

# WAZA Membership -- what it means

(from the SAZARC briefing book, 2004)



*In our region most everyone was very happy about our being approved for membership of SAZARC. It seemed a good time to write to the Director, WAZA and various members of council to get more of an idea of what this means to our region. In the past, zoos in some regions have committed acts which were not consistent with WAZA Code of Ethics and Welfare and the regional or national association suffered as a result. As Director, SAZARC, I wrote a letter asking specifically what this meant for the benefit of our SAZARC members, as many are new to the international scene. The email which I wrote and WAZA Director's reply are below. This was pointed out to SAZARC attendees during our business meeting.*

Date: Tue, 16 Nov 2004 10:45:22 +0100  
From : Sally Walker, Director, SAZARC

Dear WAZA colleagues :

Has anyone ever "defined" what a regional association member's responsibilities to WAZA are ? I want to explain to SAZARC what WAZA membership means other than just saying they are members. I know there are behavioural and attitudinal expectations. Other than the Code of Ethics and Welfare, is there anything written ? A practical example of how this might be required is, say, if one member zoo is caught doing something wrong ... such as buying animals from animal dealers who catch them from the wild ...and WAZA membership comes to know, then the association will be censured.

Are we the officers of the Association responsible for the behaviour of all our zoos ? We need to know this also to continue the evolution and development of our Constitution. As you know we submitted our Constitution and By-laws as one of the requirements for obtaining WAZA membership but I indicated that this was not our final document. You had indicated that this was all right as long as we kept WAZA informed of changes. You also indicated at that time that SAZARC did not need to be legally registered under any government, but that it was an elegant solution that SAZARC members had requested Zoo Outreach Organisation, a legally registered entity to serve as Administrative Office.

If you can give some indication of our responsibilities, it will help us in taking another step towards having a more workable constitution and also help us to decide on a membership procedure. So far, it is very *ad hoc* with no fee, etc. I am glad that it has been so, thus far, as it has been inclusive which is what a new group needs here. But now perhaps it is time to start thinking of a more systematic way of doing things, particularly in view of our WAZA membership, which we do not want to lose.

With best wishes,

Sally Walker, Director, SAZARC

Date: Tue, 16 Nov 2004 12:45:22 +0100  
From: Waza Director <waza.director@bluewin.ch>  
Subject: AW: waza regional association member responsibilities  
To: 'Sally Walker' <zooreach@vsnl.com>, emcalister@rzssa.org.au, zoo@zoo.ch, alex.ruebel@zoo.ch, director@scz.org, 'Karen Sausman' <KASTLD@aol.com>, Miranda.Stevenson@btopenworld.com, Koen.Brouwer@nvdzoos.nl,

Dear Sally

I am not sure whether anyone has ever defined what a regional association member's responsibilities to WAZA are, but legally, only WAZA members have obligations / responsibilities to WAZA. One of these is that members have to abide by the WAZA Code of Ethics. In my interpretation, this implies, in the case of association members, that they have to adopt their own Codes of Ethics which must not necessarily be identical, but essentially in compliance with the WAZA Code. As a result, the institutions adhering to a WAZA Association Member would be obliged to follow ethical principles which essentially comply with WAZA's.

There are no other rules (except for procedural things, like submission of CIRCC Grant applications etc.) that are binding except the Code and the By-Laws. However, if WAZA Members adopt vision and mission statements, policies, guidelines etc., one would expect that they (the members) share the vision/mission and are prepared to follow the policies or guidelines. In the case of the association members this should again result in the association adopting comparable policies etc. that would have to be followed by their members, whether these are in WAZA or not.

A practical example is the case of the Taiping Four where SEAZA took appropriate action in compliance with the ethical principles adopted by both WAZA and SEAZA regarding an SEAZA member institution that was not an individual WAZA Member.

Regards

Peter Dollinger, Director, WAZA