

IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group

2020 Report



Christine Breitenmoser



Urs Breitenmoser

Co-Chairs

Christine Breitenmoser (1)
Urs Breitenmoser (2)

Red List Authority Coordinator

Tabea Lanz (1)

Location/Affiliation

(1) KORA, Muri b. Bern, Switzerland
(2) FIWI/Universtiät Bern and KORA, Muri b. Bern, Switzerland

Number of members

193

Social networks

Facebook: IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group
Website: www.catsg.org



Mission statement

Cat Manifesto
(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.

Green List: initiate Green Status assessments for Tiger (*Panthera tigris*) and Iberian Lynx (*Lynx pardinus*).

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

Research activities: develop a 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 the conservation status and assess 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 a 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 a 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: (2) attend CITES Animal Committee, Steering Committee meetings and Conference of the Parties; (4) organise a one-day workshop with CITES and Convention on Migratory Species (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.



Vulnerable Southern Tiger Cat,
Leopardus guttulus
Photo: Tadeu de Oliveira

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.

Technical advice: (1) attend Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI) midterm workshop; (2) attend the first range state meeting of the joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI); (3) finalise the *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa* on a mandate from CMS under the African Carnivores Initiative for review by the different committees; (4) submit the final version of the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa* to the CITES Secretariat in time for the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP18); (5) support the Secretariats of CITES and CMS for the development of a Programme of Work for the African Carnivores Initiative; (6) 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*.

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 Conference of the Parties.

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



Vulnerable African Golden Cat,
Caracal aurata
Photo: Laila Bahaa-el-din



Endangered Tiger, *Panthera tigris*
Photo: Alex Sliwa

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; (6) produce a Special Issue of *Cat News* on status assessments and the conservation strategy of the Jaguar in South America.

Policy: attend the 13th Conference of the Parties to CMS (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 meetings 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 an international conference on Snow Leopard (*Panthera uncia*) monitoring and conservation and organise a side event for the Pallas's Cat in May 2020.

Activities and results 2020

Assess

Documents review

i. Draft assessments of knowledge base and the quality of the Red List assessment are underway for 12 species: Fishing Cat, Marbled Cat (*Pardofelis marmorata*), Asiatic Golden Cat (*Catopuma temminckii*), Jaguarundi (*Herpailurus yagouaroundi*), Ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*), Margay (*Leopardus wiedii*), Pampas Cat (*Leopardus colocolo*), Southern Tiger Cat (*Leopardus guttulus*), Northern Tiger Cat (*Leopardus tigrinus*), Geoffroy's Cat (*Leopardus geoffroyi*), Guiña (*Leopardus guigna*) and Caracal (*Caracal caracal*). We have so far integrated 7,422 new georeferenced observations into the Cat Specialist Group Spatial Database, and we have found 2,359 additional references, which we are now gradually integrating into the Digital Cat Library. (KSR #15)

Green List

i. We participated in several meetings with Liz Bennett, Co-Chair of the Green Status of Species Core Team, and Molly Grace, coordinator of the Green Status of Species Core Team, to plan the Green Status Assessment for cats, and discussed it with Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Panthera and the Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme (ITHCP) for Tigers. (KSR #11)

Red List

i. We have been working on the re-assessments of Asiatic Cheetah, Javan Leopard, Arabian Leopard (*Panthera pardus nimr*), Wild Cat (*Felis silvestris*), Chinese Mountain Cat, Tiger, Andean Cat (*Leopardus jacobita*) and Clouded Leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*); the re-assessment of Pallas's Cat and Sri Lankan Leopard (*Panthera pardus kotiya*) were published. We have been working on new assessments of Indian Leopard (*Panthera pardus fusca*), Bornean Clouded Leopard (*Neofelis diardi borneensis*), Sumatran Clouded Leopard (*Neofelis diardi diardi*), African Wildcat (*Felis lybica*) and Mainland Leopard Cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*). (KSR #1)

Act

Technical advice

i. The *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa* has been submitted. (KSR #15)

ii. The final version of the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa* was submitted to the CITES Secretariat in time for CoP18. (KSR #15)

iii. The Programme of Work has been developed uniting all Decisions and Resolutions under CITES and CMS as well as formerly developed Conservation Strategies. (KSR #15)



Network

Communication

i. We have added and uploaded 1,157 publications to the Digital Cat Library, which had 12,969 publications at the end of 2020.

Communicate

Communication

i. The Special Issue on the status and conservation needs for Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) in Continental Europe is well advanced and will be completed in 2021. (KSR #28)

ii. We published *Cat News* 71 and 72 with 35 peer reviewed articles. (KSR #28)

iii. Articles on biology and ecology, status in the Guiana Shield, a distribution model for South America, use and trade and *ex situ* conservation have been submitted. (KSR #28)

Scientific meetings

i. We attended the CMS CoP13 in India and participated in a side event on the African Carnivores Initiative. (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 Authority Coordinator), Roland Bürki (support to the Chair), Anna Huber and Valentyna Laskova (bookkeeping): 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 Reppucci 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 projects would not be possible without financial support from many committed institutions and private persons. We are very grateful for the support of the Friends of the Cat Group, Zoo Leipzig, the Ayers Wild Cat Conservation Trust, CMS Convention on Migratory Species, Stämpfli AG, and especially Patrick Meier and Peter Stämpfli.

Summary of activities 2020

Components of Species Conservation Cycle: 4/5

Assess	3	■■■
Act	3	■■■
Network	1	■
Communicate	4	■■■■

Main KSRS addressed: 1, 11, 15, 28

KSR: Key Species Result