

Regional Species Planning & Management Policy

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1. Purpose

This Policy establishes an effective, accountable, and transparent framework for ZAA regional species planning and management amongst Association Members, Non-Members, and other Recognised Regional Associations. It ensures a collaborative, consultative, best practice approach to support demographically viable and where possible, genetically sustainable populations in the Australasian region. In the case of threatened species that are the focus of recovery efforts, it ensures that their regional populations support the delivery of tangible conservation outcomes as required, as well as the delivery of consistent educational and advocacy messaging.

2. Scope and exemptions

This Policy applies to all identified SMP Priority Species. Exemptions apply to certain parts of the Policy.

3. Policy Statement

3.1 The Association:

- (a) Supports the objectives and intent of all relevant prevailing National, state, and territory environment, biosecurity and welfare legislation and the authorities responsible for regulation of these matters.
- (b) Supports the objectives and intent of international multilateral environmental agreements including the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); and its supplementary protocols, the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic

Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilisation; and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

- (c) Highlights the benefit received by Association Members in being able to participate in Species Management Program(s) administered by other Recognised Regional Association(s) including WAZA, Cooperative Conservation Program(s), and process and efficiency opportunities for animal imports and exports provided from being a Member of a Recognised Regional Association well-connected with government agencies and other Recognised Regional Associations across the world.
- (d) Considers that exhibited animals and animals housed for the purpose of exhibition and conservation breeding are not used primarily for commercial purposes, and as required, are transferred in keeping with the ZAA Animal Transfers Policy on a gratis loan basis.
- (e) Requires that members acquiring SMP Priority Species commit all individuals of the species in their population to the Stewardship of the program, this commitment will be outlined in any member requested supporting document provided by the Association for the importation of SMP species with the relevant government agencies.
- (f) Acknowledges the costs involved in animal transfers and imports to support program goals. For some species, consideration may be given to a cost share/cost recovery model to support participants with ongoing logistics costs.
- (g) Provides Association Members access to the Association's Regional Species Planning framework and opportunities to participate in ZAA Species Management Programs (SMPs), and via Association membership and animal welfare accreditation, Association Members have access to opportunities to participate in Species Management Programs administered by other Recognised Regional Associations.
- (h) Supports Association Member participation in ZAA SMPs only where current best practice can be met for a species, with consideration given to facilities (including capacity to progress transfers and introductions), expertise, population genetics and demographics, and where animals can be cared for in such a way and are provided with the opportunities to achieve a positive welfare state.
- (i) Supports a consultative, collaborative approach to species planning and management, informed by analysis and advice from the relevant SMP Position Holders, [including institutional TAG Liaisons,] and with support from the relevant Taxon Advisory Group (TAG) Co-conveners and the ZAA Executive Team as required. [See Section 5. *Related Documents: SMP Engagement Flowchart.*]
- (j) Strongly encourages Members to work closely with the relevant SMP Position Holders to make every attempt to transfer managed species to/from other ZAA Members as a priority before considering rehoming animals outside of the membership to non-members.
- (k) Does not usually support the transfer of SMP animals to Non-Members unless assessed by the AMC as supporting the program's goals. This includes transfers to

other Recognised Regional Association Species Management Programs, and recovery programs.

- (l) Requires that, in circumstances where an Association Member is exited from the membership based on a breach of the Association's Animal Welfare Policy, or where a Member becomes insolvent and unable to continue to operate, all ZAA SMP Animals received or descended from animals received as a benefit of ZAA Membership are repatriated back to the ZAA SMP for distribution within the relevant program on advice from the relevant Position Holder(s). In these circumstances where animals have been acquired via other Recognised Regional Association Species Management Programs, the Association will consult with the relevant regional program i.e., AZA SSP, EAZA EEP, WAZA GSMP etc., to determine a course of action for these animals.
- (m) Requires that in circumstances where a Member is exited from the membership due to a breach of the Association Constitution and/or Policies (excluding the Association Animal Welfare Policy which is detailed in 5.1) or a Member leaves the Association via their own decision, an agreement will be reached between the Member and the Association as to which animals can be retained by the Member and which animals will be repatriated back to the ZAA SMP for distribution within the relevant program. In these circumstances, if relevant i.e. if animals have been acquired from other Recognised Regional Associations and participate in their Species Management Program(s) i.e., AZA SSP, EAZA EEP, WAZA GSMP etc., these other Recognised Regional Associations will be informed that this organisation is no longer a Member of the Association.
- (n) Will, in Q1 of each calendar year, notify relevant SMP Position Holders (TAG Liaisons, Species Coordinators, TAG Conveners) of due dates for Annual Report and Recommendation submissions, and expected dates of consultation for each ZAA SMP.

3.2 Species Coordinators:

- (a) Will give due consideration to genetic and demographic targets for each species as well as individual and group welfare, and resource capacity and commitment of both source and recipient Association Members.
- (b) Will collect relevant data, analyse relevant data, and produce timely and accurate Annual Report and Recommendations at the frequency determined by the ZAA Executive Office through consultation with the AMC and relevant SMP Position Holders.
- (c) Are required to work in consultation with TAG Liaisons at participating institutions to help facilitate the successful development and implementation of breeding and transfer recommendations.

3.3 Taxon Advisory Group(s) (TAGs):

- (a) Assess and analyse species populations, and with reference to the Association's relevant TAG Regional Species Plan (RSP) document, reach agreement on preferred SMP Priority Species and non-priority species.

- (b) Recommend Species Role(s), including opportunities to support conservation outcomes, and the required level of management, including the need for a formal ZAA SMP. Consideration of conservation priorities (e.g., the needs of formal Recovery Programs) and global zoo and aquarium population requirements (including consultation and coordination with other Recognised Regional Associations) will occur to inform recommendations.
- (c) Will reach consensus on the recommended Species Role(s) and Management Strategy(ies) for each SMP Priority Species. Management Strategy(ies) are guided by the agreed Species Role and current population status.

3.4 The ZAA Animal Management Committee (AMC):

- (a) Will consider TAG recommendations i.e., for proposed new ZAA SMPs, changes in SMP Priority Species/Non-Priority Species etc.
- (b) Will determine whether there is a need to establish/discontinue a ZAA SMP, or change the Management Strategy(ies), based on the TAGs recommendations.
- (c) Will consider requests to permanently remove an animal(s) from a ZAA SMP when removal will support positive welfare outcomes and program goals.
- (d) Generally, does not support permanent modification of an animal to enable participation in Animal Visitor Interactions or for housing in atypical social structures.
- (e) Does not support engagement of species or individuals for Animal Visitor Interactions where these species or individuals are destined for reintroduction. Breeding program animals may be used for interactive experiences only when there is no interference with breeding or population management goals.

3.5 Association Members:

- (a) Are encouraged to actively participate in TAG meetings.
- (b) Wherever possible, commit to aligning their institutional species plans (including planned species/specimen acquisitions, dispositions, transfers and breeding) with TAG-endorsed regional approaches that are representative of the membership as advised by the AMC, the TAGs and SMP Position Holders.
- (c) Commit to accurately updating their species composition data in ZAAs Census and Planning Online System (CPOS) at least annually, at the request of the ZAA Executive Team and/or the Species Coordinator.
- (d) Commit to participating in ZAA SMPs with the following considerations:
 - (i) For a new Member joining the Association, incorporating existing animals into ZAA SMPs on the advice of the AMC or their elected delegate.
 - (ii) For Members who have acquired non-Program animals separate to the Association, and who's animals may (or may not) be participants of another Recognised Regional Association's Species Management Program, if a ZAA SMP is newly established by the Association for that

species, participation in the SMP of these existing animals is to be via engagement and consultation with the relevant TAG and the AMC.

- (e) Are required to work in consultation with the Species Coordinator to support plans and implement recommendations.
- (f) Will provide timely and accurate information about species populations and individuals in human care at their organisation and planned species numbers to support Species Coordinators and the ZAA Executive Office in their delivery of the Annual Reporting and Recommendations process, and the Regional Species Planning process. [See Section 5. Related Documents: SMP Engagement Flowchart.]
- (g) Commit to endorsing, and implementing endorsed recommendations and plans as a priority. If endorsed recommendations or plans cannot be implemented for any reason, the Association Member will inform the relevant SMP Position Holder(s) in writing as quickly as possible.
- (h) That seek to permanently remove an animal from the breeding population of a ZAA SMP must obtain approval from the ZAA AMC prior to actioning, (with the exception of events such as euthanasia or permanent contraception to address an immediate welfare concern, such as trauma or birthing difficulties) and permanent removals to support Formal Recovery Programs or equivalent.
- (i) That seek to temporarily remove an animal from the ZAA SMP through temporary/reversible contraception must obtain approval from the Species Coordinator prior to actioning, with the exception of medical emergencies (in these cases, the Species Coordinator must be advised as soon as practical after the event).
- (j) Wishing to work with species with no current ZAA SMP are encouraged to participate in a species breeding program operated by another Recognised Regional Association to ensure the animal is part of an established Species Management Program.
- (k) Regarding SMP Animals, commit to:
 - (i) in circumstances where a Member has its Association membership terminated based on failure to achieve ZAA Accreditation status or a breach of the Association's Animal Welfare Policy, all ZAA SMP animals received or descended from animals received as a benefit of Association membership may be repatriated back to the SMP for distribution within the relevant program, as per advice of the relevant TAG and SMP Position Holders.
 - (ii) In circumstances where a Member has its Association membership terminated based on a breach(es) of Association Constitution and Policies (excluding the Association Animal Welfare Policy), an agreement will be reached between the Member and the Association as to which animals can be retained by the Member and which animals will be repatriated back to the ZAA SMP for distribution within the relevant program. Such decisions to be based on the genetic value of individual animals and

general population health of the relevant ZAA SMP. Decisions to be made in conjunction with the relevant TAG and the AMC.

- (iii) In circumstances where a Member withdraws from Association membership, by the Member's decision, an agreement will be reached between the Member and the Association as to which ZAA SMP animals can be retained by the Member and which animals will be repatriated back to the ZAA SMP for distribution within the relevant program. Such decisions will be based on consideration of the Member's capacity to demonstrate assurance that animals will be cared for in such a way and be provided with opportunities to achieve an ongoing positive welfare state, the genetic value of individual animals and general population health of the relevant SMP. Decision to be made in conjunction with the relevant TAG, the AMC and the Standards and Accreditation Committee (SAC).
- (iv) In circumstances where an Association Member becomes insolvent or enters into administration, the Association will work with the member to ensure support and animal welfare is maintained until such time as a final determination on the future of the organisation and membership is known. If at this point it is determined that a Member will not be in a position to continue operations, all participating ZAA SMP animals are repatriated back to the ZAA SMP for distribution within the relevant program.
- (v) In all circumstances above, and with case by case consideration for Clause 5.j.i and Clause 5.j.iv, Members exiting the Association will retain the same number of ZAA SMP animals as when they joined the Association. The individual animals to be selected in consultation with the TAG, AMC and ZAA Executive Team.
- (l) Regarding animals from other Recognised Regional Association Species Management Program(s) i.e., AZA SSP, EAZA EEP, WAZA GSMP, commit to:
 - (i) In any of the circumstances detailed in **3.5.k.i** and **3.5.k.iv** all animals participating in other Regional Association breeding programs are repatriated back to the ZAA SMP and other Species Management Programs administered by a Recognised Regional Association, as per advice of the AMC and the relevant Association TAG and Position Holders.
 - (ii) For circumstances detailed in **3.5.k.ii** and **3.5.k.iii** the Association will inform the other Regional Associations that the organisation is no longer a Member of the Association.

3.6 The ZAA Board or their delegate:

- (a) Will address any issue/concern which arises that is not covered by this Policy, but falls within the purpose of this Policy, in the best interest of the Association and its membership.

- (b) May wish to participate in discussions and decision-making relating to repatriation requirements identified in Clause 3.1(l), 3.1(m), 3.5(k)(i), 3.5(k)(ii), 3.5(k)(iii), 3.5(k)(iv), and 3.5(l)(i).

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Compliance

The Director or their delegate of an Association Member will ensure that all species planning and species management processes involving their institution shall satisfy the requirements of this Policy; the requirements of all relevant prevailing international, national, and state legislation; and all related ZAA Policies and Procedures, and the ZAA Code of Conduct, are met.

Where an Association Member becomes insolvent or enters into administration, the Association Member will ensure that the Administrator is aware of this Policy and commitments outlined herein.

4.2 Reporting

Reporting to the ZAA Executive Team is required where Association Member activity conflicts with any aspect of this Policy, or ZAA Procedure, or AMC/ZAA Recommendation. The Director/CEO/Owner of an Association Member or their delegate is responsible for reporting such variances to the ZAA Executive Team.

The AMC reports to the Association Board on ZAA Species Management Program developments and any breaches to this Policy and/or its associated ZAA Procedures.

4.3 Records Management

The ZAA Executive Team is responsible for maintaining records on any breaches to this Policy and/or its associated ZAA Procedures.

The Director or their delegate of an Association Member is responsible for systems/procedures that that provide for accurate and current record keeping relating to species housed at the institutions (e.g., CPOS, ZIMS).

The Policy acknowledges that individual Members own animal records and associated information relating to their organisation, and that the Association provides a custodian role for data that is used to support species planning and management.

4.4 Issue resolution

Should any conflicts arise, every attempt should be made to resolve these in the first instance through consultation with the relevant Species Coordinator and TAG Co-Conveners. Where the Association Member(s) is/are unable to resolve such conflicts, assistance should be sought from the ZAA Executive Team, and may be elevated to the AMC, or through the Association's Complaints Policy framework.

5. Related Documents

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policies, procedures, and guidelines of the Association:

- SMP Engagement Flowchart (Appendix to this Policy)

- Animal Transfers Policy
- Animal Visitor Interactions Position Statement 2.0
- Animal Management Committee Terms of Reference
- Position Description and FAQ Sheet for ZAA SMP Position Holders

6. Terms and Definitions

AMC (syn. ZAA AMC, ZAA Animal Management Committee): A Committee of the Zoo and Aquarium Association Australasia.

Association, The (syn. ZAA): The Zoo and Aquarium Association Australasia.

Association Member(s) (syn. ZAA Member, Member): A financial member of the Zoo and Aquarium Association Australasia.

Cooperative Conservation Program (syn. CCP, Approved CCP): A breeding and/or management program (e.g., ZAA SMP, AZA SSP, EAZA EEP, WAZA GSMP etc.) that is operated with the intention of conserving a species (in the wild or in captivity, or both) and applies best practice to the management of husbandry, genetics, biology and behavioural needs of the species. The program's objectives must be based on the conservation status and needs of the species and the program must be operated in a way that is not detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild. Approval of a CCP is required for all Appendix I species where there is an intention to transfer live animals into or out of Australia for conservation breeding purposes.

CPOS (Census and Planning Online System): ZAAs central database that is used for institutional and regional species planning.

Endorsed Plan/s: Endorsed plans are developed by the Species Coordinator and TAG, approved by Institutional Representatives, and published by ZAA. These include TAG Regional Species Plans and Captive Management Plans.

Endorsed recommendation/s: Breeding and/or transfer recommendations (Annual Report & Recommendations) for a particular ZAA SMP. Endorsed recommendations are supported by TAG Representatives and published by ZAA.

Institutional Representative: A person who represents an Association Member and is accountable for actions of that Member, usually the Chief Executive, Director, or Owner. This person approves Endorsed Plans.

Insolvent: Unable to pay debts owed.

Lapsed: In the context of ZAA Membership, refers to the membership status of a member having become invalid due to expiry and non-renewal as per *Member Policy* and *Association Constitution*

Management Strategy: Practices and approaches utilised to manage a species.

Non-SMP Species: A species for which there is no formal ZAA SMP facilitated by the Association.

Recognised Regional Association(s): A zoo and aquarium association that is a member of, and in good standing with, the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA).

Regional Species Plan: A strategic TAG-specific document that identifies Priority Species, rationale for management of Priority Species, agreed strategies for how Priority Species will be managed in the Australasia/Oceania region.

Species Role: The primary reason for which a species is included in a ZAA TAG Regional Species Plan.

Specialist Advisory Group (SAG): A ZAA group providing specialist advice to ZAA Members on a particular area of expertise.

Species Coordinator: The primary manager of a specific ZAA SMP.

Species Management Program (syn. ZAA Species Management Program, ZAA SMP, SMP. Analogous to AZAs SSP, EAZAs EEP, WAZAs GSMP): The mechanism through which ZAA administers programs for priority species. Programs are managed to meet a set of tailored goals over a designated timeframe. A program for a priority species is referred to as a ZAA {common name} SMP or abbreviated to {common name} Program. (i.e., ZAA Sumatran Tiger SMP, or Sumatran Tiger SMP). SMPs are hosted by a Host Institution, who provides support to position holders to deliver work required for program continuity and success.

Species Role: The specific function of an SMP Priority Species in the Regional Species Plan. Species Role(s) are selected from a finite group of roles and are based on a need identified in a legitimate conservation planning instrument (recovery plan, conservation advice, IUCN Red List), or other mechanism determined as acceptable by the AMC.

SMP Animal/s (i.e., Program Animal/s): An animal/s participating in a ZAA SMP. Generally, these animals are housed by ZAA Member institutions, however there may be rare exceptions where non-ZAA members hold ZAA SMP Animal/s.

SMP Position Holder(s) (syn. ZAA SMP Position Holder(s)): a candidate assessed by the ZAA Animal Management Committee or ZAA Board, as a critical to the functioning of the ZAA SMP. Positions include Studbook Keeper, Species Coordinator, Institutional TAG Liaison (TAG Liaison), Taxon Advisory Group Co-Convener, Director Conservation & Population Management, Conservation & Population Management Officer.

SMP Priority Species – All species determined to be a priority by the relevant ZAA Taxon Advisory Group. Where a ZAA Regional Species Plan (RSP) exists for the relevant taxonomic group, Priority Species include all species listed in the RSP.

Stewardship: The management and allocation of species to ensure the long-term viability of a plan/program.

Studbook Keeper: A person who maintains a studbook to support a ZAA SMP.

Taxon Champion: A person nominated informally by the TAG as the primary contact for a species or group of species for which there is no formal ZAA SMP.

Taxon Advisory Group (TAG): A group comprising TAG Representatives from all Regional Association members having interest in a particular taxon. The group also includes the ZAA Director, Conservation & Population Management and Conservation & Population Management Officer.

Taxon Advisor Group Co-convenor: Taxon-specific technical expert charged with facilitating advisory group operations.

TAG Liaison (syn. Institutional TAG Liaison): A person who represents an Association Member on a particular Taxon Advisory Group and is the key contact for that Member in terms of maintaining contact and negotiating breeding and transfer recommendations with a species coordinator. This role also endorses Annual Reports and Recommendations on behalf of their institution.

Terminated: In the context of ZAA Membership, refers to scenarios in which membership status is ended on decision by the ZAA Board.

TUATARA: ZAAs regional population planning, assessment, and reporting tool.

Withdrawn: In the context of ZAA Membership, refers to the scenario where the Member leaves the ZAA Membership, by choice of the Member.

ZAA Executive Team: The Executive Team of the Association, providing support to Association Members and operations.

ZAA Procedure: A ZAA Procedure developed in conjunction with the relevant ZAA Committee, to which adherence is mandatory.

7. Approval and Review Details

Approval History	Details
Approval Authority	ZAA Board
Relevant Committee and/or Stakeholders	Animal Management Committee (previously the ASMP Committee)
Original Approval Date	09/06/2020
Last Review Date	21/06/2024
Next review date	21/06/2029

This document should be reviewed within five (5) years of the date of approval or last review.

Amendment History Approved / Amended / Rescinded / Reviewed	Authority	Date	Description / Notes
Approved	Board	21/06/2024	Minor reforms to provide clarification as recommended by AMC Committee.
Approved	Board	28/03/2023	Reformed ASMP Policy as recommended by AMC Committee.
Approved	ZAA Board	08/08/2022	Provide clarity on a number of terms and additions to further clarify intent of the Policy
Approved	ZAA Board	01/02/2021	Three clauses were adjusted to better support the program's vision "viable species, now and in the future"
Approved	ZAA Board	15/03/2021	Updated terminology (eg, ASMP to SMP) and references.
Approved	ZAA Board	09/06/2020	Approved changes made by AMC
Approved	AMC Committee	28/05/2020	Replacing ASMP Policy.

8. Attachment: SMP Engagement Flowchart

