



CELEBRATING 3 YEARS INTERBEING



Helping you care for animals
and for yourself

Welcome to the 3-year celebratory INTERBEING activity book by AnimalConcepts.

This activity is a free resource to be enjoyed and shared. It highlights the work of many others in addition to our own work.

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Helping you care for animals
and for yourself

Celebrating 3 years together

On April 9th, 2020, the AnimalConcepts membership experience launched for the first time, with the Practical Animal Welfare Science platform. In 2021 One Care and Earth Charter-SDG platforms were added to focus on human wellbeing and planetary wellbeing respectively. The interconnected learning platform combines animal, human, and planetary wellbeing content and is unique in the world, offering varied, affordable, and accessible continued professional and personal development, sharing, and learning for all. We have spent the past 3 years developing the platforms with webinars, webposters, activity books, podcasts, and a variety of other resources across a variety of learning styles.

We have continually learned and improved thanks to community feedback since we first launched, and we are pleased to give back to the community with this free celebratory resource and activity book. In 2023, we officially renamed our interconnected platforms as INTERBEING - reconfirming our commitment to the intertwined nature of human, animal, and planetary wellbeing, alongside our new Foundations platform to act as an introduction across all of these areas.

This resource aims to combine our three priority areas of activity into one, taking an approach that you can apply to any new project. Maybe you are reviewing a diet sheet, or you are thinking about building a new enclosure? This activity book aims to help you think about how your project considers all different aspects of human, animal, and planetary wellbeing, with links to free resources from ourselves and others to help you.

With this resource, we hope to celebrate the work we have accomplished over the last three years, celebrate the partnerships we have made, and give our thanks to our growing community. We hope you enjoy this resource, and as always, we love to hear comments, feedback, and suggestions from you at: info@animalconcepts.eu

Sabrina, Patrícia, Max, Melody, & Irma - the AnimalConcepts Team

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This INTERBEING activity checklist is a companion resource for any new project you are working on. While it is, of course, not a comprehensive manual for any project you might possibly work on, it will help to guide you as you consider the different areas of animal, human, and planetary wellbeing that might impact your project.

Not everything covered in this activity book will be relevant to you or your specific project, but it is broadly applicable to any work in professional animal care and welfare you might undertake - whether it be reviewing diet sheets, designing a new habitat, creating a new training program, and more. Combined with free resources to help guide you on your journey to understanding and incorporating INTERBEING into your work, we hope this free resource helps you and others.

We create resources just like this as well as webinars, podcasts, webposters, practical activities, decision trees, and more on our interconnected learning platforms at INTERBEING, giving you the foundations you need to achieve excellence in animal, human, and planetary wellbeing.

Learn more at animalconcepts.eu

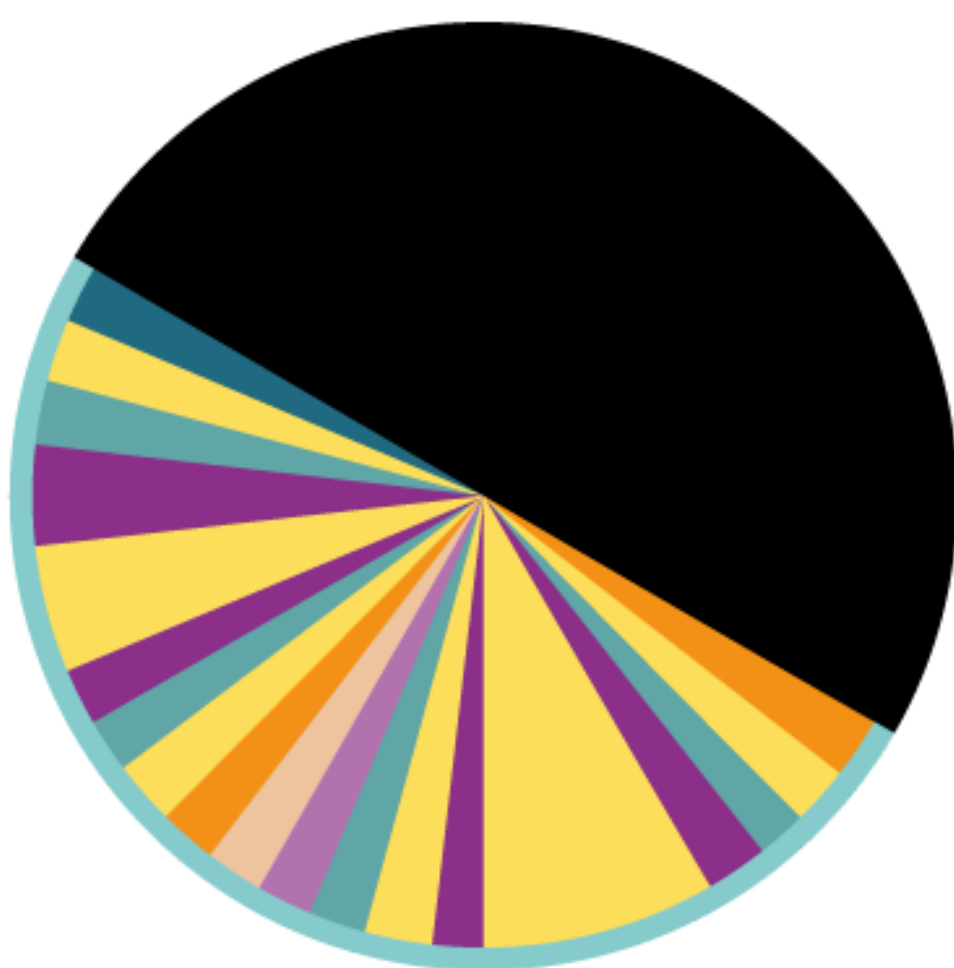
ANIMAL WELLBEING

What is animal wellbeing all about?

Animal wellbeing is all about the experience of life from the perspective of individual animals. We often look at welfare as being about the things we put "in" to their care - the design of their habitat, the food we give them, the quality of their healthcare, and so forth. While these things are all undoubtably important, it is also important to think about the indicators the animal itself is giving us about how it feels about it's life.

Animals living in human care spend much of their day without direct care inputs from their caregivers. We are all very busy, of course - animal care and welfare is a busy job with many responsibilities, including record keeping, maintenance, meetings, preparing food, staff training, and more. Plus, there is all the time spent in a 24-hour period where there are no care staff on site - as much as two thirds of the time.

A: Summertime



B: Wintertime



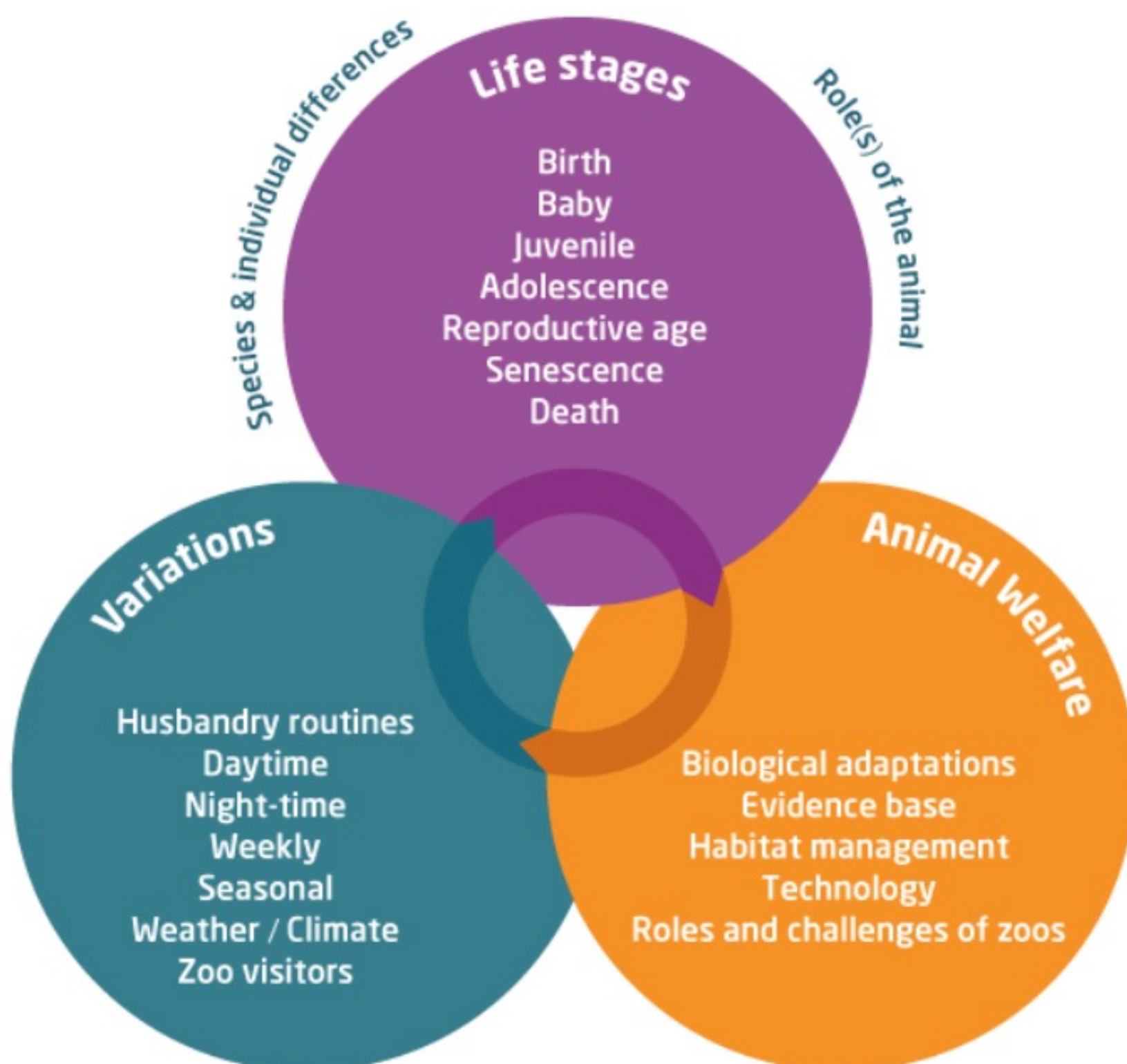
ANIMAL WELLBEING

24/7 animal wellbeing checklist

Developed by Sabrina Brando and Dr Hannah Buchanan-Smith in 2018, the [24/7 across lifespan framework](#) is a concept which addresses 14 key criteria for assessing animal welfare and habitat management.

How does your project apply to the 14 key criteria?

Thinking about the animal's perspective, how are you going to work to ensure that positive experiences and feelings are promoted? We have many different components to consider when trying to meet the needs of the animal, both specific to the animal - such as species, life stage, health status, and personality - and external to them - such as the season, time of day, country they are living in, and variations in their care.



On the next pages, complete the 24/7 across lifespan checklist to ensure your new project meets each criteria from the perspective of the animal.

ANIMAL WELLBEING

☐ **Absence of prolonged hunger**

Animals should be fed at appropriate times, mimicking natural feeding intervals. For example, for animals that eat at night in the wild, have you considered how food will be provided at these hours?

The other end of the spectrum should also be considered such as obesity and appropriate body condition: Visit the [AZA body condition scoring resource center](#)

☐ **Access to species-typical food and foraging**

Animals should have species-appropriate food and delivery, considering the behavioural aspects as well as the nutritional aspects of the diet provided. For example, have you considered how the diet is presented to the animals and whether it mimics how the animal would feed in the wild?

For more information on the nutritional aspects of diets for zoo animals, visit the [MSD veterinary manual book](#)

☐ **Absence of prolonged thirst**

Animals should have a sufficient and accessible water supply at all times of the day. Even for species that do not naturally drink a lot of water, clean and fresh water should always be made available in case they need it. The manner in which animals obtain their water should be considered, as well as safety and hygiene considerations of the water supply.

Read more ideas about how water can be used sustainably from Auckland Zoo's [wild about water blog](#)

ANIMAL WELLBEING

☐ **Animals should have comfort when resting**

Animals should have comfort when they are resting, alone or socially; they should be able to be physically comfortable and relaxed when they are resting and sleeping. Are there opportunities for animals to rest and be relaxed? Are you observing the animals relaxing in this way? Do they have somewhere to rest away from visitors?

☐ **Animals should have thermal comfort**

Animals should not be too hot nor too cold, and they should have different microclimates to choose from based on their needs. For example, have you provided shade from the sun, or somewhere warm to go when it gets cold overnight?

☐ **Animals should have space to move freely**

Animals should be able to use a full range of natural locomotion - jumping, leaping, running, flying, swimming - in the context of both indoor and outdoor spaces. For example, does your [back-of-house](#) provide as much space to move around freely as all front-of-house areas?

☐ **Animals should have perceived control**

All areas of an animals habitat, both in front-of-house and back-of-house areas, and in all other aspects of their care including training, diet, enrichment, and so forth, should be complex, providing animals with the opportunity to make choices based on their preferences and exert agency - or control - over what they want to do, what they want to have, and when they want things to happen.

Read more about choice and control on this blog post from the BPS: [Choice and control for animals](#)

ANIMAL WELLBEING

☐ **Animals should be free of major injuries**

Animals should be free of major injuries, including locomotory disorders. Health and safety [risk assessments](#) should be conducted to ensure that all aspects of their care such as habitat design, enrichment, substrates, etc. are safe both in the short and long-term.

☐ **Animals should be free of disease**

Animals should experience appropriate standards of hygiene and care which aim to protect the animal against disease. For example, can you use biofloors to keep the substrate hygienic? Is it easy to clean the habitat? What products are you using for sanitation?

☐ **Animals should be handled appropriately**

Animals should not suffer pain from inappropriate handling, catching, management, or transport. Positive reinforcement training should be used where possible so that animals can be encouraged to participate in their own care and have choice and control.

For ideas and inspiration on animal training for husbandry and handling, check out this YouTube playlist we have created with a variety of examples: [Training.playlist](#)

☐ **Animals must be treated well in all situations**

Caregivers should prioritise promoting good human-animal relationships, with the animals perspective as the focus in all interactions. Consider in all situations how humans behave around animals, and the impact that has.

Read more about the "human dimension" of animal welfare at the following: [Human dimension of welfare](#)

ANIMAL WELLBEING

☐ Expression of normal social behaviours

Animals should be able to express normal and non-harmful social behaviours, such as grooming. This also includes ensuring animals are housed in appropriate social groups and have the opportunity to be together or apart from conspecifics. For example, when separating animals for any reason (such as medical reasons), do they need to be alone or can they have a "friend" with them? With diet plans, have you considered the social element?

☐ Expression of species-typical behaviours

Animals should have opportunities to display a variety of normal behaviours, for example, burrowing, scent-marking, exploring with all of their senses, and so forth. Providing opportunities to display these behaviours often comes hand-in-hand with reducing undesirable behaviours such as stereotypies. How can you provide an enriching life experience to the animals in your care?

Check out our enrichment playlist: [Enrichment playlist](#)
And take a look at the WildThink database: [WildThink](#)

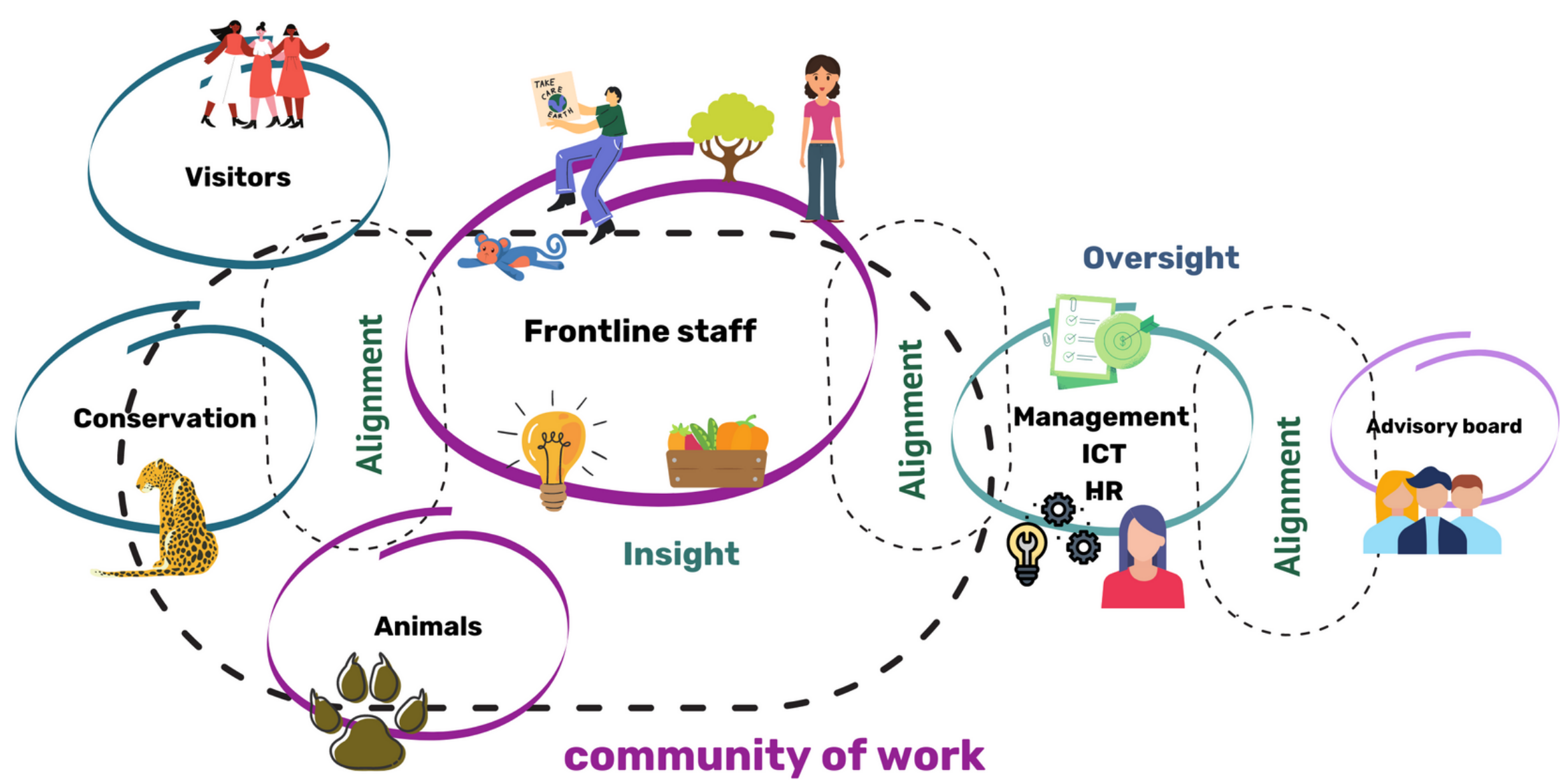
☐ Promote positive emotions

Animals have been demonstrated to experience emotions similar to humans. As such, negative emotions such as fear, distress, frustration, and boredom should be prevented, while positive emotions such as security and contentment should be promoted. When thinking about your new project, put yourself in your animals "shoes" and try to see things from their perspective; how would you feel in this scenario if you were that animal? Avoid looking through a "human" lens and try to think through the "animal" lens.

HUMAN WELLBEING

What is human wellbeing all about?

When we think about human wellbeing in the context of work we are doing with animals and the planet, or even working in any other profession, it is about understanding that in order to be at our best to do our best at what we do, we need to feel supported mentally, physically, and socially. We should feel comfortable to share the good and the bad things, and feel that the work we do is worthwhile and celebrated. At work, we are one community, and in order for our projects to excel and in order to provide excellence in animal and planetary wellbeing across our work we should be supportive of each other in all aspects of the things we do together. Whether we are only working together in collaboration on one project, or if we are colleagues every single day, we should give respect to the things that optimise human wellbeing for those we work with.

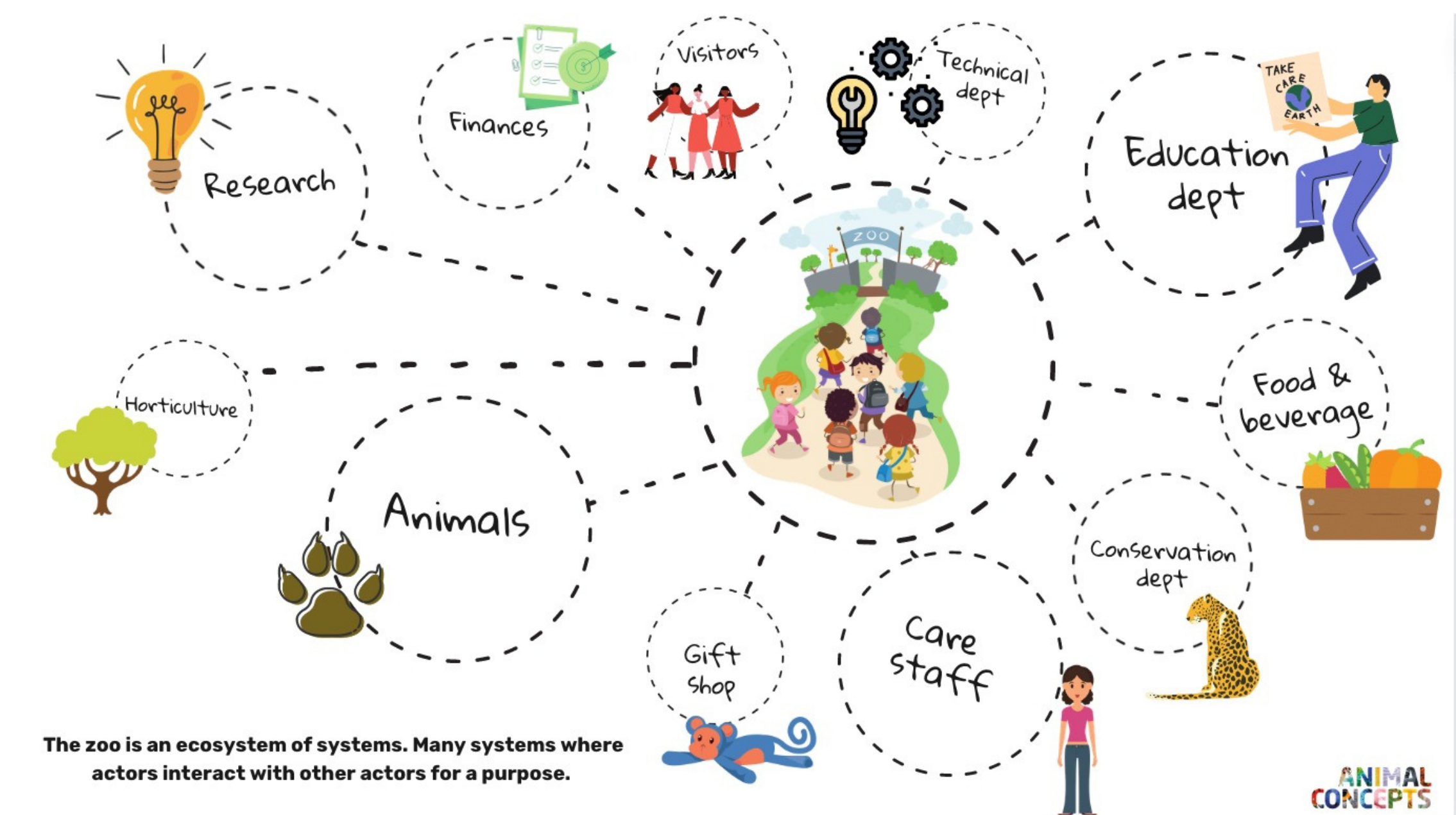


Think of your project as being like an ecosystem. Every component of the project interacts towards a common goal or overarching purpose; every element is interconnected. For every component to succeed, individual actors require the essential tools to excel. Excellence in human wellbeing is, therefore, essential to achieving our goals and fulfilling our purpose.

HUMAN WELLBEING

One care and We care

The human wellbeing dimension of a project can prove to be quite complex. When we work with other people, there are a lot of elements to their lives that may influence their wellbeing as part of a team; their history, how they have worked with people in the past, their habits, and so forth. It is important to help all of those involved in your project to create healthy habits and boundaries surrounding their work, especially when dealing with work that can be challenging. For example, when working with animals, there is a real risk of empathic strain, the trauma of grief and loss, and stressful, time-sensitive work involving the health and welfare of possible dozens to hundreds of individual animals. By ensuring everyone has the tools from both an individual and organisational perspective to look after themselves and each other, we can promote good human wellbeing in the face of these challenges.



On the next pages, complete the human wellbeing checklist to ensure your project considers how best to optimise human wellbeing and ensure every individual involved - no matter whether they are only working in one small area, or responsible for much of the project - is supported across all areas of human wellbeing.

HUMAN WELLBEING

☐ Support mental health

The wellbeing of people isn't only about health, but also about their quality of life. Do the people involved in the project have the opportunity to invest time in family, hobbies, and self-care - do they have a good work-life balance? Does work stress carry over into everyday stress?

Think about ensuring everyone has a fair workload, there are enough people involved to ensure no one has to work excessive overtime hours, and that there are enough resources to get the work done without being too difficult.

Check out this curated list of mental health resources for the workplace from Mind: [Useful resources](#)

☐ Support physical health

Sometimes, especially when working practically in animal care, the work we do can be physically taxing. Even when working at a desk for most of our jobs, the physical strain of work can add up over time and impact our physical health. Has a thorough risk assessment been carried out to ensure staff are not at risk of injury, no matter what their job role is? Has everyone received health and safety training to know how best to conduct their job with respect to their physical health in the short and long term? What supports are in place in case someone working on the project falls ill and is unable to work? There may be local, regional, or national legislation you must follow with respect to health and safety as well.

Check out this resource on health and safety when working with screen displays: [Computer health & safety](#)

HUMAN WELLBEING

☐ Social relationships at work

Humans are social, so it's not a surprise that the interactions between ourselves and our colleagues at work can have significant impacts on our wellbeing. Therefore, it is important to make sure communication between all people involved in a project is good, positive, and friendly. Creating a sense of identity and culture through shared values helps to bond people together towards a common goal.

Do you have systems in place to celebrate and accomplish the work of individuals and teams involved in the project? How do you promote friendly interactions between people working together? Consider activities that bring people together and strengthen bonds.

☐ Opportunities for learning and development

Personal and professional growth is key for helping people stay positive and engaged with the work they do. How does your project provide opportunities for people to gain new skills? Could your project be used as a learning experience for junior staff members looking to learn more about topics such as nutrition, training, enrichment, habitat design, or whichever other areas your project focuses on? Our [INTERBEING](#) platforms focus on providing affordable continued professional development.

Consider opportunities for mentoring, time for people to engage with additional courses and training programs, individual coaching, and opportunities to attend conferences, workshops, and other events to learn and share experiences. Consider also creating professional [development plans](#) or incorporating your project into existing plans.

HUMAN WELLBEING

☐ Equality, diversity, and inclusion

People are diverse in many ways; where we come from, who we are, and how we feel are all different from one another. By striving to represent people from all backgrounds, no matter who they are, we can welcome a more diverse set of viewpoints and ideas into our projects. How are you providing opportunities for diverse groups to be involved in your project? How are you making sure that your project is equal, equitable, and inclusive of all?

Check out the following guide from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) on how you can create a more inclusive, diverse, and equal environment in your workplace or project: [HERE](#)

☐ Provide supports and adjustments

Everyone has their own way of learning and working that might not necessarily be the same as yours. At its most basic level, people have different [learning styles](#) and also different [personalities](#) that influence the way they like to do things best.

It is also important to consider that some people may struggle with various aspects of their work, such as sitting for a long time, getting around, and so forth. Whether it is a physical or a psychological challenge, everyone should be supported to do their best in the project and at all times at work through the provision of any appropriate reasonable adjustments you are able to offer them. Creating a workplace where everyone has the tools to succeed regardless of disability or other challenges is key to achieving diversity, equality, and inclusion goals too.

HUMAN WELLBEING

☐ Relationship with leadership

Every project and team will inevitably have one or a few people spearheading it, and it is essential that everyone involved in the project has a positive relationship with those in leadership roles. How are you creating an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect? Does the leadership team feel approachable? Are people comfortable talking to leadership? The project, and the whole workplace, should be a safe space where people feel comfortable to share their suggestions and concerns.

A transformational leadership approach is one that serves to embody the above values and create spaces and projects that are inspiring and collaborative, where all people are celebrated and supported.

☐ Work environment

We spend a lot of our time working, and whether we are working from home, in an office, in an animal's enclosure, kitchen, or anywhere else, everything from light to temperature to background sound can have an impact on our wellbeing. Think about opportunities for natural light, the comfort of desks and other provisions, spaces to eat and relax in that are comfortable, opportunities for fresh air, cleanliness of work spaces, and even the way that spaces are decorated to feel uplifting and inspiring.

Of course, when working with animals, some compromise may have to be made in order to ensure the animal's wellbeing is placed first and foremost. Think instead how you can ensure the comfort of the human individual without compromising on animal wellbeing; for example, can you offer noise-cancelling headphones to those who are sensitive to sounds?

PLANET WELLBEING

The Earth Charter as a framework

Planetary wellbeing is focused on how the activities we do and the processes we have impact the greater community of life on the planet we share, from the animals outside our facilities to the environments they live in, to the resources shared by the whole planet. It is not only about thinking about the environment, though topics such as sustainability and preventing ecological harm are indeed integral to the concept of planetary wellbeing. It is also about respecting all life, providing all cultures with the opportunity to thrive, and protecting the environment, world culture, and other resources for future generations of people and animals to enjoy.

There are a number of frameworks we can use to examine whether what we are doing and our processes align with the goals of planetary wellbeing. Most known are the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, as seen below) but there are also other frameworks such as the Earth Charter we can follow. (Below image (c) UN Sustainable Development Goals)



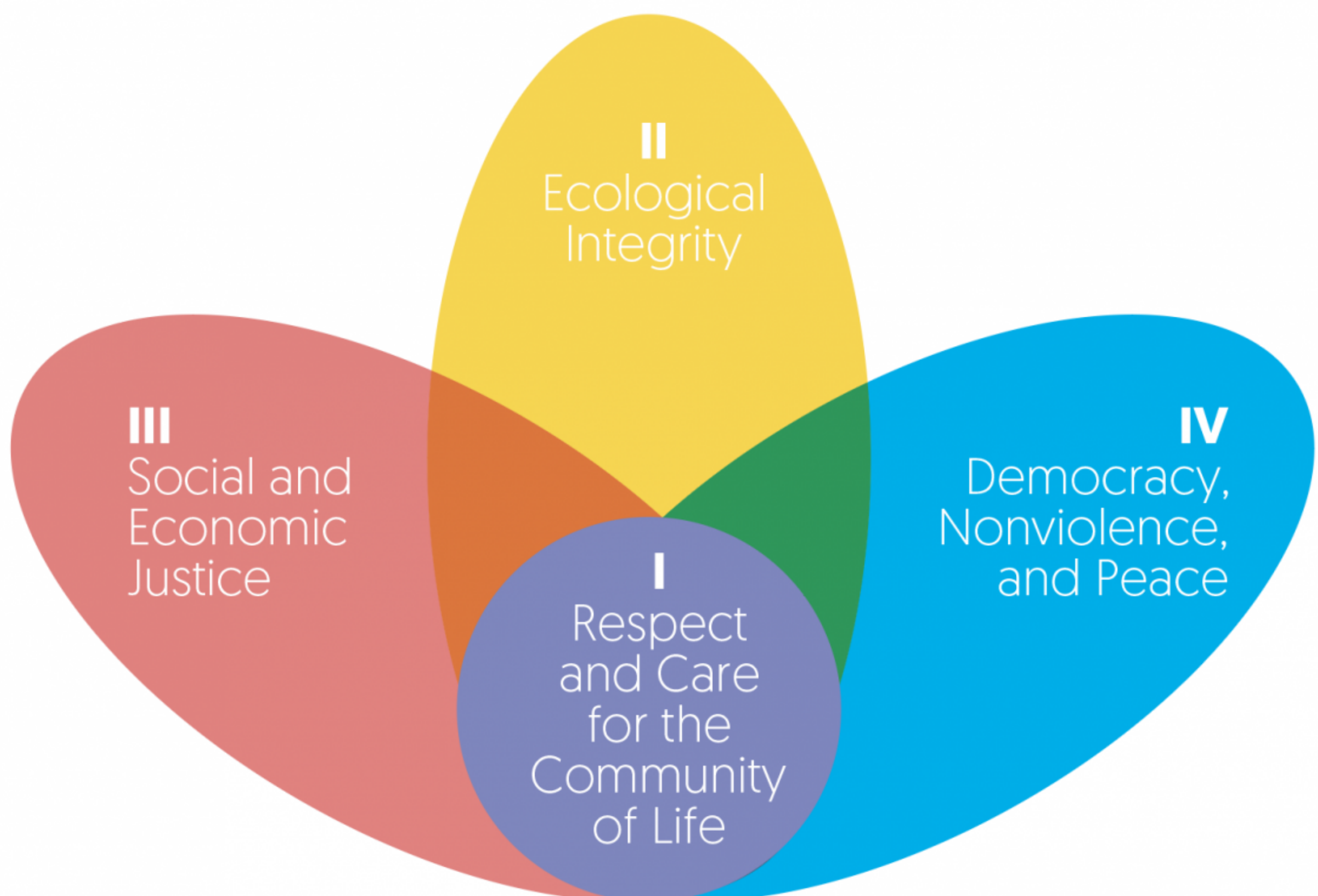
PLANET WELLBEING

The Earth Charter as a framework

At AnimalConcepts, we are proud to be partners of Earth Charter International. We utilise the Earth Charter as a lens and a framework for our activities and processes, helping to guide us on our mission towards sustainability and wellbeing for all people, all animals, and all of the planet. The Earth Charter is divided into four interconnected "Pillars", each made up of four principles, which together form the sixteen guiding principles outlined by the document. These are: Respect and care for the community of life, ecological integrity, social and economic justice, and democracy, nonviolence, and peace.

The full Earth Charter can be read freely online [here](#).

It is available in many languages. Below image (c) Earth Charter



On the next pages, complete the planetary wellbeing checklist through the lens of the Earth Charter to ensure your project is considering all aspects of planetary wellbeing alongside your human and animal wellbeing goals.

PLANET WELLBEING

☐ **Respect Earth and life and all it's diversity**

All forms of life are deserving of respect, regardless of their worth to human beings. For example, how are you dealing with "unwanted" animal visitors such as pests? Are you feeding live insects to any of your animals, and how are they cared for? Are you treating all animals involved in your work with the same level of respect, from invertebrates, to amphibians, to birds, to mammals?

☐ **Care for the community of life with love**

With knowledge and power comes a responsibility to work towards the common good, and the ability to use natural resources comes with a duty to preventing ecological harm. How are you ensuring that all materials and elements sourced for the project are obtained sustainably? How are you ensuring that the work you do does not directly or indirectly harm the environment?

☐ **Building peaceful and democratic societies**

Communities at all levels should ensure fundamental human rights, freedoms, and equal opportunities for everyone. At the basic levels, this means ensuring everyone has an opportunity to have their say in the project, relevant rights and freedoms of people and animals are maintained, and all people - regardless of their background - can participate and be included.

☐ **Secure Earth's bounty and beauty**

Support the long-term flourish of Earth's human and ecological communities. Think about sustainable sourcing of materials that allows future generations of people and animals to use resources; for example, check out this article on [sustainability in sourcing food for animals](#) in zoos and aquariums.

PLANET WELLBEING

☐ **Protect and restore Earth's systems**

Adopt sustainable development plans at all levels, considering the environmental impact and how you are mitigating unavoidable impacts. For example, if you are aiming for carbon neutrality in your project, how are you planning on offsetting any unavoidable emissions generated through transport or buying in of materials? Think about tree planting initiatives and other solutions.

☐ **Prevent harm as a best method of protection**

Action should be taken to ensure all activities and processes avoid causing harm in the first place, instead of putting "band-aids" so to speak on the issue. For example, what measures are you taking to reduce single-use plastic use in your project in all areas as opposed to solely supporting ocean clean-up activities?

☐ **Safeguarding Earth's regenerative capacity**

We should act with restraint when using Earth's natural resources, emphasising material sufficiency throughout our processes. Do you have a sustainable and effective waste management initiative in place? Have you adopted a 5Rs approach across the different types of waste your project might produce - considering how you can refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose, and recycle?

☐ **Promote open exchange of knowledge**

Information should be freely shared towards the shared goals sustainability, with an emphasis on how we can support those who are still developing, including cultural and spiritual knowledge and wisdom. Have you taken steps to consider all knowledge inputs from all levels, including local cultural knowledge? Are you freely sharing the results of your project, both positive and negative?

PLANET WELLBEING

☐ **Eradicate poverty as an imperative**

Recognise and protect the vulnerable, and allow them to develop. How are you ensuring everyone who works on your project at all levels are paid fair and living wages? This does not only include people working directly on the project, but also those indirectly involved, such as the workers responsible for harvesting materials that you source - such as ingredients for food, timber, etc.

☐ **Ensure all activities are equitable**

Promote the equitable distribution of wealth within and among nations, and ensure all trade supports sustainable resource use, environmental protection, and progressive labour standards. Thinking about the people involved at all levels of your project, including sources of different materials, how are you ensuring labour standards are fair for all? By what criteria do you select your suppliers?

☐ **Affirm gender equality and equity**

Promote the active participation of women in all aspects of political, civil, social, and cultural life as full and equal partners and leaders. How are you ensuring gender equality at all levels of your project? Have you provided equal opportunities for men, women, and people of other gender identities to be involved at all levels of your project?

☐ **Uphold the rights of all**

Discrimination should be eliminated, in all of its forms. Think about creating a diversity, equality, and inclusion policy which ensures that no one is discriminated against for any aspect of who they are, including how all forms of discrimination will be swiftly dealt with if and when they occur.

PLANET WELLBEING

☐ **Strengthen democratic institutions**

Protect the rights of people within our own spheres of influence by encouraging open communication and honesty between all stakeholders, such as providing open forums for staff to freely discuss their concerns and ideas. This goes hand-in-hand with supporting staff wellbeing by creating a safe space for all people to share without fear of judgement.

☐ **Life-long learning of skills for sustainability**

Integrate into formal education and life-long learning the knowledge, values, and skills for a sustainable way of life. For example, have you thought about how your project could be used to help educate the public towards sustainability? As well as this, use your project as an opportunity to educate the people involved life-long skills.

☐ **Treat all life with respect and consideration**

Prevent cruelty to animals kept in human societies and protect them from suffering, and protect wild animals from methods of hunting etc. that cause avoidable suffering. For example, if carnivores are involved in your project, how is the meat sourced to feed them? Have you ensured the supplier is following excellent animal welfare standards?

☐ **Promote a culture of tolerance and peace**

Encourage and supporting mutual understanding, co-operation, and solidarity among all people and among nations, preventing violent conflict and promoting peaceful solutions to problems. In messaging surrounding your project, are you taking a positive outlook, focusing on what we are doing and what we can do better as a community for the future?



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Helping you care for animals
and for yourself