

## **Regulation on accreditation for joining/confirmation of membership in EARAZA**

### **1. General provisions**

1.1. The purpose of accreditation is to confirm that an organization applying for EARAZA membership or being a member of EARAZA adheres to modern standards of zoo and aquarium operations in such areas as animal welfare, conservation education and management, and that the work of the organization complies with the principles and requirements of EARAZA regulations.

The accreditation is regulated by this Regulation on accreditation for joining/confirmation of membership in EARAZA (hereinafter referred to as the Accreditation Regulation) and other regulatory documents of the Association.

1.2. Accreditation is undergone by organizations applying for membership in EARAZA<sup>1</sup> (hereinafter referred to as the applicant organization), and organizations that are already members of EARAZA (cyclic accreditation). It may also be required for an EARAZA member who has been the subject of a serious complaint.

1.3. An EARAZA member organization must undergo cyclical accreditation at least once every 10 years. Zoos with the longest membership history are the first to be cyclically accredited. The order of accreditation is developed by the Executive Directorate of EARAZA and approved by the Presidium. An EARAZA member organization has the right to apply to the Executive Directorate of EARAZA with a request to set an earlier term of cyclic accreditation.

An EARAZA member organization has the right to request to reschedule cyclical accreditation for valid reasons not more than three times for a period not exceeding one year.

1.4. The accreditation procedure should be as transparent as possible and should be based on the principles of mutual respect, objectivity and professionalism.

### **2. Obligations and rights of the Executive Directorate of EARAZA**

2.1. Upon receipt of a letter from an applicant organization expressing its wish to join EARAZA, the Executive Directorate is obliged to indicate in the reply letter:

- a list of documents to be sent to EARAZA (if necessary, attach samples of such documents or indicate the section of the website where they are published);
- a list of EARAZA documents, which the applicant must familiarize themselves with before submitting the application and which he must agree to comply with in the application for membership<sup>2</sup>.

2.2. The Executive Directorate is obliged to ensure that the data provided in the documents are up to date.

2.3. The Executive Directorate, together with the Presidium, has the right to refuse the applicant organization to undergo the accreditation procedure if, based on the results of consideration of the submitted documents, it becomes obvious that the activities of the applicant organization do not comply with the principles and regulatory documents of EARAZA. The applicant organization in this case may apply to the EARAZA Arbitration Commission. The applicant organization may re-apply for membership in EARAZA only after the elimination of the factors that caused the refusal.

2.4. If the applicant organization is a member of a national or regional association, the Executive Directorate has the right to contact the relevant association with a request to provide any relevant information about the applicant organization.

2.5. If the applicant organization refuses to cooperate or does not get in touch for more than two months, the Executive Directorate has the right to send a refusal to consider the application to the organization. In this case the applicant organization can reapply for EARAZA membership not earlier than after one calendar year.

2.6. The Executive Directorate is obliged to organize systematic and structured recording and storage

of all requests, provided information and other documents received by the Executive Directorate in the course of accreditation.

### **3. Obligations of organization undergoing an accreditation examination**

3.1. Before submitting an application, the applicant organization should carefully study the EARAZA guidance documents specified in the letter from the Executive Board and/or posted on the EARAZA website.

3.2. The administration of the applicant/organization undergoing cyclic examination is obliged to answer honestly all questions of the accreditation questionnaire, in case of additional questions - to answer them promptly.

Without advance receipt of this questionnaire from the applicant organization, the accreditation examination will not be conducted and the application for membership will remain pending.

Without receiving this questionnaire in advance from the organization undergoing cyclical examination, the organization is considered to have failed the accreditation examination.

3.3. The organization undergoing the accreditation inspection is obliged to pay all travel expenses, as well as food and accommodation expenses for the members of the accreditation commission. The work of the members of the accreditation commission is not paid. The payment method is negotiated with the Executive Directorate of EARAZA before the start of the accreditation examination.

3.4. It is necessary to provide the accreditation commission with full access to all the facilities of your zoo, including places not intended for visitors, the veterinary department and administrative areas.

3.5. One of the senior managers (director, deputy director, chief veterinarian or other manager) must accompany the accreditation commission throughout the visit. The participation of other specialists is left to the discretion of the administration of the organization undergoing accreditation examination.

3.6. Employees of the organization undergoing an accreditation examination must also be present in their departments and answer questions of the accreditation commission within their competence.

3.7. A wrap-up meeting of the day should be organized at the end of each workday and a member of the zoo management staff should be present to continue the discussion and answer questions.

### **4. Accreditation Commission**

4.1. The accreditation commission should consist of three people. The head of the accreditation commission is a member of the Executive Directorate of EARAZA or the Presidium of EARAZA.

It is desirable that one of the members of the accreditation commission represents the country of the applicant organization and (or) was familiar with local laws, language and customs. This member of the accreditation commission should assist the other members of the commission with transfers and various organizational matters.

One more member of the accreditation commission must be an employee of an EARAZA member organization, similar to the applicant organization and located in a country other than the applicant organization's country (possible exceptions due to objective circumstances are agreed with the Presidium). A member of the Accreditation Commission may be a senior or middle manager or a specialist (director, deputy director, chief veterinary surgeon, head of the educational department, etc.) from a similar EARAZA member organization with at least five years of experience in this position.

4.2. All members of the accreditation committee must be well versed in the EARAZA governing documents.

To be included in the list of potential members of the accreditation commission it is necessary to fill in the corresponding questionnaire and send it to the Executive Directorate of EARAZA.

4.3. Applications for the position of a member of the accreditation commission are considered by the Executive Directorate. In the process of reviewing a candidate's application, the Executive Directorate shall have the right to request information on the candidate's work experience, ability to travel and any specialized knowledge that may be required during the accreditation examination. All reviewers must be able to participate in at least one inspection per year and provide a consent from their supervisor assuring that the reviewer will be available to participate in an on-site accreditation inspection at least once per year.

4.4. Candidates of the members of the accreditation commission are proposed by the Executive Directorate of EARA ZA for approval by the Presidium of EARA ZA.

4.5. The accreditation commission manager is responsible for every aspect of the inspection, including visits to the organization's facilities, document review, and meetings.

The accreditation committee leader is the meeting coordinator during the visit, makes notes on the Accreditation Questionnaire during the zoo tour, informs the representative of the applicant organization of all required tasks, and writes the accreditation commission report on the visit. Any problems that arise should be solved by the head of the accreditation commission.

4.6. The accreditation examination should take no more than one to three days (depending on the size and type of the accredited organization). The examination should be organized in such a way that the costs of the receiving party are minimized.

4.7. Confidentiality and neutrality must be respected during the examination. While the auditors may exchange views during a visit to the applicant organization, they may not, at any point during the audit, discuss with representatives of the organization undergoing the accreditation examination information related to the results of the examination.

4.8. The detailed results of the accreditation audit are confidential and can only be provided to the Executive Directorate and the Presidium, as well as to the head of the organization that has passed the accreditation examination. The final decision of the accreditation examination is first brought to the attention of the administration of the organization that has passed the examination, and then indicated in the newsletter for the members of EARA ZA.

## **5. Accreditation examination procedure**

### **The administration of the applicant organization is obliged to:**

#### Before the visit:

5.1. Coordinate in advance the dates of the visit and the time of meetings of the members of the accreditation commission with the employees of their organization, as well as to confirm the possibility of placing the members of the commission.

5.2. Promptly respond to letters from the Executive Directorate of EARA ZA.

5.3. Alert their staff to be prepared to answer all questions from the accreditation committee.

#### During the visit to the organization

5.4. Arrange a meeting and transfer of members of the accreditation commission.

5.5. Provide members of the accreditation commission with a separate room for working with documents, a computer with Internet access and other necessary office equipment.

5.6. Ensure the presence of employees and prepare documents related to the following topics:

- Financial support.
- Consent of the governing bodies for the organization to join EARA ZA
- Education, professional experience and professional development of employees.
- Organization structure and management system.
- Master plans.
- Plans for the formation of the collection.
- Plans and protocols for emergency situations.
- Purchase of animals, animal exchanges and transportation.
- Participation in species conservation programs.
- Animal care/registration of veterinary data.
- Availability of permits for keeping animals in the collection.

5.7. Provide access for members of the accreditation commission to the entire area, including service areas and off-exhibit animal housing:

#### ***Physical facilities***

- General condition, repair work and cleanliness.
- Security and maintenance of aviaries.
- Safety of visitors, employees and animals.

- Visitor access.
- Management of the waste collection and disposal system.
- Attractions that are not related to animals.

#### ***Animal care***

- Exhibits and off-exhibit areas.
- Life support systems.
- Animal welfare (physical condition, housing conditions, meeting species-specific needs, environmental enrichment, training, etc.).
- Nutrition and feed handling. Access to feed and water.
- Registration of data on the condition of animals.

#### ***Veterinary medicine***

- Facilities and equipment.
- Education and professional level of employees.
- Autopsy.
- Trapping equipment.
- Veterinary drugs and their handling.

#### ***Education***

- Facilities and equipment.
- Education and professional level of employees.
- Availability and quality of placards and signs.
- Availability of general information and educational materials.
- Availability and topics of excursion programs.
- Inclusion of the topic of species conservation in educational work.
- Working with special categories of visitors.

#### **The head of the accreditation commission is obliged to:**

- 5.8. Familiarize the representative of the applicant organization with the inspection schedule and answer questions arising on the inspection procedure.
- 5.9. Resolve all questions and concerns that arise during the accreditation examination.

#### **The members of the accreditation commission are obliged to:**

- 5.10. Perform duties in a tactful, professional honest and unbiased manner.

### **6. The end of the accreditation examination**

- 6.1. The head of the accreditation commission has the right to delegate the writing of a part of the examination report to other members of the accreditation commission.
- 6.2. The full version of the standardized report on the conduct of the accreditation examination is formed by the head of the accreditation commission within no more than two months from the date of the examination.
- 6.3. The report of the accreditation commission on the visit of the organization with the signatures of all members and recommendations on all aspects of the activities that require changes is sent to the Presidium of EARAZA. If the members of the accreditation commission do not agree on any issue, each of them has the right to record their dissenting opinion in the report.
- 6.4. The Presidium of EARAZA makes a preliminary decision and, if the conclusion on the admission of the organization to the membership of EARAZA is approved, the Executive Directorate sends information about this to all members of EARAZA.
- 6.5. Within a month, members of the Association may send objections to the Presidium regarding the candidacy of the member in question (with justification).
- 6.6. The Presidium of EARAZA makes a final decision on granting membership (and the level of membership) or refusing admission to membership of EARAZA in accordance with the Charter and other regulatory documents of EARAZA no later than one month after the expiration of the period specified in clause 5.6, and sends information about its decision to the applicant organization.

6.7. The decision of the Presidium to refuse to accept the applicant organization as a member of EARAZA may be appealed to the Arbitration Commission no later than 1 (one) month from the date of receipt of the decision on refusal.

6.8. The applicant organization has the right to send a second application for accreditation no earlier than one year after receiving the refusal and only if the factors that caused the refusal are eliminated.

LIST

of documents to be sent by the Executive Directorate of EARAZA to the applicant organization when applying for membership in EARAZA

1. Membership application form
2. Accreditation form
3. Letter of recommendation from other organizations
4. Charter of EARAZA (electronic link to the site page)
5. EARAZA Code of Ethics (electronic link to the website page)
6. Membership Regulations/Rules (electronic link to the website page)
7. Regulation on accreditation (electronic link to the website page)
8. Other documents (electronic link to the website page)