

EAZA Communications Guidelines

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

These Guidelines aim to help the managers and communicators of EAZA Member institutions improve your audiences' understanding of what you do and what it means to be an EAZA Member.

The first part addresses the **importance of creating and sharing of similar messages** about the EAZA community and its work. We recommend using similar expressions across our languages. We also advise that your strategic communication reflects key values, such as: (a) transparency – to build trust, (b) breadth – to present the wide scope of activities you undertake, and (c) depth – to show your staff's expertise.

The document also considers that the work of our community is met with varying levels of sensitivity in different EAZA countries and cultures. It is important to respect these differences but also respect the agreed scientific consensus, especially in relation to particularly sensitive topics.

In the second part, you will find advice on **reaching various audiences**. The main internal audience consists of your colleagues: they should have the tools to be able to talk about their work, the work of your institution, and the mission of our community. Externally, we suggest ways and channels for reaching the target audiences of your strategic communication.

The third part, addresses identifying "hot topics" and supporting **crisis management** by transparent, broad and in-depth communication. You will also find guidance on several specific topics which should be appropriately communicated, such as "ownership" of animals, naming of animals, animal interactions and marking of human occasions with animals.

Finally, these Guidelines suggest **investing in qualified staff** to carry out your institution's work in communication, advocacy and policy influencing.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	1
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	1
INTRODUCTION AND AIMS.....	2
BUILDING MESSAGES.....	2
1. Harmonizing the language.....	2
2. Harmonizing the message.....	3
3. Finding a common voice in a diverse community.....	5
REACHING AUDIENCES.....	5
1. Internal audiences.....	5
2. External audiences.....	7
IDENTIFYING ISSUES AND HOT TOPICS, HANDLING CRISES.....	8
ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	9
ANNEX. Terminology used to describe the work of progressive zoos and aquariums.....	11

INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

Public attitudes are shaped by many voices that amplify similar messages. These Guidelines are therefore intended to help all EAZA Members to spread similar messages across the EAZA region and build better long-term understanding of our work and of the meaning of being an EAZA Member. The document is intended for CEOs and directors, as well as managers of communications, PR, marketing and education – or any member of staff responsible for communications.

Decisionmakers and stakeholders, on whose support EAZA Members rely, don't always know what the EAZA community stands for in conservation, animal care, welfare, public education, research, lobby, advocacy, and other domains of our work. Improving this understanding is a shared responsibility of EAZA Members and EAZA as an organisation. The task starts with aligning the strategic communications produced in each of our institutions, which is one of the objectives of EAZA's Strategic Plan for 2021-2025 and the aim of these Guidelines.

The authors believe that the EAZA community can all benefit if every Member:

1. Speaks about their own good work in support of conservation;
2. Speaks about their place in a community of like-minded institutions – including their cooperative work with other progressive zoos and aquariums;
3. Celebrates the success of good zoos and aquariums across the whole spectrum of activities;
4. Speaks about what it takes to become and remain an EAZA Member.

The Guidelines should help you speak about the work of good zoos and aquariums and your place among them, build long-term support to achieve your mission in “good times”, and cope better with “bad times”.

In the document, we focus on the strategic communications, i.e., communications undertaken by Members to define and promote their work among stakeholders: the public, politicians and authorities, partners in NGOs and academia, and the media. In their relations with these stakeholders, EAZA Members can benefit strongly by working together, using similar messages and language, and seeking opportunities to deliver these messages in effective ways.

This document does not look at marketing communications, i.e., communications aimed at meeting short- or medium-term business objectives of each individual EAZA Member institution.

BUILDING MESSAGES

1. Harmonizing the language

Concepts such as species conservation, population management and programmes, etc. will be better recognised and understood by the public and by various stakeholders if we agree to use similar terms in each language of the EAZA region.

Communications managers: We encourage you to consider the list of suggested terms (see Annex) where appropriate.

Please share and discuss this list with colleagues within your institutions. These terms might be different from the phrases they use in their daily work, and it is important for our community to understand why some terms might be more appropriate or effective than others. We hope to make these terms common among all our audiences so that they understand that EAZA (and other progressive) zoos and aquariums are collaborating towards bigger goals than what would be possible if they worked alone.

2. Harmonizing the message

No zoo or aquarium alone can save (a) species. Communication about the work of the whole EAZA community will help build trust and allow each Member to show how they fit into the conservation landscape and partnerships.

Strategic communication is more effective if it is:

- a. **Transparent:** *showing that EAZA Members are considerate, accountable and dedicated to the protection of animals and animal species through professional practice. Being open about areas where we know we can do better.*

Both in good times and in bad, it is always desirable that people have trust in zoos and aquariums and their actions. During calm times, they should know where their donations and ticket spending go to, and they should have confidence that we – and they – are doing genuine good. During a crisis, hiding bad news is not the recommended approach. A well-informed public is less likely to blame the institution for its response.

Transparency can be uncomfortable, but our institutions are more likely to be supported if we recognise areas in which we can do better and engage our audiences in doing better. We should aim for high levels of trust, which means being as open as possible with those we speak to.

- b. **Broad:** *showing how every job function at the zoo or aquarium relates to the others; showing how EAZA zoos and aquariums work together; presenting zoos and aquariums within the wider conservation community; linking audiences through animals.*

We encourage you to make sure that your communications do not miss the opportunity to talk about registrars, researchers, conservationists, bird specialists, invertebrate champions, veterinarians, educators, aquarists, exhibit designers, local communities and other partners in range states and so on. Promoting your partnerships with others will also help.

Zoos and aquariums depend on decisions and policies created by politicians and public authorities. Many of them aren't aware of the wide range of cooperation that takes place in our community. By speaking about the full range of our work and expertise, we make it clear that the way we are usually presented by zoo and aquarium opponents is factually incorrect and/or taken out of context, outdated, and does not match the positive experience of our visitors.

In these Guidelines, we are encouraging you to consider all target audiences and the ways of reaching out to them. This also includes advocacy work with political audiences.

In advocacy, our joint success depends on a synergy between your own local efforts, national efforts (usually coordinated by national zoo associations), and EAZA representing you on the level of EU's institutions and with global conventions and partners. As a policy stakeholder, EAZA speaks on topics related to zoo legislation (EU Zoos Directive and national zoo licensing), animals in general (CITES and wildlife trade, animal health, welfare, transport) and species conservation.

To make our collective voice heard, we rely on your stories and case studies: make sure that your zoo or aquarium adds data to the EAZA Conservation Database, as it helps EAZA find your stories, promote them and use them to illustrate the efforts of the EAZA community.

- c. **In-depth:** *underlining the high level of scientific and professional expertise of our community. Including details of common operations and procedures (e.g., animal transfers, acquisition and disposition, genetic and demographic analyses, etc.).*

It is not only the range of our activities which is impressive, but also their depth. Your communications should reflect the fact that you employ people of high expertise and experience,

who can contribute to the survival of species, and can engage the public using the most up to date educational practices. Your staff can provide input to legislation, advise on policy and create effective strategies to help wildlife and the people who live with it.

While the general public may not understand the full scope of the work done by the specialist staff of zoos and aquariums, they are likely to trust people who evidently have the skills, experience and partnerships to get difficult jobs done.

EAZA processes also help show the depth of our expertise. Regional Collection Plans, Long-Term Management Plans, Member accreditation, all point to a level of commitment and professionalism that reflects well on your institution and its ability to help species.

Referring to the work of the EAZA community can help build awareness of the cooperative network you belong to. We therefore encourage Members to mention:

- **Conservation**

Many stakeholders, including the staff working in your institution, may not fully understand the role that your zoo and aquarium, and the animals in your care, play in conservation. It is important to explain all the ways in which your zoo/aquarium contributes to species conservation (both in the field and through the joint work with animals in our care, primarily through EEPs), fundraising, research and public awareness and education.

- **EAZA Ex Situ Programmes (EEPs)**

The 400+ EEPs are joint population management programmes. They are the main structure for zoo- and aquarium-based *ex situ* conservation in EAZA.

Despite the complexity of the EEP system, there are simple ways in which you can explain what EEPs are (see Annex). You are encouraged to do so; it can help you better explain new births, transfers of animals, and other common occurrences. Communicating about the EEP also points to the purpose of progressive zoos and aquariums and their commitment to working together.

- **Cooperation and partnerships**

Communicating in a transparent, broad and in-depth manner, as suggested above, also includes promoting cooperation and crediting your partners.

The level of cooperation among Members, and between Members and external partners, is often not understood by stakeholders. Promoting your work with other progressive institutions is a good way to show the wider impact of your activities and that you are part of a larger effort that is more likely to succeed in the protection of species.

Where more than one institution is involved, we recommend mentioning as many as possible and appropriate. The partners can work on joint communications: for example, where an animal is transferred within an EEP, both the zoo/aquarium of origin and of destination can speak about the transfer, the reasons behind it and the expectations. This not only shows the context of the transfer, but also helps explain to your audiences a new arrival, or an unexpected absence of an animal they were used to seeing. Where more than one Member is involved in a reintroduction project, the impact of the communications is likely to be larger if all the Members communicate about it together.

The EAZA Executive Office can also help you promote the stories about your partnerships via EAZA's channels! Consider sending advance press releases and other communications to press@eaza.net.

3. Finding a common voice in a diverse community

EAZA's 400+ Members and Candidates for Membership are based in nearly 50 countries. Like any association of such size and geographic spread, the EAZA community shows a diversity of ethical positions and standpoints on fundamental and sometimes difficult issues. Within this diversity, what is common to all EAZA Members is that they work scientifically – which is one of the conditions of membership. Our fact-based communication allows us to reach a common position on most issues by respecting the agreed *scientific consensus*.

Scientific consensus means that while there may be different **interpretations** of data and different ethical or other considerations, the **facts** themselves should not be in doubt.

The controversial issue of management euthanasia/culling provides an illustrative example:

Not in all countries are zoos and aquariums legally permitted to euthanise animals for management purposes. And not all are ethically comfortable with the practice. Yet, there is no evidence that would suggest that culling is not an effective method of controlling a population and maintaining its genetic and demographic diversity.

The agreed *scientific consensus* position on this issue may be described as: "Management euthanasia/culling is influenced by local customs and subject to local laws. While some zoos and aquariums do not conduct culls and may not agree with the practice, all EAZA Members agree that it is a scientifically sound method of population management to support genetic and demographic diversity of a population."

EAZA expects all Members to be willing to respect the agreed *scientific consensus* if approached for comment by the media. You are, of course, free to present your own point of view or other interpretations of the facts, but you are asked to respect the actions of other EAZA Members if they follow a scientifically accepted position agreed within EAZA.

This is in line with the binding [EAZA Code of Ethics and Conduct](#). It requires Members to refrain from actions which negatively affect "[...] the position, the development, reputation, existence, work, purpose and/or mission of other Members and EAZA". Members are encouraged to check all facts before making a public comment and to avoid escalating a negative story that concerns another Member. You should avoid commenting on a situation taking place in another Member zoo/aquarium unless you have agreed this with them.

The EAZA Executive Office can provide the agreed *scientific consensus* position on most issues and will usually publish a Position Statement or public statement if there is a need, agreed with the EAZA Council, Executive Committee, and/or relevant TAG.

REACHING AUDIENCES

1. Internal audiences

Establishing a common culture across institutions starts with ensuring that the staff who work in zoos and aquariums, in all the many roles that exist, truly understand the value of their work.

Good capability of strategic communications means that any one of your staff should be able to talk about their work, the work of your institution, and the missions of the community of progressive zoos and aquariums.

In essence, everyone who works with you should have the tools, information and/or training to act as an ambassador for your institution and for progressive zoos and aquariums. Not all these duties will be

always assigned to all your colleagues, but everyone needs to have at least a certain level of knowledge of the messages we want to spread to external stakeholders.

Therefore, we encourage every Member to:

- a. **Share updates** and allow staff to present their work to colleagues, understand the work and mission of the zoo/aquarium and to understand the community of progressive institutions it belongs to. This could include details of the conservation projects the institution is working on, latest developments in educational practice and so on.

To introduce EAZA to your colleagues, we have produced a “What is EAZA?” presentation for your use. It is updated regularly and is available in several languages: see in the folder [Presentations](#).

During the EAZA21+ campaign (2021-2023), many EAZA Members have begun holding regular meetings among their staff to discuss their role in EAZA and in the broader conservation landscape. We encourage all Members to follow this good informal practice.

- b. **Provide opportunities** for members of staff to share their knowledge with visitors, social media audiences and others. For example, it is highly impressive for visiting politicians to find staff at all levels who can speak about zoos and aquariums and their role in conservation.

The [EAZA Social Media Toolkit for Beginners \(2021\)](#) is available on the EAZA website and is intended to help you encourage staff members to communicate with their own audiences to increase the number of positive voices.

- c. **Foster connections** between your staff and colleagues in other EAZA institutions. This helps share knowledge of best practice and creates a sense of community demonstrating the value of cooperation.

We encourage staff to join professional associations with relevance to their specialism and to build relationships with staff from other institutions, both through formal partnerships and projects and through informal contact. There are many EAZA Facebook groups, run by the EEO or by members of the community, allowing staff to connect with their peers and to follow the latest news.

Communicators are very welcome to join the EAZA Communicators’ Network [by filling in this form](#).

- d. **Encourage staff to attend EAZA events** to build knowledge of contemporary zoo and aquarium practice and learn about other disciplines and specialisms.

These events include: the EAZA Annual Conference, EAZA Education Conference, European Zoo Nutrition Conference, EAZA Animal Welfare Forum and EAZA Conservation Forum. Of these, the Annual Conference represents the widest cross-section of activities undertaken by Members.

We strongly recommend Members to allocate budget for Communications staff to attend at least one EAZA Annual Conference during their time with the organisation.

- e. **Take an active part in EAZA Campaigns.** They are also a good way to get involved. We encourage Members to join the [EAZA campaigns](#) and make full use of the resources developed to build educational and communications content for engaging with various audiences.

- f. **Identify staff with dual roles.** Many zoo and aquarium employees are also active in other networks, from veterinarians’ associations to IUCN SSC Specialist Groups. By promoting their dual roles, you (and the other networks they are part of) can show how their work for the zoological community has helped them become internationally recognised specialists in their areas.

2. External audiences

You and your colleagues should use every suitable opportunity to engage with your stakeholders. Being prepared for these opportunities helps to spread the word about the community of progressive zoos and aquariums and what they can achieve in the most organic way.

2.1. Channels for reaching external audiences

We recommend that all Members explore opportunities to place their messages with audiences on channels appropriate to each audience, e.g.:

- a. **Social media:** each platform has its own characteristics and attracts specific audiences, so be sure to adapt your messages to the platforms used. Remember to tag or mention EAZA, other Members and other collaborators to spread the message and further evidence your connection to a progressive community. Reach out to your peers in the EAZA Communicators' Network to compare which approaches work best.
- b. **Community events:** zoos and aquariums provide the perfect setting for events aimed at the local community. This can include discussions on how to get involved in conservation or other pro-environmental initiatives, actions to change local or national legislation, animal biology, etc.

The appetite for learning about animals and the natural world should not be underestimated. Zoos and aquariums should be seen as expert intermediaries between the community and conservation of the natural environment globally and locally.

- c. **Political events:** many zoos and aquariums have good relations with their closest political representatives, but their involvement in wider political forums and events (on the regional, national and international levels) is not as developed.

We encourage you to make it a core part of your communications and advocacy strategy. The EAZA Executive Office and your national zoo association (where it exists) can provide guidance on how to get involved.

- d. **International forums:** EAZA represents you at the EU and in meetings of CITES, IUCN and other forums. Most of these organisations also have their national branches and contact offices, and it is essential for individual Members as well as the national associations to maintain good working relations with them. The EAZA Executive Office can provide further guidance.
- e. **Media relations:** most zoos and aquariums are skilled at media relations locally (and in the case of larger institutions, nationally) but much of this work is dedicated to promotion of the institution. We believe that it is also important to promote the cooperative work of the progressive zoo/aquarium community. This can strengthen the public perception of a "joined up" network which is highly effective in its roles.

We therefore strongly encourage Members to include messages about EAZA and/or progressive zoos and aquariums more widely. This may be done by referring to EEPs, conservation work carried out together, and so on.

2.2. External partners: your communication allies

Every year, EAZA Members participate in hundreds of projects with external partners: NGOs, public agencies, universities, etc. These projects range from small initiatives (for example, your zoo/aquarium supporting a conservation NGO) to multi-stakeholder projects supported by international funds.

Communication can, of course, greatly contribute to the success of the project. Moreover, positive mutual mentions (by project partners and others) are not only an act of kindness: they help strengthen

the relationships and enhance the credibility and reputation of each participating partner and the networks they are part of.

We recommend that all Members:

- a. Make sure that each project you are involved in has a **communication plan**. It can be simple and short – or more comprehensive, depending on the scale of the project. The plan should set clear and measurable objectives and define the timing and responsibility for each communication activity.
- b. Make sure the communication plan includes mutual mentions by project partners or supported organisations about each other's role in the project.

To make it easy for your partners to talk about your zoo/aquarium, be ready to provide them with:

- A short description of your institution and its membership in EAZA and other networks,
 - Your social media handles and relevant hashtags related to your institution,
 - Your logo in appropriate resolution,
 - Photos, videos and other visuals as appropriate.
- c. Maintain relations with your partners also when you aren't involved in a specific project together. Explore opportunities for communicating about each other. Send press releases and news about your work to your partners and encourage them to communicate about it.

Make sure to inform your partners about communication opportunities in advance and make it easy for them to talk about you (see advice in point b).

IDENTIFYING ISSUES AND HOT TOPICS, HANDLING CRISES

Transparent and proactive communication about the collaborative role of zoos and aquariums in wildlife conservation, education, research and animal welfare, and about EAZA processes, is one of the best ways to build support and prepare for communications challenges.

You should be ready for interest from the media, activists and legislators concerning various aspects of your work. Not all this interest will be positive. The most effective way of handling difficult situations and crises is to maintain a programme of transparent, broad and in-depth communications so that your audiences are not caught by surprise and may already be sympathetic to some extent. **EAZA Members should not avoid speaking about difficult issues.**

The **reaction of other Members** is also an important factor. You should respect the EAZA Code of Ethics and Conduct, and for crisis situations, we ask you to respect the *scientific consensus* which will usually be communicated by EAZA in a Position Statement or public statement. Read [above section](#) for more on this topic.

It is also important to recognize the emotional element of a crisis: facts must always be balanced with the understanding that people may not immediately care about the scientific consensus.

Remember that in public perception, not all animals are equal. There will always be a greater media impact from the more charismatic species. Moreover, people are often more curious and concerned about an individual animal than a species. Crisis response should reflect this; however, managers are encouraged to communicate about all animals and all species with equal respect.

Preparedness is key in crisis communications, and we encourage Members to regularly think about what plans they might have for a variety of situations.

Whenever you face a communication crisis or are expecting one, we encourage you to contact the EAZA Executive Office and your national zoo association (where applicable) who will be ready to work together to support you in responding effectively.

We also encourage you to download the [EAZA Guide to Crisis Communications \(April 2017\)](#) from the Member Area of the EAZA website.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

We also encourage you to consider the following topics which should be appropriately used and presented in in communications.

- 1. Naming of animals:** EAZA neither encourages nor discourages public announcing of individual animals' names. If the cultural context around your institution allows it, then naming animals can strengthen their role as ambassadors for their wild conspecifics, attracting more sympathy from your audiences. Nonetheless, there are some points to consider:
 - The names publicized to visitors should be respectful of the animal's dignity.
 - The name should not be used to oversimplify the connection between animals and humans, or to portray animals in zoos and aquariums as exotic pets. It shouldn't replace accurate scientific and other information that will help visitors to understand the role of an animal in its social group, the status of the species in the wild, and the measures being undertaken to save them.
- 2. Celebrating human occasions with animals:** as with the naming of animals, the celebration of birthdays, Christmas etc. can be controversial, however, zoos and aquariums should feel free to do so, as long as it respects the animals' dignity and the values of the institution and its mission (welfare, education, conservation, research).
- 3. Interactions with animals:** even if your animal demonstrations comply with the EAZA Standards and encourage natural behaviours of animals, we advise caution about picture/feeding opportunities etc. Educators and communicators are advised to pay attention to the following:
 - Explain the context whenever visitors or staff are pictured in close contact with an animal (e.g., health checks performed by a trained veterinarian).
 - Make sure the member of staff is wearing the zoo or aquarium uniform.
 - Check out the [IUCN Best Practice Guidelines for Responsible Imagery of Non-Human Primates](#) for good practice in this area.

Final remark

The success of our community in communication, advocacy and influencing of policies depends on a network of dedicated professionals. We strongly encourage the heads of EAZA Member institutions to **invest in recruiting qualified staff** to undertake work in these areas, and to maintain and develop their qualifications through continuous professional training.

Additional resources

The following documents may also be useful to you:

- When communicating about EAZA, the brand guidelines document (to be linked with final version) provides the parameters for use of the [EAZA logo](#), [EEP logo](#) and other branding essentials
- [Guidelines for independent EAZA-related social media managers \(Jan 2018\)](#) are available on the Communications Committee folder in the EAZA Member Area

Finally, make sure you follow EAZA on social media for the latest news and ideas of topics to promote on your channels. Remember to tag EAZA on your posts when promoting joint efforts of the community so we can like and share.

- Facebook: [@EAZA01](#)
- LinkedIn: [@eaza](#)
- Instagram: [@eaza_official](#)
- YouTube: [@EAZAVideo](#)
- Website: www.eaza.net

Annex. Terminology used to describe the work of progressive zoos and aquariums

The list below is an invitation for you to consider what terminology you use to describe different concepts and aspects of your institution's work to various expert and non-expert audiences.

The first part contains terms that are part of official EAZA language and have been approved in the binding Standards. In the second part, we have listed words that may not necessarily be part of EAZA's governing documents but are important to consider, given constant advancement of zoo and aquarium practice and evolving attitudes in society.

In the future, we intend to translate the list into various languages of the EAZA region.

1. Terms used in official EAZA language (approved by EAZA Members)

EAZA

How to explain what EAZA is? The text used in official EAZA documents might help you as a start:

Founded in 1992, the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (www.eaza.net) is the world's largest regional zoo and aquarium association. Driven by our vision "Progressive zoos and aquariums saving species together with you", we enable collaboration of more than 400 Members (zoos and aquariums, national zoo federations and other organisations) in 47 countries, in the areas of: animal population management, animal care, conservation, education and research.

Accreditation

New applicants for EAZA Membership must be accredited by a screening team and approved by EAZA Council. Additionally, the first cycle of the EAZA Accreditation Programme for existing Members will end in 2024, enabling all Full Members to be recognised as an EAZA-accredited zoo/aquarium.

Reflect on the usage of "accreditation" and "accredited zoo/aquarium" in your language and why accreditation distinguishes EAZA Members from non-accredited zoos and aquariums. Consider how to effectively communicate it to both experts and non-experts.

For further details, visit the EAZA website and especially the EAZA Membership and Accreditation Manual. In the upcoming accreditation cycle, new guidance will assist you in explaining the importance of accreditation and celebrating this accomplishment.

EEP = EAZA Ex situ Programme

The 400+ EEPs are joint population management programmes. They are the main structure for zoo- and aquarium-based *ex situ* conservation in EAZA.

Most species covered by EEPs are at risk of extinction, and most EEPs serve conservation-focused roles. Many EEPs involve animal breeding. For a full list of the conservation- and non-conservation roles assigned to EEPs, we encourage you to read the resources on the EAZA website (Population Management Manual and EEP infographics). Webpages for individual EEPs are also being gradually added to the site (see EEP pages).

We encourage you to use the official full name, EAZA Ex situ Programme, in formal communications, and consider how you can best describe the EEP system to various audiences in your language.

For example, this is what you could say in a social media post about an EEP that is coordinated by an expert from your institution:

An EAZA Ex situ Programme (EEP) is a joint effort of zoos and aquariums to manage healthy and genetically diverse animal populations together. This

involves exchanging animals, breeding, and many more activities supported by specialist knowledge.

The roles of EEPs are defined jointly by experts from the zoo and aquarium community and their partners from the field. Currently, EAZA manages EEPs for over 400 animal species, most of which are at risk of extinction.

(As a reminder, EAZA Members are expected to display the [EEP logo](#) next to each species for which there is an EEP.)

Regional Collection Planning

In EAZA's population management system, Regional Collection Plans (RCPs) establish the species lists managed as EEPs and the reasons why these species are managed. These plans also inform the institutional collection plans of EAZA Members.

While the term "collection plan" is suitable for specialist and internal communication, using "collection" nowadays is more fitting for museums than organizations involved in caring for living beings.

Consider replacing "collection" with alternatives like "species composition," "list of animals", "species plan", or similar terms.

Animal Demonstrations

Current EAZA Standards require animal demonstrations to have educational value. The preferred term is "animal demonstrations" instead of "animal shows", to emphasize the requirement that these sessions are professional, educational and centered on the well-being of animals. Consider whether your terminology has changed from "show" to "demonstration" as well.

2. Terminology that is changing because of evolution in society and language

From "captivity" to "human care"

The term "captivity" was commonly used to refer to animals kept by people, in contrast to animals that are free ranging in their natural habitat. Hence, terms like "captive-bred" and "wild-born" are used officially, notably in CITES.

Supported by EAZA Standards, modern zoos and aquariums focus on high-quality care provided to animals in our institutions. Consequently, "in captivity" has been replaced with "in human care". Similarly, "caring for animals" is taking the place of "animal keeping", and even "zookeeper" is being replaced by alternatives such as "animal care staff."

Consider whether your institution and country are shifting their language from "keeping" to "caring" for animals, to better reflect the dedication and care of your staff.

Another change in language, "animals in our care" is gradually replacing "our animals" to reflect the idea that zoos and aquariums are more of the animals' guardians or custodians than their owners.

From "exhibit" to "habitat"

As part of modern zoos' progress and evolution to meet the specific needs of the animals in their care, the quality and quantity of space provided to animals have also been steadily growing.

To consider: how is the language in your institution and country evolving to describe the living quarters of the animals in your care? Are terms like "exhibit" and "enclosure" being replaced by "animal habitat", "environment", "bedroom" or similar alternatives?

Various other concepts are continually evolving, both in their meaning because of constant progress in zoo and aquarium management, and in their perception by different audiences. This includes terms used to

describe basic aspects of zoo/aquarium work. For instance, “locking animals up for the night” is increasingly being replaced by more exact alternatives such as “animals taken in” or “animals going to their night area”.

Meanwhile, ecological concepts of “the wild” and “free-roaming animals” are also undergoing changes. The availability of areas that can be described using these terms has significantly decreased, as human influence extends over most natural habitats for animal species.

As we continue discussing these and other terms within the EAZA community, we invite you to contemplate them with your colleagues and peers.