

Cop 11 Indian Alliance for Zero Extinction Side event, 17 October 2012 at Hyderabad, India

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Alliance for Zero Extinction is the coming together of different Non Government Organizations across the globe to prevent the immediate threat to species extinction!

The Alliance is an initiative to develop conservation strategies for species assessed as Critically Endangered or Endangered as per IUCN categories and criteria found in a single location. The ideology of setting up the Alliance is in tandem with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Aichi 2020 Target 12: By 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained.

The Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) sites are declared based on three criteria:

Endangerment. An AZE site contains at least one Endangered (EN) or Critically Endangered (CR) species, as listed on the IUCN Red List.

Irreplaceability. An AZE site is only designated if it is the sole area where an EN or CR species occurs, contains the overwhelmingly significant known resident population (>95%) of the EN or CR species, or contains the overwhelmingly significant known population (>95%) for one life history segment (e.g. breeding or wintering) of the EN or CR species.

Discreteness. The area is a definable boundary within which the characters of habitats, biological communities, and/or management issues have more in common with each other than they do with those in adjacent areas.

Globally 587 AZE sites are identified based on these three criteria and these sites are inhabited by 920 species of mammals, birds, amphibians, some reptiles and conifers.

The Alliance has national representations in Brazil, Mexico, Colombia and India among others. The Indian Alliance for Zero Extinction



Russ Mittermeier describes the global impact of AZE.
Photo: Priyanka Iyer



Nick Holmes explains the close linkages of Island Conservation and AZE through the many case studies. Photo: Arun Kanagavel

(Indian AZE) was established in January 2011 to bring together NGOs in India to prevent extinction of the Critically Endangered and Endangered species found in a single location in India. Currently, the NGOs that have joined hands in this endeavor are Aaranyak; Conservation Research Group; Agumbe Rainforest Research

Station; Biodiversity Research and Conservation Society; Biome Conservation foundation; Keystone Foundation; Madras Crocodile Bank Trust; Society for Wildlife Conservation, Education and Research; Titli Trust;

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Sanjay Molur provides a glimpse into the activities of the Indian AZE emphasizing on the project initiated by CRG in two AZE sites in Kerala.
Photo: Priyanka Iyer

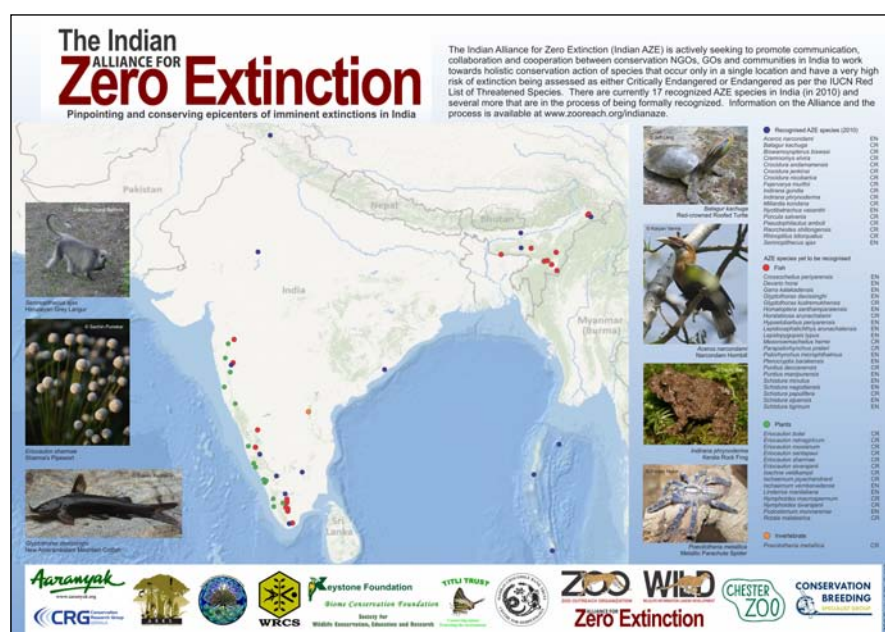
Table 1. Seventeen Indian Alliance for Zero Extinction species listed in 2010

Sr No.	Species Name	IUCN status
1	<i>Aceros narcondami</i>	EN
2	<i>Batagur kachuga</i>	CR
3	<i>Biswamoyopterus biswasi</i>	CR
4	<i>Cremnomys elvira</i>	CR
5	<i>Crocidura andamanensis</i>	CR
6	<i>Crocidura jenkinsi</i>	CR
7	<i>Crocidura nicobarica</i>	CR
8	<i>Fejervarya murthii</i>	CR
9	<i>Indirana gundia</i>	CR
10	<i>Indirana phrynoderma</i>	CR
11	<i>Millardia kondana</i>	CR
12	<i>Nyctibatrachus vasanthi</i>	EN
13	<i>Porcula salvania</i>	CR
14	<i>Pseudophilautus amboli</i>	CR
15	<i>Raorchestes shillongensis</i>	CR
16	<i>Rhinoptilus bitorquatus</i>	CR
17	<i>Semnopithecus ajax</i>	EN

Wildlife Information Liaison Development Society; Wildlife Research Conservation Society; and Zoo Outreach Organization.

The 2010 global AZE update includes 17 AZE species (including birds, amphibians, mammals and reptiles) in 17 sites in India (Table 1).

Post the 2010 listing the Indian AZE has identified 21 AZE fish species and 14 AZE plant species based on the freshwater assessments conducted in Eastern Himalaya and Western Ghats by the IUCN Freshwater Biodiversity Unit and Zoo Outreach Organization (Table 2). One tarantula is also recognized in this Indian AZE list. This list provides an idea of species in India that are highly restricted in distribution and at a very high risk of extinction with the highest priority for undertaking status survey, and developing and implementing conservation plans.



A Poster on Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE)

Understanding this pressing need and the similarity in the vision with the CBD Aichi 2020 Target 12, the Alliance for Zero Extinction organized a side event titled "Seven Wonders of Conservation" at the Convention of Parties 11 at Hyderabad on 17 October 2012, to present this concept and invite other NGOs to be a part of this network.

Olivier Langrand of Island Conservation and AZE Steering Committee member introduced the programme, the AZE concept and about the Seven Wonders of Conservation, an initiative to identify, through social networking, the worlds top seven AZE species/sites. Along with him two other AZE Steering Committee members, Russ Mittermeier of Conservation International and Sanjay Molur of Zoo Outreach Organization were part of this side event along with other speakers and supporters, Jane Smart and Aban Marker Kabraji of IUCN, and Nick Holmes of Island Conservation. Dr. Russ Mittermeier spoke about the Alliance and its impacts thus far including the effects the objectives had influenced the Target 12 and the new initiative of Friends of Target 12. Jane Smart indicated her and IUCN's support to AZE and indicated that the AZE was a natural progression to the assessments conducted by the IUCN's famous Red List of Threatened Species. Aban Marker Kabraji spoke about the IUCN's Asia Regional Office being in full support of the activities of AZE and the

Table 2. Fish, aquatic plant and invertebrates recognized by the Indian AZE for priority action.

Sr. No.	Species Name	IUCN Status
Fish		
1	<i>Crossocheilus periyarensis</i>	EN
2	<i>Devario horai</i>	EN
3	<i>Garra kalakadensis</i>	EN
4	<i>Glyptothorax davissinghi</i>	EN
5	<i>Glyptothorax kudremukhensis</i>	CR
6	<i>Homaloptera santhamparaensis</i>	EN
7	<i>Horalabiosa arunachalami</i>	CR
8	<i>Hypselobarbus periyarensis</i>	EN
9	<i>Lepidocephalichthys arunachalensis</i>	EN
10	<i>Lepidopygopsis typus</i>	EN
11	<i>Mesonoemacheilus herrei</i>	CR
12	<i>Parapsilorhynchus prateri</i>	CR
13	<i>Psilorhynchus microphthalmus</i>	EN
14	<i>Pterocryptis barakensis</i>	EN
15	<i>Puntius deccanensis</i>	CR
16	<i>Puntius manipurensis</i>	EN
17	<i>Schistura minutus</i>	EN
18	<i>Schistura nagodiensis</i>	EN
19	<i>Schistura papulifera</i>	CR
20	<i>Schistura sijuensis</i>	EN
21	<i>Schistura tigrinum</i>	EN
Plants		
1	<i>Eriocaulon bolei</i>	CR
2	<i>Eriocaulon ratnagiricum</i>	CR
3	<i>Eriocaulon rouxianum</i>	CR
4	<i>Eriocaulon santapau</i>	CR
5	<i>Eriocaulon sharmae</i>	CR
6	<i>Eriocaulon sivarajanii</i>	CR
7	<i>Isachne veldkampii</i>	CR
8	<i>Ischaemum jayachandranii</i>	CR
9	<i>Ischaemum vembnadense</i>	EN
10	<i>Lindernia manilaliana</i>	EN
11	<i>Nymphoides macrospermum</i>	CR
12	<i>Nymphoides sivarajanii</i>	CR
13	<i>Podostemum munnarensense</i>	EN
14	<i>Rotala malabarica</i>	CR
Invertebrate		
1	<i>Poecilotheria metallica</i>	CR

need to identify more national AZEs within the region.

Nick Holmes presented insights into links between Island Conservation and AZE and mutual support. He began with explaining island ecosystems and the major threats plaguing them – invasive species! He also highlighted how it was imperative to remove alien invasive species from the system to prevent extinction on islands and some success stories in island conservation, many of which are also AZE sites.

Sanjay Molur made a presentation about Indian AZE with special emphasis on the Periyar Lake - Stream System (PLSS) case study initiated by the Conservation Research Group of Kochi, one of the members of the Indian AZE. The baseline data to support this information originated from the assessments of status and distribution of freshwater taxa (fish, molluscs, odonates and aquatic plants) across the Western Ghats conducted by Zoo Outreach Organization and IUCN Freshwater Biodiversity Unit supported by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund. The Periyar LSS hosts three AZE species of freshwater fish species— Periyar Hill Trout *Lepidopygopsis typus*, Periyar Barb *Hypselobarbus periyarensis* and Periyar Latia *Crossocheilus periyarensis*—and another site, also located in Kerala, is Santhampara, a non-protected area which hosts two AZE species— *Horalabiosa arunachalami* and *Homaloptera santhamparensis*. Although occurring within the protected area, the freshwater species are not protected as they are under the negative influences of pollution from oil spills and introduction of exotic fish. The project is to address these concerns and to direct attention to the urgency of the situation. Local stakeholders such as the Kerala Forest Department and the local communities are very supportive of the initiative and are joining hands to battle the alien invasive species in this system.

The event was concluded with an interesting interactive session with participation from people belonging to different parts of the world. There were questions pertaining to protection awarded to freshwater groups in India and also sharing of case studies speaking of the success stories and

complications involved in conservation.

Organizations in India who are interested in becoming members may visit the Indian AZE website for more details <www.zooreach.org/indianaze/indianaze.html>

Organizations and individuals wishing to join in the conservation efforts of any of the above species, or wishing to start action on other AZE species may write to <herpinvert@gmail.com> or <zooreach@zooreach.org>

