



Position Statement: Breeding of Animals in Captivity

GFAS believes that a true sanctuary (including those that rehabilitate animals for eventual release or adoption) does not engage in intentional breeding of animals in captivity, with limited exceptions.

The GFAS standard on breeding and contraception provides that there is no intentional propagation of animals in lifetime care.

While we recognize that some organizations place importance on captive breeding as a means of conserving certain species that may be endangered or threatened with extinction, GFAS has a different mission: to continuously improve the quality of care for animals requiring sanctuary.

Many animals come into sanctuary, rescue, or rehabilitative care as a result of the illegal pet trade, exploitation in research or entertainment settings, or as victims of neglect and cruelty, and many were bred in captivity. GFAS believes that a sanctuary should not engage in intentional captive breeding, only to have more animals living in captivity or becoming at-risk.

Under certain conditions, captive breeding as part of a bona fide breeding-for-release program is acceptable.

The situation may be different in a rehabilitative setting in which facilities have plans to release wildlife. Under GFAS standards, certain captive breeding may be acceptable. Factors to consider include:

- Animals are not brought into captivity for the purpose of breeding. Animals that are allowed to breed should enter a facility as a result of normal acquisition protocols such as surrender or government confiscation.
- Animals are listed under relevant national law as endangered or threatened species or are species listed on Appendix I or II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) ; or are species categorized as Threatened (Vulnerable, Endangered or Critically Endangered) or Extinct in the Wild on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™
- Breeding is part of an in-situ program for indigenous wildlife in their country of national origin.
- Breeding is not forced, such as through artificial insemination or being placed in enclosures of insufficient size or otherwise not in keeping with GFAS standards.
- The facility has identified available sites to release the animals in accordance with specific conservation goals, in compliance with all applicable laws and recognized guidelines (e.g., IUCN).

While GFAS will assess any breeding program activity on a case by case basis, a breeding program conducted in hopes that animals can be released at a time in the future, without any more definite plan or timeline, will generally fall outside of GFAS standards.