

IUCN SSC Species Monitoring Specialist Group



SPECIES MONITORING
Specialist Group



CHAIR

P.J. Stephenson

Laboratory for Conservation Biology,
Department of Ecology
& Evolution, University
of Lausanne,
Lausanne, Switzerland

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

86

SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE

Twitter: @Monitor_Species

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

Mission statement

The IUCN SSC Species Monitoring Specialist Group (SMSG) aims to enhance biodiversity conservation by improving the availability and use of data on species populations, their habitats and threats.

Projected impact 2021–2025

The Species Monitoring Specialist Group helps build capacity for biodiversity monitoring in a range of stakeholder groups, from government departments to companies to NGOs, and also in taxonomic Specialist Groups. That increased capacity for data access and use will improve adaptive management of conservation projects, which in turn will improve the status of species. However, we cannot predict precisely how many species will have their conservation status improved as a result of our work.

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-001 Enhance species monitoring and Red List data quality and volume through the testing of monitoring methods and the development and dissemination of lessons, tools and guidelines.

T-002 Support the development and testing of the Green Status of Species (GSS).

T-003 Integrate the IUCN Red List Index and the Green Status of Species into monitoring tools and guidelines developed by the group so as to encourage uptake by civil society and business as well as countries.

NETWORK

T-004 Develop and implement partnerships that result in projects and products that enhance species monitoring.

T-005 Engage IUCN members and Secretariat teams in group projects.

Activities and results 2021

ASSESS

Green Status

T-002 (KSR 6)

Number of new Green Status of Species assessments completed: 2

Result description: The Chair contributed to two GSS assessments (African Penguin, *Spheniscus demersus*; Sahafary Sportive Lemur, *Lepilemur septentrionalis*) included in the latest IUCN Red List (2021-3) as a result of an SMSG project.

Red List

T-003 (KSR 7)

Number of NGOs and companies using group tools and guidelines that advocate using the Red List Index or Green Status of Species: 1

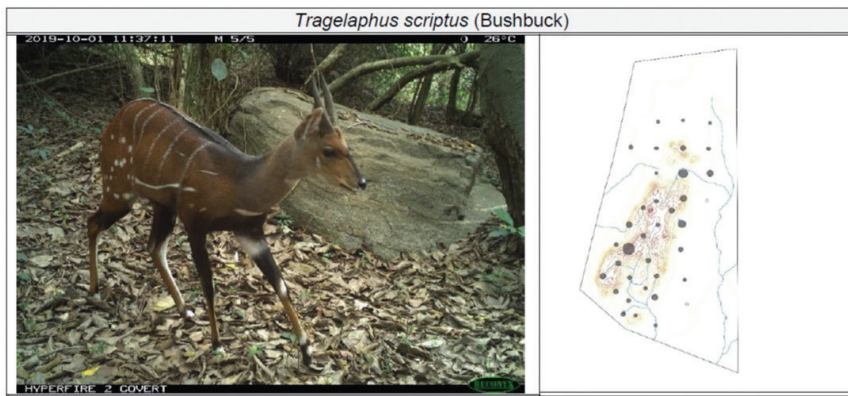
Result description: The group's ongoing project with the IUCN Global Business and Biodiversity Programme has led to the development of a biodiversity strategy and monitoring guidelines for the coffee company Nespresso, with encouragement to use both the Red List and Green Status of Species (see Stephenson & Carbone, 2021c, below).

Research activities

T-001 (KSR 5)

Number of scientific publications about species research that acknowledge SSC affiliation: 9

Result description: This year there were major advances in testing and comparing monitoring methods at project sites (e.g. Shai Hills, Ghana) and through literature reviews. There was also major progress in the development of monitoring guidelines with the Chair being lead author on the *IUCN Guidelines for planning and monitoring corporate biodiversity performance*. A research project supervised by the Chair and led by Ines Moreno explored biodiversity data and capacity gaps and causes in East Africa (results to be published in 2022). A grant was also secured from the Swiss government to start a new research project led by the group Chair that will lead to the development of a decision support tool to help multiple stakeholders access



A bushbuck captured by a camera trap in Shai Hills Reserve Ghana, and the species distribution map the specialist group has helped develop for reserve managers
Photo: Kofi Amponsah-Mensah

biodiversity data and tools. Key papers this year as a direct result of the Chair's work or group projects included: (1) Badalotti, A., et al. (2021). 'Improving the monitoring of conservation programmes: lessons from a grant-making initiative for threatened species'. *Oryx* 56:288–294. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0030605320000538>; (2) Grace, M.K., et al. (2021). 'Testing a global standard for quantifying species recovery and assessing conservation impact'. *Conservation Biology* 35(6):1833–1849. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13756>; (3) Hochkirch, A., et al. (2021). 'A strategy for the next decade to address data deficiency in neglected biodiversity'. *Conservation Biology* 35(2):502–509. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13589>; (4) Moussy, C., et al. (2022). 'A quantitative global review of species population monitoring'. *Conservation Biology* 36: e13721. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13721>; (5) Stephenson, P.J. (2021). 'Monitoring should not be a barrier to conservation success: a response to Sanders et al.'. *Oryx* 55(5):656. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0030605321000624>; (6) Stephenson, P.J. and Carbone, G. (2021a). *Guidelines for planning and monitoring corporate biodiversity performance*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. <https://doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.CH.2021.05.en>; (7) Stephenson, P.J. and Carbone, G. (2021b). 'New guidelines allow companies to plan and monitor biodiversity performance at the corporate level'. *Oryx* 55(4):491–492. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0030605321000442>; (8) Stephenson, P.J. and Carbone, G. (2021c). *Nespresso and Biodiversity*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. Available at: [Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.https://www.sustainability.nespresso.com/sites/site.prod.sustainability.nespresso.com/files/Nespresso-And-Biodiversity-2021.pdf](https://www.sustainability.nespresso.com/sites/site.prod.sustainability.nespresso.com/files/Nespresso-And-Biodiversity-2021.pdf); (9) Zwerts, J.A., et al. (2021). 'Methods for wildlife monitoring in tropical forests: Comparing human observations, camera traps, and passive acoustic sensors'. *Conservation Science and Practice* 3:e568. <https://doi.org/10.1111/csp2.568>. The Chair also presented Group work and promoted species monitoring at several conferences including: (1) 'An overview of modern biodiversity monitoring tools: challenges and opportunities',

symposium on Innovations in Biodiversity Monitoring for Conservation (online), International Congress for Conservation Biology, Kigali, Rwanda, December 2021; (2) 'The role of agricultural ecosystems in biodiversity conservation', Landscapes for Forests and Food plenary (online), 2021 Global Landscapes Forum Climate: Forest, Food and Finance - Frontiers of Change conference, Glasgow, Scotland, November 2021; (3) Launch of IUCN Biodiversity Guidelines for Business, We Value Nature Ten Day Challenge, webinar, March 2021; (4) 'The use of environmental DNA in monitoring aquatic biodiversity for conservation: a review of challenges and opportunities', DNAquanet Online Conference, March 2021.

NETWORK

Capacity building

T-004 (KSR 1)

Number of partners engaged in group projects: 2

Result description: New partnerships were established in 2021 with: (1) the cruise ship company Viking; the Chair was invited to join the research advisory group and has now developed (and received Viking approval for) a new project due to start in 2022 with two other group members (Jessica Meeuwig and Denise Risch) and their institutions (Blue Abacus and the Scottish Association for Marine Science); (2) the University of St Gallen, Switzerland, for a new research project with the Chair and two group members (Maria Cecilia Londono and Yaa Ntiamoa-Baidu).

Proposal development and funding

T-005 (KSR 3)

Number of species monitoring initiatives implemented together with IUCN members, national/regional committees and Secretariat: 2

Result description: Business guidelines for biodiversity planning and monitoring were developed with the IUCN Global Business and Biodiversity Programme at the IUCN Secretariat. The project to assess global monitoring schemes published its results (see Moussy et al., 2021, above), the result of a collaboration with BirdLife International, an IUCN Member.

Acknowledgements

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Summary of achievements

Total number of targets 2021–2025: 5

Geographic regions: 5 Global

Actions during 2021:

Assess: 3 (KSR 5, 6, 7)

Network: 2 (KSR 1, 3)

Overall achievement 2021–2025:

