

# **Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums**

## **Conservation and Science Program**

**Building for the future**

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## Presidents Comments

E.O. Wilson, in his book *The Future Of Life*, states that Biodiversity, counted by species (timber wolf or cougars) or families (dog families or cat families), and on both land and sea, is today about twice as great as the average level achieved throughout the past 450 million years. This is a tremendous legacy that we have been blessed with. However, the species extinction rate is now over 1000 times higher than the rate that occurred prior to humans expanding around the globe. We are in danger of losing much of nature's biodiversity within the lifetimes of our children and the young adults alive today.

And biodiversity is our business. CAZA institutions should focus their efforts to make a significant difference in addressing the issue of species extinction. Biologist, Dr. Andrew Bryant recently stated that if it was not for Canadian Zoos the Vancouver Island Marmot (one of the most endangered species on earth) would now be extinct.

Given these realities, I would like to extend CAZA's heartfelt thanks to the Conservation & Science Committee and the expert volunteers who gave their time to develop this 'Road Map' - "Conservation and Science Program – Building For The Future".

This is a timely work that refines previous thinking of the 1996 CAZA Long Term Strategic Plan with regard to the important role of CAZA facilities in Conservation and Science. By bringing together the guidance of the World Zoo Conservation Strategy and the expertise of the members who worked on this committee this document provides an exciting and challenging framework to guide CAZA's important Conservation and Science work into the future.

**The Key Results Areas outlined in this document - Conservation of Biodiversity, Resource Conservation, Science and Research and Partnerships and Resources – with their associated objectives provide expert guidance for CAZA and member institutions that will greatly enhance CAZA's efforts in support of biodiversity.**

Nothing will silence our critics faster than if we can demonstrate that CAZA institutions are committed to conservation and education. Society needs accredited zoological facilities to assist in confronting the species extinction crisis.

By working together CAZA institutions can have an even greater impact on motivating societal change. There is reason for optimism - people care a lot about their children and invest in their shelter, clothing, food and education. So it is only logical that people will want to invest in preserving the legacy of incredible species diversity for the benefit of our children.

## **Introduction**

In 1996 CAZA members approved a “Long Term Strategic Plan” that would shape the future of the Association. Following are some of the key elements that relate directly to the contents of this document and apply as much today as when they were created.

**CAZA’s ROLE: CAZA is committed to the conservation of biodiversity**

### **CAZA’s MISSION**

To be a Canadian leader in the conservation of biodiversity by coordinating and supporting its members in the areas of education, animal management, scientific study and field conservation.

### **CAZA’s VALUES**

- The association supports efforts to preserve biodiversity within Canada and throughout the world while respecting the natural evolution of ecosystems.
- The association recognises the value of scientific study that benefits humankind and nature
- The members of the association are repositories for significant amounts of information and expertise and have both the ability and responsibility to communicate information related to science education to their communities.
- The association and its members will actively participate in conservation efforts within the constraints of available resources.

### **CAZA’s VISION**

CAZA will enhance the contributions of its members to conservation, defined in its broadest sense, through its coordinating efforts and policies. The association will promote and support a clear Canadian perspective which will be reflected in its policies and programs.

Broad based, multi-institutional scientific projects will find coordinating assistance through CAZA. The Association will provide support to research through communicating the progress and results of scientific work and assisting members in finding the national and international credit due their work.

### **GOAL 2**

CAZA will enhance member contribution to conservation and our collective image as leaders in species and habitat conservation

## **Executive Summary**

Following a thorough review of the results of the membership survey conducted in January 2006, it became apparent there was an opportunity to expand the scope and the scale of Conservation and Research activities in the Association. Comments received from many of CAZA's institutions suggested they would be interested in increasing their levels of activity in the areas of conservation and science if appropriate opportunities were available. In addition, the recently published World Zoo and Aquarium Conservation Strategy (WZACS) made a number of recommendations that seemed to be worthy of CAZA's consideration as an Association.

Based on this background the Conservation and Science Committee conducted a two-day workshop at the Toronto Zoo June 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. The goal of the workshop was:

**The creation of a set of strategies that will ultimately lead to CAZA and it's members being recognized as leaders in the Canadian conservation community.**

The first day was dedicated to generating ideas and options. Twelve CAZA members, representing large and small, public and private organizations attended. They first reviewed and discussed the WZACS. The group also considered the types of activities that other zoo associations such as AZA and EAZA were involved in. Finally, John Carnio led them through a review of the current Canadian Collection Plan (CCP) programs. The second day the Conservation and & Science Committee met as a working group. They reviewed and further refined the categorization of the materials from the previous day. The working group identified the following four Key Results Areas ( KRA).

- **Conservation of Biodiversity**
- **Resource Conservation**
- **Science and Research**
- **Partnerships and Resources**

This document is the sum result of the working groups efforts. It will continue to evolve and change as more input is received. At this time the plan is very much at a "strategic" level, focusing primarily on KRAs, Goals and Objectives. In the future, the C&S committee will develop more of an "operational" plan that will identify highest priority areas and activities that must be undertaken.

## **Key Result Area: Conservation of Biodiversity**

### **Vision**

**“Zoos and aquariums will make further contributions to conservation in the wild by providing knowledge, skills and resources through initiatives in zoo breeding, translocations and reintroduction, wildlife health, research, training, education and by funding field activities. Zoos and aquariums will be an important force for worldwide conservation by their employment or support of field workers active in the conservation of wild animals and their habitats.**

**All zoos and aquariums will be primary centers of expertise in small population management and will be involved in global or regional cooperative breeding programmes. All such programmes will be based on sound knowledge using the latest available data on population management, reproductive biology, genetics, behaviour, physiology, nutrition, veterinary care and husbandry. “**

From World Zoo and Aquarium Conservation Strategy

### **Goal One: To expand member involvement in conservation programs**

#### **Objectives**

1. Negotiate with AZA a process to allow fuller participation by CAZA members in SSP programs.
2. Increase communication about, and awareness of, the options available for members to participate in.
  - a. Create and maintain an electronic communication network among all member institutions.
  - b. Dedicate an area of the web site to conservation projects that members could support
3. Establish bench marks for conservation participation that are incorporated into the accreditation standards
4. Develop systems that facilitate CAZA institutions staff and volunteers involvement in conservation programs

## **Goal Two: Optimize the operation of the CCP**

### **Objectives**

1. Develop cooperative regional collection plans with other associations for CSPs & CPMPs. (AZA, EAZA etc.)
2. Develop plans for taxa conservation programs (frogs, snakes etc.)
3. Evaluate Canadian species to identify those that would benefit from the creation of a CESP
4. Facilitate the import and export of animals to increase the genetic & demographic quality of CCP populations and to ease the burden of paperwork on smaller institutions
5. Provide greater levels of financial and human resources for the conduct of CAZA CCP programs.
6. Conduct training programs for member institutions staffs.
7. Identify and prioritize the areas that are in need of formal research
8. Provide funds to support smaller institutions participation in workshops and meetings

## **Goal Three: To expand CAZA's role in biodiversity conservation.**

### **Objectives**

1. To negotiate with AZA the appointment of an official CAZA representative to the North American CAP.
2. Have CAZA formally endorse existing programs (frogwatch, adopt-a-pond, etc.) and encourage members to become involved in them.
3. Review CAZA's participation in WAZA, CBSG etc.

## **Goal Four: To encourage and support CAZA institutions in the education of their patrons about conservation of biodiversity.**

### **Objectives**

1. Encourage members to utilize landscape approaches that would support the maintenance of wild populations on their sites and to use this as a teaching tool for patrons.

2. Encourage members to provide information about the conservation issues facing species in their collections as part of their education programs
3. Encourage members to provide information about the actions that the public can take to aid in conservation.
4. Support the development of the CAZA national education program
5. Develop and provide to members, education and public awareness materials for each CESP.

## **Key Result Area: Resource Conservation**

### Vision

**“All zoos and aquariums will work towards sustainability and reduce their ‘environmental footprint’. They will use natural resources in a way that does not lead to their decline, thus meeting the needs of the present without compromising future generations. All zoos and aquariums will serve as leaders by example, using green practices in all aspects of their operations and by demonstrating methods by which visitors can adopt sustainable lifestyles. “**

From World Zoo and Aquarium Conservation Strategy

### **Goal One: Create a CAZA “Green Strategy” program.**

#### **Objectives**

1. Identify priority areas of focus, training needs and support initiatives
2. Create effective mechanisms for sharing information about new technologies, success stories etc.
  - a. Develop an area on the web site to provide examples of programs and links to resources
3. Develop a “Green Practices” recognition program.

### **Goal Two: To implement a communications program to build awareness and support for CAZA’s members environmental conservation activities**

#### **Objectives**

1. Establish and maintain an advocacy program to inform and enlist support from Government policy and decision makers

2. Encourage the development of appropriate displays at all CAZA institutions to inform visitors of environmental conservation activities
3. Institute an internal communication program that will encourage all CAZA institutions staff to be aware of, involved in, and supportive of the CAZA “Green Strategy”

## **Key Result Area: Science and Research**

### Vision

**“Zoos and aquariums are fully and actively integrated into the research community and into public consciousness and understanding of science, as serious, respected scientific institutions that make significant contributions and sound scientific decisions for wildlife worldwide.”**

From World Zoo and Aquarium Conservation Strategy

### **Goal One: Expand member participation in research**

#### **Objectives**

1. Create a research network involving all CAZA member institutions to enhance communication
2. Create a list serve or similar vehicle for all those interested in research projects
3. Create a list of research priorities and share this with all individuals and organizations interested in conducting research within CAZA institutions
4. Define and document processes to be followed for CAZA members or external organizations wanting to get involved in or support a research project.

### **Goal Two: Increase awareness of research**

#### **Objectives**

1. Encourage and support CAZA members in publishing results of research work.
2. Provide an area on the web site to list all research work in progress, results of completed work and opportunities for members to support or participate in projects
3. Schedule research sessions at conferences

4. Incorporate a research section in the newsletter

## **Key Result Area: Partnerships and Resources**

### Vision

**“Through increased cooperation and judicious encouragement, zoos and aquariums will continue to raise standards of animal management, educate the public to act on behalf of conservation issues, and assist in field projects. Partnerships will strengthen global cooperation and help all zoos, aquariums and other conservation organizations to improve and to achieve their conservation goals. Zoos and aquariums will be encouraged to help one another, particularly those that have fewer resources and/or expertise.”**

From World Zoo and Aquarium Conservation Strategy

**Goal One: To generate adequate financial and human resources to support CAZA’s conservation and science programs**

### **Objectives**

1. Create a Charitable entity within the CAZA organization that will raise money through donations and other activities to fund conservation, education and science programs
  - a. Establish a CAZA flow through conservation fund
  - b. Establish a CAZA Conservation Endowment fund
  - c. Review the benefits of hiring a fundraiser.
  - d. Consider a “Planned Giving” program
  - e. Create CAZA wide fundraising materials
  - f. Consider raising funds and awareness through CAZA run ecotourism programs
  - g. Package conservation programs as elements that will, individually or collectively, lend themselves to generating financial support.
2. Take advantage of grants that are available to support CAZA efforts.
  - a. Apply for grants to fund CAZA conservation programs
  - b. Provide support to members by identifying granting sources, information on timelines for grants and support in creating grant applications.

**Goal Two: To establish relationships with individuals and institutions that will further the accomplishment of CAZA's overall conservation and science plans**

**Objectives**

1. Establish partnerships that will aid in CAZA's conservation programs
  - a. Establish partnerships with government agencies at the federal and provincial levels (CWS, MNR, Recovery teams etc.)
  - b. Create and prioritize a list of potential partners in each segment of the population that would help to facilitate programs
  - c. Support the creation of research partnerships by providing information and support to universities and other organizations interested in conducting research
2. Establish relationships with like minded organizations or individuals
  - a. Other zoo & aquarium associations (AZA, EAZA etc.)
  - b. Local and native peoples in areas of activity
  - c. Outdoor educators
  - d. Support the efforts of re-hab agencies
  - e. Animal welfare groups

**Goal Three: To develop or endorse campaigns that would raise funds and resources for selected conservation programs for CAZA and it's members to support and participate in.**

**Objectives**

1. Build on the CAZA national conservation week
2. Establish criteria for approval of campaigns by CAZA
  - a. Concentrate on Canadian species and spaces first
  - b. Minimum of 50% focus on Canadian issues
  - c. Develop priorities based on in-situ (amphibians) and ex-situ (elephant) needs
  - d. Public appeal of species (aid in fund raising)
  - e. Representation of species in members collections
  - f. Potential for change
  - g. Partnerships with governments.
3. Select two existing international campaign – turtles, tigers, bush meat etc. for CAZA to endorse.
  - a. Try to link to campaigns with Canadian or cold hardy species – turtles, amphibians, tigers, etc.

4. Select two existing national campaigns eg. Vancouver Island Marmots, WWFs endangered spaces etc. for CAZA to endorse
5. Create campaigns to support a CESP.

## **Contributors**

The Association extends its appreciation to the following members who participated in the Conservation and Science workshop hosted by the Toronto Zoo June 22 & 23, 2006.

Jack Sisson - Riverview Park and Zoo

Serge Lussier - African Lion Safari

Phil King - Assiniboine Park Zoo

Bob Johnson - Toronto Zoo

Peter Klose - Jungle Cat World

Patrice Deneault - Parc Safari

Michel Delorme - Montreal Biodome

Rebecca Spindler - Toronto Zoo

John Stoner - Zoo Consultant

Bill Rapley - Toronto Zoo

Maria Franke - Toronto Zoo

John Carnio - CAZA CCP Coordinator

Bill Peters - CAZA National Director

Greg Tarry - CAZA – Special Projects Manager