

Work Group 2
Characterisation of Ark and Rescue Centres
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The Work Group distinguished following different types of Ark and Rescue Centres (ARC's). For each kind of ARC the purposes, requirements and type of facilities are described.

- **Educational ARC's**

- Purposes
 - > inform the public, organise special information programs for schools and organisations of farmers, scientists, hobby breeders, consumer groups....
 - > safeguard the knowledge of breeding rare breeds, including traditional and cultural aspects of animal breeding
- Requirements for educational ARC's
 - > have a representative sample of endangered and well preserved, typical local farm animals
 - > provide for guiding facilities, documentation, well equipped meeting rooms
 - > equipped to offer “learning by doing” programs such as working with products of traditional farming (cooking, cheese making, production of ham, weaving, ...)
- Type of facilities
 - > Farm parks, show farms
 - > Open air musea, national parks, in-situ conservation parks
 - > Zoo's and zoological gardens
 - > School farms, university research farms
 - > City farms

- **Farm ARC's**

- Purposes
 - > breeding of endangered farm animals
 - > production and sale of (labelled) local breeds products
 - > sustainable farming with local breeds
 - > farming in combination with nature preservation, with grazing projects, with caring for handicapped people (care farms, hypo, asino and other forms of zoo therapy)
 - > farm tourism (bed and breakfast)

- Requirements
 - > professionally run farms (see below “Type of facilities”),
 - > farms should be self supporting and profitable,
 - > majority of animals present on the farms should belong to local endangered breeds,
 - > general animal welfare standards to be applied on the farm,
 - > open to the public and provide for guidance facilities.
 - > ARC’s should be well spread geographically in order to minimize risks in case of outbreak of contagious diseases.

- Type of facilities
 - > Ark farms, Arche-Höfe, biological farms, ...
 - > Care farms
 - > Agro tourism farms (providing B & B, farm stay, ...)

- **Rescue stations**
 - Purposes
 - > to save herds of endangered farm animals from slaughtering in case last remaining breeder(s) (have to) stop breeding
 - > to save animals in case of political unrest, military conflicts, floodings, etc. ..
 - Requirements
 - > facilities that are acquainted with caring for animals and have room, time and personnel available to welcome additional animals
 - > ease of transportation regulation to and from rescue stations
 - Type of facilities
 - > all type of facilities that are equipped and can take care of farm animals during a certain period of time
 - > even prisons with farming activities can play a role as rescue station

- **Quarantine stations:**
 - Purposes
 - > voluntary isolation to save endangered breeds of farm animals in case of outbreak of contagious diseases
 - Requirements and type of facilities
 - > facilities that are acquainted with caring for animals and have room, time and personnel available to welcome animals such as farms that stopped farming, retired farmers who no longer hold animals but still have the capabilities of doing so.
 - > Animals should be kept only for a limited period of time.

Quarantine stations should only be considered as a solution of last resort. Disease prevention measures, including vaccination and early warning systems have to be studied and implemented in order to protect animals from diseases and prevent diseases from spreading. Mass culling of animals as a measure of controlling the spreading of contagious diseases (policy of stamping out) should be abolished even more so in case of rare breeds. This requires preparation of action plans to be

discussed with the local authorities and lobbying with politicians and administrations on local and European level.

Animal welfare groups, consumer organisations and breeding associations should be associated to this type of action.

General Guidelines for ark and rescue centres: National and European level

- **What should be done on National level:**

- Rare Breed organisations have to control on national level whether all local rare breeds are identified, described and population size is available. Where this information is not available, organisations should lobby for it at the respective authorities to make it their first priority e.g. using the FABIS-network. This information can be (cross-) checked with the FAO database (DAD-IS) and the State of the World report.
- Furthermore breeders have to be identified and animals registered. If this is not the case, action has to be undertaken to get this identification and registration in place in cooperation with the government and the local authorities.
- The different types of Ark and Rescue Stations have to be identified, described classified and recorded in a standardized manner, according to the four categories withheld by the Workgroup. Characteristics to be taken into consideration are:
 - > type of activity (farm, educational centre, animal park,)
 - > sanitary situation (maedi-visna,)
 - > capacity to take up (additional) animals
 - > animal species (horses, cattle, poultry)
 - > human capacity
 - > period of keeping the animals (whole year through, only in summer, ...)
- Try to figure out how many ark and rescue centres are needed. Whether this is a function of breeds per country or of the number of animals per breed, etc. may differ regionally and will have to be discussed in the area meetings.
- Action-plans for endangered animals in emergency scenarios have to be established. All countries have “catastrophy rescue plans” in case human beings are endangered (flooding, fire, air pollution, nuclear threats,). These plans should be checked and if necessary be adapted to integrate also animals.
- All stakeholders need to be identified and involved in the development of such plans for example via an advisory-board (national co-ordinators, chief veterinary in the ministry, chamber of agriculture, local authorities, breeding organisations, NGOs, research institutions)
- Executives at the National Sanitary Funds (funds for animal health) have to be made aware of the issue and be convinced to use the funds principally rather for keeping animals alive, than for compensating farmers for animals that are culled. Quarantine centres should be financed out of these funds.

- **What should be done on European level**

- Within the ELBARN framework a working-group should be set up to work out common guidelines for ark and rescue-centres for all European area i.e.
 - > minimum requirements (financial, personnel and capacity)
 - > quality standards
 - > controls
- Networking on regional level e.g. for regional transboundary breeds is strongly recommended
- A taskforce should be created to work out an action-plan on European level in favour of endangered breeds (ELBARN). EU has to be addressed to get special regulations for rare breeds
 - > special status for ark and rescue farms
 - > protection against slaughtering,
 - > medical treatment e.g. vaccination,
 - > ease of transportation in case of emergency
- More discussion, adapted to the specific situation in each of the four European area, needs to be done at the area workshops
- Networking in favour of endangered breeds is crucial.