

## FROM THE CHAIR



## Here we are with another excellent issue of Tapir Conservation!

As you all know, the IUCN/SSC-affiliated Tapir Specialist Group is a global group of tapir conservationists dedicated to conserving tapirs and their habitat through strategic action-planning in countries where tapirs live, information sharing, and through educational and communication outreach that demonstrates the importance of tapirs to local ecosystems and to the world at large.

Our group continues to grow stronger and more effective each year and I would like to give you a brief update about our most important activities and outcomes in 2013.

The TSG continued to make steady progress on the development of National Action Plans for Tapir Conservation in several tapir range countries in South and Central America and Southeast Asia. TSG Country Coordinators and Regional Committees are working tirelessly towards developing their plans and implementing the priority actions and goals developed for each plan.

Several tapir conservation initiatives around the world made significant progress in 2013. Our TSG Country

Coordinator for Nicaragua - Christopher Jordan - is expanding his work in that country and establishing a large, long-term conservation program focused on Baird's tapirs. Christopher is working in several different fronts including research (he is getting ready to capture and radio-collar tapirs), threat mitigation, in particular hunting, education and outreach. Our members in Ecuador - including Armando Castellanos, Andrés Tapia Arias, Fernando Nogales, Juan Pablo Reyes, Carlos Urgilés and many others - continue to work tirelessly to gather information about tapirs in that country, particularly mountain tapirs. Carl Traeholt (Malaysia), Wilson Novarino (Indonesia) and Nay Myo Shwe (Myanmar) continue to work hard on researching and developing strategies for the conservation of Malayan tapirs in Southeast Asia. Here in Brazil, the work of the Lowland Tapir Conservation Initiative (coordinated by me) continues to expand and grow stronger and another project based in the Atlantic Forests of Espírito Santo State (Pró-Tapir) has just captured and radio-collared their first tapir! All very exciting news coming from the field!!!

During 2013, we made significant progress on the review and update of several of our publications, particularly the TSG Field Veterinary Manual. This Manual is the single most important document developed by the TSG, and thousands of people have downloaded the manual from our website and used it widely. The new version of the Manual will be launched and made available online in early February 2014.

The TSG is well on its way on the implementation



**Figure 1. Christopher Jordan scratching a baby tapir down for the team veterinarian, Dr. Eduardo Sacasa, to assess her health. This tapir was held illegally as a pet in rural Nicaragua and is now in good health in a rescue center.**



**Figure 2. Renata Santos, wildlife veterinarian working with the Lowland Tapir Conservation Initiative in Brazil and one of the editors of the new version of the TSG Field Veterinary Manual**

of the TSG Strategic Plan 2012-2014, which includes 18 prioritized goals and 53 actions. A new 3-year Strategic Plan will be developed during the Sixth International Tapir Symposium to be held in Brazil in November 2014.

As I mentioned before, the symposium will be held in Campo Grande, capital of Mato Grosso do Sul State, in the central part of Brazil, where I live and work. We have set the dates for the conference: 17-20 November, 2014, with participants arriving on the 16th and departing on the 21st. We are currently working on the local logistics of the conference here in Campo Grande and we have started our fundraising campaign. I have attended all the major zoo association conferences in 2013, including ALPZA, AZA, EAZA and WAZA and through presentations and networking we have managed to approach dozens of tapir holding zoos worldwide which are now excited to support our conference.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank the AZA Tapir Taxon Advisory Group and the EAZA Tapir Taxon Advisory Group, as well as the Copenhagen Zoo in Denmark and the Houston Zoo in the United States, for their continuous support of our TSG activities. We would not be able to do much without the support from these incredible organizations! Thank you so much!

We are all looking forward to meeting you in Brazil next year!!!

Best from Brazil,

**Patrícia Medici**

Chair, IUCN/SSC Tapir Specialist Group (TSG)