



# A R A Z P A

E d u c a t i o n P o l i c y



AUSTRALASIAN REGIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ZOOLOGICAL PARKS AND AQUARIA



# ARAZPA

ARAZPA, the Australasian Regional Association of Zoological Parks and Aquaria is a non-profit, conservation organisation committed to helping conserve the world's threatened species.

ARAZPA is made up of the major zoos, parks and aquaria in Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific Islands. ARAZPA member organisations support the principles outlined in the World Zoo Conservation Strategy and continue to develop zoos, parks and aquaria as centres of excellence in species conservation, education and research.

Through ARAZPA, zoos, parks and aquaria collaborate on a range of conservation efforts. These include:

- conservation breeding programs for threatened species;
- reintroduction programs to help re-establish our fast-disappearing wildlife;
- public education programs, to raise awareness of the world's biodiversity and what we can all do to help save it;
- research to improve our understanding of threatened species;
- fund-raising to support programs protecting threatened species in their natural habitat.



## Mission Statement



To provide exemplary learning opportunities that connect people with nature. These experiences enable the community to better understand and contribute to a future where humans live in balance with the natural world.



## Purpose

This policy has been developed by the Australasian Regional Association of Zoological Parks and Aquaria (ARAZPA) Education Advisory Group to provide a coordinated approach to education in ARAZPA organisations. It offers leadership in the formulation of principles, guidelines and minimum standards for education for the many different sectors involved in zoos, parks and aquaria.



The document will evolve to meet the changing needs of educational philosophy and practice in zoos, parks and aquaria. The ARAZPA Education Advisory Group will review this document annually.







## EDUCATION IN ZOOS, PARKS AND AQUARIA - WHAT IS IT?

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Education in zoos, parks and aquaria is a specialised field of environmental education. It gives communities access to living plants and animals in order to enrich their understanding of interdependence and conservation. This involves experiential learning in unique settings that encompasses:

- raising awareness of social and ecological aspects inherent in the conservation of the natural world;
- acquiring new perspectives, values, knowledge and skills;
- participation in formal and informal learning processes;
- empowering people to take positive action for our environment.



# Principles of Zoos, Parks and Aquaria Education

Education is core business in zoos, parks and aquaria. By adopting the principles outlined, ARAZPA organisations will become exemplary models of education for an ecologically sustainable environment.



Education in zoos, parks and aquaria-

## 1 Provides unique learning experiences that connect people with the natural world.

This will be achieved by:

- capturing the imagination and emotions of visitors to motivate positive actions;
- creating inspiring, challenging, innovative and enjoyable learning experiences within and outside our organisations and online;
- developing multi-sensory experiences that cater for the different social backgrounds and learning styles of visitors;
- providing appropriate experiences that connect people with live animals and plants;
- utilising expertise of all staff to develop exciting and meaningful experiences;
- engaging the community through unique activities such as behind-the-scenes tours and interpretive experiences.



## 2 Involves the whole community.

This will be achieved by:

- providing formal and informal learning experiences for all visitors;
- providing opportunities for people to behave in an environmentally responsible manner;
- utilising information and communication technologies to provide educational opportunities for everyone;
- consulting members of the community in order to create programs that fulfil their educational requirements;
- developing community partnerships;
- facilitating opportunities for education research.



## 3 Is lifelong.

This will be achieved by:

- providing opportunities for staff and community members to continually improve their knowledge and skills for environmental action;
- developing meaningful experiences that engage people of all ages, social backgrounds and levels of understanding.





## 4 Is holistic, encompassing all parts of the organisation.

This will be achieved by:

- establishing effective communication between staff, volunteers and relevant organisations;
- implementing a coordinated approach to zoos, parks and aquaria education;
- integrating principles of effective learning into all areas of planning;
- ensuring that all staff and volunteers are familiar with and implement their respective organisations' education policy;
- training staff and volunteers to play an integral role in the delivery of zoos, parks and aquaria education;
- reviewing core business regularly to ensure that educational best practice is being implemented.

## 5 Gives people an understanding of their place within the natural world and the need to take individual and collective action for ecological sustainability.

This will be achieved by:

- modelling environmental action for sustainable living that visitors can apply;
- involving the wider community in conservation education programs;
- linking visitors and communities with environmental programs and information;
- developing outreach programs, either on an individual institution basis or as a collaborative effort, between zoos, parks and aquaria and other agencies in the region.







## 6 Encompasses social, environmental and economic goals.

This will be achieved by:

- according education equal status with other key priorities;
  - allocating suitable funding to support the development and delivery of effective education in zoos, parks and aquaria;
  - ensuring on-going support from new and existing partners;
  - supporting and implementing social, environmental and economic initiatives and policies of government and statutory authorities;
  - supporting educational initiatives in regions requiring additional resources.
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## Supporting Documents

The ARAZPA Education Advisory Group will continue to develop support material for the policy in the following areas:

- sample educational experiences onsite, offsite and online;
- links and partnerships;
- reference material and other related documents.

This support material will be accessible through the ARAZPA website - [www.arazpa.org.au](http://www.arazpa.org.au)





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