



**The IUCN Species
Survival Commission**

QUARTERLY REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2021

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Cover Photo:
Hairy oyster mushroom, *Panus lecomtei*
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IUCN Species Survival Commission



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Executive Summary

The IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC) was a resounding success. The figures for attendance and participation, as well as the long list of sessions completed, satellite events around the world and fundamental discussions leading to resolutions and recommendations, speak for themselves. Surely there were challenges, and attendance was not equally accessible to everyone – especially notable was the almost complete absence of delegates from Oceania. But it is important to acknowledge the massive effort of the IUCN Council and Secretariat, as well as the various Congress Committees, prior to and during our visit to Marseille. Our hosts, the French Government, were superb. Careful and conscientious health measures kept the pandemic at bay, and generous resources provided by them and other partners facilitated participation of numerous delegates.

As usual, in this *Quarterly Report* we summarize recent achievements of the SSC Chair's Office team. We indicate where we made presentations, delivered talks and focused conservation interventions. But most of the content in this issue is related to the WCC. Our delegation gathered around and gave life to the Reverse the Red Pavilion. Not only was it a prime location for networking, but also the source of some of the most exciting content available to Congress participants. Numerous SSC members were able to attend or participate remotely, providing a sample of the expertise, cutting edge science, visionary planning and conservation action that characterize SSC groups. Many also engaged in discussions of motions in a complex but very successful hybrid format, that led to 137 Member resolutions and recommendations and 11 governance-related decisions that are now IUCN policy.

As the new quadrennium has now started, please keep your eyes open for an email inviting you to renew your membership for 2021-2025.

We close this issue with two highlights from the SSC network. First, we are delighted to welcome the Pigeon and Dove Specialist Group, who will devote their attention to the 354 extant species in the Columbidae family. Some of the most famous extinction stories in the conservation literature, the passenger pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*) and dodo (*Raphus cucullatus*) are included here, too. Second, our colleagues from the Fungal Conservation Committee (FunCC), celebrate the adoption of “mycologically inclusive” language and invite us all to join in this movement.

Resumen Ejecutivo

El Congreso Mundial de la Naturaleza de la UICN fue un éxito rotundo. Las cifras de asistencia y participación, así como la larga lista de sesiones realizadas, los eventos satélites en todo el mundo y los debates que condujeron a resoluciones y recomendaciones, hablan por sí mismos. Seguramente hubo desafíos y la asistencia no fue igualmente accesible para todos; especialmente notable fue la ausencia casi total de delegados de Oceanía. Pero es importante reconocer el enorme esfuerzo del Consejo y la Secretaría de la UICN, así como de los diversos Comités del Congreso, antes y durante nuestra visita a Marsella. Nuestros anfitriones, el Gobierno francés, fueron excelentes. Las medidas de salud cuidadosas y concienzudas mantuvieron a raya la pandemia, y los generosos recursos proporcionados por ellos y otros socios facilitaron la participación de numerosos delegados.

Como es habitual, en este *Informe Trimestral* resumimos los logros recientes del equipo de la Oficina de la CSE. Indicamos nuestra participación en presentaciones, charlas y desarrollamos los esfuerzos llevados adelante a través de cartas de intervención para la conservación. Pero la mayor parte del contenido de este número está relacionado con el Congreso. Nuestra delegación dió vida al Pabellón 'Revertir el Rojo'. No solo fue un lugar privilegiado para la creación de redes, sino también la fuente de algunos de los contenidos más interesantes disponibles para los participantes del Congreso. Numerosos miembros de la CSE pudieron asistir o participar de forma remota, proporcionando una muestra de la experiencia, la ciencia de vanguardia, la planificación visionaria y las acciones de conservación que caracterizan a los grupos de la CSE. Muchos también participaron en discusiones de mociones en un formato híbrido complejo pero muy exitoso, que condujo a 137 resoluciones y recomendaciones de miembros y 11 decisiones relacionadas con la gobernanza que ahora son política de la UICN.

Dado que el nuevo cuatrienio ha comenzado, les pedimos estar atentos a recibir un correo electrónico que les invitará a renovar su membresía para 2021-2025.

Cerramos esta edición con dos aspectos destacados de la red CSE. En primer lugar, nos complace dar la bienvenida al Grupo de Especialistas en Tórtolas y Palomas, que dedicarán su atención a las 354 especies existentes de la familia Columbidae. Algunas de las historias de extinción más famosas en la literatura sobre conservación, la paloma migratoria (*Ectopistes migratorius*) y el dodo (*Raphus cucullatus*) también se incluyen aquí. En segundo lugar, nuestros colegas del Comité de Conservación de Hongos (FunCC por sus siglas en inglés) celebran la adopción de un lenguaje "micológicamente inclusivo" y nos invitan a todos a unirnos a este movimiento.

Résumé

Le Congrès mondial de la nature (WCC) de l'UICN était un franc succès. Les chiffres de présence et de participation, ainsi que la longue liste de sessions terminées, d'événements satellites à travers le monde et de discussions fondamentales qui ont mener à des résolutions et des recommandations, parlent d'eux-mêmes. Certes, il y avait des défis et la participation n'était pas également accessible à tous – l'absence presque totale de délégués d'Océanie était particulièrement notable. Mais il est important de reconnaître l'effort massif du Conseil et du Secrétariat de l'UICN, ainsi que des Comités divers du Congrès, avant et pendant notre visite à Marseille. Nos hôtes, le gouvernement français, étaient superbes. Des mesures sanitaires prudentes et consciencieuses ont tenu la pandémie à distance, et les ressources généreuses fournies par les hôtes et d'autres partenaires ont facilité la participation de nombreux délégués.

Comme d'habitude, dans ce *rapport trimestriel*, nous résumons les réalisations récentes de l'équipe du bureau du président de la CSE. Nous indiquons où nous avons fait des présentations, livré des conférences et cibler des interventions de conservation. Mais la majeure partie du contenu de ce numéro est liée au WCC. Notre délégation s'est rassemblée et a donné vie au Pavillon Inverser le Rouge. C'était non seulement un emplacement privilégié pour le réseautage, mais aussi la source de certains contenus les plus passionnants disponibles pour les participants du Congrès. De nombreux membres de la CSE ont pu assister ou participer à distance, fournissant un échantillon de l'expertise, de la science de pointe, de la planification visionnaire et des actions de conservation qui caractérisent les groupes de la CSE. Beaucoup ont engagé des discussions dans un format hybride complexe mais très réussi, qui ont conduit à 137 résolutions et recommandations de Membres et 11 décisions liées à la gouvernance qui sont désormais la politique de l'UICN.

Comme la nouvelle période quadriennale a maintenant commencé, veuillez garder les yeux ouverts pour un e-mail vous invitant à renouveler votre adhésion pour 2021-2025.

Nous clôturons ce numéro avec deux temps forts du réseau CSE. Premièrement, nous sommes ravis d'accueillir le Groupe de spécialistes des pigeons et des colombes, qui consacrera leur attention aux 354 espèces existantes de la famille des Columbidae. Certaines histoires d'extinction les plus célèbres de la littérature sur la conservation, le pigeon voyageur (*Ectopistes migratorius*) et le dodo (*Raphus cucullatus*) sont également incluses ici. Deuxièmement, nos collègues de « Fungal Conservation Committee (FunCC) » célèbrent l'adoption d'un langage « mycologiquement inclusif » et nous invitent tous à nous joindre à ce mouvement.



IUCN
WORLD
CONSERVATION
CONGRESS
Marseille



Recent Activities



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; Vivek Menon, VM; Kira Mileham, KM; Bibiana Sucre, BS; Orlando Salamanca, OS; Jafet Nassar, JN; Aritzaitz Rodríguez, AR; Nahomy De Andrade, ND; Mayerlin Ramos, MR; Edgard Yerena, EY; Simeon Bezeng, SB; Greg Mueller, GM; Jean-Christophe Vié, JCV; Mirza Kusrić, MK; Topiltzin Contreras MacBeath, TC; Russell Mittermeier, RM; Barney Long, BL; Luigi Boitani, LB; Elizabeth Bennet, EB; Piero Genovesi, PG; Brahim Haddane, BH; Fred Launay, FL; John Hutton, JH; Onnie Byers, OB)

CONFERENCES

- Reverse the Red, *2021 Zoo and Aquarium Association Australasia (ZAA) Conference*, 3 August 2021, Sydney, on-line event. (JPR)
- La conservación funciona, *IV Foro Internacional: Biodiversidad, ¿que estamos haciendo por ella?* Parque Natural Metropolitano, 25 August 2021, Panama, on-line event. (JPR)
- The importance of global databases to guide the conservation community, *The Critical Role of Key Biodiversity Areas in Tackling the Nature Crisis*, CEOs Webinar, 1 September 2021, Cambridge, on-line event. (JPR)
- Update to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, *IUCN World Conservation Congress*, 3-11 September 2021, Marseille. (JPR)
- Reverse the Red - SSC evening: A call to action for Sumatran rhinos, *IUCN World Conservation Congress*, 3-11 September 2021, Marseille. (JPR, BL)
- IUCN Green Status of Species: a new standard to measure species recovery and conservation success, *IUCN World Conservation Congress*, 3-11 September 2021, Marseille. (JPR)
- Assess-Plan-Act to Reverse the Red within SSC, *IUCN World Conservation Congress*, 3-11 September 2021, Marseille. (DR, GM, JCV, JPR, MK, TC, VM)

- Reversing the Red - Exploring a Global Partnership to Save the Species we love, *IUCN World Conservation Congress*, 3-11 September 2021, Marseille. (JPR)
- Hainan Gibbon Conservation model: Effectively Saving a Critically Endangered Species, *IUCN World Conservation Congress*, Marseille, 3-11 September 2021. (JPR, RM)
- The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species: from 2017 to 2030, *IUCN World Conservation Congress*, 3-11 September 2021, Marseille. (GM, JCV, JPR)
- Building Back Better: Expert Solutions For Addressing Wildlife Trade Challenges, *IUCN World Conservation Congress*, 3-11 September 2021, Marseille. (JPR)
- One Earth – One Health: how can we mitigate future pandemics? *IUCN World Conservation Congress*, 3-11 September 2021, Marseille. (JPR)
- Species Conservation Planning helps Reverse the Decline of Threatened Species, *IUCN World Conservation Congress*, 3-11 September 2021, Marseille. (JPR)
- Building a culture of conservation through new alliances and strengthening the agency of key actors, *IUCN World Conservation Congress*, 3-11 September 2021, Marseille. (JPR)
- Closing Plenary: Conservation Knowledge for Conservation Impact, *IUCN World Conservation Congress*, 3-11 September 2021, Marseille. (EB, BS)
- Enabling civic spaces - Towards an IUCN agenda, *IUCN World Conservation Congress*, 3-11 September 2021, Marseille. (BS)
- Role of EAZA zoos and aquariums in post-2020 biodiversity framework, *EAZA Annual Conference 2021*, 21 September 2021, Amsterdam, on-line conference. (JPR)

MEETINGS

- IUCN Red List of Threatened Species training. 13-17 September 2021. National Herbarium Cameroon (SB).
- *IUCN World Conservation Congress*, 3-11 September 2021, Marseille. (JPR, VM, RM, GM, JCV, LB, EB, PG, BH, FL, JH, BS, ND, MR in person and DR, MK, TC, OB, KM virtually)
- 26th Annual Meeting of the Board of Advisors and Trustees, Loro Parque Fundación, 29-30 September 2021, Tenerife. (JPR)
- CYTED-RELCOM Thematic Network: Areas and sites of importance for bat conservation in Latin America and the Caribbean. Seminar “Areas of importance (AICOMs) for bat conservation in Chile”. September 10th, 2021, Santiago de Chile (JN virtually).

INTERVENTIONS

- **Joint position paper on Conservation impacts of African swine fever in the Asia-Pacific region:** On June 24, 2021 the IUCN SSC, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) released a position paper on African swine fever (ASF). This is a virus that does not pose a hazard or risk to humans, but has devastated domestic pig production and impacted

wild pig populations, especially in the Asian-Pacific Region. It is a highly infectious and, usually fatal, disease of pigs. It was first reported in the region in August 2018 and has since led to the culling of hundreds of millions of domestic pigs in an effort to control its spread. No vaccine exists to combat the virus, and basic biosecurity measures currently remain the best approach to prevent further ASF spread and spill-over to wild pig species in the region. Its impact on wildlife conservation could be devastating due to the potentially high mortality rate in native wild pigs. FAO, IUCN SSC and OIE expressed increasing concern that ASF outbreaks could push the 11 native wild pig species to the edge of extinction. The loss of native wild species could also affect fragile ecological communities by depriving threatened predators of a vital food source. It is of particular concern the potential impact on the Vulnerable bearded pig (*Sus barbatus*) in Sabah, Malaysia, the Vulnerable Philippines warty pig (*Sus philippensis*) and there are concerns about wild pig populations in Indonesia. "Any intervention needs multi-sectoral and multi-institutional cooperation involving ministries, veterinary services, wildlife services, non-government organizations, researchers, industry and communities," the joint communique said. Stronger biosecurity, surveillance, monitoring and response systems across sectors inclusive of domestic and wildlife species are very much needed. FAO, IUCN SSC, and OIE called on increased dialogue among government ministries and relevant experts to develop effective policies, as well as coordinated regional efforts to address ASF. See position paper [here](#).

- **IUCN SSC Statement on acceptance of Fauna, Flora and Funga, July 10, 2021:** The IUCN Species Survival Commission calls for the due recognition of fungi as major components of biodiversity in legislation and policy. It fully endorses the [Fauna Flora Funga Initiative](#) and asks that the phrases "animals and plants" and "fauna and flora" be replaced with "animals, fungi, and plants" and "fauna, flora, and funga." See published statement [here](#).
- **SSC supports the submission on enforcement matters addressed to the intergovernmental Commission for Environmental Cooperation of the United States-Mexico-Canada trade agreement (USMCA/CUSMA), requesting immediate actions to save the "vaquita marina porpoise":** In August 14, 2021, the SSC Chair expressed support to the submission on enforcement matters filed on 11 August 2021 by the Center for Biological Diversity, Animal Welfare Institute, Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Environmental Investigation Agency, addressed to the intergovernmental Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC - United States-Mexico-Canada trade agreement - USMCA/CUSMA), requesting immediate actions from governments, international bodies and potential donors to save the "vaquita marina porpoise", the most threatened marine mammal on the planet. Vaquita (*Phocoena sinus*) is a small porpoise endemic to the Upper Gulf of California in Mexico, which has experienced a catastrophic 99% decline in its population in the last decade. Scientific estimates show that there may be only about 10 specimens left. It is a Critically Endangered species due to its being incidentally trapped in gillnets set for totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*), a fish that is also a threatened species, illegally fished because its swim bladders is sold in Asian black markets for exorbitant prices. The SSC urges immediate serious efforts to implement the use of legally mandated vaquita-safe fishing gear and a long-overdue crackdown on violators, on the next fishing season on totoaba, during which might occur the final extinction of vaquita porpoise. See full letter [here](#).
- **SSC ASAP Position Statement on the Conservation of Saola, August 19, 2021:** On Thursday 19th August 2021, the Chair of the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) and the IUCN SSC Asian Species Action Partnership

(ASAP) published a joint position statement concerning the conservation of Saola. It is a call to action for one of the most imperiled mammals on the planet, the Saola, *Pseudoryx nghetinhensis*, a forest-dwelling bovine (200 pound -90 kilogram-) mammal, unknown to science until 1992. It lives in the Annamite Mountains of Vietnam and Laos. It was the first new large mammal to science in more than 50 years, an incredibly important discovery. To date, Saola has never been seen in the wild by a biologist. It is a Critically Endangered species according to the IUCN Red List. The statement calls for a concerted effort to determine how the species can be saved, and highlights the need for significantly increasing search efforts. ASAP encourages organisations working towards the conservation of species in Southeast Asia to help promote the call. There is still time to save Saola in the wild. Only 30% of Saola habitat has been surveyed for wildlife, with as little as 2% intensively surveyed for Saola. This is a resource problem and there is an urgent need for resources and intensive searches in strategic locations. See full statement [here](#).



As the world began to resurface from the Covid-19 pandemic, the IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC) united delegates to address global priorities for nature conservation; with a strong focus on how we collectively address the dual challenge of tackling climate change and biodiversity loss.

The WCC was the first major environmental event to go ahead in hybrid format and was attended by 5,700 delegates joining in person in Marseille, France and a further 3,500 online participants. The onsite WCC Exhibition Hall also welcomed over 25,000 members of the public.

The Congress drew significant participation from across Government agencies, the NGO community, Indigenous Peoples, youth and the private sector to drive action on nature-based recovery, climate change and biodiversity. This is particularly important in advance of key meetings under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to be held in the coming months.

In the sections below you will find highlights of the Congress.



Reverse the Red Pavilion at IUCN World Conservation Congress
Photo © IUCN SSC

Reverse the Red Pavilion

The Reverse the Red Pavilion and Movement was a beacon of optimism and a celebration of species conservation success throughout the IUCN World Conservation Congress.

As part of the Reverse the Red Movement, this pavilion was a joint initiative of the IUCN SSC and 24 other partners. The leading partners included the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, HHMI Tangled Bank Studios, Smithsonian's Earth Optimism, The IUCN Global Species Programme, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance and On the Edge Conservation.

Through a central RtR Pavilion space and a full and dynamic program, RtR brought diverse stakeholders together for speaking sessions, workshops, film showcases, open-mic sessions, social events and networking, all aimed at building collaborative strategies to protect biodiversity more effectively.

Within the Pavilion, the program covered more than 30 sessions including topics such as advancing IUCN knowledge products like the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and Key Biodiversity Areas as well as the launch of the new IUCN Green Status, the *Species Recovery Roadmap*; there were several sessions showcasing the critical role of *ex situ* conservation in species

recovery and others calling for stronger mechanisms for assessment, planning and action at the national level. A half day was dedicated to discussions on sustainable use and trade with sessions from the Sustainable Use and Livelihood Specialist Group (SULi), TRAFFIC, CITES (as a pre-recorded session) and others.

The Commission of Ecosystem Management (CEM) was a partner of the Pavilion and hosted a number of sessions as well as a successful evening social event. Other evening social events were hosted by WAZA and one by the SSC itself with special guest, Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands to highlight the urgency of recovery efforts for the Sumatran Rhino.

Other Reverse the Red sessions were held on one of the Exhibit Hall main stages and focused largely on stories and models of success across a range of taxa and partners in species conservation.

The Reverse the Red Pavilion was perhaps most valuable as a key networking hub for species conservationists throughout the Congress. It was an incredibly active meeting place with dynamic conversations happening from morning to night. The program was further brought to life by the visually spectacular images from National Geographic's PhotoArk featured throughout the space, and by the fun Reverse the Red merchandise and artistic, species-themed temporary tattoos. Even newly elected IUCN President, Razan Al Mubarak, was adorned with a tattoo, RtR face mask and tote bag on her visit to the Pavilion.

Through the eye-catching RtR masks, t-shirts and bags the RtR Movement was very visible throughout the WCC Forum and Members Assembly and it was formally launched through a successful hybrid session on the main program featuring a panel discussion with IUCN SSC Chair, Jon Paul Rodríguez, WAZA President Theo Pagel, IUCN Deputy Director General Grethel Aguilar and IUCN CEM Chair Angela Andrade.

Key highlights from the WCC and especially from the RtR Pavilion were recorded by the RtR team at the WCC. Most of this audiovisual material is already available at www.reversethered.org/iucn-wcc and will be more coming soon, so stay tuned in the coming weeks.



Reverse the Red Satellite Events

A number of IUCN SSC Partners hosted satellite events in their own countries to engage a wider audience, including local communities, government agencies and NGOs, with RtR and the WCC.

Fundación TEMAIKEN Satellite Event

Fundación TEMAIKEN in Buenos Aires, Argentina hosted two workshops with the aim of building a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach to the conservation of threatened species in Argentina. The events were held in Buenos Aires and Misiones provinces and had the participation of multiple stakeholders, including government agencies and legislators, scientists and academic organizations, NGOs and private enterprises.



Ex situ conservation as a strategy to “REVERSE THE RED” - Experiences and next steps: was held in TEMAIKEN Biopark. The event brought together more than 50 specialists from 22 organizations (NGOS, zoos, universities and governmental agencies) in order to evaluate the relevance of *ex situ* conservation strategies for threatened species in Argentina, identify needs and outline future actions. The day began with the presentation of the Species Survival Center that Fundación TEMAIKEN is establishing in Buenos Aires with the IUCN Species Survival Commission. After a previous survey on the *ex situ* conservation experience, presentations were made by the participants to share the strategies, species and threats that are addressed. With all this information, a workshop was held in which strengths, opportunities, threats and weaknesses regarding *ex situ* conservation were detected and then continued working on the planning and prioritization of next steps. The event culminated in the establishment of a consensus on the need to give continuity and revalue the contribution to *ex situ* conservation as part of a comprehensive approach to the conservation of the species.

Seeking to generate an action plan for the conservation of endemic flora in Misiones, their environments and associated species of high conservation value in the region, the event brought together 26 specialists from different disciplines, as well as referents from government areas. The flora of the Cerrado relic, in San Ignacio, Misiones is essential to manage alliances and lands for its conservation. The goal was to give visibility to the environmental value of the area, and to raise awareness about the need to conserve the endemic flora existing in the Cerrado de San Ignacio that is unique in the country and the world, and very important for conservation by a natural area with distinctive characteristics. The event was declared of provincial interest by the government of Misiones.

ABQ BioPark Satellite Event

The ABQ BioPark also hosted a Reverse the Red satellite event in parallel with the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Albuquerque, New Mexico on September 10, 2021. In addition to spreading conservation optimism and celebrating Reverse the Red success stories, participants representing 18 NGO, local, state, and federal management agencies across the state gathered to network and learn more about the ABQ BioPark's role as a National Center for Species Survival.



As an additional step towards IUCN's Assess-Plan-Act conservation cycle in the state, the ABQ BioPark announced plans to assess the Middle Rio Grande ecosystem under the IUCN's Red List of Ecosystem framework. This designation will elevate the potential need for more comprehensive conservation measures within the Middle Rio Grande to the international stage, and will further strengthen collaborative partnerships within the state. The ABQ BioPark looks forward to the next steps of this project, which seeks to engage all conservation practitioners through stakeholder engagement, across a broad suite of expertise.



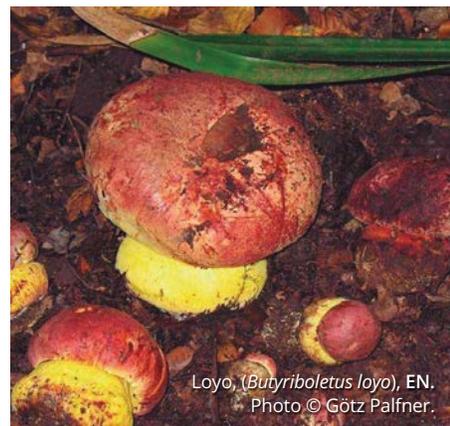
SSC at the IUCN World Conservation Congress

The IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC) was the first hybrid (in-person and virtual) environmental event since the pandemic began, and the SSC Network had a strong presence through many forum sessions, the Reverse the Red Pavilion, and supporting the discussion of motions.

Assess-Plan-Act to Reverse the Red

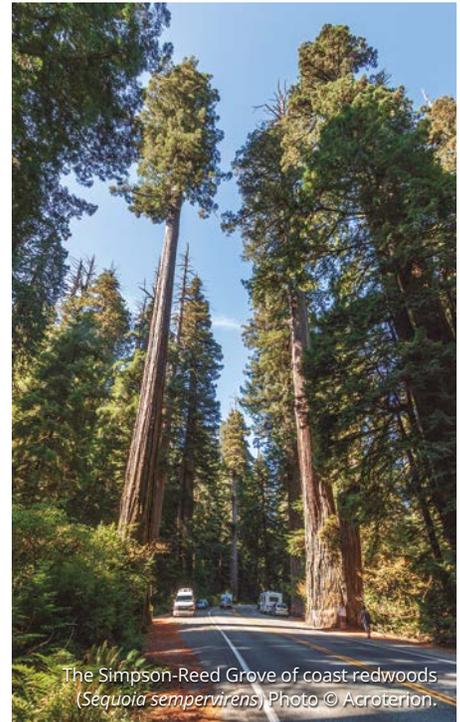
After the assessment of extinction risk of a species, that information is used to bring together stakeholders and develop conservation action plans; the collaborative implementation of those action plans has led to the recovery of many species. This *Species Conservation Cycle* is the conceptual framework of SSC. As a main session during the WCC, SSC leaders introduced assess-plan-act, as well as Reverse the Red, and case studies from around the world that have improved the outcomes for fungi, plants, amphibians, mammals and freshwater species.

As a fungus case study, Greg Mueller, Chair of the Fungal Conservation Committee spoke of the collaborative effort to conserve the Chilean threatened endemic *Butyriboletus loyo* (EN). This effort is carried out by Fungi Foundation, INFOR (Chilean National Forestry Institution), Universidad Austral, and the Mapuche communities in La Región de Los Ríos, in Panguipulli. These organizations developed a strategic action plan that included an *in situ* research component to increase production as well as efforts to develop best practices for harvesting the species. This



work was implemented after the red list assessment identified that unsustainable harvest was a major threat to the species. Chile is a leader in including fungi in environmental policies and actions.

"No need to assess everything before acting!" said Jean-Christophe Vié, Director General of Fondation Franklinia and SSC Steering Committee Member. Trees are an iconic group representing the largest part of the earth's biomass, their preservation leads to enormous collateral benefits for numerous other species. The Global Tree Specialist Group (GTSG) jointly with Fondation Franklinia, Botanic Gardens Conservation International, and several organisations has been assessing the World's trees finding that at least 30% of the 58,497 known species are threatened. In terms of implementing conservation actions, several projects are ongoing in alliance with the Colombian Plant Specialist Group, Central Africa Plant Red List Authority, Western Ghats Plant Specialist Group, and New Caledonian Plant Red list Authority, together with NGOs, botanical gardens, and research institutions. Conservation action projects include identifying and protecting mature individuals; supporting seed collection, banking and propagation; reducing threats, planting and monitoring post-planting; while at the same time empowering local communities to protect species, develop capacities, and livelihoods.



Mirza Kusriani, SSC Regional Vice-Chair for South and East Asia, shared the experience from Indonesia, where the bleeding toad, *Leptophryne cruentata* (CR), has declined sharply by causes unknown. According to assessments, since the amphibian populations are small, fragmented and fluctuate in size, there is a need for a long-term monitoring program. Led by SSC members, a group of experts participated in two virtual workshops to shape the conservation planning strategy of this species. As a result, it was decided to do annual monitoring, ecological research, and *ex situ* research to design a future program of conservation breeding and translocation.



Vivek Menon, SSC Deputy Chair and Chair of the Asian Elephant Specialist Group (AsESG) shared their experience with the Bornean Asian Elephant. After the re-assessment completed in 2020, the Asian Elephant is categorized as Endangered at the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Nevertheless, AsESG experts consider the Borneo elephant's taxonomy distinct from elephants of mainland Asia, which means it needs a separate assessment as a sub-species. The Bornean Asian Elephant Plan (2020-2029) envisages improving protection to halt elephant killing, improving landscape connectivity, ensuring the best *ex situ* practices for elephant management and conservation, and sustaining population monitoring. Since December 2019, AsESG has supported the implementation of conservation action

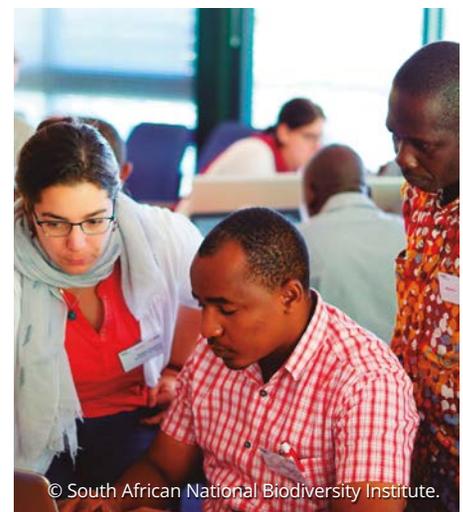


together with Sabah Wildlife Department and local partners, such as realigning fences in palm oil plantations to facilitate passage, undertaking rescue and translocation of problem animals, and developing the Borneo Elephant Sanctuary as a conservation center.

Topiltzin Contreras, Co-Chair of the Freshwater Conservation Committee, shared the experience of the Morelos minnow, *Notropis boucardi*, a freshwater fish endemic to the state of Morelos, in central Mexico. The assessment pointed out that the species has decreased due to the impact of invasive trout, the invasive plant *Egeria densa* and urban development. In order to revert that trend, experts joined efforts with Federal and local authorities, as well as with the general public to develop a communication and conservation strategy. Efforts combined removal of the invasive species, law enforcement over urban pressures, patrolling and monitoring by local communities and declaration of the area as a Ramsar site, among other actions. After 12 years with the plan in place, the population of the *carpita* went from about 100 individuals to thousands occupying a broader area.



Domitilla Raimondo, Co-Chair of the Plant Conservation Committee shared the South African example of implementing assess-plan-act at the national level. Carrying out national-level species and ecosystems assessments influence the priorities and policies established by the country. Land-use planning and management is guided by the assessments to secure habitat for highly threatened species, for example through protected areas, stewardship agreements, among others. The assessments also identified unsustainable use of species for traditional medicine as an important threat, and this led to work with traditional healers in promoting sustainable practices. The poaching of succulent plants has shown a dramatic increase in the past 2 years; this has been addressed with an increase in confiscations and the *ex situ* propagation of as many species as possible to save genetic diversity.



SSC Sessions at the Reverse the Red Pavilion

The Reverse the Red Pavilion was the perfect spot to showcase the diverse work of the SSC Network, from growing focus on supporting national expert networks to establishing partnerships and tools to ensure species survival, engaging stakeholders, and achieving post-2020 biodiversity targets.

Recently launched, the IUCN Green Status of Species is the first global standard way to assess species' progress toward recovery. During this session, Molly Grace, Co-Chair of the Green Status Working Group, explained how the Green Status produces Species Recovery Categories to accompany the well-known extinction risk categories of the IUCN Red List, throughout exploring species case studies.

Led by Richard Jenkins, *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species: from 2017 to 2030* engaged several SSC leaders and other Red List Partners. They presented the progress in expanding the IUCN Red List, especially for plants, fungi and invertebrates, the importance of conducting re-assessments so that the Red List Index can be produced, as well as the priorities for the IUCN Red List in the next decades.

Colleagues from the IUCN Save Our Species programme, headed by Ana Nieto, led the session of *Conservation action to benefit Species, Habitats, and People*. They explained the three-legged approach of SOS' conservation projects (species, habitats and people), and focused on how to deliver positive impacts, engaging important donors and the private sector.

The session *Key Biodiversity Areas — a blueprint for scaling up action to conserve our planet's biodiversity*, led by Penny Langhammer, launched the 28th edition of the CEMEX Nature and Conservation Book Series: *Key Biodiversity Areas*, in which leading global experts explore the importance of these sites in addressing the biodiversity crisis. The session highlighted the critical role KBAs play in achieving targets of the post-2020 GBF.

Led by Anastasiya Timoshyna, Co-Chair of the Medicinal Plant Specialist Group, the session *Building Back Better: Expert Solutions For Addressing Wildlife Trade Challenges* showcased a selection of approaches to addressing the over-exploitation of species, covering regulatory frameworks, standards and certifications for sustainable trade, and changing behaviors. The session engaged participants in the development of further thinking about innovative solutions for addressing wildlife trade challenges.

Nisha Owen, Chair of the Phylogenetic Diversity Task Force led a panel discussion at *Weird, wonderful, overlooked: conserving the Tree of Life*. This session discussed the importance of the Tree of Life as a fundamental component of global biodiversity, of critical intergenerational value, and how to conserve species that together represent billions of years of threatened evolutionary history.

Jon Paul Rodríguez talked about the creation of SSC National Species Specialist Groups and nationally focused partnerships to bring together experts focused on implementing IUCN methods and approaches. He highlighted that these initiatives will also allow for emerging leaders to join the SSC network to grow professionally and be part of the global conservation community, while contributing to improve the status of biodiversity in their countries.

At *Still ruffling feathers: How sustainable use benefits conservation* the Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group (SULi), led by Chair Dilys Roe, presented stories and narratives of local communities and the importance of sustainable use, viewed from their perspective. The interactive discussions provided the opportunity for participants to engage directly with SULi members and learn how to get involved in SULi activities.



Workshop sessions at IUCN World Conservation Congress
Photo © Kelly Griese.



Workshop sessions at IUCN World Conservation Congress
Photo © Kelly Griese.

The Asian Species Action Partnership (ASAP) also participated through a pre-recorded session. The short film highlighted how conservation partnerships can be a powerful mechanism to address the many challenges facing species conservation and illustrates their role to push urgent action for species on the brink of extinction.

Bill Street, from the Indianapolis Zoo, led the introduction of the Global Center for Species Survival as a partnership between SSC and the Indianapolis Zoo. With expert coordinators dedicated to catalysing the conservation of mammals, plants and fungi, birds, invertebrates, amphibians and reptiles, marine and freshwater species, the GCSS hopes to greatly increase the SSC's capacity to Reverse the Red for global biodiversity.

SSC Leaders present at IUCN WCC

We were delighted to see a very high engagement from many SSC Leaders at WCC, both virtually and in-person. We want to recognise and thank all SSC Leaders who spoke at sessions, organised discussions, participated in panels, provided advice or facilitated the discussion of motions, among many other activities. As SSC, it is our role to enable IUCN to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity of biodiversity; the WCC is a key place to address this mandate. We compiled a list of SSC Leaders we heard from at WCC, but we're sure we're probably missing some of you, apologies!

- [Alex Zimmermann](#)
- [Amanda Vincent](#)
- [Anastasiya Timoshyna](#)
- [Anna Loy](#)
- [Axel Moehrensclager](#)
- [Barney Long](#)
- [Beth Polidoro](#)
- [Brahim Haddane](#)
- [Cristina López-Gallego](#)
- [David Mallon](#)
- [David Obura](#)
- [Dilys Roe](#)
- [Domitilla Raimondo](#)
- [Erik Meijaard](#)
- [Fred Launay](#)
- [Gabriela Lichtenstein](#)
- [Gernot Segelbacher](#)
- [Greg Mueller](#)
- [Ian Harrison](#)
- [Jean-Christophe Vié](#)
- [Jon Hutton](#)
- [Kathy Hughes](#)
- [Kent Redford](#)
- [Liz Bennett](#)
- [Luigi Boitani](#)
- [Mike Hoffmann](#)
- [Mirza Kusriani](#)
- [Molly Grace](#)
- [Monika Böhm](#)
- [Nisha Owen](#)
- [Onnie Byers](#)
- [Penny Langhammer](#)
- [Philip McGowan](#)
- [Piero Genovesi](#)
- [Randall Reeves](#)
- [Rima Jabado](#)
- [Russ Mittermeier](#)
- [Stephen Woodley](#)
- [Topiltzin Contreras](#)
- [Vivek Menon](#)
- [Wendy Foden](#)
- [William Karesh](#)



IUCN World Conservation Congress.
Photo © IUCN / Ecodeco / Sam Hollenshead.

Resolutions and Recommendations

Key decisions of the IUCN Members Assembly include the adoption of resolutions and recommendations, highlighting topics of strategic importance which will define the general policy of IUCN and amend its Statutes.

137 Member resolutions and recommendations, as well as 11 governance-related decisions, were adopted through electronic vote in October 2020 and during Congress in September 2021. The full list and their content can be found [here](#).

“Motions are essential to IUCN, because they are the core of the inclusive process in which members participate in the decision making of our organization”, says Topilztin Contreras MacBeath, Co-Chair of the IUCN SSC Freshwater Conservation Committee. There are at least 39 resolutions and recommendations that are of greatest relevance to the Species Survival Commission and were assigned focal points, as they directly call upon or request the SSC or Commissions in general, to work towards a certain goal.

See below the list of those 39 resolutions and the names of its SSC focal points. These species-focused resolutions and recommendations form a major part of the SSC's work. However, this is a preliminary list that will be expanded. If any SSC member would like to become a focal point for a Resolution or Recommendation that is not listed, please let us know.

Res/Rec Code (WCC-2020-Res-)	Resolution Topic	SSC Focal Point
WCC-2020-Res-004	Urgent action against the grass <i>Cortaderia selloana</i> outside of its natural distribution range.	John Wilson (Invasive Species SG)
WCC-2020-Res-005	Promoting harmony between cranes – flagships for biodiversity – and agriculture.	Kerryn Morrison (Crane SG)
WCC-2020-Res-007	Developing agroecological practices as nature-based solutions.	Lian Pin Koh (Oil Crops TF)
WCC-2020-Rec-020	Protection of herbivorous fish for improved coral community.	To be confirmed
WCC-2020-Rec-021	Halting biodiversity loss in the insular Caribbean.	To be confirmed
WCC-2020-Res-022	Establishment of a mid-frequency active (MFA – 1 to 10 KHz) sonar moratorium for maritime military exercises conducted in Macaronesia.	Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara (Marine Mammal Protected Areas TF)
WCC-2020-Res-023	Reducing impacts of incidental capture on threatened marine species.	To be confirmed
WCC-2020-Rec-024	For an improved management of drifting fish aggregating devices (FADs) in purse seine fisheries.	To be confirmed
WCC-2020-Res-040	Implementing international efforts to combat the sale of illegal wildlife products online.	To be confirmed
WCC-2020-Res-057	Accounting for biodiversity: encompassing ecosystems, species and genetic diversity.	To be confirmed
WCC-2020-Res-058	Safeguarding coral reefs from harmful chemicals in sunscreen.	To be confirmed
WCC-2020-Res-059	Combating the illegal trade in lion body parts and derivatives.	To be confirmed

WCC-2020-Res-072	Importance for the conservation of nature of removing barriers to rights-based voluntary family planning.	Onnie Byers (Conservation Planning SG)
WCC-2020-Res-075	Transboundary cooperation for conservation of big cats in Northeast Asia.	To be confirmed
WCC-2020-Res-079	Linking in situ and <i>ex situ</i> efforts to save threatened species.	Onnie Byers (Conservation Planning SG) and Axel Moehrenschlager (Conservation Translocation SG)
WCC-2020-Res-082	Reducing marine turtle bycatch: the important role of regulatory mechanisms in the global roll-out of Turtle Excluder Devices.	Michel A. Nalovic (Marine Turtle SG)
WCC-2020-Res-085	Rewilding.	John Wilson (Invasive Species SG) and Axel Moehrenschlager (Conservation Translocation SG)
WCC-2020-Rec-089	Preventing the extinction of the Great Indian Bustard (<i>Ardeotis nigriceps</i>) in India.	Kedar Gore (Bustard SG)
WCC-2020-Res-090	Continental conservation priority for the jaguar (<i>Panthera onca</i>).	To be confirmed
WCC-2020-Res-091	Global Conservation of rhino rays (<i>Rhinidae, Glaucostegidae, Rhinobatidae</i>).	Rima Jabado (Shark SG)
WCC-2020-Res-093	A call for increased consideration of genetic diversity in IUCN planning and actions.	Gernot Segelbacher (Conservation Genetics SG)
WCC-2020-Rec-094	Safeguarding the Endangered narrow-ridged finless porpoise (<i>Neophocaena asiaeorientalis</i>) in the Yellow Sea.	Gianna Minton (Cetacean SG)
WCC-2020-Res-095	Conservation of seahorses, pipefishes and seadragons (family Syngnathidae)	Amanda Vincent (Seahorse, Pipefish & Seadragon SG)
WCC-2020-Res-096	Maximising return on conservation investments and sustainable development: eradicating invasive alien species (IAS) to conserve island biodiversity and benefit society.	John Wilson (Invasive Species SG)
WCC-2020-Rec-097	National Plan for the Sustainable Management of the Guanaco in Argentina.	Gabriela Lichtenstein (South American Camelid SG)
WCC-2020-Res-098	Saving the world's otters.	Nicole Duplaix and Anna Loy (Otter SG)

WCC-2020-Res-099	Strengthening great ape conservation across countries, in and outside of protected areas, involving local actors.	To be confirmed
WCC-2020-Res-100	Building Madagascar's capacity to counter the threat from invasive species.	John Wilson (Invasive Species SG), Mijoro Rakotoarinivo and Harison Rabarison (Madagascar Plant SG)
WCC-2020-Res-101	Addressing human-wildlife conflict: fostering a safe and beneficial coexistence of people and wildlife.	Alexandra Zimmermann (Human Wildlife Conflict TF)
WCC-2020-Res-102	Improving process and action to identify and recover 'Extinct in the Wild' species.	Axel Moehrensclager (Conservation Translocation SG)
WCC-2020-Res-103	Action against Asian songbird trafficking.	David Jeggo (Asian Songbird Trade SG)
WCC-2020-Res-107	Reducing the impact of fisheries on marine biodiversity.	To be confirmed
WCC-2020-Res-108	Deforestation and agricultural commodity supply chains.	Erik Meijaard (Oil Crops TF)
WCC-2020-Res-113	Restoring a peaceful and quiet ocean.	Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara (Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force)
WCC-2020-Res-123	Towards development of an IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation.	Onnie Byers (Conservation Planning SG)
WCC-2020-Rec-126	Reinforcing the protection of marine mammals through regional cooperation.	Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara (Marine Mammal Protected Areas TF)
WCC-2020-Res-131	Ensuring adequate funding for the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.	Simeon Bezeng (SSC Chair Office, Regional Red List and KBA Programme Officer)
WCC-2020-Res-132	Controlling and monitoring trade in croaker swim bladders to protect target croakers and reduce incidental catches of threatened marine megafauna.	Miss Claire (Croaker and Drum Fishes Red List Authority)
WCC-2020-Res-134	Protecting the Lower Congo River from large hydro-electric dam developments.	Ian Harrison (Freshwater Conservation Committee)



IUCN Elections.
Photo © IUCN / Ecodeo / Sam Hollenshead.

Elections

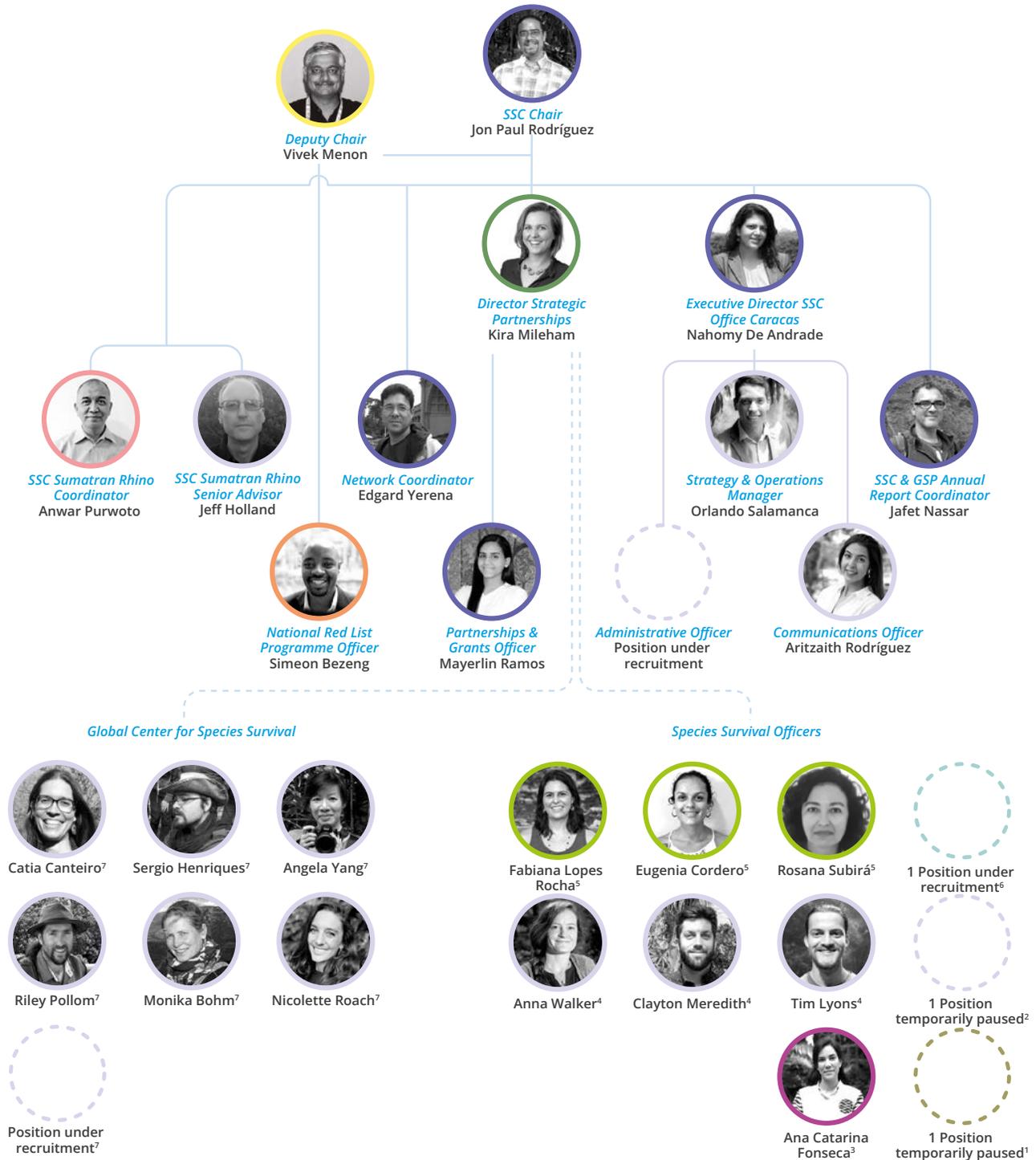
One of the functions of Congress is to hold elections for the positions of the IUCN President, Treasurer, Regional Councillors and Chairs of Commissions, who will make up the IUCN Council. This is the body responsible for the oversight and general control of all the affairs of IUCN.

Open to all IUCN Member institutions, the IUCN Council elections were held from 4 to 7 September 2021 by an online vote. Twenty-eight Regional Councillors were elected for the Africa, Meso and South America, North America and the Caribbean, South and East Asia, West Asia, Oceania, East Europe, North and Central Asia and West Europe regions. Regional Councillors act as IUCN ambassadors, working to serve the interests and mission of IUCN, and inform the Council on the interests, priorities and needs of IUCN Members in their regions.

The IUCN SSC warmly congratulates and welcomes all the successfully elected candidates to Council IUCN 2021–2025. We look forward to working with each of them on important species conservation efforts throughout this 4-year term. In particular, we are excited to congratulate Razan Al Mubarak on her election as IUCN President, she becomes the second woman and the first representative from the Arab world to hold the position in IUCN's 73-year history. We also specifically congratulate Jon Paul Rodríguez on his re-election as IUCN SSC Chair; the IUCN SSC Deputy Chair, Vivek Menon for his election as West Asia Regional Councillor and former IUCN SSC Executive Director Bibiana Sucre on her election as Meso and South America Regional Councillor.

To view all the newly elected IUCN Council visit: [Council Members 2021-2025 | IUCN](#)

SSC Chair's Office



EMPLOYED BY SSC PARTNERS:

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

BASED IN:

- Argentina
- Australia
- Brazil
- India
- Indonesia
- Portugal
- South Africa
- UK
- USA
- Venezuela



Sumatran rhino, (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*), CR.
Photo © International Rhino Foundation.

A call to action for Sumatran rhinos

The Sumatran rhino is one of the most threatened large mammals in the world. The session held during the World Conservation Congress in Marseille, last 4 September 2021, was a call to all participants to join efforts to save and recover the species. IUCN Species Survival Commission, Re:wild, International Rhino Foundation and WWF are the Sumatran Rhino Survival Alliance which is supporting the Government of Indonesia's Emergency Action Plan to save the species, working through local conservation organizations. The plan is to protect all remaining Sumatran Rhinos and search and rescue isolated Sumatran rhinos that are not breeding in the wild to breed them under human care.

The session gave an overview of the initiative by Barney Long of Re:wild. An impassioned speech by Her Royal Highness Princess Laurentien of The Netherlands who has worked on sustainable and environmental issues for many years, along with a positive and open discussion with the participants to identify possible out of the box solutions to this difficult conservation problem. The participants were very engaged and the Princess facilitated a thoughtful and helpful conversation.

#ConservationWorks Achievements of the Sumatran Rhino Survival Alliance

Since its creation in September 2018, the alliance has made important strides in bringing this species back from the brink:

- 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 construction of a new Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary in Aceh is about to begin.
- Identified a number of rhinos for rescue to enhance the conservation breeding program.
- Established the Sumatran Rhino Husbandry and Propagation Expert Advisory Board to guide the implementation of the Emergency Action Plan adopted by the Indonesian Government.



Sumatran rhino, (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*), CR.
Photo © Joel Sartore/National Geographic.



Membership renewal

SSC Leaders are the heart driving SSC membership. After appointed or reappointed, SSC Group Leaders will be asked in turn to renew their group's membership through the new Commission System, following the timeline of key activities below:

From 12 September – 10 October, it will continue the membership review period. By default, the Commission System will invite all 2017-2020 SSC members for renewal. The SSC Leaders appointed will be notified to:

- Review their group membership based on 2017-2020 lists
- Review and accept their commission membership
- Monitor the renewal progress

On 25 October 2021 the Commission System will open for new applications. At this point all SSC Leaders can invite new members to join their groups:

Between 25 October and 6 December 2021, the Commission System will automatically send massive invitation by email campaigns, the membership will be divided in two groups:

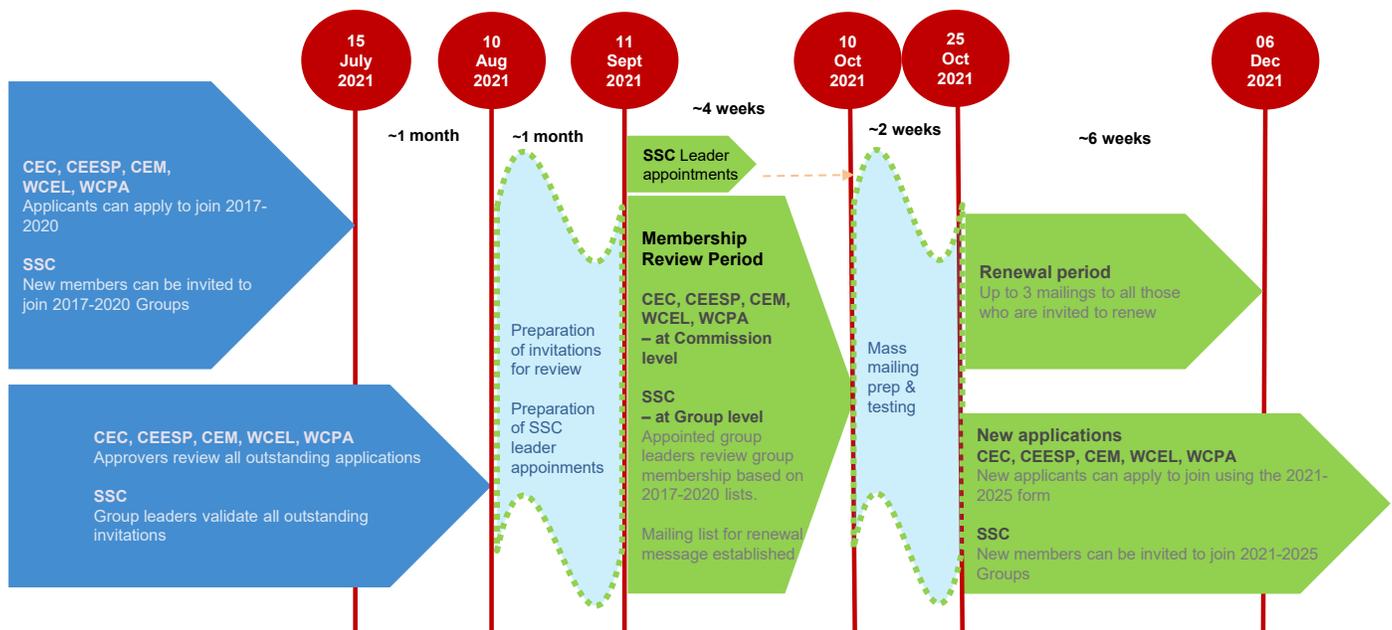
1. Non-renewals – a single message will be sent
2. Invitation to renew – three messages sent over a few weeks

At this point all SSC Members will be asked to:

- Sign into the IUCN Commission System
- Renew or resign their membership
- Accept the 2021-2025 membership conditions

By 6 December 2021, the Membership renewal process is complete, and the Commission System will close, all un-actioned invitations will expire.

Commission membership renewal timeline 3-11 September Congress



CSU Leaders update May 2021

Read the instructions to use the IUCN Commission System [here](#) and the FAQ [here](#).

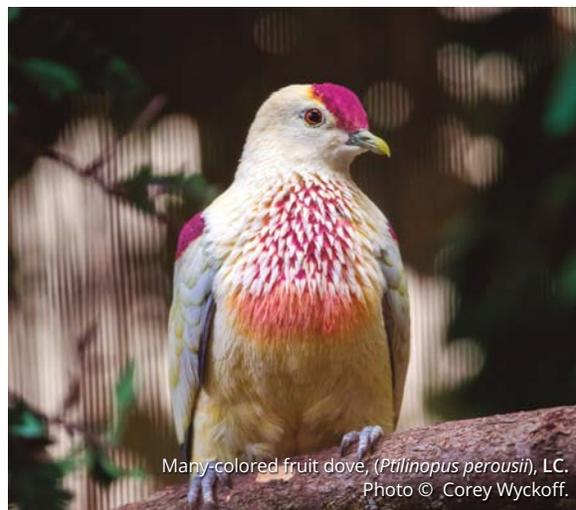


Sata Cruz ground dove, (*Alopecoenas sanctaerucis*), EN.
Photo © Joe Wood.

IUCN SSC Pigeon and Dove Specialist Group: Strengthening collaboration between SSC and the Zoo community

The Columbiformes (pigeons and doves) have a very wide global distribution, occurring in a diverse range of habitats and on every continent except Antarctica. The order includes terrestrial and arboreal taxa, generalist omnivores and specialist frugivores, long-distance migrants and species with extremely restricted ranges, and birds ranging from the size of a sparrow to that of a turkey. Despite this evolutionary success, the order's sole family, Columbidae, currently ranks as one of the most threatened avian families in the world.

Of the 354 extant species, 72 (20%) are currently threatened with extinction and a further 47 are classed as 'Near Threatened'. One species (the Socorro dove, *Zenaida graysoni*) persists only in captivity. The total disappearance of a further 16 species has been documented, including two birds – the passenger pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*) and dodo (*Raphus cucullatus*) - which have come to be emblematic of anthropogenic species loss.

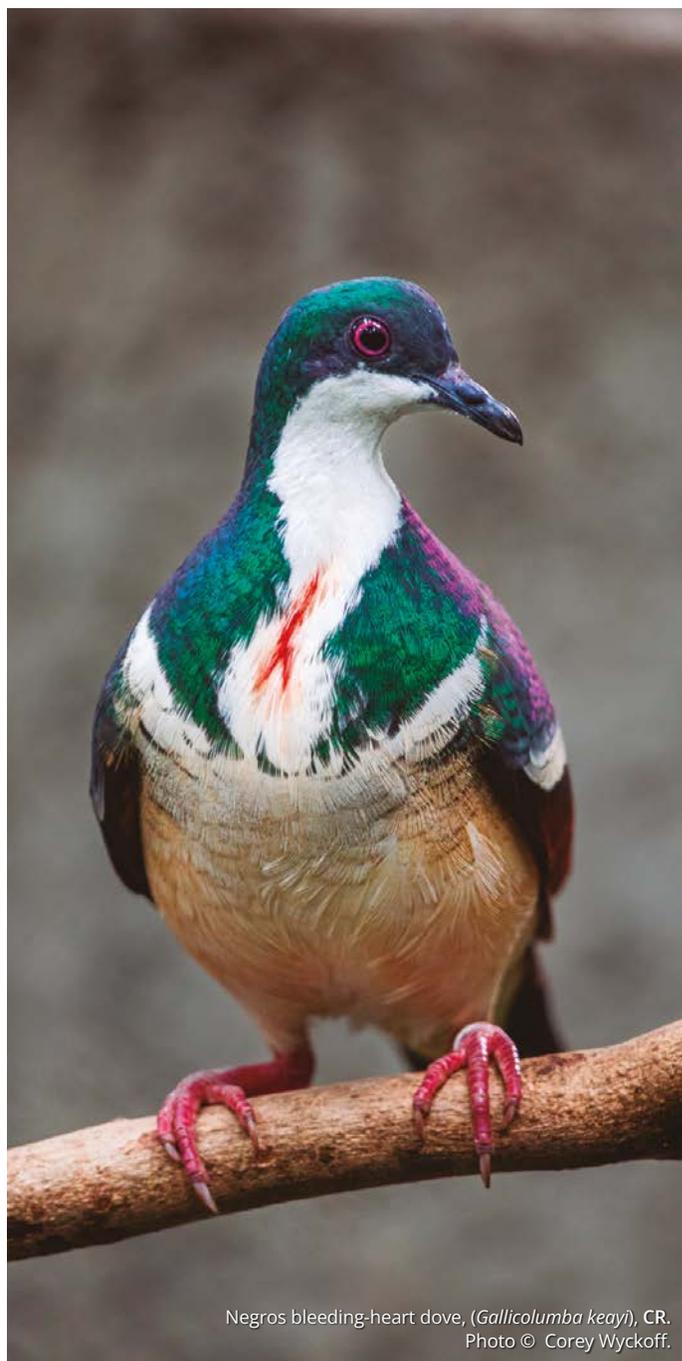


Many-colored fruit dove, (*Ptilinopus perousii*), LC.
Photo © Corey Wyckoff.

Habitat loss and degradation, climate change, invasive alien species, trade, and hunting are some of the primary threats to endangered Columbiformes, problems which are compounded by the restricted ranges of most of the species concerned (many inhabit islands) and by their tendency to be dependent on tropical forest.

Despite the vital ecological roles played by many Columbiformes, the order does not currently receive a level of attention proportionate to the number of threatened species which it contains. This is evident in the paucity of information relating to the true status of wild populations; the data used to assess population sizes for most threatened species is ranked as 'poor' by Birdlife International.

This new group will fill an important gap by providing leadership for the conservation of Columbiformes. This will include collaborating with the Bird Red List Authority to determine and continually review the status and needs of Columbiformes, promoting the implementation of necessary research, working with the IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group to develop conservation action plans for the most threatened species, actively seeking to mobilise funding for conservation efforts, and encouraging cooperation and the exchange of information amongst Columbiform specialists and between relevant organisations. A central function of the PDSG will be to facilitate the exchange of information between organisations and individuals with an interest in the conservation of pigeons and doves.



Negros bleeding-heart dove, (*Gallicolumba keayi*), CR.
Photo © Corey Wyckoff.

The group is led by two Co-Chairs: Chuck Cerbini, Curator of Ornithology at the Bronx Zoo (USA) and Columbiformes Taxon Advisory Group Chair for the American Association of Zoos and Aquariums, who will act also as the focal point for *ex-situ* conservation; and Joe Wood, a Conservation Biologist at the Toledo Zoo (USA), who will act as the focal point for conservation planning. Simon Bruslund (Vogelpark Marlow, Germany) will be the liaison for red-listing with the Bird Red List Authority.

This Specialist Group will be hosted by Toledo Zoo, under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding already signed between the Zoo and SSC.



Who shapes the SSC?



Interview with Greg Mueller and Giuliana Furci

Chair and Deputy Chair of the Fungal Conservation Committee (FunCC).

Aiming to raise awareness of the importance of fungi, these two conservationists led a petition for recognition and commitment to use “mycologically inclusive” language (“fauna, flora and funga” and “animals, fungi and plants”) in internal and public-facing communications of the IUCN Species Survival Commission. Get more details about this statement through this interview to its promoters.

What does it mean to be mycologically inclusive, and why is it important?

Being mycologically inclusive means treating fungi on par with animals and plants. The best estimate suggests that there are between 2.2 and 3.8 million species of fungi on Earth – as many as 10 times the estimated number of plant species – meaning that, at most, a mere 8% of all fungal species have been described. Of these, only 545 have had their conservation priority assessed on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, compared with 81,569 species of animals and 56,245 species of plants. While good progress is being made in building recognition of the importance of fungi, most conservation policies and actions still do not include fungi, and fungi are often not included in conservation discussions. Without being explicitly included in policies, fungi are likely not going to be considered in conservation actions except possibly as an afterthought. Fungi play many critical ecological roles and are of high economic value. Not including them in conservation actions puts these essential components of biodiversity –and all the organisms they sustain– at risk.

The FunCC was created to increase attention to fungi conservation, what are you most proud of among the progress made by this Committee so far?

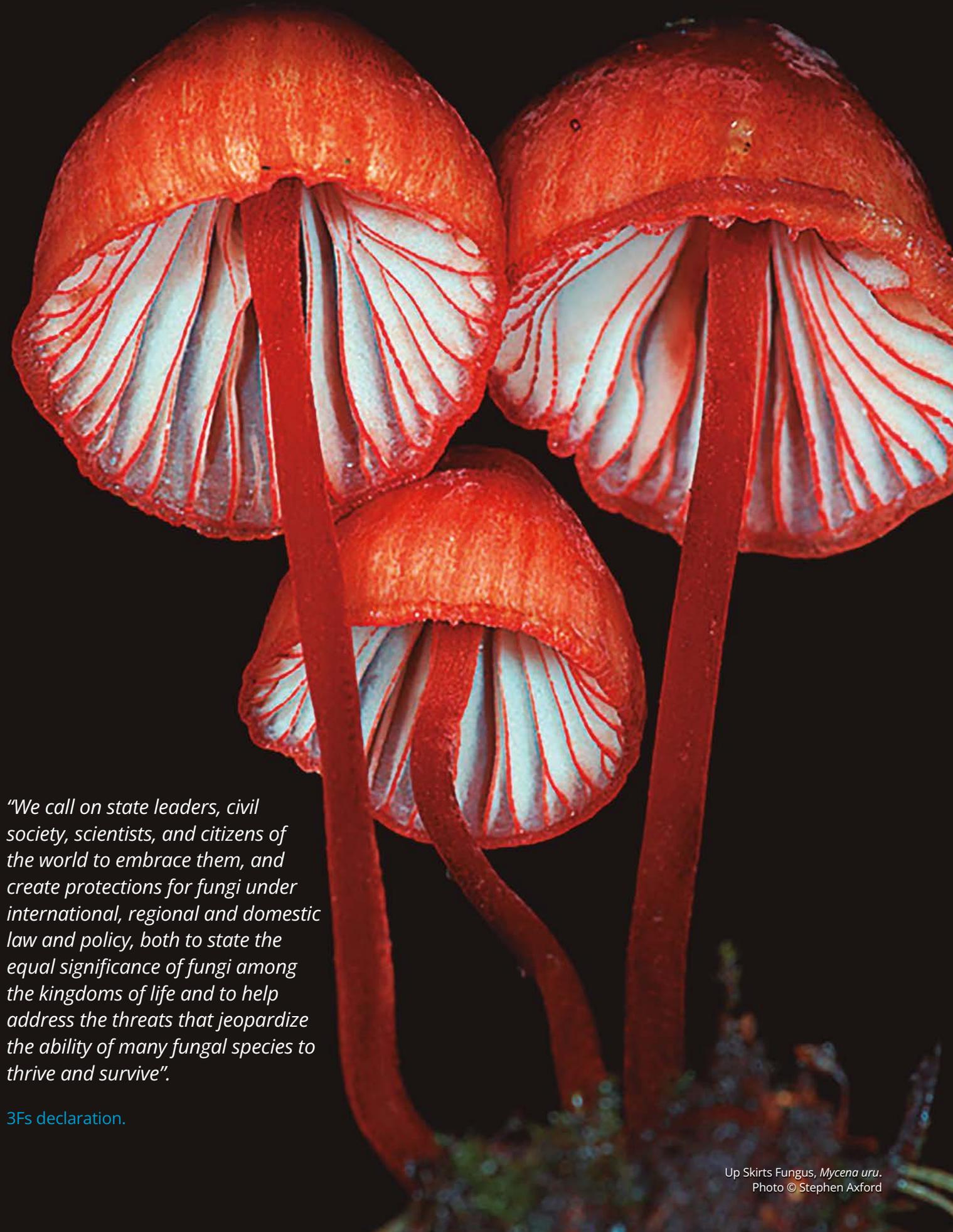
Having the Species Survival Commission and Re:wild join together - to very publicly commit to using mycologically inclusive language and call for other organizations to follow suit - has led to fungi being explicitly considered during discussion of the Post2020 Biodiversity Framework and Global Species Action Plan. The Fungi Foundation, the Center for Global Justice and Human Rights at NYU School of Law, and biologist Merlin Sheldrake developed the Fauna, Flora, Funga initiative that is the basis for these efforts. Our other focus has been to better coordinate actions of the five IUCN SSC Fungal Specialist Groups to increase their impact.

What are your next steps to increase engagement from organisations and policy makers in the 3Fs movement?

Getting an agreement to explicitly recognise fungi in policies is the first step. We are now working to have fungi included in conservation planning and action. Conversations are ongoing with SULi as well as some NGOs to develop sustainable use policies and promote pilot initiatives. Similarly, we are working with the ecological restoration community to better integrate information on fungi into tree planting and other restoration initiatives. And, while several high-profile organizations like SSC have committed to recognizing the importance of fungi, we have a long way to go for universal recognition.

What are the biggest challenges and priorities to mobilise conservation action for fungi globally?

Probably the biggest challenge is overcoming hundreds of years of animal/plant dominated thought and language by the conservation community. Getting fungi included in national, regional, and global policies and treaties, including appropriate MEAs will take a concerted effort to inform parties and foster agreement.



"We call on state leaders, civil society, scientists, and citizens of the world to embrace them, and create protections for fungi under international, regional and domestic law and policy, both to state the equal significance of fungi among the kingdoms of life and to help address the threats that jeopardize the ability of many fungal species to thrive and survive".

3Fs declaration.

Up Skirts Fungus, *Mycena uru*.
Photo © Stephen Axford

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IUCN SSC QUARTERLY REPORT / SEPTEMBER 2021



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