

## EAZA celebrates World Wildlife Day 2023

"Partnerships for Wildlife Conservation"



The theme for this year's World Wildlife Day on 3 March is "Partnerships for Wildlife Conservation". Since partnerships are central to the work of EAZA and our Members, and to our current EAZA21+ Campaign, we are showcasing their variety in this mini-series.

### Episode #3: Project consortia with external funding

20 February 2023

Project consortia are an excellent example of EAZA partnerships. Conservation is supported by many funding opportunities, and teaming up with the right partners is the first step to success. In species conservation, partnerships that bring together expertise from across the *ex-situ* and *in-situ* spectrum (applying the **One Plan Approach**) can play a decisive role in how competitive, and successful, your proposal will be.

EAZA Members are joining more and more project consortia of different sizes and scales. **Is there a secret to their success?**

If we zoom in on successful consortia that won grants from the EU LIFE programme, we will find some common features of the EAZA zoos and aquariums involved:

- 👉 They participate in **multiple EEPs for threatened species**: this gives them ample skills and expertise, but also solid networks of stakeholders to connect with.
- 🎓 **Educational programmes** are always high on their agenda, to raise public awareness. This helps them get recognised in their countries as institutions of high educational importance.
- 🔬 They apply **science-based** decision-making.

#### Combining *in-situ* and *ex-situ* actors

The Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS) leads the EU LIFE project "[Saving Wildcats](#)" together with Nordens Ark and other partners. Both zoos have vast **experience in animal reintroduction and in working with governmental- and NGO partners**. The project aims to re-establish a viable Scottish wildcat (*Felis silvestris silvestris*) population in the Scottish Highlands, and it did not come out of the blue: it builds on previous work of the Scottish Wildlife Action partnership and a Conservation Action Plan developed by a large group of prominent organisations and experts.

In Finland, EAZA Members Korkeasaari Zoo in Helsinki, Ähtäri Zoo and Ranua Zoo are supplying their ***ex-situ* husbandry skills and facilities** to the EU LIFE project "[WildForestReindeerLIFE](#)". Coordinated by the Wildlife Service Finland, it aims to reintroduce the wild forest reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus fennicus*) to its native habitat in southern Finland. The consortium is multidisciplinary to the core, including the Finnish Hunters' Association too.



#### Targeting species as well as habitats

Zagreb Zoo is the ex-situ partner of the recently funded "[LIFE for Mauremys](#)", a LIFE project designed to improve the conservation status of the Balkan terrapin (*Mauremys rivulata*) in Croatia. One of the key objectives is to **raise public awareness** about the conservation of Mediterranean freshwater habitats, benefiting from the terrapin's role as an "umbrella species".

Protecting habitats requires addressing the habitats' users but also their **relationships with the target species**. The LIFE project "[HUNVIPHAB](#)", involving Budapest Zoo (and in the previous consortium also Vienna's Schönbrunn Zoo), focuses on the critically endangered Hungarian meadow viper (*Vipera ursinii rakosiensis*). Intensive agriculture is contributing to the snake's decline, so the project focuses on viper-friendly land management guidelines along with recommendations for the EU Common Agricultural Policy.

Agriculture and farmers are also the focus of [LIFE SOS Crau Plain Grasshopper](#), a project aiming at preserving the Crau plain grasshopper (*Prionotropis rhodanica*), endemic to a small region in France. Parc Animalier de la Barben and the Zoological Garden of the Besançon Museum bring their expertise in insect breeding and **landscape management**. This project, too, builds on previous intense work which led to the creation of the conservation strategy for the species together with an IUCN SSC specialist group.

#### Networks: your opportunity!

The EAZA community grows through people's connections. You can make full use of the EAZA21+ journey to define (or refine!) your zoo's identity and strengths and reinforce your connections while keeping an eye on the conservation targets set by international agreements.

**The brand-new Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework** is based on a whole-of-society approach. In other words, everyone must contribute, including modern zoos and aquariums. So, here is a question for you to consider with colleagues: ***to maximise your zoo's conservation impact, who would you need to partner with first...?***

