

## **CAZA Position Re: Impact of Climate Change**

### **Preamble**

Changes in climate have affected the world, and the distribution and abundance of its plants and animals since the beginning of time. However, during the 20th Century, the rate of climate change increased dramatically (the greatest in the last 1000 years), with the 1990s being the warmest decade on record. This coincided with industrial and social development increasing the level of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and accelerating what is essentially a natural process.

Climate change presents a series of important and immediate challenges. In nature conservation, there is already clear evidence to show that plants and animals are being affected by climate change. This includes changes in populations, ranges, migration patterns, and seasonal and reproductive behaviour of certain species. Such effects are likely to become more apparent and extensive as climate continues to change.

### **Position**

CAZA and its Institutional Members, recognizing the threats from climate change facing species, habitats and biomes both in Canada and throughout the world, commit to increasing the quality and quantity of their actions to counter the threat of climate change as well as promote awareness of the impact that climate change is having on the Earth's biodiversity.

CAZA members are encouraged to lead by example in sustainable environmental practices and to incorporate the probable effects of climate change into education programs.

CAZA, through its institutional members, is strategically placed to assume a leadership role by promoting environmental sustainability and by providing accurate information to its members and all of their visitors about the issues and recommendations as to what they can do at the personal, local, national and international levels to reduce the causes and impacts of climate change.

CAZA urges government to use the results of scientific research to adapt policy and practices to the immediate challenges created by climate change, and to strengthen the case for planning the long-term conservation of species and their habitats over wide geographic areas.

CAZA urges individuals to advocate policy measures and cultural changes to reduce the long-term emissions of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere and so help mitigate the effects of climate change as rapidly as possible, in accordance with sustainable development principles.

CAZA supports policies that encourage the sustainable use of energy, and research that promotes the development of less polluting fuels, cleaner combustion techniques, renewable energy schemes, and more energy-efficient industrial processes, consumer products, building design and transport systems.

CAZA recognizes the importance of cooperative efforts to address large issues such as global climate change and is eager to explore partnership opportunities addressing the issue of climate change that will enhance its impact and that of its members.

CAZA stands ready to aid recovery programs with the provision of resources such as technical support and expertise in the areas of captive breeding and small population management for species impacted by climate change.