

CAZA Policy Re: Dispersal of animals in the event of institutional member closure.

Preamble

CAZA is committed to assisting member institutions facing closure with the dispersal of their animals.

CAZA members take both a national and international approach when developing their animal collection plans. CAZA members integrate their animal collections according to priorities established by a number of species management plans. Priority species are coordinated between institutions, with breeding and transfers recommended by a coordinating body.

CAZA and other zoological associations, publish animal collection plans regularly. Recommendations for breeding and transferring within managed species programs are published periodically. These processes provide a mechanism for the identification of spaces for animals within those programs that require relocation due to institutional closure.

Policy

CAZA and its members will commit to ensuring the placement of all animals within managed species programs. The relevant species management group will oversee the process of recommending appropriate placement of animals in managed programs. In addition, CAZA will provide all reasonable assistance in placing all other animals that are not part of a managed program. Should no appropriate housing be identified following all reasonable attempts to re-house animals requiring placement, CAZA recognizes that humane euthanasia may be necessary.

Should any CAZA institution face closure while an institutional member, CAZA considers that such an institution remains a CAZA member until appropriate plans for the dispersal of its animal collection have been finalized. This continuation of membership is contingent upon the institution adhering to CAZA animal care standards. CAZA will continue to exercise all normal responsibilities towards a member institution until dispersal is completed. Further, CAZA expects member institutions to recognize their responsibilities towards other member institutions until their animal collection has been dispersed. Therefore, member institutions are expected to follow all recommendations from Species Coordinators for the dispersal of animals within managed species programs.

CAZA recognizes that the welfare of the animals in the care of member institutions is of paramount importance, and that all attempts should be made to identify appropriate housing for animals before other options are considered. In most cases, animals will be re-housed; however, there may be cases where this is impossible. In these instances, CAZA accepts that under certain circumstances it may be necessary to humanely euthanize animals. This would only be done once all other acceptable options had been fully explored.

Policy Specifications (Mandatory)

1. Legal restrictions on the disposition of animals must be observed.
2. The institution must be concerned that the manner of disposition be in the best interests of the animals, the species, the institution and the public it serves.
3. A medical summary, diet, management/husbandry summary and all historical files and records must accompany or precede the animals relocation.
4. Animals will not be sold, traded or otherwise transferred to any organization or individual for the purpose of being hunted.
5. It must be recognized that relocating an institutions collection can take a considerable amount of time, particularly with animals that are aged, have health problems or require specialized housing or care. It is critical that throughout that time period, provision of appropriate levels of animal care – consistent with CAZA animal care standards – be provided to all animals.

Policy Directions (Discretionary)

1. Animals may be disposed of by sale, exchange, loan or gift to a CAZA accredited zoological park or aquarium, other qualified institutions or individuals, in accordance with the CAZA Code of Professional Ethics.
2. Live animals may be placed with animal suppliers having the qualifications and facilities to care for the animals in accordance with the Code of Professional Ethics of CAZA.
3. Suitable living animals may be released into their native ranges or other areas according to relevant laws and regulations and to the general health of the specimen.
4. Animals may be humanely euthanized if other modes of removal are not feasible.
5. Commonly designated domestic animals should be disposed of in a manner consistent with good agricultural practices and subject to relevant laws and regulations