

Meeting of World Zoo Conservation Strategy Steering Group, ZSL, London

A meeting of the World Zoo Conservation Strategy Steering Group was held on 17th February 2004 in the Nuffield Building ZSL

Present: Alex Rubel [AR], Amanda Alabaster [AA], Anne Baker [AB], Bengt Holst [BH], Bert de Boer [BB], Bill Conway [BC], Caroline Lees [CL], Chris West [CW], Glyn Davies [GD], Gordon Reid [GR], Jo Gipps (Chair) [JG], Lars Lunding Andersen[LLA], Lena Linden [LL], Mark Stanley-Price [MSP], Michael Hutchins [MH], Miranda Stevenson [MS], Onnie Byers [OB], Peter Olney [PO], Sally Walker [SW]

1) Update on the Foundation Document JG (PO, MS)

Current situation: general background – some forty people have contributed so far since November. We may pick up some points over the Catalysts meeting over the next two days. Contributions vary, in length and comment and detail and some contradict each other. Also comments are still coming in. Overall the comments are positive. Some chapters will have to be redrafted in a more strategic and cohesive format so that the document looks like it was written by one person. AR asked about the contradictory issues – are they fundamental – not really and there is a solution to most of the issues. Funding and distribution will be finally decided in Bern – date in Bern is either 10 or 11 May and the Steering Group will be contacted immediately the final date is decided.

2) General – **preface and introduction**

- a) N.b. this is the strategic document – no 1 of 4
- b) To whom is the document aimed? – for zoos but must emphasise what is unique about zoos? – what is their unique contribution?
- c) Why is it necessary now?: why a new one what has happened since the last WZCS?
- d) What are the goals and the general aims? – and how is the document meant to be used?
- e) What are the recommendations?
- f) How the document stands in relation to CBD, IUCN Technical Guidelines, IUCN redlisting etc.

Action: There should be a **preface** with the general information in it as to who the document is for.

Core group to do this.

Introduction: CW would like to see the fully integrated document before finishing off the introduction. The foundation document should make it clear what examples are required in the auxiliary documents There followed a more general discussion on what is the difference between the zoo's mission and the WZACS as the majority of institutions are regional and local, not global, are not conservation organisations but simply serve a small group of people. This actually needs to come out (in **the Introduction**) and also in **partnerships and marketing** chapters. What would a document on zoo management strategy have in it that this does not? The document covers the areas of activity where zoos are involved in conservation. It must be inspirational and show the direction that we are moving in. It was agreed that in general there was nothing fundamentally wrong with the document.

The questions 'what impact do we expect this document to have on major conservation organisations'? It is important to get the message across that we are talking about saving wildlife in a human dominated world. What is unique about zoos is the interdisciplinary ability of the organisations. We know that management is essential and need to tell some of the other conservation organisations this. The link between the disciplines in zoos and conservation is not clear from the **managing populations chapter**. However this may only be true for western zoos, zoos in less developed countries do not have these skills.

The zoo world does not have the competence in managing wild populations – is it going to obtain or acquire this? Probably need to put together multidisciplinary teams in the future and we need to put forward our proposals for solutions in the document. We need something which might provide a kind of hope. i.e. do we need an epilogue on the way it ought to be. The link between development and conservation (currently in **chapter 2**) needs to be highlighted.

The **Introduction** must also emphasise that this is what we are aiming for – not necessarily where all zoos are now.

3) **Executive Summary:** will be written after the document. It might have been useful to have goals and objectives from the start. Executive Summary will be similar design to the last one in WAZCS.

4) Structure for each **Chapter** will be:

- a) Vision
- b) Subsections which discuss a particular issue or topic; where zoos and aquariums are now; what needs to be done; what we expect the changes to be over the next 10 years - recommendations as to how it should be done i.e. how to implement the strategy
- c) Conclusions and if necessary further recommendations

5) It was decided not to cite references in the text but in a bibliography with a general section and a section for each chapter. **Decision:** give general references that those who were writing the chapter used. Web-addresses in general section. The references must be relevant, they are resources.

6) New chapter arrangement agreed (old number):

- a) Introduction
- b) Integrated Conservation (1)
- c) Conservation of wild populations (2)
- d) Science and research (4)
- e) Population management for conservation (5)
- f) Education and training for conservation (3)
- g) Communication: marketing and public relations for conservation (6)
- h) Partnerships and Politics (7)
- i) Going green: sustainability (8)
- j) Ethics and Welfare in Conservation (9)

The **ethics chapter** should be at the end and perhaps should just be called 'Ethics'. Also needs to include other

issues such as re-introductions. **Decision:** Leave as **ethics and welfare**.

7) Discussion on the suggestion for the **addition** of a Wildlife, Health and Medicine Chapter:

- a) How zoo networks can be used for this
- b) Creative use of vet facilities and staff
- c) Treatment of injured wildlife
- d) Veterinary outreach
- e) Assistance to population management programmes
- f) Disease environment

General Comments: this is not part of a strategy – it overlaps with some of the other chapters and it is also part of the toolkit. However it still needs to be incorporated in the document. On the other hand it is a strategy as zoos have been responsible for discovering and monitoring diseases e.g. West Nile virus. Animal diseases that also have public health issues can use the expertise of zoo veterinarians. It makes the point that this is something that we are concerned about but we must not be defensive – be more positive. Other examples would be vultures in India. Emergent and shared disease areas (also there is a piece in **Chap 2**). Diseases are an emerging problem in conservation – and zoos have expertise, but should have a landscape perspective – not bit by bit treatment of disease. Other idea was to put in **population management** chapter or **wild population** chapter. **Agreed Action:** it is a notable omission. It could be in both these chapters i.e. **population management** and **conservation in the wild** and GD will expand a section of his chapter to cover this. Ballou's chapter will take the rest. GD needs Caroline to point out what is missing. CL to work with GD.

8) Definitions of *in* and *ex situ* and captivity: these will go in a glossary.
The working group from Costa Rica had produced a report on the topic.

In situ and *ex situ* – there is confusion on what *situ* means i.e. where is *situ*? Use Mark's matrix to show the continuum. **Action:** MSP to make box to put in preface. Do we use in the text itself – we can with the use of the box. *Ex situ* is used to avoid using the word captive. Captive: use zoo animals? **MSP to assist PO in this.**

9) Design: **Agreed Action:** it must be designed and there is a cost in this but it must be recognisable WAZA document.

10) Timetable: meet in Bern, but there will be no new document distributed before Bern. Suggested that there will be a final draft for Taipei – which would mean publication in early 2005.

11) Next three documents: discuss this in Bern. JG and MS to come up with a schedule. **Toolkit** needs to go alongside training programmes with repeats, otherwise there is a problem getting people to use the toolkits. CBSG Conservation Zoo Workshops might be a model (but have any of these been implemented?). Of models that work, one is accreditation. We have to demand some things – i.e. the document has to be backed up by a stick and then a higher bar – have to do at least this much to get your accreditation. However it was agreed that accreditation has to be regional. The toolkit needs to be interactive and dynamic – what they can do and what other regions can do to help them. **Decision:** The toolkit document should be web-based. People are interested in problems i.e. things that they need the answer to. If we can solve these problems then this is what we can achieve. But the zoo community could prioritize the issues that they can address and do something about. **Action:** we will focus on **toolkits** and **action plans** in Bern. Onnie will design the facilitation of this meeting.

Two Headed Russell's Viper

Jayanthi Alahakoon*

A reptile having two heads with a length of about 10 inches was found in Hambantota down south of Sri Lanka. It was handed over to the National Zoological Gardens by wildlife officers and was identified as a Viper by the Zoo staff. Since the animal was not eating it was force fed, but it died few days later.

The post-mortem revealed two tracheas, both leading to one lung. The animal had one heart. There were two oesophagus, two stomachs, two small intestines leading to one large intestine. Force-fed food was seen on each side of the small intestines. Liver was seen on either side situated adjacent to the small intestines. There were also two gall-bladders.

Two kidneys were present on either side. No other abnormalities were seen. The animal died due to multiple congenital abnormalities.

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