



# Policy Position Statement

## Euthanasia

### Purpose

Zoos South Australia (Zoos SA) is committed to providing the highest level of welfare for all animals under its care.

This encompasses animals within the animal collection at Adelaide and Monarto Zoos (including those involved with public contact and behavioural presentations), in the field and research projects, rescue and rehabilitation animals, and those intended as animal food.

Zoos SA acknowledges its life-long responsibility for animals in its care, to manage its programs and knowledge systems appropriately, dedicate adequate resources and monitor and evaluate its efforts.

Zoos SA also recognises its responsibility to ensure effective management of its animal collection in collaboration with other zoos throughout the Australasian region.

While Zoos SA recognises that it has an overriding responsibility to safeguard the lives of animals under its care, it is also accepted that under certain circumstances it may be necessary to euthanise individual animals.

### Rationale

It is recognised that euthanasia is an emotive topic. Zoos SA will actively engage with its staff and stakeholders to ensure decisions are made using best practice science and welfare considerations.

Zoos SA supports the decision to undertake euthanasia of animals under certain circumstances to achieve the best possible welfare outcome for an animal or its wider population. The circumstances under which the euthanasia of an animal may be considered include:

**Animal welfare** - where illness, injury or age-related factors of an individual adversely affect its quality of life or a serious disease is diagnosed that is known to be contagious to other animals or humans.

**Population and demographic animal management** - in cases such as the unavoidable breeding of surplus animals (as per a species natural breeding strategies, contraceptive failure or side-effects thereof, or when receiving institutions' circumstances change), or if an individual of a social species is held in isolation.

**Operational animal management** - as seen in approved research, recovery and fieldwork programs, in the event of a dangerous animal escape, as an intended fresh food source, for feral animal control and where over populations impact adversely on the environment.

## **Monitoring and review**

Zoos SA's Position Statement – Euthanasia will be reviewed every two years or where circumstances warrant by the Zoos SA Board. This Statement will guide the work of all staff and volunteers of Zoos SA.

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Next review due: April 2020

## **References**

Rules of the Royal Zoological Society of South Australia Incorporated

Zoos SA Animal Welfare Charter

Relevant Zoos SA Policies and Procedures