

## **Thanks from CBSG/RSG and SAZARC participants**

### **From Nepal**

The Ninth SAZARC Conference and Sixth Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG)/ Reintroduction Specialist Group (RSG) meeting was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka between February 9 and 15, 2009. Ms. Sarita Jnawali, Project Manager from National Trust for Nature Conservation Central Zoo, along with Mr. Shivraj Bhatta, Ecologist from the Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) participated the Conference. The trip for both participants was fully sponsored.

The focus of the SAZARC conference this year *Zoo Legislation and Zoo Inspection* was very relevant in the context of Zoos in Nepal. So far, Nepal does not have legal provision for wildlife exhibition. The Government of Nepal has given overall management responsibilities to the National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC) since 1995. NTNC is a national NGO created by legislative Act 1982. In addition to Central Zoo, NTNC manages two conservation areas (Annapurna and Manaslu) and assists the DNPWC to scientifically manage Chitwan NP, Bardia NP and Suklaphanta WR through its Chitwan, Bardia and Kanchanpur based Biodiversity Conservation Center, Bardia Conservation Program and Suklaphanta Conservation Program, respectively.

The present Conference was an excellent forum to learn and share legal aspects of zoo management at regional level. All the lectures delivered on Zoo Legislation and Standard, Possible Impediments of Legislation-interactive Zoo Ethics, Animal Welfare Legislation, Zoo Assessment Tool, Conservation, Education and Research, and Marking/Individual Identification of Animals were very informative and broaden up our knowledge and skill in zoo management. In particular, the Zoo Inspection Exercise was extremely useful to learn the inspection mechanism. This will be helpful to assess different Zoos in Nepal. Moreover, presentations from other countries were also very useful.

Prior to SAZARC Conference, opportunity was provided to attend two-days CBSG/ RSG meeting, focused on Consideration in Releasing Animals: IUCN Fundamentals and reintroduction guideline. The group exercise, discussion and presentation were also very useful to understand the importance of the regional networking and the cooperation. This forum was not only helpful to share experiences but was useful to establish effective coordination and cooperation among experts engaged in *ex-situ* and *in-situ* conservation.

Finally, we would like to express our sincere thanks to Sally Walker, Founder Director of Zoo Outreach Organization, who made our participation possible in SAZARC Conference and CBSG/RSG Meeting. We, on behalf of DNPWC would like to extend deep appreciation for inviting government representative to participate in the Conference. As the Central Zoo in

close coordination with DNPWC is in a process of drafting Zoo Act and Legislation and its endorsement, the knowledge gained during the Conference has become instrumental to speed up the overall process. Sally's suggestions and guidance over the last one decade has helped the Central Zoo to build up capacity of its staffs and school teachers, and adopt science based conservation education program. The Central Zoo has been successful to launch membership based education program among 4000-5000 school children of Kathmandu valley every year through well trained staff and FOZ teachers.

**Sarita Jnawali, Manager, NTNC - Central Zoo & Shivraj Bhatta, Ecologist, DNPWC, Nepal.**

### **From India**

Thanks are also due to the resource persons and team crew of Zoo Outreach Organization. We would also like to acknowledge the sponsors who provided costs for our travel and stay, our participation in such an important and interesting regional conference would not been possible without their support. We appreciate the National Zoological Garden and Ministry of Sports and Public Recreation of Sri Lanka for providing homely environment throughout our stay in Sri Lanka. Thanks for the review. I personally was benefitted a lot by both the conferences. Specially lectures by Mike Jordan were very good; I learnt a lot by his presentations as well as those of Kris and Miranda.

The contributions and efforts made by National Zoo Colombo and its staff to make the conference comfortable, exciting and memorable were commendable and deserve all comments written by you about them. Nonetheless, you and your whole team deserve to be congratulations also for making the events a memorable learning experience. All participants too took active interest and were also instrumental in making the meeting and conference successful by experience sharing and giving their valuable inputs. I thank you and your team once again for everything.

**With regards, S S Rajpoot, Van Vihar National Park, India.**

### **From Bangladesh**

It was a wonderful 8 days with all SAZARC colleagues and resource persons. It was a very nice program to share knowledge and experience. All the programs, group work, presentations, etc. helped me a lot to update my knowledge and to realize the gap of our activities. Thanks again for giving me this opportunity.

**Best regards, Dr. Malekur, Dulahazara Safari Park.**

### **From India**

We are thankful to every one those who participated in SAZARC and also to resource persons. Our special thanks to organisers and host, they have taken lot of pain for participants A to Z arrangements. Our sincere regards to Hon'ble Minister and Secretary, Addl Secretary and staff of Sri Lanka and also to Sally Walker and her very

special team. Once again thanks to every one and hope that you all will continue to tolerate me with the same tempo and patience.

*Yours sincerely, R.K. Sahu, Ahmedabad Zoo, India.*

#### **From Pakistan**

It was really like a dream come true to be with you in Sri Lanka. I 'd like to pay my best regards to all our donors, hosts, friends, ZOO, WILD and SAZARC Founder, (Sally), Latha, Daniel, Marimuthu, Miranda, Kris, Mike and all the Sri Lankan hosts to provide marvellous opportunity. Thanks Sally for provision of the learning platform to share and exchange knowledge. Thanks again to all donors.

*Regards, Bushra Khan, Ed Off., Lahore Zoo, Pakistan.*

#### **From Sri Lanka**

This is for saying thank you for you all. I participated on the second day and it was great opportunity for me (representing the Young Zoologists' Association). I shared your experiences and got valuable information from all the country representatives.

*Iresha Harischandra, Sri Lanka.*

#### **From Bangladesh**

First of all, I would like to thank you a lot for inviting me as well as giving me an opportunity to have a chance and access in a learning and knowledge & experience sharing conference the 9th SAZARC conference held in Colombo. As you know I have completed my doctorate in the field of Avian Breeding and I am deserving such an inquisitiveness regarding conservation breeding too. Undoubtedly, I can say that I got the right opportunity in RSG & CBSG meeting. After that, though I am working with Zoo for last 6 years, this is the first time I availed the opportunity to gather the knowledges on policies and legislations already existing and going to be passed in the SAARC countries. All the lectures of our honourable speakers were very informative to me. This is my pleasure to thank honourable speakers Mike Jordon, Miranda Stevenson, Kris Vehrs. I specially became fascinated with the presentation on breeding given by Mike and also learned a lot from Mike's talk on Marking of Animals and Kris speech on CITES as well as Miranda's on the Five Freedoms, etc. Along with learning a lot, I also enjoyed specially during post conference tour. I can't forget the memory of observing herd of wild elephants with calves from a very short distance. It was both a learning and amazing adventure for me. Though it was in night time, but I learned from turtles breeding programme. Sally you know, I have been graduated from Poultry Science and have a vast experience in hatching avian eggs both in natural and artificial means. But, it was first time for me to have a look on turtle eggs laying, collecting, placing for hatching and taking out of the hatchlings to rescue them from suffocation. It was really wonderful job. One mater is worthy to mention here that all the staff, officers, higher officials involved in arranging the conference were very very cordial, sincere and active. I have also learned from that how should arrange such

a successful multinational conference. Thanks to all the Sri Lankans involved over there. I cant remember all their names but thanks Sally, Sanjay, Daniel, Latha, Marimuthu, and thanks to all other participants from 6 other SAARC countries. I have captured many scenes and movies. Whenever, I shall get time, as soon as possible, I shall try to post over internet. Hope for the best. Have a good luck for all of us and every betterment in the path of wilds conservation, breeding and reintroduction.

*Best regards, Md. Golam Rabbani, Rangpur Zoo, Bangladesh.*

#### **From Bhutan**

Thank you for inviting me to an important series of meetings of the regional networks of IUCN SSC Conservation Breeding Specialist Group, (CBSG, South Asia), IUCN SSC Reintroduction Specialist Group, (RSG, South Asia) and the 9th Annual SAZARC Conference South Asian Zoo Association for Regional Cooperation (SAZARC) w.e.f 9th-15 February 2009 hosted by National Zoological Gardens of Sri Lanka. I'm extremely glad that wonderful experiences in the field of reintroduction, Zoo management, and Zoo Legislation are timely and useful. I didn't expect so much from the CBSG meeting and the SAZARC conference. It is worth attending. Once again, thanks to your marvellous team of Sanjay, Daniel, Marimuthu, Latha and the excellent Resource persons

*Best regards, Kuenzang Gyeltshen, Bhutan.*

#### **From Sri Lanka**

Thanks for all the hard work you and ZOO team did trying to organize the workshop in SL. We enjoyed having you here and learned so much during the workshop. Wish you best in HECx workshop in Nepal.

*Best Regards, Ganga Wijesinghe, Vety. Surgeon, Sri Lanka.*

#### **From Sri Lanka**

Hi. Good morning. I hope you would have finished your Nepal programmes. You must be tired of continuous Programmes. Hoping you all would have enjoyed the natural beauty of Nepal. I would like to thank you for bringing the excellent resource persons, participants from South Asia and your active working staff of Z.O.O. We had a good time during the session. I am sorry that I couldn't join with you all right through out the tour. Once again I take this opportunity to thank you all.

*Good wishes, P. Arunthahty, Vety. Surgeon, Sri Lanka.*

#### **From Sri Lanka**

We had very nice time with you and all other colleagues. The Zoo inspection form you gave us I turned to an evaluation guideline and make use to evaluate enclosures designed for Pinnawala zoo. The professor who is in the team told me that it is a really good document for us to build up the new zoo. Thanks to you Sally we got the knowledge. Thank you.

*Best wishes, Renuka Bandaranayaka, Asst. Director, National Zoo, Sri Lanka.*

### **From Sri Lanka**

We learned lots of new information on SAZARC, CBSG and RSG. I would like to thank you and your staff. We hope to join your programs annually to increase our knowledge and share experiences from other countries. I participated in small mammals conservation and field technique program in 2004. We would like to have another program on conservation and modern technology. I would like to thank you again on the opportunity you have given.  
**Pubudu Weerathna, YZA, Sri Lanka.**

### **From Pakistan**

I would like to thank you for providing me opportunity to attend the CBSG workshop & 9th Annual Conference of SAZARC in Colombo Zoo, Sri Lanka. Inspection of different sections of Colombo Zoo was really an excellent experience for me. In the light of the observations of the honourable resource persons I would further improve different sections of Karachi Zoo. The format of inspection is also a very valuable document for the improvement and upgradation of any South Asian Zoo. It enabled the participants like me to understand the technicalities very deeply and how to sharpen skills of inspection or identify the mistakes which we do not consider in our daily routine work. The presentations of Mike, Miranda, Kris Vehrs, Sanjay & yours were very informative especially the presentation of Mike on Considerations in releasing animals – Some IUCN fundamentals, Reintroduction of Southern ground Hornbill and other species.

Presentation of Miranda on CBSG activities in the past year, were very worth while. Presentation of Kris on CITES also cleared so many confusions of our mind; she has given a detailed information about the functions & objectives of the organization. All the resource persons mentioned above deserve my heartfelt applause. Working group sessions held during the conference were also very useful & brain storming for a manager dealing with the wildlife. It represented the collective views of all the participants of different countries, which reflected a comprehensive & complete picture to solve the problem faced wildlife of this region. Convey our special regards and thanks to Hon'ble Minister, Secretary, Addl Secretary to the Ministry of Sports and Public Recreation & Colombo Zoo Director & his staff regarding organizing such a good workshop & SAZARC Conference at Colombo Zoo, Sri Lanka. The food & cultural activities were also very pleasing as well as schedule of conference cum shopping which we enjoyed very much. During the tour a ride in a glass bottom boat to see corals, turtles & colourful fishes was a unique experience of my life. The visit to Bundala National Park, where we saw wild elephants, crocodiles and many Sri Lankan birds, was remarkable and a memorable experience of my life. It was very amazing sight for me to look at the elephants freely roaming in their natural habitat. It is really another treasure of wildlife like Gir forest of India in South Asia. The people who are managing this treasure are very professional and praiseworthy & deserve all appreciation for their wonderful work.

Good wishes to the new SAZARC president, Sarita Jnawali who will organize the next conference. Thank you for arranging such an excellent workshop and conference for which you & your special team deserve appreciations from myself.

**Qazi Muddassir, Director, Karachi Zoo, Pakistan.**

Thanks ! The 9th conference of SAZARC which I attended in Sri Lanka was unforgettable. All the arrangements, lectures were very good. I'd like to pay my regards especially to Ms. Sally Walker and her team. **Muhammad Yousaf Pal, Director, Lahore Zoo, Pakistan.**

All the resource persons have delivered good and informative lectures. It was very good to see Sri Lanka and friends again. Thanks Sally for this opportunity as it will not be possible without you. Thanks to our host the Sri Lankan Zoo Staff.

**Abdul Qadeer Mehal, Director, Punjab Wildlife & Parks, Pakistan.**

### **From India**

As a part of the ZOO team which hosts SAZARC and organises this annual event. I would like to give my profuse thanks to the Government of Sri Lanka, the Ministry of Sports and Public Recreation and the staff of the National Zoo for their excellent and unfailing patience, hospitality and courtesy throughout the CBSG/RSG meeting, SAZARC conference and tour. I must particularly focus on patience, because due to some administrative characteristics of nearly all the South Asian countries organising and funding this series of meetings is the most difficult job I have ever had, and I frequently lose patience which makes the job of hosts and co-organisers even more difficult. I thank the hosts for being so tolerant and accomodating. Being host, is also a very difficult job and often hosts and organiser both feel the stress. I show mine but the hosts normally don't show theirs !

It was a pleasure to have so many upper-middle and senior officers present at the conference. Sri Lanka is lucky to have had 21 M.Sc. and Ph.D. level graduates deputed to the zoo and it was great to have them at the meeting, even, for some of them, for a short time.

It is appreciable that the Hon. Minister, Ministry of Sports and Recreation and his officers, Secretary and Addl. Secretary (particularly...our President) for their immense interest in the meetings, conference and tour as they contributed their concern, ideas and time as well as a very generous financial grant to see the participants were treated well.

I would like to thank the sponsors from abroad for their interest and financial contribution as many of them have been contributing since the first meeting. These sponsors are all in the business of conservation and animal welfare. They have many demands on their resources and it is a hard choice for them to allocate such resources. We are thus hard pressed to insure that conservation and welfare principles are burned on our brains as a result of the conference. I hope we succeeded in that. Many thanks to all.  
**Sally Walker, ZOO/SAZARC.**