

Central Zoo Authority and its MOU's: Central Zoo Authority goes International for improving its services

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Central Zoo Authority, established in 1991 as a legal entity under the Ministry of Environment and Forests, has been breaking new ground in the last few years with its determination to improve aspects of care and management of India's zoos. After establishing itself and gaining supportive powers, CZA created norms, rules and standards in order to evaluate all of its zoos and lesser wild animal facilities and determine which of them could improve sufficiently to be a conservation asset instead of a useless burden. Over the years of inspections, assessments, evaluations, recommendations, funding, renovation, improvement and recognition the Central Zoo Authority achieved something never before done. It pulled up close to 400 zoos and closed down 200 animal facilities. Quite an achievement and it is ongoing, even now almost a quarter century old.

CZA was once practically a closed door to non-Indian zoos and even ideas but over the decades it has become closer and closer to an international entity by becoming a Member of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA), attending various courses and conferences throughout the world and, more recently, joining with other zoos and scientific organisations in MOU's to guide their cooperation.

Wildlife Reserves, Singapore

In this MOU both WRS and CZA will promote and coordinate staff exchanges for training in both technical and management of zoo, conservation and research activities. WRS agreed to sponsor economy class air fare, food and lodging for two senior management from selected Indian Zoos, for a two-week training attachment at WRS. CZA agreed to sponsor economy class air fare, food and lodging for two resource persons from WRS to participate in workshops organized by the CZA for Zoo Directors, Veterinarians, Biologists and Educators with duration of about four days in India. A similar arrangement has been made for exchange of training for veterinarians, managers, biologists and keepers from Indian zoos. Both of the institutions will coordinate exchange of wild animals to improve genetic diversity, ensure sustainable captive breeding, enhance species lifetime in captivity and highlight species diversity.



Singapore and CZA officials Signing the MOU ... from Singapore Fanny Lai, Vijaya Kumar Pillai, and Raja Segaran

The MOU also provides undertaking joint Conservation and Research projects in South and Southeast Asia that may include *in-situ* work, habitat protection, public education

and awareness, environmental issues and capacity building of range country staff. They will be the channel of cooperation on Conservation and Research projects between the two regions i.e. WRS for the Southeast Asian region and CZA for the South Asian region and will endeavour to represent the interests of zoological institutions in these regions, including cultural exchanges. MOU constitutes an expression of the Parties' mutual good faith only and does not constitute a legally binding offer or contract.

Leipzig Zoo, Leipzig

The Leipzig Zoo (LZ) and the Government of India represented by the Central Zoo Authority (CZA) have agreed to cooperate to improve, develop and implement future strategies in a good variety of fields, e.g. Capacity building/exchange of manpower, Sharing of management practices, Scientific animal exchanges, Convening training



Jorg Junhold, Director, Leipzig Zoo and B. S. Bonal, Member Secretary, CZA sign the MOU between their institutions.

programmes for Indian zoo supervisors by Leipzig Zoo experts. Indian zoos identified for exchange of scientific information and exchange of Sloth bears and other species are : National Zoo (New Delhi), Mysore Zoo (Karnataka), Nehru Zoo, (Hyderabad, A.P.), Arignar Anna Zoological Park, (Vandalur, T.N.), Assam State Zoo, (Guwahati, Assam), and Nandankanan Zoological Park (Bhubaneswar, Orissa).

The zoos in both countries aim to improve the cooperation about the management of captive animal populations and exchange of individual breeding animals between zoos for the welfare of sound population management.

Leipzig Zoo and CZA shall provide funds for various sponsorships for training in zoo management for zoo personnel from both countries participate in workshops organized by CZA for Zoo Directors, Veterinarians, Biologists and Educators which are generally for four days of duration in India.

Areas of collaboration

Consultation by request in the field of management of zoo populations, e.g., wildlife veterinary medicine, zoo

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management, and raising awareness for wildlife conservation; capacity building in the areas of zoo management, animal keeping and sustainable captive breeding, conservation management through studbook management and highlight species diversity for the respective animal collections, veterinary wildlife medicine and scientific training.

Conducting common research projects (e.g. by scientists and experts) from time to time and increase scientific knowledge on the ecology, behaviour, reproduction, diseases and genetics of species identified by both the parties and their manifold relationships to people.

Long-term cooperation to ensure the highest possible standards, as stipulated by the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA), in the keeping, husbandry, medical treatment and welfare of animals in zoos in Europe and India.

Improvement of access to international zoo conservation networks to ensure that animal population kept in zoos is integrated into international conservation breeding programmes.

National Trust for Nature Conservation, Nepal

The Central Zoo Authority (CZA), New Delhi and National Trust for Nature Conservation, Nepal (NTNC), with its head office in Khumaltar, Kathmandu, which manages the Central Zoo (CZoo) and three Conservation Areas of Nepal and has projects in two national parks and two wildlife reserves in Nepal with the mutual objective to foster closer professional zoo relationship as well as to protect and conserve threatened wildlife and habitats signed the Memorandum of Understanding.



Sarita Jnawali, Director, Central Zoo/NTNC; B.S. Bonal, Member Secretary, CZA; Juddha Bahadur Gurung, Member Secretary/NTNC and Brij Kishor Gupta, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, CZA.

The areas of collaboration include both institutions to promote and coordinate mutual staff exchanges for training in technical and management aspects of Zoo-related and Conservation and Research matters.

CZA will annually sponsor two (2) senior level NTNC/CZoo personnel and NTNC/CZoo will annually sponsor one (1) senior level CZA personnel to participate in workshops/trainings/exposure visits organized by the institutions in their own country. The dates, duration and locations of such visit will be according to mutual agreement. Every year, CZA will invite Veterinarians, Biologists, Educators and Zoo

Keepers from NTNC-CZoo to participate in trainings/workshops organize by the CZA at Indian Zoos and *vice-versa*. They also agreed to promote and coordinate exchange of Zoo animals to improve genetic diversity, ensure sustainable captive breeding. They will also collaborate on Conservation and Research projects in South Asia that may include *in-situ* work, habitat protection, public education and awareness, etc.

National Primates Research Centre, University of Davis, California, USA

The overall objective is to establish a programme of inter-institutional collaboration, research and technological intervention between Central Zoo Authority, Wildlife Institute of India and University of Davis, California for developing productive strategies for rhesus population management and reducing human-rhesus conflict. The institutions will collaboratively investigating human-rhesus interaction and their control. Some of the issues are:

- Understanding interdisciplinary post release effects of monkeys sterilization centres on population genetics, zoonosis and behaviour
- Developing and comparing contraception agents and methods
- Characterizing the dynamics and processes underlying human-rhesus conflict
- Designing long term managed care facilities and captive care management protocols for translocated and sterilized Rhesus groups
- Facilitating new policies on problem animal control
- Developing pilot projects for field trials of population control and rehabilitation measures for rhesus and socio economic and cultural strategies for mitigation of human-rhesus conflicts



Mr. P.R. Sinha, Director, WII retiring soon, signed the MoU. An official from the Primate Centre in USA will visit India in August to officially sign the MOU.

This MOU will facilitate collaboration in research and training of personnel from all the three institutions for the management of human-monkey conflict. The areas of co-operation will include exchange of faculty, research staff and students with all these institutions with visitors agreeing to comply with administrative procedures, etc. required by the host. The institutions shall provide support and assistance in securing living accommodation and working space for the visiting faculty, staff and the students.

All of these MOUs are groundbreaking events which will lead to a much greater level of interaction between the Indian zoo community and others around the world. Some of India's worst zoo and wild animal problems will be mitigated or entirely solved with this array of expertise.