

## Evaluation Abstract

**Title, author and date of the evaluation report:**

Review of the Implementation of the Red List Programme Agreement, prepared by Charles Lusthaus, Review Leader, January 2005

**Name of project, programme or organizational unit:**

Red List Programme Agreement

**Objectives of the project, programme or mandate of the organizational unit:**

Four conservation organizations – BirdLife International, Conservation International, NatureServe, and the Ocean Conservancy – entered into an agreement with IUCN to enhance the implementation of the RLP by (1) identifying and documenting those species most in need of conservation attention if the global extinction rates are to be reduced, and (2) providing a global index of the state of degeneration of biodiversity.

**IUCN area of specialisation:** Species Conservation

**Geographical area:** Global

**Project or programme duration, length of existence of organisational unit:** 2002 – to date

**Overall budget of the project, programme or organizational unit:** N/A

**Donor(s):** N/A

**Objectives of the evaluation:**

To review the performance of the Red List Consortium since its inception. The evaluation specifically aimed to:

1. Assess the extent to which the rationale for the Consortium is still valid.
2. Assess the extent to which the organizational arrangements, management and governance are effective and still appropriate.
3. Assess the benefits of the Consortium to the four Red List partners.
4. Document the lessons from the first years of experience.
5. Make recommendations related for the future development, management and governance of the Consortium.
6. Develop and test an approach and methodology for the evaluation of partnerships that can be used in future IUCN reviews of other partnership arrangements.

**Type of evaluation:** Organizational; Programme

**Period covered by the evaluation:** 2002 - 2004

**Commissioned by:** IUCN Director – Global Programme

**Audience:** The senior management of the four partner organizations of the current Red List Partnership: IUCN (Secretariat and SSC), NatureServe, BirdLife International, and Centre for Applied Biodiversity Science – Conservation International.

**Evaluation team:** External

**Methodology used:**

An evaluation matrix and work plan was developed, along with a set of concepts deemed useful in assessing the functioning of the Consortium. Information was obtained through face-to-face and telephone interviews with key informants and other stakeholders. Data collection was complemented by site visits to partner organizations and a document review.

**Questions of the evaluation:**

The full list of evaluation questions can be found in Appendix V: Evaluation Matrix. The latter also contains information regarding the evaluation data sources and the data collection methodology.

**Findings & Conclusions:**

Findings:

1. The Red List Programme continues to need financial and technical support to meet the implementation schedule set down in its 2000 strategic plan and updated in 2004. Thus the rationale for the Agreement continues to be relevant.
2. The common principles, which underline the Red List Agreement, remain relevant today.
3. Consortium membership continues to meet the strategic interests of each of the four organizations.
4. While all partners agree to the Red List Programme vision, goal and objectives, some have diverging expectations with regards to the use of the Red List.
5. While the roles and responsibilities of the Red List Programme Committee are reasonably clear, this is not the case for the Consortium Members. It is unclear who is responsible for providing Consortium leadership and for developing a consortium model that works.
6. The Governance system has been able to balance the existing asymmetrical relationships within the Consortium. However, this is and will continue to be a source of concern.
7. There are no stated procedures for changing the Consortium Membership or for resolving Consortium disputes.
8. Strategic leadership is not apparent in the Consortium's work. There is no strategy or business plan to guide its work.
9. There is an overlap of activities between the Consortium and the Red List Programme Committee.
10. Consortium processes like problem solving, decision-making, risk management, conflict resolution and communication are at very early stages of evolution.
11. The credibility and the authority given to the IUCN Red List and its brand is a critical asset that requires protection.
12. The Consortium Agreement section on branding along with the draft branding policy might compromise the credibility of the IUCN Red List.
13. There is ambiguity among partners with regards to the recognition of contribution as well as ownership of the Red List products.
14. Joint financing campaigns and approaches in support of the Red List Programme have not been operationalized.

Conclusions:

- Despite informants' generally positive opinion, significant issues exist with respect to the institutional arrangements, which threaten the sustainability of the Consortium and the Red List itself.
- The rationale is still valid, for both the Consortium and the member institutions.

- While there are clear individual accountabilities to member organizations, there is not a clear institutional accountability.
- The Consortium has taken an *ad hoc* approach to strategy, management and operations. Few resources have been put into management, and there has been little strategic leadership.
- While it makes sense to continue the Consortium, important adjustments need to be made to improve its governance, management and long-term sustainability.

**Recommendations:**

1. The Consortium should continue, but it needs modification with respect to institutional arrangements.
2. The purpose and function of the Consortium and the distinction between the Consortium and the Red List Programme Committee should be more clearly articulated.
3. The Consortium Agreement needs to be clarified and updated.
4. Senior institutional officials should be responsible for the governance of the Consortium, This should be separate from the more managerial and operational body, which has guided the Consortium in the past.
5. Institutional members need to be more explicit about the management model most appropriate for managing the Consortium.
6. IUCN should clarify the relationship between the SIS and the Consortium.
7. The branding policy of Consortium products along with the overall communication strategy needs to be developed in light of the role and function of the Consortium.

**Lessons Learned:** Not specified

**Language of the evaluation:** English

**Available from:** Species Survival Commission (SSC); IUCN Global Monitoring and Evaluation Initiative, Gland, Switzerland