

2021 Report

IUCN SSC Sonoran Desert Plant Specialist Group



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NUMBER OF MEMBERS

23

Mission statement

The mission of the IUCN SSC Sonoran Desert Plant Specialist Group (SDPSG) is to assess the extinction risk of all Sonoran Desert plant species, educate the public about Sonoran Desert species and threats, and implement conservation plans supported by the Red Listing process.

Projected impact 2021–2025

By the end of 2025, we strive to have made substantial progress towards the ambitious agenda of assessing all Sonoran Desert species. At the same time, we expect to make progress in surveying and removing high priority invasive species through greater coordination. Conservation planning will begin concurrently with the Red List assessments on high priority species chosen through the process of prioritising Sonoran Desert plants for assessment and by working with other specialist groups to create a comprehensive list of threatened species across taxa.

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-001 Coordinate with other groups to coordinate on overlapping species.

T-002 Complete assessments for 250 Fabaceae species.

T-004 Submit three funding proposals to support assessments and expert workshops.

T-005 Complete a draft list of Fabaceae species endemic to the Sonoran Desert.

T-010 Develop threats map of the Sonoran Desert to assist in drafting assessments.

PLAN

T-008 Initiate conservation planning for threatened plant species in the Sonoran Desert using IUCN conservation planning guidance.

ACT

T-009 Map distribution and remove priority invasive plant species in the Sonoran Desert.

T-011 Advance in situ and ex situ conservation (seeds and living collections) of Critically Endangered and Endangered plants and preventive sampling of seeds of more widely distributed plant taxa.

NETWORK

T-006 Hold annual SDPSG meetings (possibly during regional meetings).

COMMUNICATE

T-003 Create and finalise logo.

T-007 Include sessions/discussion panels on the activities and deliverables of the SDPSG in the Arid Lands Symposium or other relevant regional or international meetings.

Activities and results 2021

ASSESS

Red List

T-001 (KSR 6)

Number of new global Red List assessments completed: 1

Result description: We coordinated with many groups on overlapping species, including Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, New Mexico BioPark, and the SSC Global Tree Specialist Group.

T-002 (KSR 6)

Number of global Red List reassessments completed: 1

Result description: We have made substantial progress on drafting assessments for Fabaceae species. We hope to complete these next year and begin the process of expert review.



Coulter's lupine
Photo: Marianne Jensen



Little-leaved palo verde, Sonoran Desert
Photo: Steve Jones



Kallstroemia grandiflora
Photo: Marianne Jensen

T-004 (KSR 6)

Number of new global Red List assessments completed: 2

Result description: We applied for a National Science Foundation grant in February 2021 and a Bureau of Land Management grant in May 2021 that would have supported assessments and expert workshops.

Research activities

T-005 (KSR 5)

Number of research projects completed or supported by SSC members per taxonomic group and region: 1

Result description: We completed a draft list of Fabaceae species endemic to the Sonoran Desert.

T-010 (KSR 5)

Number of research projects completed or supported by SSC members per taxonomic group and region: 1

Result description: We have completed the initial threats map for the Sonoran Desert. We have a manual process for using the threats map in assessments and are working to automate some of this work. This will continue to be a tool that we can improve and augment.

PLAN

Planning

T-008 (KSR 8)

Number of conservation plans/strategies developed: 0

Result description: Co-chair Dr Helen Rowe participated in the SSC Species Conservation Planning Group facilitation training.

ACT

Conservation actions

T-009 (KSR 10)

Number of actions addressing major drivers/emerging threats of species or population loss: 1

Result description: In partnership with the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy and other organisations in the Central Arizona Conservation Alliance (CAZCA), we have removed priority invasive plants from over 50 acres in 2021.

NETWORK

Membership

T-006 (KSR 2)

Number of SSC members recruited: 1

Result description: We held an annual meeting in October 2021 to provide updates and discuss next steps with members and partners.

COMMUNICATE

Communication

T-003 (KSR 13)

Number of communication products using innovative tools: 1

Result description: The logo of the SDPSG has been completed.

T-007 (KSR 12)

Number of presentations delivered in scientific events: 3

Result description: We presented at the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy Parsons Field Institute Update in May 2021 and to the Arizona Native Plant Society annual meeting in November 2021. In addition, the chair hosted a workshop to engage regional natural resource managers, botanists and researchers to review the draft threats map of the Sonoran Desert.

Acknowledgements

We'd like to thank Clay Meredith at New Mexico BioPark for the development of the new rapid assessment tool and for providing us with output from the tool. We'd like to thank the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy for assistance by volunteers on mapping species and assistance with developing the threats map. We'd like to thank students at NAU for work in drafting assessments and developing the threats map.

Summary of achievements

Total number of targets 2021–2025: 11

Geographic regions: 4 Global, 7 America

Actions during 2021:

Assess: 5 (KSR 5, 6)

Plan: 1 (KSR 8)

Act: 1 (KSR 10)

Network: 1 (KSR 2)

Communicate: 2 (KSR 12, 13)

Overall achievement 2021–2025:

