

## 2021 Report

# IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group



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COORDINATOR**  
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**NUMBER OF MEMBERS**  
200

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE**  
Facebook: IUCN SSC Cat Specialist  
GroupWebsite: [www.catsg.org](http://www.catsg.org)

### Mission statement

Cat Manifesto (<http://www.catsg.org/index.php?id=44>).

### Projected impact 2021–2025

To promote the long-term conservation of all cat species across their range.

### Targets 2021–2025

#### ASSESS

**T-018** Publish at least once a year an article on new/updated Felidae Red List assessments or Red List assessment-related subjects in *Cat News* by encouraging lead assessors to write articles on published Red List assessments, also addressing problems during the assessment process.

**T-019** Update the Cat Conservation Compendium (*Cat News* Special Issue 9) incorporating new information and approaches such as Assess to Plan, updated IUCN Guidelines for Species Conservation Planning, Green Status assessment, etc., and publish it as a *Cat News* Special Issue.

**T-020** Assess the following taxa for the first time for the IUCN Red List: African Leopard (*Panthera pardus pardus*), Sunda Leopard Cat (*Prionailurus javanensis*) and Northeast African Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus soemmeringii*).

**T-021** Reassess the following taxa for the IUCN Red List: Caracal (*Caracal caracal*), Pampas Cat (*Leopardus colocola*), Iberian Lynx (*Lynx pardinus*), Flat-headed Cat (*Prionailurus planiceps*), Fishing Cat (*Prionailurus viverrinus*), Persian Leopard (*Panthera pardus saxicolor/tulliana*) and Northwest African Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus hecki*).

**T-022** Finalise, submit and get published the (re-)assessments of African Wildcat (*Felis lybica*), Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*), Chinese Mountain Cat (*Felis bieti*), European Wildcat (*Felis silvestris*), Andean Cat (*Leopardus jacobita*), Mainland Clouded Leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*), Tiger (*Panthera tigris*), Mainland Leopard Cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*), Sumatran Clouded Leopard (*Neofelis diardi diardi*), Bornean Clouded Leopard (*Neofelis diardi borneensis*), Indian Leopard (*Panthera pardus fusca*) and Javan Leopard (*Panthera pardus melas*).

**T-023** Encourage assessment team members or contributors to global Red List (re-) assessments to conduct regional and national Red List assessments of the taxa globally assessed and support them with the implementation of National Red List Guidelines.

**T-024** Conduct and publish the Green Status assessments of Tiger (*Panthera tigris*), Iberian Lynx (*Lynx pardinus*) and European Wildcat (*Felis silvestris*).

**T-025** Conceptualise the Guidelines for Climate Change Vulnerability for cat species and identify for which cat species a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment should be first conducted.

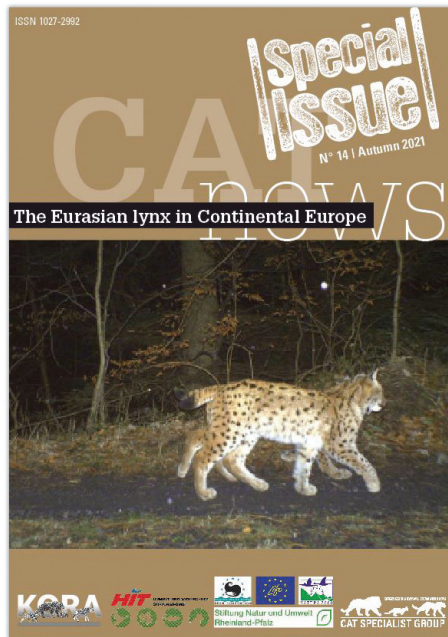
**T-026** Enhance the information in the Red List assessments and Green Status assessments, especially about threats and conservation of a taxon, to facilitate and benefit the development of conservation planning for the taxon as demanded by the Assess to Plan approach.

**T-027** Evaluate the assessment and the status of knowledge of small cat species, identify gaps and define the most urgent conservation actions per species.

**T-028** Maintain and expand the Cat Specialist Group Species Database (CSGSD).

**T-029** Develop a strategy to collect camera trapping by-catch data and opportunistic species records, synchronise the exchange of records between institutions and integrate these records into the Cat Specialist Group Species Database (CSGSD, used for Red List distribution maps).

**T-030** Reflect the revised taxonomy of the cat species (Kitchener, A.C., et al. 2017. A revised taxonomy of the Felidae. The final report of the Cat Classification Task Force of the IUCN/ SSC Cat Specialist Group. *Cat News Special Issue* 11:1–80.) in the Red List and Green Status assessments.



**T-061** Develop guidelines for the monitoring of African Lion (*Panthera leo*) and its prey.

**T-062** Certify the Cat Specialist Group Red List Authority Coordinator as an IUCN Red List Trainer.

#### PLAN

**T-031** Develop a Regional Conservation Strategy for Persian Leopard (*Panthera pardus tulliana/saxicolor*).

**T-032** Develop a Conservation Strategy for European Wildcat (*Felis silvestris*).

**T-033** Develop a Regional Conservation Strategy for Leopard (*Panthera pardus*) in Southern Africa.

**T-034** Update the *Regional Conservation Strategy for the Cheetah and African Wild Dog in Eastern Africa*.

**T-035** Support the development of an updated Action Plan for the Iberian Lynx (*Lynx pardinus*).

**T-036** Update the Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan for Wild Cats.

**T-037** As required or requested: Comment on cat related policies.

**T-038** Attend CITES and Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) meetings and comment on cat-related Resolutions and Decisions.

**T-039** CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI): Advance initiative at global, regional and national level, attend respective meetings.

**T-040** CMS Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) and related IUCN Save Our Species (SOS) programme: Review Persian Leopard (*Panthera pardus tulliana*) conservation status, develop Persian Leopard conservation strategy, advance conservation

projects for other cat species (Snow Leopard, *Panthera uncia*; Asiatic Cheetah, *Acinonyx jubatus venaticus*), attend CAMI meetings.

**T-041** Use the Conservation Strategy for European Wildcat (*Felis silvestris*) to promote an improved Wildcat conservation within the European Union member states (Fauna-Flora and Habitats (FFH) Directives).

**T-042** Use the continental European conservation recommendation for the Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) to lobby for a more coordinated approach with multilateral agreements (EU FFH Directives, Council of Europe's Berne Convention).

#### ACT

**T-043** Support the implementation of the Conservation Strategy for the Pallas's Cat (*Otocolobus manul*).

**T-044** Support the implementation of the LIFE Project for the recovery of the European Wildcat (*Felis silvestris*) in Scotland (Saving Wildcats Advisory Group).

**T-045** Support the implementation of conservation actions for the Leopard (*Panthera pardus*) in the Caucasus, including implementation of an MoU between IUCN, Russian Ministry of Natural Resources (MNRE) and European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA).

**T-046** Support the implementation of cat conservation projects under the ACI.

**T-047** Support the implementation of the ACI through a coordinated implementation plan developed by the Cat Specialist Group and its members working on ACI species in Africa.

**T-048** Attend CITES Non-detriment Findings (NDFs) conference and provide recommendation on NDFs for Lion (*Panthera leo*) and Leopard.

**T-059** Develop mechanisms to expand the Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme (ITHCP) to incorporate Snow Leopards and Leopards.

**T-063** Participate in the project 'Act Green: A near-real time integrated mapping and reporting system for re-wilding efforts: applying, extending and enhancing an application for Tigers (*Panthera tigris*) to Lions (*Panthera leo*), Jaguars (*Panthera onca*), and American Bison (*Bison bison*)' together with Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Panthera, WWF, a.o.

#### NETWORK

**T-002** Develop an MoU with Foundation KORA for hosting the Cat Specialist Group.

**T-003** Develop a funding strategy, both institutional and project related, and update and adapt it annually to the work programme.

**T-004** Secure funding to deliver K2-13.

**T-005** Strengthen the relationship with the zoo community in regard to the implementation of the Assess-Plan-Act (APA) approach in cats.

**T-006** Update the membership strategy (number of members, expertise, regional distribution, affiliations, etc.), review Terms of Reference for members and re-constitute the Cat Specialist Group.

**T-007** Develop a programme for and conduct periodical webinars with Cat Specialist Group members to strengthen the team



Tiger (*Panthera tigris*) in Pench National Park, India  
Photo: Patrick Meier

spirit of the group, inform about news and/or issues, and provide the opportunity to ask questions to the Co-Chairs and group members.

**T-008** Develop and conduct Red List assessment and Green Status assessment (online) training courses with emphasises on 'Assess to Plan' for assessors and Cat Specialist Group members.

**T-009** Develop and conduct (online) training courses for Cat Specialist Group members and others in important conservation-related subjects.

**T-010** Support already existing and the building of new (small) cat networks in regard to organisational questions, looking for funding, making connections, capacity building, etc.

**T-011** Maintain and expand the Cat Specialist Group Library.

**T-012** Within SSC: Enhance collaboration with the SSC Chair's Office, Species Office, and other Specialist Groups as possible and needed, e.g. SOS: Tiger programme, CAMI, ACI; Conservation Translocation Specialist Group: Cat Re-introduction Guidelines; Canid Specialist Group: ACI; Species Conservation Success Task Force: Green Status assessment.

**T-013** Within IUCN: Inform other Commissions and Regional Offices on cat issues related to their themes or regions, respectively.

**T-014** UN Conventions: Continue and deepen cooperation with CITES and CMS on cat issues, e.g. African Carnivore Initiative, Central Asian Mammal Initiative, Jaguar Decisions, NDFs, etc.

**T-015** World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA), EAZA, Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), a.o.: Continue and deepen cooperation with AZA and EAZA Felid Taxon Advisory Groups (TAGs) on various issues, e.g. Eurasian Lynx recommendations, Leopard reintroduction guidelines, conservation breeding recommendations, and maintain good relationship with head offices.

**T-016** NGOs: Continue and deepen cooperation with specific NGOs on various cat conservation topics, e.g. WCS (Tiger), Panthera (Lion, Small Cats), WWF (Leopard, Jaguar).

**T-017** Encourage cat assessors or contributors of global Red List (re-) assessments as well as Cat Specialist Group members and other stakeholders to implement Assess-Plan-Act at different locations and opportunities in cooperation with governments (e.g. through conducting national assessments).

**T-049** Explore in a discussion with the whole group, and adapt if desired, the internal structure and organisation of the Cat Specialist Group, e.g. geographic subgroups, taxonomic or topical working groups, specific task forces, etc.

**T-060** Update the Cat Specialist Group in the IUCN Commission System.

#### **COMMUNICATE**

**T-050** Produce two regular issues of *Cat News* with peer-reviewed articles.

**T-051** Promote *Cat News* and gain more Friends of the Cat Group, the sponsor group of *Cat News*.

**T-052** Produce a Special Issue of *Cat News* on Jaguar Conservation need and Regional Strategy for South America.

**T-053** Produce a Special Issue of *Cat News* on the status of the Eurasian Lynx including Recommendations for Continental Europe.

**T-054** Produce a Special Issue of *Cat News* about the Balkan Lynx Recovery Programme.

**T-055** Renew the Cat Specialist Group website addressing more the IUCN environment.

**T-056** Increase the presence of the Cat Specialist Group on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter).

**T-057** Produce Unite for Literacy booklets on cat species.



Persian Leopard (*Panthera pardus tulliana*)  
Photo: Alexander Sliwa

**T-058** Establish and maintain the Wild Cat Club as a group of non-members to support the work of the Cat Specialist Group.

**T-064** Keep the IUCN SSC website updated.

## Activities and results 2021

### ASSESS

#### Green Status

**T-024** (KSR 6)

**Number of new Green Status of Species assessments completed:** 1

**Result description:** Monthly online meetings were held on the (re-)assessment of Tiger (*Panthera tigris*) for the Red List and the Green Status assessment. Both will be finalised in 2022.

#### Red List

**T-020** (KSR 6)

**Number of new global Red List assessments completed:** 1

**Result description:** Support was provided to build up an assessor team for Sunda Leopard Cat (*Prionailurus javanensis*) through online meetings.

**T-022** (KSR 6)

**Number of new global Red List assessments completed:** 4

**Result description:** Assessments of Mainland Leopard Cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*), European Wildcat (*Felis silvestris*), African Wildcat (*Felis lybica*)

and Indian Leopard (*Panthera pardus fusca*) were carried out. All are ready to be submitted in early 2022.

**Number of global Red List reassessments completed:** 2

**Result description:** Reassessments of Mainland Clouded Leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*) and Javan Leopard (*Panthera pardus melas*) were finalised, submitted and published. Many online meetings took place for the reassessments of Chinese Mountain Cat (*Felis bieti*), Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) and Tiger (*Panthera tigris*), which are all ready to be submitted in early 2022.

**T-027** (KSR 6)

**Number of global Red List reassessments completed:** 4

**Result description:** European Wildcat (*Felis silvestris*), African Wildcat (*Felis lybica*), Chinese Mountain Cat (*Felis bieti*) and Mainland Leopard Cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*) have been reassessed. All are ready to be submitted in early 2022.

**T-030** (KSR 6)

**All (re-)assessed taxa follow the revised taxonomy:** ongoing

**Result description:** Based on the revised taxonomy, European Wildcat (*Felis silvestris*), African Wildcat (*Felis lybica*) and Mainland Leopard Cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*) have been newly assessed.

**T-061** (KSR 6)

**Number of technical documents provided to support Red List assessments/reassessments:** 1

**Result description:** The programme and list of participants were developed. Due to COVID-19 the workshop has been postponed to April 2023.

**T-062** (KSR 6)

**The IUCN SSC Cat SG Red List Authority Coordinator is a certified IUCN Red List trainer:** 1

**Result description:** The Red List Authority Coordinator has successfully complete the training and is now a certified Red List trainer.

### Research activities

**T-018** (KSR 5)

**Number of publications produced in internal journals of SSC groups:** 2

**Result description:** Articles on updated Red List assessments of Javan Leopard (*Panthera pardus melas*) and Mainland Clouded Leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*) were published in *Cat News* 74.

### PLAN

#### Planning

**T-031** (KSR 8)

**Number of conservation plans/strategies developed:** 1



European Wildcat (*Felis silvestris*)  
Photo: Alexander Sliwa

**Result description:** The workshop to develop the Regional Conservation Strategy has been postponed to March 2022.

**Policy**

T-038 (KSR 9)

**Number of motions in Multilateral Environmental Agreements influenced by IUCN that are adopted:** 2

**Result description:** We attended the 31st meeting of the CITES Animals Committee (AC31), and the CMS Fifth Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council (ScC-SC5), where we submitted InfDoc UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC5/Inf.8 on the conservation of Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) in Asia and Northeast Africa.

T-040 (KSR 9)

**Number of policies where SSC members provided technical input:** 1

**Result description:** In monthly online meetings, the conservation status review and the development of topical papers have been initiated and advanced.

T-042 (KSR 9)

**Number of policies where SSC members provided technical input:** 1

**Result description:** The Bonn recommendations for the conservation of the Eurasian Lynx have been adopted by the Standing Committee of the Berne Convention.

**ACT**

**Conservation actions**

T-043 (KSR 10)

**Number of species with increased or prevented decrease in population or range size, as a result of conservation actions:** 1

**Result description:** We reviewed proposals for the small grants programme of PICA (Pallas's Cat International Conservation Alliance). The programme has the aim to implement the Regional Conservation Strategy.

T-059 (KSR 10)

**Number of species with increased or prevented decrease in population or range size, as a result of conservation actions:** 1

**Result description:** Report to include Leopard and Mainland Clouded Leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*) finalised.

**Technical advice**

T-044 (KSR 10)

**Number of technical consultations provided to support conservation actions:** 1

**Result description:** As part of the Advisory Group of the LIFE Project, we attended three online meetings to provide technical expertise for the project.

T-048 (KSR 11)

**Number of sustainable use practices supported:** 1

**Result description:** Due to COVID-19 the conference has been delayed.

**NETWORK**

**Capacity building**

T-010 (KSR 2)

**Number of networks supported:** 1

**Result description:** Funding proposal developed.

T-011 (KSR 2)

**Number of new publications integrated and uploaded to the web per year:** 215

**Result description:** Besides uploaded 215 new documents, we put a lot of effort into correcting mistakes in the database in 2021.

**Membership**

T-006 (KSR 2)

**Number of SSC members recruited:** 159

**Result description:** We invited 200 members. By the end of 2021, 159 (79.5%) had accepted the invitation in the Commission System. We are still working to get this done for the remaining invitees. The whole process was a tremendous amount of work, as the system did not always work and people did not have a lot of patience with it.

T-060 (KSR 2)

**Membership in the IUCN Commission System updated:** 79.5%

**Result description:** A lot of challenges were encountered.

#### Synergy

T-002 (KSR 1)

**Number of 'in kind' partnerships established and maintained:** 1

**Result description:** Draft MoU developed and will be reviewed by KORA Board members in 2022.

T-003 (KSR 1)

**Number of 'funding' partners established and maintained:** 1

**Result description:** One funding partnership has been renewed.

T-012 (KSR 3)

**IUCN bodies with which the SSC group collaborates to advance targets:** ongoing

**Result description:** We conducted several online meetings with the SSC Chair on various topics. We worked closely with the SOS ITHCP on the reassessment of the Tiger (*Panthera tigris*) on the IUCN Red List; we worked with CITES and CMS on various projects (see Target T-014).

T-014 (KSR 3)

**Non-IUCN bodies with which the SSC group collaborates to advance targets:** ongoing

**Result description:** With CMS CAMI, we started the preparation of a status assessment and topical contributions for the conservation of the Persian Leopard (*Panthera pardus tulliana/saxicolor*) in monthly online meetings. This will lead to the development of a Regional Conservation Strategy. We finalised the Programme of Work for the Joint CITES and CMS African Carnivores Initiative together with the two Secretariats after a review process by the range countries. The Programme of Work has been adopted by the respective bodies of CITES and CMS.

T-015 (KSR 3)

**Non-IUCN bodies with which the SSC group collaborates to advance targets:** ongoing

**Result description:** We attended the EAZA Felid TAG mid-year meeting and prepared an input document for the EAZA head office for the workshop to update the Regional Collection Plan (January 2022) for felids.

T-016 (KSR 3)

**Non-IUCN bodies with which the SSC group collaborates to advance targets:** ongoing

**Result description:** We participated together with several NGOs (WCS, Panthera, WWF, Fauna and Flora International, TRAFFIC) in a process to develop a vision document for the Tiger, *Securing a viable future for the tiger*, as an input document for the Tiger Summit 2022 and the new phase of the Global Tiger Recovery Programme.

#### COMMUNICATE

##### Communication

T-050 (KSR 12)

**Number of Species e-bulletin, Save Our Species newsletter, SSC Groups' newsletter editions produced:** 2

**Result description:** *Cat News* issues 73 and 74, with 34 peer-reviewed articles, were published in 2021.

T-052 (KSR 12)

**Number of Species e-bulletin, Save Our Species newsletter, SSC Groups' newsletter editions produced:** 1

**Result description:** We had a delay with the publication as the process has been hampered by the pandemic. The *Cat News* Special Issue on Jaguar Conservation will be published in 2022.

T-053 (KSR 12)

**Number of Species e-bulletin, Save Our Species newsletter, SSC Groups' newsletter editions produced:** 1

**Result description:** *Cat News* Special Issue 14 with 23 articles on the status of the Eurasian Lynx in Continental Europe, several topical papers and recommendations for the conservation of the species, has been published.

T-056 (KSR 12)

**Increase in number of followers:** 5%

**Result description:** Regular presence on Facebook continued.

T-064 (KSR 12)

**The Cat SG website is updated:** ongoing

**Result description:** Several sections have been updated: Members, cat profiles, *Cat News* and the Conservation Center.

#### Acknowledgements

Working very closely with the Cat Specialist Group Co-Chairs were Manuela von Arx (Digital Cat Library), Tabea Lanz (Assistant to the Chair, website, Red List Authority Coordinator), Roland Bürki (support to the Chair), Valentyna Laskova (bookkeeping) – a great thank you to all of them. We are very grateful to Foundation KORA for hosting the Cat Specialist Group. We would like to thank the many dedicated people who helped develop and run the various projects: Juan Reppucci and Maximilian Allen (associate editors *Cat News*). Alexander Sliwa, Patrick Meier and Sebastian Kennerknecht have generously made available their superb cat pictures for Cat Specialist Group purposes. Our projects would not be possible without financial support from many committed institutions and private persons. We are very grateful for the support of the Friends of the Cat Group, Zoo Leipzig, the Ayers Wild Cat Conservation Trust, KfW, IUCN SOS ITHCP, CMS Convention on Migratory Species, Stämpfli AG, and especially Patrick Meier and Peter Stämpfli.

#### Summary of achievements

**Total number of targets 2021–2025:** 63

**Geographic regions:** 50 Global, 7 Africa, 2 America, 4 Asia, 7 Europe

**Actions during 2021:**

Assess: 9 (KSR 5, 6)

Plan: 4 (KSR 8, 9)

Act: 4 (KSR 10, 11)

Network: 10 (KSR 1, 2, 3)

Communicate: 5 (KSR 12)

**Overall achievement 2021–2025:**

