Study to support the evaluation of the Zoos Directive

*Draft findings on the effectiveness of the Zoos Directive*

Workshop 16 May 2017

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Part I - Introduction
Key question: To what extent have the general and specific objectives of the Zoos Directive been achieved?

Issues addressed:

- Progress towards the general and specific objectives of the Zoos Directive:
  - Actions taken by the Member States to ensure implementation and enforcement of the Zoos Directive
  - Conservation measures implemented by zoos
  - Contribution of the Zoos Directive to the conservation of biodiversity

- Factors that have contributed to or inhibited progress

- Negative or positive changes beyond the intended effects of the Zoos Directive
Part II – Progress made and contributing factors
Before the adoption of the Zoos Directive, only five Member States (BE, DK, FR, ES, UK) with legislation on zoos (including licensing requirements, but not pursuing comprehensive conservation objectives)

In 1988, the Survey of Zoological Collection found:

- no widely used definition of “zoo”;
- limited information available on number of zoo;
- only a few zoos broadly meeting “the standards required by international guidelines of modern zoo practice”;
- little significant consideration of the conservation activities or potential of zoos.
The Zoos Directive:

- Establishes minimum standards for the keeping of animals in zoos in the EU;
- Recognises and promotes the role of zoos in the conservation of biodiversity;
- In practical terms, requires Member States to establish a licensing and inspection system, ensuring that:
  - Zoos implement a set of conservation measures;
  - Animals are treated or disposed of under appropriate conditions in case of closure of a zoos.
Licensing and inspection systems: progress achieved

- Initial issues and delays in the setting up of the national licensing and inspection systems:
  
  In the 14 Member States, a significant part of the existing zoos licensed only after the four-year transitional period established by the Zoos Directive.

  In some cases, no license issued within the four-year period (e.g. NL, IE, IT).

- Member State competent authorities have gradually improved their systems and, between 2010 and 2015, the share of licensed zoos has increased.
Licensing and inspection systems widely vary across the EU

Effectiveness influenced by:
- Use of national inspection forms (BE, CY, CZ, ES, IE, NL, PT) or detail criteria provided in legislation (BG, IT, FR)
- Use of external expertise for carrying out or assisting inspections (BG, BE, CZ, DK, NL, PL and, if needed/depending local bodies, FR, ES and PT)
- Guidance documents on conservation measures provided to zoos (e.g. IE, NL)
- Availability of a centralised zoo database (CY, CZ, IE, PL, PT)
Elements checked during the inspections also vary across Member States and influence the quality of inspections:

- Requirements of Article 3 of the Zoos Directive not specified in terms of operational criteria and measurable parameters.
- Detailed criteria mainly for minimum standards for animal accommodation (binding in BG, BE, IT, LT, PL; or non binding guidelines in DE, IE) and other aspects, such as safety of visitors (BG, BE, CY, CZ, FR, ES, IE, IT, PT), outside the scope of the Directive.
70 zoos replied to the survey. Overall positive picture:

- Many zoos engaged in research projects, population management programmes (EEP and ESB), education and awareness raising activities;
- Measures on animal husbandry, prevention of escapes and record keeping in place.

Zoos member of EAZA (37 out of 70, or 53%) or other national/international federations (16 out of 70, or 23%) might bias the results. But similar positive trends in non EAZA/other federations zoos, and no significant difference between smaller and larger zoos.
Art. 3, first indent: Participating in Research, and/or training in relevant conservation skills, and/or exchange of information, and/or captive breeding, repopulation or reintroduction of species into the wild: these measures are alternative options in all Member States, except in BG, PL, PT (and FR).

![Bar chart showing implementation of conservation measures by zoos](chart.png)
**Art. 3, second indent:** Education and awareness in relation to the conservation of biodiversity

**Number of surveyed zoos that have a written education strategy**

*by membership*

- EAZA: 2 Yes, 28 No, 2 NA
- Other Federation: 4 Yes, 12 No, 1 NA
- No Federation: 2 Yes, 4 No, 1 NA
- No information on membership: 3 Yes, 1 No, 7 NA
- Total: 51 Yes, 51 No, 51 NA

*by size*

- 250 employees or more: 1 Yes, 8 No, 1 NA
- Between 50-249 employees: 1 Yes, 16 No, 1 NA
- Between 10-49 employees: 2 Yes, 21 No, 2 NA
- Less than 10 employees: 1 Yes, 3 No, 6 NA
- Total: 51 Yes, 51 No, 51 NA
Art. 3, third indent: Accommodation of animals and animal husbandry

Zoos capabilities in the field of animal husbandry

- Protocols for capture/handling/transport of animals: 62 Yes, 4 No, 4 NA
- Hygiene plans for cleaning and change of food/water: 67 Yes, 3 No
- Contact with external qualified veterinarian with experience and knowledge of wild animals: 58 Yes, 3 Yes, 9 NA
- In house qualified veterinarian with experience and knowledge of wild animals: 45 Yes, 18 Yes, 7 NA
- Written nutrition programme: 63 Yes, 3 Yes, 4 NA
- Written health care programmes: 66 Yes, 3 Yes, 3 NA
**Art. 3, fourth indent:** Most zoos with formal plan/protocol to prevent both the escape of animals and the intrusion of outside pests and vermin.

**Art. 3, fifth indent:** 68 out of 70 declare with record keeping system. Mainly:
- electronic system;
- With record per individual animal (in line with national legislation in BE, IE, PT, ES).
- Complete collection covered in 40 out of 70 zoos
Answer to the question of the public consultation “Do you think the following activities are sufficiently promoted in zoos across the EU?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21a. Research on species conservation issues</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>44%</td>
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<tr>
<td>21b. Training on relevant species conservation skills</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21c. Exchange of information relating to species conservation, between zoos, authorities, other organisations</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21d. Provide education on and raise awareness of biodiversity and broader nature protection topics</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21e. Provide education on and raise awareness of species, wild animals and their natural habitats</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21f. Provide information on exhibited species and their habitats</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21g. Keep animals under appropriate conditions with good veterinary care</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21h. Collect data on the animals in the zoo</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>54%</td>
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</table>
Concrete contribution of zoos’ activities to overall biodiversity conservation difficult to measure.

Based on existing literature:
- Participating in research: limited impact of zoos activities because of limited research activities;
- Contribution to conservation of captive breeding and reintroduction subject to debate;
- Contribution to financing of conservation is observed for some zoos;
- Benefits (or lack thereof) of keeping non-threatened species also subject to debate;
- According to recent studies, real benefit of public education for awareness of visitors on conservation issues, but limited impact on their long-term behaviour towards biodiversity conservation.

Implementation of the Directive contributes to EU and international targets for the protection of wild fauna and the conservation of biodiversity.
Contributing factors

Transposition, implementation and enforcement by the Member States’ authorities

- Transposition
  - Pre-existing legislation (BE, DK, FR, ES, UK)
  - Additional requirements provided in transposing legislation.

- Implementation:
  - Proactive attitude of MSCAs (e.g., guidance documents, training and workshops).

- Enforcement:
  - Additional enforcement activities
  - Use of external expertise
  - Use of synergy with other acts (e.g. CITES)
Contributing factors

Activities of the European Commission, the Federations, NGOs and zoos themselves

- Activities by the EC:
  - Enforcement activities (infringement procedures)
  - Issuance of the Good Practice Document

- Activities by federations:
  - E.g., membership requirements, standards, training, breeding programmes, workshop and conferences and public awareness raising activities

- Activities by NGOs:
  - Monitoring of implementation of the Directive
  - Flagging issues to the authorities
  - Information to the public

- Activities by IUCN, WAZA (e.g. key documents)

- Activities by zoos, academia and media
Positive impacts beyond conservation

▪ Creation of a common framework among the Member States contributing to raising the quality of zoos and to increase public awareness on the role of zoos in conserving biodiversity:
  • 63% of the respondents to the public consultation rated the benefits achieved in terms of establishment of a coherent legal framework as crucial or significant.

▪ Increased standards for the welfare of animals kept in zoos:
  • increased attention by Member State authorities and better conditions for animals kept in captivity.
Part III – Open issues and impeding factors
Open issues

- Inconsistent application of the requirements on conservation measures across the EU:
  - Additional requirements in some Member States (definition of zoos, specification of Article 3 measures, animal accommodation or safety standards);
  - Licensing and inspection systems differ in relation to elements checked and criteria.

- Closure of non-compliant zoos rarely observed

- Lack of resources and capacity for inspections by MSCAs:
  - Zoo inspectors are usually responsible for a range of different duties (e.g. animals used for scientific purposes, compliance with other legislation dealing with invasive alien species and CITES);
  - Skills of zoo inspectors are generally broad and not necessarily focused on wild fauna and species specific issues.

- Concerns raised about unlicensed zoos still operating
Hindering factors

- **Directive's framework nature** preventing consistency in transposition and effective implementation. Mainly:
  - definition of zoos
  - alternative options provided under Article 3 first indent
  - lack of detail of the requirements of Article 3

- **In terms of transposition:**
  - Late transposition and delayed implementation
  - Non-conformity of the transposing legislation

- **Implementation** particularly challenging regarding:
  - organisation of national administrations (division of competence, portfolio, absence of communication);
  - identification and inventory of establishments;
  - closure of zoos (absence of rehoming, organisation by the MSCAs).
Hindering factors

- **EC’s contribution is limited:**
  - **Limited means** were conferred to the Commission in terms of monitoring and coordinating implementation due to subsidiarity
  - Dissemination of **Good Practice Document** not satisfactory (low awareness and no translation).

- Economic factors mentioned by surveyed stakeholders as problematic for implementation:
  - impact of the 2008 **economic crisis**;
  - **economic influence of zoos at local level** sometimes detrimental to the proper implementation of the Directive.
Part IV – Conclusions
Overall progress has been made in achieving the general (protect wild fauna and conserve biodiversity by strengthening the role of zoos in the conservation of biodiversity) and specific objectives of the Zoos Directive (Article 3 conservation measures).

Although enforcement issues remain and implementation is inconsistent across the EU, operational licensing and inspection systems are set up and represent a condition for ensuring that all zoos are licenses.

Zoos that took part in the survey are implementing several conservation measures.

Consultations show that improvements have been achieved in EU zoos.
Conclusions

- The **impact** of conservation measures promoted by zoos on biodiversity conservation is debated in literature. However, the Zoos Directive represents an **essential instrument** for achieving the objectives set at EU and international level.

- **Stakeholders** play an instrumental role in the proper implementation of the Directive, and in the achievement of its objectives.

- The Zoos Directive and the work of stakeholders are mutually reinforcing in order to strengthen the role of zoos in the conservation of biodiversity. However this **main goal is not yet fully achieved**.
Part V – Discussion
Points for discussion

- Feedback on the findings: are there important gaps or misinterpretations? Do you have different views and supporting evidence?
- Do you have further inputs on the achievements, remaining issues, contributing and impeding factors?
- Are there other impacts, positive or negative changes, that have not been mentioned?