

ZEN! Z.O.O.'s Educator Network

Zoo Outreach Organisation Educator Network

It was my honor and privilege to serve as Regional Representative for Asia and then South Asia almost continuously for many years. Asked to represent Asia when the change in regions in IZE took place (from 3 regions—USA, Europe and Australia to six adding Asia, South America and Africa) a number of years ago, I was asked by then President Peggy Harvey to serve as Regional Rep for Asia. I served couple of years and when my term was over, I suggested the name of Ang Phuri Sherpa, Education Officer of Central Zoo, Kathamandu, Nepal as IZE Asian Regional Representative. After a few months Ang Phuri left the zoo and joined WWF in Nepal. As his duties were out in remote areas he couldn't carry out the duties of Regional Rep and I was asked to finish his term. After this, it gets hazy but I remember moaning to IZE at some point that nobody could do "Asia" as such justice ... I felt it just too big an area and very complicated with many different languages and cultures. I can't remember exactly how it went but at some point I proposed that there be a South Asian Region of IZE and I volunteered to start it. I did and called it SANIZE, the South Asian Network of IZE. That was some years ago. This year was an election year for IZE and this region so opted out and nominated Meena Nareshwar of Centre for Environmental Education CEE. No one contested and now Meena is South Asian Regional Rep for IZE.

During those years as IZE Regional Rep, ZOO received request from and followed through on many different organisations other than zoos, and we took them into our South Asian region network. We have developed long term relationships with educators, either professional specialists or volunteers and ngos from different disciplines, such as forestry, wildlife, Natural History Museums, business, etc. Our network is large and many of our network members are very active and, in fact, MOST of them are from organisation that are NOT zoos. We will continue to be involved in education with a snappy new name and acronym. We don't have a grand plan to expand but we will continue to *evolve* the **new** network, rather the same network with a new name and the expanded focus is always as along being an IZE network. We will write to all the former SANIZE network members informing of the change and giving Meena Nareshwar's email address and institution.

Important Note :

It is important to us that the distinction between Z.O.O.'s Educator Network and zoo educator network be understood. Zoo Outreach is not running a zoo network for zoo educators, but for all educators involved in any type of wildlife or environmental education. I noted that some of our educators, having been informed by our office about ZEN had not written it out correctly but written as "Zoo Educator Network". Please be appraised that this is NOT correct, it is Z.O.O.'s Educator Network or Zoo Outreach Organisation's Educator Network -- so better to just say ZEN. We don't want to cause confusion or compete with any activity of IZE, the official zoo educators' community and Association, and must make that clear.

Please either refer our educator network as ZEN, Z.E.N., Z.O.O.'s or ZOO's Educator Network. We will continue to make educational materials, conduct educational activities and make them available free but for postage and handling for any good project submitted.

I'd like to thank IZE and particularly IZE Council for the years they permitted me and ZOO to hold the Region. I know it was not easy for them and I apologise for any offence given.

Best wishes,
Sally Walker and the ZOO (ZEN) Crew