

Indianapolis Zoo receives \$4M to open a conservation center

October 13 2019

The Indianapolis Zoo plans to open an international center devoted to saving threatened species, an effort that zoo officials call a natural extension of their biennial Indianapolis Prize honoring animal conservation leaders.

The Global Center for Species Survival is expected to open next year and employ a team of nine Indianapolis-based experts who will work with more than 9,000 wildlife experts worldwide to save threatened [species](#).

The zoo has received a \$4 million startup grant from the Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment Inc. to support the fledgling center. Rob Shumaker, president of the zoo, said the center also aims to assist researchers with their work, including fundraising, talking to [policy makers](#) and crafting social media campaigns.

"It's no exaggeration to say that every significant conservation project in the world will be touched by the Global Center for Species Survival," Shumaker said in written remarks.

The center is a collaboration between the zoo and the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Species Survival Commission, or IUCN. The zoo and IUCN signed a deal Monday to establish the center during a commission meeting in in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

The IUCN , founded 70 years ago and composed of biologists who

maintain a list of threatened species, is considered the world's largest and most significant environmental conservation organization.

The Species Survival Commission, known as SSC, prepares action plans to save species and provides information to IUCN that is used to develop and define the Red List, which identifies and evaluates endangered species.

CEO Michael Crowther, who is retiring from the commission at the end of 2018, started working with SSC leaders two years ago to develop the concept of the center, the zoo said. The center is a natural offshoot from the Indianapolis Prize, which the zoo has awarded every other year since 2006.

Russ Mittermeier, a former Indianapolis Prize winner, said the new center will cement the city as a hot spot for visiting conservationists.

"Their visions have really made Indianapolis a real center for species [conservation](#) already and now they're taking it to the next level with this incredible commitment," Mittermeier said.

© 2019 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

Citation: Indianapolis Zoo receives \$4M to open a conservation center (2019, October 13)
retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2019-10-indianapolis-zoo-4m-center.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.