

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ZOOKEEPERS (ICZ)

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2024 – 2025





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## Vision and Mission

### **Vision**

The International Congress of Zookeepers is; A global network of zoo keepers contributing to the highest standard of professional animal care and the role of zoos today.

### **Mission**

The International Congress of Zookeepers will contribute to the highest standard of professional animal care by;

- Continuing to build a global network of animal care professionals
- Supporting regional associations
- Facilitating the exchange of knowledge and skills
- Promoting professionalism via training and resource sharing
- Supporting keepers involved in conservation projects



## Terms

For the purpose of this document the following terms were defined;

### **Zoo**

“An establishment that maintains wild animals typically for conservation, education, research, and visitor engagement”.

This include but is not limited to: zoos, aquariums, dolphinariums, reptile parks, bird parks, conservation breeding centers, rehabilitation/rescue centers, safari parks, wildlife reserves/sanctuaries, insectariums/butterfly parks, bioparks and wildlife parks.

### **Zookeeper or Keeper**

“An animal care professional working in a zoo”

### **Regional Association**

“An organization for professional zookeeper association in a specific region. A region is defined by culture, language, or geography.”



# Objective 1 – Continue to Build a Global Network of Zookeepers

## 1.1 Organize a keeper Congress every 3 years

We will aim to organize a keeper Congress every three years in different locations, with diverse programs and networking opportunities. The Congress should be financially sustainable and as affordable as possible. Scholarships will be offered to keepers as an opportunity to attend the Congress.

## 1.2 Expand International Zookeeper Day (IZD)

We will expand participation in International Zookeeper Day, which we will celebrate annually on the 4th of October in recognition of the contribution of keepers worldwide. We will ensure it is recognized as an ICZ initiative.

## 1.3 Develop and nurture relationships with partners

Develop and nurture relationships with like-minded organizations who provide resources, networking, or training opportunities for zoo employees.



## Objective 2 – Support Regional Associations

### 2.1 Cross promote member association events

ICZ Regional Associations will promote involvement in each other's events. Their members will be able to attend events and purchase publications for member prices.

### 2.2 Support Regional Associations

We will provide continual support to our existing ICZ Regional Associations with provisions of resources, such as publications, workshops, or guest speakers.

### 2.3 Promote and support new keeper associations

We will support new Regional Associations with assistance in their formation, ongoing guidance and the provision of resources, such as publications, workshops, or guest speakers.

### 2.4 Establish contacts in non-member associations

We will establish relationships with non-member Regional Associations and provide assistance if requested.



## Objective 3 – Facilitate the Exchange of Knowledge and Skills

### 3.1 Deliver practical skills and knowledge sharing events

We will aim to hold a Congress every three years and a workshop in non-Congress years. We will explore opportunities to conduct regional workshops, encourage keeper-driven workshops and cross-promote Regional Association members events.

### 3.2 Provide reference material

We will develop and support publications and reference materials and provide access to digital resources.

### 3.3 Share Regional Association news and journals

We will share newsletters, journals, information, and knowledge amongst Regional Associations.

### 3.4 Develop social media communication

We will increase our presence on our current social media platforms and explore further platforms.



## Objective 4 – Support Conservation Projects

### 4.1 Offer keeper conservation grant

We will offer an annual grant(s), for projects involving keepers aiming to protect wildlife and their habitats.

### 4.2 Promote keeper involvement in conservation projects

We will raise awareness for keeper-initiated conservation projects and provide opportunities for keeper involvement in these projects. We will motivate and inspire keepers to establish their own projects.

### 4.3 Donate Congress generated funds to a conservation project

Each Congress, we will support a local conservation project both financially and by raising awareness. These funds will be obtained from each Congress registration.





## Objective 5 – Operate a Professional Organization

### 5.1 Incorporation

We will meet government requirements for the country of incorporation.

### 5.2 Budget

We will sustain and aim to increase our core budget.

### 5.3 Documentation

We will develop, maintain, and update all documentation as required to support operations and ensure suitable access and archives.

### 5.4 Meetings

The steering committee will participate in regular email, virtual, and in-person meetings and will make decisions about the operation of the ICZ.

### 5.5 Increase ICZ brand recognition

We will increase our reach and brand recognition by the above, plus:

- Maintaining an engaging website with up-to-date content
- Expanding our social media presence
- Production of the newsletter 'KeeperNotes'
- Production of ICZ collateral with relative and current information
- ICZ Keeper Conservation Grant
- ICZ Merchandise

### 5.6 Respond to industry and community queries

We will position ICZ as a reputable organization to respond to industry and community queries.



# Appendix 1 – Current Steering Committee members

## Board

- Lex van der Leije Harpij Representative, President
- Raúl Cabrera Porcel AICAS Representative, Conservation chair
- Jocelyn Hockley ASZK Representative, Treasurer
- Sara Steward Executive officer, Secretary, Communications chair

## Executive committee (includes the board positions)

- Victoria Snook ABWAK Representative, Congress chair
- Melinda Schlegel BdZ Representative

## General Steering Committee members

- Flor GACAS Representative
- Denise Luminelli Independent SC member
- Benjamin Independent SC member



## Appendix 2 – Development of the plan

In November 13-17, 2023, members of the ICZ SC met in Havana, Cuba to work on the development/ draft of the ICZ Strategic Plan for 2024-2029. This Strategic Plan follows on from the previous plans cover, 2009-2016 and 2018-2023. The following ICS SC members were present: Lex, Raul, Sara, Melinda, Jocelyn, Vicky & the draft was edited by the previous members & Maca, Denise, & Anne-Malaurie.

In October 9 – 13, 2017, members of the ICZ Steering Committee met at Ocean Adventure, Subic Bay Philippines. Chris Banks, sponsored by Zoos Victoria, assisted the group in facilitating development of the ICZ Strategic Plan for 2018-2023.

This Strategic Plan (hereafter referred to as the plan) follows on from the previous plan covering 2009 – 2016, which was developed in Singapore. The steering committee aimed to simplify the plan having identified the strengths and weaknesses of the association over the past seven years.

Prior to the Subic Bay meeting, a questionnaire identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats was circulated to all associations, ex-Steering Committee members and others that had been previously involved in the ICZ.