**Recommendation 1084 (1988)**[1]

# Situation of zoos in Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Bearing in mind that zoological gardens, including wildlife parks and aviaries containing species of birds found in the wild, are of considerable public interest and serve the cause of conservation as well as fulfilling an educational and scientific role, considers that :

1.1. the fulfilment of that role requires the application of principles consistent with nature conservation and the provision of adequate care for the creatures which are exhibited or contained in such establishments ;

1.2. some practices such as the acquisition of wild species, especially where these are endangered, are not consistent with Article 1 of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats : ‘‘Particular emphasis is given to endangered and vulnerable species, including endangered and vulnerable migratory species" ;

1.3. recognition of the above convention should be accompanied by the clear acceptance that the conservation of European wildlife should be matched by respect for wild species in other continents ;

1.4. increasingly, zoological gardens should rely upon breeding from captive stock rather than on the collection of creatures from the wild, and the acquisition of wild stock should cease ;

1.5. furthermore, the highest standards of care and provision should be maintained in regard to the living conditions and management of wild creatures in zoological establishments ;

1.6. in certain establishments humane and wise management practices have been established and these should be extended to all such establishments ;

1.7. the high standards of care and the existence of statutory regulations obtaining in some member countries should be more generally recognised with a view to the extension of such standards and to the introduction of relevant regulations in all member countries ;

1.8. such developments should be encouraged by the introduction of appropriate incentives,

2. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :

*a.* organise, within the Council of Europe, the annual or biennial award of a European Zoo Prize to the establishment which best meets the standards of care and management and best serves the cause of conservation ;

*b.* in addition to the presentation of an annual or biennial prize, award a certificate of commendation to those establishments which merit recognition of their achievements ;

*c.* invite the governments of member states to explore the possibility of sponsorship of good practice and to assist in the recognition of merit in their countries ;

*d.* ensure that in each member country arrangements are made to register zoos and to provide licences for their operating only where satisfactory standards of care have been established ;

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1. See Doc. 5903, report of the Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities, Rapporteur : Mr Hardy. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 30 June 1988.

*e.* invite the governments of member states :

1. to promote arrangements which will link the zoo to educational projects - with this in mind all animals on display in a zoo should be identified and described to ensure that the visitor can learn of the nature of the species, its habitat and characteristics ;

2. to ensure, in pursuance of the educational role, that zoos operate within the context of international conservation, perhaps by the provision of training and other relevant programmes ;

3. to ensure that at all times zoos maintain proper care for the creatures in their charge, this requiring adequate and continuous veterinary supervision and support.