Divestment “Fast Facts”
Talking points to use in media releases and quotes

• Our institution believes that our investments should reflect our mission to conserve species.

• To keep warming below 2 degrees Celsius, scientists and economists say we must leave 80 percent of the current coal, oil, and gas reserves in the ground. Simply put, to avoid the most catastrophic effects of climate change we can only burn 565 gigatons of carbon dioxide, while the fossil fuel industry currently holds five times that amount in its reserves. The fossil fuel industry’s business model depends on its ability to burn all of the carbon in its reserves.

• Divestment publicly acknowledges that in order to return levels of atmospheric CO2 to safe levels, many of the known carbon reserves held by these companies must not be used. Through divestment, we are publicly asking governments to enact policies that reflect this reality.

• Our institution is taking action to reduce the amount of carbon we emit. However, we recognize that there is a lack of more available, affordable alternatives to fossil fuels. Divestment demands a shift in priorities that must take place for these alternatives to become readily available.

• Divestment is a way to build a movement that includes people from all sectors and areas of the globe, united under our universal concern about climate change and the number “350.”

• Divestment draws attention to the moral problem with investing in companies whose business plan counts on “business as usual” extraction and burning of fossil fuels at the expense of current and future generations and all species. It makes no moral or practical sense to finance conservation activities by investing in companies whose business plan is detrimental to the long-term survival of wildlife.

• Divestment helps remove the social license that allows the fossil fuel industry to continue to emit dangerous pollutants into the atmosphere for free.

• Zoos and Aquariums for 350 calls on zoos and aquariums to pursue divestment of their institutions’ investments from fossil fuel companies, as well as reduce carbon footprints and offset remaining carbon emissions, and engage in climate change education initiatives that incorporate the number “350.”

• Zoos and Aquariums for 350 joins the climate change movement started by 350.org, an organization aiming to solve the climate crisis by addressing systemic barriers to climate solutions.