



Report on the Activities of the Austral and Neotropical America section during the 23rd Annual Meeting of the Society for Conservation Biology

2009

Summary

During the 23rd Annual Meeting of the Society for Conservation Biology, held in July 2008 in Beijing, China, the Austral and Neotropical America (ANA) section of the society carried a general ANA meeting, and a meeting with the other regional sections. This report details these activities, and provides a follow-up on the goals that had been established on the previous Global Meeting, identifying which have been accomplished and which have not. It was written by Mariana Vale, Director of Communication at the time of the meeting.

Board members present at the meeting

Nora Byrum (Director of Education)
Mariana Vale (Director of Communication)
Rurik List (Director of Finances)
Sandra Pompa (Director of Communication, elect)
Rodrigo Medellin (President Ex-officio)

Beijing, 11-17 July 2009

ANA GENERAL MEETING (July 13th, 2009)

ANA's Communication Director, Mariana Vale, hosted the ANA Meeting. Mariana made a short presentation explaining what ANA is, the benefits of being an ANA member, and showing ANA's most recent activities and future goals. Nora Bynum, Mariana Vale, Rurik List, Sandra Pompa and Jon Paul Rodríguez (Editor of NeoCons) gave short explanations of activities carried by ANA. The meeting was well attended, despite the distance that separates China from Latin America and the Caribbean. We had 33 attendees from 7 different Latin American countries. Many participants were not ANA members yet and expressed interest in joining the section. The attendees expressed interest in having: (1) a regional meeting; emphasizing the language deterrent to ANA attendees at SCB global meetings, (2) more resources available at ANA's webpage, and (3) an ANA Facebook page to enhance communication within the section. The new Director of Communication, Sandra Pompa, will put together the Facebook page, and ANA is recruiting volunteers to work on item 2.

MEETING WITH OTHER REGIONAL SECTIONS (July 14th, 2009)

ANA's Communication Director, Mariana Vale, represented ANA on a meeting with the presidents of other regional sections (Oceania, Africa, Europe, Asia and North America). The meeting established the need to enhance communication among regional sections, and designed James Watson, President of the Oceania Section, to act as a bridge among sections on SCB issues that are relevant to all sections. During that meeting the President of North America Section, Erica Fleishman, presented to Mariana the proposal of a joint regional meeting for the Americas in 2011, held by ANA and the North America Section. This proposal has been on the table at least since the 2008 ANA board meeting held in April. Mariana transmitted the need, expressed by ANA members during the 2009 ANA general meeting, of having a bi-lingual regional meeting. Erica Fleishman saw no problem with that requirement and, following Nora Bynum's idea, suggested Oaxaca in Mexico as a possible location for the America's meeting. The proposal should be discussed with the ANA board as whole in the following months.

FOLLOW-UP ON GOALS ESTABLISHED ON THE PRECEEDING MEETING

The ANA board members did not meet as group, but as subgroups in several occasions. Below is an update on the tasks and goals that had been established by the board in the 2008 Global Meeting:

1. 2009 ANA Board Meeting (canceled)

In the 2008 SCB Global Meeting the board decided to have an ANA Board Meeting in Mexico in 2009. The board, however, re-visited this proposal and decided that it would be more cost-effective to support the attendance of board members to the SCB Global Meetings. Starting on 2013, these meetings will be held every other year. During the

years where there will be neither a Global Meetings nor an ANA regional Meeting, the board should organize a board meeting to keep the flow of activities within ANA.

2. ANA's paper in Conservation Biology (accomplished)

In 2007 the sections of SCB has been asked to develop a paper discussing the main conservation challenges faced by each region, to be considered for publication in Conservation Biology. In the 2008 SCB Global Meeting the ANA board proposed a short survey among ANA members to help identify the principal conservation challenges faced by the ANA region. The survey was carried out, and its results successfully guided the elaboration of a paper that was published in the 23rd issue of Conservation Biology, under Conservation Focus: Priorities for Policy-Relevant Conservation Research: a View from SCB Regional Sections.”

3-4. Need for applying for funds and increase membership (not accomplished)

In the 2008 SCB Global Meeting the ANA board identified the need to apply for funds for ANA activities, given that the Christensen fund which had been covering ANA's expenses ended. Mariana Vale (ANA's Director of Communication and representative in SCB's Development Committee) agreed to communicate with Rurik List (ANA's Director of Finances) and Rese Cluck (SCB's Development Coordinator) to identify and apply to possible sources of funds for the ANA section. Some exchanges of e-mails happened but no proposal was put together and the financial situation of ANA remains difficult. Similarly, in the 2008 Meeting the board identified the need to increase ANA membership but no significant moves were made in that direction. We hope that the new Director of Membership, Clinton Jenkins, will take the lead in engaging the board and the current members in strengthening and increasing the ANA membership.

5. Need to tighten the relationship with regional chapters (not accomplished)

Currently there are two local chapters within the ANA region. ANA should tighten its relationship with these chapters. In the 2008 Global Meeting Mariana Vale (ANA's Director of Communication) agreed to communicate with Fiona Nagle (SCB Chapters Coordinator) to start a dialogue with representatives of these local chapters. During the following year Mariana was unsuccessful in obtaining a reply for the e-mails sent to Fiona Nagle, and to the head of the chapters. In the 2009 General ANA Meeting Mariana re-iterated the opportunity available to ANA members to form local chapters.

6. Need to update the Bylaws (not accomplished)

In the 2008 SCB Global Meeting the ANA board identified the need to update the bylaws of ANA to include the ex-officio board members as part of the board for two years, as decided in the 2008 Board Meeting held in Mexico. ANA's president, Gerardo Ceballos, was responsible for performing this update. The update had not been done.

7. Need to updates ANA's Webpage (accomplished)

In the 2008 SCB Global Meeting the ANA board identified a number of needed updates on ANA's Webpage. Mariana Vale (ANA's Director of Communication) volunteered make these updates. All updates were made in 2008.