

# IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group



**CHAIR**  
**Onnie Byers**  
Global Conservation  
Network, 12101  
Johnny Cake Ridge  
Road, Apple Valley,  
Minnesota 55124, US

**NUMBER OF MEMBERS**  
242

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE**

Facebook: @ConservationPlanningSG  
Instagram: @iucn\_conservationplanningsg  
Twitter: @IUCN\_CPSG  
Website: www.cpsg.org

**Mission statement**

The mission of the IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group (CPSG) is to save threatened species by increasing the effectiveness of conservation efforts worldwide. For over 40 years, we've accomplished this by using scientifically sound, collaborative processes that bring together people with diverse perspectives and knowledge to catalyse positive conservation change. We provide species conservation planning expertise to governments, Specialist Groups, zoos and aquariums, and other wildlife organisations.

**Projected impact 2021–2025**

To increase global species conservation planning capacity and the number of effective conservation plans in place for threatened species.

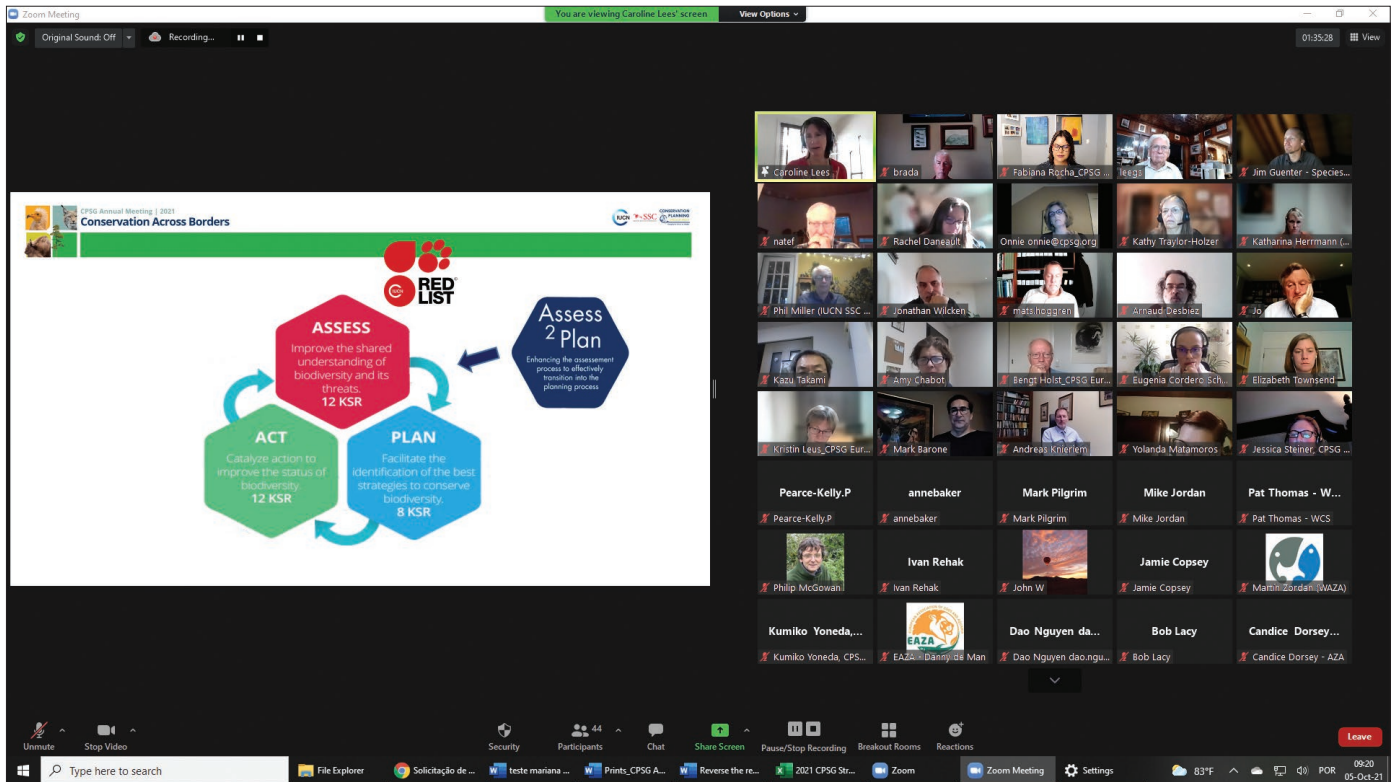
**Targets 2021–2025**

**PLAN**

- T-001 Help groups to select species for conservation planning attention, by providing ready access to relevant approaches, tools and case studies.
- T-002 Accelerate identification and activation of pathways to effective conservation for selected species (including, but not limited to, those threatened with extinction).

- T-003 Make A2P (Assessing to Plan) more effective in activating pathways and more useful to a wider range of planning practitioners and situations.
- T-004 Strengthen the tools and processes used for single-species conservation planning activities.
- T-005 Carry forward the A2P process' pathways to effective action and create an effective methodology for integrated multi-species conservation planning.
- T-006 Increase the value to SSC planning of the IUCN SSC Species Conservation Planning Tools Library.
- T-007 Provide tools and processes for evaluating and, where appropriate, incorporating ex situ options into species conservation and collection planning.
- T-008 Develop and deliver effective training in the design and facilitation of species conservation planning processes.
- T-009 Scale up coaching and mentoring programme for more competent and confident species conservation planning process designers, facilitators and technical experts able to lead in threatened species planning processes globally.
- T-010 Demonstrate a scaling up of effective species conservation planning occurring globally.

- T-011 Establish a professional learning network of species conservation planners, enabling the ongoing capacity growth and the development and refinement of planning guidelines, tools and processes.
- T-012 Encourage inclusion of species conservation planning in national, regional and global policy.
- T-013 Support national commitments to achieving biodiversity targets by providing direct species conservation planning and capacity building support to national governments and indigenous communities.
- T-014 Improve ability to provide tailored support to governments and indigenous communities on species conservation planning matters.
- T-015 Maintain suitable systems for evaluating the impact of conservation planning on species.
- T-016 Maintain a database and library of planning information for CPSG and the wider SSC.
- T-017 Explore the assembly and integration of an expanded body of information that will enhance the species conservation planning process.



2021 CPSG Strategic Committee Meeting  
Photo: CPSG

**T-018** Collaborate with appropriate information sources to implement and promote open and accessible data sharing for enhanced species conservation planning.

**T-019** Collaborate with the information technology community and other sectors where appropriate to construct new tools and methods for interdisciplinary data assembly and analysis.

## Activities and results 2021

### PLAN

#### Planning

**T-001** (KSR 8)

**Library of tools and case studies to support groups to prioritise species for planning and action:** 1 ongoing.

**Result description:** CPSG's Assess to Plan (A2P) process continues to evolve and improve, most recently with the 2021 publication of the report titled *Assessing to Plan: Next Steps Towards Conservation Action for Threatened Snakes & Lizards of Mainland South Asia*.

**T-001** (KSR 8)

**Updated CPSG tools library:** Ongoing.

**Result description:** We are currently undertaking a major revision of Tools Library content, updating the list of tools used most frequently as part of CPSG's Steps for Species Conservation Planning. In addition,

we are refining our general template for how information about each tool will be presented.

**T-002** (KSR 8)

**Increase number of CPSG teams delivering A2P analyses and planning workshops:** 1

**Result description:** European team currently running A2P in Denmark for hoverflies (started 2021).

**T-002** (KSR 8)

**Promote A2P to Specialist Groups and governments:** Completed for 2021.

**Result description:** In 2021, the Assess to Plan (A2P) process was included in CPSG's introductory materials distributed to governments via IUCN Regional Offices. Also in 2021, A2P webinars were made available to other SSC Specialist Groups.

**T-004** (KSR 8)

**Continued collaboration with the Species Conservation Toolkit Initiative (SCTI):** Completed for 2021.

**Result description:** Continued application of the Species Conservation Toolkit Initiative's software for population viability analysis, Vortex, to an increasingly complex array of species (e.g. univoltine insects including butterflies in North America) and conservation planning applications (e.g. explicit analysis of hybridisation with Coyotes

(*Canis latrans*) as a threat to long-term persistence of the Red Wolf (*Canis rufus*) in the south-eastern United States).

**T-005** (KSR 8)

**A specific case study in which a candidate set of tools/process can be tested for applicability to effective multi-species planning:** 1

**Result description:** CPSG's Assess to Plan (A2P) process continues to evolve and improve, most recently with the 2021 publication of the report titled *Assessing to Plan: Next Steps Towards Conservation Action for Threatened Snakes & Lizards of Mainland South Asia*. In addition, a European team is currently running A2P in Denmark for hoverflies (started 2021), using lessons learnt from previous A2P processes to help systematise and automate the steps focused on information assembly and analysis.

**T-006** (KSR 8)

**New and appropriate materials developed by CPSG (One Plan Approach resources, etc.) are added to the Tools Library:** Ongoing.

**Result description:** We are currently undertaking a major revision of Tools Library content, updating the list of tools used most frequently as part of CPSG's Steps for Species Conservation Planning. In addition, we are refining our general template for how information about each tool will be presented.



Red Wolf Recovery Planning Workshop,  
Day 1: 31 August 2021  
Photo: Phil Miller

**T-008 (KSR 8)**

**Establish training courses accessible to SSC members and beyond for all CPSG planning processes and tools:** Ongoing.

**Result description:** The training programme is now well established. Approximately 800 individuals have successfully completed facilitation skills training between 2018–2021. In addition to the Facilitation Skills online course that we run twice annually, we are launching our Wildlife Disease Risk Analysis online course in March 2022.

**T-008 (KSR 8)**

**Create a certification scheme to provide explicit recognition of knowledge gain by those individuals who have completed the training successfully:** Completed for 2021.

**Result description:** Course completion certificates are in place for all our training. Those on the Development Path also receive a certificate on completion of the programme. A certificate of reflective practice is in place for those individuals who complete the training and then wish to demonstrate their ability to put their training into practice. A course certification scheme is in place. More than 800 individuals have completed this process to date. Development Path certification is also now in place with seven individuals receiving their certificates for completing the mentoring programme in 2021.

**T-009 (KSR 9)**

**Planner and Technical Development Path mentoring programmes in place and able to respond to a scaling up of capacity need as required:** Completed for 2021.

**Result description:** Seven CPSG Species Conservation Planning Facilitators successfully completed the programme in 2021. A further 16 mentees are now on the programme, 12 of which focused on the Facilitator Development Path, and four linked to the Technical Development Path.

Facilitator and Technical Development Path competency checklists are now developed to provide a structure for mentees and mentors to use to plan out professional development areas of focus.

**T-009 (KSR 9)**

**CPSG Planner accreditation scheme in place to identify individuals who can demonstrate a level of competency in species conservation planning knowledge and skills to the design and facilitation of planning processes:** Completed for 2021.

**Result description:** The process for 'sign off' of mentees as CPSG Species Conservation Planning Facilitators is now in place. A decision was made not to adopt an 'official accreditation scheme' for now, instead favouring a combination of feedback from mentees and mentors to determine whether or not the mentee has demonstrated their competencies and abilities to work independently of support. Seven mentees reached this standard and were recognised at CPSG's 2021 Annual Meeting.

**T-010 (KSR 10)**

**Processes in place to monitor and evaluate the enhancement of professional development factors (e.g. knowledge, skills, perceived self-efficacy) in those individuals we train and mentor:** Ongoing.

**Result description:** An annual training survey monitors these variables. Reporting for 2021 is to be completed by April 2022. Note a paper summarising our training and monitoring work has been accepted and will be published in 2022. The 2021 survey is complete with 65 trainees responding.

**T-010 (KSR 10)**

**Customised training programmes developed for national governments to enable them to build and maintain the capacity of their staff to put planning principles and steps into practice:** 1

**Result description:** In 2021, we tailored a course for government personnel from Lebanon.

**T-010 (KSR 10)**

**Systems in place to monitor and evaluate increase in species conservation planning occurring as a result of increase training; goal of ensuring 10,000 species are covered by conservation plans:** 539

**Result description:** Respondents to our annual training surveys of 'graduates' of our training programme have listed 215 species that they facilitated and/or designed planning processes for in 2021. In 2021, a further 324 species were identified by trainees. These figures are clearly only a percentage of the total number of species impacted, as only a proportion of trainees respond to the survey.

**T-011 (KSR 8)**

**CPSG-Connect network providing a platform on which a community of planning practice can be developed:** Completed for 2021.

**Result description:** The network consists of ca. 200 members. CPSG Planning Clinics launched as an additional resource to help build capacity for planning within the network. The clinics provide an opportunity for people who have completed our training to raise questions concerning specific species conservation planning projects they are involved in, and for them to receive expert input. CPSG Facilitation Practice sessions have also been established to provide opportunities for (virtual) facilitation tools practice. The network is strengthened with additional participants on our training courses having now completed the training and actively seeking opportunities to put their training into practice.



Critically Endangered Red Wolf (*Canis rufus*)  
Photo: B. Bartel, USFWS

**T-011 (KSR 8)**

**Planning guidance and additional resources informed by and communicated through the expanding planning community:** Completed for 2021.

**Result description:** Planning clinics established and Facilitation Tools Practice Sessions also in place as outlined under previous capacity building result.

**T-013 (KSR 9)**

**Produce and distribute (to IUCN offices, government agencies, other appropriate authorities) documents introducing CPSG tools, processes and capacity development opportunities:** Completed for 2021.

**Result description:** A document introducing CPSG was distributed to governments via IUCN Regional Offices.

**T-014 (KSR 9)**

**Collaborate with at least one national government to develop country-specific guidance and training materials and promote these as an option to other national governments:** Ongoing.

**Result description:** Discussions began with the Australian Government in 2021.

**T-015 (KSR 8)**

**Track and evaluate long-term trajectories of species post-planning:** Ongoing.

**Result description:** Methodology to maintain suitable systems for evaluating the impact of conservation planning on species was published in 2021.

**T-017 (KSR 8)**

**Identify appropriate disciplines and fields that can contribute critical information to the enhanced planning process:** Ongoing.

**Result description:** We are closely collaborating with Impact by Design Inc. to utilise their expertise in applying Theory of Change principles and techniques to the problem of understanding anthropogenic drivers of

activities that lead to increased mortality of chimpanzees. In addition, we are partnering with the Saint Louis Zoo in the design of a Species Conservation Planning incubator. Effective conservation of endangered wildlife requires understanding the threats to species persistence and the complex human factors that drive those threats. The Species Conservation Planning Incubator will bring together diverse professional and academic expertise to study these key relationships and develop novel strategies for addressing species extinction.

**T-017 (KSR 8)**

**Create a better understanding of the specific information sets necessary for inclusion in the enhanced case study:** Ongoing.

**Result description:** Through collaboration with the Jane Goodall Institute and the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation in Liberia, we are mapping key elements of the linked chimpanzee-human system that governs removal of chimpanzees for the bushmeat trade. We seek to generate robust estimates of chimpanzee population change (decline) in the study area in and around Liberia's Grebo-Krahn National Park, and the contribution to that decline made by bushmeat hunting by local human communities.

**T-017 (KSR 8)**

**Engage key representatives from identified disciplines to collaborate with CPSG for the purpose of developing more integrated conservation planning tools and processes:** Ongoing.

**Result description:** Through this collaborative applied research project, we have partnered with the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation in Liberia as a key local expert in gathering behavioural and sociological data among residents of human communities living near the project area (Grebo-Krahn National Park). Along with research partners Impact

by Design Inc. and the Jane Goodall Institute, we have now put together a group that we hope will generate important new insights into the human behavioural drivers of bushmeat hunting in Liberia.

**T-017 (KSR 8)**

**Develop a specific case study that offers opportunities for creating an expanded information set for enhanced planning:** Ongoing.

**Result description:** We are working with Impact by Design Inc. and the Jane Goodall Institute to develop a case study in the integration of wildlife population quantitative risk assessment tools with evidence-based human behaviour change methodologies. We have chosen the Western Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes verus*) population in and around Grebo-Krahn National Park in south-eastern Liberia as our test case. Through previous work in this project, we have identified hunting chimpanzees for bushmeat as the primary threat to local population persistence, and therefore the target activity for this integrated research.

**Acknowledgements**

We thank Global Conservation Network, the donors who make up this network make everything we do possible.

**Summary of achievements**

**Total number of targets 2021–2025:** 19

**Geographic regions:** 19 Global

**Actions during 2021:**

Plan: 23 (KSR 8, 9, 10)

**Overall achievement 2021–2025:**

