

**Eurasian Regional Association
of Zoos and Aquariums
EARAZA**

RULES

**FOR PARTICIPATION
IN THE EARAZA PROGRAMMES FOR THE CONSERVATION OF SPECIES (EAP)**



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Approved by
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CONTENTS

	Page
1 Introduction	2
2 Types of EARAZA programmes	3
3 Principles of the implementation of EARAZA programmes	4
4 Procedure for submission, review and approval of EARAZA programmes	6
5 Reports on the progress of EARAZA programmes	6

APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Responsibilities of EARAZA Programme Coordinators	7
Appendix 2	Responsibilities of EARAZA Programme participants	10

1. Introduction

One of the most important functions of zoos, aquariums and other public and private organizations managing animal collections (hereinafter referred to as zoos) is conservation of rare and endangered species of animals. This is achieved through the implementation of the programmes aimed at establishing genetically and demographically healthy captive populations of rare and endangered species. Currently, the zoos of the world are developing their animal collection planning based on the environmental, educational and research significance of each particular species, taking into account the problems associated with the need to maintain high standards of animal welfare. Such planning is carried out both at the level of each individual zoo, and on a national, regional, and global scale.

Zoo populations of wild animals play the role of insurance populations that can be used for the restoration of the species in case of their extinction from the wild or for the reinforcement of wild populations experiencing periods of genetic or demographic crisis. *Ex situ* population management programmes have already been successfully used for the prevention of the extinction of a number of species.

Currently, when the removal of animals from the wild is becoming increasingly rare, the implementation of *ex situ* conservation programmes is the only way to maintain the genetic and demographic health of captive populations. In most cases, such programmes may be carried out only through the participation of a large number of zoos, which makes it possible to achieve the goals of the conservation of the genetic diversity of captive populations, maintaining of high standards of animal welfare (based on the responsible transfers of animals between zoos), and implementation of scientifically sound collection planning policies.

The Eurasian Regional Association of Zoos and Aquariums (hereinafter referred to as EARAZA, or the Association) has been an Association Member of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) since 2005, which means that all EARAZA member institutions should undertake a binding obligation to adhere to the principles of WAZA, according to which zoos should make a significant contribution to the conservation of wild animals by developing active cooperation between various organizations for the efficient implementation of species conservation programmes.

In addition, all EARAZA members should comply with the provisions of the EARAZA Charter that clearly outlines the purposes and objectives of the Association, including:

"2.1. The purpose of the Association is to coordinate efforts and develop a system of inter-zoo collaboration in the conservation and breeding of wild animals including mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, invertebrates, and other representatives of wild fauna, hereinafter referred to as animals.

2.2. The main objectives of the Association are:

... development and implementation of joint programmes for breeding of rare animal species and reintroduction of captive bred animals into the wild in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation (and in the case of work in the territories of foreign states, in accordance with the legislation of the relevant countries and states), while observing the guidelines of international conservation organizations..."

These Rules define the principles of the implementation of EARAZA population management programmes for rare and endangered animal species and provide information on both the types of such programmes and functions that zoos must accomplish to establish and efficiently implement EARAZA conservation programmes. Compliance with the rules listed below is mandatory for the participants of programmes carried out under EARAZA activities.

It should be noted that the *ex situ* species population management programme may be unsustainable due to an extremely small number of population founders, an initially low level of genetic diversity, reproductive characteristics of the species, or insufficient number of zoos participating in the programme.

In this regard, EARAZA member zoos are strongly encouraged to participate in the maximum possible number of EARAZA programmes for those species that are kept by EARAZA zoos.

2. Types of EARAZA Programmes

In order to coordinate and optimize the conservation of rare animal species (especially those of the fauna of the North of Eurasia (Palearctic)), EARAZA zoos can implement programmes for the conservation of both individual rare species (the Steller's sea eagle, the Siberian Asian spruce grouse, the Amur tiger, the Pallas's cat) and groups of species attributed to these groups on the basis of taxonomic similarity (cranes, bustards, anseriformes, acipenserids) or biotopic confinement (mountain ungulates). The effective implementation of most of these programmes requires the participation of a significant number of zoos, but in some cases, EARAZA programmes may be implemented by a limited number of zoos or even by one zoo in cooperation with third-party environmental or scientific organizations.

Depending on the tasks and scale, EARAZA conservation programmes can be divided into the following types:

Type I: EARAZA captive population management programmes for the most vulnerable or endangered species, in the situations where such programmes are integrated into those of other zoo associations, especially if the animals included in the programme are used for reintroduction or reinforcement of the wild population.

Type II: Independent programmes of EARAZA for *ex situ* population management, especially programmes of great importance for the conservation of species in the regions or countries where individual members of EARAZA are located. The need for this type of programme should be assessed taking into account the conservation status of the relevant species or group of species.

Type III: EARAZA programmes aimed at developing optimal animal husbandry methods for establishing or managing viable *ex situ* populations, studying or monitoring the status of *in situ* populations, or carrying out scientific research directly related to the conservation of the species. Unlike the programmes of types I and II, type III programmes do not include captive population management, but may be implemented in addition to existing regional or global *ex situ* population management programmes and in cooperation with various scientific and environmental organizations.

Type IV: EARAZA Studbook keeping programmes. Keeping EARAZA Studbooks for the species for which type I and II programmes do not exist is aimed at collecting and maintaining a database on the animals kept at the Association's zoos. Keeping studbooks will contribute to the scientifically based establishment of groups and pairs of individuals of the related species in certain zoos and will help create the basis for establishing EARAZA programmes of type II.

When assessing the feasibility of establishing the EARAZA programme, it should be remembered that the use of the *ex situ* programme as a component of the conservation strategy is not required for *all* species and not *all ex situ* population management programmes directly pursue the goals of the *in situ* species conservation.

3. Principles of the implementation of EARAZA programmes

Before applying for the participation in the programme, the Zoo Director should familiarize the founder of the zoo and the city property management with the requirements for the participants of the programme, paying special attention to a non-commercial basis of the animal transfers between participating zoos, and obtain the written consent of the founder for the zoo's participation in the relevant programme. If the body supervising the zoo or the zoo status changes, its administration should coordinate the participation in the programme with the new management.

The tasks of the governing body in the implementation of EARAZA programmes are performed by the Presidium of the Association. Direct control over the implementation of EARAZA programmes is assigned to the Working Group on EARAZA Programmes, whose chairman will be a co-opted member of the EARAZA Presidium.

Ex situ population management in the framework of EARAZA programmes is carried out by Programme Coordinators (see Appendix 1: "*Responsibilities of the EARAZA Programme Coordinators*"). The appointment of a Coordinator is made on the basis of a submission from the relevant zoo (or zoos) or EARAZA staff for approval of his/her candidacy by the Working Group on EARAZA Programmes, after which the candidacy of the Coordinator has to be approved by the Presidium. The Coordinator should have a higher specialized education and possess all the professional qualities, knowledge, and skills necessary to manage the EARAZA programme. The zoo employing the Programme Coordinator should provide all the necessary conditions for the effective work of the Coordinator. The EARAZA Programme Coordinator organizes and conducts elections of the Programme Committee that should include representatives of zoos from different countries participating in this programme. The total number of Committee members should be determined by the Programme Coordinator, depending on the number of participating zoos (see Appendix 1). When preparing recommendations, the Programme Coordinator and the Programme Committee should be guided by the interests of the management of high genetic diversity of the population as a whole and make recommendations based on the interests of the species conservation, taking into account the specific circumstances that may arise at individual zoos.

In case of inappropriate behavior of the Coordinator or unsatisfactory performance of his/her duties, zoos may first apply to the Working Group on EARAZA Programmes to solve the problems that have arisen; in case of more serious violations of the requirements pertaining to the Coordinator's duties or in the situation where the Working Group on EARAZA Programmes is unable to solve the current problems, a complaint may be filed with the EARAZA Presidium, which has the right to decide on the change of the Programme Coordinator.

In case when Programme Coordinator resigns from her/his position at her/his own request (because of the termination of the employment by the zoo, inability to serve as Programme Coordinator, etc.), the Working Group on EARAZA Programmes invites EARAZA members to submit their candidacies for the position of the Programme Coordinator, considers the received proposals, and submits a draft decision on the appointment of a new Coordinator for consideration by the Presidium. When considering candidates for the position of the Programme Coordinator, preference is given to candidates from the zoo where the previous Programme Coordinator worked.

The implementation of EARAZA programmes will be successful only if the participants and Programme Coordinators comply with certain requirements applicable to the specifics of each programme type. The participants of the programmes should follow the recommendations of the coordinators as fully as possible and provide optimal conditions for breeding and maintaining the welfare of individuals of the related species (see Appendix 2: "*Responsibilities of EARAZA programme participants*"). One of the key conditions for participation in EARAZA programmes is the non-commercial nature of the transfers of animals between zoos. All participants of the programme should be guided by the interests of maintaining the viability of the whole population of the species within the EARAZA programme and contribute to the management of the population as if the population were the joint

property of EARAZA. In this way, programme participants should avoid the situation of creating financial barriers that may negatively affect the implementation of recommendations on animal transfers. The EARAZA programmes are not commercial projects, and the concept of "selling an animal" between their participants should be excluded. All transfers of animals and their offspring under EARAZA programmes should be carried out on non-commercial basis. An exception may be the situations of the transfer of individuals that were received by zoos on a commercial basis before joining the EARAZA programme.

In case of the violation of the condition on the non-commercial transfers of animals or their offspring within the EARAZA programme and in the situation where a participant of the programme being a sending party claims for the payment of the cost of animals from the receiving institution, the Programme Coordinator, in agreement with the Programme Committee, submits the case to the Working Group on EARAZA Programmes that can propose to the EARAZA Presidium to take specific measures against the zoo in question (see document "Regulation on measures in case of a violation of the EARAZA Code of Ethics or rules of participation in EARAZA Programmes").

In certain cases EARAZA Presidium on the recommendation of the Working Group on EARAZA Programmes can make a decision on the exclusion of an institution from the EARAZA Programme. Information on the exclusion from the EARAZA Program will be brought to the attention of all EARAZA members. If the Programme Coordinator deems it necessary to transfer animals of the corresponding species that were received by the zoo under the Programme to other participants of the Programme, the excluded zoo should transfer such animals to zoos designated by the Coordinator. The excluded zoo may reapply for the participation in the EARAZA Program only after three years, if the organization is ready to commit to fulfilling all the requirements for participation in the EARAZA Programme.

The transfer of animals between zoos participating in EARAZA programmes may be carried out on one of the following terms:

- a) donation;
- b) exchange (including exchanges of specimens of one species for specimens of another species);
- c) transfer on the basis of the breeding loan agreement.

EARAZA is an international association, which includes organizations from different countries, and this fact should be taken into account when transferring animals between zoos. A reference to these Rules should be made in each animal transfer agreement, with the recommendation of the EARAZA Programme Coordinator being attached to such an agreement.

When transferring animals, each party independently bears the costs associated with the paperwork. In general, the receiving party will be responsible for covering the costs associated with the animal transfer, which may include the costs of transportation, manufacturing of transport containers, carrying out veterinary tests, and obtaining CITES permits and other relevant documents. These conditions may be changed by the consensus of the parties.

Under the Type I Programmes that are carried out as part of the larger-scale programmes, EARAZA programme participants are required to follow the recommendations jointly prepared by the coordinators of all relevant programmes. Any interregional transfers of animals should be carried out in accordance with the requirements of higher-level programmes (e.g. the Global Species Management Plans (GSMPs)). Coordinators and participants of Type I and II Programmes are required to follow the rules provided in Appendices 1 and 2.

When participating in EARAZA Type II Programmes for the species for which similar programmes are managed by other associations of zoos and aquariums, EARAZA zoos that are also members of such associations are obliged to follow followed through on commitments made previously, and relevant EARAZA programmes should be carried out with a view to comply with the requirements and rules of other associations.

When managing EARAZA Programmes it is necessary to take into account, among other things, the provisions of national wildlife legislation (e.g. all Giant pandas are the property of China, while all lion-headed tamarins are the property of Brazil).

In cases where the EARAZA programme includes *in situ* conservation activities (reintroduction or population reinforcement project, obtaining individuals removed from the wild, scientific and other *in situ* studies) that need to be approved by the environmental or other supervisory authorities of the country or region where these activities are carried out, it is necessary to obtain appropriate permits. Any programme that includes projects of reintroduction or reinforcement of the wild population should be implemented according to recommendations provided in the relevant IUCN guidelines. Any EARAZA programmes can be implemented in cooperation with third-party organizations.

The decision on funding specific areas of activities within the framework of EARAZA Programmes will be made by the EARAZA Annual Conference after reviewing the application for establishing a new programme or report on the progress of an existing programme for the past year. The programme report should be submitted to and assessed by the Working Group on EARAZA Programmes and then submitted to EARAZA Presidium, which puts the issue of the financial support (or continuing funding) of the programme to the vote of the participants of the EARAZA Annual Conference. The assessment of the programme funding issue should be done on the basis of many criteria including the importance of the programme from the perspective of the vulnerability of the targeted species, current or potential need for the conservation of the species (or group of species), the significance of the programme for the region, etc.

4. Procedure for submission, review and approval of EARAZA programmes

Any EARAZA member can initiate the creation of a programme for any species. The application (preferably in electronic form) for managing a programme should be submitted by the initiator/initiators of the programme to the Working Group on EARAZA Programmes. The application should, among other issues, justify the expediency of the programme from the perspective of species conservation. It should reflect the goals and objectives of the programme, methods and means of its implementation, expected results, significance for the Association, estimated deadlines for implementation, as well as data on the participants of the programme and, if necessary, information on sources of funding (own funds, EARAZA's funds, funds from other organizations, government and other grants). The application can be made in a format, with taking into account the requirements for its content. In cases where the implementation of a particular programme requires approval from environmental or other supervisory authorities of a country or region, appropriate approvals should be attached to the application. Within a month, the Working Group on EARAZA Programmes considers the received proposal and either submits the programme to the Presidium for its approval or recommends that the initiators finalize the submitted version of the programme, or rejects the proposal with appropriate justification. Information about the Presidium decisions related to the approval or rejection of the proposal on the programme initiation should be brought to the attention of the applying organization within 3 months from the date of submission of the proposal. Decisions on the termination of the Programme or changing the Programme status are made by the EARAZA Presidium. Information about these decisions shall be included in the annual reports of the Presidium and in the EARAZA publications.

If the implementation of the proposed programme involves a violation of environmental legislation or contradicts the Charter and principles of EARAZA and/or WAZA, the proposal will not be accepted for consideration. Commercially focused programmes will not be accepted for consideration either.

All EARAZA programmes adopted (approved) by the EARAZA Presidium have a right to use EARAZA logo.

5. Reports on the progress of EARAZA programmes

Programme Coordinators are required to submit reports on the work done within the programme to the Working Group on EARAZA Programmes no later than February 1 of each year. After considering the report and preparing their conclusions, the Working Group sends the report with their opinion to the EARAZA Presidium. The coordinators of such programmes should provide information on financial issues to all participants of the programme, including it in their annual reports on the activity under the programme.

If the Programme Coordinator fails to submit a report on the programme for two consecutive years the Presidium of EARAZA on the recommendation of the Working Group on EARAZA Programmes may decide to replace the Coordinator.

APPENDIX 1

Responsibilities of EARAZA Programme Coordinators

The Coordinators of Types I, II, and IV Programmes manage their programmes based on the use of ZIMS for Studbooks or SPARKS and PMx software.

Responsibilities of the EARAZA Type I or II Programme Coordinator:

1. The Programme Coordinator should organize the elections and activities of the Programme Committee. The number of the Committee members may be determined by the decision of the Coordinator, depending on the number of the Programme participants. Candidates for positions in the Committee are elected from the representatives of zoos participating in the EARAZA Programme. The elections are held on the basis of simple majority vote of representatives of all zoos participating in the EARAZA programme. The term of office of the Committee members is five years, after which new elections are held. If a member of the Committee resigns until the end of his/her term of office (e.g. because of termination of the employment by the participating zoo or for other reasons), the representative of the participating zoos who received the highest number of votes in the previous vote will be included in the Committee.

The Committee members should deal with all issues related to the strategic aspects of the implementation of the programme, including, in particular, the following:

- Assessment and approval of the Coordinator's breeding and transfer recommendations;
 - Review and approval of a long-term population management plan prepared by the Coordinator; submission of proposals for implementation of scientific research aimed at improving animal husbandry methods;
 - Resolution of issues related to conflict situations that may arise due to the need for programme participants to follow the Coordinator's recommendations;
 - Making proposals on the inclusion of new zoos (non-members of EARAZA) in the Programme and the related decisions;
 - Approval of proposals on activities related to the *in situ* conservation.
2. In coordination with the Committee, the Coordinator may appoint Programme advisors (professionals in veterinary medicine, animal science, construction and reconstruction of animal enclosures, *in situ* species conservation, etc.).
 3. The Coordinator should keep a Studbook up to date and make all necessary changes thereto on a regular basis.
 4. The Coordinator will perform the analysis of the population data, draw up a long-term population management plan, and submit it for approval by the Committee members.
 5. The Coordinator should in due course circulate to all Programme participants breeding and transfer recommendations approved by the Committee; the timing of issuing recommendations in each specific programme should be determined on the basis of biological characteristics of the species with regard to the period of time required for preparing conditions for animal breeding.
 6. The Coordinator should timely (within a month) send answers to current requests of the Programme participants and promptly answer urgent questions.
 7. The Coordinator should provide the participants of the programme with information about plans to catch animals or collect eggs in the wild, as well as about cases of justified removal of animals from the wild and the decisions related to the transfers of such animals to zoos, if such measures are to be taken under EARAZA Programme.
 8. The Coordinator should fulfill obligations related to the development of the best husbandry methods for the species (taxon, group) and preparation of recommendations and species management guidelines.

9. The Coordinator should prepare summary reports (including current data from the studbook), submit them for approval by the Programme Committee, and circulate approved reports to all Programme participants, EARAZA Executive Office, and Working Group on EARAZA Programmes.
10. In case of a change in the management of a zoo included in the EARAZA Programme, the Programme Coordinator should inform new zoo managers about the principles of the Programme and obtain their consent for the further participation of the zoo in the Programme.
11. The Coordinator of the EARAZA Type I Programme should closely cooperate with the coordinator(s) of the programme (e.g. GSMP, EEP, etc.), which incorporates the EARAZA Programme.
12. The Coordinator may organize workshops, seminars, and conferences on the subject of the programme to discuss proposals and recommendations, as well as to prepare a long-term plan for the development of the Programme and to address complex issues related to the Programme implementation.
13. The Coordinator should maintain contacts with relevant scientific institutions for exchanging experience and results of the programme and, when possible, facilitating their cooperation.
14. The Coordinator, together with the EARAZA Executive Office, should provide participating zoos with the support in obtaining necessary permits from environmental bodies.
15. The Coordinator should provide the participants of the Programme with all available information about the situation related to the conservation of the species *in situ* and *ex situ*.
16. Together with the Committee, interested participants of the Programme and relevant environmental and other organizations, the Coordinator should carry out activities related to the *in situ* conservation of the species (including participation in projects of reintroduction and reinforcement of the wild populations of the species).

Responsibilities of the EARAZA Type III Programme Coordinator:

The Programme Coordinator initiates and coordinates activities for the conservation of the species *in situ* and management of sustainable *ex situ* population, including the following focus areas:

1. Collection of information and maintaining database on the *ex situ* activities related to the targeted species, and analysis of the collected data.
2. Development of the best husbandry methods for the species (taxon, group) and preparation of recommendations and species management guidelines.
3. Providing participants of the Programme with advisory support on the animal management and other aspects of species conservation.
4. Providing participants of the Programme with the information related to *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation of the species.
5. Carrying out scientific research and maintaining contacts with scientific and other relevant institutions through exchanging experience and research results, as well as, if possible, involving such institutions in cooperation.
6. Participation in activities aimed at *in situ* conservation of the species (including participation in projects of reintroduction and reinforcement of the wild populations).
7. Participation in the activity of relevant international projects, groups, and communities.
8. Organization of workshops, seminars, and conferences on the subject of the programme.
9. Organization of educational events on the subject of the programme.

Responsibilities of the Studbook Keeper (the EARAZA Type IV Programme Coordinator):

1. The Studbook Keeper should make all necessary changes to the database on a regular basis.
2. The Studbook Keeper should analyze the population data and assess the feasibility of creating a Type I or II Programme for the species.

3. The Studbook Keeper may give breeding and transfer recommendations to the participants of the Programme; the timing of issuing recommendations in each specific programme should be determined on the basis of biological characteristics of the species with regard to the period of time required for preparing conditions for animal breeding (participants are encouraged to follow the Studbook Keeper's recommendations; however, unlike the situation with Type I or II Programmes, compliance with such recommendations is not binding).
4. The Studbook Keeper should prepare summary reports (including current data from the studbook), submit them for approval by the Programme Committee, and circulate approved reports to all Programme participants, EARAZA Executive Office, and Working Group on EARAZA Programmes.
5. The Studbook Keeper may organize workshops, seminars, and conferences on the subject of the programme to discuss proposals and recommendations for the development of the Programme.
6. The Studbook Keeper, with the assistance from EARAZA Executive Office, should provide participating zoos with the support in obtaining necessary permits from environmental bodies.
7. The Studbook Keeper should provide the participants of the Programme with all available information about the situation related to the conservation of the species *in situ*.

APPENDIX 2

Responsibilities of EARAZA Programme participants (Types I and II Programmes):

1. The EARAZA Programme participants commit themselves to the long-term management of the species population.
2. The Programme participant should create the necessary conditions for keeping animals in accordance with the Coordinator's and the Programme Committee's requirements developed on the basis of species management guidelines and husbandry standards. If the participant resigns responsibility for the fulfillment of this obligation, they should reasonably notify the Programme Coordinator thereof.
3. The Programme participant should accurately maintain a database with information about all animals of the corresponding species, using either ZIMS or other types of databases for this purpose.
4. The Programme participant should promptly send information about all changes in the collection of animals of targeted species (such as events of birth, death, transfers, etc.) to the Programme Coordinator throughout the year so that the Coordinator can at the earliest possible stage consider the received data when drawing up plans for the development of the population.
5. The Programme participant should do their best to follow breeding and transfer recommendations of the Coordinators, as well as to supporting the implementation of a long-term population management plan. If the implementation of the recommendation for any reason is associated with significant problems or is impossible, the participant should notify the Programme Coordinator and Committee about the situation in a timely manner so that the latter have the opportunity to review the recommendation. If a reasonable solution is not found, the Coordinators, together with the Programme Committee, make a final decision, which, after approval by all representatives (by a simple majority of votes) of the zoos participating in the Programme, becomes mandatory for implementation.
6. The Programme participant should coordinate with the Programme Coordinator any transfer of animals for which a special recommendation has not been given. This requirement is especially important in the case of animal transfers between zoos participating in the EARAZA Programme and organizations that are not participants of the Programme.
7. The Programme participant should avoid the situation of creating financial barriers that may negatively affect the implementation of the recommended transfer of a particular animal.
8. The Programme participant should fully follow the recommendations presented in the existing species management guidelines (published by other associations of zoos and aquariums or developed by EARAZA), creating optimal conditions for ensuring welfare and reproduction of the individuals of the species.

Responsibilities of EARAZA Type III Programme participant:

The responsibilities of participants of the programme of this type are determined by the Programme Coordinator, depending on the Programme's content and format.

Responsibilities of EARAZA Type IV Programme participant:

The Programme participant should promptly send information about all changes in the collection of animals (such as the events of birth, death, transfers, etc.) to the Studbook Keeper throughout the year.