



## Dr. Peter DOLLINGER

World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA)

### *“A look at World Association of Zoos & Aquariums and the Planned MOU between CITES, IATA, and WAZA”*

The World Association of Zoos and Aquariums was founded in 1946 as the International Union of Directors of Zoological Gardens (IUDZG). In 2000 the name was changed to ‘WAZA’ and, in 2001, a permanent Executive Office with full-time director was established.

Zoos and aquaria adhering to the WAZA Network have to comply with the WAZA Code of Ethics and Animal Welfare. This implies a.o. that all animal transfers must conform to the international standards and laws applying to the particular species. Where appropriate, animals should be accompanied by qualified staff.

Currently, WAZA has 225 members: 203 Institution, 6 Affiliate and 16 Association members. Institution members are zoos and aquariums that meet specific requirements. Affiliate members are like-minded and professionally related organisations. Association members are regional or national zoo and aquarium associations, which unify in total about 1000 institutions.

The role of WAZA in the complex system of zoo associations can be briefly described as follows:

- WAZA is the global umbrella organisation of zoos and aquaria.
- WAZA represents 80-90 % of the scientific zoos and aquaria world wide.
- WAZA ensures that its members comply with the code of ethics.
- WAZA meets its objectives in cooperation with its constituency and the wider zoo community.

CITES is in principle a trade agreement, serving exclusively to prohibit, restrict or monitor international trade in animals or plants of designated wild species. Although it is formally not an organisation, the Conference of the Parties has established structures which assimilate CITES to an organisation: including a Standing Committee, which takes care of the business of the COP between the meetings, an Animals and a Plants Committee, both dealing with technical and scientific issues, and a Nomenclature Committee. For specific issues Working Groups have been established such as a Transport Working Group.

At the 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties, held in 2002, the decision was taken that the Secretariat shall liaise with the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) with a view of concluding a Memorandum of Understanding in order to:

- a) Strengthen further collaboration in order to improve transport conditions of live animals;
- b) Establish an official training programme on animal transport;
- c) Facilitate the exchange of technical information relevant to animal transport between the Secretariat, the IATA Live Animals and Perishables Board, and the WAZA Executive Office.

A draft MOU was prepared and agreed to by the CITES Secretariat and WAZA Council. The IATA Live Animals and Perishables Board was, however unable to come to a conclusion at its 2003 meeting.

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Peter Dollinger studied veterinary medicine at Zurich University and wrote his Doctoral Thesis under the leadership of Heini Hediger, then Director of Zurich Zoo. After University he worked as a part-time assistant at the Zoos of Mulhouse (France) and Zurich, and at the Institute of Parasitology at Zurich University. In 1974 he moved to Berne and worked for 28 years in different capacities at the Swiss Federal Veterinary Office. In particular he directed the Permits and Inspections Division, which included responsibility for CITES and the welfare of zoo animals. He was appointed Executive Director of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums in 2001.

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