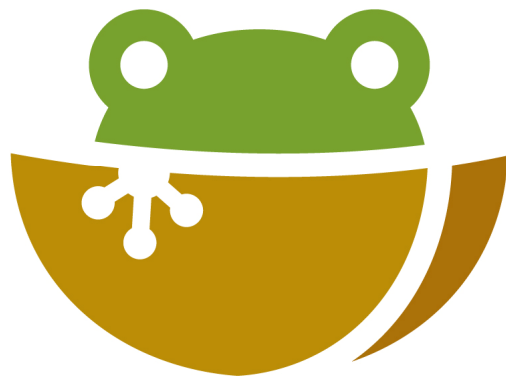


# One giant leap for mankind: Amphibian Ark and the 2008 Year of the Frog

Dr Lesley Dickie  
2008 Year of the Frog Global Campaign Manager



**amphibian ark**  
**2008 YEAR OF THE FROG**

# It's not easy being green.....

It's not that easy bein' green;  
Having to spend each day the color of the leaves.  
When I think it could be nicer being red, or yellow or gold-  
or something much more colorful like that.



It's not easy bein' green.  
It seems you blend in with so many other ordinary things.  
And people tend to pass you over 'cause you're not standing out like flashy  
sparkles in the water- or stars in the sky.

But green's the color of Spring.  
And green can be cool and friendly-like.  
And green can be big like an ocean, or important like a mountain, or tall like a  
tree.

When green is all there is to be  
It could make you wonder why, but why wonder why? Wonder,  
I am green and it'll do fine, it's beautiful!  
And I think it's what I want to be.

# Threats to amphibians

- Habitat loss
- Habitat fragmentation
- Hunting
- Invasive species
- Trade
- Climate Change

.....enigmatic declines



No longer enigmatic - **Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis (“Bd”)**

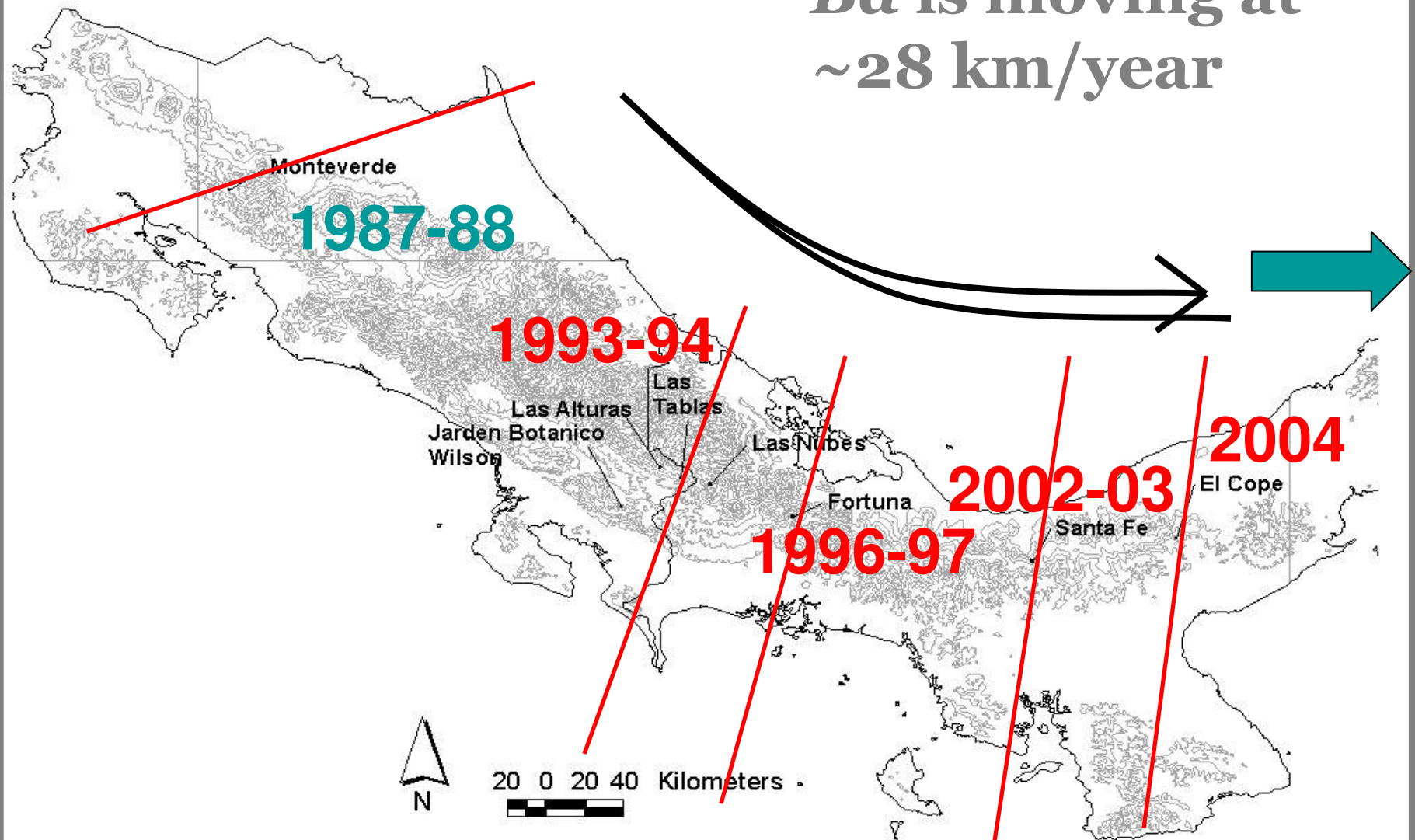
First recognised in 1998 but now traced back to museum specimens from the 1930’s

# The challenge of Chytrid mediated declines

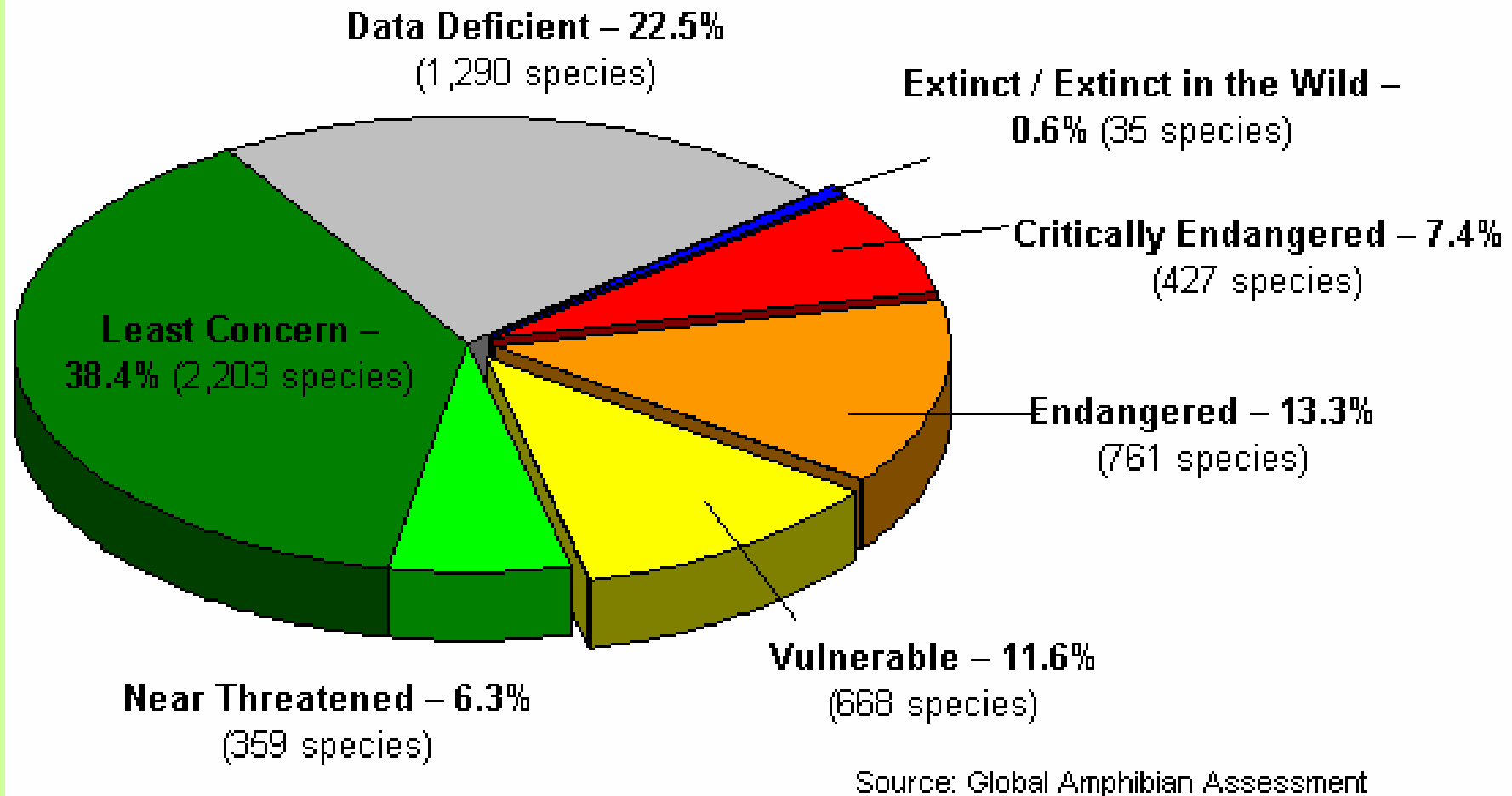
- They are extremely rapid
- They are poorly understood
- They are hard to predict
- There are no known *in situ* mitigation measures
- They are getting worse
- They are the major cause of extinctions



*Bd* is moving at  
~28 km/year



# Global Amphibian Assessment (GAA)(2004)

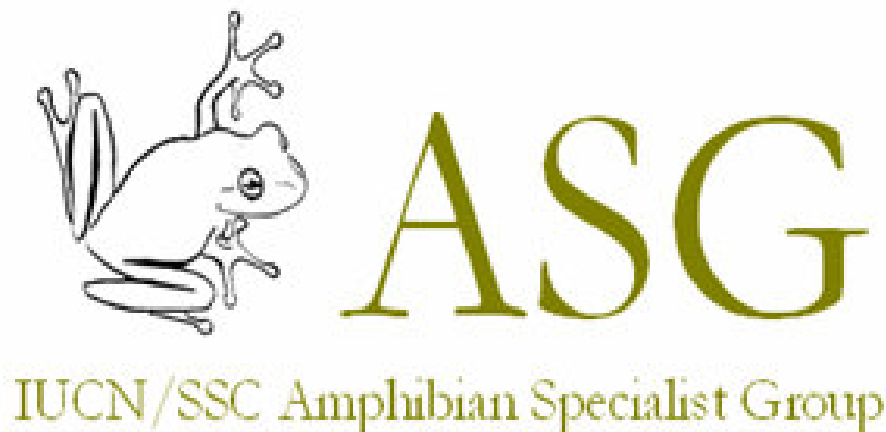
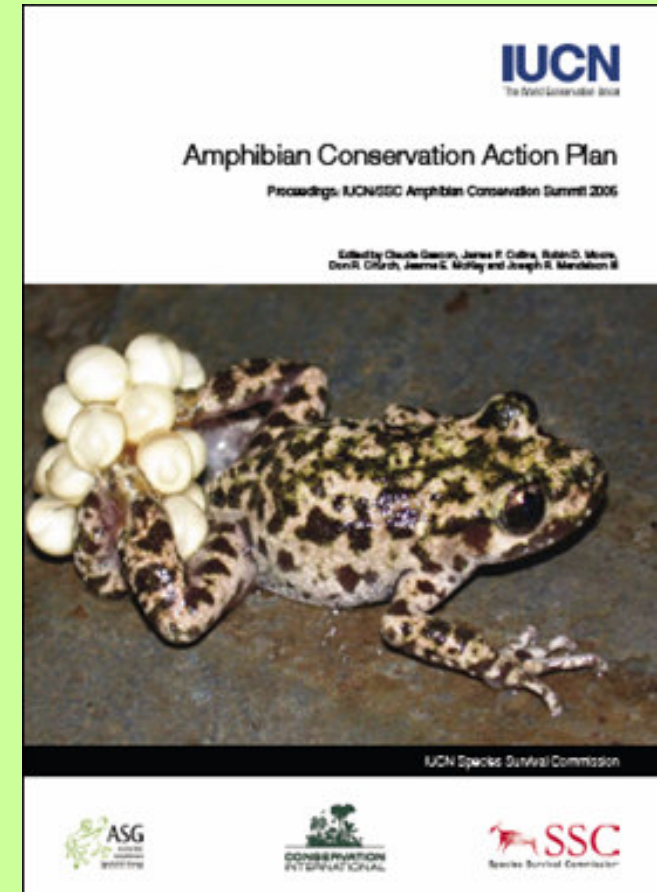


Nearly half of all amphibian species are declining, 1,891 known to be threatened  
Another 1,290 data deficient – many suspected to be in decline



# Amphibian Conservation Summit (2005)

- Amphibian Conservation Action Plan (\$400 million)
- Amphibian Specialist Group
  - Research
  - Assessment
  - Conservation in the wild



# Problem Statement for ex situ community

- Greatest species conservation challenge
- Mass extinction without *ex situ* help
- We are uniquely capable of help
- We are expected to help
- All zoos can and must help
- We cannot fail to act





# The Unique Qualifications of the *Ex Situ* Community

- >1200 accredited zoos
- >100,000 employees
- >600 million visitors/year
  - 1 in 10 people every year!
- ~1000 websites
- ~250,000 amphibians of ~400 species
  - TAGs, studbooks
- private sector
  - 12,000 members of DGHT/EUFORA
  - 100-200 species have been bred in multiple generations
  - 1 breeder has 1.5-2 million offspring/year



WAZA and CBSG are together taking responsibility for helping to coordinate the global amphibian *ex situ* conservation response



Working in close partnership with the IUCN Amphibian Specialist Group



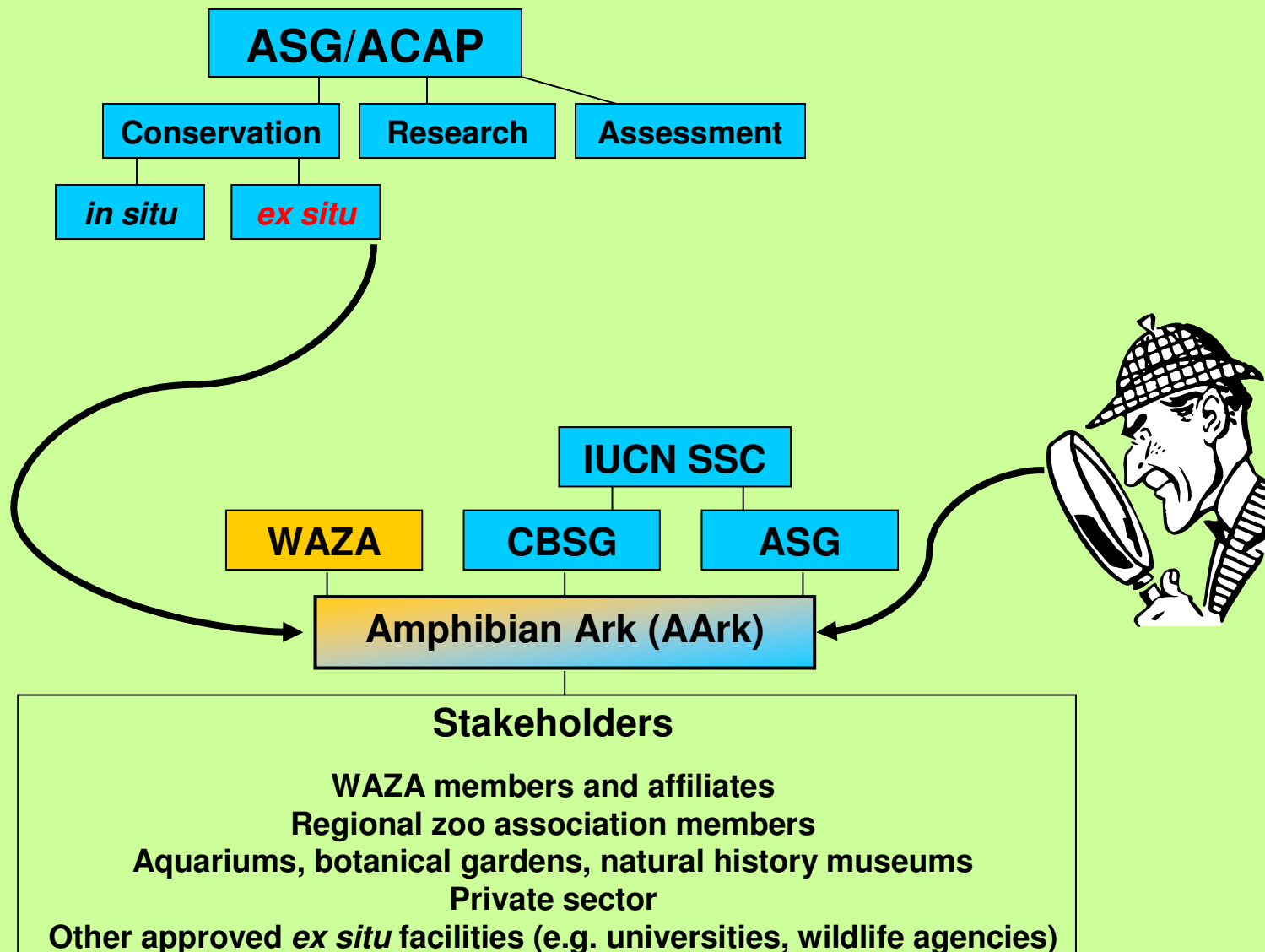
ASG

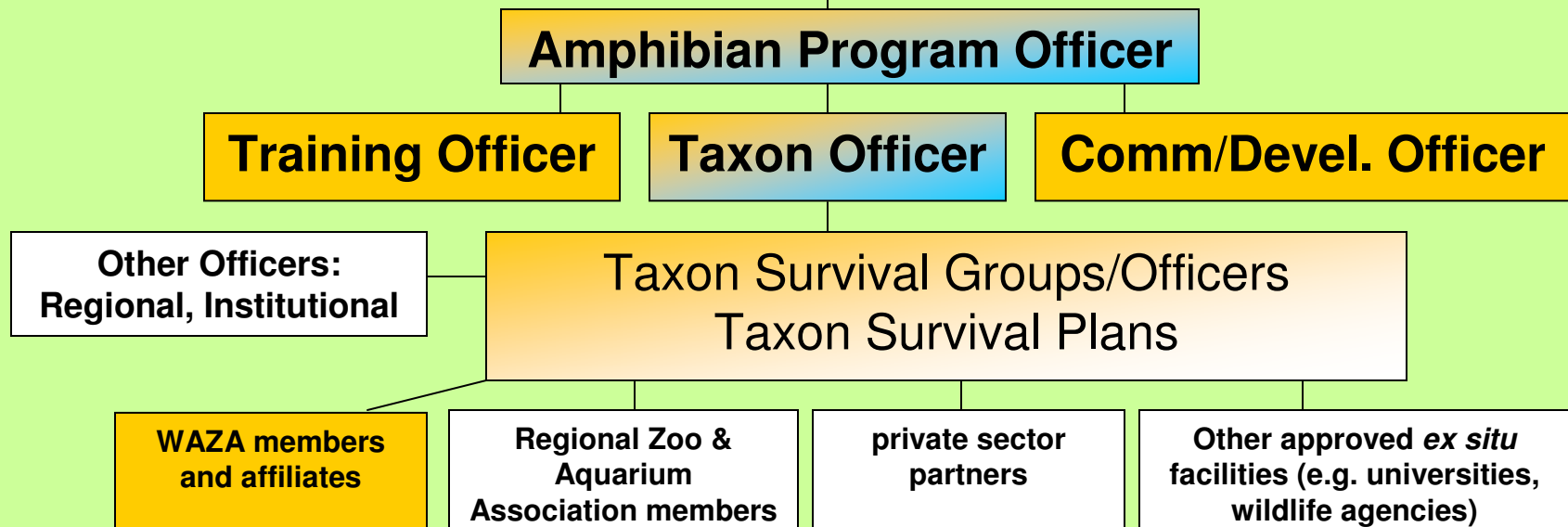
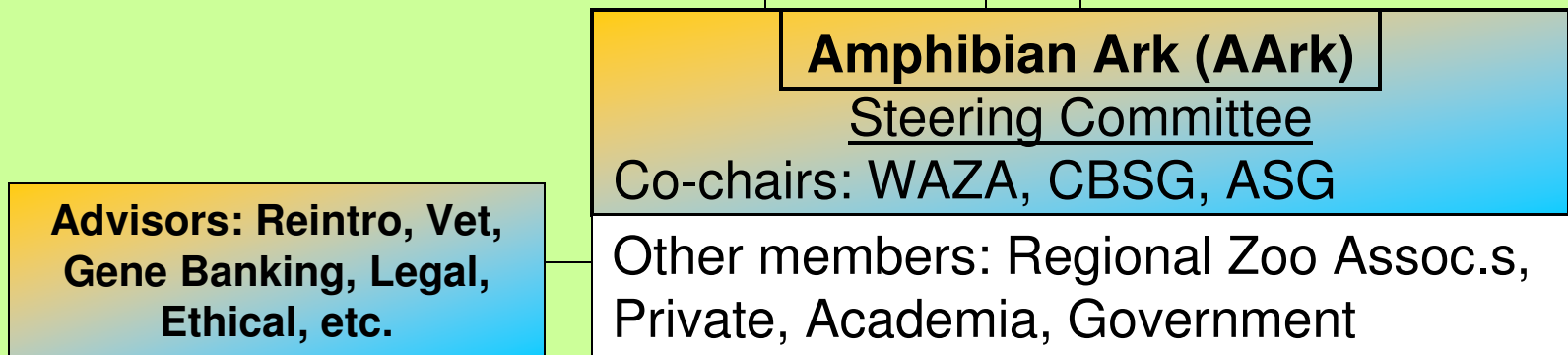
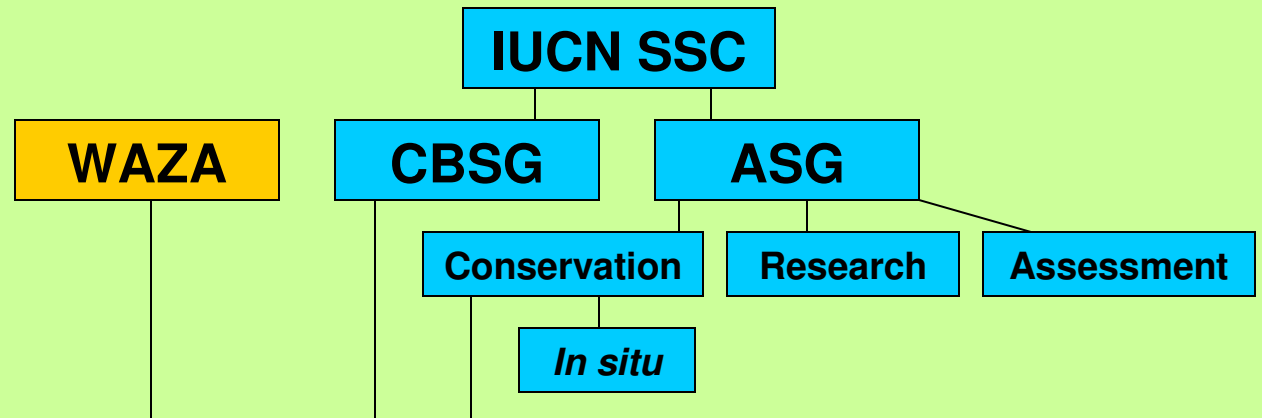
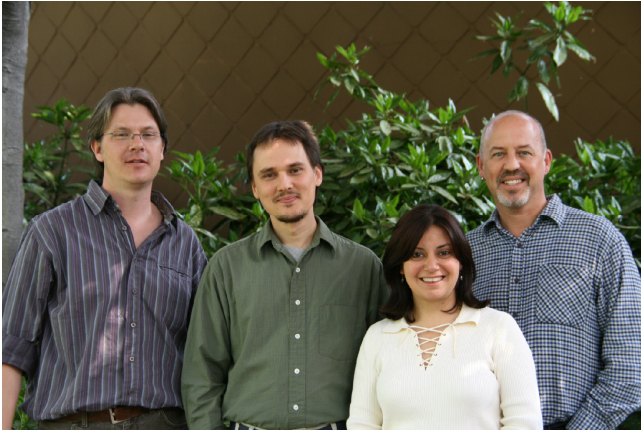
IUCN/SSC Amphibian Specialist Group



- global network of stakeholders cooperating on captive programs
- mission: working in **partnerships** to ensure the global survival of amphibians – focusing on those that **cannot be safeguarded in nature (~500 sp.)**.









# Amphibian Ark

- Awareness
- Fundraising
- Conservation
  - Building partnerships
  - Taxon prioritization & management
  - Capacity building
  - Rapid response
  - Research & Reintroduction



[www.amphibianark.org](http://www.amphibianark.org)

# What commitment is needed?

- With ~500 major zoos and aquariums in the world and ~500 species requiring ex situ help Amphibian Ark is asking each zoo and aquarium to commit enough resources to save one species



# 2008 Year of the Frog



- [www.2008yearofthefrog.org](http://www.2008yearofthefrog.org)
- globally coordinated campaign
- raise awareness
- raise funds
- need \$50 million to save 500 species
  - greatest conservation value!

# AArk Patron: Sir David Attenborough



# How it works

- Each regional association of WAZA will run the 2008 Year of the Frog campaign locally with individual institutional sign-up (EAZA Amphibian Alarm 2008 year of the Frog)
- Some events will be global and involve participation from institutions around the world
- Regional associations can run more specific events
- Institutions develop their own campaign activities as with other EAZA campaigns



# 10 good reasons to join the campaign

1. After surviving for 360 million years, one-third to one-half of all amphibian species are in danger of becoming extinct.....potentially the single greatest disappearance of species since the dinosaurs.
2. Amphibians matter. They play a critical role in the ecosystems as both predator and prey, they perform a pest control service and their skin has substances that offer promising medicinal cures for humans.
3. The *ex situ* programme provides a real solution for those amphibians endangered by the most urgent threat, chytrid fungus.
4. Many people don't know how important or threatened amphibians are. This is a chance for zoos to excel at one of their most important roles: education.
5. This is truly the first global initiative to save endangered animals. Local zoos can and should play a role in this unified effort.
6. Participation provides an opportunity to engage your local community in a global crisis.
7. The crisis provides a unique opportunity to demonstrate to the world that zoos and aquariums are valid and powerful conservation partners

# 10 good reasons to join the campaign cont.

8. The efforts of this global collaboration can lay the groundwork for future global conservation efforts.
9. Zoos and aquariums must not stand by and watch hundreds of these exquisite species become extinct in our lifetime.....especially when *ex situ* captive breeding provides a viable yet simple solution. If we do not respond immediately and on an unprecedented scale, much of an entire vertebrate class will be lost, and we will have failed in our most basic conservation mission.
10. Amphibian Ark demonstrates to humankind what can be accomplished by people working together for a common cause. The result will be empowerment for the public to get involved in solving future problems and responding to future crises.



# Forthcoming opportunities

- New Year's Eve
- Valentine's Day/Kiss a Frog Day
- Feb.29 International Day of the Frog 'Leap Day'
- St. Patrick's Day  
(Wearing of the Green)
- Jump for Frogs during the Olympics



# New Year's Eve

- Global Leapfrog
- As many zoos around the world all holding amphibian activities at 11am (local time)
- As with the New Year moving across the globe from East to West, a wave of staged leapfrog events occurring at 11am New Year's Eve local time at WAZA zoos and aquariums, with one zoo symbolically handing the game to the next zoo in the timeline or the next country in the timeline will create one giant 'leap' across the world to launch the 2008 Year of the Frog.
- Global press activity





## Masks to give out – ‘viral’ marketing at televised New Year’s events







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