

## **Species Survival Plan<sup>®</sup> – Animal Management Reconciliation Policy**

The success of cooperative breeding programs depends on all institutions supporting Species Survival Plan<sup>®</sup> (SSP) recommendations. Therefore, the Board emphasizes the crucial nature of the cooperative process in the development of SSP Master Plans to ensure that animal management recommendations accurately reflect the vital needs of both the SSPs and participating Accredited Institutions and Certified Related Facilities.

If differences regarding SSP recommendations occur between the SSP Management Group and a member Institution, AZA's Full Participation Policy clearly articulates the process that both parties must utilize to resolve them prior to engaging in the Animal Management Reconciliation process. However, if such differences cannot be resolved, then the parties involved must request that AZA's Wildlife Conservation Management Committee (WCMC) mediate the situation.

- WCMC will (1) determine if all efforts to resolve differences have been exhausted and, (2) determine if the recommendations in question are fundamental to the cooperative management of the *ex situ* population. If both situations are true, then WCMC will notify all parties and appoint a Mediation Task Force which includes the WCMC Chair / designee, one member of WCMC selected by each party to represent them, the SSP Coordinator, the institution's Director and two other institutional representatives, and AZA's VP of Animal Conservation.
- The Mediation Task Force will conduct a confidential review of the situation in less than 30 days. Within 2 weeks of the completed review, the WCMC Chair / designee will draft a mediation report describing a consensus decision, which will be reviewed by the participating parties. Comments on the draft report must be returned within a week of distribution. The WCMC Chair / designee will consider all comments and produce a final mediation report. Assuming a resolution is reached, the report will be submitted to all participants involved in the process and the matter will be closed.
- If the mediation process yields no resolution, WCMC must notify all parties and initiate the reconciliation process, during which the institution in question must not engage in any breeding, acquisitions and / or dispositions that run counter to the SSP until a resolution is found. The Reconciliation Committee, over which the WCMC Chair / designee presides, will include the institution's Director or designee, the WCMC Board Liaison, and AZA's Sr. VP of Conservation, VP of Animal Conservation, and Executive Director. The Reconciliation Committee will consider the Mediation Task Force report and determine if additional information is required.
- In its call for greater accountability, the AZA Board holds that action by the Accreditation Commission and / or the Ethics Board can be taken against a member institution that: (1) demonstrates a pattern of a failure to participate and / or (2) demonstrates an action contrary to an SSP program recommendation which threatens the short- or long-term management of the *ex situ* population. Therefore, the Reconciliation Committee will specifically consider if either of these instances is found to be valid.
- If it is determined that the member institution's action is not detrimental to the cooperative management of the *ex situ* population, then the Master Plan will be changed accordingly and the results of these findings will be incorporated into a reconciliation final report submitted to the AZA Conservation Office.
- If it is determined that the member institution's action is detrimental to the cooperative management of the *ex situ* population, and / or is part of a pattern of a failure to participate, then the Master Plan will stand as is and the Reconciliation Committee will notify the institution that they must comply with it. If the institution refuses this directive, the Reconciliation Committee will note this in the reconciliation final report filed with AZA's Conservation Office and provide the report to the Accreditation Commission and the Ethics Board for consideration.