

**Question for written answer E-003677/2011
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Richard Ashworth (ECR)

Subject: Animal welfare standards in EU zoos

The Born Free Foundation, on behalf of the ENDCAP coalition, recently undertook an extensive pan-European evaluation of standards in European zoos. Their findings, revealed in a series of reports under the title of 'The EU Zoo Inquiry 2011', detail numerous failings in the levels of implementation and enforcement of Directive 1999/22/EC at Member State level.

It is clear that a number of Member States are not doing enough to provide animals in zoos with a suitable environment that meets their biological, spatial, physiological and behavioural needs, as required by Article 3 of Directive 1999/22/EC.

How does the Commission propose to assist Member States in improving compliance with Directive 1999/22/EC? Does it currently have a plan to help failing Member States improve animal welfare standards and ensure that the competent authorities know what Directive 1999/22/EC requires of both themselves and of zoos?