



Post-Conference Summary Report

Name of Event: **1st International Meeting on Zoo Research, Conservation and Biodiversity (IMZRCB)**

Date of Event: **March 19, 2021**

Location of Event: **Virtual (via Microsoft Teams)**

Number of Persons Attending: **109**

Hosting Organization: **Serengeti-Park Hodenhagen GmbH**

Contact Name: **Dr. Idu Azogu-Sepe**

Telephone Number: **+49 (0) 5164 9799-444**

E-mail: **i.azogu@serengeti-park.de**

IMZRCB 2021 Conference Summary

On March 19, 2021, the Serengeti-Park Hodenhagen held its 1st International Meeting on Zoo Research, Conservation and Biodiversity (IMZRCB). An initiative of the Serengeti-Park Department of Research (SPDR), the conference was formed to provide a platform for scientists, academia, zoo researchers and all persons interested to discuss and exchange information on new science-based innovations and research topics that will offer perspectives and future-oriented solutions to biodiversity changes, while also addressing environmental sustainability. This conference has a strong focus on zoo research and conservation, with the commitment to create clear and tangible future goals on how to help the planet's biodiversity! The goals are to sensitize people about biodiversity, start a discourse, and increase environmental awareness. We want to be solution-oriented without moving backwards and bring hope through solutions. Our conference is a call for action!

The 1st IMZRCB was moved to a free and virtual format, after it was clear that it was impossible to meet in person due to restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic. This decision created the opportunity to attract students, zoo people, university professors, researchers and the general public from many parts of the world. Some registrants were unable to join the meeting due to technical difficulties. Overall, 109 people attended the virtual event from countries such as Indonesia, Philippines, Chile, India, France, UK, Denmark, Poland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Tunisia, USA, Canada, and of course Germany. This really gave our conference the international feel that is part of its name.

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Serengeti-Park
Hodenhagen GmbH
Am Safaripark I
29693 Hodenhagen

Tel. +49 (0) 5164-97 99 0
Fax +49 (0) 5164-97 99 144
info@serengeti-park.de
www.serengeti-park.de

Geschäftsführer:
Dr. Fabrizio Sepe
Dirk Böger
USt-IdNr. DE 116372896





The CEO and owner of the Serengeti-Park Hodenhagen, Dr. Fabrizio Sepe, and the Head of the Serengeti-Park Department of Research, Dr. Idu Azogu-Sepe, opened the conference with a welcome speech. Dr Sepe talked about the Serengeti-Park Hodenhagen and highlighted it as a biodiverse location with unique research and educational opportunities. Of note, he mentioned that the 220-hectare park is the 2nd largest breeding location for the Southern White Rhino. He also thanked the conference organizers, Dr. Idu Azogu-Sepe (Behavioural neuroscientist; IMZRCB General Chair), Friederike Höner (Biologist/ curator; IMZRCB Program Chair) and Stephan Worm (Biologist; IMZRCB Publicity Chair). Dr. Azogu-Sepe gave a short presentation about the aims of the IMZRCB, biodiversity drivers, and what we can do to protect biodiversity. This last part would be implemented through workshops in next year's conference. It is aimed at increasing people's anticipation towards future contributions.

The keynote speaker, Dr. Jörg Ganzhorn shared his pre-recorded talk on the evolution and conservation of lemur diversity in Madagascar, suggesting incentives for forest conservation to improve the ecosystems of vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered lemur species.

Talks were classified according to the conference themes of science/policy interaction, and comparative animal behaviour and adaptations. There was a mix of students and senior scientists presenting their work on a good range of topics covering many taxa. We had a total of 6 invited speakers and 5 poster/symposium presenters (see list of speakers and their topics below). Topics included: Shark species knowledge index, EU trade ban on songbirds, research in zoos and in the wild on primates, bioacoustics in the white rhinoceros, behavioural ecology in captive parrot species and mouse deer, and hormonal assessments in captive elephants (urinary, salivary, faecal sampling) for breeding, stress assessments and familial recognition. These talks served to promote zoo research, wildlife management, animal husbandry, and conservation aspects in zoos. There was also a 30-minute breakout session with 3 themed virtual rooms (Primate, Rhino and Elephant).

Many thanks to our speakers and presenters! We wish a congratulations to our best poster winner, Ricardo Lemos de Figueiredo, and our best symposium winner, Franziska Hörner. Special mention to our volunteer student, Martin Kränzlin for his support and moderation of our Rhino breakout room.

Recordings from the 1st IMZRCB can be viewed on our Serengeti-Park Hodenhagen YouTube page.

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Next year's IMZRCB conference is scheduled from the 31st of March to 2nd of April 2022. It is clear that there is interest from many people around the world who may not be able to attend an in-person event. As such, we look forward to creating a hybrid conference for in-person, as well as online, attendance. We will hold workshops to gather ideas on how to make an impact towards biodiversity issues, even on a local level. There will be increased opportunity to network with zoo researchers and scientists to strengthen the platform for the zoo community, while also enjoying our themed lodges and a tour of the Serengeti-Park. Lastly, we look forward to showcasing the Serengeti-Park Hodenhagen as a place involved in research, conservation and biodiversity. In doing so, it is important that we highlight the role of zoos (and aquaria) in conservation and support of biodiversity.

Speakers and presenters for IMZRCB 2021:

Keynote speaker

Dr. Jörg Ganzhorn - Evolution and conservation of lemur diversity in Madagascar

Invited speakers

Dr. Kathrin Kopp - Studying great apes: What zoo research can look like and how it benefits science and animals alike

Dr. Julia Fischer – Baboon diversity

Dr. Marina Scheumann - Vocal and social behaviour in the white rhinoceros

Dr. Ann-Kathrin Oerke - Benefits of non-invasive hormone measurements for breeding captive elephants

Dr. Susan Hambrecht - Salivary cortisol levels in captive African elephants as an indicator of physiological stress

Poster presenters

Rikke Øgelund Nielsen - Shark Species Knowledge Index – Illustrated by the scalloped hammerhead (*Sphyrna lewini*)

Ricardo Lemos de Figueiredo - Assessing the behaviour, welfare and husbandry of mouse deer (*Tragulus* spp.) in European Zoos

Jacqueline Jürgens - The EU trade ban: a critical analysis of the drop in CITES songbird trade

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Symposium presenters

Verena Behringer - Differences in cell-mediated immunity between wild and zoo-housed bonobos and chimpanzees and their implications for animal welfare and conservation

Ricardo Lemos de Figueiredo - Enabling wild-type behavioural ecology in captive parrot species

Franziska Hörner - What an odour can tell an elephant – Evaluation of recognition and family bonds in zoo elephants (*Loxodonta Africana*) by an olfactory test

Volunteer student

Martin Kränzlin

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