



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

APPROVED POLICY

CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE ABSOLUTELY PROTECTED UNDER THE WILDLIFE ACT 1953

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	POLICY OVERVIEW.....	3
1.1	Purpose.....	3
1.2	Scope	3
1.3	Audience	3
1.4	Statutory Responsibilities.....	3
1.5	Principles Underpinning Captive Management of NZ Wildlife.....	4
2.0	CATEGORIES FOR CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT AND THEIR APPLICATION.....	6
2.1	Categories for Captive Management	6
2.2	Application of the Categories	7
3.0	LEGISLATION	8
4.0	REFERENCES	8
5.0	CROSS REFERENCES	9
6.0	GLOSSARY.....	10

1. POLICY OVERVIEW

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a policy framework for consideration of requests to hold in captivity wildlife absolutely protected under the Wildlife Act 1953 and to ensure integration of captive management of such wildlife with their *in situ* conservation.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 This policy covers all species of wildlife absolutely protected under the Wildlife Act 1953. Species not absolutely protected and therefore not within this policy's scope are:

- 1st schedule - game species;
- 2nd schedule - wildlife partially protected;
- 3rd schedule - wildlife that may be hunted or killed;
- 4th schedule - wildlife not protected other than where notified by the Minister of Conservation;
- 5th schedule - wildlife not protected;
- 6th schedule - animals declared to be wild animals;
- 8th schedule - wildlife not protected but may be kept, bred or farmed.

1.2.2 An important consideration is the current state of common native parakeet species and some reptile species in captivity, i.e. red/yellow crowned parakeets, and common lizard species. The Department acknowledges that, although these species are absolutely protected under the WA, it has minimal ability to exercise stronger management control over them at present because of the widespread and uncontrolled nature of some holdings and unknown genetic fitness of captive populations. In the short term, initial application of approved captive management policy will therefore not be on common parakeets and lizards. Further work will be carried out over the next 12 months to determine how the policy will be implemented with respect to captive populations of these common parakeet and lizard species.

1.3 Audience

This policy has been developed for the use of Departmental staff, holders of absolutely protected wildlife and other interested parties.

1.4 Statutory Responsibilities Underpinning Captive Management of NZ Wildlife

1.4.1 The Department of Conservation has statutory responsibility for the protection of all wildlife absolutely protected under the Wildlife Act 1953, including those held in captivity.

1.5 Principles Underpinning Captive Management of NZ Wildlife

1.5.1 The New Zealand Government is a contracting party to The Convention on Biological Diversity 1992. Article 9 requires States to undertake ex-situ conservation, with the predominant purpose being to complement in-situ measures.

1.5.2 The principles underpinning the Department's policy on captive management of New Zealand's protected native species are in accord with those articulated in the IUCN policy statement on captive breeding (IUCN 1987) and the IUCN/UNEP/WWF World Conservation Strategy (1991). The principles are:

- (1) The highest priority for the conservation of biodiversity is *in situ* conservation of species in their natural habitats.
- (2) In cases where captive (*ex situ*) management has been identified as a component of a threatened protected species recovery strategy, there should be "close integration between *ex situ* and *in situ* programmes, with captive management programmes designed to support programmes aimed at conserving the species in the wild "
- (3) Captive populations should be managed to ensure that they are genetically and demographically viable and do not require continuous addition of wild specimens.
- (4) Captive breeding programmes for threatened species should be aimed at conservation of that species and should not involve commercial transactions.
- (5) Animals of threatened species should not be held in captivity except where recommended and approved as an action in a species recovery plan and where a captive management plan has been approved to support the *in situ* conservation of the species.
- (6) Collection of animals from the wild for *ex situ* programmes must not be allowed to threaten ecosystems or *in situ* populations. The same principle applies to the release of captive animals back into the wild.

1.5.3 While the Department maintains some in-house captive management expertise, and undertakes some captive management programmes, it recognises the important role individuals and institutions outside the Department play. Under the terms of the World Conservation Strategy, the Department has an obligation to encourage the most effective use of these resources for conservation.

1.5.4 As part of its obligation under the Conservation Act 1987 the Department will give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, by providing opportunities for consultation and participation of tangata whenua with respect to the captive management of protected native species where appropriate. In particular, the Department will consult with tangata whenua where indigenous protected species are being taken from the wild into captivity, released from captivity into the wild or are being exported¹. In addition, sections 287 to 296 of the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act impose specific requirements on the Department in relation to the protection, management and conservation of "taonga species" as defined in that Act.

¹ issues relating to cultural harvest will be dealt with separately

1.5.5 The Department will consult with and facilitate collaboration between all parties involved in protected species conservation programmes which include a captive management component to ensure that *ex situ* conservation activities are properly integrated with *in situ* conservation activities.

1.5.6 The Department will monitor and evaluate captive management advocacy criteria and standards on a regular basis to ensure that they are achieving the required goals or are modified as required.

1.5.7 The Department will evaluate captive management programmes against their objectives on a regular basis to ensure that the programmes remain relevant to species conservation needs, or in the case of protected species held for advocacy purposes only, still adequately convey the prescribed conservation message and, if not, are modified or terminated as appropriate.

1.5.8 The welfare of absolutely protected wildlife in captivity will be managed by ensuring that all holders of absolutely protected wildlife operate according to the requirements of the Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Exhibit Animals (AWAC/MAF1994), relevant Husbandry Manuals, and any additional species-specific standards for facilities or programmes (see Captive Management Technical Procedures).

2.0 CATEGORIES FOR CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT AND THEIR APPLICATION

2.1 Priorities for Captive Management

2.1.1. The Minister of Conservation has made decisions on the policy for holding absolutely protected wildlife (ref: Wildlife Act 1953) in captivity. Absolutely protected wildlife may be held in captivity only where there is a clear benefit for conservation, either direct or indirect

To assist in determining the appropriateness of holding different species of absolutely protected wildlife in captivity, and to guide the consideration of applications to hold such wildlife in captivity, absolutely protected wildlife are grouped into three categories.

2.1.2. The categories are:

Category 1 : Captive management for direct conservation benefit.

Absolutely protected wildlife may be held for:

- **Recovery of threatened species** where this is a priority action for the long term conservation of a threatened species in its natural habitats
Species held for recovery can be displayed for advocacy purposes where: they are held in facilities accessible to the public; display is consistent with recovery programme requirements; and, where facilities and programmes meet appropriate standards for advocacy
- **Restoration of ecosystems** where the Department has identified a need for the introduction of absolutely protected wildlife to ecosystems to enable their recovery to more natural conditions and processes.

Category 2 : Captive management for indirect conservation benefit.

Absolutely protected wildlife may be held for:

- **Animal rehabilitation.** Absolutely protected wildlife can be held for strictly time limited periods and either released, or euthanased at the end of this period, or kept for longer periods as part of approved species recovery programmes
- **Display of wildlife for conservation advocacy:**
 - short term : advocacy based displays will be approved only where there is a clear benefit to conservation through holding animals in captivity
 - long term : conservation advocacy using protected species on display to occur in more natural habitats, rather than in artificial environments and only where there is a clear benefit to conservation.
- **Export of protected wildlife.** Absolutely protected wildlife can be held for export only where it is demonstrated that this will improve the conservation of a species

Category 3: Captive Management of wildlife which does not fall into category 1 or 2.

This category includes:

- Species which do not meet the advocacy criteria and standards and are not required in captivity for species recovery programmes.
- Injured protected wildlife which will be permanently disabled and unsuitable for release or use in species recovery programmes

2.2 Application of Captive Management Policy

The Department will:

2.2.1. Support the holding in captivity or the taking of eggs and juvenile adults from the wild of absolutely protected wildlife which fall into Category 1 for species recovery purposes, subject to prior approval of a Recovery Plan.

2.2.2. Support the holding in captivity of absolutely protected wildlife which fall into Category 1 for ecosystem restoration purposes where:

- DOC has approved the ecosystem restoration initiative, including the use of absolutely protected wildlife;
- Captive management is of a strictly time limited nature and for a particular restoration initiative;
- There are no stocks of the required species in the area in question;
- There are no stocks available for translocation from other wild habitats.

2.2.3. Assess the merits of the captive management of Category 2 protected species on a case by case basis, according to advocacy standards (except for injured birds being rehabilitated for release).

2.2.4. Not support removing protected species from the wild for conservation advocacy purposes. Protected species used for advocacy should be sourced from captive populations.

2.2.5. Ensure that collection, management and release of absolutely protected wildlife for *ex situ* programmes does not threaten ecosystems or *in situ* populations. Removal from the wild of protected species or eggs of a threatened protected species will not be supported except where, on the basis of a thorough review of the conservation status of the species and consideration of all available management options, this course of action is deemed important in the recovery of the species.

2.2.6. Phase out the holding of all protected species which fall into Category 3 through grandparenting (see glossary).

2.2.7. Require husbandry manuals to be prepared for all Category 1 and 2 protected species (except injured birds being rehabilitated for release).

2.2.8. Prohibit the free flying displays and flying of unreleasable raptors.

2.2.9. Allow injured raptors to be trained to fly to fist or lure in order to build their fitness for release.

2.2.10. Support the treatment of injured absolutely protected wildlife only in cases where it is likely that the animal will: make a good recovery and be suitable for release into the wild; become part of an approved Species Recovery Programme. If the animal's full recovery is unlikely and it cannot be placed in an authorised programme, treatment should be withheld and the animal euthanased. Protected species that were already being held prior to the implementation of this policy that are non-rehabilitatable and cannot be placed in an authorised programme for a permitted purpose may be maintained under the grandparenting clause (see glossary).

3.0 LEGISLATION

Section 53 of the Wildlife Act 1953

Sections 287 - 296 of the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998

4.0 REFERENCES

Australasian Species Management Program. 1993. Species Management Procedure Manual. ASMP. Australia.

Convention on Biological Diversity. 1992

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. 1973

IUCN. 2000. IUCN Red List Categories. IUCN Species Survival Commission, Gland. 21pp

IUCN. 1987. The IUCN Policy Statement on Captive Breeding. IUCN. Gland. 4 pp.

IUCN/UNEP/WWF. 1991. Caring for the Earth: A Strategy for Sustainable Living. IUCN/UNEP/WWF, Gland: 228pp.

IUCN/CBSG. 1993. The World Zoo Conservation Strategy: The Role of the Zoos and Aquaria of the World in Global Conservation. Chicago Zoological Society. Illinois.

Jakob-Hoff, R. 1994. An overview of the ARAZPA Accreditation Programme. In: Ed. G Phipps and K Kirk. ARAZPA Blueprint: Implementing the World Zoo Conservation Strategy in Australasia. ARAZPA. Sydney.

Molloy, J and Davis A 1994. Setting priorities for the conservation of New Zealand's threatened plants and animals. 2nd edition. Department of Conservation. Wellington

Reed, CEM and Stockdale PHG. 1994. Disease Considerations in Captive Breeding and Translocations of New Zealand Birds. Ecological Management 2: pp. 46-54.

Stockdale, PHG, Reed CEM and Cork, SM. 1993. General suggestions for disease avoidance for threatened species of New Zealand Native Birds. Unpublished report prepared for the Threatened Species Unit, DOC, Wellington.

5.0 CROSS REFERENCES

DOC publications, procedures and draft procedures (available on request from the Department's Conservation Policy Division, Head Office)

Issue of Export Permits under the Wildlife Act. July 1992. Procedure Number 1.12.5.

Draft Procedures for Health Management of Species Protected Under the Wildlife Act

Draft Policy for the Allocation of Dead Specimen of Species Protected under the Wildlife Act 1953. November 1992

Draft Policy for Conservation of Parakeets and Rosellas in New Zealand

Draft Policy for Conservation of Reptiles and Amphibians in New Zealand

Standard Operating Procedure for Translocation of New Zealand's Indigenous Terrestrial Flora and Fauna. Procedure NH 1042. Approved May 2002.

Cross References Produced by Other Agencies

Animal Welfare Advisory Committee / Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. 1994. Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Exhibit Animals and Information for Animal Exhibit Operators. Code of Animal Welfare No. 14. MAF. Wellington.

6.0 GLOSSARY

Advocacy Plan - a plan that demonstrates how the proposed display will demonstrate an approved advocacy message that cannot be demonstrated more effectively in the wild.

Advocacy standards - standards that will be developed to operate along side the advocacy criteria

Advocacy Criteria - A set of criteria that all applications, to hold protected species for advocacy purposes only must meet before an application is considered. For more information see the Captive Management Technical Procedures (Appendix I b).

Analogue species - Sometimes referred to as 'surrogate species'. Analogue species may be used to develop techniques for use on closely related but generally more threatened species so as to minimise potential risks to that species during the trial process; e.g. using pied stilts to trial a new captive diet before feeding it to black stilts.

ARAZPA - The Australasian Regional Association of Zoological Parks and Aquaria is the representative body of the professional zoo and aquarium industry in the Australasian region. Its Mission Statement is "To promote and maintain professional standards of operation in the zoological industry and to maximise its collective resources for the conservation of biodiversity."

ASMP - The Australasian Species Management Programme is the species management unit of ARAZPA. Its Mission Statement is "To contribute to the conservation of biodiversity by providing co-operative planning and intensive small population management expertise and processes in service of institutional members and agencies delivering conservation outcomes."

AWAC - Animal Welfare Advisory Council responsible to the Minister of Agriculture and author of the Code of Welfare for Exhibit Animals.

CAPTIVITY – For the purposes of this policy, captive management is defined as any situation where wildlife is or is potentially prevented from escape, and where regular and frequent management intervention (e.g. feeding, animal health maintenance) is required to maintain animal health and welfare.

CBSG - The Conservation Breeding Specialist Group is a Specialist Group of the IUCN's Species Survival Commission (SSC). Its Mission Statement is "The conservation or establishment of viable populations of threatened species". Its goals are:

- (1) Organise a global network of people and resources;
- (2) Collect, analyse and distribute information;
- (3) Develop global conservation breeding programmes; and
- (4) Integrate management programmes for captive and wild populations.

CMAG - The NZ Conservation Management Group is the representative body of individuals and institutions involved in the co-ordinated captive management of New Zealand's native fauna. It includes representation from ASMP and Department of Conservation. Its mission statement is "to aid the conservation of New Zealand native fauna through co-ordinated captive management programmes."

CMAG objectives are to:

- (1) Facilitate integration of ex situ conservation with in situ recovery programmes.
- (2) Support and co-ordinate captive management programmes for NZ native fauna.
- (3) Advise and make recommendations to relevant statutory bodies on captive management issues.
- (4) Facilitate the professional development of people involved in co-ordinated captive management programmes.
- (5) Gather, collect and disseminate information relevant to the advancement of the objectives.

CMC - A Captive Management Co-ordinator is appointed by DOC to co-ordinate the captive management activities for a species in accordance with a captive management plan and, where applicable, to integrate these activities with the relevant species recovery programme.

Captive Management Plans - state the goal and objectives of the captive management programme and the actions and resources needed to achieve the goal. This includes the number of captive animals needed in the programme, the period for which they will be held, and the fate of surplus individuals.

Ex-situ conservation - The conservation of components of biological diversity outside their natural habitats.

Grandparenting clause - species are held in an authorised facility (that meets the required facilities standards) until they die a natural death, all breeding must be discontinued.

Habitat - The place or type of site where an organism or population naturally occurs.

Husbandry Manuals - Outline the standards required for accommodation, food, health care, and other living requirements for species held in captivity. They also describe record keeping requirements for captive holders. A format guide for Husbandry Manuals is outlined in the Captive Management Technical Procedures. Husbandry Manuals will usually be appended to the species' CMP and reviewed after a period specified in the Manual.

In-situ conservation - The conservation of ecosystems and natural habitats and the maintenance and recovery of viable populations of species in their natural surroundings.

ISIS - International Species Information System is the global data and information service providing animal records keeping software (ARKS, MedARKS) and species management software (SPARKS) to members. ISIS also maintains a central inventory of all animals reported as being held in the world's major zoos.

IUCN - International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. Also known as the World Conservation Union.

MAF - Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. MAF involvement in the captive management of protected species includes: import or export of protected species; registration of zoos; administration of the Code for Welfare of Exhibit Animals.

PHVA - Population Habitat Viability Assessment is a process developed by CBSG for assessing the extinction risk for a species and for developing management recommendations to enhance long-term survival. PHVA workshops are conducted in the range area of the species at the invitation of the wildlife agency responsible. Also included in the PHVA process is an evaluation of the status of the species in captivity, plans for re-introduction and problems requiring collaborative research.

SPARKS - The Single Populations Analysis and Records Keeping System is used to produce studbooks and to carry out demographic and genetic analyses on the captive population of any species.

Wildlife - As defined in the Wildlife Act 1953: "means any animal that is living in a wild state and includes any such animal or egg or offspring of any such animal held or hatched or born in captivity, whether pursuant to an authority granted under this Act or otherwise; but does not include any animals of any species specified in the Sixth Schedule to this Act (being Animals that are wild animals subject to the Wild Animal Control Act 1977)." Fish and marine mammals are not considered to be wildlife and are administered under different legislation, with the exception of black coral, red coral and spotted black groper (*Epinephelus daemeli*) as referred to in Schedule 7A of the Wildlife Act 1953.