

2016-2017 Report



Tigga Kingston



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Co-Chairs

Tigga Kingston ⁽¹⁾ (Old World)
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Red List Authority Coordinators

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Location/Affiliation

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Number of members

94

Social networks

Facebook:
IUCN Bat Specialist Group
Website:
www.iucnbsg.org/



Mission statement

- (1) To contribute to the mission and goals of IUCN/SSC.
- (2) To ensure the maintenance or recovery of populations of threatened bat populations.
- (3) To ensure that other bat species remain at a favourable conservation status.

Main activities by Key Priority Area (2016 & 2017)

Barometer of life

■ Red List

- i. Late 2017, a new Red List Authority Coordinator (RLAC) was appointed for the Old World bats (Dave Waldien), to help with connecting and guiding the regional Red List Authorities (RLAs) to complete the bat assessments. (KSR #1)
- ii. Regional RLAs for the Old World bats were recruited (e.g. for South and Southeast Asia, Africa, Australasia, Europe) and assessments for the threatened species were completed. (KSR #1)
- iii. The first Global Bat Taxonomy Working Group meeting was held in October 2017 to establish a global bat taxonomy database. This included a review of progress of current online systems in development as well as planning for their integration/merger. End-user needs were also identified. (KSR #4)
- iv. Only a couple of dozen species of New World bats remain to be assessed. Some refinement in data and maps remains to be conducted. (KSR #1)

Conservation action

■ Capacity building

- i. Progress implementing solutions to the human-bat conflict of the Mauritius Fruit Bat (*Pteropus niger*) in Mauritius. A stakeholder workshop by IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force on netting techniques to keep bats

from fruit crops was held in Mauritius, August 2017). The workshop demonstrated methods in use elsewhere and identified barriers to netting uptake and possible solutions. (KSR #17)

- ii. Additional progress implementing solutions to the human-bat conflict of *P. niger* in Mauritius. A workshop was held to provide training (May 2016) on how to count flying fox populations for monitoring in Mauritius. This led to two successful surveys of *P. niger* by Mauritian National Parks and Conservation Service (Oct 2016, 2017). (KSR #17)

- iii. North America is rapidly approaching a standardized protocol to monitor acoustics and presence of *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (a psychrophilic fungus that causes white-nose syndrome, a fatal disease that has devastated bat populations in parts of the United States and Canada). (KSR #18)

■ Red List

- i. Reassessment of *P. niger* following two culls was completed by a diverse group of assessors and reviewers from the Bat Specialist Group (BSG), Mauritius NGOs, and officers from the Mauritius Government. (KSR #32)

■ Synergy

- i. There has been a strengthened interaction with wind energy companies for bat conservation, and links are already in place in some countries. Expansion of these links, stemming from the CMS listing, should proceed and be coordinated. (KSR #29)

Acknowledgements

We thank the following donors/sponsors for assistance with workshops in Mauritius (monitoring and net-use): Bat Conservation International, Chester Zoo, Mauritius Wildlife Foundation and the Government of Mauritius' Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security. Work towards a resolution of the human-bat



Greater Long-nosed Bat (*Leptonycteris nivalis*), Endangered
Photo: Rodrigo Medellín

conflict is underpinned by the collaboration and cooperation of the National Parks and Conservation Service and the Food and Agricultural Research Extension Institute (FAREI), Mauritius Wildlife Foundation, and experts from the IUCN SSC Task Force on Human-Wildlife Conflict led by the Chair, Alex Zimmerman. We thank Ian and Sandy Groves and Sara Bumrungsri for sharing their expertise at the netting workshop, and Tammy Mildenstein for her lead of the flying fox monitoring workshop. We thank the regional RLAs in the Old World for the significant progress in the Red List assessments - Kyle Armstrong, Dai Fukui, Neil Furey, Suren Gazaryan, Tammy Mildenstein, Ara Monadjem and from the GMA team Riccardo Piraccini.

Targets for the quadrennium 2017-2020

Barometer of life

Red List: (1) complete assessment of Old and New World bats; (2) establish a global bat taxonomy database.

Communications

Communication: improve BSG communication with all of its members.

Conservation action

Capacity building: standardized protocol to monitor acoustics and presence of *P. destructans* in North America.

Research activities: (1) secure standardized protocols to monitor *P. destructans* in North America (including Mexico); (2) compile all Important Areas for Bat Conservation (AICOMs) and Important Sites for Bat Conservation (SICOMs) in one GIS platform.

Synergy: (1) resolve human-bat conflict and secure stable populations of *P. niger*; (2) strengthen interaction with wind energy companies for bat conservation.

Increasing diversity of SSC

Synergy: (1) develop network of bat conservation researchers in Oceania; (2) create a network of networks around the world for bat conservation.

Projected impact for the quadrennium 2017-2020

By the end of 2020, we envision that by having effective Red List assessments in place, informed by current taxonomy, that this will underpin effective conservation planning for bat species globally. The BSG anticipates a sustainable resolution to the human-bat conflict in Mauritius, and an end to Government culls of *P. niger*. A conservation networking initiative in Oceania is intended to promote regional capacity and conservation of threatened island bat species. The North American Bat Conservation Alliance will be solidly in place and recognized by the three federal governments of Canada, the U.S. and Mexico, as the entity to promote bat conservation in the continent. RELCOM, the Latin American Alliance, will have the network of AICOMs and SICOMs articulated and integrated into a GIS upon which each country will enable investment in bat conservation priorities. Following the CMS listing of four species of *Lasiurus*, the implementation of the associated requirements is a priority for the quadrennium; additional species are likely to be listed. A survey to monitor the presence of *P. destructans* will have, by the end of 2020, expanded to Mexico and research for treatment and recovery of bats affected by White Nose Syndrome will continue.

Summary of activities (2016-2017)

Key Priority Area ratio: 2/7

Key Priority Areas addressed:

- Barometer of life (4 activities)
- Conservation action (5 activities)

Main KSRs addressed: 1, 4, 17, 18, 29, 32

Resolutions 2016 WCC: 019

KSR: Key Species Result