

Reaseheath Mini Zoo

Conservation Policy and Strategy

1. Introduction & Purpose

Reaseheath Mini Zoo (RMZ) is committed to contributing to the conservation of species and habitats, both locally and globally. As members of BIAZA, we align our conservation work with their requirements and guidelines, as well as IUCN best practice, EAZA recommendations, and the Secretary of State's Standards of Modern Zoo Practice.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for how RMZ will contribute to conservation through ex-situ breeding programmes, in-situ support, research, education, sustainability initiatives, and community engagement.

2. Commitment & Ethical Considerations

Conservation is central to the mission of RMZ. Our activities are guided by the following principles:

- **Animal welfare first** – all conservation and education actions must support the welfare of animals in our care.
 - **Evidence-led decisions** – projects are underpinned by science, research, and best practice.
 - **Education and behaviour change** – inspiring students, visitors, and the wider community to value and act for nature.
 - **Sustainability** – minimising negative impacts and embedding conservation into daily operations.
 - **Ethics** – all projects and activities are evaluated against ethical frameworks including BIAZA and IUCN guidelines to ensure conservation is genuine, transparent, and impactful.
-

3. Current Conservation Activities

3.1 Breeding Programmes

RMZ contributes to European breeding programmes to maintain healthy, genetically viable populations of threatened species.

EEP Species:

- *Speothos venaticus* - Bush Dogs
- *Saguinus imperator* - Emperor Tamarins
- *Cebuella pygmaea* - Pygmy Marmosets
- *Saguinus Oedipus* - Cotton-top Tamarins

ESB Species:

- *Liasis mackloti savuensis* - Savu Island Python
- *Brachylophus fasciatus* - Fiji Banded Iguana

3.2 Research & Surveys

- **On-site biodiversity surveys:** Conducted regularly with staff and students, monitoring bird, amphibian, and invertebrate populations.

3.3 In-situ Contributions & Partnerships

- **Nature's SAFE:** Partner organisation contributing biological samples to Europe's largest living biobank, supporting the preservation of endangered species.
- **Project DUNG:** Actively conserving UK native dung beetle populations.

3.4 Conservation Education & Interpretation

- **On-site interpretation:** IUCN Red List displays, habitat threats, and conservation messaging across enclosures.
- **Curriculum-linked sessions:** Schools and college students receive conservation-focused learning opportunities.
- **Informal education:** Holiday clubs and workshops engage children with activities such as making bug hotels, seed bombs, and bird boxes.
- **Social media campaigns:** Used to highlight global awareness days and conservation causes (e.g. World Lemur Day, Endangered Species Day).

3.5 Sustainability Practices

RMZ contributes to Reaseheath College's Sustainability Policy. On site we:

- Provide **water bottle refill stations** and promote reusable bottles.

- Stock sustainably sourced kiosk items (e.g. recycled plastic toys).
 - Collect and reuse **rainwater** for toilets.
 - Encourage visitors to adopt sustainable practices at home via education trails and interpretation.
 - Through the charity Neighbourly, we reconsider on average 350kg of supermarket fresh produce saving much of it from going to landfill.
-

4. Conservation Strategy

Annual Action Planning

Each September (aligned with the academic year), RMZ produces a **Conservation Action Plan** setting out the aims and activities for the year. Actions are reviewed annually to assess success, continuation, or adaptation.

Aims & Objectives

RMZ will:

- **Survey** the zoo and wider campus for native wildlife.
 - **Enhance habitats** to support biodiversity on campus.
 - **Participate** in EEP/ESB programmes for suitable species in our care.
 - **Support research** opportunities linked to conservation.
 - **Engage** in national citizen science and conservation campaigns (e.g. iNaturalist through BIAZA's *Spotted on Site*).
 - **Reduce impact** of zoo operations by applying sustainable building and enclosure design.
 - **Communicate** conservation issues to inspire behaviour change among visitors and students.
-

5. Future Directions (2024–2026)

- Expand involvement in **EEP and ESB programmes**.
 - Develop stronger partnerships with **in-situ conservation projects**.
 - Create an **eco-trail** around the zoo highlighting sustainability and conservation actions.
 - Increase staff participation in **BIAZA working groups**.
 - Grow **fundraising initiatives** linked to species conservation projects.
-

6. Policy Control Information

Version	Date Issued	Review Date	Policy Owner / Author	Person Responsible for Updates	Approved By
3.0	12/09/2025	01/09/2026	Zoo Manager	Zoo Manager	