

By Email

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本署檔號 OUR REF: (12) in LCSD ADM GA/6-5/4/1255 (2023)
來函檔號 YOUR REF:

20 February 2023

Kim J McCoy

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Dear Sir / Madam,

Code on Access to Information

Re: Application No. 15/2023

Further to our interim reply dated 7 February 2023, the relevant section provided the following reply to your application for access to information in relation to the Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens (HKZBG) –

Question 1

“Are the primates you house actively breeding/are you encouraging them to produce offspring? If so – why? And how many do you have?”

Reply

Since the 1970's, HKZBG has been playing a significant role in educating the public on the importance of wildlife conservation through the display of rare and endangered animal and plant species. Public education programmes are organised to promote appreciation and conservation of nature and arouse public awareness regarding protection of endangered species.

The HKZBG is supported by a team of dedicated staff comprising a veterinary officer and well-trained staff in animal husbandry. LCSD is committed to taking care of the well-being of all animals under our care. It strives to provide a better environment, facilities as well as environmental enrichment programmes for the animals to express their natural behaviour.

Having considered the breeding recommendations from the relevant International Studbook Keepers, HKZBG has been breeding endangered species such as Bornean Orangutan, Buff-cheeked Gibbon, Black and White Ruffed Lemur, Ring-tailed Lemur, and Cotton-top Tamarin as well as some birds such as Bali-myna.

There were nine primates born in 2022 at HKZBG, the breakdown is tabulated below:

Primates born in 2022	Number
Buff-cheeked Gibbon – (CITES I)	2
Ring-tailed Lemur – (CITES I)	1
Black & White Ruffed Lemur – (CITES I)	3
White-faced Saki – (CITES II)	2
Cotton-top Tamarin – (CITES I)	1

From time to time, the HKZBG exchanges surplus endangered animals with reputable zoological institutions to establish suitable breeding pairs of endangered animals for conservation breeding work. Recent good examples were the introduction of the Cotton-top Tamarins and White-faced Saki from Singapore in 2018 and sending the lemurs to an overseas zoo in 2017. Sending Orangutan to other reputable zoo is also one of the options to the sustainability of this valuable species and is currently under consideration to send one young male to Singapore.

Question 2

“When the last updates to the cage/enclosures were made?”

Reply

We have planned a series of enhancement initiatives to upgrade HKZBG to a modern and interactive zoological and botanical garden. Improvement works are being carried out by phases to replace the existing aviaries and animal enclosures with modern design for naturalistic displays and to introduce mixed species displays, where possible.

Currently, improvement works to the Orangutans’ enclosures is in progress. Apart from the enhancement of cages, a linkbridge is being constructed to allow the animals to explore between enclosures and to let them have more space and interactions.

Recent refurbishment works to animal enclosures	Status
Orangutan Enclosure (M20)	Completed in December 2019
Walk-in Aviary (A15)	Completed in April 2021
Linkbridge between Orangutan Enclosures (M20 & M22)	In progress

Question 3

“A comparison between the enclosures you are housing the primates in with optimal enclosure guidelines for those primates – specifically size, stimuli, elements of nature, outdoor and indoor spaces.”

Reply

The World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) is one of the leading international organisations providing guidance to zoos and aquariums around the world in animal care and welfare, environmental education and global conservation. WAZA also sets standards for its members with regard to animal care and husbandry. Being a member of WAZA, HKZBG will continue to

positively comply with and draw reference from relevant guidelines and advices as far as possible to promote the welfare of the animals in its care and upgrade its facilities and services, including the animal enclosures to enhance their living environment. We will ensure that all animals in our care are treated with utmost care. Appropriate animal husbandry practices are in place and sound veterinary care available.

Question 4

“Where I can find the latest published report by LCSD on the HKZBG and including any consultation studies that have been commissioned.”

Reply

The consultancy study undertaken in 2014 provided many valuable suggestions for ways to improve HKZBG. The recommendations from the report, though not published, have been considered in depth and a work plan to implement the accepted recommendations has been developed.

Question 5

“Whether any of the consultation study recommendations have been implemented.”

Reply

One of the reasons for commissioning the study was to ensure that issues relevant to the welfare of animals in our care were considered. The consultancy recommended a greater focus on welfare, and this has been at the forefront of recent decisions on the composition of our collection and on-going renovation and refurbishment programmes to enhance the environment for the animals. The current works programme includes renovation and rebuilding of many of the enclosures for mammals and birds. Apart from improvement to animal enclosures, other recommendations relevant to the botanical garden, branding and direction signage etc. have been addressed.

Question 6

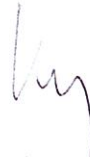
“A full list of all animals in captivity.”

Reply

A total of 298 animals are housed in HKZBG comprising 188 birds, 88 mammals and 22 reptiles. The full list is at Annex.

For enquiries concerning the above subject, please contact Ms LEE, Manager (Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens) at 2530 0152. For enquiries related to the Code on Access to Information, please contact Miss YIP, Executive Assistant (General) Special Duties, at 2601 8906.

Yours sincerely,



(Ms Loletta LAU)

for Director of Leisure and Cultural Services

Encl.