

## 2021 Report

# IUCN SSC Hornbill Specialist Group



#### CO-CHAIR

**Lucy Kemp** (Africa)  
Mabula Ground  
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#### CO-CHAIR

**Aparajita Datta** (Asia)  
Nature Conservation  
Foundation, India

#### RED LIST AUTHORITY

**COORDINATOR**  
BirdLife International

#### NUMBER OF MEMBERS

141

#### SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE

Facebook: @iucnhornbills

Instagram: @iucn\_hornbills

Twitter: @iucn\_hornbills

Website: <https://iucnhornbills.org>

### Mission statement

The Hornbill Specialist Group aims to use our combined knowledge and skills for evidence-based conservation action of hornbills and their habitats.

### Projected impact 2021–2025

By the end of 2025, the Hornbill Specialist Group (HSG) will have carried out conservation planning for all Endangered and Vulnerable hornbill species in both Asia and Africa, with implementation agencies supported by the HSG to meet their targets. Conservation planning will include Indigenous Knowledge Systems to be used in designing bespoke conservation actions/models where the threats are anthropogenic in nature. We will have enabled and supported research for greater understanding of lesser-studied species, especially in Africa and for some Asian species. The knowledge will be used for evidence-based conservation action for hornbills and their habitats. By 2025, we will have built a strong and active collaborative hornbill research and conservation network in Asia and established one in Africa.

### Targets 2021–2025

#### ASSESS

**T-006** Continue to publish and share *Hornbill Natural History and Conservation* (HNHC) newsletter/journal.

**T-007** Publish a book on the status and conservation (state of current knowledge) of the world's hornbills.

**T-009** Prepare (or share existing) 'advice' on release/reintroduction of (e.g. confiscated) hornbills into the wild.

**T-010** Organise Red List assessment workshops for African and some Asian species.

**T-011** Conduct climate change assessment for Southern Ground Hornbill (*Bucorvus leadbeateri*).

**T-012** Encourage some national-level assessments/action plans.

**T-013** Compile and publish bibliography of hornbill publications.

**T-021** Obtain better range-wide population and habitat assessments for global population estimates based on science to inform Red List threat category.

**T-022** Identify threatened species priority areas.

**T-034** Revise and publish the hornbill research training manual online.

**T-050** Document research projects and compile case studies by HSG members and others on hornbills and create knowledge database.

**T-060** Liaise with the Green Status of Species Task Force to test this approach for ~2–5 threatened hornbill species.

#### PLAN

**T-014** Update, review and implement existing plans.

**T-015** Publish multi-species Visayan Action Plan and ensure collaboration between groups.

**T-016** Publish range-wide action plan for the Plain-pouched Hornbill (*Rhyticeros subruficollis*).

**T-017** Publish range-wide action plan for Northern Ground Hornbill (*Bucorvus abyssinicus*).

**T-018** Publish Action Plan for the Mindoro Hornbill (*Penelopides mindorensis*).

**T-019** Publish range-wide action plans (with adequate government representatives/all relevant stakeholders) for at least a few Vulnerable and Endangered species (Sunda Hornbills, Indo-Chinese and Philippine endemics).

**T-020** Assess 2 Plan (A2P) for African hornbill species.

**T-054** Push for CITES listing/trade issues for *Bycanistes*, *Ceratogymna*, *Bucorvus*, Sulu Hornbill (*Anthracosceros montani*) precautionary, follow up on Helmeted Hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*).

**T-055** Motion for new names/taxonomy.



Wreathed Hornbill (*Rhyticeros undulatus*) male on a visit to the nest at Pakke Tiger Reserve, India  
Photo: Aparajita Datta

**T-056** Develop an IUCN motion (resolution) on the importance of hornbills for habitat (especially forest) restoration (UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration).

**T-057** Hold a Helmeted Hornbill update/ side event and 'All Hornbills' side event at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2021.

**T-058** Convention on Migratory Species: support inclusion of the case of the Plain-pouched Hornbill.

**T-059** Submit phylogeny recommendation to BirdLife.

#### **ACT**

**T-025** Finalise and share 'Hornbill Basic Care Guidelines'.

**T-027** Collect data and analyse trade in hornbills; assist in preparation and lobbying of CITES listings for (African) hornbills, e.g. *Ceratogymna* spp. and perhaps *Bycanistes* spp.

**T-028** Continue to drive/support existing action plans.

**T-029** Continue with field surveys that assess the status of hornbills in the wild (e.g. hotspots for protection/management).

**T-030** Engage with governments on hornbill conservation issues.

**T-031** Develop and publish sustainability best practices guidelines.

**T-032** Develop best practices guidelines on community engagements: lessons from existing projects, with nest guardian programmes.

**T-033** Encourage establishment of conservation actions/programmes in countries with less work undertaken or poor information: collaborations/training.

**T-044** Provide land use guidelines.

**T-045** Support rural communities involved in species conservation: nature tourism/ nest guardians.

**T-046** Undertake more policy-level work with governments that leads to real change.

#### **NETWORK**

**T-001** Explore having a government liaison for Indochinese countries that we can work with.

**T-002** Compile and profile HSG members, organisational affiliations, projects, publications, contributions, skills and expertise.

**T-003** Provide training in Red List assessment for members: representatives from different range countries.

**T-004** Provide training in scientific research skills/writing/data analysis: workshop needed for members/students.

**T-005** Build conservation capacity and competency, both individual and organisational (Conservation Planning Specialist Group training, e.g., using Asian Species Action Partnership approach).

**T-023** Build partners/networks in range countries that are poorly represented or with information gaps (Indo-China and most of Africa).

**T-024** Explore Science for Nature and People Partnership (SNAPP) opportunity to

enhance collaboration between different taxon Specialist Groups and field partners, etc.

**T-035** Improve and increase communication and functioning with existing HSG members and the Steering Committee.

**T-036** Harness members' skills and delegate tasks to more members: increase engagement and involvement of members in actions/activities.

**T-037** Re-invite members; ensure representation and diversity.

**T-038** Build relationships with non-hornbill groups and promote successful outcomes (SNAPP Opportunity).

**T-039** Encourage our members to contribute to global/regional databases: iNat, eBird, etc.

**T-040** Approach Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), a regional intergovernmental organisation.

**T-041** Engage with potential large funders for highlighting threats to hornbills and seeking partnerships for support.

**T-042** Look at engaging relevant industry partners in conservation partnership.

**T-043** Concession land management: engage with relevant government stakeholders (regional/federal).

#### **COMMUNICATE**

**T-047** Establish a blog on the website where members can write, contribute, host podcasts.

**T-048** Host online events and/or talks by members on their work (engagement and mentoring): invite partners, funders, SSC main office, Conservation Planning Specialist Group (CPSG), etc.

**T-049** Improve quality and frequency of communications through websites, social media and listserv.

**T-051** Organise International Hornbill Conference, Bhutan 2022.

**T-052** Manage the implementation of a communication strategy (social media and events).

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## Activities and results 2021

### ASSESS

#### Research activities

**T-006** (KSR 5)

**Number of publications produced in internal journals of SSC groups:** 1

**Result description:** We published one newsletter in July 2021: Vol 2(1) with two research articles and five notes from the field.

**T-013** (KSR 5)

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

**Result description:** We had two interns in Asia and Africa who compiled a bibliographic database on all 62 species of hornbills. All 32 species of Asian hornbills and the details of scientific research work done on them were compiled in one Google spreadsheet. Later, we used Airtable software to create the database and make it more convenient to manage. We are now in the process of making it accessible online on the IUCN HSG's website. The links and details will be shared here once the databases are finalised.

**T-034** (KSR 5)

**Number of publications produced in internal journals of SSC groups:** 1

**Result description:** A meeting was held to discuss the updating and rewriting of a new Hornbill Research training manual. Multiple chapters with many authors have been identified; however, work on the chapters by individual authors is yet to begin. Completion is expected by December 2022.

**T-050** (KSR 5)

**Number of research projects completed or supported by SSC members per taxonomic group and region:** 2

**Result description:** The Asian and African hornbill bibliography/database is completed; the next step will be to compile details of various research projects on

hornbill species across range countries.

This work will continue and be completed by December 2022.

### PLAN

#### Planning

**T-015** (KSR 8)

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

**Result description:** The multi-species Action Planning workshop for five threatened endemic species was held in Negros, Philippines, in June 2019. This workshop included conservation planning for two endemic threatened hornbill species: the Critically Endangered Rufous-headed Hornbill (*Rhabdotorrhinus waldeni*) and the Endangered Visayan Hornbill (*Penelopides panini*). The final report was published in February 2022 and can be downloaded at: <https://iucnhornbills.org/western-visayas-conservation-workshop-report/>.

### ACT

#### Technical advice

**T-030** (KSR 10)

**Number of technical consultations provided to support conservation actions:** 5

**Result description:** This is carried out by many HSG members through their research and conservation projects for multiple species in many range countries in Asia and Africa. Collectively through the HSG, engagement with government authorities has been carried out specifically in some range countries for species like the Critically Endangered Helmeted Hornbill (Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Brunei, Myanmar), Sulu Hornbill and Rufous-headed Hornbill (Philippines), and the Vulnerable Southern Ground Hornbill (South Africa, Zimbabwe).

### NETWORK

#### Capacity building

**T-004** (KSR 2)

**Number of people trained in other fields:** 6

**Result description:** We have four new members from Africa.

**T-005** (KSR 2)

**Number of people trained in conservation planning:** 3

**Result description:** Within Africa, we have three new members trained by CPSG in conservation planning, and they will be involved in three conservation plans in 2022.

#### Membership

**T-002** (KSR 2)

**Number of SSC members recruited:** 12

**Result description:** An online survey form with many questions was created and sent

out to the HSG member network on 30 October 2021. By mid-November, we had received 25 responses. The survey was closed in early December. However, there was a problem retrieving the data. We are now redoing the survey. Several new African members and a few Asian members were recruited into the HSG this year.

**T-035** (KSR 2)

**Number of SSC members recruited:** 20

**Result description:** We have added several new members since 2020, especially from Africa. Several members have also now been recruited into helping with different activities and work of the HSG. For example, our Editorial Board had five members including one from the Steering Committee. Given the level of work, we have recruited three additional HSG members. Communications on updates and activities have increased. Several Steering Committee members are also in key advisory roles on trade and captive breeding, while others have contributed to the social media communications, conservation planning and training.

#### Synergy

**T-023** (KSR 4)

**Number of governments supported to develop species conservation policies:** 3

**Result description:** This has been initiated in several countries in Africa such as Ghana, Nigeria and Ethiopia.

**T-042** (KSR 1)

**Number of funding partners established and maintained:** 6

**Result description:** Several in-country hornbill research and conservation projects are engaging with new partners (private, corporate) for funding and support of their projects/work on hornbills in Asia and Africa. Details of these are not yet compiled.

### COMMUNICATE

#### Communication

**T-048** (KSR 12)

**Number of media articles mentioning IUCN Species theme:** 1

**Result description:** An online research and conservation seminar was held on 27 September 2021 with 5–6 talks by hornbill researchers/HSG members. Since this was the first time, we opened it only to HSG members. Around 50 members participated. We planned to do more such talks periodically in the year but could not yet organise another event. We hope to do one more between July and September 2022.

**T-049** (KSR 12)

**Number of media articles mentioning IUCN Species theme:** 1



Wreathed hornbills in a large communal roost (around 100 birds) near Pakke Tiger Reserve, Arunachal Pradesh, India  
Photo: Aparajita Datta

**Result description:** The website has been updated, communications made through the HSG listserv, and several posts published on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook from official handles. Seventeen posts were published in the last year, with 1,677 fans and followers and 1,933 engagements. As of April 2021, the three IUCN HSG social media channels have: Twitter: 178 followers, Instagram: 818 followers and Facebook: 681 followers.

**T-052 (KSR 12)**

**Number of media articles mentioning IUCN Species theme: 1**

**Result description:** Our Steering Committee member Yoki Hadiparkarsa and his team at Rangkong Indonesia implement our social media communications on three channels. They have produced a strategy for social media communications, which needs to be further updated and discussed/improved. Their team is supported by financial support from Mandai Nature (annually given to HSG). We hope to also discuss with the IUCN bird coordinator and link him with the social media team for suggestions on social media communications.

#### Scientific meetings

**T-051 (KSR 12)**

**Number of scientific events organised: 0**

**Result description:** The 8th International Hornbill Conference was to be held in Bhutan in May 2021. This conference is held every four years; the last one was in

2017 in Malaysia. The conference was postponed due to COVID-19 and planned for May 2022. However, it will now be held in May 2023. A scientific committee and organising committee are in place, some keynote speakers have been decided, the venue and theme have been decided, and planning meetings have been held.

#### Acknowledgements

All of us are working in a voluntary capacity for the HSG and we thank our members, Advisory Board, Steering Committee, the Editorial Board of the newsletter and those in the IUCN SSC Chair's office for their support, especially Jafet Nassar and Mayerlin Ramos. The key partner organisations who have supported the activities undertaken are the Mabula Ground Hornbill Project, Nature Conservation Foundation, Mandai Nature, Hornbill Research Foundation, Rangkong Indonesia, Attica Zoological Park, Malaysian Nature Society, Disney Animal Kingdom, Kasetsart University, EAZA Hornbill Tag, Maguari-One Zoo and Wildlife Consultants, and the Wildlife Conservation Society.

Individuals from several other institutions such as TRAFFIC, North Carolina Zoo, PhilBio, Birdlife International, Talarak Foundation, and the IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group have helped during the conservation action planning workshops and/or participated or

worked in collaboration with the HSG. We thank the Hornbill Research Foundation in Thailand for supporting the Programme Officer. We thank Maitreyi Hegde and Elizabeth Zadnik for their work on the hornbill bibliography database, Janhavi Rajan (NCF) for work on the website and newsletter and Elsia Yuanti and the communication team at Rangkong Indonesia for their work on the social media communications of the HSG.

#### Summary of achievements

**Total number of targets 2021–2025: 57**

**Geographic regions: 1 America, 45 Africa, 53 Asia, 2 Europe**

#### Actions during 2021:

Assess: 4 (KSR 5)

Plan: 1 (KSR 8)

Act: 1 (KSR 10)

Network: 6 (KSR 1, 2, 4)

Communicate: 4 (KSR 12)

#### Overall achievement 2021–2025:

