

## A Triathlon of Conservation Conferences in USA: Communication, Cooperation and Collaboration leading to *One World...One Conservation*

Last month, I was privileged to be able to attend three excellent conferences, all international and all with an interest in zoos. Some years ago I might have said that all these organisations were driven only by an interest in zoo management, in captive animals and their welfare. Today its not correct to say that, because it is not entirely true.

Today, these organisations ARE concerned with zoos, or captive animal facilities, or zoo management and welfare of wild animals (what we used to call *ex situ* conservation) but they are equally concerned with their institutions being involved in utilising their wild animals, their visitors, their venues, their surplus or specially generated funds, and their own energy for promoting, progressing and supporting field conservation. This was a pervasive theme through all of these conferences. It has been a growing movement for the last twenty years.

In fact, for some years now, the line between *in situ* and *ex situ* has been growing increasingly thinner. Now, instead of always acknowledging the *in situ* / *ex situ* distinction, we are now rapidly moving toward the completion of a quantum leap, a conceptual evolution in thinking which started about two decades ago, that is more along the lines of, if you will, **"One World One Conservation"**!

The three international organisations which conducted conferences in USA in September-October were

**International Congress of Zookeepers, ICZ** in Seattle, Washington

**Conservation Breeding Specialist Group, IUCN SSC CBSG** in St. Louis, Missouri

**World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, WAZA** also in St.Louis, Missouri.

Several themes ran through all of these conferences but all of these themes concerned two general directions, e.g. 1. professional development and improvement and 2. looking outward to address current global crises.

The next three issues of ZOOS' PRINT will focus on these three organisations, their aims and activities, their relevance to us here in South Asia, and how we in ZOO, WILD, SAZARC, CBSG South Asia and our

other taxon and thematic networks are both guided by and an influence in these and other organisations.

Other themes that will be running through our next three issues of ZOOS' PRINT, are two major categories, 1. 21st Century Crises and 2. our various anniversaries.

The 21st Century Crises we are most concerned with have been designated as the thematic and training material for our next SAZARC meeting, e.g. Disaster/Emergency Response in the Zoo, Climate Change/Global Warming, Emerging Infectious Diseases. Closely related is the biodiversity crisis, which, at the end of Countdown 2010, is declining as much as if not more than when the Convention on Biodiversity was signed. IUCN has declared 2010 as the Year of Biodiversity so all of us must focus on this in addition to other themes in the coming year, in particular, the Amphibian Crisis because we are committed to do so with CBSG and WAZA.

These crises will occupy our (greater environmental community) for the rest of our lives. In fact, the quality and the length of the rest of our lives will be determined by how we and others behave in the short term future.

The last theme I will mention is 2, ZOO's various anniversaries in 2010. They are

### **25 Years Anniversaries -- 1986**

- i. Founding of Zoo Outreach Organisation
- ii. Publication of ZOO ZEN
- iii. Publication of ZOOS' PRINT

### **10 Years Anniversaries - 2000**

- i. Founding of South Asian Zoo Association for Regional Cooperation SAZARC
- ii. CBSG South Asia (converted from CBSG India, established in 1991)

We will celebrate quietly but for our SAZARC meeting which will be held in Kathmandu, Nepal, where SAZARC began.

In this issue we will feature items of interest from the ICZ and CBSG meeting. In subsequent issues we will focus on WAZA primarily.

