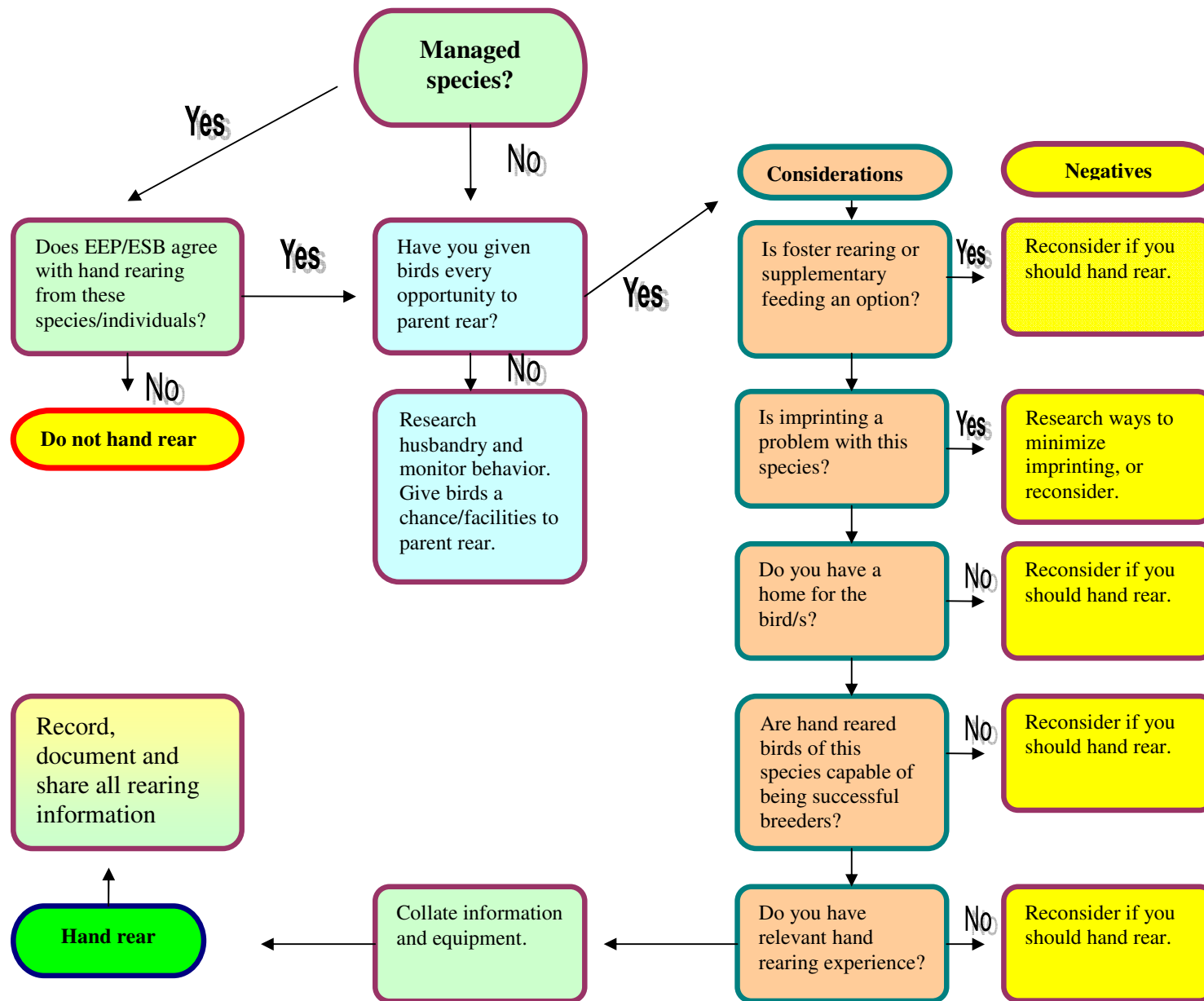


Hand rearing decision tree.



It is paramount that the decision to hand rear is thought through thoroughly and should only be considered an option as a last resort. All bird keepers have a responsibility to ensure that if they decide to hand rear it is for all the right reasons, and that the bird/s can go on to have a natural life quality with the ability/option to reproduce.

Wherever possibly imprinting must be kept to a minimum, rearing birds in a group can help achieve this, if this is not possible consider use of mirrors, puppets and or keep human contact to the minimum. Avoid hand rearing species which are renowned to have human imprinting problems, quality of life for these individuals will be impaired, mental health issues may arise, and it is doubtful they will be successful breeders. These birds will take up valuable aviary space from individuals that could be parent rearing.

Always give birds the option to parent rear first, if they do not succeed the first few times be patient, many species will take several attempts before they 'learn' how to rear successfully, in the meantime check that you have given the birds everything they require in order to achieve success, this will require some research into the natural behaviors of the individual species.

Watch the behavior of your birds, they will give you clues as to what their requirements may be, consider;

- Is the nest box correct and placed in an area that the birds feel secure?
- Is the nest substrate correct/clean?
- Is there any interference from other species/cohabitants in the aviary?
- Are there any factors outside the aviary that may be having an effect?
- Are the pair fully bonded?
- Is there an adequate supply of food?
- Is there enough cover in the aviary?
- Is the nest protected from the elements?
- Are the breeding birds healthy?
- Is the furnishing in the aviary suitable?
- Are you keeping to a set routine when servicing the aviary?
- Are the birds breeding age?

After each failed attempt review the circumstances and adapt husbandry accordingly. Only consider hand rearing if there is no other option available.