

Guidelines for Safari Parks which are Working either as Zoos or as Extension to Zoos

(Adopted in the meeting of CZA held in 21st Nov, 1996)

For the purposes of these guidelines, safaries are specialised zoos where the captive animals are housed in any large naturalistic enclosures and the visitors are allowed to enter the enclosure to view the animals in a mechanised vehicle or a pre-determined route from close quarters. These guidelines are not applicable to the self-sustaining safaries which need much larger area.

It is also clarified that the guidelines are only in respect to the size of the enclosure and the precautions to be adopted while conducting inside the enclosure. The housing, upkeep and health care of the animals shall be regulated as per provisions of Recognition of Zoo Rules, 1992.

AREA :

The area of a Safari Park may be as large as possible. Minimum area of a safari for large carnivores and for ungulates should be 20 hectares and 30 hectares respectively. As the number of animals in the safari increases, the area should also be increased and it must be ensured that the biological requirements of the animals housed therein are fully met.

TOPOGRAPHY :

Topography should be undulating. It should not have steep slopes. It should be well drained.

ANIMALS :

Animals should be kept in viable and

compatible groups. In case of large carnivores i.e. Lions a small viable pride and in case of Tigers a viable compatible group of two animals may be kept. Bears may be kept as compatible pairs or small groups.

Ungulates like Cheetal, Sambar etc. could be kept in viable herds, and groups. In case of primates (Rhesus, Bonnet Monkeys) a troop would be desirable. Care should be taken that the Safari Park is not overpopulated by any species in order to maintain the quality of its environment. In order to maintain hygiene and ensure ease of management, carnivores be fed in feeding areas and cubicles, preferably away from public scrutiny. Herbivores may be provided concentrates to maintain the vegetation and other values of the Safari Park.

Adequate number of drinking water points with running supply of potable water for animals would be provided in the safari. The water points should be naturalistic and merged with the overall environment of the enclosure.

It is preferable to bring in and hold carnivores during the night in the feeding cubicles for observation etc.

FLORA :

The vegetation maintained in the Safari Park should be of an indigenous nature. The density could be regulated according to the needs of the species kept, and to provide naturalistic effect. It should provide shelters and withdrawal areas to the animals. It must be ensured that adequate

tree cover is always maintained in the safaris.

FENCE/MOAT :

The area should be surrounded by a suitable peripheral chainlink fence/wall. The chainlink or wall fence should be of a minimum height of 5 meter in case of large carnivores, and a 4 meter high non-scalable fence or wall for Bears (Sloth and Himalayan - Black Bear). In each case suitable bothway - overhang be provided at the top. For ungulates a 2.5 meter high chainlink fence preferably with overhangs be set-up as a peripheral fence. Suitably designed moats could also be used according to feasibility. In all cases the fence/moat should be safe at all times so that animals or people are not able to cross them. A buffer zone (strip) of about 5 meter width be provided around the fenced area. Stray animals and unauthorised persons should not be allowed to enter this buffer zone. Double gates of suitable dimensions be provided at the point of entry. Safety gates may also be provided at a point nearly for service and emergency exists. Gates should be easily operable by one person at a time. Ticket booths and rest facilities may be provided at a short distance from the entrance in the buffer zone. Near the entrance a storeroom be provided for storing of equipment etc. required for management of the park as well as to meet emergencies.

WATCH AND WARD :

For keeping an effective watch on the animals, visitors, as well as intruders, at least one watch tower of about 5 meter height be provided preferably near the entrance which should be manned as long as animals are inside the Safari Park. Near the entrance a kiosk for the gate operator

may be provided. At least other manned watch tower of 5 meter height be set up at the remotest corners of the park.

VISITORS :

Visitors may be provided entry into the park in special vehicles run by the Safari Park operators. No visitor should be allowed inside any Safari Park on foot at anytime. Visitors should not be allowed to get out of the vehicle even in case of failure of the vehicle, till they are asked to do so by the authorised staff.

Visitors should be informed of the safety measures to be adopted in case of any emergency. Visitors should be prohibited from extending any part of their body outside the windows. They should also be asked to maintain silence so as not to provoke the animals when they are in the vicinity of the vehicle. The door of the vehicle should not be opened by the visitors.

VEHICLE :

All vehicles should be mechanised ones, preferably vans. They should be run by the Safari Park operators, who should ensure that they are in good condition at all times. the windows and doors of the vehicle should be suitably barred to provide security to visitors. The safari operator shall ensure that the door of the vehicle carrying the visitors is always kept security locked so that no visitor can manipulate the locking system. The vehicle should have provision for attachment to another vehicle for pulling it out in case of failure without anybody getting out of the vehicle. It should have auxiliary gears for being used in unmade terrain, if required. The vehicle must also have first aid equipment in it.

LAYOUT OF ROADS :

A main road be laid out to cover most of the highlights of the park, but leaving out certain withdrawal areas for the animals. It should be wide enough to allow two vehicles to cross each other. The road should not have steep gradients or sharp curves. It should be kept in good conditions at all times.

EQUIPMENT :

The Safari Park should have equipment for restraint of animals including capture guns along with accessories, drugs etc. for use in emergencies and routine operations. It should have the usual equipment for feed of animals etc.

It should also have firearms with ammunition to meet rare emergent and inevitable situations that may arise. However, these should not be used except as a last resort in emergencies. Safari Park should also have routine equipment like spades, sickaxes, saws, ropes and hooks etc. for maintainance as well as use in emergencies. Wireless equipment should be provided to watchmen, vehicles etc.

VETERINARY CARE :

The animals should be subject to routine veterinary care on a day to day basis and in accordance with the 'Recognition of Zoo Rules'. For this purpose the Safari Park should have a treatment room on or near the premises.

The animals should be subject to veterinary check everyday. Prohylactic and

sanitary measures should be carried out on a periodic basis as per a written schedule.

MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS :

The Safari Park should maintain all records as envisaged in the 'Recognition of Zoo Rules' especially in case of endangered species.

EDUCATION :

Signboards should be setup near the entrance. These should give information regarding the biological as well as ecological facts about the animal species housed. Besides this it would be useful if such information is presented in an appropriate manner during the drive inside the Safari Park to the visitors. Small pamphlets or handouts would also be given to the visitors, highlighting the Safari Park, the animals housed and their status and ecology in the wild.

OPERATION :

The frequency of vehicle entering into the Safari Park be regulated so that the animals are not unduly stressed. The vehicles should not be taken near the animals to say within a distance of 5 meters. Vehicle should move in a one way direction in a preset programme.

The double gates may be operated by one person, so that there is no misunderstanding or mistake. The vehicle driver, watchmen and gate keepers should have wireless connection with the Safari Park Curator at all times.