

2nd International Congress on Zookeeping, Gold Coast, Australia, May 2006

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The 2nd International Congress on Zookeeping was held on the Gold Coast 7-11 May 2006. All in all it was a resounding success! Delegates numbering 225 from 24 countries attended the congress with papers being presented from 15 countries. The ICZ was originally formed by the zookeeper associations from Australia, Germany, USA, UK, the Netherlands, France and Spain. Following the congress the new zookeeping associations from the Philippines and Africa both look like becoming active members of this important zookeeping association.

ASZK was the primary organiser of this 2nd ICZ with assistance in particular from the UK keeper association ABWAK members Paul Howse and Teague Stubbington, who organised the paper program. There was a wide variety of topics presented from elephants and large carnivores to birds to keeper training programs and news on two new zookeeping associations from the Philippines and Africa mentioned earlier.

A full social program was also in place with the opening icebreaker sponsored by SOS Rhino giving delegates the opportunity to mingle and mix as well as having fun playing some enriching games created by Peggy Mucci and Matt Radnidge and supplied by Joe Parsons from Aussie Dog – another of the wonderful sponsors.

Monday opened with a welcome to country by local Aboriginal elder Uncle Graham followed by aboriginal dancers then a keynote address by Steve Martin from Natural Encounters. The new ICZ logo which had been voted on during registration was announced followed by a great selection of papers. The afternoon event was a trip up to Dreamworld on the northern end of the Gold Coast. Sponsored by Dreamworld this gave delegates the opportunity to get up close and personal to a koala and other native animals, go on a few stomach churning rides and explore the park. This was followed by cocktails at Tiger Island and dinner at the restaurant during the evening. It was interesting to see the response to the interactive tiger exhibit with many Europeans in particular having mixed feelings about the keeper interaction with the tigers. Thanks to all the Dreamworld team for contributing to an interesting evening.

Tuesday morning was an early start with breakfast at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary. Fortunately there were no raptors scaring the birds & most got the opportunity to feed the wild lorikeets which the delegates from overseas in particular loved. On return to the hotel another session of papers followed with an afternoon of workshops ending the major sessions of the day. We were very fortunate in having Steve Parish run a photography workshop, John Wright facilitated an exhibit design workshop, Steve Martin a training workshop & Margaret Hawkins organised a behavioural enrichment workshop.

The evening entertainment was a BBQ & silent & live auction at the hotel. The auction raised \$5,800 and was

assisted by a live auction with Tony Billing in control assisted by Marcia Salverson & Jocelyn Hockley raising \$1800. The silent auction organised by the ICZ team led by Norah Farnham and ably assisted by Renee Higler, Carsten Knott, Pep Xarles and Mickael Mickault did a great job of operating a complex event smoothly and brought in the final \$4,000. This money will assist the continuation and growth of the ICZ. It was great to have donations from some of the exhibitors including books from Andrew Isles Natural History Books and a very sort after coat from Ronstan.

Wednesday was again a full day with papers followed by an evening at Seaworld which was sponsored by Seaworld. A special seal show & dolphin show had the delegates enthralled as did the opportunity to have cocktails by the polar bears. Dinner was a multicultural feast with an exhibit design competition organised by Penny Cooper which saw the creative German keepers run in first place with their statement on bureaucracy. Delegates from The Netherlands, Japan & Spain showed us their special dancing talents as well! Thanks also go to the staff that brought out the seal and provided their services for the night.

No ASZK conference will now be without a spooning challenge which was taken on after the return to the hotel! Rather than try and fit 80 people into Ron Pope's room the hotel was happy for us to use the corridor behind the bar to make a new record. A total of 87 people spooned as counted by ICZ president Shane Good. The next ASZK conference in Alice Springs is going to have a very tough time breaking that one!

The final day saw another round of excellent presentations and workshops on interpretations by Martin Fingland and fundraising led by Lynsey Jones from Chester Zoo, Shane Good & Teague Stubbington from the ICZ steering committee. The second keynote of the conference was presented on this day by Associate Professor Lesley Rogers from the University of New England. She gave a thought provoking presentation on the intelligence of animals and the considerations that need to be made based on new research in keeping these animals in captivity. I think much of this research backed up what many of us suspected through our work.

It was great to also have a number of exhibitors which displayed and sold relevant goods to delegates. Exhibitors included Andrew Isles Natural History Books, Ronstan and Carl Stahl rigging systems, Dogtainers animal transport and Natural Encounters Inc.

All in all it was a great event. All the people mingled and enjoyed themselves and the opportunity of being with so

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many peers from around the world. It was great to see a number of keepers from India, Nepal, PNG, Philippines, Mexico & Columbia receive sponsorship from the various zookeeper associations to attend. I know a lot of information and contacts were exchanged which can only benefit us in the future.

ASZK also somehow managed to squeeze in its annual general meeting at which Des Spittall was awarded a Hall of Fame award for his long term contribution to zookeeping. Congratulations Des.

The next ICZ will be held in Seattle in 2009 – I hope we can see a big contingent of Aussies there!

Finally thanks to the sponsors in particular Chester Zoo, SOS Rhino, Seaworld, Aussie Dog, Dreamworld, Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary, Burgers Zoo and Gendika. Thanks go to the ICZ steering committee as well as the ASZK members who worked hard during the conference with special mentions to Tony Kershaw for his work on the registration

desk, Teague Stubbington as official photographer supported by Richard Urban and Paul Metcalf the ASZK vice president and Carla Srb ASZK president who filled so many gaps so well. Also thanks Carsten Knott for carting the pens half way around the world!

Note: About three people from India attended this Congress but at least two of them were not zookeepers. Dr. Subhransu Pan is a veterinary doctor who is a Reader in West Bengal and apparently has an interest in zoos. He presented a technical paper and was sponsored by the conference.

Dr. K. Surendra Verma, Conservation Officer, from the Elephant Conservation Centre in Bangalore also attended to promote the Centre and was sponsored by one of the zoos sponsoring the conference.

Bharatkumar Sampatrav Maratha of Ahmedabad Zoo was awarded a travel grant but was not able to procure a visa in time. It is a pity as he might have been the only zookeeper from India to attend the conference.



World Wide Fund for Nature - India Invites applications for the post of Director - Species Conservation

The Species Conservation Programme of WWF India is one of the largest programmes of the organisation with great potential for further expansion. WWF India's species conservation programme works at the landscape scale with a focus on various species, significantly, tigers, elephants and rhinos in the Terai, Sunderbans, Central India, Northeast India and the Nilgiris. The programme is also developing work on other key species such as the red panda and snow leopard. WWF India is looking for a dynamic and motivated individual to head the Species Conservation Division and provide leadership to a team of dedicated personnel both in the secretariat and in the field.

The Species Conservation Director will be responsible for providing vision, strategic leadership and practical guidance to further develop WWF India's species conservation programme and integrate it with the other thematic programmes of the organisation to maximise delivery and impact of conservation on the ground. The incumbent will also be responsible for ensuring smooth working relationships with government and NGO partners at various levels, for developing capacity of the team and for raising funds from within and outside India. Donor liaison, effective monitoring and reporting as well as representing WWF India at national and international fora will also be responsibilities of this position.

Position Requirements: Researchers, scientists and individuals, including serving and retired government officials are eligible to apply. Applicants must have the experience of managing mega species for at least 10 years. In exceptional cases, the minimum experience may be relaxed. The position is open to Indian nationals only.

Interested candidates should possess a record of demonstrated leadership and collaborative development and delivery of integrated conservation programmes. Extensive national experience in wildlife conservation, natural resource management or a related field is essential. Skills in strategic planning and analysis, adaptive management and knowledge on issues related to wildlife policy in India are critical. Exceptional communication skills, both written and verbal, the ability work productively under pressure and meet tight deadlines, the capacity to make presentations and communicate through electronic media are necessary. Managing a diverse team and travelling in difficult conditions are integral to the position. Personal commitment to the cause of conservation and strong commitment to WWF's mission and values are also essential.

The position is based in New Delhi, involving considerable travel both within India and overseas. Remuneration is negotiable and depends on the candidate's experience and the overall WWF India salary structure. WWF India does not provide housing, telephone or vehicle facilities.

Interested candidates may apply within 30 days of the issue of the advertisement, giving full details regarding compensation received in the present and previous assignments, expected salary and three references to: Manager – Human Resources, WWF-INDIA, 172-B, Lodi Estate, New Delhi 110 003. (Ph. 4150 4815-19) Email: hr@wwfindia.net