



# Animal Welfare Approaches

## - Ocean Park Hong Kong -

Concepts and principles of animal welfare and ethical perspectives concerning animals and their uses under care at Ocean Park Hong Kong.



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# FRAMEWORK

## ► Welfare Legislation

- considers how we must treat animals

## ► Welfare Science

- Considers the effect on the animal from the animals point of view.
- An assessment of animal welfare.

## ► Welfare Ethics

- considers the human actions toward the animals

## ► Accreditation



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# HKSAR WELFARE LEGISLATION

- HKSAR CAP139 Public Health (Animals and Birds) Ordinance for Animal Exhibition Licence
- HKSAR CAP169 Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance - minimum requirements that animals should be protected and defended.

CAP169 is currently under review to expand the scope and introduce a positive duty of care on the caretakers and people in charge of animals.



# UNDERSTANDING WELFARE SCIENCE & ETHICS

## Understanding animal welfare requires science

How different environments affect animals' health and behavior, from the animal's point of view



## Deciding how to apply those scientific findings involves ethics

How humans should treat animals: the framework by which we can use the science



# WHAT IS ANIMAL WELFARE?

- Animal Welfare - Refers to an animal's collective physical, mental, and emotional states over a period of time, and is measured on a continuum from good to poor. (AZA, Animal Welfare Committee, 2012)
  - Are these physical, mental, and emotional states constant all the time?
    - Probably not. These states vary from day to day and may depend on each other.
    - Hence, as these states vary, an animal's welfare moves along a continuum from good to poor.





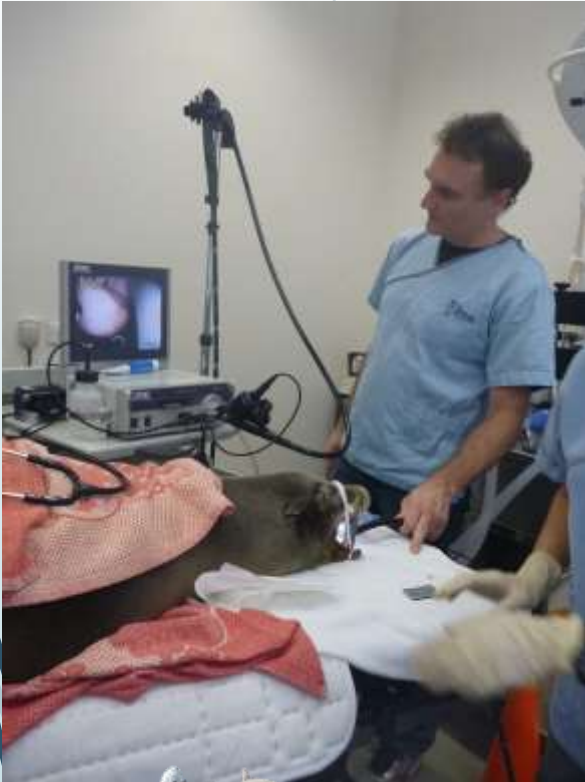
# FIVE DOMAINS MODEL

- **Freedom from hunger**
- **Freedom from discomfort**
- **Freedom from pain and suffering from disease**
- **Freedom to express normal behavior**
- **Freedom from fear and distress**

Area	Criteria
1. Good feeding	Animal should not suffer from prolonged hunger
	Animal should not suffer from prolonged thirst
2. Good housing	Animal should have comfort around resting
	Animal should have enough space to allow ease of movement
	Animal should have thermal comfort
3. Good health	Animal should be free of physical injuries
	Animal should be free of disease
	Animal should not suffer pain caused by procedures
4. Appropriate behaviour	Animal should have a positive emotional state, and negative emotions should be avoided as far as possible
	Animal should be able to express normal social behaviours
	Animal should be able to express species-typical behaviours
	Promotion of good human-animal relationships



# HOW WE ACHIEVE MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT OF ANIMAL WELFARE



- Relevant training and expertise in animal health and welfare monitoring.
- Culture that practices regular reporting and monitoring.
- Collaborate with other institutions.
- Animal transport plans that abide by relevant national and international standards.
- Require animal welfare standards and practices of receiving institutions to be at or above those of Ocean Park.
- Employ veterinarians, biologists, and behavioural experts in a broad range of taxa.
- Apply comprehensive whole-of-life care.
- Preventative medicine plans to mitigate animal disease outbreaks, including quarantine protocols that are comprehensive.

# ENRICHING THE ENVIRONMENT



- Build staff skills and commitment to enrichment strategies and activities into the daily lives of all animals.
- Regularly review strategies, activities and provide ongoing staff training.
- Introduce different enrichments that provide challenges, choices and comfort to animals, to stimulate a diversity of species-specific natural behaviours.
- Positive reinforcement as an enrichment and training tool.
- Evaluate and share with other zoos and aquariums.
- Incorporate environmental enrichment into exhibit design and upgrades.
- Share enrichment stories with visitors.



# EXHIBIT DESIGNS CAN ENRICH LIVES

- Provide environmental characteristics that support species-specific welfare in exhibit design and upgrades.
- Ensure that the animals' physical and behavioural needs are met.
- Accommodate the changing needs of an animal or group of animals over time.
- Ensure that staff members can safely and easily engage in maintenance, care and training without undue stress or injury.
- Explain animal welfare on exhibits and provide visitors with information about personal actions they can take to improve the welfare of animals anywhere.



# BREEDING AND COLLECTION PLANNING

- Positive welfare management during breeding events using, for example, oestrus monitoring, animal separations and skilled observation (ethograms).
- Use of professional staff, including external specialist input, to oversee breeding-related animal welfare issues.
- Use of a clear euthanasia policy, which outlines the circumstances for the use of euthanasia.
- Ensure that species-specific animal welfare considerations are fully integrated into long-term collection planning.
- All animals come from sources that do not have an unsustainable impact on wild populations or reinforce commercial production of wild animals.



# ANIMAL WELFARE RESEARCH

- Prioritise animal welfare and welfare monitoring as research in collaboration with universities, research bodies and other zoological institutions.
- Apply findings based on sound scientific research to support positive animal welfare management.
- Animal ethics, welfare and research committee, with external representation to oversee research activities.
- A research policy and protocols to ensure that any potential animal welfare concerns are clearly identified.
- Actively work to assist research partners to promote positive animal welfare states.



# ENGAGEMENT WITH PUBLIC

- DO NOT use animals in any interactive experiences if their welfare may be compromised.
- Undertake animal welfare evaluations and ongoing monitoring of all individual animals in interactive experiences.
- Messaging that accompanies all interactive experiences is to raise conservation awareness and/or achieve conservation outcomes.
- All animals are treated with respect, including how animals are depicted and presented.



# PARTNERSHIPS

- Institutional member of World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (s)
  - Assoc. Zoos & Aquariums – *“Highest standards of excellence in animal care, education and conservation, animal science, recreation, finance, safety and governance”*
  - Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks & Aquariums – *“Upholding standards and guidelines that optimize the psychological and physical health of marine mammals under care at Ocean Park, maximizing educational and scientific value of the collection.”*
  - American Humane Assoc. - Humane Conservation program - *“The Humane Conservation onsite assessment demonstrated that Ocean Park has a culture and staff dedicated to providing the best care and welfare for the animals in their collection.”*



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# SUMMARY

- Legislation and regulations are minimum standards in many situations...we strive to exceed these
- Animal welfare and care are based on industry standards, processes and the latest science available
- Validated through accreditation or 3<sup>rd</sup> party evaluation

