

The Guidance on Further Strengthening the Regulation of Zoos

NO. [2010]172

Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of the People's Republic of China
www.mohurd.gov.cn 26/10/2010

Departments of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of all provinces and Autonomous Regions, Beijing Municipal Bureau of Landscape and Forestry, Shanghai Municipal Administration of Afforestation & City Appearance, Tianjin Municipal Management Committee of City Appearance & Landscaping, Chongqing Administration of Parks, Bureau of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps:

To comprehensively implement the scientific concept of development, regulate the management of zoos, promote the healthy and sustainable development of zoos (including parks with animal exhibition areas); we put forward the following suggestions on further strengthening the regulation of zoos:

1. Recognize the nature, role and task of zoos

As specialized parks to conduct comprehensive conservation of wild animals within urban green space system, zoos are demonstration places to protect biodiversity and are important component of social commonweal work; they are also the important medium of spiritual civilization and ecological civilization construction; conduct comprehensive conservation and scientific research of wild animals, develop science popularization education and propagandize environmental protection for the public are the main tasks of zoos. Great importance should be attached to the development of zoos from the perspective of building a harmonious society and ecological civilization; planning, building and managing of zoos should be carried out practically.

China's zoo industry has developed quickly since the reform and opening up, it has played a positive role in enriching the lives of the people and protecting wild animal species and natural resources etc. but with the social and economic development, some local governments and zoos began to pursue economic benefits unilaterally and diverged from the direction of zoos' social commonweal development, some zoos have been turned into profit-making organizations filled with wild animal performance and illegal sales of wild animal products etc, which results in the decline of the standards of animal conservation and zoo management with incidents of unnatural animal death and animals hurting people happening from time to time. The practice has brought about hidden perils for wild animal conservation and social public security and bad social influence. The practice which is contrary to commonweal nature of zoos and their main tasks must be resolutely banned.

2. Strengthening the management of zoos practically

1) Increase investment to guarantee the sustainable development of zoos

Governments of all levels should ensure the availability of sufficient funds, government agencies and relevant policies to guarantee that zoos possess what they need for a normal operation and sustainable development such as material resources of animal resources, animal cages & houses, feed, medical equipment etc and professionals such as veterinarians etc and management personnel. A special fund for construction and management of zoos must be established; zoos should not be regarded as "financial

burdens” and be pushed to market to survive by commercial operations. The ownership and management right of public-benefit zoos must not be transferred. Governments should actively guide the whole society to support the development of zoos by donation and animal adoptions etc.

2) Manage the location selection and relocation of zoos strictly and ensure the commonweal nature of zoos.

Building or relocating zoos should be strictly controlled and a feasibility study must be conducted according to the principle of zoos’ commonweal nature. It’s also necessary to solicit public opinions extensively during study process; the results of the study should be published by no fewer than two types of public media. The final study results should be reported to ministry of housing and urban-rural development by provincial administrative departments of construction (landscaping) for filing. If the relocation of a zoo is inevitable, the commonweal nature of the zoo must not be changed after the relocation, neither the public green spaces at the former site of the zoo can be used for other purposes.

3) strengthen security management and ensure safety operations of zoos

All administrative departments of construction (landscaping) should strengthen the supervision on all aspects of daily operations and management of zoos, arrange security check regularly, find and eliminate hidden dangers in time.

All zoos should develop a system of daily safety management, complete the setting of security warning signs etc, and maintain their facilities and equipment in time to ensure the safety of animals and people. They also need to make contingency plans in terms of animal escape and animal attacking people, major animal epidemics etc, and organize regular drills for the accidents.

4) Ensure animal welfare and animal health

All zoos should supply sufficient and suitable feed of good quality for animals; build safe, sanitary and easily handled cages/houses which suit animals’ behavior; strengthen the construction of veterinary hospitals and adopt necessary disease prevention and treatment measures, ensure necessary medical care for animals; properly dispose of dead animals; all zoos must not carry out any animal performance; and animals should be kept away from disturbance or irritation.

No animal exhibition area can be set up in zoos which can not ensure the aforementioned basic animal welfare.

5) Refine record management and plan scientific development

All zoos should establish and refine animal husbandry and management records; and there should be a specific person to register and organize animal lineage; animal population development plan should be made according to that plan of zoo industry.

6) Improve laws, regulations and standards, regulate industry management

All zoos should fully mobilize trade association and research institutions; further improve matching regulations on zoo construction and management aiming at current prominent management problems based on the analysis of present situation of zoo industry, clarify legal liability and disciplinary measures thus to ensure there are laws and regulations to abide by in terms of the management of zoo industry.

7) Strengthen propaganda and increase nationwide awareness of animal protection

The administrative departments of landscaping should strengthen the propaganda of zoos and raise nationwide awareness of zoos' important role in wild animal conservation, science popularization and environmental protection etc, make zoos a channel to send positive messages of caring about nature and protecting animals etc. the departments should respond actively to the public and media concerns and solve problems properly.

3. **Conduct special inspection; concentrate on resolving prominent problems of zoo industry.**

1) Inspect and ban all animal performance activities

All zoos and other parks should start to inspect all kinds of animal performance activities immediately and ban all of them within 3 months since the issue of this guidance.

2) Strictly prohibit illegal trade of wild animal products

Opening wildlife restaurant in zoos or other parks is strictly prohibited, eating wild animals and their products, illegal sales of wild animal products are also prohibited. Zoos and parks with aforementioned problems must make rectifications within 3 months since the issue of this guidance.

3) Rectify illegal operations of zoos such as leasing and contract operation etc

The transfer of operation right of zoos, animal exhibition areas, animal halls & sites or animals inside those facilities to profit-making organizations or individuals by means of leasing, contract operation and acquisition buy-out etc is prohibited. Zoos and parks which have conducted the transfer of their operation right must make rectifications within a fixed period of time and restore the commonweal nature of zoos as soon as possible.

4) Deal with the encroachment on green spaces of zoos and parks seriously

Encroaching on green spaces of parks in disguised forms of modification, zoo relocation is strictly prohibited; the act of encroaching on the land of zoos for commercial development must be rectified within a fixed period of time and the land must be restored the nature of public green spaces.

An overall special inspection of zoo management should be carried out by all units according to the contents of this guidance. All zoos should conduct and finish self-inspection within one month since the issue of the guidance and report the inspection results to the administrative department of landscaping of their city. All administrative departments of construction (landscaping) should carry out a general investigation on all zoos in their administrative regions within three months since the issue of this guidance and report the investigation results to the ministry of housing and urban-rural development.

Our ministry will conduct random examinations on the practical situation of the special inspections carried out by all units and include the planning, construction and management of zoos as factors of the criteria to be examined the reviewed for the title of "nationally designated garden city". The problem zoos which have been identified during the random inspection will be asked to make rectifications within a fixed period of time; for zoos refusing to cooperate with random inspection and to make rectifications or zoos failing to meet the standards after rectifications within a period of time, the operation of

which will be suspended for internal rectification, they will also be criticized in a circulated notice.

Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of the People's Republic of China
18/10/2010