



United Nations Decade on Biodiversity

**Biodiversity is
US**

Foreword: Gerald Dick, Executive Director, WAZA

WAZA Project: Decade on Biodiversity

The World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA), and its members, with their experience in awareness raising and interaction with the public, are well positioned to help educate the public about the need to protect biodiversity during the Decade on Biodiversity. Indeed, during its 66th Annual conference WAZA members unanimously endorsed the UN Decade on Biodiversity and supported both the Aichi Biodiversity targets and a WAZA global project supporting both the Decade and the Aichi targets.

Therefore, together with a selection of more than 30 zoos and aquariums in six different regions of the world, a modular set of awareness raising tools are being developed as a recognisable framework, but adaptable to regional, cultural and individual institutional situations. These tools will then be made available to the whole WAZA membership.

These tools will include films of different lengths, an educational one of 13 minutes and a 3 minutes and 30 sec one for busier places in zoos and aquariums as well as for website use. A mobile phone / tablet application, a social media campaign and visuals (posters). The central objective of the project is to make sure the public understands biodiversity and its threats, and conveying stimulating and positive messages about the importance of individual contributions towards biodiversity conservation, and how to act on an everyday basis to contribute to biodiversity conservation through a reduction in individual footprint. The aim is to contribute significantly to Aichi Target 1: *“By 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably”*.

The target is to reach out to up to 700 million zoo/aquarium visitors (which represents 10% of the world population). The numerous conservation projects of the WAZA community are convincing arguments and the animals displayed in the WAZA members’ facilities are great ambassadors to increase public awareness and trigger action.

In parallel, in collaboration with Chester Zoo and The University of Warwick, WAZA is coordinating an evaluation of biodiversity literacy. This will be the first large scale global evaluation of the role of zoos and aquariums as education centres. This will be carried out through pre and post visit survey which will be carried out both before (2012/2013) and after (2014/2015), the implementation of the tools.

WAZA thanks CBSG and IZE for the support in identifying the awareness tools and the input especially in the concept phase of the development of the funding proposal, which was generously accepted by the Swiss based MAVA Foundation for Nature.

WAZA would be delighted to give you more information on this exciting project. Please contact Tiago Pinto-Pereira the WAZA Decade Project Manager e: tiago.pintopereira@waza.org

WAZA Biodiversity Literacy Survey at Sri Chamarajendra Zoological Gardens, Mysore, India

Rakhi (wrist band) used for the survey (front and back) designed and developed by Zoo Outreach Organization, India.



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