



150 years of Looking at people looking at animals: zoo visitor studies - where do we come from, where are we going?

INTERNATIONAL JUBILEE CONFERENCE
"ZOOLOGICAL PARKS: HISTORY, CHALLENGES, PERSPECTIVES"
150th ANNIVERSARY OF MOSCOW ZOO

September 18-22, 2014

Moscow, Russia

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Koninklijke Maatschappij voor Dierkunde van Antwerpen
Royal Zoological Society of Antwerp

...based on...



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1 / 1 70,2% Zoeken





LOOKING AT PEOPLE LOOKING AT ANIMALS

AN INTERNATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY
ON VISITOR EXPERIENCE STUDIES
AND EXHIBIT EVALUATION
IN ZOOS AND AQUARIUMS

Second, updated edition

Compiled by Harry Schram for the EAZA Education Committee
*Additional material contributed by Steve Bigwood, Menaka Floy, Peter Galbuzera, Mylenny Griffiths,
Eric Jensen, Ken Kawachi, Kristin Leis, Rungsanya Marnamun, Mirko Maravita, Constance Melicharek,
Andrew Moss, Patricia Munro, Sandra Nicolodi, Zjef Poreboom, Gie Robeyns, An Rommyns,
Adinda Saman, Liam Smith, Jeroen Stevens, Elide Vervoacke, Kevin Walker and Malcolm Whitehead.*
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Looking at people looking at animals. Visitor studies bibliography. Version 0.3 - 20110210.pdf - Adobe Reader

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- **Attitudes to Cetaceans : visitor studies**

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World Zoo and Aquarium Conservation Strategy



ВСЕМИРНАЯ АССОЦИАЦИЯ ЗООПАРКОВ И АКВАРИУМОВ
- ЕДИНСТВО ВО ИМЯ СОХРАНЕНИЯ ВИДОВ -

Обеспечивая будущее для диких животных планеты

Природоохранная стратегия
всемирного сообщества зоопарков и аквариумов
(WZACS – the World Zoo and Aquarium Conservation Strategy)



ИСПОЛНИТЕЛЬНЫЙ ОТДЕЛ WAZA. БЕРН. ШВЕЙЦАРИЯ. 2005

(IUCN/WAZA – 1992 & 2005)

4 tasks of the modern zoo:

- Conservation
- **Education**
 - Research
 - Recreation

Why do we study our visitors?



- Are we reaching them?
- Does our message come accross?
- What do our visitors experience/think/learn...?
- Do they change their behaviour?
- ARE WE EFFECTIVE?
- ARE WE REALLY DOING WHAT WE THINK OR CLAIM TO BE DOING?



Why do we study our visitors?



- strategic (policy and management support) information:
- making considered choices
- Are we on the right track?
- where do we need to adjust/correct?



Internal evaluation criteria



- Are we doing our job?
- Is the money well spent?
- Are we achieving results?
- Can we do better?



External evaluation and validation criteria



- Fundraising
- Public support
- Political support
- Self-criticism
- Quality management



Origins of visitor studies



- USA, 1930s
- Social psychology and marketing: commercial applications
- Urban and traffic planning
- ...MUSEUMS
- What about RUSSIA??
- First publications...
- 1930!



Pioneers & leading visitor researchers



**Barbara Birney | Steve Bitgood | Minda Borun
Lynn Dierking | John Falk | John Fraser
Alan Friedman | Ben Gammon | Jeff Hayward
Joe Heimlich | George Hein | Molly Hood
Hans-Joachim Klein | John Koran
Ross Loomis | Arthur Melton | Roger Miles
Edward Robinson | Chandler Screven
Beverly Serrell | Harris Shettel | Loic Tallon
Steve Yalowitz...**

Pioneers & leading visitor researchers



but also... sound (museum) theoretical work...

A VISITOR-CENTERED APPROACH: ENHANCING MUSEOLOGY WITH PERCEPTUAL THEORY

Anna Leshchenko

Russian State University for the Humanities, Museology Department
Moscow – Russia

ABSTRACT

Museum Visitor Studies have focused on studying demographics, behavior, satisfaction, leisure habits and potential learning outcomes for visitors moving around the museum space. This approach pays attention to outer effects, while multidisciplinary nature of museology allows us to apply the theory of perception and methods of psycholinguistics to find an inside-out way to see the visitor. By taking a look at the visitor's perception skills from psycholinguistic perspective, museologists can adapt a new way of understanding why each visitor who is allowed to become a creative agent within the participatory paradigm is more involved in museum communication and learns more.

The perceptual process is the one that enables visitors to interpret the information flows that are part of any exhibition. Some issues concerning perception should be taken into account by museum professionals in order to make the visiting process more communicatively efficient. This article attempts to see differences in visitors' perception and information-processing of exhibition content showing that each visitor has his own learning style and pace.

RÉSUMÉ



Une approche centrée sur le visiteur : l'amélioration de la muséologie au moyen de la théorie de la perception

Les *Études de Visiteurs de Musée* se sont concentrées sur l'étude du comportement de données démographiques, sur la satisfaction, les habitudes de loisir et l'apprentissage potentiel de résultats pour des visiteurs se déplaçant autour du musée. Cette approche prête attention nous permet d'appliquer la théorie de la perception et les méthodes des psycholinguistes d'appliquer la théorie de la perception et les méthodes des psycholinguistes d'appliquer la théorie de la perception et les méthodes des psycholinguistes d'appliquer la théorie de la perception et les méthodes des psycholinguistes pour atteindre une manière inversée de voir le visiteur. En jetant un œil sur les techniques de perception du visiteur dans une perspective psycholinguistique, les muséologues peuvent adapter un nouveau moyen de comprendre le pourquoi chaque visiteur, à qui l'on permet de devenir un agent créatif dans le cadre d'un paradigme de la participation, est plus impliqué dans la communication muséale et apprend davantage.

Le processus de la perception est celui qui rend les visiteurs capables d'interpréter les flux d'information qui font partie de n'importe quelle exposition.

Международный Совет музеев (ICOM)
Международный Комитет Музеологии (ICOFORM)
Международный Комитет Музеологии Сибири, стран Азии и Тихоокеанского региона (ICOFORM SIB&SAP)
Институт истории СО РАН
Алтайская государственная педагогическая академия
Восточно-Сибирская государственная академия культуры и искусства

The International Council of Museums (ICOM)
The International Committee for Museology (ICOFORM)
The International Committee for Museology of Siberia, of the Asia and Pacific (ICOFORM SIB&SAP)
The Institute of History of the SB RAS
Altai State Pedagogical Academy
The East-Siberian State Academy of Culture and Arts



**MUSEUM AND THE VISITOR:
PROCESS, PROGRESS AND PROTEST**

**МУЗЕЙ И ПОСЕТИТЕЛЬ:
ПРОЦЕСС, ПРОГРЕСС И ПРОТЕСТ**

V ежегодный симпозиум ICOFORM SIB&SAP

V annual symposium ICOFORM SIB&SAP

Tunisia, 1 – 3 November 2012

IRKUTSK 2012

Visitor studies is not a science. It's a field of study.



- Psychology (social, educational, environmental...)
- Social sciences
- Communication/media sciences
- Qualitative and/or quantitative



Zoos and aquariums are unique. Yet comparable to other institutions...



- Museums
- Heritage/monuments
- Science centres
- Botanical gardens
- (Visitor centres with) natural habitats (national parks)
- Amusement parks
- Cultural events



Cross pollination...



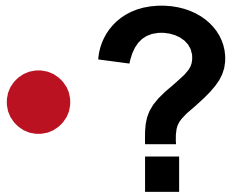
- Education psychology
- Science information
- Informal education, visitor interpretation
- Environmental education
- Leisure studies
- Marketing



WHAT do we want to know?



- WHO are our visitors?
- HOW do they visit us?
- WHAT do they see/hear/experience/read?
- WHAT do they learn?
- WHAT do they think?
- but the pyб 50.000.000 question is...
- **DO THEY CHANGE THEIR BEHAVIOUR/ATTITUDES**



Who are our visitors?

Visitor studies \neq marketing research



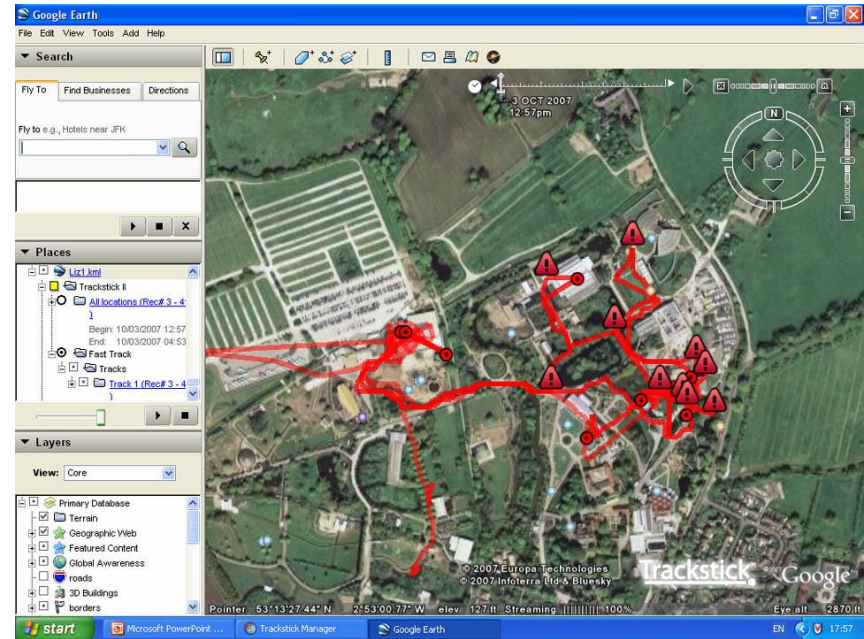
- ...but it often makes use of similar basic data
- **THE** visitor does not exist
- Various target groups (children, adults, groups, individuals, schools, gender, ethnic, senior citizen, disabled...)
- Importance of (mass) media use?
- How representative are our quantitative data?



How does a visit proceed? A question of time and space...



- Routing/circulation
- Timing/time allocation
- Orientation/wayfinding
- OBSERVATION (timing/tracking)
- **Attracting power** (= do they notice/look/stop?)
- **Holding power** (= how long do they look/see/interact/read or ...discuss...?)
- Quantitative research: does not tell us much about the **quality** of the experience ...or does it?



What do our visitors see – hear – read – feel – observe - experience?



- ANIMALS IN THEIR ENCLOSURE/HABITAT
- Context?
- Behaviour, enrichment
- Unobtrusive observation
- QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
- Difficult to experiment!



What makes a high quality experience?



Ratio between:

Subjective advantages
(benefits)

Necessary
time and effort
(investment)



Exhibit evaluation



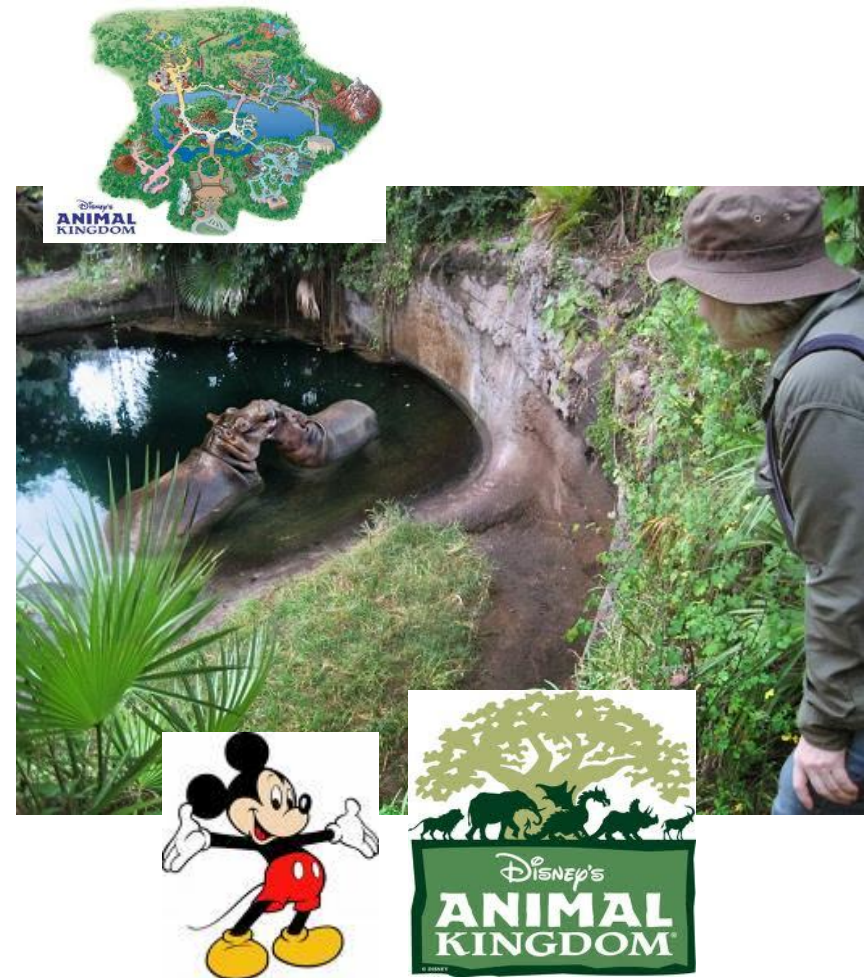
- Pre-formative: preparatory
 - Concepts
 - What do people know already?
 - What do they expect?
 - Pilot versions, trial & error
- Post-formative or summative
 - Does it work?
 - How can we improve it?



Exhibit evaluation criteria @ Disney's Animal Kingdom



- THE IDEAL EXHIBIT(?)
- Upper 2/3rds of the animal should be on view
- ...in the front 2/3rds of the exhibit
- ...for 2/3rds of the time
- ...to 2/3rds of the visitors
- Consequences in exhibit design and animal husbandry
- Criterium for animal keeper performance evaluation?



What do our visitors see – hear – read – feel – observe - experience?



Methodology:

- Observation and monitoring
- Interviews, surveys...
- Focus groups
- Listening in on visitor conversations



What do our visitors see – hear – read – feel – observe - experience?



SUPPORTING MEDIA

- Signage: readability and understanding
- Audiovisual media
- Interactive exhibits
- Interpretive publications: (how) do visitors use them?
- Keepers' talks
- Animal shows and demonstrations
- YOU CAN EXPERIMENT!



What do our visitors see – hear – read – feel – observe - experience?



Hey, didn't I forget something here?



An advertisement for Perth Zoo's iPhone app. It features a hand holding an iPhone displaying the app interface with the text 'Perth Zoo' and 'African Painted Dog'. To the right, large white text reads 'PERTH ZOO'S IPHONE APP.' Below this, a small icon of a donut is followed by the text 'Visit the iTunes App store for the FREE Perth Zoo App today!'.

What do our visitors see – hear – read – feel – observe - experience?




 **Московский зоопарк приглашает Вас на интерактивную прогулку по зоопарку с увлекательным рассказом о животных** 

Присоединиться к нам просто:


- Воспользуйтесь нашей бесплатной сетью WI-FI, определяющейся как ZOO вашим устройством 
- Закачайте Ваш бесплатный аудиогид по QR-коду или по ссылке www.mtg.travel 
- Выберите в программе Московский зоопарк в режиме «тура» или «музей» 
- Воспользуйтесь QR-кодами или номерами треков, указанных в нижнем правом углу этикетки животного (в режиме тура истории переключаются автоматически) 



  

 **Откройте для себя Московский Зоопарк, таким каким вы его не видели раньше. Скачайте приложение Московского Зоопарка, чтобы отпраздновать 150-летнюю годовщину Парка:**

Discover the Moscow Zoo like you've never seen before. Download the Moscow Zoo app to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the park.



What do our visitors see – hear – read – feel – observe - experience?



Apps	2014
Available on the App Store	1.200.000
GET IT ON Google play	1.300.000
Windows Phone Windows Store	300.000
Get it at BlackBerry World	150.000

What do our visitors see – hear – read – feel – observe - experience?



	2008	2014
Zoo apps	4	approx. 600

What do our visitors learn?



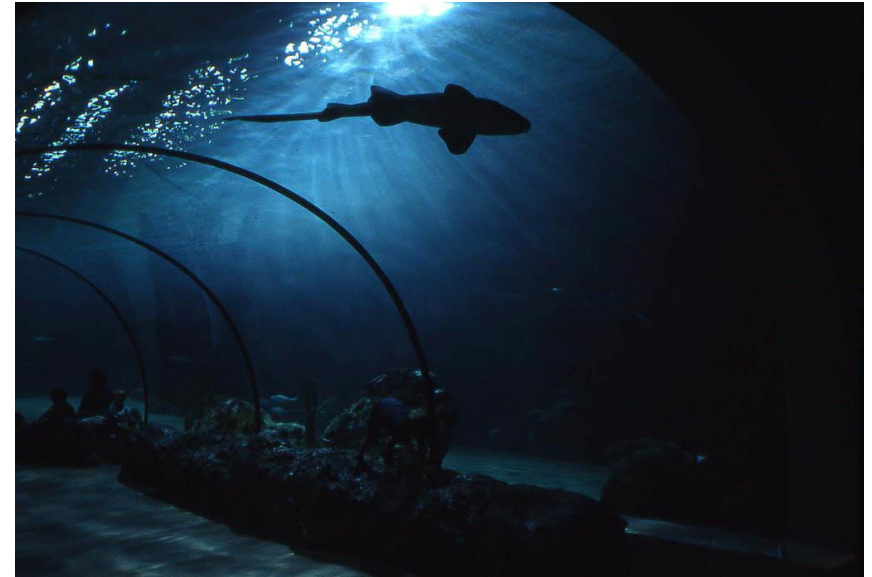
- INFORMATION>
- INTERPRETATION>
- EDUCATION!
- The most difficult question...
- Previous knowledge?
- Informal learning can be evaluated, but it is different from formal learning (no curriculum, no formal tests, (often) no presence of an intermediary (teacher)...)



What do our visitors learn?



- PROBLEM : Urgent need for more background studies into general public attitudes towards animals, nature, conservation, etc..
- Differences (social, geographical, cultural, age, gender..?)
- Role of other information sources (formal education, media (TV, internet...))



What do our visitors learn?



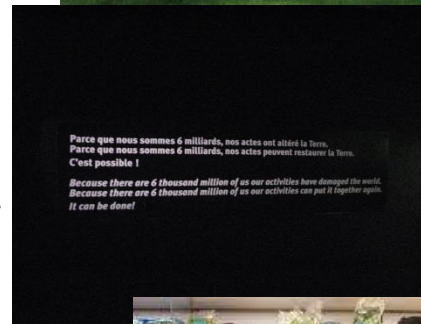
- How does informal education work?
- What are the (dis)advantages of location-based informal education?
- Research in progress...



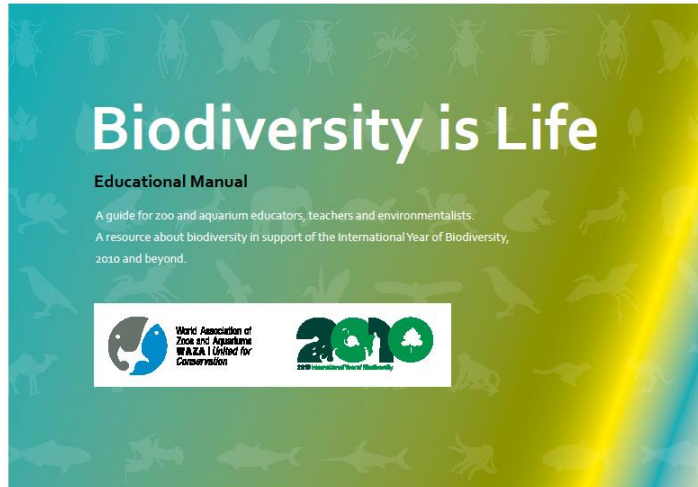
Do zoo visitors change their behaviour?



- “Compared to the average citizen, zoo and aquarium visitors are in general more aware of environmental and conservation issues, and there is a greater chance of them developing attitudes and behaviour which contributes to sustainable development and conservation.”
- *Is this a RESULT of visiting zoos/aquariums?*
- *Or is visiting zoos/aquariums a RESULT of an openness towards conservation issues?*
- **Need for long term research: CONSERVATION PSYCHOLOGY!**



Do zoo visitors change their behaviour?



Institutional aspects: who is afraid of visitor studies?



- Visitor studies and evaluation are NOT expensive.
- In-house or outsourcing?
- Pre-formative: in-house
- Other studies: both options
- Problem: few independent consultants in (Continental) Europe – main focus on museums/science centres...
- Universities/University colleges – students/internships
- (Learn to) Do It Yourself!



Some areas for further research...
(suggestions for sleepless nights for zoo people...)



**Can you improve a bad exhibit
with a good sign?**



Some areas for further research... (suggestions for sleepless nights for zoo people...)



**If your visitors do not read your labels,
are you having a problem with your visitors
or with your labels?**



**Some areas for further research...
(suggestions for sleepless nights for zoo people...)**



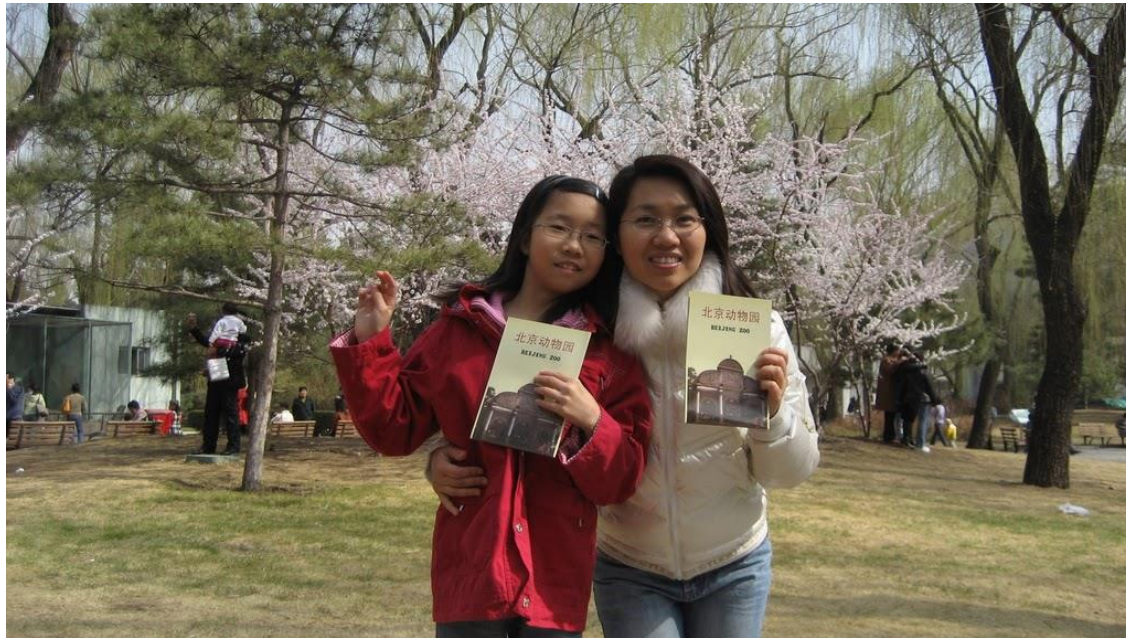
**Why do 14 year olds
stop visiting zoos?**



**Some areas for further research...
(suggestions for sleepless nights for zoo people...)**



**Did you ever see a zoo visitor
reading a guide book *during* the visit?**



Some areas for further research... (suggestions for sleepless nights for zoo people...)



**Do people come to the zoo
to watch television
or play on the computer?**



Some areas for further research... (suggestions for sleepless nights for zoo people...)



Are you ready for tomorrow's society?



**Some areas for further research...
(suggestions for sleepless nights for zoo people...)**



Contextualizing...

**How do we link the world of the animal
to the world of the visitor?**



**Some areas for further research...
(suggestions for sleepless nights for zoo people...)**



Contextualizing...

Do people see the habitat behind the animals?

**Individual animals as a step towards
species/habitats/ecosystems?**



**Some areas for further research...
(suggestions for sleepless nights for zoo people...)**



Contextualizing...

What is the message of animal shows?

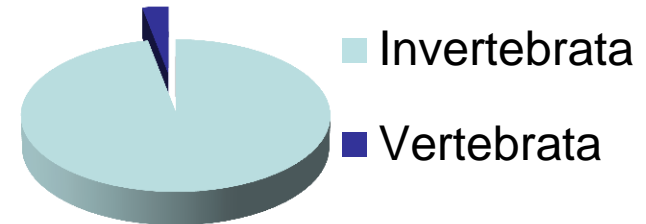


Some areas for further research... (suggestions for sleepless nights for zoo people...)



Are we providing a fair and balanced view of nature?

- Animals
- Mega vertebrates
- Invertebrates?
- Plants?



**Some areas for further research...
(suggestions for sleepless nights for zoo people...)**



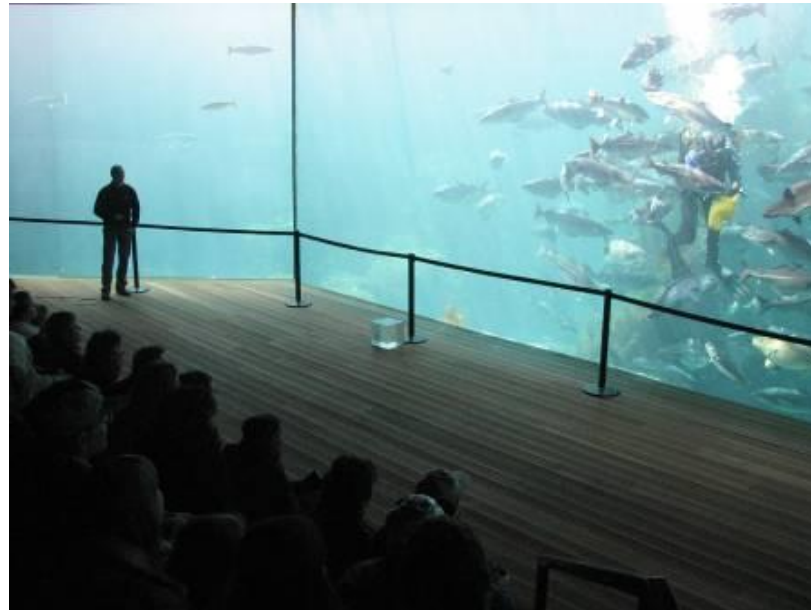
**Are we using our most popular exhibits
to convey our most important messages?**



**Some areas for further research...
(suggestions for sleepless nights for zoo people...)**



**How many visitors did you have today?
How many of them have you inspired
to contribute to conservation?**



Our 5 step plan



Wildlife is fantastic!



Unfortunately,
a lot of wildlife is in trouble...



...but luckily more and more people
are doing something about it...



So are we!



...how about you?

**Some areas for further research...
(suggestions for sleepless nights for zoo people...)**



The zoo as a green activist?



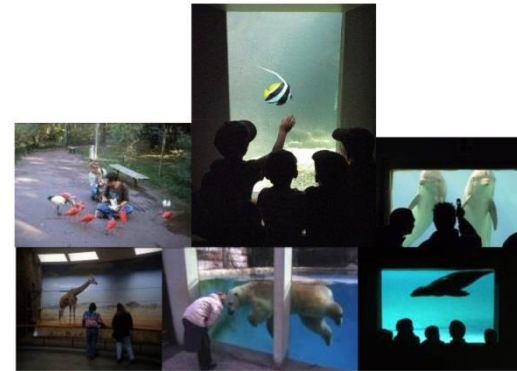
Please help to improve...



Comments
Suggestions
Additions
Mistakes
Anything irrelevant?

PLEASE LET US KNOW

harry.schram@kmda.org



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Thank you for you attention!
Questions? Comments? References?



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Zoo Antwerpen | Planckendael | Koningin Elisabethzaal



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