

Communiqué

Madrid Zoo moves its dolphins to a new state-of-the-art zoo

This trip follows the recommendation of the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) within the conservation program for this species.

Zoo Aquarium de Madrid has moved the dolphins to a new state-of-the-art zoo. This trip has been carried out following a recommendation of the dolphin conservation programme of the European Association of Zoos and Aquariums (EAZA), with the goal of guaranteeing the highest technical standards to keep the group together. The animals have arrived in perfect condition, accompanied by their keepers.

The professionals who have looked after the welfare of these dolphins for years have travelled with them to Hainan Ocean Paradise and will accompany them during the first weeks of their adaptation and exchange their experience with the new team.

This park has modern facilities and the most advanced technical means. It currently houses dolphins from other European institutions. The experience is proving to be satisfactory, which is why this decision has been taken as part of the conservation programme.

A key consideration in the selection of this new destination has been the need to keep the group of eight dolphins cohesive, which would have been impossible in Europe.

The Zoo's team of keepers and veterinarians, as well as animal transport specialists and conservation professionals have been involved for weeks in the preparations and requirements of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Live Animals Regulations (LAR) of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) to ensure maximum comfort to their destination.

This modern zoo, located in the privileged environment of Hainan Island, includes five interconnected pools of different sizes, including a medical pool, and has a structure resistant to adverse weather conditions such as typhoons. In addition, a complete veterinary hospital has been built within the 2.000 square metre Blue Ocean Conservation and Rescue Centre, including a quarantine area for adaptation, a medical treatment room and a surgery room, as well as several laboratories for microbiology, clinical pathology and water quality management.

During the first month of adaptation, they will be accompanied by the staff of the Madrid Zoo to exchange their experience of care with the new team.

The animals will remain part of the European dolphin population to ensure the best possible genetic diversity and a self-sustaining population with the addition of Hainan Ocean Paradise as an external partner in the program, overseen by the European Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

As for the future of the dolphinarium, Madrid Zoo could collaborate as a temporary accommodation center when the needs of other parks or institutions require it while work is being done to resume educational activities in this space. Later, its adaptation for the conservation of other marine species will be assessed.

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