

# IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group

2019 Report



Christine Breitenmoser



Urs Breitenmoser

## Co-Chairs

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## Location/Affiliation

<sup>(1)</sup> KORA, Muri b. Bern, Switzerland  
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## Number of members

193

## Social networks

Facebook: IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group  
Website: [www.catsg.org](http://www.catsg.org)



## Mission statement

Cat Manifesto  
([www.catsg.org/index.php?id=44](http://www.catsg.org/index.php?id=44)).

## Projected impact for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

By 2020, we will have implemented the Assess-Plan-Act (APA) approach for additional cat species. We envision improving the status assessments and launching new conservation planning processes. These conservation initiatives will be combined with communicational and educational programmes for people and institutions living with these species.

## Targets for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

### Assess

Capacity building: attend and facilitate a workshop to develop recommendations for the conservation of the Persian Leopard (*Panthera pardus tulliana*) in July 2020.

Documents review: initiate the development of the Cat Specialist Group's Small Cat Agenda that includes three over-arching themes, which are related to each other and serve the overall goal to advance the conservation of small cats and their living spaces. This is reached through improving our knowledge on small cats, raising awareness, building up a 'small cat community', and initiating specific conservation programmes wherever needed and possible.

Red List: update key Red List assessments: Fishing Cat (*Prionailurus viverrinus*), Chinese Mountain Cat (*Felis bieti*), Leopard (*Panthera pardus*) subspecies.

Research activities: develop camera trapping database which feeds into the Global Mammal Assessment and the IUCN SIS database.

Technical advice: (1) develop Cat Monitoring Guidelines; (2) conservation of the Wild Cat (*Felis silvestris*) in Scotland: review of the conservation status and assessment of conservation activities.

### Plan

Planning: (1) revise the National Action Plan for Asiatic Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus venaticus*) in Iran; (2) participate in Javan Leopard (*Panthera pardus melas*) workshop; (3) facilitate lynx workshop; (4) develop conservation strategy for the Pallas's Cat (*Otocolobus manul*); (5) planning for the Leopard in Africa and Southeast Asia; (6) updating and coordination for the Lion (*Panthera leo*) Conservation Strategy; (7) facilitate a workshop to develop a conservation strategy for the Jaguar (*Panthera onca*) in a number of neglected countries in collaboration with San Diego Zoo Global.

Scientific meetings: attend workshop on non-detriment findings in regard to trophy hunting in Sevilla, Spain.

Synergy: attend European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) and Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Felid Taxon Advisory Group (TAG) meetings.

Technical advice: (1) attend Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) midterm workshop; (2) attend CITES Animal Committee,



Steering Committee meetings and Conference of the Parties (CoP); (3) attend first range state meeting of the joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI); (4) organise a one-day workshop with CITES and CMS Secretariats to discuss cat items on their agenda and how we can support them, and to have an initial discussion of the Programme of Work for the joint African Carnivores Initiative; (5) finalise the *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa* on a mandate from CMS under the African Carnivores Initiative; (6) submit the final version of the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa* to the CITES Secretariat in time for CoP18.

#### **Act**

Conservation actions: (1) support implementation of the revised strategy for Leopard in the Caucasus ecoregion; (2) support implementation of the revised National Action Plan for Asiatic Cheetah in Iran.

#### **Network**

Communication: (1) maintain the Digital Cat Library; (2) attend the SSC Leaders' Meeting in Abu Dhabi and contribute to various sessions.

Policy: attend CITES Animal Committee, Steering Committee meetings and CoP.

Technical advice: organise a meeting with Lion specialists and the appointed Lion database manager to discuss the Lion database and the content of the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa*.

Synergy: attend the World Conservation Congress in Marseille in June 2020 and participate in a number of sessions during the forum.

#### **Communicate**

Communication: (1) World Wildlife Day celebration: Cat theme; (2) develop a *Cat News* issue on the Status and Conservation Needs for Pallas's Cat; (3) develop a *Cat News* issue on the Status and Conservation Needs for Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) in Continental Europe; (4) scale up communication and fundraising; (5) produce two regular *Cat News* issues per year.

Policy: attend the CMS CoP13 in India and participate in a side event on the African Carnivores Initiative.

Scientific meetings: (1) participate in the Suicide or Survival (SOS) Conference in The Hague representing the IUCN SSC APA approach; (2) attend the 2nd International Small Wild Cat Conservation Summit; (3) attend meeting of the African Lion Working Group; (4) attend the II International Symposium on the Ecology and Conservation of the Jaguar and other Neotropical Cats in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil in August

2020 as a member of the scientific committee and key note speaker; (5) attend international conference on Snow Leopard monitoring and conservation and organise a side event for the Pallas's Cat in May 2020.

#### **Activities and results 2019**

##### **Assess**

##### Documents review

**i.** Draft assessments of the knowledge base and the quality of the Red List assessment for eight species: Andean Cat (*Leopardus jacobita*), African Golden Cat (*Caracal aurata*), European Wildcat (*Felis silvestris*), Jungle Cat (*Felis chaus*), Rusty-spotted Cat (*Prionailurus rubiginosus*), Flat-headed Cat (*Prionailurus planiceps*), Pallas's Cat, and Borneo Bay Cat (*Catopuma badia*). (KSR #15)

##### Red List

**i.** Assessment for Indochinese Leopard (*Panthera pardus delacourii*) completed and uploaded; assessment for Sri Lankan Leopard (*P. p. kotiya*) completed and submitted. Because the Wild Cat is now two species, we initiated the assessment of both species, *Felis silvestris* and *Felis lybica*. We also initiated the reassessment of Pallas's Cat, Chinese Mountain Cat, Indian



African Wild Cat  
Photo: P. Meier



Near Threatened Jaguar, *Panthera onca*  
Photo: P. Meier

Leopard (*P. p. fusca*), Arabian Leopard (*P. p. nimr*) and Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*). (KSR #1)

#### Technical advice

**i.** Initial discussions to develop cat monitoring guidelines started in 2019; the first expert workshop for Lions will be in 2020. (KSR #18)

#### **Plan**

##### Planning

- i.** Planning and fundraising phase for the Leopard started for southern Africa. (KSR #15)
- ii.** We developed the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa*, delivered to CITES in English and French, together with more than 50 authors from the wider Cat Specialist Group network. (KSR #15)
- iii.** We facilitated a workshop to develop a regional conservation strategy for the Jaguar in South America in collaboration with San Diego Zoo Global. The strategy together with a status update and a number of topical chapters will be published as a Special Issue of *Cat News* in 2020. (KSR #15)
- iv.** Conservation strategy for the Pallas's Cat published as part of *Cat News* Special Issue 13 in spring 2019. (KSR #15)

#### Technical advice

**i.** A workshop took place in October 2019 together with CITES and CMS Secretariats to discuss cat items on their agenda and how we can support them, and to have an initial discussion of the Programme of Work for the joint African Carnivores Initiative. We have also invited the SOS African Wildlife Initiative to attend. (KSR #26)



ii. We revised the first draft of the *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa* based on the comments from the Range States and submitted it to CMS Secretariat in September 2019, in English and French. It will be discussed at CMS CoP13 and the CITES Animals Committee meeting in 2020. (KSR #15)

iii. We have revised the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa* based on input from the Range States and submitted the revised version in English and French to the CITES Secretariat in time for CoP18. It was also submitted as an Information Document for CMS CoP13. (KSR #26)

### Network

#### Communication

i. We have uploaded 630 papers to the Digital Cat Library, which contained at the end of 2019 a total of 12,749 cat conservation relevant publications.

ii. Urs gave a talk under 1.3 'Species Strategic Plan, IUCN Programme 2021–2024, SSC Data and experiences delivering assess, plan, policy, and action' on our APA approach. Christine was part of the Facilitator Team in 4.4.b 'How to boost SSC engagement on conservation action' and gave an interview to HHMI Tangled Bank Studios and Part2 Pictures. (KSR #29)

#### Policy

i. We attended CITES CoP18 in Geneva, in August 2019. There were six cat relevant items on the agenda: Cheetah, Leopard, Lion, Jaguar, Asian big cats and African Carnivores Initiative (ACI). We participated in a side event on the ACI with a talk about the status of the four species included in the initiative. (KSR #26)

### Communicate

#### Communication

i. We published *Cat News* Special Issue 13 in Spring 2019. (KSR #28)

ii. A symposium took place in June 2019, with 50 lynx experts from continental Europe participating. The recommendations have been presented to the Standing Committee of the Berne Convention in December 2019. The *Cat News* Special Issue on the Status and Conservation Needs for Eurasian Lynx *Lynx lynx* in Continental Europe is under way and will be published in 2020. (KSR #28)

iii. We produced two regular *Cat News* issues (CN69 and CN70) with 35 peer reviewed papers. (KSR #28)

#### Scientific meetings

i. We attended both the Kenya Wildlife Service Carnivore Symposium in Nairobi and the African Lion Working Group (ALWG) meeting in Mpala. We signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the ALWG. (KSR #28)

### Acknowledgements

Working very closely with the Cat Specialist Group Co-Chairs were Manuela von Arx (Digital Cat Library, Balkan Lynx Recovery Programme), Tabea Lanz (Assistant to the Chair, website, Red List Assessments), Roland Bürki (support to the Chair), Anna Huber (book keeping): a great thank you to all of them. We would like to thank the many dedicated people who helped develop and run the various projects: Keith Richmond, Brian Bertram, Juan Repucci and Maximilian Allen (associate editors *Cat News*). Alex Sliwa, Patrick Meier and Sebastian Kennerknecht have generously made available their superb cat pictures for Cat Specialist Group purposes. Our

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### Summary of activities 2019

Components of Species Conservation Cycle: 4/5

Assess	3	■■■
Plan	7	■■■■■■■
Network	3	■■■
Communicate	4	■■■■

Main KSRs addressed: 1, 15, 18, 26, 28, 29

KSR: Key Species Result