

Alestidae EEP

On 18 October 2021, the EEP Committee has approved the establishment of the African tetras (Alestidae) EEP (EAZA Ex situ Programme) in the framework of the new EAZA Population Management Structure.

Currently there are 119 species in the family, of which 12 are endangered and 2 critically endangered. Amongst EAZA institutions (according to ZIMS) “only” 2 of these endangered species (*Alestopetersius smykalai*, *Arnoldichtys spilopterus*) are kept. The numbers of these 2 species are insufficient which means it is not enough to establish and maintain a strong population of these two species. The family is fairly popular amongst hobby aquarists which might be very beneficial for the programme in the long term, since it contributes to the overall total population, although the number of species available commercially often changes. On the long run I would like to set up a breeding programme for all the endangered species in the family, and also for those who are currently not endangered but experiencing heavy decrease regarding the wild population.

Plans for the future:

- The numbers shown by zims often does not correspond to reality. I would like to explore exactly how many of the EAZA and EUAC institutions are keeping species from this family.
- I would like to create a committee, and together decide which species within the family should we focus on.
- Introduce new specimen from reliable resources such as trusted privates, since the current numbers amongst zoos are very insufficient.
- Popularize the species amongst EAZA and EUAC institutions alike. Encourage many to start keeping, and breeding those species in the family that requires the most conservational attention.
- Developing an educational strategy towards the visitors
- Setting up a breeding background at Budapest Zoo mostly for the Alestidae family but other endangered species as well outside of this family.
- Creating a Long-term Management plan for the species that needs the most attention and also develop Best Practice Guidelines aligned to the TAGs RCP.
- Looking for opportunities for reintroduction to the wild after the population is stable and sufficient enough.