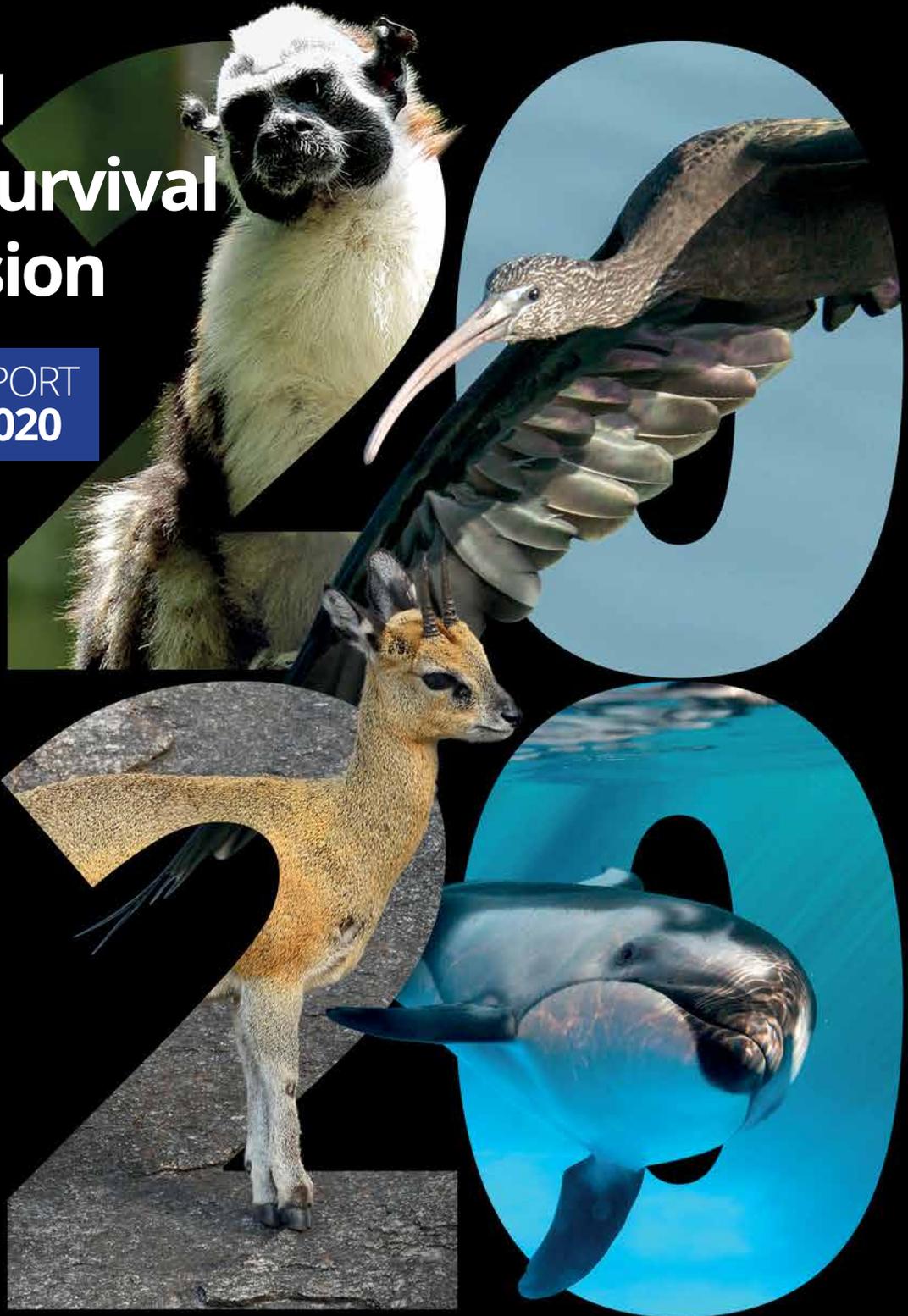




The IUCN Species Survival Commission

QUARTERLY REPORT
DECEMBER 2020



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Geoffroy's Tamarin, *Saguinus geoffroyi*, LC
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Glossy Ibis, *Plegadis falcinellus*, LC
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Klipspringer, *Oreotragus oreotragus*, LC
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Pacific white-sided dolphin, *Lagenorhynchus obliquidens*, LC
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this 16th issue of [SSC Quarterly Report](#), we take a look at the last four years, and outline some of the challenges ahead. Our network continues to grow, surpassing the 10,000 member mark in 2020. But the data on our membership indicate that increasing diversity continues to be a major priority. For example, the number of members in three regions — West Asia, East Europe, North and Central Asia, and Oceania — combined represents just 12% of all SSC members. Gender balance is male skewed (70%), both in the Commission overall and in the leadership. Roughly 10% of members are under the age of 35, while this proportion appears to have declined since 2017. When renewing SSC membership this year, we will ask leaders to help us begin to correct this. Some groups have already looked into the composition of their membership (e.g. Otter SG and Seahorse, Pipefish and Seadragon SG, Asian Elephant SG) and we plan to support others by providing aggregate data and jointly exploring mechanisms for diversification. Likewise, together with Conservation Committee Chairs and Regional

Hemitrichia calyculatas
Photo © Alain Michaud

Vice-Chairs, during the next quadrennium we will prioritize establishment of new SSC Groups to fill in major taxonomic, disciplinary and geographical gaps.

Conservation Committees, as well as the Standards and Petitions Committee and the Red List Committee, give us a taste of their variety of contributions to the Species Conservation Cycle over the last year. These include assessments and identification of priorities for the *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*, submission of motions and organization of events for the Marseille 2020 World Conservation Congress, capacity building, implementation of conservation action, and communication through social media, blogs, scientific publications, conference presentations and reports.

A major focus of the quadrennium was strengthening the capacity of the SSC network to deliver the Species Conservation Cycle, by establishing partnerships to strengthen assessments, conservation planning, and implementing conservation action, at global and national levels. Teams based at Centers for Species Survival (CSS) at The Deep Aquarium (UK), Georgia Aquarium (USA), Oceanário de Lisboa (Portugal), Albuquerque Biopark (US), Parque Das Aves (Brazil) and Fundación Temaikèn (Argentina) contributed more than 3,000 assessments to the Red List, carried out conservation planning and modelling for 19 bird species and will continue engaging with SSC groups through training, workshop facilitation and provision of support. In late 2020, a team of seven Network Coordinators were hired at the Global Center for Species Survival (GCSS) established at Indianapolis Zoo (USA), to support the SSC groups on plants and fungi, invertebrates, amphibians and reptiles, birds, mammals, freshwater and marine species. These 21 roles are based at their respective organizations, but are devoted to the SSC network. Their contribution is enormous, and we are deeply grateful for their commitment and dedication. Establishment of additional CSS around the world, and replicating this successful model, will continue to be a priority for the years to come. Partnerships focussed on a theme, such as Sumatran Rhino Rescue, also remind us that coordinating and joining forces is fundamental for advancing the agenda of complex conservation challenges.

Continuing with delivery of the Species Conservation Cycle, but this time at the national level, [Reverse the Red](#) provides a mechanism for establishment of hubs that combine the expertise of the SSC network with other components of IUCN, as well as partner organizations, and especially the engagement of governments. Reverse the Red also provides a platform for emerging leaders at the national level to join SSC, while actively engaged in evidence based species conservation action.

Finally, we have devoted a lot of attention to listening to the SSC network, providing tools for planning and monitoring activities, and developing incentives to make this happen. SSC Data has become an on-line database where leaders interact in real time with their group members, especially those in leadership roles, and jointly design and oversee implementation. Through this effort we have a much more comprehensive and systematic understanding of our networks' targets, activities and needs. Species Recovery grants, generously funded by National Geographic Society and Fondation Segré, combined with our internal grant program, with funds from Environmental Agency Abu Dhabi, Planta! and On the Edge Conservation, mobilize resources to implement SSC action plans and other activities of the network.

In balance, the 2017-2020 quadrennium was very productive for SSC. All of this was possible due to the generosity of [supporters](#) of the Chair's office. We are deeply grateful for believing in SSC and continuing your support.

Achievements of SSC are characterized by being a product of teamwork. It is a delight to work alongside deeply committed and qualified professionals. The next quadrennium will surely give us many more opportunities to continue enjoying our company and keep positive results coming.

Resumen ejecutivo

En este décimosexto [Informe Trimestral de la CSE](#), damos un vistazo a los últimos cuatro años y perfilamos algunos de los desafíos futuros. Nuestra red continúa creciendo, superando la marca de los 10.000 miembros en 2020. Sin embargo los datos sobre nuestra membresía indican que aumentar la diversidad sigue siendo una prioridad. Por ejemplo, el número de miembros en tres regiones (Asia Occidental, Europa Oriental, Asia Central y del Norte y Oceanía) en conjunto representa solo el 12% de todos los miembros de la CSE. La distribución de género está sesgada hacia lo masculino (70%), tanto en los miembros como en el liderazgo de la red. Aproximadamente el 10% de los miembros tienen menos de 35 años, mientras que esta proporción parece haber disminuido desde 2017. Cuando renovemos la membresía de la CSE durante este año, pediremos a los líderes que nos ayuden a comenzar a corregir esto. Algunos grupos ya han analizado la composición de su membresía (por ejemplo, Grupo de Especialistas en Nutria, Grupo de Especialistas en Caballitos de mar, pez pipa y dragón de mar, y Grupo de Especialistas en Elefante asiático) y planeamos apoyar a otros proporcionando nueva información y explorando conjuntamente mecanismos de diversificación. Asimismo, junto con los Presidentes de los Comités de Conservación y los Vicepresidentes Regionales, durante el próximo cuatrienio priorizaremos el establecimiento de nuevos Grupos de la CSE para llenar los principales vacíos taxonómicos, disciplinarios y geográficos.

Los Comités de Conservación, así como el Comité de Estándares y Peticiones, y el Comité de la Lista Roja, nos dan una idea de su variedad de contribuciones al Ciclo de Conservación de Especies durante el último año. Estos incluyen evaluaciones e identificación de prioridades para la Lista Roja de Especies Amenazadas de la UICN, presentación de mociones y organización de eventos para el Congreso Mundial de la Naturaleza de Marsella 2020, desarrollo de capacidades, implementación de acciones de conservación y comunicación a través de redes sociales, blogs, publicaciones científicas, presentaciones e informes de conferencias.

Un área prioritaria durante este cuatrienio fue el fortalecimiento de la capacidad de la red de la CSE para cumplir con el Ciclo de Conservación de Especies, mediante el establecimiento de asociaciones para fortalecer las evaluaciones, la planificación y la implementación de acciones de conservación, a escalas globales y nacionales. Equipos basados en los Centros para la Supervivencia de Especies en The Deep Aquarium (Reino Unido), Georgia Aquarium (EE.UU.), Oceanário de Lisboa (Portugal), Albuquerque Biopark (EE.UU.), Parque Das Aves (Brasil) y Fundación. Temaikèn (Argentina) contribuyeron con más de 3.000 evaluaciones a la Lista Roja, el desarrollo de planes de conservación de 19 especies de aves, y seguirán colaborando con los grupos de la CSE a través de la formación, facilitación de talleres y prestación de apoyo. A finales de 2020, se contrató a un equipo de siete Coordinadores de Red en el Centro Global para la Supervivencia de Especies (GCSS por sus siglas en inglés) establecido en el Zoológico de Indianápolis (EE.UU.), para apoyar a los grupos de la CSE en plantas y hongos, invertebrados, anfibios y reptiles, aves, mamíferos, especies de agua dulce y marinas. Estos 21 roles operan desde sus respectivas organizaciones, pero están dedicados a la red de la CSE. Su contribución es enorme y estamos profundamente agradecidos por su compromiso y dedicación. El establecimiento de nuevos Centros para la

Supervivencia de Especies en todo el mundo y la replicación de este modelo exitoso seguirá siendo una prioridad en los próximos años. Las asociaciones centradas en un proyecto, como el rescate de rinocerontes de Sumatra, también nos recuerdan que coordinar y unir fuerzas es fundamental para avanzar en la agenda de desafíos complejos de conservación.

Continuando con el Ciclo de Conservación de Especies, pero ahora a escala nacional, Revertir el Rojo ([Reverse the Red](#)) proporciona un mecanismo para el establecimiento de centros que combinan la experiencia de la red de la CSE con otros componentes de la UICN, así como organizaciones asociadas, y especialmente participación de los gobiernos. Revertir el Rojo también proporciona una plataforma para que los líderes emergentes a escala nacional se unan a la CSE, mientras participan activamente en acciones de conservación de especies basadas en evidencia.

Por último, hemos dedicado mucha atención a escuchar la red de la CSE, brindando herramientas para planificar y monitorear las actividades, y desarrollando incentivos para que esto suceda. El "SSC Data" se ha convertido en una base de datos en línea donde los líderes interactúan en tiempo real con los miembros de su grupo, especialmente aquellos en roles de liderazgo, diseñando y supervisando conjuntamente la implementación. A través de este esfuerzo tenemos un entendimiento mucho más completo y sistemático de las metas, actividades y necesidades de nuestra red. Subvenciones para la recuperación de especies, generosamente financiadas por National Geographic Society y Fondation Segré; combinadas con nuestro programa interno de subvenciones, con fondos de la Agencia Ambiental de Abu Dabi, Planta! y On the Edge Conservation, movilizaron recursos para implementar planes de acción de la CSE y otras actividades de la red.

En resumen, el cuatrienio 2017-2020 fue muy productivo para la CSE. Todo esto fue posible gracias a la generosidad de los [aliados](#) de la Oficina de la Presidencia de la CSE. Estamos profundamente agradecidos por creer en la CSE y continuar con su apoyo. Los logros de la red se caracterizan por ser producto del trabajo en equipo. Es un placer trabajar junto a profesionales altamente comprometidos y calificados. Seguramente el próximo cuatrienio nos dará muchas más oportunidades para seguir disfrutando de nuestra compañía y seguir obteniendo resultados positivos.

Résumé

Dans ce 16e numéro du [rapport trimestriel de la CSE](#), nous examinons les quatre dernières années et soulignons certains des défis à venir. Notre réseau continue de croître, dépassant la barre des 10 000 membres en 2020. Mais les données sur nos membres indiquent que l'augmentation de la diversité continue d'être une priorité majeure. Par exemple, le nombre de membres dans trois régions - Asie de l'Ouest, Europe de l'Est, Asie du Nord et centrale et Océanie - ne représente que 12% de tous les membres de la CSE. L'équilibre entre les hommes et les femmes est biaisé par les hommes (70%), tant au sein de la Commission dans son ensemble que dans la direction. Environ 10% des membres ont moins de 35 ans, alors que cette proportion semble avoir diminué depuis 2017. Lors du renouvellement de l'adhésion à la CSE à la fin de cette année, nous demanderons aux dirigeants de nous aider à commencer à corriger ceci. Certains groupes ont déjà examiné la composition de leurs membres (par exemple Otter SG et Seahorse, Syngnathe et Seadragon SG, Eléphant d'Asie SG) et nous prévoyons d'en soutenir d'autres

en fournissant des données agrégées et en explorant conjointement des mécanismes de diversification. De même, avec les présidents des comités de conservation et les vice-présidents régionaux, au cours du prochain quadriennal, nous donnerons la priorité à la création de nouveaux groupes CSE pour combler les principales lacunes taxonomiques, disciplinaires et géographiques.

Les comités de conservation, ainsi que le comité des normes et des pétitions, et le comité de la Liste Rouge, nous donnent un aperçu de leurs contributions variées au cycle de conservation des espèces. Celles-ci incluent les évaluations et l'identification des priorités pour la Liste Rouge de l'UICN des espèces menacées, la soumission de motions et l'organisation d'événements pour le Congrès Mondial de la Nature de Marseille 2020, le renforcement des capacités, la mise en œuvre des actions de conservation et la communication via les réseaux sociaux, les blogs, les publications scientifiques, présentations et rapports de conférence.

L'un des principaux objectifs était de renforcer la capacité du réseau CSE à réaliser le cycle de conservation des espèces, en établissant des partenariats pour renforcer les capacités locales, la planification de la conservation et la mise en œuvre des mesures de conservation. Une équipe d'agents de la Liste Rouge basée aux Centers for Species Survival (CSS) du Deep Aquarium (Royaume-Uni), du Georgia Aquarium (États-Unis), de l'Oceanário de Lisboa (Portugal), du Albuquerque Biopark (États-Unis), du Parque Das Aves (Brésil) et de la Fundación Temaikèn (Argentine) a contribué à plus de 3 000 évaluations de la Liste Rouge et continuera de s'engager avec les groupes CSE à travers la formation, la facilitation d'ateliers et la fourniture d'un soutien. Fin 2020, une équipe de sept coordinateurs de réseau a été embauchée au Global Center for Species Survival (GCSS) établi au zoo d'Indianapolis (USA), pour soutenir les groupes CSE sur les plantes et les champignons, les invertébrés, les amphibiens et les reptiles, les oiseaux, les mammifères, espèces d'eau douce et marines. Ces 21 employés sont basés dans leurs organisations respectives, mais se consacrent au réseau CSE. Leur contribution est énorme et nous sommes profondément reconnaissants de leur engagement et de leur dévouement. L'établissement de CSS supplémentaires dans le monde et la réplication de ce modèle à succès continueront d'être une priorité pour les années à venir. Les partenariats axés sur un thème, tel que Sumatran Rhino Rescue, nous rappellent également que la coordination et unir leurs forces sont fondamentales pour faire avancer l'agenda des défis complexes de la conservation.

Poursuivant la mise en œuvre du cycle de conservation des espèces, mais cette fois au niveau national, « [Reverse the Red](#) » fournit un mécanisme pour l'établissement de pôles qui combinent l'expertise du réseau CSE avec d'autres composantes de l'UICN, ainsi que des organisations partenaires, et en particulier le engagement des gouvernements. Reverse the Red fournit également une plate-forme aux leaders émergents au niveau national pour rejoindre CSE, tout en étant activement engagés dans des actions de conservation des espèces fondées sur des preuves.

Enfin, nous avons consacré beaucoup d'attention à l'écoute du réseau CSE, en fournissant des outils pour la planification et le suivi des activités et en développant des incitations pour y parvenir. SSC Data est devenu une base de données en ligne où les dirigeants interagissent en temps réel avec les membres de leur groupe, en particulier ceux qui occupent des postes de direction, et conçoivent et supervisent conjointement la mise en œuvre. Les subventions pour la récupération des espèces, généreusement financées par la National Geographic Society et la Fondation Segré, combinées à notre programme de subventions internes, avec des fonds de l'Agence

environnementale d'Abu Dhabi, Planta! et On the Edge Conservation, mobiliser des ressources pour les plans d'action de CSE et d'autres activités du réseau.

Dans l'ensemble, le quadriennal 2017-2020 a été très productif pour CSE. Tout cela a été possible grâce à la générosité des [partisans](#) du bureau de la présidence. Nous sommes profondément reconnaissants de croire en CSE et de continuer votre soutien. Les réalisations de CSE se caractérisent par le fait qu'elles sont le fruit d'un travail d'équipe. C'est un plaisir de travailler aux côtés de professionnels profondément engagés et qualifiés. Le prochain quadriennal nous donnera sûrement de nombreuses autres opportunités de continuer à profiter de notre entreprise et de continuer à obtenir des résultats positifs.

Update on the SSC Network

Our members and leaders

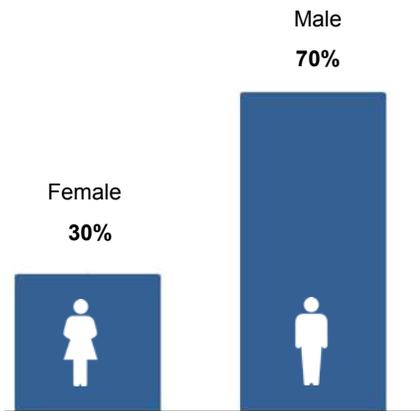
SSC membership increased 30% since 2017, from **7,496 in 2017** to **10,016 in 2020**. The members are now present in 175 nations and active in 163 groups. This growth is part of the efforts to build a diverse network that includes experts from all regions of the world. However, we still face geographic imbalance, with 50% of members from West Europe and North America and the Caribbean. Lowest numbers are in West Asia (2%), East Europe, North and Central Asia (5%) and Oceania (5%). To try to strengthen the presence of the regions in our governance, the Steering Committee includes at least two representatives from each region, as well as Regional Vice-Chairs. The goal is to build a SSC Network with more leaders and members from these underrepresented regions, you can help us find them!



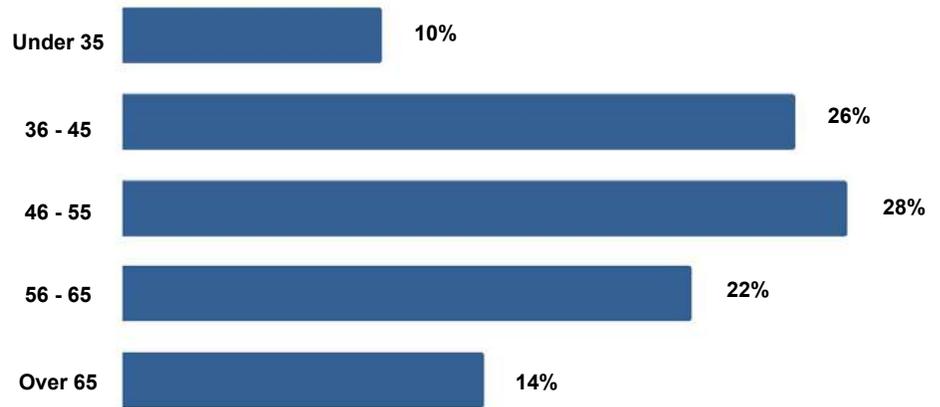
Geographic distribution of SSC membership: 10% Africa; 5% East Europe, North and Central Asia; 11% Meso and South America; 22% North America and the Caribbean; 5% Oceania; 18% South and East Asia; 2% West Asia; 27% West Europe.
Source: IUCN Commission System, November 2020

Gender distribution is similar for members (29% females) and for SSC group leaders (30% females). Female leaders increased from 27% in 2017.

The commission has a relatively balanced age distribution, from 36 to 65 years old. We need to improve engagement of youth, 35 years old and younger as shown in the chart below.



Gender distribution of SSC Leaders
Source: IUCN Commission System, November 2020

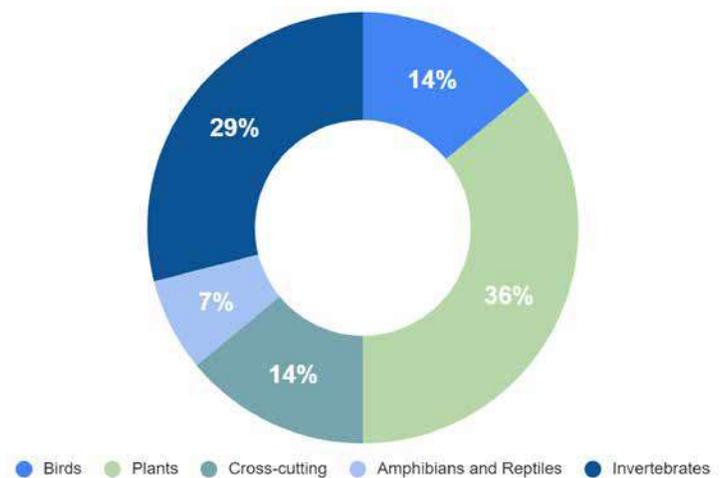


Age groups
Source: IUCN Commission System, November 2020

Our SSC Groups

It is always exciting to welcome new groups into the SSC Network, and to extend our geographic, taxonomic and thematic coverage to provide conservation attention to a growing number of species.

In 2017, our members were distributed in 141 groups. By 2020, the number increased 15% with the creation of 22 new SSC groups: 1 Action Partnership, 1 Committee, 3 Stand-alone Red List Authorities, 6 Task Forces and 11 Specialist Groups. The graphic shows the distribution of the new SSC Groups by taxonomic groups.



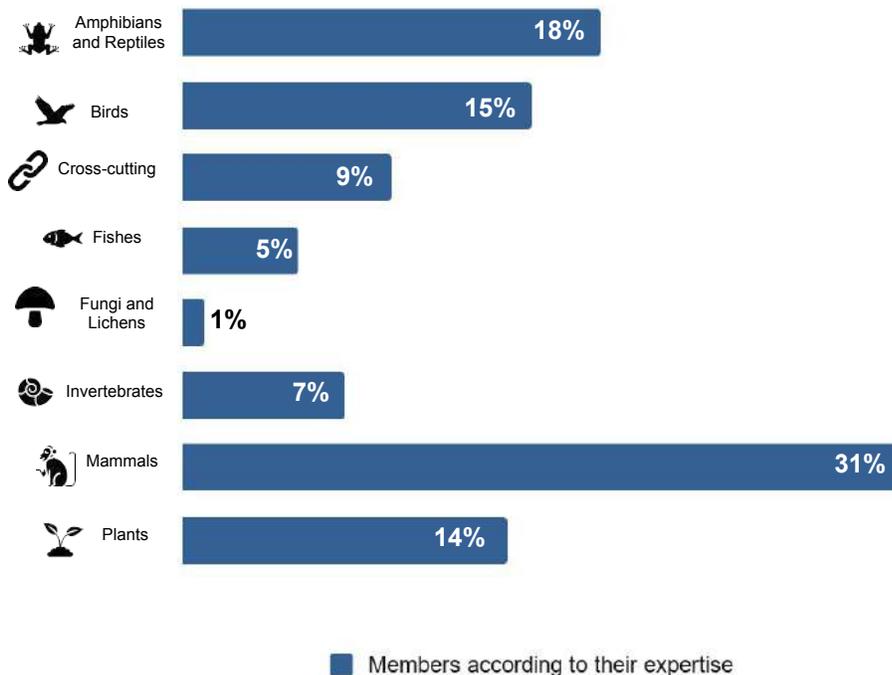
Distribution of new SSC Groups according to their expertise
Source: IUCN Commission System, November 2020

During the four years, the following groups were established:

- [Asian Songbird Trade Specialist Group](#)
- [Asian Species Action Partnership](#)
- [Colombia Plant Specialist Group](#)

[Firefly Specialist Group](#)
[Fungal Conservation Committee](#)
[Hornbill Specialist Group](#)
[Hoverfly Specialist Group](#)
[Indonesia Plant Red List Authority](#)
[Ladybird Specialist Group](#)
[Mayfly, Stonefly and Caddisfly Specialist Group](#)
[Oil Palm Task Force](#)
[Phylogenetic Diversity Task Force](#)
[Post-2020 Biodiversity Targets Task Force](#)
[Seed Conservation Specialist Group](#)
[Skink Specialist Group](#)
[Sonoran Desert Plant Specialist Group](#)
[Species Conservation Success Task Force](#)
[Synthetic Biology and Biodiversity Conservation Task Force](#)
[Turkey Plant Red List Authority](#)
[West Africa Plant Red List Authority](#)
[West Asia Arabian Plant Specialist Group](#)
[Western Ghats Plant Specialist Group](#)

Most SSC Groups focus on mammals and plants, with fishes, fungi and lichens, as the taxa most underrepresented. This distribution is further skewed when we look at the membership distribution. Also mammals and plants have the largest number of members representing 45%, and fungi and lichens the lowest with 1% of the membership.



Distribution of SSC members per expertise
 Source: IUCN Commission System, November 2020



Pacific white-sided dolphin, *Lagenorhynchus obliquidens*, LC
Photo © Shedd Aquarium

Conservation Committees and the Species Conservation Cycle

Conservation Committees are established by the SSC Chair, in consultation with the Steering Committee, to govern a specific portion of the Species network or SSC's activities. As we approach the new IUCN quadrennium, we illustrate their work with a summary of recent activities. They do so under the framework provided by the Species Conservation Cycle: Assess - Plan - Act - Network - Communicate.

Freshwater Conservation Committee (FCC)

Assess

- Support the IUCN Global Species Programme in its objective to complete, by 2020, a comprehensive global assessment for the Red List of all freshwater priority groups:
 - › Between 2019-2020 completed eighteen regional assessments for selected freshwater groups.
 - › In 2019 published close to 1,600 individual species assessments.
 - › During 2020 advanced +3,200 assessments to be published.

Plan

- Contribute to several papers and publications to boost the conservation work in the upcoming agenda of Nature 2030:
 - › IUCN 2021-2024 Programme.
 - › Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework ([UN-Water input on Freshwater-Biodiversity Linkages: Response to the Zero-Draft Document from the Open-Ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#))

- › Motions submitted to the IUCN 2020 World Conservation Congress, Marseille:
 - 009 - [Protecting rivers and their associated ecosystems as corridors in a changing climate](#) [Resolution WCC-2020-Res-008-EN]
 - 013 - [Protection of Andes-Amazon rivers of Peru: the Marañón, Ucayali, Huallaga and Amazonas, from large-scale infrastructure projects](#)
 - 014 - [Aquatic biodiversity conservation of shallow marine and freshwater systems](#) [Resolution WCC-2020-Res-012-EN]
 - 020 - [Valuing and protecting inland fisheries](#) [Resolution WCC-2020-Res-018-EN]

Act / Network

- Development of a framework for eradicating invasive fishes in subtropical freshwater lakes jointly with Freshwater Life, *Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas*, National Geographic and Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund.
- New Alliance for Freshwater life in Mexico supported by CONABIO and *Sociedad Ictiológica Mexicana (Simac)*.

Communicate

- Contributed to publications and live meeting to talk around the challenges facing plant and animal species of the freshwater ecosystem:
 - › Crossroad blog: [Wetlands: the ultimate biodiversity hotspot](#).
 - › [The Status and Distribution of Freshwater Fishes in Mexico](#) report.



FCC Co-Chair MacBeath
Photo © FCC

Fungal Conservation Committee (FunCC)

Established in 2020, the FunCC aims to raise awareness of the importance of fungi and foster action to ensure their persistence and continued benefits to the environment and society.

Assess

- Even with the Covid-19 lockdown, progress continues and assessments were published, making progress in the [Global Fungal Red List Initiative](#).



Plan

- Fungi are not included explicitly in CITES. FunCC has been looking into what would be the benefits of working with fungi in the convention and whether there are any reasons against doing so.
- Exploring whether there are areas of IUCN or other conservation initiatives that the FunCC should prioritize contacting for potential interactions/synergies.

Act

- FairWild Foundation is adding a focus on sustainable harvest of fungi, FunCC Chair is now part of their Advisory Committee.

Network

- Supported establishing new leadership of the Lichen Specialist Group and expansion of leadership for Ascomycete Specialist Group.
- 2020 saw strong development of capacity and action for red listing in South America, especially Brazil and Colombia.

Communicate

- The Fungal Diversity Survey (formerly North American Mycoflora Project), has expanded its remit and added a strong focus on engaging citizen scientists generating data for use in conservation initiatives (IUCN members and others are on advisory committee).

Invertebrate Conservation Committee (ICC)

Assess

- There has been a constant increase of terrestrial invertebrates assessments and we've reached approximately 1.7% of the known invertebrate species assessed (1.4 million described species and 24,000

invertebrate species on the IUCN Red List). Red List assessments are done by the Specialist Group members and Terrestrial Invertebrate Red List Authority.

- Publication in *Conservation Biology* about addressing data deficiency in neglected biodiversity with many people from SSC and presenting concrete recommendations.

Plan

- Assess-Plan-Act project in Western Ghats: the region is Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve in India and there are 31 members representing a diverse set of taxa and also including specialists in fungi, plants, reptiles, small mammals etc.; the project outline has been submitted to IKI Grants.
- Developed an international roadmap for insect conservation and recovery, published in *Nature Ecology and Evolution*.

Network

- Progress in broadening the taxonomic scope in the SSC to include new Specialist groups (e.g. Wild Bee Specialist Group, Ant Specialist Group, Tiger Beetle Specialist Group).

Communicate

- Organised a [Locust Opera](#) for the World Conservation Congress 2020 composed with artists on the extinction of the Rocky Mountains Locust. This species once formed the largest animal swarms ever documented (12.5 trillion insects devastated the Great Plains and a famous swarm in 1875 covered an area of 510,000 km²)!
- Publication in *Science* about two butterfly conservationists murdered in Mexico and about how conservationists need better protection and their heritage should be followed.
- Two other publications on “Scientist’s warning to humanity on insect extinctions” and on “Solutions for humanity on how to conserve insects” in *Biological Conservation*.



Marine Conservation Committee (MCC)

Assess

- Helped identify priority marine species for Red List Strategic Plan in next quadrennium.

Plan

- Generated attention and action that led to five Motions deriving from MCC effort being approved as IUCN Resolutions.
 - › 027 - [Reducing impacts of incidental capture on threatened marine species](#) [Resolution WCC-2020-Res-023-EN]
 - › 029 - [Ecosystem conservation, restoration and remediation in the ocean](#) [Resolution WCC-2020-Res-025-EN]
 - › 107 - [Global conservation of rhino rays \(Rhinidae, Glaucostegidae, Rhinobatidae\)](#) [Resolution WCC-2020-Res-091-EN]
 - › 110 - [Safeguarding the Endangered narrow-ridged finless porpoise \(*Neophocaena asiaeorientalis*\) off the Korean Peninsula](#) [Resolution WCC-2020-Res-094-EN]
 - › 111 - [Conservation of seahorses, pipefishes and seadragons \(family Syngnathidae\)](#) [Resolution WCC-2020-Res-095-EN]
 - › 124 - [Reducing the impact of fisheries on marine biodiversity](#) [Resolution WCC-2020-Res-107-EN]
- Facilitated online formal discussion process on IUCN World Conservation Congress Motion 124 – Reducing the impact of fisheries on marine biodiversity.
- Contributed to online panel discussion on Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) in December 2020: Relationships and synergies between marine KBAs and other processes. Marine Key Biodiversity Areas – progress & prospects.



Network

- Extended our series of MCC-facilitated discussions on topics of mutual interest to marine SSC chairs, with a focus on bycatch. We explored ways in which fisheries bycatch impacts our diverse taxa, and began identifying areas of overlapping concern, where collaboration among SGs could strengthen conservation efforts. We heard brief presentations from Chairs or representatives of the IUCN SSC SGs for seahorses, cetaceans, sharks and rays, turtles, snappers, breams and grunts, and from BirdLife International for seabirds. Going forward, the MCC will support the marine SGs in developing a concerted effort on management and policy matters related to bycatch.
- Engaged in SSC renewal process for SGs, helping support transitions in SG leadership at the end of the quadrennium, and particularly to find new Co-Chairs for some marine SGs.
- Facilitated the IUCN SSC Shark SG in selecting new Co-Chairs, through a consultative process.

Communicate

- Called on our networks to support important WCC motions on marine issues, through social media on Twitter (@SSCmarine) and Twitter, Facebook and Instagram (@IUCNseahorse).

Plant Conservation Committee (PCC)

Assess

- The number of plants on the IUCN Red List has more than doubled since 2016, with 23,885 plants added to the Red List since then, bringing the total assessments to 43,556 and ensuring that the plant target for the Barometer of life of 38,000 plants has been met.
- The Global Tree Assessment currently underway is catalysing assessment work across the network of specialist groups and ensuring capacity for assessments is being developed in many regions.
- Species of plants which are now being increasingly harvested from the wild as a result of the need to treat COVID19 are being prioritised for Red List assessments by our Medicinal Plant Specialist Group.



Plan

- The PCC has been leading the development of the draft Post-2020 Plant Conservation Strategy, with suggested Plant Conservation Objectives for 2050, and Plant Conservation Targets for 2030. These were submitted to the CBD Secretariat and further alignment is being done.
- Aiming to produce a IUCN Guideline on Crop Wild Relatives (CWR) before the end of 2021 this will be based on a policy brief that has been prepared on Crop Wild Relatives (CWR) and how parties to the CBD can protect them based on experience gained from implementing the Safeguarding Mesoamerican crop wild relatives.

Act

- A multi-author scientific paper has been submitted to the journal *Global Change Biology* entitled: "Ten golden rules for reforestation to optimise carbon sequestration, biodiversity recovery and livelihood benefits" with authors from BGCI, Kew and partners.
- Two PCC members based at BGCI are carrying out a review of tree planting initiatives by NGOs, looking at the benefits promoted and species planted (native, non-native, invasive) compared to tree planting initiatives by botanic gardens.

Network

- PCC has supported the renewal of leadership of plant SSC Groups.

Communicate

- The Plant Conservation Committee has been involved in raising awareness and engaging the plant network on the issue of inappropriate tree planting for carbon sequestration.

Standards and Petitions Committee (SPC)

Assess

- Worked on providing guidelines and testing for a few taxa on when to list a species as extinct and possibly extinct.
- We dealt with several issues from the Red List Unit on misapplication of the Red List Guidelines.
- Climate Change SG has been communicating with a team in Capetown University regarding the possible development of a Red Listing support tool for incorporating climate change models.



The Red List Committee (RLC)

Assess

- The Red List Technical Working Group held a meeting from the 12-14 February 2019 which covered the following issues: (i) Mapping Standards (ii) SIS and SIS Connect (iii) Red List website and (iv) Other topics like RLI, affiliation of assessors, estimated date of extinction, classification schemes, EX vs EW for species conserved in seed bank, and streamlining LC assessments.

Network

- The RLC is invited to comment on new Specialist Groups and Red List Authorities applications.
- New Red List Memberships and Partnerships: Missouri Botanical Garden, Global Wildlife Conservation and Albuquerque BioPark were admitted as formal members of the Red List Partnership.
- A working group of RLC members and other global conservation experts was constituted to support the development of the new Red List Strategic Plan for the IUCN quadrennium 2021-2024. The main objective of this group was to engage broadly and investigate with leading technology institutions how new and emerging technologies can support Red List assessments/reassessments.
- National Red List Working Group: (i) Many training opportunities were created in 2019 (ii) A National Red List capacity building workshop was held in November 2019 in Nairobi-Kenya where 25 biologists were trained to apply the IUCN Red List standards; (iii) There is also huge interest in the RLE assessments (South Africa, Morocco, Ethiopia, Malawi and Botswana) and KBAs identification in Africa (South Africa, Uganda, Mozambique, Malawi, and Tunisia).

Communicate

- The IUCN Red List data featured prominently at the IPBES Global Assessments Report adopted in May 2019 in Paris-France. A lot of the media coverage focused on the estimate of 1 million species being threatened with extinction (i.e. extrapolating RL data to the total number of described species).



2017-2020

Key SSC Chair's Office milestones



SSC Network

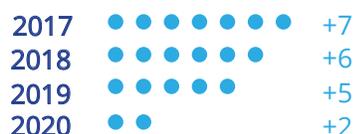
— Increase in Commission membership:



163 SSC Groups in 175 countries:

- Red List Authorities
- Task Forces
- Action Partnership
- Conservation Committees
- Specialist Groups

20 New SSC Groups



— Estimate of annual in-kind contribution of SSC expert network to IUCN: US\$ 67 million.

— SSC Data consolidated as a network monitoring tool on what SSC groups achieve each year, what targets they pursue, and what their needs are.

— The Fourth IUCN Species Survival Commission Leaders' Meeting was held in Abu Dhabi, 6-9 October 2019.

— Launched SSC Internal Grant, a funding mechanism of the SSC Chair's Office for small requests within the SSC Network. Supported 53 proposals with over US\$ 160,000 allocated to activities such as communication, training workshops, and red list assessments.

— The SSC EDGE Internal Grant was also launched in partnership with On the EDGE Conservation to support projects of SSC Groups across evolutionarily distinct species and lineages. The first round selected 6 grants totaling \$57,000 to support priorities of the SSC Species Conservation Cycle.

Barometer of Life

— Red List Partnership, Global Species Programme and SSC network delivered key indicators through the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species:



Capacity building

— Established six partnerships to strengthen local capacity, conservation planning, and implement conservation action:



Centers for Species Survival around the world:

The Deep Aquarium (UK), Georgia Aquarium (USA), Oceanário de Lisboa (Portugal), Albuquerque Biopark (USA), Parque das Aves (Brazil) and Fundación Temaikèn (Argentina).

— **14 Officers for red listing, conservation planning and conservation actions:** ~3,300 species assessments, 1,440 hour * red list officer * year.

— Global Center for Species Survival (GCSS) established at Indianapolis Zoo (USA) in 2020. It will employ a team of:



Photo credits (in order of appearance): Bird © Kira Mileham / Butterflies © David Southall / Seeds © Lyon Arboretum Seed Conservation Laboratory.





Conservation action

— 33 intervention letters delivered to governments and companies to address conservation issues of serious concern.

— Implemented **Recovery of Species on the Brink of Extinction:**

A grant opportunity in partnership with National Geographic Society and *Fondation Segré*, aimed at priorities identified in SSC action plans.

6 Rounds

attracted 465 proposals

90 were funded

(20%) with US\$ 3,216,648 allocated.

— Launched **Sumatran Rhino Rescue** in 2018, a multi-partner initiative in which SSC works with international and local organizations to support the Indonesian government in saving this species.

- The partnership has expanded the *ex situ* sanctuary in Way Kambas (southern Sumatra) and is planning to build a new one in northern Sumatra.
- Established the Sumatran Rhino Husbandry Advisory Board.
- In 2019 the first capture of the workplan was carried out successfully: Pahu, in Kalimantan.
- Raised 9 million of the overall 30 million USD budget of this program.

Communicating the work



— Created SSC accounts in [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), and updated the website, to facilitate access to the information.

— Developed communications with partner institutions such as WAZA, Earth Optimism and Global Wildlife Conservation to increase our reach.



Work at national scales



Conceptualized [Reverse the Red](#), a global movement to support governments in achieving the post-2020

Global Biodiversity Framework. Reverse the Red will actively engage the SSC network in implementing the Species Conservation Cycle (assess, plan, act, network and communicate) at the national level.

— Supported completion of the Abu Dhabi Red List of Species and currently working on the emirate's Red List of Ecosystems.

Biodiversity Assessment for Spatial Prioritization in Africa (BASPA)



Supported Malawi, Kenya, Tunisia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique to develop a national Red List and identify Key Biodiversity Areas.

Trained 25 Kenyan biologists to apply the Red List of Threatened Species standard.

Supported Kenya, Malawi, Comoros, Sierra Leone, Madagascar, and Mozambique to establish Key Biodiversity Areas National Coordination Groups.



RECENT ACTIVITIES

October - December 2020



CONFERENCES

WHERE THE SSC CHAIR'S
OFFICE ATTENDED OR
OFFERED A LECTURE



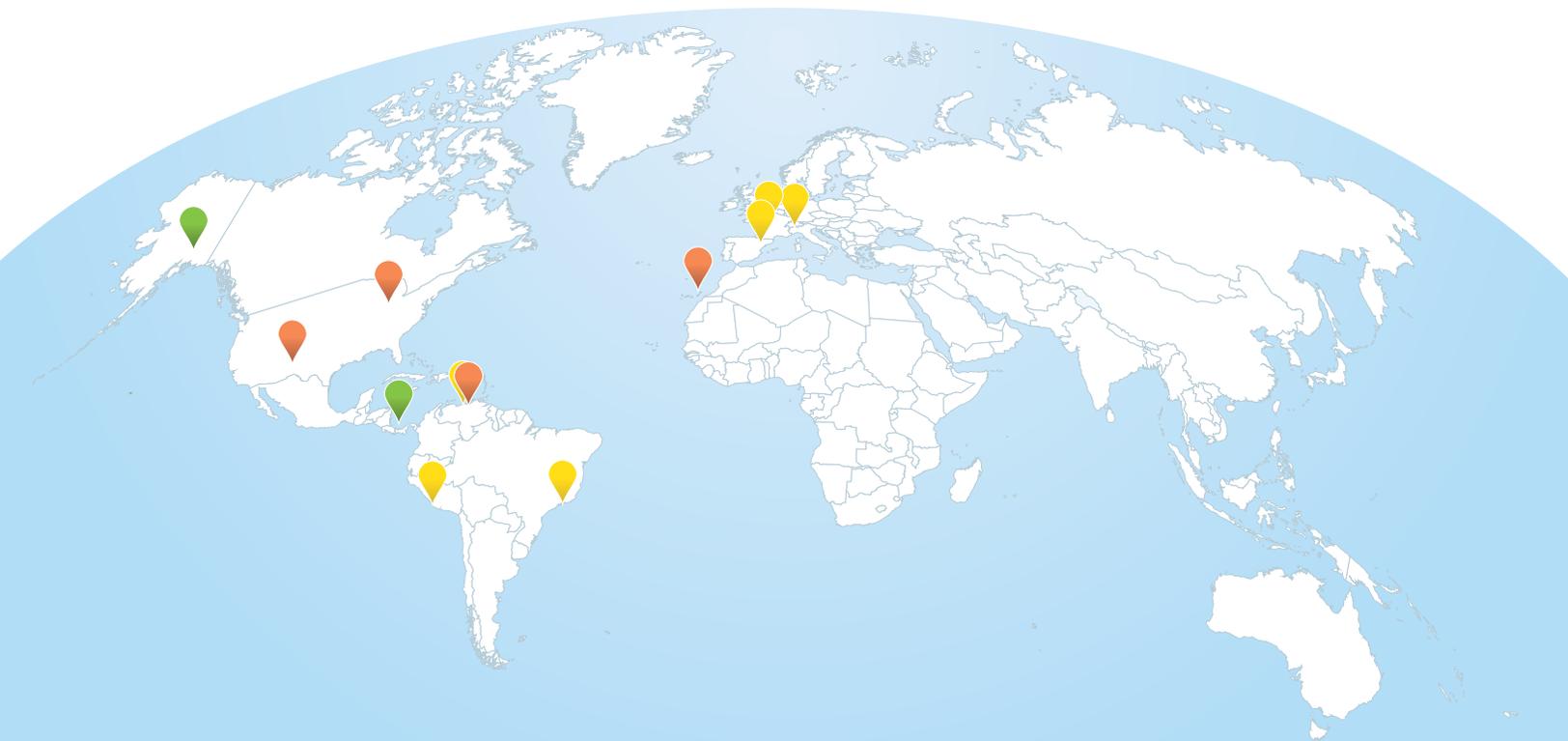
MEETINGS

WHERE THE SSC CHAIR'S
OFFICE PARTICIPATED



INTERVENTIONS

LETTERS SENT TO
GOVERNMENTS OR
COMPANIES TO
PROPOSE ACTIONS FOR
SPECIES AND HABITATS
UNDER THREAT





Conferences and meetings

(Jon Paul Rodríguez, JPR; Domitilla Raimondo, DR; Kira Mileham, KM; Bibiana Sucre, BS; Orlando Salamanca, OS; Jafet Nassar, JN; Aritzaithe Rodríguez, AR; Nahomy De Andrade, NDA; Mayerlin Ramos, MR; Edgard Yerena, EY; Simeon Bezeng, SB; Gabriela Lichtenstein, GL)

CONFERENCES

October – December 2020

- The call for urgent and effective action to address the unprecedented, unsustainable and growing impacts on wild species from human activities. *EAZA Annual Conference 2020, Conservation plenary: The Road to Kunming: Zoo and Aquarium opportunities to engage with the CBD*. 1 October 2020, Leipzig, Germany. Online event. (JPR).
- *2020 Virtual Annual Conference of the World Association of Zoo and Aquariums*. 11-15 October 2020. (KM)
- *Bienvenida, "Conservación y manejo sostenible de la vicuña"*. 30 November 2020, Lima, Perú. International conference. (JPR)
- *El manejo y conservación de la vicuña desde la mirada del uso sostenible, "Conservación y manejo sostenible de la vicuña"*. 30 November 2020, Lima, Perú. International conference. (GL)
- *Brazilian Integrated Conservation Summit 2021-2030 Panel: Decade on Ecosystem Restoration*. 1st December 2020. (KM)
- *Remarks from SSC, IUCN World Heritage Outlook 3 webinar*. 8 December 2020, Gland, Switzerland. Virtual meeting. (JPR)

IUCN Species Strategic Plan Virtual sessions
Photo © Topiltzin Contreras

January – September 2020

- *Introduction to the IUCN Species Survival Commission, and feedback to CITES from its members.* CITES Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland. (JPR)
- *Recovery of Species on the Brink of Extinction Request for Proposals.* On-line Webinar via Zoom.
- *La Supervivencia de las Especies (The Survival of Species).* Jornada Digital por la Tierra, Va por la Tierra, México City, Mexico, online presentation.
- *Earth Optimism Summit.* 24 April, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, USA, online interview.
- *La Conservación Funciona (Conservation Works).* Grupo de Especialistas en Cocodrilos de UICN, Oficina Regional América Latina y Caribe, Santa Fe, Argentina, online presentation.
- *La Conservación Funciona (Conservation Works).* Hora del Planeta, Ciudad Tarija, Tarija, Bolivia, online presentation.
- *Revertir el Rojo: Ciclo de Conservación de Especies a nivel nacional. Análisis efecto cambio climático en vertebrados terrestres amenazados en Lista Roja UICN, Comité Español UICN.* Málaga, Spain, online presentation.
- *Reverse the Red: Building National Collaborations to Save Species.* GEO BON Open Science Conference and All Hands Meeting 2020. Leipzig, Germany. Online event.
- *¿Sabes qué es la UICN y la Red List? El aleteo de la mariposa.* Mexico City. Online interview.
- *Computer Science in Modern Biology, Student Advancement Workshop.* Miami University. Miami, USA. Online panel.
- *Opening remarks. Hainan Gibbon Conservation International Symposium: Global Efforts for Saving Hainan Gibbon.* Beijing, China. Online event.
- *IUCN Species Survival Commission, Challenges Facing the Flora and Ecosystems of the Arabian Peninsula and Immediate Actions Required: A Revival of the Arabian Plant Species Specialist Group.* Qur'anic Botanic Garden, Qatar. Online presentation.
- *Briefing on synthetic biology: possible uses and limitations.* Caracas, Venezuela. Moderation of online event.

MEETINGS

October – December 2020

- *Species in Peril: Flora, Fishes and Fireflies.* University of New Mexico Biodiversity. 8 October 2020. Webinar Series. (KM)
- *Webinar: Species Recovery Request for Proposals (RFP),* organized and co-hosted with National Geographic Society. 10 October 2020. Virtual meeting. (JPR, KM, NDA, AR)
- *25th Annual Meeting, Loro Parque Fundación Board of Advisors and Trustees.* 26 October 2020, Tenerife, Spain. Virtual meeting. (JPR)
- *10th meeting of the World Land Trust Conservation Advisory Panel.* 28 October 2020, Halesworth, UK. Online event. (JPR)
- *Q&A SSC DATA System live sessions.* 29 October, 12 and 26 November, 10 December 2020. Virtual meetings. (OS, JN, BS, MR, AR, NDA, JPR)

- *Annual Coordinators Meeting of the Iberoamerican Program of Science and Technology for Development*. 10 November 2020. Virtual meeting. (JN)
- *Chicago Zoological Society's annual Conservation Leadership Awards*. 12 November 2020, Chicago, USA. Virtual meeting. (JPR)
- *SSC Red List Committee*. 9 December 2020. Virtual meeting. (JPR, DR, SB)
- *Reverse the Red Webinar series*, organized and co-hosted along with the RtR major partners. 2 and 17 November, 9 December 2020. Virtual. (JPR, KM, BS, NDA, AR, MR)
- *Q&A Session with SSC partners*. 10 December 2020. Virtual meeting. (JPR, KM, NDA)
- *Annual Assembly of the Latin American and Caribbean Bat Conservation Network (RELCOM)*. 11 December 2020. Virtual meeting. (JN)
- *SSC Update 2020, Annual meeting of the US National Committee of IUCN*. 16 December 2020, Washington, DC. Virtual meeting. (KM, JPR)
- *Steering Committee Working Group meetings*. 2, 3, 4 and 18 December 2020. Virtual meetings. (JPR, DR, KM, BS, OS, JN, AR, NDA, MR, EY, SB)

January – September 2020

- *IUCN 2021-2024 Programme Revision Workshop*. Gland, Switzerland.
- *Regional Species Survival Center annual review and board meeting*. Albuquerque Biopark. Albuquerque New Mexico, USA.
- *Visit to CITES Headquarters*. Geneva, Switzerland.
- *Eastern Afrotropical Hotspot, KBA Training for Trainers workshop*. Nairobi-Kenya.
- *Commission Chairs Meeting*. Geneva, Switzerland.
- *98th Meeting of the IUCN Council*. IUCN Headquarters, Gland, Switzerland.
- *World Wildlife Day events*. United Nations Headquarters, New York, USA.
- *Meeting with the Ministry of Environment and Renewable Resources of El Salvador to discuss opportunities of assess-plan-act for species conservation in the country*. San Salvador, El Salvador.
- *Science Panel for the Amazon*. Virtual Meeting.
- *Red List innovation*. Virtual Meeting.
- *World Conservation Congress Motions Working Group*. Virtual Meeting.
- *IUCN Motions Working Group*. IUCN Headquarters, Gland, Switzerland, online meeting.
- *IUCN Commission Chairs' meeting*. Washington, DC, USA, online meeting.
- *Science Panel for the Amazon, Scientific Steering Committee Meeting*. Washington, DC and Sao Paulo, Brazil, online meeting.
- *Science Panel for the Amazon, Lead Author meetings*. Washington, DC and Sao Paulo, Brazil, online meeting.
- *IUCN Red List Committee meeting*. Virtual meeting.
- *IUCN Council Meeting*. Gland, Switzerland. Online meeting.
- *WFN Alumni Network Development Symposium*. London, UK. Online meeting.

- *SSC Steering Committee Meeting*. Caracas, Venezuela. Online meeting.
- *SSC Leaders Meeting*. Caracas, Venezuela. Online meeting.
- *IUCN Council Meeting*. Gland, Switzerland. Online meeting.

INTERVENTIONS

High-level interventions address conservation issues of serious concern, through letters to governments or companies, which highlight the threat(s) to species and /or habitats and, using expert advice, proposing suitable action to influence decision-making and help to avoid or reduce any adverse impacts on biodiversity. Each letter provides the background and technical information, and a thorough review process led by the SSC Chair's Office, engaging the appropriate Specialist Groups, experts across the network, the IUCN regional offices and IUCN programmes.

- **Concern about the reopening of the island Escudo de Veraguas tourism development project on the Caribbean coast of the Republic of Panama.**

In November 2020, IUCN Director General, Bruno Oberle, and SSC Chair, Jon Paul Rodríguez, sent a letter to Milciades Concepción, Minister of the Environment of Panama expressing concern on the reopening of the island Escudo de Veraguas to a tourism project. Tourism uses could cause irreversible changes to the ecosystem of this island, where at least five species are endemic.

- **Letter to Bureau of Land Management Alaska State Office regarding the Arctic Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing.**

In December 2020, David L. Garshelis and Michael Proctor, IUCN SSC Bear Specialist Group Co-chairs, sent a letter to the State Director, Bureau of Land Management Alaska State Office, drilling operations in the Arctic Coastal Plain. Data show that such operations may alter bears' movement patterns, displace them from feeding sites (carcasses), and affect denning. Recent data indicate that bears may be disturbed by human activity within a mile of their den. When bears are disturbed in dens, they may abandon cubs.



2019 SSC Leaders' meeting. Group photo
Photo © IUCN SSC

Conferences, meetings and intervention letters

2017 - 2020

📍 Conferences 📍 Meetings 📍 Interventions

Global Intervention

📍 1

North America and the Caribbean

📍 30

📍 57

📍 2

Meso and South America

📍 20

📍 19

📍 7

West Europe

📍 25

📍 81

📍 2

West Asia

📍 6

📍 9

Africa

📍 32

📍 10

South and East Asia

📍 7

📍 24

📍 10

Oceania

📍 2

📍 1



Following up on past intervention letters

Since 2016 the SSC delivered 33 intervention letters to governments and companies to address conservation issues of serious concern: 7 in 2016, 5 in 2017, 8 in 2018, 3 in 2019 and 10 in 2020. Most intervention letters were promoted by SSC Groups and supported by the IUCN Director General and Regional Offices. IUCN SSC Primate and Amphibian Specialist Groups were especially active, 8 of 33 letters were led by them. Additionally, the Freshwater Conservation Committee was involved in 4 letters.

Intervention letters were delivered around the world: 10 in Africa, 10 in Asia, 4 in South America, 3 in Central America, 2 in Europe, one in Oceania and one related to species globally. We also found that 15 (45%) of the letters were focused on mammals, 5 (16%) on amphibians and reptiles, 4 (13%) on ecosystems and the remaining 6 (19%) distributed between birds, fishes and invertebrates. Not only species and ecosystems were the focus of the SSC Network, the conservation community was also key. Two intervention letters expressed concerns about the assassination of a leader of the Lenca Indigenous People in Honduras (2016), and another denounced the murder of Homero Gómez and Raúl Hernández, Monarch Butterfly conservationists in Mexico (2020).

SSC Leaders involved in 9 of 32 letters (28%) reported positive impact of interventions, such as the governmental authorities expressing willingness to discuss and take action to decrease the impact on species and ecosystems. Most discussions occurred between ministers, SSC representatives and civil society. The SSC Chair's Office continues tracking the impact of remaining interventions closely with stakeholders.

Although we do not claim that the intervention letter itself was the cause of a positive response, it is fair to say that SSC contributed to collective efforts to catalyze action in at least nine cases:

- 7 March 2016: Concerns about assassination of the Lenca Indigenous People leader, Berta Cáceres in defense of indigenous rights and protection of nature in Honduras. Private sector actors refused to participate in the project.
- 1 October 2016: Concern about the establishment of oil palm plantations in key areas of Lake Mesangat, habitat of the Critically Endangered Siamese crocodile (*Crocodylus siamensis*). The East Kutai Environmental Agency developed a Mesangat-Suwi Management plan and established a multi-stakeholder group to provide input into the Plan.
- 1 October 2016: Concern for the building of two dams on the Santa Cruz River, especially due to the lack of environmental impact assessments (EIS) and their potential impact on survival of the critically endangered hooded grebe (*Podiceps gallardoi*). All work on the dams was suspended until EIS is carried out and the public had the opportunity to comment.
- 14 October 2016: Reference to the proposed capture of African penguins (*Spheniscus demersus*), bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*), killer whales (*Orcinus orca*), and fur seals (*Arctocephalus spp.*) in Namibian waters, apparently for export to China. The Government of Namibia responded the same day indicating that the application was under review and issuing a permit was not guaranteed. There is no evidence that the export took place.
- 16 December 2016: Invasive Asian toad (*Duttaphrynus melanostictus*) spreading from an epicentre that

coincides with the Ambatovy plant site. Society civil and private sector continue working together in monitoring the activities of Ambatovy in the fight against the Asian Toad.

- 17 August 2017: Environmental impacts of the proposed Sambor and Stung Treng hydropower dams on the Mekong River. Cambodian Government suspended indefinitely plans for constructing both dams in the Mekong River.
- 1 and 24 May 2019 (two letters): Conservation status of the Termit and Tin-Toumma National Nature Reserve, Niger, with regard to concerns of the long-term integrity of the reserve and the survival of its residual population of Addax antelopes (*Addax nasomaculatus*). “Mission de l’UICN au Niger pour la conservation de l’addax, de la gazelle dama et de la Réserve Naturelle Nationale de Termit et Tin-Touma”. Proactive discussions took place between the Government, SSC Antelope Specialist Group, IUCN West and Central Africa Regional Office, IUCN Global Species Programme, and Convention on Migratory Species. The Minister invited an IUCN Mission to discuss and advise. The Mission took place in January 2020. The mission report contained seven recommendations, accepted by the Ministry.
- 1 August 2019 Concern and Support on the Conservation of the last population of the Loa water frog (*Telmatobius dankoi*) in Chile. The Minister of Environment responded to confirm a plan to implement a set of actions to work on this case with an expert biologist team, the National Zoo and SSC.

Remaining interventions that still await response or actions, are:

- Concern for ongoing culling of Mauritius fruit bats (*Pteropus niger*) in response to crop losses (1 Sep 2016).
- Interest and concern over the future of Poyang Lake and the project to construct a water control structure across the lake’s outlet. Letters on the same issue were written in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2014 (1 December 2016).
- Concern and request action for the conservation of the Critically Endangered European mink (*Mustela lutreola*) in Spain (1 March 2017).
- IUCN’s concern about the current and potential impacts of tourism development in Son Tra on the red-shanked douc langur (*Pygathrix nemaeus*), one of Vietnam’s most charismatic wildlife species and one of the world’s most threatened primates (1 June 2017).
- Conservation action planning for orangutans in Indonesia, given the steep decline in their populations (1 December 2017).
- Draw attention to the Critically Endangered white-naped mangabey (*Cercocebus lunulatus*) in the Atewa Forest in Ghana (1 December 2017).
- Concern raised by the Asian Songbird Trade Specialist Group regarding the possible removal of several bird species from Indonesia’s protected species list (1 January 2018).
- Increasing pressure on the Critically Endangered Pehuenche Spiny-chest Frog (*Alsodes pehuenche*), Argentina (1 February 2018).
- Inclusion of the Atewa Forest at Kyebi in current plans to develop an integrated bauxite industry in Ghana (1 April 2018).

- Proposed guanaco (*Lama guanicoe*) commercial harvest in Santa Cruz Province, Argentina (1 May 2018).
- Proposed Koukoutamba Hydroelectric Project and its impacts on the Critically Endangered chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*) of Guinea (1 July 2018).
- Seeking confirmation of the proposed transfer of okapi (*Okapia johnstoni*) from the Democratic Republic of Congo to Zimbabwe (1 September 2018).
- Concern about the cull of Mauritius Fruit Bats (*Pteropus niger*) as a lethal method of control on a species whose risk of extinction has recently increased (25 October 2018).
- Proposed exploration for hydrocarbons on the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska, compromising the already threatened population of polar bears (*Ursus maritimus*) in the Southern Beaufort Sea (1 December 2018).
- Concern about the situation of the Demoiselle Crane (*Anthropoides virgo*) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (4 February 2020).
- Denouncing the murder of Homero Gómez and Raul Hernández, Monarch Butterfly conservationists and defenders of the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve in Mexico (21 February 2020).
- Letter to the Government of Mongolia in support of creation of Khomyn Tal National Park (1 May 2020).
- Request for a call or meeting regarding Lake Poso, Indonesia (2 June 2020).
- Snowy 2.0 Pumped Hydro Scheme Main Works, Australia (16 June 2020).
- Appeal to Prevent the Extinction of the Cyprian Grey Bush-Cricket (*Platypleis kibris*) (17 July 2020).
- Concern about the likely impacts of the proposed Panay-Guimaras-Negro (PGN) Bridges Project on Biodiversity in the Guimaras and Lloilo Straits, and in particular, on the survival of a Critically Endangered population of Irrawaddy Dolphins (*Orcaella brevirostris*) (31 August 2020).
- Concern about the decisions taken by some luxury fashion groups to ban or cease to use the skins of wild animals, such as crocodiles, alligators, snakes, and lizards (1 September 2020).
- Concern about the reopening of the island Escudo de Veraguas tourism development project on the Caribbean coast of the Republic of Panama. At least five species are endemic to Isla Escudo de Veraguas or its coastal waters; none they can be found nowhere else on the planet. (1 September 2020).
- Letter to Bureau of Land Management Alaska State Office regarding the Arctic Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing (17 December 2020).



Engaging with the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals

IUCN SSC Network's engagement with the CMS COP13

By Dao Nguyen

SSC Network Coordinator, Global Species and Key Biodiversity Areas Programme/CMS Focal Point, IUCN Secretariat.

IUCN and the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2003 for institutional collaboration in conservation of migratory species. The IUCN Secretariat and many relevant SSC Specialist Groups (SGs) have been engaging with CMS processes. IUCN's role, in general, is to provide scientific and technical advice on the status and conservation needs of particular migratory species as well as scientific evaluations of proposals to amend the listing of species on CMS appendices.

CMS's promotion of the conservation of migratory animal species, especially endangered species, contributes greatly to IUCN's and SSC's mission. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species is used for CMS listing of species in its [Appendices](#). SSC SGs have been mobilised to support CMS with scientific knowledge and provide technical advice on a range of species.

[The 13th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties](#) to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS COP13) was generously hosted by the Government of India, in February 2020, in Gandhinagar. COP13 adopted the theme "Migratory species connect the planet and together we welcome them home." The IUCN SSC Network, IUCN WCPA's Connectivity Conservation Specialist Group, Beyond Aichi Target Task Force and the IUCN Secretariat engaged and provided inputs into many CMS migratory listing proposals, concerted action plans, specifics

regarding ecological connectivity, and input to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework in the lead-up to CMS COP13. The IUCN SSC Network included the Antelope SG, African Elephant SG, Asian Elephant SG, Anguillid Eel SG, Bustard SG, Cat SG, Caprinae SG, Cetacean SG; Crane SG, Equid SG, Giraffe and Okapi SG, Shark SG and Marine Turtle SG. IUCN Save Our Species and IUCN SSC Cat SG provided inputs and support in the implementation of the Joint CMS-CITES African Carnivores Initiative and the CMS Central Asian Mammals Initiative.

At COP13, IUCN was represented by an IUCN Delegation comprising of IUCN Secretariat and SSC Members from Antelope SG, Asian Elephant SG, Bustard SG, Cat SG, Crane SG and Equid SG. Dr. Jane Smart, Global Director of IUCN Biodiversity Conservation Group and Director of IUCN Global Species Programme was the head of Delegation. The delegation made interventions on key issues such as the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and species conservation; supporting the African Carnivore Initiative, Conservation of the African Wild Ass, the African Elephant Action Plan, and the Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna – from development through to implementation; Improving Ways of Addressing Connectivity in the Conservation of Migratory Species; and Community Participation and Livelihoods.

The IUCN Delegation also organised and participated in many side-events to promote IUCN's work in support of the work of CMS, including:

1. A Call for a Global Species Action Plan;
2. Beyond Ecological Connectivity - Building Networks among Sites, People and Institutions;
3. THE ROAD AHEAD: Toyota and the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ – Supporting implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and the SDGs;
4. Save Our Species African Wildlife Initiative;
5. Concepts and tools for the implementation of the African Carnivore Initiative;
6. Final Flight Conserving Eurasia's Iconic Bustard Species;
7. Importance of seascapes and semi-arid landscapes in western India in supporting global migratory pathways;
8. Elephant conservation beyond borders;
9. SOS Central Asia - supporting the CMS Central Asian Mammals Initiative side event;
10. Asian Elephant Conservation - prospects and Challenges;
11. The Black-necked Crane as a Flagship Species for High-Altitude Wetlands;
12. Reducing Impacts of Poison on Migratory Birds from Agricultural Chemicals and Poison Baits. IUCN India also ran a booth to display IUCN materials there at the Exhibition centre at COP13.

Overall, IUCN's presence was highly visible during CMS COP13. IUCN's knowledge products and expertise were important to CMS's decision making and implementation. There are more opportunities for IUCN to increase collaboration with CMS to better promote species conservation action within and beyond the Convention.

From CMS COP13, seven new migratory species including Asian elephant, jaguar - also listed on Appendix II, great Indian bustard, Bengal florican, little bustard, antipodean albatross and the oceanic white-tip shark were

listed under CMS Appendix I – Endangered migratory species. Three new species including Urial sheep, smooth hammerhead shark, and the tope shark were listed under CMS Appendix II - Migratory species conserved through Agreements.

New and extended Concerted Actions with targeted conservation plans were approved for 14 species.

COP13 made decisions on a number of cross-cutting policy measures to address threats to migratory species:

- Integrate biodiversity and migratory species considerations into national energy and climate policy and promote wildlife-friendly renewable energy;
- Strengthen initiatives to combat the illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds;
- Mitigate the impacts of linear infrastructure such as roads and railways on migratory species;
- Address the unsustainable use of aquatic wild meat;
- Undertake a review of bycatch levels of sharks and rays, and further implement bycatch mitigation measures for marine mammals in national fishing operations;
- Deepen our understanding of the importance of animal culture and social complexity for the conservation of endangered species;
- Investigate possible international trade in CMS Appendix I species and the implications for their conservation status.

CMS COP13 also adopted the [Gandhinagar Declaration](#), which calls for migratory species and the concept of “ecological connectivity” to be integrated and prioritized in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

The freshwater and marine fish conservation community received a boost as COP13 agreed on having two CMS COP Appointed Councillors namely Zeb Hogan for freshwater fish, and Rima Jabado (IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group Regional Vice Chair for the Indian Ocean) for marine fish. *“This role allows me to provide guidance on species that would benefit from a CMS listing while proposing recommendations to the Conference of Parties and the Secretariat on priorities for research, conservation, and management measures, as well as advise on potential solutions to pressing issues (e.g., bycatch).”* - Rima Jabado, Co-Chair in waiting for the Shark Specialist Group.

How IUCN SSC Network contributed to CMS work: proposals, concerted action and programme of work

Many SGs are working directly with CMS Secretariats, Range States and other stakeholders to provide scientific advice and evidence to put forward listing proposals and concerted action proposals and implement CMS' decisions to improve conservation status of listed species. IUCN SSC specialist groups are often requested to provide scientific comments on species listing proposals from CMS Scientific Council before the draft decisions are put forward to CMS COP for decisions. Some groups are directly implementing conservation projects with CMS Secretariats, Range States, international and national organisations and other stakeholders.

Here are a selection of quotes from IUCN SSC Specialist Groups who engage closely with CMS.

Dr. Urs Breitenmoser and Dr. Christine Breitenmoser, co-chairs, IUCN SSC Cat SG *“Although not strictly speaking migratory species, five large cat species (snow leopard, cheetah, leopard, lion, and jaguar) are now listed under CMS, because viable populations of these rare animals require huge space and most of the important populations stretch over several countries. CMS is besides CITES the only world-wide convention with a focus on species, and it plays an important role with regard to international cooperation in conservation. CITES, as a trade-related agreement, cannot cover all requirements of transboundary and international species conservation. The most promising approach to species conservation however is a tight cooperation of the two conventions, as now established for the lion, the cheetah, the leopard and the African wild dog under the joint CITES/CMS African Carnivores Initiative. IUCN, with its SOS African Wildlife Initiative and the SSC Canid and Cat Specialist Groups, is closely cooperating with the two UN conventions, and the three organisations will, together with the African Range States, make the ACI a comprehensive, synergistic and hopefully very effective conservation programme.”*

Dr. Patricia D Moehlman, Co-Chair IUCN SSC Equid Specialist Group *“CMS is a very important international forum for cooperation in the conservation of endangered wild equids. These include the African wild ass, Przewalski’s horse and Grevy’s zebra which are listed on Appendix I and the Asiatic wild ass and Kiang which are listed on Appendix II. In particular, CMS organized and secured funding for a range state meeting that resulted in the publication of the Road Map for the Conservation of African Wild Ass 2017-2027. This critically endangered species was then listed in CMS Appendix 1. The roadmap document substantiated the need for action in terms of research, training and conservation. CMS then secured funding from the Federal Republic of Germany via the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety for research and conservation in Ethiopia, Eritrea and Egypt. CMS via CAMI has also been instrumental in securing international cooperation for the Conservation of 15 species (including the Asiatic wild ass) in Central Asia.”*

Dr. Mimi Kessler, Deputy Chair, IUCN SSC Bustard Specialist Group *“The Convention on Migratory Species is increasingly being applied as a framework for global bustard conservation. This is particularly true in Asia, where all bustard species are threatened with extinction and many populations undertake long-distance movements, crossing international borders. Altogether, six proposals relating to bustards were considered at CMS COP13. These included three listing proposals, two proposals for Concerted Action, and one proposal for extension of a Concerted Action. All of these were successful! I have participated in the IUCN delegation to the last three Conferences of Parties to CMS as a representative of the Bustard SG. This has provided opportunities to inform national focal points about proposals under consideration, communicate and coordinate with stakeholders, and draw international attention to the conservation of bustards via side events. At the most recent COP, debate arose as to contemporary population size and threats to a bustard species considered for listing. Fortunately, I was present and able to quickly pull together data from across the species range to present to decision-makers, and consensus among focal points was achieved.”*

Dr David Mallon, Co-Chair, IUCN SSC Antelope Specialist Group *“CMS instruments provide positive conservation impacts on several species of antelopes living in the steppes and deserts of Asia and North Africa. The CMS Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Concerning Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope came into effect in 2006. It has been signed by all five Range States and nine cooperating organizations. The MOU, together with its Medium-Term International Work Programme, provides the overarching framework for global, regional, and national*



Red-crowned Cranes with Two Chicks , *Grus japonensis*, EN
Photo © Wang Keju

action to conserve the saiga, with the aim of restoring saiga populations to the point where sustainable use can again be envisioned. Several MOU meetings and technical workshops have been held, contributing significantly to the current recovery of the species. The Concerted Action for Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna includes seven species of antelope, five of which are highly threatened, and a sixth, the scimitar-horned oryx is the focus of an ambitious reintroduction programme in Chad. The Central Asian Mammals Initiative, and its Programme of Work, cover 14 countries and 15 species, of which six are antelopes. One of these, the goitered gazelle is benefitting from field projects funded by the IUCN Save Our Species Fund”.

Claire Mirande and Spike Millington, members, IUCN SSC Crane SG “Cranes are among many long-distance migratory groups that require habitats and sites to be protected and managed along their flyways, often spanning multiple countries. Connectivity is the key to saving these birds, among species, sites and people. CMS has adopted connectivity as a major theme, leading up to discussions on the post-2020 Biodiversity Framework. Many SSC specialist groups include highly migratory species and populations and CMS is an important framework to bring countries together. As an example, the Black-necked Crane Action Plan involves China, Bhutan and India, not all CMS Parties, but the Central Asian Flyway initiative proposed at COP 13 links these range states through this flagship species. CMS has a strong species focus and is embracing on non-governmental and expert opinion, offering great potential for expanded engagement with SSC specialist groups.

CMS also has valuable expertise and guidance on issues such as preventing poisoning in migratory birds and provide a valuable platform for different taxonomic specialist groups to collaborate to reduce this daunting threat.”

Nick Dulvy and Colin Simpfendorfer, Co-chairs, IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group “Like many other sharks and rays, the Rhino Rays face a global conservation crisis. Because they move from sea to sea crossing national boundaries and exposed to multiple fishing fleets, they are some of the most threatened marine fishes in the world. Through a CMS

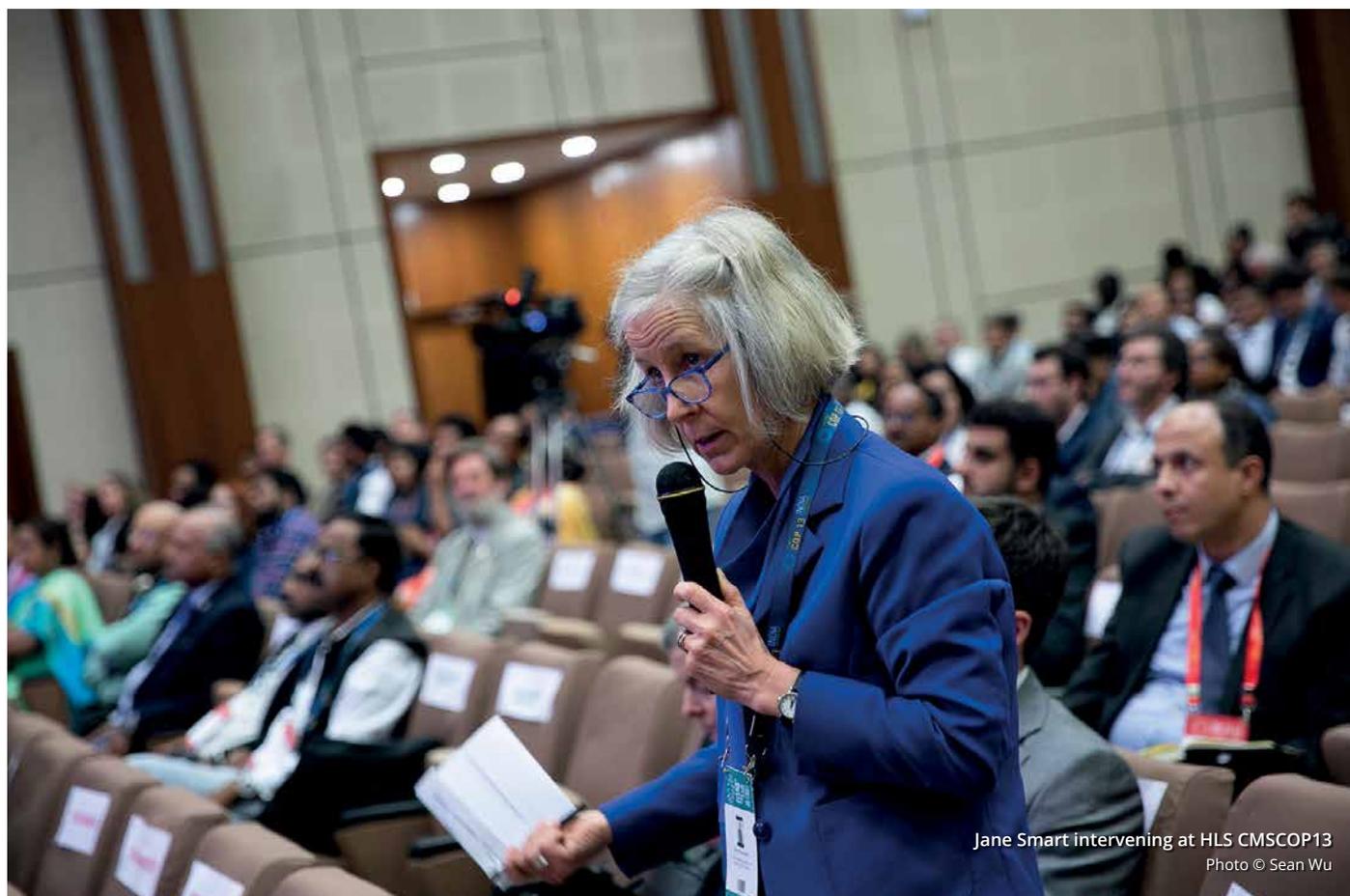
Concerted Action, the Shark Specialist Group is proposing nine activities to improve their conservation status, including developing bycatch mitigation strategies, as well as implementing and enforcing national protections. CMS can be an important platform to draw attention to the conservation needs of threatened migratory species. It can contribute to and catalyze cooperation between various stakeholders but most importantly decision-makers in support of improved conservation impacts and outcomes.”

Moving forward

IUCN Global Species Programme acts as the CMS focal point for IUCN and coordinates IUCN's engagement with the CMS policy processes. Many IUCN SSC Specialist Groups have started to engage with CMS and some SG have established a long term working relationship with CMS and continue to provide critical technical support and advice to CMS and its Parties on listed species. I would like to call for more IUCN SSC specialist groups to join the engagement with CMS to improve the conservation work of your migratory species.

IUCN SSC members can support the work on migratory species in CMS Range States at the national level through CMS national focal points and through your IUCN SSC specialist groups.

For more information and how to engage with CMS, please contact: Dao Nguyen (dao.nguyen@iucn.org), SSC Network Coordinator, IUCN Global Species Programme, IUCN Secretariat.





REVERSE THE RED

Mountain gorilla, *Gorilla beringe beringe*, EN
Photo © Kira Mileham

Reverse the Red

The global movement that ignites strategic action and optimism to ensure the survival of wild species and ecosystems with which we share our planet

Conservation works, we simply need to do more of it, access greater resources and align our efforts collaboratively and strategically. Reverse the Red is a global movement to help us achieve this.

Reverse the Red aims to catalyze actions to reverse negative trends shown on the IUCN Red List by uniting the expertise, partnerships and tools to implement the Species Conservation Cycle at the national level, under the guidance provided in the Global Species Action Plan. The movement will focus on growing national collaborations in support of a standardised framework, scaling up solutions and celebrating success. National hubs will work to support countries in achieving their Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework, utilise the knowledge standards mobilized by IUCN in their national biodiversity reporting, ensuring that the evidence base for indicators, such as National Red List Indices, is supplied by local stakeholders that contribute data, analyses and action according to their strengths, but are guided by a common agenda with comparable methods.

To achieve this, we must boost existing capacity and unite efforts across stakeholder groups. IUCN contributes the knowledge and expertise of the Commissions, the richness, diversity and connections of its Members, and the support of the Secretariat. SSC has also built a strong network of partners with zoos, aquaria and botanical gardens, as well as solid links with natural history museums. By connecting the global tools and knowledge of the IUCN, the local and national

expertise of the SSC members, with institutional partners and government stakeholders we can build networks with the knowledge, resources and influence to effectively drive the Species Conservation Cycle at the national scale and catalyze actions to Reverse the Red.

SSC National Species Groups

SSC groups are either defined by taxonomy or by discipline. Membership in these groups usually requires demonstration of being a leader in the field. This is undoubtedly a major strength of the Commission, as it brings together the world's top experts. Maintaining this technical excellence is clearly a primary priority for the future, but SSC also has an opportunity for increasing its influence nationally. In 2020 efforts will scale up to grow a third type of SSC group, defined by geography: SSC National Species Groups would engage with other stakeholders in implementing IUCN methods and approaches at the national level. They would also provide an opportunity for emerging leaders that have not achieved global standing to join the SSC network, grow professionally, and interact with the global knowledge-based conservation community, while contributing to improvement of the status of biodiversity in their countries.

These SSC National Species Groups would become key Reverse the Red stakeholders within their country, to provide the relevant expertise to inform and implement the Species Conservation Cycle at the national level.

Strategy Development

During 2020, the SSC Chair's Office, Steering Committee Reverse the Red Task Force and Partners worked hard to move forward efforts for Reverse the Red. This team created a strategy to articulate Reverse the Red as *"a global movement to reverse the negative trends shown on the IUCN Red Lists"*. It outlines a:

Vision: Reverse the Red is a global movement that ignites strategic action and optimism to ensure the survival of wild species and ecosystems with which we share our planet.

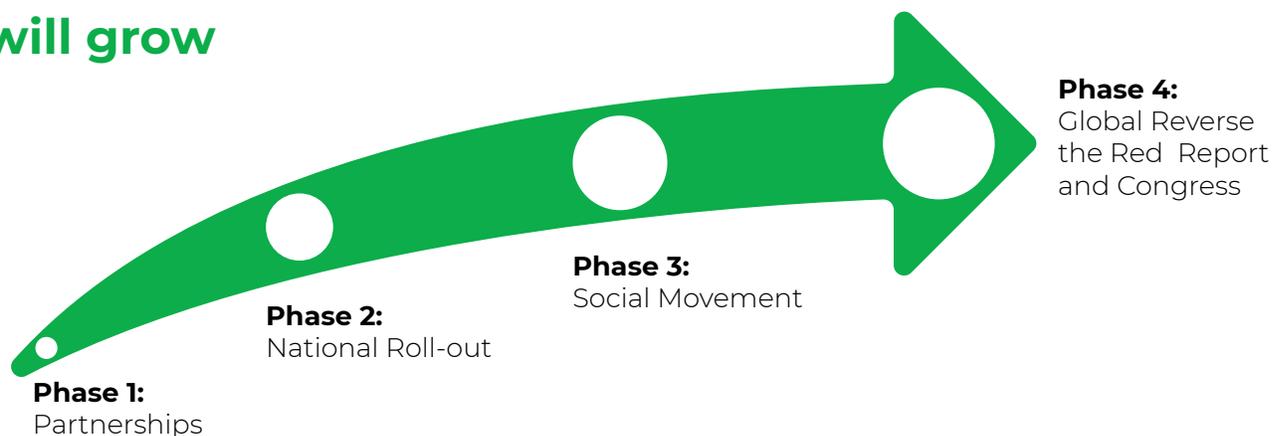
Mission: Reverse the Red will unite tools and partnerships to catalyse conservation efforts and support countries in delivering on their commitments to the Convention of Biological Diversity post 2020 Biodiversity Framework.

Reverse the Red will do this by catalysing collaboration and energising decentralised networks and communities around the world to Assess – Plan – Act for species and ecosystems by:

- creating national networks that integrate experts, civil society and governments,
- promoting the use of standardised tools and methodologies,
- fostering clear and ambitious conservation targets (Global Species Action Plan),
- supporting national roadmaps for conservation,
- building capacity and articulation,
- boosting accountability and celebrating success.

The strategy outlines a four-phase plan

How Reverse the Red will grow



Work is underway for Phase 1 which aims to engage conservation partners at national, regional and global levels to consolidate standardised tools and practices and to launch Reverse the Red as an umbrella mechanism for species and ecosystem conservation.

Pilot Country Identification

As a part of the Phase 2 within the strategy, progress has begun on identifying appropriate Reverse the Red pilot countries to prioritize initial efforts for establishing Reverse the Red partnerships, establishing National Species Groups and bolstering the species conservation cycle at the national level.

Five criteria were considered key in determining the suitability of a potential pilot country, the existing or high potential for:

- SSC expertise in-country to create a strong SSC National Species Group,
- Partnership capacity,
- Government engagement,
- Conservation need,
- Wider IUCN engagement: (eg. Regional/National IUCN Office, KBA working Group, Active National Committee etc).

The list of potential pilot countries for Reverse the Red is still being refined and does not guarantee that these countries will become the focus of initial Reverse the Red efforts, but that they will be prioritized to explore particularly for the partnership opportunities, governmental engagement and potential to begin establishing SSC National Species Groups.

World Conservation Congress Reverse the Red Pavilion

A consortium of 25 partners have joined the Reverse the Red Pavilion for the IUCN World Conservation Congress. These partners have contributed between US\$10,000 to 100,000 each towards a total budget of just over US\$ 500,000. The leading partners (contributing US\$ 100,000) meet weekly to plan the launch of Reverse the Red at the World Conservation Congress and other strategic activities, and the wider partnership group meets monthly.

A dynamic and constructive draft program was established ensuring input relative to the contributions of the many partners. However, given the postponement of the World Conservation Congress the partnership team shifted the focus onto opportunities to grow communication and virtual engagement in Reverse the Red ahead of the scheduled September 2021 WCC dates.

Website and Communication Strategy

We are developing a wider communication strategy for Reverse the Red, including the development of a 'teaser' video to introduce Reverse the Red as well as a new website, that is now live and available at www.reversethered.org. This website will serve as an information hub to provide potential partners and the wider community with the information and resources they need to get involved in Reverse the Red.

Case Study Compiling

To support the website, the communication strategy and to inform the wider model of Reverse the Red, we are compiling case study examples and resources from across the network and the Reverse the Red partners. The aim of compiling these case studies is to:

- Show how the Species Conservation Cycle is working at national or local level.
- Demonstrate there are resources and practices applied with success in Reversing the Red.
- Gather lessons learned as valuable input for Reverse the Red implementation.
- Engage conservation partners to get involved with the movement.

The case studies will reflect:

- Success in achieving species population increases, preventing declines, or changes in national policies for species conservation.
- Innovation, enthusiasm and collaboration, and inspire others to take part in the movement.
- Implement the Species Conservation Cycle (Assess-Plan-Act model) or part of it, and shows the use of standardised tools and methodologies provided by IUCN.
- Work at national or local scale and highlight the engagement and work of different stakeholders, particularly with governments, and their collaborative effort in making a positive impact in the conservation world.
- Diversity in terms of taxa and geographic distribution.

A first call to gather and select stories of success around Reverse the Red was conducted in September 2020, with 20 cases received and 10 selected as a first group to be showcased. We are working on refining the other ten cases received and planning to open other rounds of participation with the aim of creating a bank of success stories that can feed not just our website but other communication channels that allows us to tell the world that conservation works and that together we can Reverse the Red.

To see the extraordinary success stories compiled so far, please visit <https://www.reversethered.org/stories>

Webinar Series

To begin engaging stakeholders, the Reverse the Red Partners held a webinar series during the last quarter of 2020. The series included three webinars, that were moderated by Dr. Jenny Gray, from Zoos Victoria and the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, having a fireside chat discussion with several panelists. In each webinar we heard from one of the three IUCN presidential candidates, together with other inspiring conservation leaders across NGOs, multilateral environmental agreements, governments and youth around the world.

With these sessions we aimed to:

1. Attract potential partners for the implementation of Reverse the Red in pilot countries.
2. Gather the interests, needs and concerns from key stakeholders to Reverse the Red.
3. Start to familiarize IUCN WCC participants with Reverse the Red.

We encouraged the SSC Network, along with wider stakeholders from governments, institutional partners, MEAs (eg. CITES, CMS, CBD, etc.) and other key influencers to participate in these sessions, reaching more than 25,000 people through different channels. To see the recording of this webinar series, please [click here](#).





Eventos CPSCG
Photo © Fabiana Lopes Rocha

Strategic Partnerships and Grants

During 2017-2020 the SSC Chair's Office progressed on developing mutually beneficial partnerships with a broader set of organizations to help them achieve and improve their conservation goals, while supporting the SSC network and moving forward with SSC targets.

Centers for Species Survival: Rapid expansion despite COVID

Ticket sales weaken, their resolve to conserve species does not

The IUCN SSC's Center for Species Survival (CSS) model continues to advance conservation successes and critical support to the SSC network despite the unprecedented challenges that this year has brought.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted us all, but has taken an outsize toll on the zoo and aquarium community, who rely on ticket sales and events to support conservation programming. Despite these challenges, zoos and aquariums have contributed substantially to the *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* and conservation planning efforts over the course of the last year.

In total, the CSS have contributed to more than 1,200 species assessments this year. This includes assessments of all freshwater fishes in the Caribbean, substantial contributions to the assessment of North American fireflies, moths of the Hawaiian Islands, economically important medicinal plants of North America and the Himalayas, and marine fishes in aquarium collections.

Collectively, these assessments contribute to the broader mission of the Red List to assess global biodiversity, but also provide substantial insights in key areas. In addition to broader support for the IUCN Marine Biodiversity Unit (MBU), assessment of marine fishes in aquarium collections, undertaken by Catarina Fonseca at Oceanário de Lisboa, is a critical step which allows aquariums to build effective conservation programs which are focused in areas of greatest need and are tailored to the research needs most pertinent to aquarium personnel. These species also present a vital opportunity for public outreach as millions of visitors will be presented with conservation information in the presence of these charismatic organisms.

The work undertaken by Fabiana Lopes Rocha and the team at the CSS Brazil at Parque das Aves is a major contributor to unifying processes within the Assess, Plan, Act cycle for the country. By integrating conservation planning into the regional as well as aligning national and global Red Listing, it's possible to identify which species most need help, and then convene facilitated, multi-stakeholder workshops within Brazil to make a strategic plan to save the species. The CSS Brazil took up the conservation crisis of the Birds of the Atlantic Rainforest as a flagship initiative. This is currently the largest continental avian extinction crisis on the planet, with two recent extinctions and 13 Critically Endangered species. In 2019-2020 CSS Brazil worked on conservation planning and modelling for 19 bird species, in addition to the Sand Tiger Shark and the Black Lion Tamarin.



The team at the ABQ BioPark is focused on generating new inroads for conservation initiatives through comprehensive assessment projects. In 2020, Tim Lyons worked with the IUCN Freshwater Biodiversity Unit (FBU) and the Freshwater Fish Specialist Group to continue the push to complete assessments for all Latin American fishes through a comprehensive assessment of Caribbean freshwater fishes. Anna Walker has made enormous progress working with the Firefly Specialist Group toward adding all species of North American fireflies to the Red List through administrative support for the group, provision of Red List training, and contributions to individual assessments. Working with the Medicinal Plant Specialist Group, Clay Meredith has developed software specifically designed for rapid assessment of North American medicinal plants with the goal of adding 1,500 medicinal plants to the Red List by 2022.



Other SSC Center for Species Survival partnerships temporarily paused their efforts due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. That is the case of The Deep Aquarium in the UK and Georgia Aquarium in the US.

Nevertheless, during the last three years, Rob Bullock (The Deep Aquarium) contributed to 1,800 species assessments, largely marine bony fishes and some freshwater fishes, elasmobranchs, marine reptiles and marine mammals. He also played a key role as SSC Red Listing Partnership Officer, supporting the SSC's partnerships strategy and overseeing the capacity building and ongoing work of other red list officers. Likewise, Katelyn Herman (Georgia Aquarium) focused on sharks, specialized on mapping, and supported the assessment of ~500 species. SSC expresses its support to our extraordinary partners in these challenging times and looks forward to restarting conversations in 2021.

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, however, 2020 has seen further expansion of the Center for Species Survival Partnership network of the SSC. As part of this growing movement aimed to expand species conservation efforts around the world, in December 2020, SSC signed a new partnership with *Fundación Temaikèn* in Argentina to create a Center for Species Survival Argentina, which will operate from Buenos Aires. The Center, hosted by *Fundación Temaikèn*, will employ a full-time team of five experts who will work assessing, planning and mobilizing species recovery action in the country, as well as enhancing the scope and capacity for species conservation in Latin America. Conversations have been undertaken to replicate the Centers for Species Survival model in other countries such as the UK and rest of Great Britain, Singapore, Germany, Uganda, Australia and Spain.

Despite the challenges posed by declining visitation, working remotely, and the loss of capacity for in-person workshops, the continued commitment of zoos and aquariums toward conservation projects in partnership with the IUCN SSC at scales ranging from local to international is an enduring testament to the role these institutions will take in the future of conservation. The personnel at the existing Centers for Species Survival look forward to bringing on new partners in the coming year, and building new and innovative frameworks leveraging the collective power of zoos, aquariums and botanic gardens in service of the conservation community.

Introducing the Global Center for Species Survival (GCSS) Team

In 2019 the SSC entered into a partnership of unprecedented scale and possibility with the Indianapolis Zoological Society, to create the Global Center for Species Survival based in Indianapolis, USA.

This partnership initially involves the creation of a team of seven full-time Coordinators, within the Indianapolis Zoo staff but dedicated to providing strategic support, capacity and partnership development to the SSC network. This team will assist Specialist Groups and Conservation Committees in achieving their SSC Data targets, with a particular focus on supporting groups to progress efforts from assessments into planning and action, communication and network capacity building.

A Human Behavior Change Manager will join in 2021 to work with the GCSS team and the SSC network on the development and roll-out of community engagement campaigns to address priority socially-driven threats to species survival.

A comprehensive recruitment effort was undertaken by leadership from both the Indianapolis Zoo and the SSC to find a dynamic, capable team of Coordinators to create the Global Center for Species Survival Team. We received 527 applications across the seven roles, from many very high-quality candidates from around the world.

We are delighted to introduce the new Global Center for Species Survival Team who will all commence their roles by early February 2021:



Plant and Fungi Coordinator: Catia Canteiro / ccanteiro@indyzoo.com

Catia is a Species Conservation Assessor working at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, London, with over 10 years' experience working in the conservation of plants and fungi. For the past five years she has been working on extinction risk assessments for the IUCN Red List, with assessing over 500 species. She started her career working on conservation planning and action for fungi and plant species, including environmental impact assessments and monitoring studies, and on restoration of temporary ponds.



Invertebrate Coordinator: Sergio Henriques / shenriques@indyzoo.com

Sergio is the current Chair of the Spider and Scorpion Specialist Group with over 15 years experience in the field assessing, planning and acting towards arachnid conservation in collaboration with the other IUCN task forces, specialist groups and the Invertebrate Conservation Committee. He has experience supporting outreach across different media (i.e. blogs, news, NPR, National Geographic), developing integrated plans to facilitate or mobilize resources for any activity promoting arachnid conservation, and identified gaps in expertise while engaging with the global network of experts to address these gaps.



Mammal Coordinator: Angela Yang / ayang@indyzoo.com

Angela most recently worked for Rainforest Trust, where she led a department of 13 staff, overseeing over 190 projects around the world. She worked with the leadership team to develop strategy, coordinate activities and foster collaboration between departments, determine and implement organizational efficiencies, spearhead Committee meetings and lead capacity-building, both for the conservation staff and for our partner organizations around the world. Before Rainforest Trust, Angela worked with ZSL as the Programme Manager for East and Southeast Asia, and the Wildlife Conservation Society as the Senior Regional manager for their Global Health Program, overseeing operations in Asia, Africa and the Americas.



Marine Coordinator: Riley Pollom / rpollom@indyzoo.com

Riley is a marine resource management officer for Parks Canada, where he worked to study and conserve endangered Southern Resident killer whales, and also serves as the Key Biodiversity Areas Regional Coordinator for the Wildlife Conservation Society in Canada. He has been a Red List Officer for the IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group for the past four years, and previously worked in this capacity with Project Seahorse and the Seahorse, Pipefish and Seadragon Specialist Group. Riley also has held roles with The Nature Conservancy (Canada), the Canadian Wildlife Service and the Calgary Zoo.



Bird Coordinator: Mimi Kessler / mkessler@indyzoo.com

Mimi Kessler is a wildlife biologist, conservationist, ornithologist, and authority on the ecology and management of lekking birds. She has dedicated the past fifteen years to research and conservation of bustards, the most threatened terrestrial family of birds. She serves as Deputy Chair of the Bustard Specialist Group and founded the Eurasian Bustard Alliance, an international collaborative working to better understand and protect bustard species. To support the next generation of researchers and conservationists, Dr. Kessler mentors undergraduate and Masters students in Mongolia and Uzbekistan.



Reptile and Amphibian Coordinator: Nicolette Roach / nroach@indyzoo.com

Nikki is a member of the Climate Change, Amphibians and Small Mammals Specialist Groups. She spent the last three years leading and designing biodiversity and sustainability projects, primarily with amphibians, in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia. While in Colombia, she was the Director of Communications of the Latin American and Caribbean Section (LACA) of the Society for Conservation Biology. From 2015 – 2017, she led the IUCN Red List assessments for small mammals of the western hemisphere and has led IUCN Red Listing workshops in México and Brazil.



Freshwater Coordinator: Monika Bohm / mbohms@indyzoo.com

Monika has over 10 years of experience in supporting freshwater IUCN Red List assessments, across different species groups, and gained knowledge on the diverse conservation issues affecting freshwater species. She has published papers on freshwater status and threats (e.g. Climate Change Vulnerability Analyses for crayfish) and is a certified Red List trainer having delivered several Red List training workshops around the world. Monika spent over a decade as a Postdoctoral Research Assistant and Research Fellow at the Zoological Society of London and has been a member of numerous Specialist Groups.

This team will work as an extension of the SSC Chair's Office team ([see organigram](#)) in support of the wider network to identify priorities, partnerships and opportunities and to scale up capacity across the species conservation cycle. We look forward to you connecting with this incredible team and to the enormous impact this partnership will have in the service of saving species with the SSC network.

Conservation action

There is clear interest among the SSC community to catalyze conservation actions that improve the status of threatened species. Here we outline the achievements of two of the most important projects in which the SSC Chair's Office has been directly involved to mobilize conservation actions during the last couple of years.

Sumatran Rhino Rescue

This is a multi-partner initiative in which SSC works with the Indonesian Government, national and international organizations to collaboratively provide emergency rescue and expand the critical breeding program to save this

species. With a 30-million-dollar budget for five years, the partnership has expanded the *ex situ* sanctuary in Way Kambas –southern Sumatra– and is planning to build a new one in northern Sumatra. Primary achievements to date include:

- Successfully rescued a healthy female rhino – Pahu – that was relocated to a secure facility in Kalimantan.
- Completed an expansion of the Way Kambas Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary, providing space for five additional rhinos, and resources approved to build a new Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary in northern Sumatra.
- Created the first-ever 3D scan of a Sumatran rhino, at the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary in Way Kambas National Park. The scan is used as an education and outreach tool to raise public awareness of the species.
- Established the Sumatran Rhino Husbandry and Propagation Expert Advisory Board to guide the implementation of the Emergency Action Plan adopted by the Indonesian Government.

Species Recovery Request for Proposals

This is the third year of the grant program developed between National Geographic Society (NGS) and SSC, aimed at funding priorities identified in SSC action plans. Early in 2019, Fondation Segré joined the alliance, further strengthening the capacity to fund proposals.

	Applications submitted	Proposals funded	Funds allocated	SSC Members
1st round – April 2018	161	20	\$662,795	12
2nd round – July 2018	62	9	\$340,906	3
3rd round – October 2018	61	11	\$375,455	8
4th round – January 2019	40	14	\$512,118	9
5th round – April 2019	50	19	\$684,758	4
6th round – October 2019	91	17	\$640,616	8
TOTAL	465	90	\$3,216,648	44

Summary of results: Recovery of Species on the Brink of Extinction

Six application rounds have been carried out, with US\$ 3,216,648 disbursed in support of 90 conservation projects, selected among 465 proposals received (20% acceptance rate). Roughly half of approved projects were from SSC members. Primates, amphibians, vultures, bats, crocodiles, birds, and freshwater fishes are some of the taxa covered by the different award-winning projects.

Find more details about the grantees and the different projects funded under this RFP [here](#)

SSC Internal Grant Programs

Since the quadriennium started, one of the main goals of the Chair’s Office has been to develop funding mechanisms to support a network of 164 Specialist Groups in a systematic and more democratic way. Now it’s a reality. The SSC grant programs have allowed us to support a wide range of Specialist Groups, encourage them to achieve their annual plans and contribute further towards the Species Strategic Plan 2017-2020. Some partners have joined this initiative, in a model that we look forward to continuing to strengthen in the coming years.

SSC Internal Grant

Early 2019 the SSC Chair's Office launched a grant opportunity for funding small requests within the IUCN SSC network: [the SSC Internal Grant](#), thanks to the generous support of the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi. This funding mechanism has three main goals:

- Support SSC groups in achieving their targets as established in their respective SSC Data and our [Species Strategic Plan 2017-2020](#), in alignment with our strategic framework: the Species Conservation Cycle.
- Encourage and incentivise all SSC Groups to carry out their annual planning process using the SSC Data file, the monitoring and evaluation tool developed by the SSC Chair's Office. Having delivered their SSC Data is a requirement for accepting proposals from SSC groups.
- Motivate the SSC network to get more familiar with our strategic framework: the Species Conservation Cycle, and their components: Network-Assess-Plan-Act-Communicate.

So far, there have been four application cycles resulting in 53 proposals funded and more than US\$ 160,000 allocated in activities such communication, training workshops, red list assessments, among others. The full list of winners and projects is available [here](#).

From January 2020, the [NGO Planta!](#) is also contributing to this grant by providing an annual support to the value of ~US\$6,000, to be allocated towards projects related to Plant Specialist Groups, strengthening our capacity to support the SSC Network.

SSC EDGE Internal Grant

In September 2020, the SSC Chair's Office announced an extraordinary new grant program developed in partnership with [On the EDGE Conservation](#) (OTEC) for a set of small grants available to SSC groups: [the SSC EDGE internal Grant](#).

The aim of the SSC EDGE internal grant is to contribute to [halting the loss of evolutionarily distinct lineages](#), through improving assessment and planning for overlooked and evolutionarily distinct species.

The recipients of the first round were announced in early November. In a selection process jointly developed between OTEC and the Chair's Office team, the grant was distributed to six projects totaling ~\$57,000 to support priorities under the IUCN SSC Species Conservation Cycle relating to assess and plan activities. These are the SSC Groups that will develop projects for EDGE species thanks to this grant:

#	SSC Group	Amount of money
1	IUCN SSC Palm Specialist Group	\$10,000.00
2	IUCN SSC Cetacean Specialist Group	\$9,180.00
3	IUCN SSC Australasian Marsupial and Monotreme Specialist Group	\$10,000.00
4	IUCN SSC Cuban Plant Specialist Group	\$7,800.00
5	IUCN SSC Indonesian Plant Red List Authority	\$9,955.00
6	IUCN SSC Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group	\$10,000.00
SSC EDGE Internal Grant. First round winners SSC Groups		\$56,935.00

Find more details about the projects funded [here](#).



SSC DATA - Orlando Salamanca and Jafet Nassar
Photo © IUCN SSC

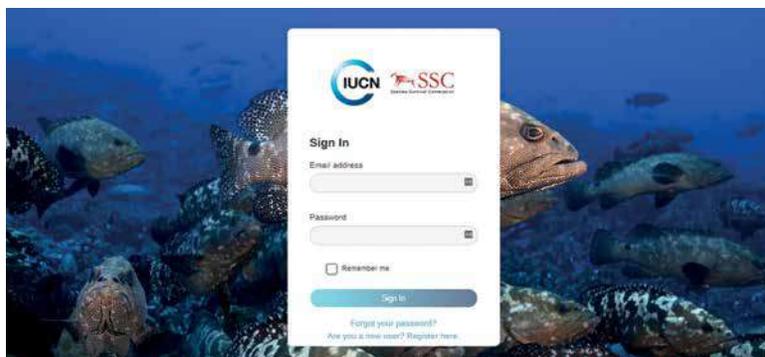
Network 3.0

The use of technology to improve global collaborative work in SSC

During the 2017-2020 quadrennium the SSC Chair's Office aimed to improve the use of technology tools to facilitate engagement with SSC leaders, external communications, as well as monitoring and reporting the results of our network.

SSC DATA: our new platform to track our impact

During 2017, the SSC Chair's Office developed SSC DATA as a tool to systematize the targets, activities and needs of all SSC Groups. This tool was based on a spreadsheet and all groups' reports were manually integrated each year into a basic database to be able to understand the network as a whole. Now, during 2020, SSC DATA evolved into a web-based platform available at www.iucnsscddata.org.



This new platform was based on feedback gathered through a survey sent to all SSC leaders. The feedback asked for a more user-friendly tool, which facilitated participation from several members of a group, and which could reduce the time it takes to provide the information requested.

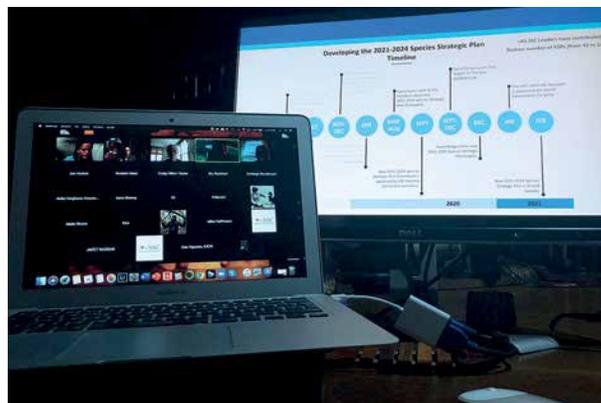
The new SSC DATA platform has the benefits of:

- A faster planning and reporting process: SSC leaders will be able to enter their data in real-time, and coordinate activities in real-time among group collaborators. Moreover, we will be able to monitor and analyze our milestones in real-time over the quadrennium.
- Integrated management tool: SSC leaders will easily track target progress, and improve real-time support to the group's targets.
- Facilitate sharing group information: the new system includes a section (SSC Network) that allows SSC leaders to visualize overall results of SSC, other groups' information and build connections among groups when needed.

SSC Leaders are now working to set and upload their group's targets into this new platform. This process will be completed by 31 January 2021. Once all targets have been compiled, they will constitute our [IUCN Species Strategic Plan 2021-2024](#)!

Boosting engagement with SSC Leaders

For the SSC Chair's Office, it has been a top priority to improve engagement with all SSC Groups. We are aware that we often approach our leaders with multiple requests, and should also be prepared to listen to the group's challenges. This started out by seeking to have at least one one-on-one call per year to catch-up on how groups are going, what challenges they are facing, provide support when possible and clarify any doubts. As part of the SSC DATA reporting process, since 2017 most groups have responded positively and appreciate having these calls.



Also, as a recommendation resulting from the SSC Leaders Meeting in Abu Dhabi, the SSC Chair's Office has installed regular virtual Q&A sessions open to all SSC leaders and partners. During 2020 we implemented three two-hour virtual sessions (January, May and October) and these were all a big success with close to 100 participants each. Many session themes were directly requested by SSC Leaders, and we've covered topics such as: specialist group composition for the next quadrennium, respectful behavior and fair/equitable interactions within the groups, technical issues of red listing (e.g. Rapid Least Concern tool), establishment of an SSC Bird Conservation Committee and other Conservation Committees, conservation of inconspicuous organisms (e.g. fungi, lichens, bryophytes), SSC Internal Grant process, leadership renewal for the next quadrennium, updated results of SSC Data and improvements to the tool, 2021-2024 Species Strategic Plan, WCC Congress updates, main changes to SSC ToRs and by-laws and support to new groups and leaders, among others.

Raising SSC's profile

External communication has also been an area to improve during this quadrennium. Aiming to support the conservation work of all the SSC Network and reach target audiences, the incorporation of one communications staff in the SSC Chair's Office team allowed us to start to move in the digital era, seeking more coordination and a bigger splash.

SSC communications are implemented in collaboration with the IUCN Global Species Programme and Global Communications Unit, as well as with partners, such as National Geographic, Sumatran Rhino Alliance and Reverse the Red.

To increase the visibility of SSC's conservation work and demonstrate how the network is an example of creating impact, we have presence in four social media — [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#). We also restructured our [website](#) to improve accessibility to the information, and to showcase more of our efforts.

Having a communications officer in the team allowed us to offer better support to SSC Groups in publishing news stories, blog posts, guidelines and position statements. The latest [Guidelines for species conservation planning](#); [Guidelines for invasive species planning and management on islands](#); [Guidelines for the management of confiscated, live organisms](#); and the Spanish version of the [Guidelines for assessing species' vulnerability to climate change](#) were launched during this quadrennium, several in different languages and are available through the IUCN Library Portal.



Other reports were completed and presented to the network including the Annual Species, EAD and Quarterly Reports, all of them available online on the SSC pages.

We still have much more to do, communication is a path without end and it is in continuous innovation. From the SSC Chair's Office we invite you to engage in communicating your efforts and share optimism to reverse the trend of biodiversity loss. Reach out to Aritzaith (aritzaitz.rodriquez@ssc.iucn.org) to help you communicate your work, organise media coverage and share with all the IUCN members what you are doing for species conservation.



SSC network during the pandemic

A new coronavirus, designated SARS-CoV-2, is causing a worldwide health pandemic with infection spreading since December 2019. This new disease, known as COVID-19, has caused more than 1.6 million human fatalities worldwide with over 70 million confirmed cases until mid-December 2020, according to the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#).

SSC Specialist Groups have formulated new guidelines for working with species in the context of this pandemic.

Below, some resources related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the relationship between species and human health.

[Guidelines for Working with Free-Ranging Wild Mammals in the Era of the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) – IUCN SSC Wildlife Health Specialist Group.

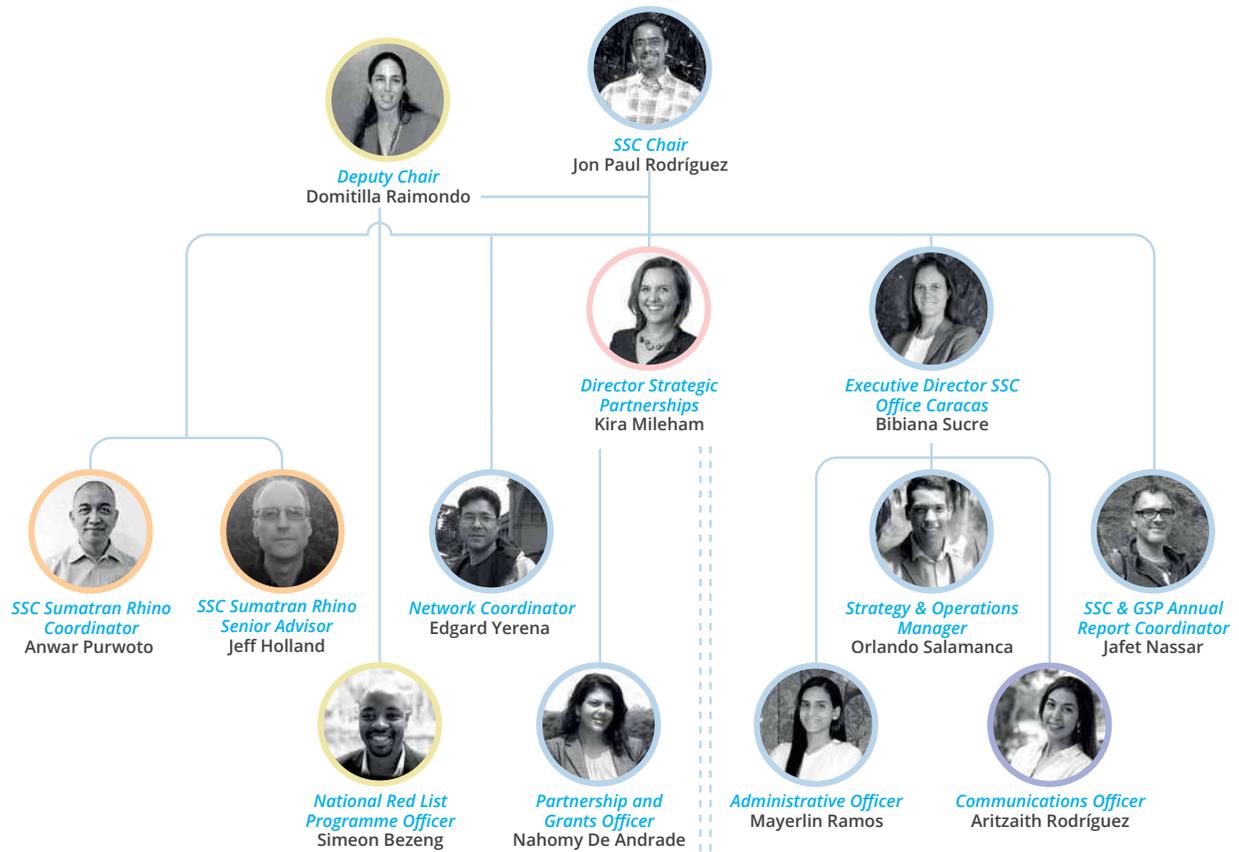
[It is Time for a Global Wildlife Health Authority](#) – post by experts of the IUCN SSC Wildlife Health Specialist Group.

[Great apes, COVID-19 and the SARS CoV-2](#) – Joint Statement of the IUCN Species Survival Commission Wildlife Health Specialist Group and the Primate Specialist Group Section on Great Apes.

[Recommendations to reduce the risk of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 from humans to bats](#) – Three Living Publications have been developed by the IUCN SSC Bat Specialist Group to provide practical mitigation strategies to address the novel risk of Covid-19.

[Statement from Pangolin Specialist Group Chair on possible link between pangolins and coronavirus](#) – IUCN SSC Pangolin Specialist Group.

SSC Chair's Office



Global Center for Species Survival

 Catia Canteiro ⁷	 Sergio Henriques ⁷	 Angela Yang ⁷
 Riley Pollom ⁷	 Mimi Kessler ⁷	 Nicolette Roach ⁷
 Monika Bohm ⁷		

Species Survival Officers

 Fabiana Lopes Rocha ³	 Eugenia Cordero ⁵	 Rosana Subirá ⁵	 5 Positions under recruitment ⁶
 Anna Walker ⁴	 Clayton Meredith ⁴	 Tim Lyons ⁴	 1 Position temporarily paused ²
	 Ana Catarina Fonseca ³		 1 Position temporarily paused ¹

EMPLOYED BY SSC PARTNERS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1) The Deep Aquarium (UK) | 5) Parque das Aves (Brazil) |
| 2) Georgia Aquarium (USA) | 6) Fundación Temaikèn (Argentina) |
| 3) Oceanário de Lisboa (Portugal) | 7) Indianapolis Zoo (USA) |
| 4) Albuquerque Biopark (USA) | |

BASED IN:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
|  Venezuela |  USA |  UK |
|  Indonesia |  Argentina |  Brasil |
|  South Africa |  Portugal | |

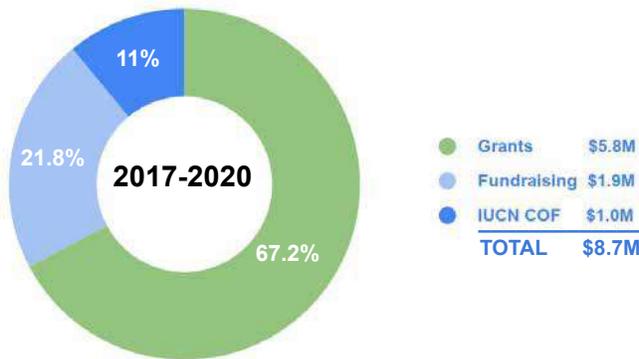
SSC Financial summary

During the last two years the SSC Chair's office team have developed a system to track the finances that has allowed to improve the decision making processes, increase efficiency in resource utilisation, as well as continue supporting conservation projects and initiatives of the SSC Network.

All the figures and results shown in this section cover 2017-2020, where December 2020 was estimated.

Funding sources

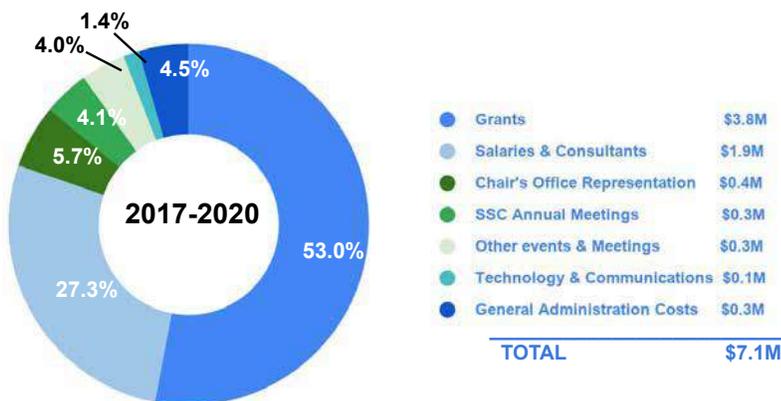
Since 2017 the Commission developed a diverse funding portfolio, 32 organisations around the world, most of them zoos, aquariums and botanical gardens that represent a growing component of our support to cover annual operations, projects and grants. The Commission also receives an annual allocation from IUCN Headquarters to cover part of the SSC Chair's Office core operations. By 2020, the total reached US\$ 8,626,409.45 (as is shown in the SSC Consolidated Financial Statement below). All these contributions are categorized in three types of sources: Grants¹ (67.7%), Fundraising² (21.9%) and IUCN Commission Operation Funds (10.4%).



2017-2020 SSC Funding sources

Expenses

Over the last four years, 52.2% of the Commission spending has been directed to grants to support conservation projects and SSC groups' activities worldwide. While 27.7% has been used for salaries and consultants for the SSC Chair's Office, the remaining 20.1% has covered activities related to office and administrative costs, technology and communications, annual meetings³ among other activities.



2017-2020 SSC Expenses

¹Grants are funds that must be allocated on specific SSC projects or SSC Groups.

²Fundraising includes money raised to cover the SSC Chair's Office general operations.

³Annual meetings include: Steering Committee, Committee, Red List and Leaders meetings.

2017-2020 SSC Consolidated Financial Statement

	(USD)
TOTAL INCOME	8,723,492.4
Grants	5,862,522.4
Fundraising	1,900,033.3
IUCN COF	960,936.6
TOTAL EXPENSES	7,097,188.6
Grants	3,763,121.5
Salaries & Consultants	1,936,368.4
Chair's Office Representation	402,628.0
SSC Annual Meetings	293,318.6
Other events & Meetings	285,882.7
Technology & Communications	96,873.7
General Administration Costs	318,995.7
BALANCE	1,626,303.8

These results can be split and analysed based on the funding sources in COF and NON-COF contributions and expenses, as they are shown in the following section.

2017-2020 SSC Financial Statement by Fund

	COF	NON COF
	(USD)	(USD)
TOTAL INCOME	960,936.6	7,762,555.8
Grants	-	5,862,522.4
Fundraising	-	1,900,033.3
IUCN COF	960,936.6	-
TOTAL EXPENSES	953,253.3	6,143,935.2
Grants	-	3,763,121.5
Salaries & Consultants	279,811.7	1,656,556.7
Chair's Office Representation	202,680.5	199,947.5
SSC Annual Meetings	245,763.5	47,555.2
Other events & Meetings	-	285,882.7
Technology & Communications	40,860.4	56,013.3
General Administration Costs	184,137.2	134,858.5
BALANCE	7,683.2	1,618,620.6

The SSC Chair's Office is extremely grateful to its long list of partners who provide invaluable support in different ways. Your contributions allow us to focus on supporting the SSC Network's efforts toward the achievement of our Vision of "A just world that values and conserves nature through positive action to prevent the loss of diversity of life on earth". We are committed to continue working hard, with your help, towards the ambitious task of saving species around the world.



Brazilian Three-banded Armadillo, *Tolypeutes tricinctus*, VU
Photo © Samuel Portela

SPONSORS AND PARTNERS





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