

## **PREAMBLE TO CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS**

The Zoo & Aquarium profession is increasingly aware of the fact that high standards of ethics and conduct are a prerequisite for all areas of activity and responsibility within the profession. This awareness has already been expressed in the codes of individual institutions and in the personal statements of many professionals.

Members of the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums play an important role in the preservation of our natural heritage. To fulfill this role we must understand the relationship we share with the public, the animals under our care, and with each other. A consequent obligation of members is to maintain high standards of ethical conduct.

A Code of Ethics provides standards by which we can judge our professional conduct. As long as our profession is guided by these principles, ours will continue to be a respected one.

## **CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS**

The following Code of Professional Ethics of the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums (CAZA) is intended to inspire its members and shall form the basis for all disciplinary actions of CAZA. All members are governed by the Code of Ethics and subject to discipline under it even if they are not employed by an institutional member. Accredited or Certified institutions will be governed by the accreditation standards and process.

Deviation by a member from the CAZA Code of Professional Ethics or from any of the rules officially adopted by the Board of Directors supplemental thereto, or any action by a member that is detrimental to the best interests of the zoo and aquarium profession and CAZA shall be considered unethical conduct by a member, and the member shall be subject to investigation by the Ethics Committee of CAZA and, if warranted, to disciplinary action. The Code is intended as an inspirational guide for members and as a basis for disciplinary action. The Obligations of Professional Ethics set forth here represent the objective toward which every member should strive.

The Code's Mandatory Standards, unlike the Obligations of Professional Ethics, are compulsory. The Mandatory Standards establish a minimum level of conduct below which no member may fall without being subject to disciplinary action. The severity of judgment against a member found to be in violation of a Mandatory Standard shall be determined by the character of the offence and the attendant circumstances.

The Ethics Committee of CAZA shall determine action to be taken in such matters, subject to appeal to the Ethics Appeal Panel, and shall exercise such additional authority as may be delegated to it by the Board of Directors.

## **OBLIGATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS**

In order to promote high standards of conduct in the profession, CAZA has formulated the following basic principles for the guidance of its members:

### **AS A MEMBER OF CAZA, I PLEDGE TO:**

- Accept that I have responsibilities not only to my professional associates, my fellow employees, and the public, but most importantly to the animals under my care.
- Display the highest integrity, the best judgment of ethics possible, and use my professional skills to the best interests of all.
- Be open and honest in the dissemination of professional information and advice.
- Use only legal and ethical means when seeking to influence governmental legislation or regulations.
- Issue no statements to the public which I know to be false or misleading.
- Maintain high standards of personal, professional, and business conduct and behaviour.
- Promote the interests of CAZA and do my share of work asked of me by CAZA.
- Aid the professional development of those who enter the zoological park and aquarium profession by assisting them to understand the functions, duties and responsibilities of the profession.
- Encourage publication of significant achievements in breeding husbandry, medical technology, architecture, etc. in publications generally familiar to members.
- Endeavour at all times to improve zoos and aquariums.
- Promote the interests of wildlife conservation, biodiversity and animal welfare to colleagues and to society at large.

- Cooperate with the wider conservation community including wildlife agencies, conservation organizations and research institutions to assist in maintaining global biodiversity.
- Cooperate with governments and other appropriate bodies to improve standards of animal welfare and ensure the welfare of all animals in our care.
- Act in accordance with all local, national and international law.
- Ensure that when animals are obtained from the wild, that such acquisitions will not have a deleterious effect upon the wild population and are acquired incorporating all legal and ethical approval methods and documentation.
- Follow the IUCN/SSC/Reintroduction Specialist Group guidelines for reintroduction when participating in release-to-the-wild programs.
- Not allow the mutilation of any animal for cosmetic purpose or change the physical appearance without valid husbandry or medical reasons.

## **MANDATORY STANDARDS**

### **Maintaining Integrity and Competence in the Zoo and Aquarium Profession**

- An applicant shall make no materially false statement or deliberately fail to disclose a material fact in connection with his or her application for membership in CAZA.
- A member shall not endorse the application for membership in CAZA of a person known by that member to be unqualified in respect to character, education, length of service, or some other relevant factor.

### **Misconduct**

- A member shall not violate a Mandatory Standard.
- A member shall not solicit the aid of another individual to circumvent or assist another to violate a Mandatory Standard.
- A member shall not knowingly engage in activities contrary to local, provincial, federal or international laws, as such laws relate to our profession; and a member will, to the best of his or her ability, cooperate with governmental agencies regulating animal welfare and animal transactions.

- A member shall not engage in conduct that adversely affects or is prejudicial to the concepts and ideals of CAZA.
- A member shall make every effort to ensure that all animals in his/her collection and under his/her care are acquired and disposed of in a manner which meets the current policies of the Association and do not find their way into the hands of those not qualified to care for them properly.
- A member shall ensure that all animals in their collections shall receive appropriate levels of care.

### **Disclosure of Information**

- A member shall not knowingly misinform the receiving party regarding animal records or specimen disposition.
- A member shall not alter animal records or facts concerning age, condition or other material information about any animal where such action may effect the sale, trade, loan or other transaction with respect to said animal..
- A member shall immediately bring to the attention of the Ethics Committee of CAZA any information concerning a clear violation of a Mandatory Standard.
- A member shall issue no statement to the public which he/she knows (or should know) to be false or misleading.