



# Certification Process for Conservation Projects of the Latin American Association of Zoos and Aquariums (ALPZA)

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# CERTIFICATION PROCESS FOR CONSERVATION PROJECTS OF THE LATIN AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS AND AQUARIUMS (ALPZA)

ALPZA members develop permanent activities for the conservation of biodiversity. In this sense, it is important that they have clear guidelines to direct and organize their efforts, and as long as they comply with these criteria they can be recognized and certified as ALPZA CONSERVATION PROJECTS.

The ALPZA conservation project certification process was created in 2010 as an initiative of the Conservation Committee and is open to all ALPZA members.

Within the framework of this process, a CONSERVATION PROJECT is defined as one or a set of temporary initiatives developed with the purpose of conserving biodiversity within a time schedule and a budget.

Below we present the guidelines and describe the steps to apply to the ALPZA conservation project certification process.

## GUIDELINES

1. The PROJECT has been sustained for at least 2 years or is part of a plan or program with continuity.
2. THE PROJECT recognizes environmental problems and specific threats (direct and indirect) that may affect one or more species, their populations, or habitats, and develops clear strategies and proposals for their solution.
3. THE PROJECT determines goals, objectives, and actions, as well as the indicators to measure them.
4. THE PROJECT promotes inter-institutional cooperation, joining its efforts with national, international, governmental and / or non-governmental organizations associated with wildlife conservation.
5. THE PROJECT has qualified professional staff, linked to the institution, and dedicated to the development of these efforts.
6. THE PROJECT has a minimum annual budget secured and Resources are allocated to the PROJECT (including equipment, infrastructure, materials).
7. THE PROJECT presents evidence that the goals, objectives, and actions are being achieved.
8. THE PROJECT develops management actions for the conservation of biodiversity, scientific research and / or education programs.
9. The results of the PROJECT are shared in scientific means (conferences and / or publications) and / or academic events (courses and / or seminars), and in communications media.
10. THE PROJECT involves the local community where it has influence and integrates it into its work strategy, informing them about the objectives, scope and results; and when actions may have an impact on their livelihoods, members of this community are involved in decision making, when feasible.
11. THE PROJECT complies with the ALPZA Code of Ethics.
12. When THE PROJECT involves the translocation of individuals to the wild:
  - 12.1. A health protocol is determined and implemented to avoid the introduction of diseases in the wild population.
  - 12.2. A behavioral assessment and analysis are carried out in order to determine the adaptability of the animal (s) to wildlife, when necessary.

12.3. The genetic and geographical origin of the individuals to be translocated are considered to avoid adverse impacts on the ecosystem.

12.4. A physical identification system is determined for all individuals, when feasible.

12.5. Ecological, environmental, and socio-cultural conditions for the translocation are assessed and procured.

12.6 A post-release monitoring system is determined to check the adaptation of translocated specimens, when feasible.

12.7 A plan for evaluating the results of the translocation is determined with the goal of identifying possible benefits or negative impacts, and solutions for their mitigation.

### 13. When THE PROJECT involves rescue and rehabilitation actions:

13.1. The entrance and exit of animals to the institution or rescue center is controlled by the governmental environmental authority.

13.2 There are isolated spaces, quarantine areas and work protocols that provide biosecurity for the staff and establish the correct management of the individuals, considering the welfare of the animals.

13.3 There is a system for the identification and tracking of each individual during its time in the institution or center.

13.4 The rehabilitated individuals are integrated into translocation programs in natural habitats or ex situ conservation programs for the species, or management in a zoological institution recognized by the respective national authority. In case of translocation to the wild, points 12.1, 12.2 and 12.3 must be complied with, and when feasible 12.6.

### 14. When THE PROJECT involves the conservation of natural areas:

14.1 The conservation area is clearly defined and delimited, geographically, and legally.

14.2 The area has a management plan.

### 15. When the PROJECT develops ex situ conservation actions

16.1 A role for the ex situ program has been determined in accordance with the [IUCN Species Survival Commission Guidelines on the Use Ex situ Management for Species Conservation](#).

16.2 The characteristics and dimensions of the ex situ population required to fulfill the function or functions defined in point 16.1 have been determined.

16.3 The material and human resources necessary for the implementation of the ex situ program are available.

16.4 There is a plan for program monitoring, adjustments, and evaluation.

16.5 The program promotes links to in situ conservation actions (through education, work with the community, translocation, research, etc).

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Once the certification of the PROJECT is officially communicated by email, the Member agrees to comply with the following points. Failure to meet any of these points for a period of two (2) consecutive years will result in loss of certification.

- Send annual reports of the activities developed in the period between January and December of the previous year, with their progress and results, and on the date and format indicated by the Conservation Committee.
- Send photographic evidence, video and / or news of the progress and results, associated with the respective annual report.
- When these guidelines are updated, present evidence of compliance in the immediate annual report.
- Communicate to the Conservation Committee and ALPZA's Executive Director any novelties related to changes in the administration of the PROJECT, such as responsible person and institutional affiliation.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is advised that the PROJECT develop in situ and ex situ management strategies and conservation actions in line with the One Plan Approach, integrating the efforts of all the actors responsible and involved in the conservation of biodiversity.

The PROJECT should facilitate capacity building and conservation training.

It is recommended that THE PROJECT involve and integrate more than one member of ALPZA.

When THE PROJECT involves translocation of specimens to wildlife the [Guidelines for reintroduction and other translocations for IUCN conservation purposes](#) (IUCN / SSC 2013) should be followed.

If THE PROJECT involves the conservation of natural areas, it is recommended that the area be registered in a public or private protected areas system.

## APPLICATION

If you are a member of ALPZA and wish to submit a Project to be evaluated, please complete the Application form, and send it together with the indicated files to the Executive Director of ALPZA ([direccion@alpza.com](mailto:direccion@alpza.com)).

Files to submit:

1. Application form filled out
2. Letter of presentation of the PROJECT signed by the Director or Representative of the Institution.
3. File including evidence of compliance with the guidelines (example: publications and associated news, promotional and educational material, etc.).
4. Photographs associated with the development of the project: minimum 10.

Files in points 1, 2 and 3 must be sent in pdf format.

## PROJECT REVALIDATION

Certified projects will be subject to a five-year review. The idea of this is to carry out an active follow-up beyond the annual reports submitted by the projects. This review is an internal analysis by the conservation committee, based on the annual reports submitted by the project, comparing progress, current status, modifications, achievements, etc.

Based on this internal analysis, the project can follow two paths:

- 1- Revalidation, in which case it continues with its active certification.
- 2- Request for information and/or meeting with the project director in order to review the progress of the project and evaluate whether it continues to be certified.

In both cases, the result of the analysis is communicated to the project director. For scenario 2, the process continues with the permanent support of the ALPZA conservation committee, offering guidance in the processes of evaluating project progress.

## GLOSSARY

**Conservation action:** It is a specific activity or effort developed to contribute to the protection of a species, its habitat, or an ecosystem in response to the identified threats. Conservation

actions can be part of conservation plans and strategies for species or be part of conservation projects that seek to ensure the survival of that species (s) in the long term. Conservation actions can also respond to emerging situations.

**Conservation area:** It is an area that constitutes an effective conservation unit for the maintenance of the ecological processes that characterize it.

**Conservation management:** Refers to the actions required to regulate human activities to minimize direct and indirect negative impacts on valuable sites and / or valuable species, with the objective of maintaining the existence of specific species or biodiversity in general. In any case, the activities managed include those that could have direct negative impacts on the objective, and those that only have indirect effects, and may have these effects at a considerable distance from the place where the activity takes place.

**Environmental problem:** These are situations caused by human, economic, social, cultural, and political activities, processes or behaviors, among others; that affect the environment and cause negative impacts on the environment, the economy and society.

**Ex situ conservation:** The conservation of components of biological diversity outside their natural habitats.

**Goal:** These are practical and concrete steps that contribute directly to the scope of the Project's conservation vision.

**Identification:** Refers to the way in which a specimen or specimen is recognized individually. The forms of identification can be electronic (chip), physical (band or ring, cuts, photography) or logical (registration number, name).

**Impact indicator:** A measure of achievement; or a description of the conditions that would show that a particular action would have been implemented successfully. Good indicators are measurable, accurate, consistent, and sensitive.

**In situ conservation:** The conservation of ecosystems and natural habitats and the maintenance and recovery of viable populations of species in their natural environments and, in the case of domesticated and cultivated species, in the environments in which they have developed their properties specific.

**Objective:** It is a positive statement of what needs to be done to contribute to achieving a Goal.

**Protected area:** A geographically defined area that has been designated or regulated and managed to achieve specific conservation objectives.

**Rehabilitation:** It is the action of recovering a wild animal that suffered some pathology or was removed from its habitat, sanitary, physical, psychic and / or behaviorally.



**Rescue:** It is the act of responding and acting to save a disabled animal or an animal that is in imminent threat of danger, provide its immediate needs when necessary and deliver it to a center where it receives definitive care so that it can recover and finally be returned to nature.

**Threat:** It is any factor that causes a detrimental impact on the abundance of the population of a species.

**Translocation:** It is the movement of a living organism from one area to another, facilitated by the human being, either from ex situ conditions or from another natural area.

## REFERENCES

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