

Procedure and process for acquiring Animals from Zoos abroad

Step-1 Animals to be acquired are part of your approved collection plan

Verify whether the animals you propose to acquire are part of your approved collection plan by the Central Zoo Authority (CZA). If not, obtain prior approval of CZA for your collection plan before negotiating with a foreign zoo.

Step-2 Negotiating with foreign zoo and obtaining veterinary protocol for bringing in animals into India

- a) While negotiating with the foreign zoo, try to acquire at least 2 pairs or more number of specimens you propose to add to your collection plan. This will ensure that even if one animal dies during transit, you are left with at least three or more specimens. Secondly, tell the exporting zoo to put a price tag (of minimum value) for the purpose of customs duty, while agreeing to provide the animals. (The Dept. of Revenue, Govt. of India can also be approached for waiver of customs duty, but this is quite cumbersome and time taking).
- b) While agreeing to part with animals, the foreign zoo would ask for veterinary protocol to be followed for import of the animals. An application has to be made to Assistant Commissioner (Trade), Dept. of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries, Govt. of India, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi-110001 seeking guidelines for the same. {This again takes time, one has to pursue on telephone}. All correspondence to Assistant commissioner shall also be marked to The Commissioner, Dept. of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries, Govt. of India, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi-110001 for his information.

Step-3 NOC of Chief Wildlife Warden and approval of Central Zoo Authority

Once you have firmly entered into an agreement with the foreign zoo for an exchange, move the proposal to Chief Wildlife Warden of the State for seeking no objection from the States point of view. Thereafter submit the proposal to Central Zoo Authority for their approval.

Step-4 NOC of Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), Govt. of India

As soon as Central Zoo Authority approves the proposal, move an application to the Director (Wildlife Preservation), Ministry of Environment, Forests &

Climate Change, Govt. of India, Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, New Delhi for obtaining a no objection certificate towards import of the animals.

Step-5 Submission of Application to regional office of Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, MoEF for issue of CITES import permit and Director General of Foreign Trade for import certificate

- a) Communicate your approvals to the donor foreign zoo for facilitating issue of CITES export permit/ NOC from CITES angle by their concerned CITES management authority.
- b) Obtain a copy of CITES export permit from the foreign Zoo and submit an application to the Regional Deputy Director, Wildlife Crime Control Bureau of the region / port of entry (where the zoo is proposing to disembark the animals into India) for issue of CITES import permission. The NOC obtained from the Chief Wildlife Warden of the State shall also form part of the application.
- c) Submit an application to Director General of Foreign Trade, New Delhi for seeking permission to import animals. 3 copies of ANF1 (Aayat Niryat Form-1) and 3 copies of ANF2B (Aayat Niryat Form 2B) shall be submitted with copies of all approvals. A copy each of these forms shall also be submitted to Joint Director General Foreign Trade of the region where the zoo is located (Offices of Joint Director General Foreign Trade are located in most of state capitals barring a few.)
- d) An Import Export Code (IEC) is required to be obtained prior to getting the import certificate. Govt. run zoos need not obtain the same as they are exempted and permanent IEC has been allotted by DGFT. Private zoos run by registered societies and trust also need not obtain IEC (exemption for the same has to be obtained by informing the DGFT that animals being imported are not for commercial purpose- visit DGFT website for details)

Step-6 Engaging a customs house agent (CHA) for helping in airport quarantine, CITES and customs clearance

Once all above permissions are in place and dates finalised for import of animals, hire a registered CHA having prior knowledge of dealing in customs clearance of animals. (Help of Regional Animal Quarantine Officer at the airport could be obtained for identifying a responsible CHA of experience).

A copy of the veterinary certificate of the animals being imported should be obtained from the foreign zoo and submitted to Regional Animal Quarantine

Officer before hand itself. This will facilitate faster release of animals at the airport.

It is mandatory to keep imported animals under quarantine at the port of entry for a minimum period of 21 days before they can be taken to the zoo. But it has been seen that most of time holding facility for animals at the quarantine centre does not exist. Thus the zoo themselves take responsibility for keeping the animals under quarantine in their campus. A letter from the veterinary officer of the zoo would be required declaring that proper quarantine arrangement exist in the zoo and submitted to the Regional Animal Quarantine Officer before hand itself.

Step-7 Transportation of animals from airport

If your zoo happens to be near the international airport / port of entry transportation of the animals can be carried out on a truck. One has to ensure that prior to loading of animals on truck; the same shall be properly sterilized.

If one is proposing to carry animals on long distance (1000km or more), Indian railways is always preferable, as animals will be subject to less stress. However, for this prior permission of the concerned regional railways have to obtain. Generally the Chief Commercial manager of concerned zone / region deals with the matter. Secondly, Animal Welfare Board of India has brought in legislation for transportation of animals by road and railways. Therefore before embarking upon transportation, one has to obtain prior permission of the board or from a recognized animal welfare officer on prescribed form. This is mandatory for transporting animals by Rail.

Important Notes:

1. It is mandatory to obtain prior NOC from the concerned Chief Wildlife Warden of the state before applying to Central Zoo Authority.
2. It is mandatory to seek prior permission of the Central Zoo Authority for importing any animal into an Indian Zoo.
3. Very young and very old animals should not be imported. General age class should be between 4 to 6 years, i.e the animals should have been properly weaned and do not depend on their mothers / Keepers for food. The importing zoo should obtain detailed history sheets of the animals being acquired prior to agreeing to receive them. (All accredited zoos in the world are on ISIS data base and maintain records as per the ISIS norms.)

4. If the importing zoo is receiving exotic animals for first time, they should train their keepers on husbandry matters either at the exporting zoo or in any Indian zoo having the animals, before the animals land up in the zoo.
5. As permissions are required to be obtained from multifarious government agencies, continuous persuasion is required.