

Meet the **ALLIANCE FOR Zero Extinction**

www.zeroextinction.org

What is AZE? The Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) is a joint initiative of 52 biodiversity conservation organizations around the world, which aims to prevent extinctions by identifying and safeguarding key sites where species are in imminent danger of disappearing. The goal of the Alliance is to create a frontline of defense against extinction by eliminating threats and restoring habitat to allow species populations to rebound. See www.zeroextinction.org for more details.

Zoo Outreach Organisation is becoming deeply involved with AZE. Sanjay Molur is on their Steering committee. He recently discussed with them what we could do as collaborators. Our Readers will hear more about AZE in near future.

One of their projects is associated with the IUCN 2010 International Year of Biodiversity.



Zero Extinction Target

A major goal of the International Year of Biodiversity 2010 must be to agree on a global target of halting the extinction of Earth's species caused by human activity. While this target is ambitious, by using sound science to determine where species extinctions are most likely to occur next, we can break it down to a step by step process that is completely achievable given the resources currently mobilizing around environmental protection globally. One leading mechanism to accomplish this target is being advocated by the Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) www.zeroextinction.org. AZE represents 67 of the world's leading biodiversity conservation organizations and is dedicated to halting the extinction of Earth's most endangered species. The Alliance has identified 595 relatively small sites all over the world where the remaining populations of the 794 Critically Endangered and Endangered species found at a single sites are restricted. These are irreplaceable places that must be protected in order to maintain Earth's biodiversity in the future, and by targeting their conservation we can create a global front line of defense against species extinction.

AZE member organizations and national governments have already protected nearly half of these sites. The remaining locations receive no formal protection and most face continuing habitat loss today. Not only are these sites vital to prevent the extinction of nearly 800 of Earth's most endangered species, a new study shows that the value of ecosystem services such as water filtration, soil retention, and carbon sequestration at these sites is worth billions of dollars to the global economy. Many of them also present significant nature tourism opportunities. AZE has already been welcomed by the G8+5 environment ministers through the Potsdam initiative, and is included as an indicator for the 2010 target by the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership.

The protection of Alliance for Zero Extinction sites offers a tremendous opportunity for nations to meet the 2010 Biodiversity Target of the Convention on Biological Diversity. What you can do:

COLLABORATE – Build a national network of biologists, conservation groups, land management experts, and nature tourism operators to help identify critical places using the AZE criteria (see www.zeroextinction.org/selection.htm).

IDENTIFY – Identify all the ZERO EXTINCTION sites in your country; work with the global AZE network to include these sites in the global list.

RECOGNIZE – Highlight those **ZERO EXTINCTION** sites that are already publicly protected, and consider extending official protection to private reserves that include these sites.

PROTECT IN PARTNERSHIP – Work with conservation groups and the private sector to create protected areas and develop carbon, watershed protection, or ecotourism projects at unprotected ZERO EXTINCTION sites to protect species and generate revenues.

ZERO EXTINCTION TARGET

IUCN World Parks Congress Message to the Convention on Biological Diversity:

"Effectively conserve all globally threatened species in situ with an immediate emphasis on all globally Critically Endangered and Endangered species confined to a single site."

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