

4.6 Guidelines - Animal Records Keeping

Recognising the need to ensure that animal records are thorough, in a standardised format and transferable, Zoo and Aquarium Association member organisations:

1. Ensure that, for all specimens, parentage, breeding, medical and transaction histories are accurately maintained.
2. Ensure that, for species for which it is feasible, all specimens are individually identified.
3. Where possible and appropriate, without excluding the use of other methods¹, adopt the use of an ISO compliant transponder system² for the identification of live animals, and where doing so:
 - (a) implant microchip transponders where consistent with the well-being of the specimens concerned; and
 - (b) standardise the location of implanted transponders in each animal according to advice from the IUCN/SSC Conservation Breeding Specialist Group; and
 - (c) do not re-use transponders, in particular where the animals concerned are, or are likely to be, recorded in the International Species Information System data base.
4. Ensure that accurate individual specimen records are maintained for all species; with the exception of those for which group records are maintained (refer to the next item).
5. Ensure that adequate group records are maintained for those species for which specimens are transported and cared for as a group (e.g. some fish, invertebrates, tadpoles, colony species and herd species). Such species would include those for which:
 - a. the natural generation time is very short, i.e. there is a rapid turnover of specimens as a result of high fecundity and mortality rates; and/or
 - b. the reliable counting of specimens is not practical, so that only estimates of group size are available.

¹ Individual identification is achieved through tags, bands, transponders, tattoos, etc. Some guidance is provided, including possible sources and some regional conventions, in the *AGRO Resource Manual*, 1999.

² A system satisfying ISO Standard 11784 (which requires that transponders bear permanent, non-programmable, unalterable and permanently unique codes) and Standard 11785 (which requires that transponders are compatible with other readers – not solely those produced by the transponder manufacturer).

6. Ensure that any particular record keeping requirements associated with an approved ASMP Captive Management Program, or with an approved WAZA Global Program, are met.
7. Ensure that all studbooks managed under the auspices of, and on behalf of, Association or WAZA, are developed for the collective benefit. In particular:
 - a. that the data in such studbooks are held under the stewardship of the studbook authority;
 - b. that, for such studbooks, it is recognised that the studbook keeper is the curator of the data and neither the studbook keeper nor the institution at which that person is employed, is the owner of the dataset;
 - c. that the studbook dataset is made available to the zoo and aquarium community in the most useful and compatible format, this usually being as a database in electronic form (e.g. a SPARKS/ZIMS dataset).
8. Submit accurate, current data for regional distribution by publication in the ASMP Regional Census and Plan and for global distribution by the International Species Information System (ISIS).

2. Approval

Revision Record

Approved / Amended/ Rescinded / Reviewed	Date	Board / Executive Director	Description

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