



WILDLIFE ETHICS COMMITTEE

Holding and transportation of live animals policy

1. Holding of wild animals can cause them distress due to confinement, movement, noise and changes in environment and personnel.
2. Holding and transport may be short-term, e.g. retuning animals to a base camp for data gathering, followed by release at the trap site, or may be longer term and involve transport of captured animals to another facility for extended study.
3. Where the holding is short term as above, and release is planned, the Wildlife Ethics Committee (WEC) advises that this release should occur within 12 hours of capture.
4. The extent of any distress will depend on the animals' health, temperament, species, age and sex, the number of animals travelling together and their social relationships, the period without food and water, the duration and mode of transportation, environmental conditions, particularly extremes of temperature, and the care given during the journey.
5. The conditions and duration of the holding and transportation must ensure the impact on animal health and welfare is minimal.
6. Captured animals should be held individually in appropriate containers. In many cases a cloth bag will be suitable, but care must be taken when tying the bag that the animal is not constricted by the tie; special vigilance needs to be exercised in the case of small, active reptiles. Where an animal can chew or scratch through a cloth bag (e.g. rodents, varanid lizards), a rigid container is preferable (e.g. ventilated plastic box or drum).
7. Animals in bags or other soft containers must be transported within crushproof containers (e.g. foam insulated cooler or similar) that will prevent accidental crushing or other harm. Only animals of similar size should be placed within the same container for transport. Partitions should be placed within the container to prevent contact or injury of animals travelling together.
8. Where animals being transported are liable to injure one another, they should not be transported within the same container.
9. Containers must be secure and escape-proof. There should be adequate nesting or bedding material and animals must be protected from sudden movements and extremes of climate.
10. Food and water must be provided when necessary. For reptiles, feeding may not be necessary but measures must be taken to ensure hydration e.g., regular wetting of bags, or moist paper towel within the bag or container.
11. Animals being held or transported require regular monitoring. Applicants should set out clearly to the WEC the timing and nature of their proposed monitoring actions, and a statement of what will happen if animals show signs of diminishing health.
12. Transportation by air should be in accordance with International Air Transport Association (IATA) live animals regulations. <http://www.iata.org/publications/store/Pages/live-animals-regulations.aspx>
13. Both suppliers and recipients of animals must ensure that there are satisfactory delivery procedures, with animals received by a responsible person.

CONTACT

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