

WCC-2012-Res-017-EN

Enhancing the usefulness of the *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*

WELCOMING the growing influence of the *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* (hereafter *IUCN Red List*) through its open-access provision of high-quality data on the status of species;

RECOGNIZING that species are the component of biodiversity with globally accepted standards for systematic extinction risk assessment, making the *IUCN Red List* useful to governments, international agencies, scholars, conservation organizations, civil society, the business sector and multilateral conventions (such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar), the World Heritage Convention, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC));

APPRECIATING that the *IUCN Red List* has greatly expanded its coverage to over 60,000 species, including full coverage of mammals, birds, amphibians, sharks, conifers and cycads, and a growing number of reptiles, fish, plants, invertebrates and fungi;

ALARMED that accelerating climate change, increasing consumption of natural resources, continuing uncontrolled spread of invasive alien species through expanding global trade, loss of natural habitats and continuing degradation of ecosystem services (as reported by the latest edition of the CBD's *Global Biodiversity Outlook*) will further undermine the status of species in all parts of the world, an alarm that underlines the importance of providing the highest quality of information on the status of species;

THANKING the IUCN Red List Partner organizations for their continuing support of the *IUCN Red List* and the Red List Committee of the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC);

NOTING the significant efforts being made by many governments to prepare national or regional Red Lists and to support conservation of species;

CONCERNED that despite this effort, the *IUCN Red List* still covers only a small, non-representative, percentage of the world's species, and that the IUCN Red List Index indicates that the status of species is continuing to decline;

WELCOMING the development of the "Guidelines on the Implementation of the IUCN Policy Statement on Research Involving Species at Risk of Extinction, with special reference to Scientific Collecting of Threatened Species," as called for in Resolutions 3.013 *The uses of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* adopted by the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Bangkok, 2004) and 4.015 *Guidelines regarding research and scientific collecting of threatened species* adopted by the 4th IUCN World Conservation Congress (Barcelona, 2008), to encourage governments and research institutions to facilitate research on globally threatened species by competent scientists to enhance understanding of the natural history and conservation needs of these species;

RECOGNIZING the socio-economic importance of use and trade in some species and the incentives such use can provide for conservation and restoration, but that over-exploitation can also pose a serious threat to the survival of populations and species; and

SUPPORTING the *IUCN Programme 2013–2016* and its recognition of the importance of species to the vision and goals of IUCN;

The World Conservation Congress, at its session in Jeju, Republic of Korea, 6–15 September 2012:

1. REQUESTS the IUCN SSC and the Director General to complete the preparation of the Red List Strategic Plan that would clarify agreed strategic priorities for the *IUCN Red List* to the year 2020, to make its timing consistent with the Aichi Targets of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020* adopted by governments at the 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP10) to the CBD, held in Nagoya, Japan, in 2010;
2. RECOMMENDS that the Red List Strategic Plan include, among others, clear strategic results by 2020 for:
 - a. expanding the taxonomic and geographic coverage of the *IUCN Red List*, thus enabling it to become a representative Barometer of Life;
 - b. encouraging repeat assessments of taxonomic groups completely assessed, to further develop the IUCN Red List Index as an effective biodiversity indicator (including sampled approaches for large groups);
 - c. developing appropriate mechanisms to maintain and enhance the rigour of the *IUCN Red List*, and to ensure that future *IUCN Red List* species accounts are of the highest scientific standards and are recognized as formal and permanently citeable publications;
 - d. continuing support for the preparation of national and, where appropriate, regional Red Lists (especially those that follow the *Guidelines for the Application of Red List Criteria at Regional and National Levels, Version 3.1*), and the incorporation of information thus generated into the global *IUCN Red List*;
 - e. building capacity for preparing *IUCN Red Lists* worldwide and building a team of *IUCN Red List* trainers;
 - f. further enhancing the *IUCN Red List* database software (the Species Information Service) and the *IUCN Red List* website, so that these tools are easily and freely accessible;
 - g. increasing the use of the *IUCN Red List* to support policy development and conservation action with reference to the “Guidelines for Appropriate Uses of IUCN Red List Data: Incorporating the Guidelines for Reporting on Proportion Threatened and the Guidelines on Scientific Collecting of Threatened Species”;
 - h. enhancing the brand of the *IUCN Red List*;
 - i. developing new mechanisms to build financial sustainability for the *IUCN Red List*; and
 - j. providing clear strategic oversight to the *IUCN Red List*, including through renewal and expansion of the Red List Partnership;
3. ENCOURAGES governments, within the context of the *IUCN Red List*, to support the collection and free sharing of scientific information about species found within their borders, as called for under articles 7 and 17 of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
4. REQUESTS SSC, the Director General and IUCN Members working in this field to continue to improve the *IUCN Red List* to address topics such as:

- a. the response of species to changing climate (as called for in Resolution 4.016 *Development of climate change guidelines for IUCN Red List assessments* adopted by the 4th IUCN World Conservation Congress (Barcelona, 2008), with an SSC Task Force now working on the topic);
 - b. the consistent listing of species as Extinct and Critically Endangered (Possibly Extinct);
 - c. development of guidance on collection and harvest of threatened species as an annex to the “Guidelines for Appropriate Uses of IUCN Red List Data”, in order to help ensure that *Red List* data are used appropriately to guide regulation and management decisions;
 - d. the definition of “wild” populations (including reintroduced populations), and the implications for the consistent listing of species, for example, of species living within fenced areas within their natural ranges, of natural populations dependent on management interventions, and of populations resulting from “benign introductions” (as defined in the IUCN Reintroduction Guidelines) of threatened species outside their original ranges;
 - e. improvement of the “Guidelines for using the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria” to foster application of the *IUCN Red List* Categories and Criteria to island States and insular species; and
 - f. means to reconcile the expected taxonomic coverage of the *IUCN Red List* with the need to maintain the highest scientific standards; and
5. CALLS ON the Director General, SSC and IUCN Members to encourage funding agencies, international organizations, multilateral conventions, and others to support the further development of the *IUCN Red List* in order to maintain it as the global standard for assessing species, and thereby inform policy and action at all levels throughout the world.