

Online petitions to save young giraffe scheduled to die

February 9 2014



CEO of Copenhagen Zoo Steffen Straede (C back turned) speaks with the media on July 11, 2012

Thousands of people have signed on to online petitions to try to save a young giraffe that is to be killed Sunday by its keepers at Copenhagen Zoo because it resulted from in-breeding.

The male animal, aged one year and a half and named Marius, is to be

put down with a bolt gun. After an autopsy, meat from its body will be used to feed carnivores kept at the zoo in the Danish capital.

The zoo on its website says it has no choice: under European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) rules, inbreeding between giraffes is to be avoided.

Although Marius is healthy, his genes are already well represented at the zoo and he cannot be taken in by the 300 other EAZA-affiliated zoos.

Castration is considered cruel and with "undesirable effects", while releasing him in the wild is an option with little likelihood of succeeding—especially as giraffes are not wanted in African countries.

One Swedish [zoo](#), in Ostersund, which does not belong to the EAZA has asked in vain to take Marius, the Swedish newspaper Expressen reported.

The online petitions looked to be having equally little success in stopping the death sentence.

By late Saturday, some 3,200 people had signed up to one on a "Save Marius" Facebook page, while 2,500 were listed on a Danish petition on skrivunder.net and another 2,300 had put their names down on the English-language website thepetitionsite.com.

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