

New U.N. Report Shows Drastic Action Necessary to Save Species

AZA-Accredited facilities are part of the solution, helping with species recovery.

Silver Spring, Maryland (May 6, 2019) – Following the release of a dramatic report by the United Nation's Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) President and CEO, Dan Ashe, released the following statement:

The conclusions in the United Nations' IPBES Global Assessment are alarming, finding nearly one million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction. This conclusion, backed by a three-year study, is profoundly troubling news. AZA-accredited facilities are taking action to help save species and their habitat and invite the public to join us.

An AZA survey last spring found that people believe 100 animals are protected by the Endangered Species Act, when in fact 1,471 animals are included on the list. Eighty-seven percent of those surveyed were willing to help save animals from extinction. We know that people care and want to make a difference.

As the U.N. report outlines, we need to make major changes in our behaviors to protect wild animals and wild places. In 2017, AZA-accredited facilities contributed \$220 million to conservation efforts directly benefitting animals and habitats in 128 countries around the globe. In addition to our field work, AZA members educate nearly 200 million guests per year about animals to foster a deeper understanding of the need to protect them.

Since 2015, AZA SAFE: Saving Animals From Extinction® has challenged its members to do more to respond to the extinction crisis. Through SAFE, AZA members are focusing their collective expertise and leveraging their massive audiences to save over 20 species and taxonomic groups from extinction.

The U.N. report shows we do not have time to wait. AZA and its members are cultivating passionate advocates willing to take action for wildlife. From decreasing the use of single-use plastics to protect our waterways and oceans, to speaking up for legislation to promote sustainable fisheries and protect critical habitat, to ending the demand for illegally traded wildlife, and to springing into action and volunteering in your local community, join

the AZA community and make a difference for the animals we both love and need.

Engage more with AZA and its members at aza.org/joinus.

About AZA

Founded in 1924, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of zoos and aquariums in the areas of conservation, animal welfare, education, science, and recreation. AZA is the accrediting body for the top zoos and aquariums in the United States and ten other countries. Look for the AZA accreditation logo whenever you visit a zoo or aquarium as your assurance that you are supporting a facility dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things. The AZA is a leader in saving species and your link to helping animals all over the world. To learn more, visit www.aza.org.

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