



Background

The slogan for PAAZA Conference 2022 **'We are Stronger Together'** was an incredible success. It provided open and positive discussions with amazing outcomes for the new PAAZA strategic plan which needs to address the future Zoo and Aquarium sub-sector in an evolving world.

It was unanimous that neither Zoos and Aquaria nor PAAZA could remain as they are or *"get back to the old normal"*. Added to this sentiment was the fact that Zoos and Aquaria are important entities of any community and that they most definitely have a place in the evolving world.

That said, concern was raised by everyone about the strong voice from the detractors against 'Wildlife in Human Care / a Controlled Environment'. Again, the unanimous counter to this was that as PAAZA and African Zoos and Aquaria, **we need to own the word 'Zoo'**. In addition, we need to be proactive in promoting the great work done by Zoos and Aquaria rather than always defending our position.

The best way that we can do this is by using the strengths of PAAZA coupled with its strong links to WAZA.

The biggest 'tool' available to PAAZA right now to uplift African facilities, is **the WAZA 2023 Welfare Assessment goal through the PAAZA assessment and accreditation processes** combined with the WAZA Welfare Strategy. This does not mean that the other strategies are any less important, but focusing on too many aspects would be overwhelming for facilities. As a starting point, PAAZA has developed an **online 'shortform assessment'** for facilities which you can view here : <https://bit.ly/3TZTUQy>

The question raised in the 'We are Stronger Together' discussions was : *"How does PAAZA plan to address the disparity in welfare in Africa?"* The overwhelming response : *"Through implementation of the PAAZA Welfare Assessment as mandated by WAZA"*. The challenge however, is the age old story of **Africa being one of the most financially constrained continents globally** and any processes for upliftment would require funding.

How do we go about financing such a plan? One avenue which has been tested before was 'WOZA Africa - The African Zoo and Aquarium Renaissance' which was proposed in 2003 and implemented 2005 to 2007 under the then PAAZAB. It was effectively a Zoo twinning project. Although it was successful at the time, there were a number of short-comings and lessons learnt. Coupled with this is the fact that the world has evolved and so any new project would need to incorporate all these aspects.

AFRICA EVOLVING ZOOS & AQUARIA PROGRAMME (AEZAP) – an introduction

What is the scope of the task facing PAAZA?

To put it in perspective, in 2010 there were an estimated 200 Zoo or Zoo type facilities in 48 countries in Africa (ref - ZSL). These were mostly left over from the Colonial era and were effectively private collections that were left behind. Has this number decreased? On the contrary, we estimate a 10% to 15% increase in the last decade. It is worth noting that there are a total of 54 sovereign states in Africa – 48 share the mainland with 6 island states (ref – Nationsonline). It is not important whether or not all these facilities fit any specific definition of a zoo. The main issue is that the larger community - including the detractors - perceives them as being zoos. Unfortunately, in Africa the majority are, in terms of the values of the 'aligned' zoo community, substandard.

It was suggested that PAAZA once again engage with the broader WAZA community with a modern project proposal which has been termed : **Africa Evolving Zoos & Aquaria Programme (AEZAP)**. This interfaces well with and compliments the African Conservation Programme (ACP) which is a long standing portfolio of PAAZA specifically aimed at population management.

How can the broader WAZA community assist PAAZA – non-financial?

What was also noted during the discussions at PAAZA Conference 2022, was that there are an enormous number of **active research and conservation linked projects** which are either run or supported by facilities under the WAZA umbrella in Africa. **The sad part is that there is little to no inclusion of Zoos or Aquaria in the regions where these projects are active.**

As an initial step, PAAZA will setup a database to capture all the active research and conservation projects in Africa. PAAZA will ask the **WAZA community to populate this database** through the online system available at : <https://forms.gle/f6i1D9867mYSxWDM7>.

PAAZA will cross-reference this to an updated facility database, which was originally collated for WOZA Africa, to establish the extent, if any, of the *ex-situ* and *in-situ* link for sustainable conservation.

What were the short-comings of WOZA Africa?

The most notable ones were:

- The programme needs to run for 5 years
- Written accountability from the management team of the facility in meeting targets (to be agreed after the first evaluation)
- There needs to be a commitment from the management / owner of the facility that the facility will be self-sustainable post the 5 year investment
- Full financial accountability in implementation of the programme
- Written commitment to continued membership of PAAZA with annual assessments

AFRICA EVOLVING ZOOS & AQUARIA PROGRAMME (AEZAP) – an introduction

The proposed AEZAP strategy

The broad outline of the AEZAP strategy can be summarised as follows:

1) Connecting with African facilities

- a) Updating the database of all zoos, aquariums and related facilities within Africa.
- b) Ensuring the facilitation of adequate representation of such facilities within PAAZA.
- c) Dissemination of professional codes of best practice.
- d) Dissemination of the WAZA Welfare and Conservation strategies.
- e) Awareness of the information available on the PAAZA mobile app and web.
- f) On-line welfare assessment (as noted above), to get an oversight of the challenges ahead.
- g) The value of being a member of a professional global Association.

2) Conservation Breeding

- a) Identification of species (primarily African) that will most benefit from co-operative conservation breeding programmes.
- b) Education on the value of Sustainable Conservation (how the facility programme, *ex-situ*, links to and can assist *in-situ* populations thus adding value to communities.
- c) Appoint and train (skills development programme) appropriate personnel for individual programmes at the facility.
- d) Develop partnerships with wildlife agencies in the management of species.

3) Best Practice

- a) Training with special reference to animal welfare, care and husbandry, conservation practices, sustainable utilisation of natural resources, education and tourism, through tools being developed by PAAZA.
- b) Introduction to Five Domains model.
- c) Compliance with the PAAZA Welfare assessment.
- d) Introduction of Studbooks and their value to sustainable population management.

4) Linking into Rural Communities

- a) Consultation with local communities and leaders regarding their needs for revenue generation sources that reduce their dependence upon non-renewable natural resources.
- b) Formulation of education programmes for facilities aimed at the Sustainable utilisation of biodiversity (can be used for visitors, school groups, communities).
- c) Attracting tourism.
- d) Address international, national and provincial issues regarding the illegal trade and excessive utilisation of bushmeat.
- e) Promotion of food security issues.
- f) Form partnerships with stakeholders and legislators.

AFRICA EVOLVING ZOOS & AQUARIA PROGRAMME (AEZAP) – an introduction

How can the broader WAZA community assist PAAZA – financial?

PAAZA is the only African Zoo and Aquarium Association under WAZA. As a professional association, it must ensure that the primary global strategies form the cornerstones of the operational and management philosophy of all zoos and aquaria throughout Africa. **This is not a matter of choice, but an imperative in the long-term sustainable conservation of biodiversity.** PAAZA is well aware of the role it must play in this regard within the entire continent of Africa.

Within the Association, the necessary commitment, dedication, knowledge and global representation are all available in order to assist in creating a sustainable conservation minded Africa. Much needed income will be generated within communities through these initiatives, thereby driving the economies of countries in Africa and ensuring the continued survival of not only Africa's wildlife but also our people.

What was previously accepted and understood from the onset of WOZA Africa was the probability that most African Zoos north of South Africa would not be able to afford their own costs of membership and involvement in PAAZA. Post the COVID pandemic, this situation has worsened and it is now also relevant within South Africa.

Funding Requirements

- Support of PAAZA Executive Office as the centre for implementing the AEZAP programme and data collation.
- Grants for *in-situ* personnel to perform preliminary surveys within their regions (relevance of the conservation database mentioned above).
- Grants for training either at the facility or at PAAZA Chapter facility, UWEC.
- Sponsorship of facility representative at PAAZA conferences.
- Sponsorship of PAAZA membership.
- Sponsorship for attaining Welfare Assessment compliance.

Translating the above into monetary terms (provisional):

Facility related (per facility and based on 5 year programme)

PAAZA membership – 5 years	\$ 600 per year	\$ 3 000
PAAZA Conference attendance – 5 years	\$ 850 per year	\$ 4 250
Welfare Assessment – 5 years	\$ 500 per year	\$ 2 500
Sub-TOTAL	\$ 1 950 per year	\$ 9 750 for 5 years

Training related – skills development (per facility – 2 events)

Travel for two staff to UWEC – 2 trips	\$ 7 500 per trip	\$ 15 000
Training Facilitator – 2 trips	\$ 5 000 per trip	\$ 10 000
Travel to facility – 2 trips, 2 pax	\$ 10 000 per trip	\$ 20 000
Training facility (host)	\$ 8 500 per event	\$ 17 000
Sub-TOTAL	\$ 31 000 per event	\$ 62 000 for 2 events

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Welfare Assessment support (5 year programme)

Guidance to attaining improved welfare (on-line)	\$ 3 000	\$ 15 000
Guidance to attaining sustainability (on-line)	\$ 3 000	\$ 15 000
Population management including studbooks (on-line)	\$ 3 000	\$ 15 000
Sub-TOTAL	\$ 9 000 per year	\$ 45 000 for 5 years

Communications (sustainable conservation; value of Zoos & Aquaria – 5 years)

Education materials for facilities	\$ 10 000 per year	\$ 50 000
Awareness programmes & materials for communities	\$ 18 000 per year	\$ 90 000
Data package (on-line training - \$10 / GB)	\$ 1 000 per year	\$ 5 000
Sub-TOTAL	\$ 29 000 per year	\$ 145 000 for 5 years

Remote monitoring equipment (once off) \$ 5 500

Initially for assessment then for population management

PAAZA Exec Office related (per programme – 5 years)

Capacity for databases and Assessments	\$ 15 000 per year	\$ 75 000
Development and updating of supporting materials	\$ 6 500 per year	\$ 32 500
Administration (assessments, accountability)	\$ 2 800 per year	\$ 14 000
Legal council	\$ 3 000 per year	\$ 15 000
Sub-TOTAL	\$ 27 300 per year	\$ 136 500 for 5 years

To support the above initiative, PAAZA already has a number of 'tools' in place. These include but are not limited to, a dedicated web - 'Evolving Zoos & Aquariums': [Evolving into a new era \(paaza.org\)](http://paaza.org) ; a mobile app (available on iOS and Android); a species database web - 'DataWild': [DataWild – Your reference for wild animal information](#) ; as well as the main PAAZA web: www.paaza.africa which is full of useful information.

The above is a synopsis of the proposed PAAZA programme for the upliftment of facilities in Africa, AEZAP.

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