



Conservation Breeding in Indian Zoos Working Group Report

2008 CBSG Annual Meeting, Adelaide, Australia

Participants

Nate Flesness, Fanny Lai, Kristin Leus, Jansen Manansang, Ivan Rehak, B R Sharma, Kathy Traylor-Holzer, Sally Walker

Background

This group was convened to follow up on previous CBSG Working Groups on the topic of Conservation Breeding in Indian Zoos, as well as a conference on India's Conservation Breeding Initiative held in February 2008. B.R. Sharma provided an overview of the current status of conservation breeding efforts in Indian Zoos, and the group considered some of the steps that could benefit from CBSG's assistance.

Action: *ISIS to compile holdings outside of India of target species for all the species for which conservation breeding programs will be set up international transfers are possible and other species can be exchanged in order to obtain the target species.*

If participating zoos outside India are identified this would make international exchange easier

If animals somehow come in from the wild such as rescues, the first right is for the coordinating zoo, then the participating zoos in India, then the participating zoos outside India, and finally other zoos in India.

Discussion

Nate: In this case, institutions will get assigned a species (not necessarily the ones they are specialist in or enthusiastic about). The first step might be to get help from people that do have experience.

Brij: The coordinating zoo usually holds the species already and has some history with the species, but may not be experts in the species

Sally: We need to know who will make the decisions on pairings and breedings, and who will look at the genetic issues of population biology.

Brij: The Central Zoo Authority will arrange for one technical person (biologist) for each coordinating zoo. Most of the time they will be new people not yet working at the zoo.

Kathy: So these new technical people will be the group that needs training.

Nate: Training will work best for them if they have data on their assigned species to use in training.

Action: *ISIS will run animal records and ARKS training in December through January (three sessions). Seems we should start at the foundation of animal records. Will invite directors also. We can evaluate how this is going because they will send data to ISIS. Once that is working we can provide the technical coordinators with real data as a start for their studbook. And ISIS has many staff going back and forth for ZIMS so many more opportunities for the future.*

Sally: Exchanges should not take place until the training in record keeping and studbook and population management has taken place.

Kristin: It would be good to have registrars as well as technical people at the studbook training so that both roles can gain some understanding of the duties of the other.

Brij: Some of the people going to the registration will also be technical coordinators.

Action: *Must make sure to make use of Gautan Narayam's skills and experience.*

Action: *Nate: next step is then SPARKS studbook training with real data from the region to work with (will not be complete or perfect but a start). It is going to be a while before it is ready for analysis.*

Nate/Kathy/Kristin: We should concentrate first on good studbook keeping and include an overview of population management and the importance of good data, and conduct PM2000 training later in a second step.

Brij: The coordinator would also be the contact person for the international studbook keeper and provide the data from India for the international studbook

Action: ISIS bring contact information on current regional and international studbook keepers to training

The workshop in India in February resulted in general recommendations. The group evaluated these to see which could benefit from CBSG's assistance. See page 5 of this report for a complete list of recommendations.

1. The behind the scene breeding facilities are under construction – in full swing
2. The national studbook cell people are going to the zoos to dig out the information with the zoo so that animal profiles can be compiled. All the above addresses recommendation number 2
3. The zoos will join ISIS and ZIMS – is on the go
4. Health care etc – is going on.
5. Founders are also being tested genetically (fingerprinting).

Action: Nate: to make sure the images of the fingerprinting are safely archived somewhere so they can later go into ZIMS

6. A. First meeting 6th November 2009 in Darjeeling Zoo for Himalayan species.

Action: make sure there is an ISIS person there (Nate to check who)

Nate: is there something we should/could do to celebrate or reward successful record keeping and discourage bad record keeping – there are existing tools but they need adapted and be culturally sensitive

Nate: Sri Lanka national zoo has an ARKS-using registrar, it would it be helpful to involve him in training?

Sally: they would need to be able to speak some English. Will check.

B: not yet, needs a bit more time. Later step.

7. Conservation breeding management plan. Important because staff transfers a lot and you need consistency. Would be a five year overall plan.

Nate: that is a few years down the line but is also the hardest step. There are few people in the world that are expert masterplanners and to do masterplans for all 63 species is a capacity problem. Needs some thought.

8. & 9.

Brij: For some of the species identified for a conservation breeding program, there is also a species recovery plan and then the breeding program is part of the recovery plan.

Sally: CBSG South Asia has done quite a lot of assessments/CAMPs. Would be a good exercise to go check for which species there are assessments.

Also, probably the states have better data than we were able to get out of them for CAMPs etc. Would be good to get that info.

Action (Bob): Consider having PHVA planning meetings that describe the process and data needs etc (then go out to collect data etc). These planning meetings could handle several species at a time (don't need 5 days per species like a full blown PHVA). We can then also assess if a classic PHVA is what is needed, or an adapted version or another type of workshop.

Recommendation: PHVA

10. Would be a later step. Vultures might good candidate species.
11. A. Nothing for this workshop
B. No progress yet but still working on it.

Action: CZA consider sponsoring Indian zoo staff (e.g. vets) to other zoo facilities outside India

Action: ISIS to help communicate with AAZK re possible sponsorship of above

Action: take advantage of other zoo training programs (e.g. vet training at CRC medical records training)

12. Makes sense
13. Amphibians:

Action: There will be a first meeting of in situ and ex situ managers on amphibian crisis and need for ex situ management in Jan 09 in Mysore. Use the CBSG South Asia amphibian CAMP report for this. There is a very good group of field biologist that should cooperate with CZA.

Sally: It might be helpful if the zoos could start with common species to learn (as it requires a lot of expertise) and to teach people about amphibians.

Ivan: there are very good examples from Fiji on how to work with amphibians in a relatively simple way

Actions for Conservation Breeding in Indian Zoos Working Group

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