

Zoos S.A.

# Business Plan

EXECUTIVE  
SUMMARY



2013  
2018



# Looking Ahead...

## Foreword

## Looking Ahead...

*Message from the  
President, RZSSA  
and  
Chief Executive, Zoos SA*

**In mid 2012, a Five Year Business Plan was publicly released.**

**This detailed plan outlined in significant detail the actions to be taken to ensure the long term success of Zoos SA.**

The Business Plan is the detail that supports the Strategic Plan and helps to ensure that the activities of all parts of the business are closely aligned with its directions. Quarterly monitoring of the status of actions against the detailed tasks is undertaken and results reported to the Board and the State Government.

This Business Plan has now been reviewed and updated to reflect the significant achievements already made and the areas that require our focus over the next 12 months.

We remain a highly regarded institution with much to offer. Our core business continues to be based around public zoo visits, which have transformed dramatically over the past decade to become more adaptive, diverse, active and interactive.

On top of this, Zoos SA's broader conservation purpose has grown in prominence and professionalism. We apply world-class zoo standards and contribute to global conservation efforts through our integrated, science-based conservation programs.

There is much still to be done in this challenging financial climate. With the persistent and growing need for active conservation efforts to stem the loss of habitat and biodiversity, zoos will become more and more important to support species on the edge of extinction and as recruiting and learning centres for the next generation.

During 2012-2013, the decision was made to cease our business operations at Warrawong Wildlife Sanctuary and so our efforts moving forward will centre on Adelaide and Monarto Zoos.

*Outlining a  
positive and  
rigorous 5-year  
plan to...safeguard  
a healthy future  
for this treasured  
South Australian  
organisation.*

From a business perspective we require more diversified revenue streams and the establishment of a sustainable financial base that supports the organisation at the right scale and shape for what we do uniquely and well. We share with zoos worldwide a distinctive business challenge; zoos are expensive to run, easy to undervalue based purely on "bottom line" terms and have limited cost recovery options.

A hybrid approach is needed; one that echoes the qualities of a 21<sup>st</sup> century zoo as a business as well as a world-class conservation society.

Key elements of this future are:

- Strengthening our engagement with members and visitors by building on our high quality experiences and education and learning opportunities.
- Sound financial planning and management.
- Integrated science-based conservation programs.
- Sites and exhibits that follow world-class standards.
- Collections managed based on quality and conservation relevance.

Our team – the Board, staff and volunteers – continue to work hard to deliver quality visitor experiences, business revenue, conservation achievements and improved animal care.

We have reviewed this Business Plan to underpin these efforts and commitment, outlining a positive and rigorous 5-year plan to consolidate our strengths, address shortcomings and safeguard a healthy future for this treasured South Australian organisation.



Dr Carla Litchfield  
President, RZSSA



Elaine Bensted  
Chief Executive, Zoos SA

**Our Vision is to lead and achieve long-term  
conservation change**

**through our internationally renowned  
sites, programs and people.**

Vision, Zoos SA Strategic Plan, 2012-2017





# Introduction

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## Introduction

**Zoos SA is a long-established**

and successful organisation that is an integral part of South Australia; since Adelaide Zoo opened to the public in 1883, six generations of South Australians have passed through its gates.

It is a not-for-profit, membership-based society dedicated to biodiversity conservation with nearly 29,000 members.

## Our Mission

**Zoos SA is a charitable conservation society**

that exists to save species from extinction and to connect people with nature.

*Zoos SA is a charitable conservation society that exists to save species from extinction and to connect people with nature.*

*Mission  
Zoos SA Strategic Plan  
2012-2017*

## Our 20-Year Vision

**Our vision is to lead**

and achieve long-term conservation change through our internationally renowned sites, programs and people.

# Adelaide Zoo

## Adelaide Zoo

is the second-oldest zoo in Australia with a unique, special style and character.

Located on the fringe of the City of Adelaide, adjacent to Botanic Park, the zoo retains many of its original architectural features, making it an enjoyable place to visit and an important part of South Australia's heritage.

Originally constructed on six and a half hectares and now occupying eight hectares, the zoo is home to over 250 species of exotic and native mammals, birds, reptiles and fish exhibited in beautiful botanic surroundings. It also benefits from its proximity to the Adelaide Botanic Gardens, University of Adelaide and SA Museum. Adelaide Zoo has grown into a major tourist attraction for locals and visitors.



# Monarto Zoo

Located 70 kilometres east of Adelaide,

Monarto Zoo is an open-range zoo covering 1000 hectares.

It contains large areas of native Australian habitat and plays a major role nationally and internationally in breeding programs for threatened species.

It offers visitors an unparalleled display of African and Asian animals in an open-range safari setting. Since opening in 1993, it has grown into a major tourist attraction for not only the Murray and Mallee region but also South Australia, with approximately 100,000 visitors a year.



# Warrawong Sanctuary

During 2012-13,

the decision was made to cease our business operations at Warrawong Wildlife Sanctuary.

Our efforts moving forward will centre on Adelaide and Monarto Zoos.





# Our

# Business Plan Priorities

# Priorities

*Five Year Business  
Plan Priorities for  
Zoos SA during  
2013 – 2018*

**In conjunction with Zoos SA's Strategic Plan 2012 - 2017,**  
this Business Plan positions the organisation to provide a stable financial operating basis to work towards its goals.

It sets out a responsible and effective approach for the next five years, with a particular focus on detailed actions for 2013-14.

Key elements of the Business Plan include:

- Ensuring visitor experiences at the two sites – Adelaide and Monarto – for members and nonmembers are enjoyable, rewarding and educational.
- Ensuring animal husbandry and research practices meet national and state animal welfare standards.
- Delivering successful and integrated science-based conservation programs (local, national and international) in collaboration with our partners and investors.
- Updating education and training programs and materials to ensure they align with the new national curriculum and strongly link with conservation priorities.
- Engaging with target audiences to grow admissions and memberships through targeted campaigns and maximise cross-selling opportunities.
- Maximising fundraising opportunities, including philanthropic support, memberships, bequests and animal adoptions.
- Ongoing review of our operations to increase income generating activities and target cost-saving opportunities through improved efficiencies and streamlined operations.
- Continuing to develop our Master Plan with a view to improve value, conservation, visitor enjoyment, sustainability and operating efficiencies.
- Strategic infrastructure investments and regular reviews to maintain assets, reduce risks and costs, and continue to improve visitor experiences.
- Strengthening our communication channels both on-site and online to enhance visitor and member access and engagement, income generation and to enable an increased focus on conservation activities.
- Providing a diverse range of individual and family zoo and animal encounter experiences.
- Valuing and supporting staff, volunteers, members, partners and visitors, including implementing effective engagement and feedback mechanisms.

# Our Business

As set out in Zoos SA's Strategic Plan 2012 - 2017,

the organisation has four primary goals and a series of broad strategies to achieve these. This Business Plan builds on this framework. The relationship between the Strategic Plan and the Business Plan is shown below.

## Strategic Plan



## Business Plan





# Four Goals

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## Our Four Goals

### I Saving Species

**The strategies identified to achieve this goal**

**are underpinned by selected conservation projects, both international and local. These projects reinforce Zoos SA's conservation credentials, linking collection species with on-ground conservation efforts based on sound scientific principles.**

Zoos are uniquely placed to contribute to the protection of the amazing species found across the world as they can bring a wide range of partners and resources to programs; from being able to hold and breed animals in captivity to increase numbers, to conducting research to understand species' biology, to protecting and restoring habitat and also reconnecting people to nature so they understand the consequences of their actions on the world around them. Zoos SA is involved in all these aspects and more.

Zoos SA has undertaken a wide range of projects both within Australia and internationally over the years and these projects have seen staff and students gain valuable skills, helped Zoos SA gain a reputation as an effective conservation organisation and, importantly, delivered a range of on-ground conservation outcomes – helping species to survive into the future in the wild.

Expansions of field project involvement beyond existing commitments is dependent on external funding being secured.

International programs are predominantly funded from our Conservation Fund which is made up of Zoos SA's 10% commitment of income from *Behind-the-Scene* Experiences run onsite at Monarto and Adelaide Zoo. A portion of the Conservation Fund is also invested in the native species breeding programs such as Warru and also to help meet contractual requirements with China regarding the Giant Panda.

*The Zoos SA Business Plan builds on the framework established in the Strategic Plan.*

## 2 Connecting People with Nature

### Zoos provide a great opportunity

for people to learn about and connect with animals and their habitats which they may never otherwise see. In particular, zoos may be the only chance to see some species up close - a very different experience to watching them on television.

In an increasingly urban world, zoos can be an oasis in which people can get in contact with nature through their senses; sight, smell, sound, as well as hands-on involvement. Zoos provide a window into a natural world that is both increasingly close with technology bringing more of it into our daily lives, and increasingly distant as we experience it remotely.

Zoos are places where people can experience the cycles of life; from the changing of the seasons and weather, to the births and deaths of individual animals. They are a place where people learn about themselves and others and, importantly, where they can learn about the impacts their decisions have on the lives of those around them. Where people can meet ambassadors for their wild cousins who provide a connection for people to learn about the challenges facing the species and information about what they can do to help.

Zoos offer a range of ways in which people can connect with nature; from a family day visit with zookeeper presentations or volunteer-led tours, to a structured school education program at Adelaide or Monarto Zoo, or even an off-site visit to a community group by the McDonald's Zoomobile.

Taking part in a Zoos SA school education program has been part of the experience of growing up in South Australia for hundreds of thousands of students over the years and continues to be a vital part of both the South Australian lifestyle and Zoos SA's activities.



## 3 Working Ethically and Sustainably

### As leaders in wildlife conservation and animal care,

zoos are in a unique position to showcase environmental sustainability and inspire our visitors to take action to conserve wildlife and the natural world.

It is therefore essential that our environmental sustainability ethic is echoed in the way we treat others and the way we do business.

This means adopting high welfare standards for our people – staff, members and visitors – and the animals we look after, managing our inputs and wastes to keep our environmental footprint “light” and supporting ethical businesses through our purchasing and service arrangements.

## 4 Building a Sound Business

### This goal is essential to Zoos SA's business

and is critical to underpin the delivery of our other goals.

Improved governance arrangements have been put in place in the 2012-13 year and these will operate for the full year of 2013-14 and be reviewed annually.

### Improved Reporting

#### Formal reporting

against the Business Plan commenced during 2012-13 to the Board and the State Government. This will continue each quarter.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have also been prepared for the Strategic Plan. These include some headline indicators known as “flagships” to track our success.



Our

# Yearly Priorities

## Yearly Priorities

### As Zoos SA regains financial stability

the focus is on consolidating our operations and conservation projects, and redeveloping a model to enable the organisation to rebuild and focus on our core goals aligned to the Strategic Plan.

2013-14

### Continued focus will be placed on implementing changes

and consolidating operations to secure the financial stability of Zoos SA.

Part of this process will be the ongoing development of the Master Plan and associated site and project plans, to evaluate the species we have in our collection and facilities for them.

Nurturing and developing relationships with corporate interests and the broader community will be a key focus for our communication activities. As part of this, we will focus on our strong conservation message and renewed fundraising activities to underpin future capital investment and conservation projects.

2014-15

### With the development of a new Education strategy and plan

Zoos SA will focus on its roll out through education institutions and wider community groups.

This will involve aligning materials and programs with contemporary requirements, improving access opportunities and the use of suitable and engaging technologies.

Financial sustainability remains a critical focus, together with further development of sponsorship and fundraising activities. Continued communication of our conservation message and achievements to support admissions, project work and involvement in Zoos SA activities will also be key priorities.

2015-16

### Focus will continue on growing

and providing quality service to Zoos SA's support base to facilitate funds for future operations and capital projects.

Ongoing review of operations will ensure the organisation is cohesive, cost effective and income focused, and its day-to-day operations are clearly supporting the principles laid out in the Strategic Plan.

With the Master Plan and associated site, project and collection plans in place, more significant capital projects will be targeted. Use of technology in the way we conduct our operations and to enhance visitor experiences will continue to be a focus.

2016-17 | 2017-18

With more stable financial operations, a stronger fundraising presence, clear direction provided by the Master Plan, and targeted communication, Zoos SA will focus on conservation activities on our properties, in the field and through international relationships.



## Debt Reduction Strategy

### Some level of debt is appropriate

especially for a seasonal business, however Zoos SA's debt reduction strategy aims to ensure priority payment to the existing debt.

Zoos SA currently has a \$7.5m loan with Westpac. The Business Plan, released in July 2012, detailed a plan to sell the Wild Africa land at Monarto in the 2013-14 year and apply the proceeds (estimated in the 2012-13 Business Plan as \$2m) to partial reduction of this debt. There is currently a development application for the development of a drag strip on an adjacent property to this land. In 2012-13 we appealed this development approval and our appeal was upheld, however we understand the application will be relodged. The outcome of this development application may have a significant impact on the property valuation, and hence the timing of this sale will be discussed further with the State Government and Westpac.

In preparing our business plan for future years, we have developed a forward budget that enables annual debt payments against this loan from within our annual operating budget from the 2015-16 year forward. The debt repayment schedule will continue to be discussed with Westpac and the State Government throughout the Plan period.

## Infrastructure Investment

Ongoing development of all Zoos SA sites is critical to ensure:

- Upgrade/replacement of ageing infrastructure as it reaches the end of its useful life.
- Animal exhibits meet contemporary standards to support animal welfare and conservation outcomes.
- Improvements are made to comply with changing workplace safety and environmental standards and efficiencies.
- Exhibits are enhanced or newly created to engage the public and drive visitation and alternative revenue generation.
- Changes in booking systems and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) are used to improve the overall experience for visitors and staff.



# Annual

# Budget Focus 2013-14

## Budget Focus

*The organisation will strive to achieve the most with what it has and inspire more investment by delivering on its commitments.*

*Zoos SA Strategic Plan  
2012-2017*

Royal Zoological Society of SA Inc.  
**Financial Operations**  
Forecast for the year ended 30 June 2014

	F14 \$000
<b>INCOME</b>	
Admissions	6,806
Education	767
Membership	2,591
Retail	1,332
Catering	934
Events & Visitor Experience	640
Operating Grant	5,277
Fundraising	1,738
Conservation	174
Other	268
	<u>20,527</u>
<b>PAYROLL</b>	
Wages including on costs	11,499
	<u>11,499</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Other Expenditure	6,915
	<u>6,915</u>
<b>EBITDA</b>	
	<u>2,113</u>
Interest	406
Depreciation	2,520
	<u>2,926</u>
<b>EARNINGS</b>	
	<u>813</u> -

**NOTES & ASSUMPTIONS**

- The financials forecast is based on business outcomes based on expected economic conditions. It does not include major variables such as:
  - The impact of significant animal changes, such as panda births.
  - Bequest revenue, which is unknown at the time of preparing for this forecast.
- The F14 forecast does not include the monies received and paid to the Chinese Government for pandas, as it is cost neutral.

# Photographic Credits

- Page 1 Cheetah, MZ, *David Mattner*
- 2 Dusky Langur, AZ, *David Mattner*
- 5 Zoomobile Outreach Program, *Jessica Langley*
- 6 Fennec Fox, AZ, *David Mattner*
- 9 Giant Panda, AZ, *David Mattner*
- 9 Chimpanzee, MZ, *David Mattner*
- 9 Education Program, *Zoos SA Education*
- 10 Tasmanian Devil, MZ, *David Mattner*
- 13 White Rhino calf, MZ, *David Mattner*
- 13 Immersion Orangutan exhibit, AZ, *David Mattner*
- 13 Zoomobile Outreach Program, MZ, *Jessica Langley*
- 13 Warru, Black-flanked Rock Wallaby, MZ, *David Mattner*
- 14 Green Tree Python, AZ, *David Mattner*
- 16 Connection - Squirrel Monkey, AZ, *David Mattner*
- 16 Giraffe Encounter, MZ, *David Mattner*
- 18 Black Rhino, MZ, *David Mattner*
- 20 Monarto Restoration Project, MZ, *David Mattner*
- 20 Vet nurses Dianne & Paula examining x-ray, AHC, *Zoos SA*
- 20 Education Program, *Zoos SA Education*
- 22 Plains Zebra foal, MZ, *David Mattner*
- 24 Westpac Brief Encounter - Wallabies, AZ, *Zoos SA*
- 24 African Lion training, MZ, *David Mattner*
- 24 Zoomobile Outreach Program, *Jessica Langley*
- 25 Keeper and Fennec Fox, AZ, *David Mattner*



**Saving**  
species from extinction  
and **connecting**  
people with nature



**ZOOS**  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

