

2021 Report

IUCN SSC Coral Specialist Group



CHAIR

David Obura
CORDIO East Africa,
Coastal Oceans
Research and
Development – Indian
Ocean (CORDIO) East
Africa

RED LIST AUTHORITY COORDINATOR

Beth Polidoro
Julie Ann Wrigley
Global Institute of
Sustainability, Arizona
State University,
Phoenix, Arizona, US

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

40

SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE

Instagram: @coralspecialistgroup

Twitter: @coralspecgroup

Website: <https://www.coralspecialistgroup.org/>

Mission statement

The IUCN Coral Specialist Group brings together leading scientists, practitioners and conservationists under the Species Survival Commission of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. Reflecting the vast diversity of coral reefs, their importance to people in so many ways and the imminent threat to their very existence from climate change and human uses, the group has a broad ecosystem and conservation focus. Our combined knowledge contributes to inform society and policy makers to take science-based action.

Projected impact 2021–2025

The Red List of Threatened Corals is arguably one of the most important biodiversity indicators in global policy circles. Our priority is to update the Red List of Threatened Reef-building Corals and the Coral Red List Index. This is in order to contribute to policy and decision-making processes relevant to coral reefs, oceans and climate, and to align the actions of diverse coral reef stakeholders around the world.

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-004 Complete assessment of Red List status of reef-building corals.

PLAN

T-008 Identify regional conservation priorities for Scleractinia corals and build a blueprint to improve their status.

ACT

T-001 Update global policy with the extinction status of reef-building corals.

T-006 Promote the production of biodiversity data at the species level for reef-building corals, by facilitating the adoption of new technologies among the group's members.

NETWORK

T-002 Recruit at least 10 new members by 2022.

T-007 Increase availability and mobilisation of biodiversity data on reef-building corals by promoting and fostering the use of open data information systems for coral reefs.

T-009 Train new group members as Red List assessors within early 2021.

COMMUNICATE

T-005 Organise three public/international presentations to communicate the conservation work/Red List assessment results of the IUCN Coral Specialist Group.

Activities and results 2021

ASSESS

Red List

T-004 (KSR 6)

Number of species that have been assessed through the different tools: 84

Result description: We conducted Red List reassessments entirely online. Fifty-two of 873 are endemic to the Atlantic and were sent to the IUCN Species Information Service (SIS) system. Twenty-one researchers were participating in this work from 12 different countries. Currently, we are undertaking the rest of the global coral species reassessments to finish next year, 2022.

NETWORK

Membership

T-002 (KSR 2)

Number of SSC members recruited: ongoing
Result description: We have started with the recruitment process.

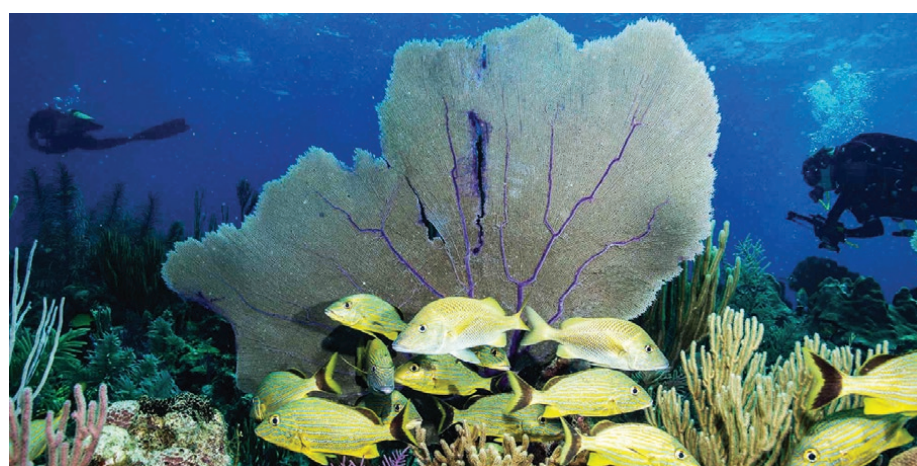
Capacity building

T-009 (KSR 2)

Number of people trained in assessment tools: 40

Result description: Altogether, this year and in 2020, we have engaged and trained more than 40 coral researchers in assessment tools.

IYOR Bank Coral Reefs
 Photo: Eric Lukas / The Ocean Agency



IYOR Bank Cuba
 Photo: David Gross / The Ocean Agency

COMMUNICATE

Communication

T-005 (KSR 13)

Number of SSC members' presentations developed in relation to specific taxonomic groups: 3

Result description: Our core team member at Arizona State University, Luis Gutierrez, presented the Atlantic Corals Red List assessment results. The Chair, Dr David Obura, participated and communicated about our Atlantic Red List reassessment progress at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26). Our core team member, Dr Fran Cabada, presented our methodology and approach during the 14th International Coral Reef Symposium (ICRS2021) online meeting.

Acknowledgements

We want to give special thanks to our Coral Heroes, helping us update the Red List assessments in the Atlantic! In particular: Alasdair Edwards, Aldo Croquer, Anastazia Banaszak, Andrea Rivera-Sosa, Elvira Alvarado, Emma Kennedy, Estrella Villamizar, Flavia Nunes, James Crabbe, Jorge Cortés, Joshua Feingold, Juan Jose Alvarado, Juan Pablo Quimbayo, Liz Goergen, Lorenzo Alvarez-Filip, Marcelo Kitahara, Margaret Miller, Michael Sweet, Nadia Santodomingo, Rosa Rodríguez-Martínez, Kaveh Samimi-Namin, Greta Aeby, Bert Hoeksma, Doug Fenner and Mark Vermeij.

Summary of achievements

Total number of targets 2021–2025: 8

Geographic regions: 8 Global

Actions during 2021:

Assess: 1 (KSR 6)

Network: 2 (KSR 2)

Communicate: 1 (KSR 13)

Overall achievement 2021–2025:

