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HYBRID CONFERENCE & WORKSHOPS



SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE ACTION FOR WILDLIFE HEALTH AND WELFARE

By

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ABSTRACT

Climate change has been described as the biggest existential threat of our time. Drawing on the principles of resilience, this session will consider the impacts of climate change on wildlife health and wellbeing, from a holistic, systemic perspective, and explain why, if we are to realise a future rich in wildlife, we need to make decisions now about what the future, in our lifetime, and beyond, looks like, for wildlife, and for the environments upon which they depend.

For the past decade Zoos Victoria has worked passionately and tirelessly to fight wildlife extinction. In recognising that climate change is threatening the ongoing existence of the diverse wildlife that shares our planet, we have committed to urgently tackle the devastating threats from climate change.

This presentation will demonstrate, through our values of optimism, curiosity and trust, what Zoos Victoria is already doing and future plans, for environmental sustainability and climate action for wildlife health and welfare. We will share how we have mapped climate change modelling, scenarios and forecasts against our whole of business strategies and plans to understand and act on the impacts of climate change on our organisation and our extensive work for wildlife.

Zoos Victoria's position on climate change was approved by the Board in 2021 and now forms the basis of a program of work on Sustainability, Climate Action for Wildlife and Wildlife Health which supports the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations go hand-in-hand with strategies that tackle climate change and work to preserve our natural environment and species. These programs have been mapped against the Sustainable Development Goals and consider the immediate and cascading, longer term impacts of climate change in the context of species extinction; wildlife health; care for animals in our zoos; disaster resilience; critical wildlife habitat and biodiversity; organisational sustainability and community connection to nature.

Zoos Victoria recognises that investing in sustainable development and action against climate change has immediate and long-term benefits for biodiversity conservation, as well as community health and well-being and economic development and stability.

SDGs supported include:

1 – No Poverty

3 – Good Health and Wellbeing

6 – Clean Water and Sanitation

7 – Affordable and Clean Energy



- 10 – Reduced Inequalities
- 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities
- 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production
- 13 – Climate Action
- 14 – Life Below Water
- 15 – Life on Land
- 17 – Partnerships for the Goals

BIOGRAPHY

Amanda Lamont, Climate Action and Disaster Resilience Advisor, Zoos Victoria, alamont@zoo.org.au

Amanda joined Zoos Victoria after the 2019-20 Australian bushfires to develop and deliver a wildlife emergency management plan to increase wildlife resilience and welfare outcomes in disasters. Her role was expanded to advise on strategies to consider the impacts of climate change on Zoos Victoria's operations, including its extensive program of work in wildlife conservation and the changing disaster landscape. Amanda has an established career in disaster resilience and disaster risk reduction, having held leadership roles at the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience, Australian Red Cross and World Vision Australia. Amanda is a volunteer at Australian Red Cross and is a volunteer firefighter. She is deployed nationally to support people during and after disasters, including in NSW and Victoria during the 2019-20 bushfires. Amanda is also the co-founder of the Australasian Women in Emergencies Network.

Leanne Wicker, Wildlife Health and Welfare Advisor, Zoos Victoria, lwicker@zoo.org.au

Leanne, an experienced wildlife veterinarian, has worked with Zoos Victoria since 2013. After working as the Senior Veterinarian at the Australian Wildlife Health Centre, Healesville Sanctuary, she is Zoos Victoria's first Wildlife Health and Welfare Advisor. This role aims to integrate the science of wildlife health and welfare into Zoos Victoria's efforts to safeguard biodiverse ecosystems, ensuring wild animals continue to thrive well into the future. Leanne has applied this 'one health' approach to a range of diverse clinical, research and management roles throughout Australia, Antarctica, Vietnam, Laos and China. She has worked as a veterinarian in rescue centres caring for wildlife confiscated from the illegal wildlife trade in Vietnam, contributed to the development of husbandry and veterinary care standards for confiscated pangolins, conducted health and disease surveillance in free-ranging wildlife to support translocation and reintroduction programs, managed the health of captive wildlife in zoos and conservation breeding programs, provided veterinary care to sick, injured and orphaned Australia wildlife, and contributed to the emergency response to wildlife impacted by bushfires in Victoria.