

Appendix to Primate Briefing for animal experimentation - Article 10

All of the reports below accept that capture of primates from the wild is a major animal welfare concern that should be avoided. In addition, there are a number of scientific papers supporting this view that can be referenced on request. Associated issues relating to human health, the health status and quality of animals (and hence quality of science), and conservation of local primate populations, all strengthen the case against the continued capture of wild primates.

There are a number of reports that have a bearing on this issue, including key documents from the European Council, European Commission and national level advisory bodies for example:

- Council of Europe Declaration of Intent concerning animals used for scientific purposes (4.12.1997);
- Council Decision of 23 March 1998 concerning the Conclusion by the Community of the European Convention for the protection of vertebrate animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes;
- The European Commission SCAHAW report on 'The welfare of non-human primates in research' (2002);
- EFSA: Opinion of the Scientific Panel on Animal Health and Welfare on a request from the Commission related to Aspects of the biology and welfare of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes (14.11.2005);
- The Animals Procedures Committee, UK (2006).

Relevant sections of these documents are quoted below.

- **Council of Europe Declaration of Intent (4.12.1997)** concerning animals used for scientific purposes states:

"The signatories to this Declaration of Intentagreed in collaboration and as appropriate to their competency:

- to encourage initiatives and measures to end the use of wild-caught primates."

- **Council Decision of 23 March 1998** concerning the Conclusion by the Community of the European Convention for the protection of vertebrate animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes, states that:

"Whereas the use of primates for experimental and other scientific purposes has led to the catching of primates in the wild, and whereas this should be avoided whenever possible in view of the suffering and losses which can occur during catching and transport;"

- **The European Commission SCAHAW report** on 'The welfare of non-human primates in research' (2002) states:

"Breeding and supply

*14. For as long as the use of primates in research is necessary, only purpose-bred animals should be used. Such purpose breeding should be planned in order to meet the projected research requirements and breeding centres should be accredited (Ch. 8, 12). **Only animals of the second or subsequent generation bred in captivity should be accepted as being classified as 'purpose-bred' and supplied for research.** Any exceptions should be based on their approval following an ethical review process (Ch. 8).*

- **The revised Appendix A of ETS 123** states:

"Keeping non-human primates in the laboratory creates a number of problems which are not shared with other commonly used laboratory mammals. Non-human primates are not domesticated, but are wild animals; most are also arboreal. Their wild status means that they are more alert than domesticated species and thus are highly reactive to any unfamiliar and alarming stimuli. Unlike domesticated species, they have not been selected for friendliness to humans and low aggression.

Early friendly contact between infants and care-givers will result in a less fearful animal, as the animals learn that familiar humans do not constitute a threat, but the animals will retain most of the attributes of their wild conspecifics.

“Non-human primates used for scientific research should be captive-bred and, where practicable, reared on site to avoid transport stress. Captive-bred animals are of known age, parentage and health status and have been reared under standardised husbandry practices. Where non-human primates are to be imported they should, whenever possible, be obtained as offspring from established breeding colonies with high welfare and care standards. They should be free from zoonotic diseases. Wild caught animals should only be used in exceptional circumstances as they present health hazards to staff, have unknown histories and are likely to be more afraid of humans. In some instances there can be a significant mortality among the animals at the trapping site and during transfer to the source country holding site.”

- **EFSA: Opinion of the Scientific Panel on Animal Health and Welfare** on a request from the Commission related to Aspects of the biology and welfare of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes (14.11.2005) states:

“Capturing a species from the wild for use in a laboratory is a major welfare concern and is, therefore, an important criterion for inclusion of the species in Annex 1.”

- **The UK Animals Procedures Committee** in its report on ‘Acceptance of overseas centres supplying non-human primates to UK laboratories’ (2006) states:

“Capture of wild primates for use as breeding stock or for export for use in experiments has been identified as a particular cause of concern because of the additional distress caused to the animals (Prescott 2001, SCAHAW 2002).

The PSC recognised that it would not be possible to immediately end trapping of wild animals without impacting on supply, but went on to say:

“In order to help discourage the use of wild-caught animals as breeding stock, and support the effort to eliminate early weaning systems (since in general, early-weaned primates do not become competent breeders) the following is required:

- *The UK should move toward a position where it will only accept as 'purpose-bred', animals of the second (F2) or subsequent generations bred in captivity. The PSC recognises that achieving the goal of defining "purpose bred" animals as F2 or subsequent generations may take time, given recent experience of how this affects breeding performances and general well-being of the colonies. The UK should require any centre that traps from the wild to have a clearly defined strategy to decrease reliance upon wild populations and move to the supply of F2 animals only (for example by gradually decreasing their trapping quota and retaining a significant and increasing proportion of first generation offspring for breeding second-generation stock). The overall progress towards this goal for centres generally should be kept under review by the PSC. Due consideration could be given to other factors, for example, where, as part of their national authorisation to operate, breeders (at the present time) are required to trap a minimum quota of animals. The progress of individual centres should be reviewed by the PSC and the Home Office Inspectorate when assessing a centre for re-acceptance i.e. at intervals of not more than two years.*

All of the above reports accept that capture of primates from the wild is a major animal welfare concern that should be avoided. There are a number of scientific papers supporting this view that can be referenced on request. There are, in addition, associated issues relating to human health, the health status and quality of animals (and hence quality of science), and conservation of local primate populations, that argue against the continued capture of wild primates, that need to be taken into account.

For more information (including cost, sources, and availability) refer to the ADI Technical Briefing “Ending the trapping of wild monkeys for research and breeding farms.”