

Reports to WAZA from Asian Zoo Associations : South Asian Zoo Association for Regional Cooperation, SAZARC, Report 2008-09

The South Asian Zoo Association for Regional Cooperation (SAZARC) was founded in the year 2000 in Nepal with an intention of providing crucial training, information and opportunity to meet other zoo personnel for improving zoo management and wildlife welfare in South Asian zoos. SAZARC has met every year in South Asia and twice attended the anniversary conference of our colleagues in SEAZA. SAZARC has emphasized the importance of standards for animal welfare and conservation and it has been found that zoo legislation is necessary for introducing and implementing high standards. Therefore, SAZARC Annual Conference focuses on training featuring important topics like conservation education, captive animal welfare, animal records (ISIS), nutrition, and zoo legislation. Two countries (Bangladesh and Nepal) have drafted and are very close to passing zoo legislation in their Parliament. Other countries are aware of the need and in discussion.

SAZARC Secretariat is based at Zoo Outreach Organisation which plans and fundraises for the SAZARC conference, provides information on global and regional event, funding opportunities, coordinates global education projects and connects zoos with *in situ* projects and personnel.

SAZARC Annual Conference in Sri Lanka was conducted 9-15 February 2009, organised by Zoo Outreach Organisation and SAZARC, organised and hosted by the National Zoological Gardens, Dehiwala, Sri Lanka and Ministry of Sports and Public Recreation, Government of Sri Lanka and funded by the following : Chester Zoo/North of England Zoological Society, UK; The Benindi Fund, UK; Universities Federation for Animal Welfare, UK; Knowsley Safari Park, UK; SSC IUCN Conservation Breeding Specialist Group; World Association of Zoos and Aquariums; Twycross Zoo, UK; Paignton Zoo, UK; Walt Disney World, USA; Apennine Primate Park, Netherlands and Local sponsors Ministry of Sports and Recreation, Sri Lanka; Department of National Zoo, Sri Lanka.

The theme of SAZARC for the second consecutive year was Zoo Legislation, this year covering "fine tuning" of legislation, accreditation and inspection of zoos. SAZARC spends 60-70% of its time on training. Three Resource Persons, Mike Jordan of ATMOS, Miranda Stevenson of BIAZA and Kris Vehrs of AZA delivered presentations on various aspects of the theme and also conducted a "mock" inspections of different parts of the National Zoo on four days. The inspections were followed by a presentation each day by a different staff of the zoo speaking about the current two facilities and the two under construction.

2010 SAZARC Conference - It was agreed that 10th Anniversary SAZARC meeting could be held at

Central Zoo, Kathmandu where SAZARC originated. The theme will be **21st Century Crises in the Zoo. ZOO, a Friend of South Asian Zoos** — Zoo Outreach Organisation acts as a "friend of the zoo" for SAZARC zoos, providing a base with assets such as networks, contacts, funding potential, etc. to make a useful Secretariat. Thus the following activities could be carried out in different zoos & countries.

Educator Network SAN-IZE – driven by ZOO & SAZARC compiled best educational material in a CD containing booklets, manuals, articles, education programmes reports, guidelines, powerpoint presentations, packets, posters etc. which will be useful to conservation educators, particularly in South Asian region.

Featured training and provision of materials this year were in the subjects : Human Elephant Co-existence; Amphibian Ark Education; Hoolock Gibbon conservation; COUNTDOWN 2010 awareness. Materials on other different species and issues were also made available.

Funding Zoo Educator conferences – SAZARC Secretariat circulated funding formats and assisted members in all countries to apply and find support to attend the Asian Zoo Educator Conference (5 attended this October) and the IZE Conference at Disney World in 2010.

Publications : ZOOS' PRINT Magazine & ZOO ZEN: ZPM celebrate 25 years of regular publication in 2010. ZOOS' Print is running a special series on Conservation Breeding as well as reporting SAZARC and other zoo news and articles.

IUCN SSC CBSG & RSG Membership – ZOO/SAZARC recommended several South Asian zoo personnel for membership in IUCN SSC Conservation Breeding Specialist Group and Reintroduction Specialist Group. Others were invited to join South Asian group.

Taxon Networks are ZOO-based networks involving both field and zoo workers and enthusiasts. The networks promote CBSG processes and principles and RSG Guidelines in respect of highly speciose and neglected taxon groups, such as bats, rodents & insectivores, primates, amphibians, reptiles, and invertebrates.

Director represented SAZARC at :
CBSG/WAZA Mid-year Meetings, May 09, Al Ain;
Central Zoo visit discuss 2010 conf, Aug 09, Nepal;
SEAZA Conference, August 09, Seoul, S. Korea;
SSC/CBSG Strategic Planning topic, June 09, UK;
Dhaka Zoo discuss zoo legis. Sept 09, Bangladesh;
ICZ Conference, Keynote Speaker, Sept 09; Seattle
CBSG Annual Mtg, & St. Comm.; Sept. 09, St. Louis
WAZA Annual Conference; Oct. 09, St. Louis.