

Title: Collection Plan for The Deep.
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Introduction

The focus of The Deep is to explain the history of the World's Oceans through time, depth and latitude. We achieve this through the use of many different media including audio visual presentation, physical interactives, graphic panels and computer interactives as well as living displays.

Each exhibit has a very specific theme and if animals are used to aid this explanation then the species used are chosen to illustrate a particular point.

For this reason our collection plan is varied and does not concentrate on a particular species or group of species.

The Deep shall never trade in, or receive monetary reward for, any animals in its care. Any exchange of animals between The Deep and other institutions shall be on a mutually beneficial basis for breeding loans or as part of a research or conservation project or to enhance the displays and education resources of the partner institution.

For more details on the Research and Conservation Policy of The Deep please refer to internal document entitled "The Deep Research and Conservation Strategy".

Non-Threatened or Endangered Species

When a species is chosen for display and educational purposes only, then we will ensure they are not endangered and that the individual animals are collected in a sustainable manner by responsible collectors. Wherever possible we shall source captive bred or surplus animals to reduce the impact on wild stocks.

Once in our collection, we will ensure that the highest levels of veterinary care and husbandry practice are applied at all times and provide a suitable environment for them.

The diet and health of the animals in our care will be monitored constantly and any adjustments required will be taken in a timely and efficient manner.

Due to the non-endangered nature of the species chosen for display and education purposes only there will not necessarily be specific, focussed research efforts for these species. Any research that is carried out in relation to these species will focus on improvements in the husbandry, veterinary care or our understanding of the behaviour of these animals.

Threatened or Endangered Species

Where there is sufficient justification from conservation and research points of view we may include species that are listed as either threatened or endangered in our collection.

When this is the case we will ensure there is either a current research project focusing on the species or that they will be the focus for a future research effort.

All research carried out at The Deep will be of publishable standard.

Animals will not be included in the collection simply because they are endangered, they must also fit the purpose of our displays from educational and compatibility points of view and be suitable subjects for a research or captive breeding programme either at the present time or in the future.

Captive Breeding

Animals will only be bred at The Deep for sound scientific, educational or conservational reasons.

Non-threatened or endangered species will only be bred to enhance our understanding of animal husbandry or to supply a need for display animals either for The Deep itself or other aquaria.

Threatened or endangered species will be bred to enhance our understanding of their biology, to supply display requirements for either The Deep or other facilities or as part of a conservation based research programme.

Wherever possible, captive breeding effort will be coordinated through an appropriate TAG initiative or similar joint research project.

Sourcing of Animals

Whenever possible animals for restocking current displays or for new display will be sourced through the surplus animals lists from UK and European aquaria or from reputable captive sources.

When this is not possible they will be sourced from reputable suppliers only. All suppliers will be vetted with regards to collection and transport methods, ethical stance, reputation and environmental policy. Only suppliers that can be regarded as ethically sound and non-exploitive will be used.

All suppliers will undertake to comply entirely with all national and international requirements regarding the collection, transport and import/export of marine animals.

Every care to minimise transport times for animals and stress experienced during transport will be taken.

Where there is any doubt as to whether or not an animal is fit to travel, appropriate veterinary advice will be sought.

Donations of Animals

Donations of animals will generally only be accepted if the species in question fits the stocking plan for our exhibits.

Other aspects that will be considered are:

- Is the animal in immediate risk due to poor welfare conditions or inappropriate holding facilities?
- Is the animal endangered?
- Will the acceptance of the animal contribute to our or another facility's research or conservation objective?
- Can The Deep provide adequate holding facilities for the animal en route to a more appropriate holding institution?
- Can The Deep offer help and advice on alternative housing/destination of the animal if we are unable to house it ourselves?

Disposal of surplus animals

As stated above, it is not our intention to produce surplus animals as part of a captive breeding programme. However, the situation may arise where we have animals in our collection that are surplus to requirements. These may have been display animals that are now unsuitable or be donations accepted on welfare grounds.

In the rare situation that we are unable to house surplus animals then they shall be disposed of by the following routes:

1. The species, sex, number and brief history of the animals will be posted on the National Aquarium Workshop Listserver. This listserver is subscribed to by the vast majority of aquarium professionals in the UK.
2. If there is no requirement for the animals in the UK then the same information shall be submitted to the Quarterly FishFlash which is circulated to all European Aquaria.
3. If there is still no requirement for the animals they shall be offered to one of our approved fish importers/distributors for re-sale to a suitable individual or institution.
4. If this is not successful then we shall consider euthanasing the animal using licensed anaesthetics. This will always be the last resort and will only be implemented if there is no possibility that the animal could be required for research, conservation or display.

This disposal policy is in line with the agreed routes of disposal of surplus animals as agreed by the members of the National Aquarium Workshop as discussed at the annual conference in 2002.