



Rapid industrialization, urbanization and man's unscrupulous activities are taking their toll on our Mother Earth, endangering the various species and their habitats. These events, if left unabated, will seriously affect the ecological balance and put our planet in disarray. The protection of endangered species and habitats has been a top priority of international organizations, governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, industry, and individuals in their serious attempt to address these concerns and preserve the earth's valuable biodiversity for future generations.

At the helm of these efforts are the **World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF)** and the **World Zoo Conservation Strategy (WZCS)**.

The  
**WWF**

, one of the world's largest conservation organizations, was conceived on April 29, 1961 to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature by conservation of the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption. For its part, the WZCS developed principles encouraging wildlife facilities to employ ecologically-sound development practices (IUDZG 1993) through managing often-irreplaceable biological resources, thereby contributing to the conservation of biological diversity.

In keeping with these concerns, most wildlife facilities in the Philippines consider the conservation and breeding of endangered species a high priority. They offer a variety of educational opportunities familiarizing visitors about the behavior and natural history of wildlife

and their counterparts in the wild. Facilities owners normally participate in programs that bring wildlife from different facilities together to breed. In addition, they work to protect wildlife habitats in the wild and conduct research that probes on animal biology. Although these facilities deal largely with captive animals, their owners believe that captive breeding should not be considered a substitute for protecting species in the wild.

The **Lombija Wildlife Center** in Guimaras is one such facility that embodies these ideals. Its extensive and integrated program promotes ecotourism, attracting tourists to explore the natural wildlife, instilling in them the important message to protect wild animals instead of trapping and selling them as pets.

**Lombija Wildlife** facilities will likewise act as center of education and is designed to make learning about wildlife an interesting and enjoyable experience. It will provide visitors with the chance to see rare creatures that come from the different parts of the globe. It has educational programs tailored-suit to all age brackets. These programs include day trips focusing on the different aspects of animal biology and the impact of humans on animal life, topics on zoo management, feeding and care of different species and the methods used to encourage animals to breed in captivity, complex issues that farm professionals must consider on a daily basis, including strategies for controlling captive animal numbers so that animal populations do not outgrow the available space in the farm.