

# Zoo Legislation - SAZARC Working Group Reports



## Introduction

*Working Groups were convened country by country to discuss the topic of zoo legislation in each country according to the needs and ability of the country. Every country has its own individual culture and legal system and will have to find its own way to improve zoos through regulation and/or legislation. SAZARC, with its background of association with Zoo Outreach Organisation which itself was associated with the promotion of zoo legislation in India and with the organising of the first meeting of zoos of South Asia in Nepal, is uniquely placed to encourage and support the various countries of South Asia in their attempt to formalise a means of improving standards in zoos.*

*Working groups were armed with information from lectures by Mike Jordan describing zoo standards for Chester Zoo, Dave Morgan discussing operational standards for the African Zoo Association, Sally Walker relating her experience in promoting zoo regulation, Brij Kishor Gupta speaking of the Central Zoo Authority, several Indian zoo directors and one representative from each South Asian country, and also the WAZA Assessment Tool on Operational Standards of zoos. These working group reports on each country, on current issues related to zoo standards, and on what help is wanted from SAZARC will be a useful guide to a working plan.*

## Bangladesh Zoo Legislation Group Report

Working Group Members: Dr. Arabinda Kumar Saha, Kazi Fazlul Haque, Jillur Rahim Shahriar, Md. Mongur Morshed Chowdhury, Md. A. Razzaque Mia, Mike Jordan

### Task 1 – Zoo legislation and standards.

#### What currently exists in Bangladesh?

We have a Wildlife Protection Act (1974), Forest Act (1927), and Cruelty to Animals Act (1920) We also have a draft for zoo legislation pending scrutiny by the Ministry.

Currently operational standards are maintained only by individual documentary standards set for space, nutritional requirements, etc., by each individual zoo. These have been set by reference to those used by external organisations and other zoos. For example, in 2002 a new crocodile enclosure in Dhaka Zoo was required. Information from the IUCN Bangladesh office was sought to set the standards. Representatives from IUCN administration in Bangladesh were invited to Dhaka Zoo to assist with information which was mostly from the internet to set standards.

#### What is needed in Bangladesh?

- All zoos must have a Master Plan (currently only 3 zoos have this), which would need to be reviewed to comply with proposed legislation.
- Minimum standards for all species for space, required, feeding & nutrition, human resources.

- Limit to the amount of the total area of a zoo that can be developed for ancillary (non-animal) buildings (20% maximum).
- Provision of animal/veterinary healthcare, quarantine and a diagnostic centre.
- Provision of an appropriate ecological environment for the species to provide for natural behaviour.
- Participation in conservation programmes.
- Establishment of a waste management facility at each and every zoo.
- Visitor facilities; drinking water, wash room, etc.
- Safety & security.
- Regular zoo education programme.
- Record keeping system (e.g. ISIS ARKS).

### Task 2 – How can SAZARC help?

SAZARC can assist by providing:

- Training, e.g. record keeping, zoo education programmes, etc.
- Access to information on good practice / minimum standards, zoo education materials, etc.
- Assistance in animal acquisition and disposition of animals.
- Possibly a goodwill visit to Bangladesh.

### Task 3 - Action Plan

- Activate the Zoo Association of Bangladesh (Dhaka Zoo to take lead).
- Prepare a draft of operational zoo standards (Dhaka Zoo in collaboration with other zoos).
- Finalisation of zoo legislation (Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock): Legislation is already at final draft stage. A committee is already formed by the ministry to scrutinise the final draft and a report will be prepared within two months. Ministry will then finalise and then put it in the process on enactment.

## Pakistan Group Report

Working Group Members: Marzar Hussain, Md. Mansoor Qazi, Manju Siliwal

- Pakistan does not have any zoo legislation at either local, provincial or federal level. Every zoo has its own standards of practice but those are not uniform.
- Zoos are governed by different agencies - local, provincial, private and federal. No mechanism is available to provide a platform for regular interaction among zoos and there is no zoo association of Pakistan.
- Only provincial wildlife laws provide some control on wildlife centers and game reserves, but not on zoos and enforcement is weak, at best.
- Every zoo is isolated being under different controls.
- The big problem is private zoos.
- Only two instruments available i.e. existing wildlife legislation and national counsel for conservation of wildlife under the federal ministry of environment.
- There is a need to include zoos in wildlife

legislation or a separate legislation for zoo which is not very likely to happen.

- Ideal authority to take action for formulation of zoos legislation is the Inspector General of Forest and Wildlife at the federal level.
- Operation standards: Need for a coordinating meeting under the aegis of IG, forest department. Zoo representatives present here will make effort to bring up the issue in all appropriate forums and also pushing it further to Ministry of Environment. This should include:

- Master planning for every zoo
- Draft zoo legislation
- Norms and standards based on five freedoms and best practices:
  1. administrative and staffing
  2. enclosure designing
  3. hygiene
  4. feeding and upkeep
  5. animal care
  6. health and treatment
  7. veterinary facilities
  8. record keeping
  9. education and research
  10. visitor facilities
  11. development and planning

- In case of Karachi Zoo they have to move City Counsel and after approval it will go to Government for approval.

- Many zoos are mushrooming around Karachi without any standards, which is a concern.
- Private zoos and wildlife farms should also be included under an umbrella of legislation.
- Islamabad zoo is in process of redevelopment and consultant has been hired for designing zoo, drafting management system and education. This exercise will be extended to include local zoo legislation.
- SAZARC, WAZA and CZA will be more useful to consult in developing standards for Islamabad Zoo.
- SAZARC has provided WAZA and CZA norms and standards which CZA has been exercising in zoos. This will help zoos in Pakistan.
- SAZARC may consider a small workshop for zoo standards within this year in Pakistan. Ministry of Environment will be requested to host the meeting.
- The major hindrance in the Pakistan zoos is lengthy formalities, lack of manpower, skills, finance and administrative powers. Slow administrative processes and lengthy formalities delays the small activities/projects implementation.

#### **SAZARC's support/involvement**

- Formation of a committee from each country, who will draft zoo norms and standards prevailing in each countries scenario.
- Immediate workshop in Pakistan for making consensus between zoos and wildlife facilities.
- Some members from SAZARC/CZA visit available zoos in Pakistan and suggest improvements in different sectors.

#### **Sri Lanka Zoo Legislation Group Report**

Working Group Members: *Dammika Malasinghe, H.M.B.C. Herath, Ganga Wijesinghe, Jayanthi Alahakoon, Herath Banda Dissanayake, Dave Morgan.*

- It is felt that a National Policy or Strategy may be too lengthy process.
- Instead, we want to revise our existing Zoo Act which is outdated. Penalties need to be revised, also responsibilities, and animal management standards.
- A clause needs to be inserted to mandate operational standards policy.
- There should be a statement in the Act to mandate management plans and masterplans which can be revised.
- We need to revise departmental guidelines to incorporate an operational standards policy. There needs to be the following :
  - Ethics committee
  - Research
  - Education & Extension
  - Code of Ethics
  - Commercial activities policy (retail, F&B)
  - Visitor facilities
  - Marketing policy
  - Animal Welfare
  - Sustainability (Financial, Environmental)
  - Animal Surplus

#### **Restructure the Department to allow for:**

- i) Staffing needs assessment to be compliant with operational standards policy.
- ii) Staff placement and rotation.
- iii) Staff Welfare and incentives .
- iv) Training needs assessment for compliance with operational standards policy.

#### **How can SAZARC help ?**

Workshops to develop a basis for operational standards.

Arrange for training programmes pertinent to operational standards.

Provision of educational materials relevant to operational standards.

Co-ordination of zoo-based research within region.

#### **Nepal Zoo Legislation Group Report**

Present Scenario of Animal Facilities in Nepal

Working Group Members: *Sarita Jnawali, Ravi Sharma Aryal, Sanjay Molur, B.A. Daniel*

- No detailed inventory studies carried out yet.
- Lack of coordination among animal facilities in Nepal.
- No single institution to operate animal facilities in Nepal.
- Lack of Zoo Policy.
- Lack of Zoo Act or guidelines but Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation uses National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1973.
- No standard adopted norms of animal facilities.

### **Future Plan to cope with the present problem**

- Central Zoo/NTNC survey of all animal facilities in Nepal.
- Central Zoo/NTNC will organize a national Workshop on present status of animal facilities and need of Zoo legislation in Nepal will be invited policy makers, politicians, experts, like minded NGOs, media persons and representatives from all animal facilities.
- Based on the resolution of the workshop Central Zoo/NTNC will lead to draft required zoo policy and legislation.
- Central Zoo/NTNC will initiate to prepare Zoo Strategy and Management Plan.
- Sensitization of policy makers, conservationist and politician.

### **Expectations from SAZARC**

- Workshop Support from SAZARC (technical and financial support).
- Training for managerial staff working in animal facilities in Nepal.
- Request for required standard of norm for animal facilities to SAZARC in the context of Nepal present scenario.
- Goodwill inspection by SAZARC.
- Regular information sharing.
- Facilitate animal exchange programme between SAZARC countries.

### **Indian Working Group**

Strategic Actions for Operational Zoo Standards

*Working Group Members: Shrawan Kumar Sinha, Ajit Kumar Patnaik, Ajit Kumar Bhowmik, V. J. Rana, V.R. Singh, R. Marimuthu, J.B. Kacha, Bharat Singh*

### **Strategic Actions Proposed:**

1. Need for revising National Zoo Policy, 1998 — already 10 years of operation.
2. Need for certain amendments in The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
3. Animal Management plan — decentralized management, more flexibility in procedure and function, etc.
4. Present procedure of exchange of animals to be simplified — both among zoos in India and outside the country.
5. Minimum standard prescribed — to be modified / reviewed periodically — site specific and best standard applicable.
6. Studbook keeping to be strengthened / supported.
7. Rescue centre to be established separate from zoo establishment.
8. Support for biologist, record keeper and education officer needed.
9. Proper planning and orientation of conservation breeding — for achieving targeted goal.
10. Well developed, visible and integrated health care management system with proper protocols to be in place — not on *ad hoc* basis — to be institutionalized.

### **SAZARC Norms Working Group**

*Working Group Members: Dave Morgan, Kazi Fazul Haque, HMBC Herath, Ajith Kumar Bhowmik, Sarita Jnawali, Mazhar Hussain*

SAZARC participants felt that it would be a good idea of SAZARC had its own set of norms and standards. The WAZA Assessment Tool was reviewed with an idea of finding out if it would be acceptable as an “official” SAZARC tool and if anything needed modification. A group was formed to conduct a review of the WAZA Assessment Tools.

The group reviewed the requirements of the assessment tools and feels that:

1. WAZA assessment tools provide good basic guideline for setting up SAZARC standards and norms
2. However, some addition and explanations will have to be included by country to country basis depending upon its prevalent circumstances

Among the 120 points reviewed under 18 headings the group feels that only 1 point i.e., No. 43 pertaining to ethical review process under the heading Veterinary Care is bit ambiguous and needs further clarifications.

### **Capacity Building / Training group**

*Group Members: C. Ganga Wijesinghe, Jayanthi Alahakoon, Dr. Arabinda Kumar Saha, Jillur Rahim Shahriar, Dr. Md Mongur Morshed Chowdhury, Md. A. Razzaque Mia, Mike Jordan.*

Institutional capacity is important before embarking upon training / capacity building. Sufficient staff need to be available in order to develop the capacity of the zoo.

Capacity would need to be built for both resources and skills. Training in formulating legislation may be required separate to zoo operations.

### **Skills needed and equipment to support the training is required)**

Managerial – general skills for zoo management.  
Veterinary – preventative healthcare, disease surveillance, treatment (alternative therapies), restraint & handling, quarantine, laboratory diagnostic skills, surgery.  
Husbandry practices – Housing, lighting, hygiene, pest control, environmental enrichment, restraint & handling, marking/identification techniques.  
Captive Breeding – incubation, hand-rearing, artificial diets for rearing, population biology, contraception.  
Reintroduction – post-release monitoring, evaluation/assessment, planning & feasibility studies.  
Nutrition – balanced diets, feed formulation, artificial diets for rearing.

Record keeping – Computerised systems (e.g. ISIS), studbook management.  
Landscape architecture / Enclosure design.  
Zoo education.  
Zoo marketing.

### **Resources needed**

Veterinary – diagnostic facilities, restraint & capture equipment, drugs / medicines, gas anaesthesia machines, surgical equipment.

IT equipment – Computers, audio-visual / multimedia equipment, software (ARKS/ZIMS, MedARKS).

Nutrition – analytical facilities, feed formulation software.

Husbandry – Identification equipment

Captive Breeding – Incubators and brooders, surveillance cameras.

Reintroduction – radio tracking equipment.

Zoo Education – training materials.

Individual zoos should prioritise their own training needs, but then SAZARC should assist to facilitate the capacity building and organise the needs most efficiently.

### **Working Group on Release of surplus stock into the wild**

*Working Group Members: Sanjay Molur, Dammike Malasinghe, V. R. Singh, Ravi Sharma Aryal, Md. Mansoor Qazi, Shrawan Kumar Sinha, R. Marimuthu*

### **Herbivores**

Difficult to vasectomise.

Castration is not humane.

Euthanasia is not culturally or religiously accepted.

### **Disease protocol**

Complete screening of herbivores is not possible  
Not all zoos carry out veterinary protocols before releasing.

### **Not all animals should be hard released.**

Zoos should not be allowed to keep any species that is in surplus. Surplus animals are due to non management in the past. The problems are felt now.

There are no solutions right now, but it is time to look at solutions. There are problems unique to this region where problems are bigger than any solution. Global guidelines do not hold good here and regional solutions are to be looked at. There is no use targeting zoos as there are other issues such as cattle in wild areas, which is causing serious problems. Not only herbivores, but monkeys are also released.

### **Solutions?**

NGOs should call a meeting of all groups – forest officers, conservationists, animal welfare, animal rights, scientists, veterinarians, CZA, zoo officials, judges, etc. to discuss and come up with guidelines for this problem.

Hunting permits in Pakistan and may be Bangladesh but this will not work in any other SAZARC country. Slaughtering of older animals can be recommended in Pakistan only.

Culling of zoo animals should be considered scientifically after proper examination of the situation. A protocol has to be developed. This is not with an intention of feeding other zoo animals, rather an alternative to releasing animals.

A separate unit should be set up by all wildlife departments or equivalent in every country which does not permit some form of culling. These units would keep the surplus animals rather than release them into the wild. There is a model for this in the CZA Rescue Centers in India.

The problem is not only of zoos releasing surplus that could spread disease, but also of cattle in the wild that can cause problems to wild animals, e.g. rinderpest disease affecting gaurs having come from cattle. As this is a zoo solution committee, only those capable by zoos are provided, but it is recommended that a broader solution needs to be worked out.

Develop rescue centres rather than make zoos responsible to take problem animals.

### **Business meeting and Validictory**

#### **Selected SAZARC Highlights of 07**

SAZARC sent an educator from each South Asian country to conference. They represented SAZARC at several committee meetings and made many new contacts and friends for South Asian Network of International Zoo Educators.

Director, SAZARC represented the region at mid-year meeting of CBSG, CIRCC, WAZA and the WAZA Drafting Committee in April 07. She also represented SAZARC at the Annual meeting of the same groups. In the CBSG meeting she organised an India Working Group to assist Dr. B.R. Sharma organise invitee for the CZA International Conference. At WAZA, SAZARC Director Chaired a working group to discuss the WAZA Assessment tool and common on it. The Assessment Tool and other measures for bringing about improvement of zoos in the world was accepted.

The conference selected a venue for next conference which will occur late in 08 or early 09 in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka came forward to host the meeting. It is traditional for some one from Sri Lanka to carry the presidency. The current director is likely to be transferred. SL Additional Secretary might be the president. It was agreed that Mr. H.M.B.C. Herath would be the next President of SAZARC. Dr. Sahu handed over the SAZARC meeting Banner to Herath. Dr. Sahu was thanked graciously for his three years of service to SAZARC.

The SAZARC conference was adjourned after an informal and very entertaining Validictory.