

ABTA ANIMAL WELFARE GUIDELINES



SPECIFIC GUIDANCE MANUAL

Elephants in Captive Environments

Welcome to the online version of this Best Practice Handbook. Use the interactive navigation to guide your way through the manual.

Introduction

Animal attractions and experiences are now a common part of holiday destinations and are generally very popular with holiday makers. Customer surveys have shown many of the travelling public aspire to see or interact with animals. Yet research and experience also demonstrate that customers want to be assured of good animal welfare standards (YouGov 2012).

This guidance manual outlines the minimum requirements that travel providers working with these animals expect to see in place from captive elephant attractions. Additionally, it provides best practice recommendations that captive elephant attractions should strive to achieve.

As the number of enterprises has grown, so too has our understanding of the animals featured and the potential impacts of human/animal interaction. Strong relationships exist between travel providers and suppliers; it is important that all stakeholders work collectively to enable enterprises to offer meaningful, rewarding experiences to customers whilst at the same time, safeguarding the welfare of the animals and public health and safety. This approach can achieve longer-term business success, raise welfare standards across the industry and strengthen the partnerships that exist between travel providers and animal related attractions.

This document is one of a series and should be read in conjunction with the *Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism*.

Authorship

This manual and the supporting six guidance manuals have been developed by ABTA working in partnership with our consultative partner, the Born Free Foundation and have been further developed through a multi-stakeholder consultation process involving industry experts, scientists, zoologist organisations, associations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from around the world. A list of stakeholders is included in Appendix 2: Acknowledgements. It is important to point out that the content of these manuals does not necessarily reflect the exact views of the listed individuals or organisations. All stakeholders have, however, seen merit in these guidance manuals and provided invaluable input during the consultation. ABTA extends its appreciation to all the stakeholders for their contributions.

Licensing and certification

Animal attractions should be operating legally and in accordance with their country's own legal requirements. If appropriate to the country of operation, the animal attraction should have a valid operating licence issued by a recognised certification agency or relevant local authority.

Intended use of this guidance

This guidance manual is one of a series of seven manuals intended to be a practical guide for the suppliers of animal experiences and attractions offered within the tourism industry. All seven guidance manuals aim to encourage good practice in animal protection and welfare by providing businesses with knowledge and guidance.

The manuals include a benchmark for best practice in animal welfare for the tourism and animal attractions industries globally. They consolidate an abundance of existing guidance and they establish minimum requirements that are supported by travel providers. As such, they are intended for travel providers to issue to their suppliers, for tourist boards in destinations, for destination governments and ultimately and most importantly, for animal attraction and experience suppliers.

All seven manuals are by no means intended to be the definitive source of information about managing animal welfare considerations in animal attractions. We recognise that there is a great deal of variation in available standards around the world and that for many businesses the manuals will contain commonly known information, but for others they will likely serve as a useful reference regarding best practice for animal welfare. In all instances of uncertainty, we encourage suppliers to seek further advice from a suitably qualified individual or organisation.

Guidance manual overview

There are seven manuals within the series:

Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism

The *Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism* provides an introduction to animal welfare and an overview of best practice that is applicable to all businesses and attractions within the tourism industry involving animals. It covers:

- An insight into the different ways in which animals and tourism are linked
- Minimum welfare requirements for animal attractions
- Reference to specific welfare needs of commonly managed species.

It sets out guidance around animal husbandry and care designed to improve animal welfare and to phase out inappropriate practices known to have negative impacts on animals.

Specific guidance manuals

In addition, five specific guidance manuals cover a variety of activities commonly encountered through tourism. These manuals are intended to guide suppliers to achieve the minimum requirements for each of the specific activity types, besides encouraging progress towards the best practice outlined.

Specific guidance is available for:

- *Animals in Captive Environments*
- *Dolphins in Captive Environments*
- *Elephants in Captive Environments*
- *Wildlife Viewing*
- *Working Animals*.

This specific guide is for *Elephants in Captive Environments* and covers minimum requirements expected by travel providers working with this manual. It also provides best practice guidance that suppliers of captive elephant attractions are encouraged to achieve.

Unacceptable and Discouraged Practices

The final manual in the series relates to practices involving animals which have been classified as either unacceptable or discouraged by the travel providers working with these guidance manuals.

Unacceptable practices

Certain activities are widely recognised as having a detrimental impact on animal welfare, and in some cases, may present a high risk to visitor and staff safety. These activities have therefore been classified as 'unacceptable'. Travel providers working with these guidance manuals have agreed that these activities should not be offered for sale to customers.

Discouraged practices

Some activities involving animals and people may pose health and safety risks. Suppliers of activities involving animals and people should consider and effectively manage both the welfare of the animals and the health and safety of visitors and staff. Travel providers working with these guidance manuals will only consider promoting animal based activities which are classified as discouraged practices where they are satisfied that the risks to animal welfare and the health and safety of customers are managed appropriately.

Certain activities involving animals and customers have been publicly criticised as detrimental to animal welfare. Though there is currently a lack of conclusive evidence, there is a risk that such activities are detrimental to welfare. We have therefore classified these activities as 'discouraged'.

All discouraged activities are introduced in this manual (see page 13) and more details are in the specific manual, *Unacceptable and Discouraged Practices*.

Minimum requirements and best practice guidelines

This and the other six guidance manuals contain a set of minimum requirements intended to be the benchmark for the minimum acceptable level of animal welfare in tourism activities. As a supplier reading these manuals, you are strongly advised to ensure that you can easily demonstrate that your business complies with the minimum requirements. Travel providers working with these manuals have committed to these minimum requirements and will be developing procedures to check that suppliers comply and are continually striving for performance improvements. These manuals contain examples of realistic and achievable best practice guidelines for animal welfare in tourism-related attractions and activities.

KEY POINTS

- **Unacceptable practices are known to have a detrimental effect on animal welfare.**
- **Discouraged practices may pose a risk to tourist health and safety and/or a possible risk to animal welfare.**
- **Animal attractions should comply with the minimum requirements for animal welfare.**
- **We encourage animal attractions to aim for best practice in animal welfare.**
- **All seven manuals are compatible with audited industry standards.**

Audits and inspections

We recognise that many animal attraction suppliers are members of trade bodies and associations that already have membership requirements relating to animal welfare best practice and that many inspect their members to ensure these requirements are met. The *Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism* upholds internationally-accepted standards in animal welfare and legislation and is therefore compatible with existing industry standards. Audited suppliers should be able to demonstrate compliance with these minimum requirements.



Use the interactive coloured tabs on the this page to navigate the manual.

SECTION ONE:	What is animal welfare?
SECTION TWO:	Elephant species overview
SECTION THREE:	Potential impacts – animal welfare, species conservation and customer health and safety
SECTION FOUR:	Potential impacts – capture, training, keeping and chaining of elephants
SECTION FIVE:	Minimum requirements
SECTION SIX:	Examples of best practice – quick reference table
SECTION SEVEN:	Managing the impacts of tourism on elephants in captive environments
SECTION EIGHT:	Supporting information
APPENDICES	

SECTION 1

2 What is animal welfare?

Animal welfare refers to the state of an animal. An animal is in a reasonable state of welfare if it is healthy, comfortable, well-nourished, safe, able to express innate behaviour and if it is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear and distress. Other terms such as animal care, husbandry or humane treatment refer to how an animal is looked after. Reasonable animal welfare requires disease prevention and veterinary treatment, appropriate shelter, management, nutrition, humane handling and humane slaughter/euthanasia. Animals in a captive environment rely on the care and ability of humans to provide them with what they need to maintain their welfare.

Appropriate animal care

In order to encourage best practice in animal welfare in the tourism supply chain, the *Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism* and the six supporting guidance manuals build upon the principles of the Five Freedoms (developed by the Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC 1979)) and the Welfare Quality® criteria. See Appendix 1: sources of further information.

The Welfare Quality® criteria were originally developed for farmed domestic animals. An additional three criteria have been included to address animals in tourism. These additional criteria appear in bold in Table 1.

KEY POINTS

- You are responsible for an animal if you supply, own or are in charge of it.
- Five Freedoms form the basis of good animal welfare.
- Welfare Quality® criteria define the details of good animal welfare.

Table 1: The Five Freedoms and how they relate to the Welfare Quality® criteria (including the additional criteria)

Five Freedoms	Welfare quality® criteria
Good feeding	1. Absence of prolonged hunger. 2. Absence of prolonged thirst.
Good housing	3. Comfort while resting. 4. Thermal comfort. 5. Ease of movement.
Good health	6. Absence of injuries. 7. Absence of disease. 8. Absence of pain induced by inappropriate management procedures.
Appropriate behaviour	9. Expression of social behaviours. 10. Expression of natural behaviours. 11. Good human-animal relationship. 12. Positive emotional state.
Protection from fear and distress	13. Absence of general fear/distress/apathy. 14. Ability to seek privacy/refuge. 15. Absence of surgical or physical modification of the skin, tissues, teeth or bone structure other than for the purposes of genuine medical treatment/manipulation/sedation.

Suppliers, animal owners and keepers have a responsibility to the animals for which they are responsible on a permanent or temporary basis. This includes the provision of their health and welfare needs (described in Table 1). A person could, therefore, be responsible for an animal if they supply, own, or are in charge of it.

Application of and adherence to the Welfare Quality® criteria will go some way to safeguarding the welfare of the animal and to providing a state of wellbeing and dignity. Application of the *Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism* and the six supporting manuals will seek to uphold these criteria, protect animals in tourism attractions or affected by tourism experiences, and help to prevent animal suffering.

SECTION 2

Elephant species overview

4

The elephant is the largest land mammal, highly intelligent, social and charismatic. Fifty countries have wild elephant populations – 37 in Africa and 13 in Asia – though in some countries the populations have declined significantly and only handfuls of individual animals are believed to still exist in the wild.

Species variation

African elephants

There are two species of African elephants: the forest elephant of Central and West Africa (*Loxodonta cyclotis*) and the bush or savannah elephant (*Loxodonta africana*).

Asian elephants

In Asia, there is one species (*Elephas maximus*) but at least four sub-species are recognised: Mainland, Sri Lankan, Sumatran and the Bornean sub-species sometimes called pygmy elephants.

Both African and Asian elephants are classified as threatened species according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Social structures and lifespan in the wild

Elephants in nature live in a complex, multi-layered, matriarchal society comprised of family units of related females and offspring; a parallel hierarchy of males compete for dominance and the attentions of receptive females. Elephants live for up to 70 years and reach sexual maturity in their teens, which means social groups often consist of three or more generations. Grandparents can pass their knowledge on to generations. For instance, while a mother can teach the location of day-to-day foraging, drinking and bathing sites to their young, if there is a once-in-50-years drought, it is the oldest members of the herd who will remember how to survive.

The range of activities involving elephants

Elephant-based tourism falls into two broad categories with occasional overlap:

- Visitors wishing to see elephants in the wild going about their lives in their natural habitat
- Visitors wishing to see and often interact with captive elephants in zoos, sanctuaries, orphanages, elephant camps, temples, festivals, circuses, logging camps, roadside and beach photo opportunities and elephant back safaris (the last of which may involve viewing other elephants in the wild).

In Asia, captive elephants are still widely used in cultural and religious settings whose origins date back thousands of years. Historically, elephants have been regarded as a status symbol and a prestigious gift as well as being used for transport and physical labour. Elephants also have a special role within the Buddhist religion, being kept at some temples and used in religious events (e.g. Sri Lanka's Perahera).

In Africa, elephants were until recently only viewed in the wild. However in a very small number of countries, African elephants are now trained to provide transportation for tourists on elephant back safaris to view wildlife. More commonly, wild elephants are viewed from lodges, viewing platforms, bunkers, vehicles, boats, hot-air balloons and, in a few places, on foot. Guidelines on each activity follow.

This manual covers the range of activities set out above. For guidance about the viewing of elephants in the wild, refer to the *Wildlife Viewing* manual.



Asian elephants are still used in cultural and religious settings.

KEY POINTS

- Both African and Asian elephants are classified as threatened species according to the IUCN.
- Elephants in nature live in a complex, multi-layered, matriarchal society.
- Elephant-based tourism includes viewing wild elephants and viewing or interacting with captive elephants.
- In Asia, captive elephants feature in traditional cultural and religious events.
- In Africa, elephants are viewed in the wild, including on elephant back safaris.

5

SECTION 3

Potential impacts – animal welfare, species conservation and customer health and safety

In both wild and captive environments, elephants can benefit from tourism revenues that help to fund their care, and more broadly, fund elephant conservation. However when elephant attractions generate profits, there is a risk of economic considerations taking priority. In captive environments, negative welfare impacts most commonly occur when the commercial value of keeping and exhibiting animals outweigh considerations aimed at safeguarding their welfare.

Activities such as assisting elephants to bathe are sought after by tourists but they can lead to negative welfare impacts, such as elephants forced to lie in a river for hours at a time whilst paying tourists bathe them. Bottle-feeding baby elephants is equally popular with tourists. However, the revenue generated may encourage some owners or keepers to continue bottle-feeding beyond normal weaning age (calves are totally dependent upon their mothers for nutrition up to five years old; at ten years old, young elephants become completely dependent on solid vegetation). It may even encourage owners or keepers to take infant elephants away from their mothers specifically for bottle-feeding. Additionally, there are known instances where elephants have been worked when they are ill.

Potential impacts on customer health and safety

Where elephants are in captive environments, a suitable living environment is vital for the health and survival of the elephants. Animals, whether wild or domestic, can be unpredictable and potentially dangerous. Even in a controlled, captive environment or after generations of captive breeding, an animal retains its innate behaviour and instinct. Suppliers of activities involving animals and people should take all reasonable steps to safeguard the health and safety of visitors and staff, as well as the animals themselves.

Many countries have categorised commonly kept animal species by their ability to cause harm; based on this categorisation they then restrict, control or prohibit human/animal contact. For example, in the UK the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), has produced a species list based on 3 risk categories.

For animal specific categorisation based on the Defra species list, please refer to Appendix 1: animal husbandry information tables in Section 13 of the *Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism*.

Elephants are categorised as a Category 1 – Greatest Risk and therefore direct contact should be subject to a risk assessment. Travel providers working with these guidance manuals will only consider offering animal-based activities where they are satisfied that the risks to animal welfare and the health and safety of customers are managed appropriately.

Customers should be informed of the potential risks and the rules of engagement. For example, their behaviour and washing their hands before and after permitted animal contact to prevent disease transmission (zoonoses).

For further information about common zoonoses, see Appendix 2 of the *Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism*.

KEY POINTS

- For wild elephants, tourism can be a force for good; it can reduce illegal activities and income can fund conservation.
- Irresponsible behaviour by tourists and guides can damage elephant welfare and risk public health and safety.
- The commercial value of keeping and exhibiting elephants should never outweigh their welfare.
- Elephants are categorised as 'Greatest Risk'; direct human-animal contact should be subject to stringent risk assessment.



Tourism can be good for wild elephants, reducing illegal activity and funding conservation.

SECTION 4

Potential impacts – capture, training, keeping and chaining of elephants

8

Capture

Traditionally elephants have been captured from the wild using techniques targeting young elephants. Traditional practices have been superseded by helicopters, vehicles and the use of guns, with adult elephants often killed or injured as they defend their young.

Though capture of wild elephants is outlawed in India and South Africa, enforcement of legislation can be ineffective at times. In other areas where elephants exist in the wild, capture of wild elephants for use in captive attractions and facilities is known to occur.

A challenge also exists around elephant camps, sanctuaries and orphanages, which take in elephants in exchange for money paid to mahouts supposedly on the basis of conservation and welfare. In some instances, this has led the mahout to capture a replacement elephant once they have traded in the other animal. Increasingly, elephant attractions will look to incorporate both the elephants and the mahouts, which avoids the mahout capturing a replacement animal and can also demonstrate a livelihoods approach towards improved elephant conservation. By providing the mahout with a means to continue to make a living without having to capture another elephant, conservation of elephants can be improved.



Training through protected contact means the trainer and elephant do not share the same space.

Training

Traditional training techniques from some Asian countries are now being adopted in Africa to train or break in African wild-caught elephants. These practices include solitary confinement, food deprivation, restraining the elephant with ropes and winches and use of an ankus (bull-hook) or electric cattle prod. The methods continue until the animal becomes submissive and compliant.

Once the keeper establishes dominance, it is maintained through a delicate balance of fear and reward. If the elephant is compliant it receives treats. If it is non-compliant it may receive physical or verbal punishment. The training methods used can physically, behaviourally, psychologically and emotionally harm the elephants.

The vast majority of animal trainers who are informed about welfare issues agree that by using protected contact (in which trainer and elephant do not share the same space), an elephant can be trained without cruelty and with kindness and respect. In protected contact the elephant learns to respond to verbal commands only through positive reinforcement. Therefore, if an elephant does not want to cooperate it is free not to and will not suffer any repercussions. On the other hand, training through free contact (in which elephant and trainer share the same space) should employ some level of direct control. Clearly, elephants cared for under a protected contact regime cannot be trained for any activity that involves direct contact between humans and elephants.

In most traditional elephant training systems, the use of the ankus is integral. The ankus is a sturdy stick usually with two metal spikes on the end, one pointing straight forward and one curved around to form a hook. Typically the ankus is used from the earliest stages of training and throughout the lifetime of the animal, whenever it is being given any directions. Often mahouts or keepers will claim that the ankus is used only as a guide to communicate instructions to the elephant, and in some cases that may appear to be the case. However, the elephant's knowledge of the ability of the ankus to inflict pain seems to be integral to its effectiveness – both in the case of early training experiences and correction for older animals. Often the ankus is placed on sensitive areas such as the back of the legs or behind the ears, where a subtle increase in pressure can cause significant discomfort and pain.

It is worth noting that whilst trained elephants are often referred to as domestic, this is not accurate. Domestic animals, such as pet dogs and cats, livestock such as cows, sheep and pigs and other species such as horses, have been selectively bred in captivity over many generations and have adapted (at least to some extent) to the roles they are required to perform. Whilst elephants do sometimes breed successfully in captivity, this has never been sufficient to maintain a captive population and on-going capture of wild individuals has always been necessary to supplement the captive stock. Hence the species has never been truly domesticated. Whether born in the wild or in captivity, all elephants are essentially, wild animals.

Keeping and chaining

Chaining is commonplace in the keeping of elephants. Modern best practice seeks to reduce the amount of time that elephants are chained to an absolute minimum, if at all. In the responsible zoo community strict guidelines exist regarding chaining so that this practice is eliminated or reduced to a maximum of a few hours per day, or so that elephants are only chained in exceptional circumstances (such as under the direction of a suitably qualified vet). In Asia there are few enclosures outside zoos that can securely contain adult elephants, so when individuals are not under the direct control of a mahout or keeper it is normal that they are restrained by chaining, which may be for long periods. Chaining is also the usual practice in Asia for restraining bull elephants when they are in musth. Musth is a natural periodic condition of heightened levels of reproductive hormones in male elephants and accompanied by heightened aggression.

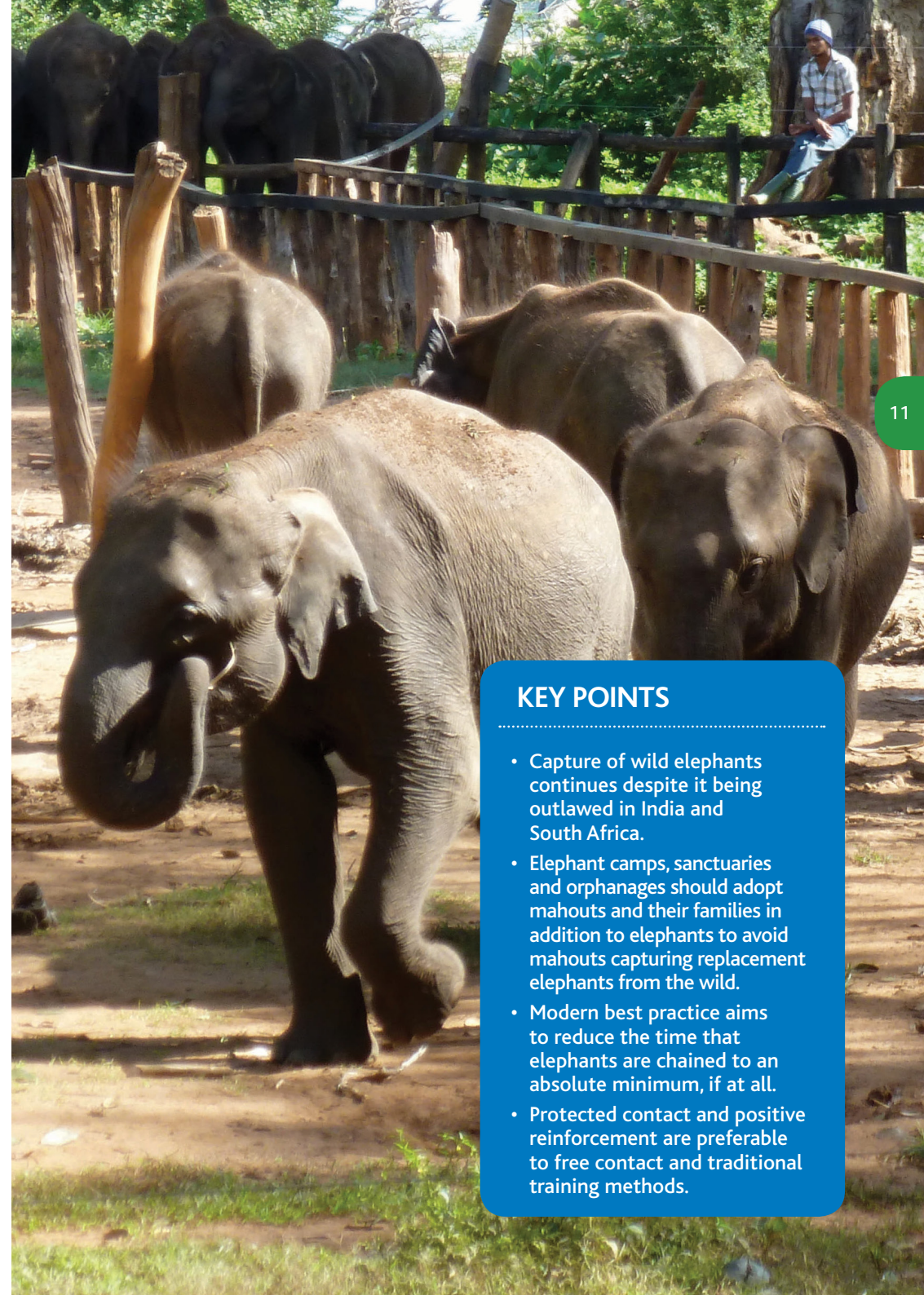
9

It occurs approximately annually in adult male elephants (of all species) and in the wild it can last for anything from a few weeks to several months (in captivity musth can last considerably longer). During musth captive elephants can become much more difficult to manage and control, and it is not uncommon for them to be chained by three legs, 24 hours a day, for the entire period. Excessive chaining can be physically and psychologically detrimental to elephant welfare. Elephants are active, inquisitive and intelligent animals and, therefore, are likely to suffer severe stress while chained. Physically, the effects of straining against chains can create wounds on legs and ankles, visible either as white scars running horizontally across the ankle or lower leg, or as open wounds. During musth, bull elephants are ideally housed in an appropriate enclosure that provides the unchained animal with sufficient quantity and quality of space. See information in *Animals in Captive Environments*.

In elephant keeping, protected contact (defined above) has replaced the hands-on, free contact approach. Physical contact between the keeper and elephant is kept to an absolute minimum and a physical barrier always separates the keeper and elephant.



Chaining of elephants should be avoided where possible. Where chaining is conducted, it should be kept to an absolute minimum.



KEY POINTS

- Capture of wild elephants continues despite it being outlawed in India and South Africa.
- Elephant camps, sanctuaries and orphanages should adopt mahouts and their families in addition to elephants to avoid mahouts capturing replacement elephants from the wild.
- Modern best practice aims to reduce the time that elephants are chained to an absolute minimum, if at all.
- Protected contact and positive reinforcement are preferable to free contact and traditional training methods.

SECTION 5

Minimum requirements

It is expected that all tourism businesses that keep, own or manage animals, or provide experiences involving animals (including visiting animal attractions such as hotel entertainment programmes), ensure that they meet the minimum requirements in the husbandry and care of animals. Travel providers working with these guidelines will be developing processes to assess suppliers against the minimum requirements listed below.

The minimum requirements are subdivided into three sets, the following two of which are applicable to captive elephant attractions:

- A. For all situations where animals are managed by and/or are dependent on human beings.
- B. Specifically for businesses with working animals.

A. Minimum requirements for animals managed and/or dependent upon human beings

1. All animals have regular, daily access to adequate and clean drinking water in line with their species specific needs.
2. All animals are fed appropriate food (which includes necessary supplements for animals in captivity), via an appropriate feeding routine, which mentally stimulates the animal(s) and encourages natural behaviour (e.g. foraging, browsing, grazing etc.).
3. In captivity, enclosures (including pools) or methods used to contain the animals for temporary periods allow all the animals to move and exercise freely, and to maintain sufficient distance from other animals in case of conflict.
4. In captivity, enclosures are environmentally complex, including natural substrate, furniture, shelter and environmental enrichment, in order to encourage normal/natural behaviour. All animals should be able to seek shelter from extreme weather conditions and privacy from view.
5. In captivity, enclosures are clean, hygienic and well maintained, (e.g. devoid of excessive faeces, urine or rotting food, potentially harmful litter, not waterlogged, not infested with vermin etc.).
6. The facility employs a vet who is knowledgeable and experienced in the health and welfare of the relevant animals (either employed on site or externally contracted).

7. There is a policy not to surgically modify the skin, tissues, teeth or bone structure of animals, and not to sedate animals to make them safe to handle, unless it is for the purpose of genuine medical treatment under the guidance of an appropriately trained vet.
8. Where customers are permitted to be photographed with animals, this should be free from evidence of bad practice. For more info see the guidance manual, *Unacceptable and Discouraged Practices*.
9. Complete, accurate animal stocklists, veterinary records and any appropriate licences or permits should be up-to-date and available for inspection. The required paperwork should be in place for any animals which have been acquired from the wild.
10. Where animals are involved in performances these should only involve natural behaviours and be free from bad practice. Training methods should be based on positive reinforcement only.



Elephant performances should not involve elephants performing non-natural behaviours.

B. Additional minimum requirements for businesses with working animals

1. Tethering and hobbling should be discouraged and where unavoidable should only be conducted using appropriate materials and methods that do not cause risk to the animal's welfare. Tethering should be for a limited time of no more than a few hours per day. The animals should be able to walk, lie down and stand up without putting tension on the tether, and reach basic resources like food, water and shade. Tethered animals should be regularly monitored.
2. Young, pregnant, nursing, injured, ill, distressed or elderly animals should not be ridden, or be required to carry/pull loads. Equids (hoofed mammals) should not be worked before they are three years old; camels should not be ridden before four years. Weaning should not be conducted for horses, donkey and mules before six months; preferably it should be allowed to occur naturally. Weaning for camels should not be conducted before four months; preferably, it should be allowed to occur naturally.
3. Equipment should fit, not causing injury, and should be cleaned and dried after use. Equipment should be removed during rest periods and ideally when eating/drinking.
4. Animals should train and work within their physical capabilities. Loads should be equivalent to the animal's size and ability (e.g. not more than one person on an equine or camel), work should not be in the hottest part of the day and animals should have regular rest periods each day of at least an hour between working periods.

SECTION 6

Examples of best practice –
quick reference table

The following table provides a basic guide to the needs and natural attributes and behaviour of elephants, based on the Five Freedoms. These needs should be understood and implemented by suppliers to ensure that negative impacts are minimised or eliminated.





Wild elephant family.

Five Freedoms	Examples of bad practice	Best practice
1. Good feeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient provision of water; provision of dirty water. • Poor quality; spoiled food; inappropriate food. • Insufficient quantity of food, which is dependent on age, sex and condition. • Unregulated, unmonitored consumption. • No provision of an environmental enrichment programme using food. • Feeding animals alone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continual access to clean, fresh water. • Nutritious food hygienically prepared. Including grasses, herbs and browse. • Food provided throughout the day. • Substrate food should be kept clean and dry and not allowed to mix with excreta. • Monitor consumption and supplements added (advised by a trained nutritionist or veterinarian). • Monitor levels of a-tocopherol to ensure elephants are obtaining adequate dietary vitamin E. • Environmental enrichment programme using feeding devices that encourage natural behaviour e.g. hiding food in crevices, barrel feeders, tree branches etc. • Feeding should take place in groups to help establish better social interaction. • Animals of 55+ years may find chewing difficult. Long-fibrous food should be added to daily diet to aid digestion.



Five Freedoms	Examples of bad practice	Best practice
2. Good housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cramped conditions, excessive chaining (longer than a few hours per day), or restriction of movement. • No access to outdoors, shade, shelter from adverse weather conditions and privacy. • No access to bathing facilities, dust baths. • Housed only on concrete flooring. • No ability to control temperature and ventilation in indoor facilities. • High noise levels: adjacent to amusement rides, sound or public announcement system. • Insufficient environmental enrichment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large housing area with varied topography to permit and encourage all animals to exercise. • Access to both indoor and outdoor enclosures. Ability to seek shelter, warmth, shade, privacy, and social interaction with other elephants. • Access to bathing facilities (large enough for all animals and deep enough for full immersion of an adult lying on its side). • Ground substrate of outdoor enclosure should be natural (e.g. earth, grass) and varied, e.g. non-compacted sand or soil for dust bathing, mud wallow, rocks, and tree-stumps or similar structures for rubbing. • Indoor facilities should be of a sufficient size to allow the elephants to move freely (with separation facilities to allow veterinary and behavioural management). • Indoor flooring should be impermeable to water, non-slip and quick drying (standing water can cause foot problems) but provides warmth and comfort if the animals lie down (e.g. sand, rubberised coating). • Minimum indoor temperature of 15°C and an area capable of being maintained at 21°C (minimum required for sick animals). • Good ventilation, natural lighting and graduation lighting (never keeping the animals in total darkness). • Ceilings, plumbing and all electrical installations out of reach.

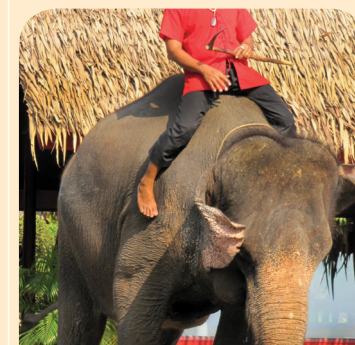
Five Freedoms	Examples of bad practice	Best practice
3. Good health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterinarian unavailable or not trained in elephant health and welfare. • Signs of malnutrition, or extreme weight loss with protruding skeleton. • Observed open wounds, or scar tissue from old wounds (white or grey skin patches), skin rashes, or noticeable discharge from eyes. Overgrown nails. • Lethargic behaviour, reluctance to eat or drink, or no interaction with conspecifics. • No hygiene protocol ensuring regular cleaning of the facilities and appropriate staff conduct. • Infrequent health checks and insufficient daily reporting on individual animals. • Discolouration or blood in urine, worms or flukes can be seen in faeces. • Repetitive abnormal (stereotypic) behaviour, such as pacing, circling, head-bobbing, or weaving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-site or contracted veterinary surgeon, knowledgeable and experienced in the health and welfare of captive elephants. • Clear and bright eyes (no eye discharge, pus or foreign body). Bright pink coloured mucous membrane in oral cavity, tongue, nostrils (tip of trunk), anus and vulva. • Skin should be dry and wrinkled with no parasites, wounds or rashes. • Normal eating in terms of quantity and frequency of food intake. Shows interest in the surrounding environment. • Hygiene protocol that include staff training. • Regular health checks, daily supervision and reports maintained for individual animals. • Normal urination (colourless to straw colour and should not contain blood or pus; flow should be continuous). • Normal defecation – 10 to 12 times per day. Watery faeces can be a sign of indigestion, parasitic infection or high water/sugar content in food. • Absence of negative welfare indicators (see Section 7, Captive environments).




Five Freedoms	Examples of bad practice	Best practice
4. Appropriate behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housed alone (unless under the direction of a veterinarian). Housed in groups of unrelated individuals. Evidence of aggression and tension between conspecifics. Female elephants and offspring housed separately, or removed from their mothers before natural weaning (unless under the direction of a veterinarian). Bull (male) elephants isolated from the rest of the herd. Chained excessively and restricted from movement. Lethargic behaviour, or no interaction with conspecifics. Repetitive abnormal (stereotypic) behaviour, such as pacing, circling, head-bobbing, or weaving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ideally housed in a social structure of the same species, mixed sex and age (mimicking the male:female ratio and age structure observed in the wild: African, groups of 30 closely-related individuals (including matriarch, related adult females, adolescents, juveniles and infants); Asian, similarly structured, consisting of approximately five individuals.) Monitored in case of conflict. Females and their offspring should be housed together: female calves stay with their mothers for life; male calves stay with their mothers until about ten years old. Bull (male) elephants only separated from the rest of the herd during musth (unless under the direction of a veterinarian). Abilities for animals to express their natural behaviour, encouraged by appropriate apparatus and enrichment e.g. dig, bathe, dive, forage, dust bathe, etc.



Five Freedoms	Examples of bad practice	Best practice
5. Protection from fear and distress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heightened fear, no ability to seek refuge, constant direct human contact. Evidence of anxiety or aggression such as trumpeting, charging. No social contact with conspecifics. Unsupervised, unmonitored public contact. Individuals made to perform unnatural behaviours. Exposed to loud music, or noise. Public feeding. Minimal rest time between performances. Excessive chaining. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interaction rigorously limited: exercise 'protective contact' and limited the use of the ankus. Minimise public contact and regularly monitor the welfare of those animals used in public interactions. Animals not put in circumstances that lead to fear, distress, anxiety or the risk of injury, e.g. as photo props, required to perform actions on command (except in the case of necessary husbandry procedures). Maintain animals in social groups when at rest. Educational programme: no music, performance of natural behaviour and description of natural attributes. Ability of animals to use all features of an enclosure without manipulation, instruction or coercion. Ability for animals to move at will, to escape and find refuge. Elephants should not be tethered, unless this is for specified animal welfare reasons or under the instruction of a suitably qualified veterinarian.



SECTION 7

Managing the impacts of tourism on elephants in captive environments

Keeping elephants in captive environments can present significant challenges for their welfare. Any assessment of captive conditions should use the following three broad criteria as minimum requirements.

Captive environments should:

- Provide spacious quarters that permit foraging, exploration and exercise, year-round access to the outdoors, year-round access to live or fresh-cut vegetation, membership of a social group of conspecifics and freedom to exercise reasonable autonomy
- Respect the lifelong bond between mothers and female calves, unless for an exceptional reason e.g. signs of conflict or aggression between mother and calf
- Be free from dominance-based behaviour management, including physical punishment or threat of physical punishment, isolation or deprivation.

Below are best practice recommendations that can help to safeguard elephant welfare in captive environments. Further best practice recommendations for keeping animals in captivity are available in the specific guidance manual, *Animals in Captive Environments*.

Elephant training

Human contact is an integral part of traditional elephant keeping, although many zoos in North America (including all members of the American Zoo Association) and increasingly in Europe are now using a preferred system of 'protected contact'. This eliminates the need to dominate the elephant and avoids full, free contact between



Many zoos are moving to protected training of elephants.

keeper and elephant (thereby reducing the potential for keeper fatalities, risk of serious keeper injury and opportunities for animal abuse). Some zoos, however, still claim that elephant training is vital to facilitate veterinary procedures, to demonstrate educational aspects of elephant biology and natural behaviours, to facilitate the transport of elephants and to ensure the safety of both elephants and people.

Best practice should always include a full risk assessment of staff/elephant interactions and, where permitted, public/elephant interactions. Suppliers should also follow protocols for their elephant management and training methods and keep behavioural profiles for each animal older than six months (updated annually). All training and interaction should be based on positive reinforcement, not physical punishment (or threat of physical punishment), isolation or deprivation.

Chaining should be kept to an absolute minimum. The use of electronic goads should be prohibited. Where ankus are used, this practice should be phased out gradually; using progressive training measures based on positive reinforcement, an ankus can be removed while ensuring keepers/mahouts can still safely train the animal.

Indicators of poor welfare

Overworked or underfed elephants may look tired and abnormally thin. This is usually indicated if the entire ribcage is clearly visible beneath the skin. Visible wounds or injuries are likely to be a sign of mistreatment of the animal. These may be caused by an ankus or other training/discipline tool, and are most often seen around the lower legs and feet and around the head and ears.

Chain wounds can also be common. These are usually around the lower legs and ankles, usually in the form of broken skin and tissue damage along a horizontal plane. Damage can also be caused by devices used to carry people or other loads on the elephant's back; abrasions and wounds where they rest on the back or neck, and where they are fastened around the flanks and under the chest and belly. Poor keeping and management can also lead to damaged feet especially toenails, which can become sore and infected.

Scar tissue from old wounds may also be visible as white or light grey patches, and whilst small blemishes may have other causes, large patches of scar tissue in suspicious places – for instance horizontal marks across the lower leg – are likely to have been caused by negligence or mistreatment. Evidence of pain-centred methods of controlling the animal include where the tip of a sharp implement has been placed behind the ear or against the back of the leg. Using such a discrete and hard-to-see tool on these particularly sensitive points indicates a training or control method that relies on physical punishment as a negative reinforcement technique.

Behavioural abnormalities are more likely to develop in impoverished environments, where animals become frustrated as a result of the lack of sensory stimulation and/or behavioural opportunities. These behaviours are usually repetitive, without any obvious function, and are not observed in elephants in the wild. Common abnormal behaviour in captive elephants includes: swaying from side to side; a complex motion of repetitive swaying and head bobbing; stereotypical route tracing (likened to repetitive pacing).



Visible ribs may be an indicator of poor welfare, underfeeding and malnourishment.

Best practice

- Chaining of elephants should be kept to absolute minimum levels e.g. no more than a few hours per day. Ideally, chaining should only occur for specified animal welfare reasons under the instruction of a suitably qualified veterinarian.
- Efforts should be taken to phase out the ankus (bull-hook).
- Elephants should be regularly checked for general condition, demeanour, obvious signs of exhaustion, malnourishment or sickness. Checks should include checking for wounds and injuries especially on the legs and behind ears, the back, the feet and head.
- Training methods should only be based on positive reinforcement.
- Where animals are trained to perform actions (without any form of threat or coercion) these should be part of their natural repertoire (not, for example, head stands, tightrope walks).
- Elephants should not be sourced from the wild for captive attractions.

Keeping elephants in zoos and other captive facilities

Zoos should comply with all relevant zoo legislation of the respective country (including registration of calves born in captivity) and should meet any existing minimum husbandry standards for elephants. Legislation may also require minimum standards in animal welfare to be enforced (e.g. all zoos in member countries of the European Union should adhere to the requirements of the European Zoos Directive). Guidelines for keeping elephants in zoos are found in the UK Secretary of State's Standards on Modern Zoo Practice, Defra 2004, and in Elephant Management Guidelines (British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums (BIAZA), 2006).



Zoos should comply with respective country-specific legislation.



Walking on a tightrope is completely unnatural and is classified as an unacceptable practice.

Elephant performances

In most cases, any display that requires an animal to perform on command should be discouraged. Exceptions may be made if the animals are demonstrating natural behaviours, working practices or veterinary treatment protocols (such as foot raising) in an educational context, and where training is by positive reinforcement (reward and not threat of pain or physical violence if commands are not obeyed). While some displays or performances are described as behavioural enrichment, this only applies when the animal can make a free choice of when and whether to take part. Enrichment should mean providing animals with opportunities to engage in a range of natural behavioural activities; making them do activities on command is training.

Activities such as walking or standing upright on their hind legs, performing head stands or walking a tightrope are not only completely unnatural behaviours, they can severely harm the health and welfare of the animal. Training an elephant to perform unnatural behaviours generally requires a very strict and dominant training regime, which will be stressful and upsetting for the animal. The use of animals in performance should only be considered when the animals concerned are able to demonstrate natural behaviour in the

context of an educational experience, with informative and accurate commentary about the species' biology and ecology.

In addition, where animals are used in performances and shows, there should be a guarantee that living conditions and the care provided meet the Welfare Quality® criteria, set out in Sections 1 and 6 of this manual, and the provisions in the specific guidance manual, *Animals in Captive Environments*.

Best practice

- Elephants should be allowed a free choice of when and whether to perform specific actions or activities – especially where activities are described as behavioural enrichment.
- Where animals are requested to perform actions (without any form of threat or coercion) these should be part of their natural repertoire.
- Training of elephants for shows and performances should only be based on positive reinforcement.
- The establishment should have a protocol for elephant management and training methods, and a behavioural profile on each animal older than six months (updated annually).
- Physical contact between the elephants and the public is discouraged. Where it does occur, contact should only take place under controlled, supervised conditions. Participants should be informed of the potential risks and the rules of engagement. For example, their expected behaviour and washing their hands before and after permitted animal contact.
- The use of elephants as a prop in tourist souvenir photo opportunities should be free from evidence of bad practice (animals are not abused, mutilated or made to perform unnatural behaviours).



Elephant welfare should not be compromised when elephants are utilised in religious festivals.

Use in religious and cultural events and at temples

Elephants used in processions may come from the temples themselves but if they are owned by private individuals, when not being used in such events (for which the owner will often be well paid) they may be earning money by being used for physical labour or in tourist activities.

The welfare of elephants can be compromised in many ways when taking part in religious processions and other cultural events. Processions usually take place on paved roads, which force the animal to stand and walk on tarmac, concrete or other hard surfaces for many hours or even days (this includes getting to and from the temple). When elephants are in public areas with many people, they inevitably have limited freedom of movement and behaviour and may be kept standing completely still for extended periods. Access to appropriate food and water may also be severely limited. In some cases animals are transported to and from events in poorly adapted and maintained vehicles, which may represent a risk to both the elephant, the driver and other road users.

Temple elephants are usually kept at the site for most of the year except when participating in pageants and religious events elsewhere. These sites are usually not designed to provide the animals with adequate freedom of movement and behaviour, or opportunities for social interaction with other elephants. Chaining for long periods is common and the daily routine may only provide brief opportunities to be off the chains, for instance, for a bath, which will usually be closely supervised by a mahout.

There may also be a risk to visitor safety where people are close to elephants without adequate or any security provisions in place.

Best practice

- Animals have free access to walk on soft, natural surfaces.
- Chaining should be kept to an absolute minimum; keeping the elephants in appropriate enclosures is preferable.
- Animals have continual daily access to an enclosed area where they can move and act freely. The minimum requirement is for at least four hours every day, in periods of at least one hour.
- Physical contact between the animals and the public is discouraged. Elephants are Category 1 – Greatest Risk according to the Hazardous Animal Category taken from the UK Secretary of State's Standards on Modern Zoo Practice, Defra 2004, (see Appendix 1: animal husbandry information table in *Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism*).
- Animals have regular access to suitable food; at-will access to drinking water; free access to shelter/shade when not engaged in specific activities (e.g. in a procession).



Good sanctuaries can provide excellent conditions for elephants.

Elephant camps and sanctuaries

An animal sanctuary is a facility that provides rescued, injured, confiscated, orphaned or abandoned animals with short or long-term refuge and/or longer-term rehabilitation. Animal welfare should be the primary concern and living conditions for all animals should meet their species-specific needs. Sanctuaries and orphanages should not breed animals, or be involved in the commercial trade or loan of their animals to other facilities. Allowing animals to breed will divert valuable resources away from rescuing animals in need and can result in animals being kept in inadequate, overcrowded conditions.

Within Asia especially, but also elsewhere, there are a range of captive elephant facilities – often promoted as sanctuaries – which offer tourism opportunities. Many of these keep elephants in a semi-free-ranging or loosely controlled environment. These vary from logging camps and other working elephant centres which may also cater for tourist visits to dedicated international-standard sanctuaries, which only allow access by prior arrangement and never permit direct contact between visitors and animals.

Animals in sanctuaries can suffer from the same problems as those found in other forms of captivity. In addition, the facilities may have policies that ultimately lead to significant elephant suffering. These include: breeding to expand the captive stock; unnecessary bottle feeding of juveniles (sometimes removed from their mother); chaining of bull elephants; transfer of animals to zoos, circuses, private owners and temples. In many cases these animals may also be used for shows or performances, elephant back riding, photographic opportunities, elephant baths and bottle feeding.

Particular attention should be paid to the treatment and conditions of the elephants when they are not taking part in a tourist experience. Animals should have plenty of opportunities to move and act freely and should have regular access to water, food, shelter/shade. Facilities should meet the appropriate elephant management and care provisions described in Section 6.

Animals housed within a sanctuary but in the process of rehabilitation for eventual release, should be kept away from the public and, if at all possible, have minimal human contact. This is important for their future survival in the wild, where a natural fear of humans is often a key survival skill. Any animal returned to the wild should be fully screened for diseases and other health issues. Post-release monitoring should be part of any release protocol whenever possible in order to assess survival rates. For more information, consult the IUCN Guidelines for Reintroductions and Other Conservation Translocations (2012). www.issg.org/pdf/publications/Translocation-Guidelines-2012.pdf

Indicators of poor welfare

In addition to concerns relating to the physical and mental condition of the animals and the conditions in which they are kept, the overall mission and the specific practices of the facility should be carefully considered. Facilities that breed elephants in order to transfer surplus animals to zoos, circuses, private ownership and temples should not be considered genuine sanctuaries. Care of the animals beyond the tourist experience should also be carefully evaluated; adequate exercise, free movement, food, water, shelter, companionship, freedom from coercion should all be present.

Best practice

- Sanctuaries and camps should comply with all relevant Animal Welfare® criteria and the guidance manual, *Animals in Captive Environments*.
- Sanctuary animals in the process of rehabilitation for eventual release to the wild should have minimal human contact.
- If the public visits the facility, numbers and proximity should be controlled to minimise potential negative impact on the animals.
- Money from entrance fees and/or donations should be directed towards the lifetime care of the animals and the sustainable operation of the sanctuary.
- Any activities involving animal contact and animal feeding should adhere to the guidance set out in the manual, *Unacceptable or Discouraged Practices*.
- The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) sets out ideal sanctuary practice.



Elephant riding using padded mats; an example of best practice.

Elephant riding

Every effort should be made to minimise the potential for negative impacts on the elephants' welfare when using elephants for riding. Riding bareback or on a padded mat, for instance, is preferable to using a howdah (the wood or metal seating arrangement often used to carry six or more passengers). A howdah can cause a number of injuries from rope sores to spinal damage. If a howdah is used, a maximum of four average-size adult passengers should be carried on a full-grown elephant's back. The weight and height of the rider(s) should be limited depending on the size of the animal. Passengers should be well balanced on both sides ensuring no damage occurs to the elephant's backbone. Great care should also be taken when loading passengers as this could damage the back of the animal.

Other aspects that can cause unnecessary animal suffering include the length of the ride, prolonged exposure to direct sunlight (especially in the middle of the day), limited access to drinking water during the ride, and the nature of the surface underfoot (softer natural substrates are preferable to tarmac, concrete etc.). Actions such as jerking of the ears, use of the ankus and beating are unacceptable. Animal handling should use

positive reinforcement (encouragement by reward). After a ride, the saddles and any other structures used to carry passengers should be removed carefully from the animal and should be kept separately. See Section 8 Supporting information, in this manual for more about acceptable elephant husbandry practice.

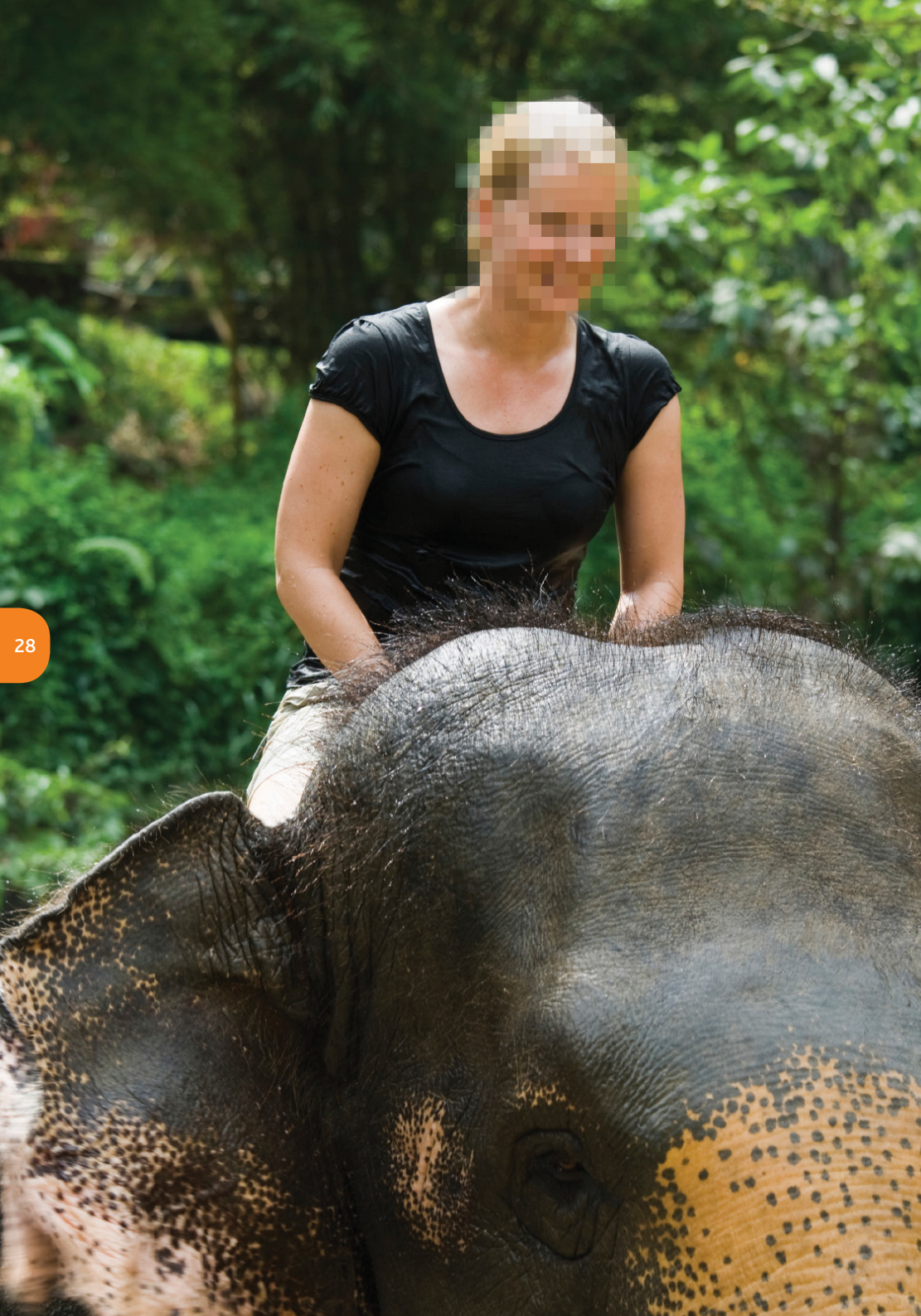
Where riding is permitted; suppliers of activities involving animals and people should take all reasonable steps to safeguard the health and safety of visitors and staff, as well as the animals themselves. Customers should be informed of the potential risks and the rules of engagement – for example, their expected behaviour – before the activity begins.

Indicators of poor welfare

Elephants used for elephant back safaris may be overworked and subject to strict training and management, leading to physical and mental suffering and injuries, as discussed above (see Elephant training). They are especially prone to injuries to their backs – in particular blisters or cuts caused by howdahs. Walking regularly on hard surfaces with a heavy load can also increase the risk of foot problems.

Best practice

- Riding bareback or using a padded mat are preferable to using a howdah (wood or metal seating).
- Pregnant, sick, disabled animals, animals under ten years, injured, inactive animals, animals under veterinary supervision of any kind and animals in musth should not be used on tours. Neither should animals of an unsuitable disposition (aggressive, nervous etc.). Animals should be fit and healthy – with a good covering of flesh, rather than prominent hip bones, back bones or pelvis.



- The weight and height of the rider(s) should be limited dependent on the size of the animal.
- It is unacceptable to keep the riding equipment on the animal between rides.
- Animals should not be ridden on tours during the hottest midday period (between 12 noon and 2.30pm). They should not be ridden for more than four hours per day or for longer than two hours at a time. Elephants should have at least one hour's rest after each two-hour ride.
- Care should be taken to apply acceptable animal handling practices using positive reinforcement.
- Animals should not be used on tar/public roads.
- The supplier should be committed to gradually phasing out riding practices and moving towards more natural interaction experiences.

Mahout training courses, elephant bathing, bottle feeding etc.

A wide range of captive elephant facilities offer special opportunities for the public to interact with elephants in specific ways, some of them portrayed as benefiting animal husbandry. Some of these activities may be offered by reputable sanctuaries, without compromising animal welfare. In other cases, however, an activity that may seem relatively harmless could be a cause for concern.

Indicators of poor welfare

These include obvious signs that the elephant is being forced to carry out behaviours/activities that are uncomfortable or stressful. (See Elephant training.) Careful investigation may be required to determine whether the activity really is beneficial for the animal.

Best practice

- Ensure that the interaction being offered is necessary and beneficial for the particular animal involved.
- Any contact only takes place under controlled, supervised conditions.
- Participants should be informed of the potential risks and the rules of engagement. For example, their expected behaviour and washing their hands before and after permitted animal contact to prevent disease transmission (zoonoses).
- The activity is limited by the supplier in the best interests of the animal; the activity is only offered by prior arrangement, at certain times and for limited duration. A more flexible approach may indicate that the welfare of the animal has a low priority.



Poor quality or poorly fitted howdahs can cause injury to the elephants.

Euthanasia

Euthanasia is a challenging concept in relation to captive animal facilities. While most would like to think it is not practised, save in exceptional circumstances, it is widely acknowledged to be part of animal management within captive attractions. There are several useful pieces of guidance around this issue. For example, in the UK, the Secretary of State's Standards of Modern Zoo Practice provides a useful guide on euthanasia. It states:

Euthanasia is an acceptable procedure only if an animal cannot be provided with captive conditions which meet the Five Freedoms (see Section 2 in this manual, What is animal welfare?), or it cannot be released into the wild.

Although breeding for conservation purposes is to be encouraged, species for which there is marginal or no conservation value should be carefully assessed on whether to allow them to breed, and, if not, appropriate action taken to prevent stock from increasing unnecessarily. In the main, measures should be taken to control unwanted or unnecessary breeding. This is preferable to euthanasia of healthy stock.

Euthanasia is justifiable under certain conditions, which include the following:

- If in the opinion of a vet, an animal is suffering from an incurable disease, or severe pain or suffering which cannot be alleviated
- If a zoo has to close, euthanasia may be the only option for some animals and the most humane for others
- If the animal poses a serious and unavoidable threat to human safety (e.g. because it has escaped)

KEY POINTS

- Euthanasia is only carried out under express instruction and authorisation from the on-site or contracted veterinarian.
- Euthanasia should only be in accordance with the principles set out in the UK Secretary of State's Standards of Modern Zoo Practice.
- Euthanasia should only be a last resort.
- Culling of surplus stock (including unacceptable sex ratios) where overcrowding compromises the welfare of the animals so that it is impractical to maintain them within the Five Freedoms.
- Information and guidance from their veterinary surgeon on euthanasia, including emergency methods
- Facilities for the humane despatch of animals of all the species kept, including for killing animals in emergency conditions
- Support and advice on public relations aspects of euthanasia.

It is important that a modern zoo has a policy, with appropriate protocols, to ensure humane and timely euthanasia to minimise suffering. It should be capable of demonstrating that zoo operators have:

For the UK Secretary of State's Standards of Modern Zoo Practice, see Appendix 6 of the *Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism*.

SECTION 8

Additional best practice indicators

Around the world, varying degrees of regulation exist with regards to animal attractions. Additionally, there are also a number of professional associations which animal attractions can join and which regulate their members regarding animal welfare standards. Below are additional indicators of best practice.

- In many countries, an operating animal attraction is regulated and regularly inspected by the appropriate government body. This sometimes includes minimum standards of animal welfare. For example all zoos in member countries of the European Union should meet the requirements of the European Zoos Directive.
- In countries where animal attractions are required to have a licence or permit to operate, the attraction should have a valid licence or permit that is on public view or readily available.
- The animal attraction should ideally be a member of a professional trade organisation that prioritises animal welfare. That organisation should have standards and guidelines and provide accreditation after inspection and evaluation.
- The attraction should keep up-to-date records of all wild animals held including numbers of each species, births, deaths, animal acquisitions and disposals. For an example of an animal stocklist see Appendix 5 in *Global Welfare Standards for Animals in Tourism*.
- The attraction should have insurance that covers the facility and every person under a contract of service (or acting on their behalf) against liability for any damage or injury caused by any of the animals, whether inside or outside the attraction, including transportation to other premises. This should be in addition to public liability insurance and compliance with mandatory health and safety requirements.
- The attraction should provide ongoing training for animal keepers and/or require keeping staff to have a recognised animal management qualification.
- Animal sanctuaries/orphanages should not allow animals to breed or replace animals. If this is allowed, the attraction needs to be re-classified. For more information on appropriate sanctuary operation, see Section 9 in the manual *Global Welfare Standards for Animals in Tourism*.
- All animals kept should have been acquired legally and in accordance with international and national legislation.

Acquisition of animals

Many in the international conservation community consider the removal of animals from the wild (where it is not for a demonstrable conservation need) to be an unacceptable practice. Indeed, some consider it undermines conservation efforts aimed at protecting species in the wild. The capture of any wild animal should therefore be governed by a strict set of guidelines. Acquisition from the wild is discouraged and suppliers should instead source new acquisitions from captive breeding programmes.

Before contemplating the capture of a wild animal, the following strict guidelines should be considered:

- Legislation governing international trade in wild-caught species (CITES), and regional, national and local laws relating to the capture of animals from the wild
- Potential conservation impact of removing individual animals from the wild on the survival prospects of a species or population (taking into account CITES Non Detriment Findings (NDF) and relevant IUCN guidelines). See Appendix 3: Captive animal guidelines in the *Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism*
- Potential welfare impact on individual wild animals, for example injury and mortality as a result of capture and transport. The impact of selected removal (for example of males) on the sex ratio

- The captive welfare of the animal and whether its destination has suitable and acceptable conditions that meet all its species-specific needs. Generally, animals should not be acquired from the wild unless there is a demonstrable and justifiable conservation need, or it can be demonstrated that the acquisition will not adversely affect in any way the conservation status or welfare of the species.

Record keeping of animals

Under the EC Directive 1999/22/EC, all zoological collections in the European Union should keep up-to-date and accurate records of all their animal species. This should include details of births, mortalities, arrivals and disposals. The minimum requirements specify that suppliers should keep such records (see Section 4 of the *Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism*).

For an example of an animal stocklist see Appendix 5: sample animal stock-list in *Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism*.

Appendices

Appendix 1: sources of further information

Category	Further info source	Description
Legislation & Conventions	EC Directive 1999/22	European legislation – keeping wild animals in zoos.
	Source: europa.eu/legislation_summaries/environment/nature_and_biodiversity/l28069_en.htm	
Legislation & Conventions	Welfare Quality®	Animal welfare principles & criteria.
	Source: www.welfarequalitynetwork.net	
Legislation & Conventions	BIAZA	British and Irish Association of Zoo and Aquaria—Elephant Management Guidelines (2010, 3rd Edition, Olivia Walter, IZVG).
	Source: www.biaza.org.uk/uploads/Animal%20Management/Elephant%20Guidelines%202010.pdf	
Organisation & Associations	HSE	Guidelines on public health and safety in zoos & aquaria.
	Source: www.hse.gov.uk	
Legislation & Conventions	CITES	Species lists governing international trade.
	Source: www.cites.org/eng/resources/species.html	
Legislation & Conventions	CITES	Guidelines on transporting live specimens.
	Source: www.cites.org/eng/transport/index.php	
Organisation & Associations	Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS)	To apply for animal sanctuary accreditation, and sanctuary best practice.
	Source: www.sanctuaryfederation.org/gfas/home	

Category	Further info source	Description
Organisation & Associations	EAZA	European Association of Zoo and Aquaria.
	Source: www.eaza.net	
Organisation & Associations	AZA	American Association of Zoo and Aquaria – Animal Care Manuals.
	Source: www.aza.org/animal-care-manuals/	
Organisation & Associations	ABWAK	Association of British and Irish Wild Animal Keepers (ABWAK).
Organisation & Associations	Australian Zoo Keeping	Collection of global animal husbandry guidelines on mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, invertebrates.
	Source: www.australasianzookeeping.org/Husbandry%20Manual%20Guidelines.htm	
Organisation & Associations	SPANAN	Survey of holiday makers and animal welfare concerns.
	Source: cdn.yougov.com/cumulus_uploads/document/n9rzwb071/YG-Archives-Spana-Holidaying-070812.pdf	

Further reading

Baker, Ilijas and Kashio, Masakazu (Eds), 2002 Giants on our Hands: Proceedings of the International Workshop on the Domesticated Asian Elephant. FAO, Bangkok, Thailand.

Cheeran, Jacob, and Poole, Trevor, 1996 The Exploitation of Asian Elephants. Ibid.

Clubb, Ros and Mason, Georgia, 2002 A review of the Welfare of Zoo Elephants in Europe. Oxford University/RSPCA

Elephant Care www.elephantcare.org/protoman.htm

Forthman D. L. et al, An Elephant in the Room: The Science and Well-Being of Elephants in Captivity. 2009 Tufts Center for Animals and Public Policy. home.elephantsincaptivity.org

Ghosh, Rhea, 2005 Gods in Chains. Foundation Books/The Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre, Bangalore, India.

Jayawardene, Jayantha (Ed.) 2003 Endangered Elephants: Past, Present and Future. Proceedings of the Symposium for Human-Elephant Relationships and Conflicts. Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Redmond, Ian, 1996 Elephant Family Values. In Taylor, Victoria and Dunstone, Nigel, (Eds) The Exploitation of Mammal Populations. Chapman & Hall, London.

Rice University, Occupational Health. research.rice.edu/services/occHealth/zoonosis/Elephants.pdf

Media articles

News

April 2012 – Keeper killed by captive elephant: www.news.com.au/world/woman-killed-by-elephant-at-zoo/story-e6frfkyi-1226338249617

Nov 2011 – German tourist killed after falling off elephant: www.nationmultimedia.com/breakingnews/German-tourist-fatally-injured-after-falling-from--30170965.html

Feb 2011 – trekking elephant kills Swiss tourist and injures four others in Thailand: www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp_asiapacific/view/1112751/1/html

January 2011 – Keeper killed by captive elephant: www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3U8UrUCsGc

February 2009 – Keeper killed by captive elephant: www.cbsnews.com/2100-205_162-675182.html

2007 – Two tourists on safari killed by elephant in Zimbabwe: www.newzimbabwe.com/pages/dinosaur17.16179.html

Journals

Gajah, the Journal of the Asian Elephant Specialist Group of the IUCN Species Survival Commission

Pachyderm, the Journal of the African Elephant, African Rhino and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups of the IUCN Species Survival Commission. www.elephantcare.org/protoman.htm (consolidated information on elephant care)

www.australasianzookeeping.org/Husbandry%20Manual%20Guidelines.htm AZA Standards for Elephant Management and Care, AZA (2003, 2nd Edition)

Elephant Management Guidelines (BIAZA), Stevenson et al (2006, 2nd Edition) (adopted by EAZA)

Guidelines for Management of Elephants in Australasian Zoos, Proboscid and Perissodactyl Taxon Advisory Group (2004)

www.dadinani.com/capture-memories/read-contributions/life-back-then/204-capturing-wild-elephants-mpv-shenoi

www.elephantvoices.org/elephant-interests/-captured-a-sold.html

An Elephant In The Room: The Science and Well-Being of Elephants in Captivity, is a multi-author on-line manual at home.elephantsincaptivity.org which makes a number of best practice recommendations

Acknowledgements

Key contributors

ABTA would like to acknowledge and extend its sincere gratitude to the following key contributors to these guidance manuals.

Daniel Turner – Born Free Foundation

Nancy Brock – Thomas Cook

Will Travers – Born Free Foundation

Mirieme Hill – Virgin Holidays

Shelley Waterland – Species Survival Network

Shena Howie – Cosmos Holidays/Monarch Travel Group

Dr. Cheryl Mvula – Tribal Voice Communications

Sean Owens – TUI UK and Ireland

Afzaal Mauthoor – Destination Creators Ltd

Consultees

ABTA would also like to extend its gratitude to the following people who were consulted in the creation of these guidance manuals, and whose input has proved invaluable in achieving their creation. The following people have contributed to one or more of the manuals.

John Roberts, Director of Elephant and Conservation Activities, Anantara Golden Triangle and Golden Triangle Elephant Foundation

Jonathan Vaughan, BSc, MSc, IEEM. General Manager, Lilongwe Wildlife Centre

David Hancocks BSc. BArch., Consultant

Peter Fricker, Projects and Communications Director, Vancouver Humane Society.

John Denerley, Director, Galloway Wildlife Conservation Trust

Laura Higham, BVM&S, MRCVS. Veterinary Programme Advisor, SPANA

Manny Mvula MSc., Senior Consultant, Tribal Voice Communications

Elise Allart, Manager, Sustainable Tourism, TUI Netherlands

Dr Deepani Jayantha, BVSc, DESMAN G-Cert., Country Representative, Sri Lanka, Born Free Foundation

Stefanie Boomsma, Sustainable Tourism Coordinator, TUI Netherlands

Dr Sonya Hill, M.Phil., Ph.D. Applied Ethologist

Jonathan Chell, Marketing Manager, Elephant Hills Luxury Tented Camp

Nick Marx, MSc. Director, Wildlife Rescue and Care Programmes, Wildlife Alliance

Kimberley Wells MSc, Senior Welfare Advisor, The Brooke

Amanda Mayhew, Manager Ecotourism and International Trade Policy, Humane Society International

Kisor Chaudhuri, Independent Expert, Government Advisor (India) and Fellow of Royal Geographical Society.

Chris Lee, Trade Marketing Manager, Tourism Authority of Thailand

Sabrina Cambiaso, Director, Dominican Republic Tourism Board

Manuel Diaz Cebrian, European Regional Director, Mexican Tourism Board.

Andrew Greenwood MA, VetMB, DipECZM, CBiol FSB FRCVS, Partner, International Zoo Veterinary Group

Dr Jamie Lorimer, University Lecturer, School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford

Philip Mansbridge, Chief Executive Officer, Care for the Wild International

Kisor Chaudhuri FRGS, Wildlife Management Consultant, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India

Manoj Gautam, Executive Director, Jane Goodall Institute Nepal

Cynthia Moss, Director, African elephant specialist, Amboseli Trust for Elephants

Dr. Brij Kishor Gupta, Evaluation & Monitoring Officer and Member, Expert Group on Zoo Designing Central Zoo Authority, Ministry of Environment & Forests, India

Kedar Gore, Director, The Corbett Foundation

Dr. Stuart Semple, Reader in Evolutionary Anthropology, Institute of Primate Tourism Research, University of Roehampton

Cathy Williamson, Captivity Programme Manager, Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC)

Alan Knight OBE, Chief Executive, International Animal Rescue

Nancy L. Gibson, Founder / Chief Executive, Love Wildlife Foundation

Kathy Gill, Strategy Director, Biosphere Expeditions

Dr Susanna Curtin, Senior Lecturer, Researcher in Eco/Wildlife Tourism, School of Tourism, Bournemouth University, UK

Professor Claudio Sillero, Bill Travers Fellow for Wildlife Conservation, WildCRU, Zoology, University of Oxford

Mr Marc Ancrenaz, Co Director, The Orangutan Project

Project management team

Daniel Turner – Born Free Foundation

Simon Pickup – ABTA

Shelly Beresford – ABTA

Statement from the Born Free Foundation

Each year, the Born Free Foundation receives thousands of calls from members of the public concerned by the suffering of animals that they witness whilst travelling. Born Free investigates these concerns and, as part of our follow-up procedures, contacts governments calling on them to draw up, improve and enforce animal welfare legislation. We also work with the travel industry which is ideally placed to influence the current situation and bring about positive change. Our extensive expertise in the science of animal welfare and wildlife conservation ensures Born Free can provide accurate and reliable information which can be used to tackle many of the negative and harmful practices that impact on the welfare of both captive wild animals and their free-living counterparts, as well as the habitats they depend upon. The Born Free Foundation is delighted that our experience has contributed to a landmark decision by ABTA to produce its ground-breaking *Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism* and six supporting guidance manuals which represent a significant step towards improving animal welfare standards of attractions associated with and supported by the tourism industry.

Appendix 2: photo captions and credits

Page	Caption	Credit
	Elephant in captivity with its trainer.	Stock image library
5	Asian elephants are still used in cultural and religious settings.	Robert Young
7	Tourism can be good for wild elephants, reducing illegal activity and funding conservation.	Born Free Foundation
8	Training through protected contact means the trainer and elephant do not share the same space.	Born Free Foundation
10	Chaining of elephants should be avoided where possible. Where chaining is conducted, it should be kept to an absolute minimum.	D Turner
11	Elephant orphanage.	D Turner
13	Elephant performances should not involve elephants performing non-natural behaviours.	Born Free Foundation
14	Wild elephant family.	A Swan
15	Underweight elephants.	D Turner
15	Enrichment feeding.	Born Free Foundation
16	Unsuitable housing.	Born Free Foundation
16	Good elephant enclosure.	Born Free Foundation
17	Injuries through chaining.	Born Free Foundation
17	Elephant sanctuary.	D Turner

Page	Caption	Credit
18	Head bobbing and swaying elephant – a sign of distress.	Born Free Foundation
18	Elephant in a natural environment Swap with Riding elephant without harness.	Born Free Foundation
19	Angry elephant charging.	Born Free Foundation
19	Riding an elephant without a harness.	Born Free Foundation
20	Many zoos are moving to protected training of elephants.	Born Free Foundation
22	Visible ribs may be an indicator of poor welfare, underfeeding and malnourishment.	Born Free Foundation
23	Zoos should comply with respective country-specific legislation.	Born Free Foundation
23	Walking on a tightrope is completely unnatural and is classified as an unacceptable practice.	Born Free Foundation
24	Elephant welfare should not be compromised when elephants are utilised in religious festivals.	Born Free Foundation
25	Good sanctuaries can provide excellent conditions for elephants.	Born Free Foundation
27	Elephant riding using padded mats; an example of best practice.	Animal Public
28	Elephant riding.	Stock image library
29	Poor quality or poorly fitted howdahs can cause injury to the elephants.	Joaquin Uy

ABTA ANIMAL WELFARE GUIDELINES



Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism



Animals in Captive Environments



Dolphins in Captive Environments



Wildlife Viewing



Working Animals



Unacceptable and Discouraged Practices

ABTA Ltd
30 Park Street, London SE1 9EQ
Tel: +44 (0)20 3117 0590
Fax: +44 (0)20 3117 0581

Email: sustainabletourism@abta.co.uk
Web: www.abta.com
Twitter: @ABTAtravel