

# REPORT CARD

## ON THE ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS AND AQUARIUMS' PROGRESS REGARDING ELEPHANTS IN ZOOS

<p><b>OVERALL GRADE:</b> <i>The AZA has failed to guide zoos toward more humane and healthy conditions for elephants. Despite its standards of care, elephants continue to suffer and die far short of their natural 60-70 year lifespan.</i></p>	<span style="font-size: 2em; color: blue;">F</span>
<p><b>Elephant Health</b> <i>Comment: Fails to protect elephant health by keeping Earth's largest land mammal in tiny exhibits, causing at least half of elephants to suffer from painful foot and joint diseases, the leading causes of euthanasia.</i></p>	<span style="font-size: 2em; color: blue;">F</span>
<p><b>Exhibit Size</b> <i>Comment: Has not learned from the two U.S. elephant sanctuaries that provide hundreds to thousands of acres of natural habitat for elephants. AZA standards allow zoos to cram two 7,000-10,000 pound elephants into an outdoor enclosure the size of a tennis court and an indoor space the size of a handball court.</i></p>	<span style="font-size: 2em; color: blue;">F</span>
<p><b>Training and Management: Chaining and Bullhooks</b> <i>Comment: Fails to grasp alternative methods that are more humane for elephants and safer for keepers. Allows elephants to be routinely chained and managed through force and physical punishment via use of the bullhook, a steel-tipped device similar to a fireplace poker.</i></p>	<span style="font-size: 2em; color: blue;">F</span>
<p><b>Social Concerns</b> <i>Comment: Does not demonstrate a clear understanding of elephants' social needs by allowing zoos to separate three-year old calves from their mothers. In the wild, calves nurse for four years, females remain with their mothers for life, and males remain with the herd into their teens. Bonded females are routinely separated when transferred between zoos.</i></p>	<span style="font-size: 2em; color: blue;">F</span>
<p><b>Exhibit Expansions</b> <i>Comment: Needs major improvement. Highly touted expansions are not providing the space increases elephants need. In the wild, elephants walk tens of miles a day while exploring, foraging, and caring for their young.</i></p>	<span style="font-size: 2em; color: blue;">D-</span>
<p><b>Conservation Education</b> <i>Comment: Inconsistent in its messages on respect for elephants by allowing accredited members to use elephants for rides, circus-style acts and controversial publicity stunts. Hundreds of millions spent to breed (mostly unsuccessfully) and maintain elephants in zoos could save entire populations of elephants in Africa and Asia if spent on habitat protection and anti-poaching efforts.</i></p>	<span style="font-size: 2em; color: blue;">F</span>