

# IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group

2018 Report



Onnie Byers

## Chair

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## Location/Affiliation

Global Conservation Network, 12101 Johnny Cake Ridge Road, Apple Valley, Minnesota 55124 US

## Number of members

280

## Social networks

Facebook:

Conservation Planning Specialist Group

Instagram:

iucn\_conservationplanningsg

Twitter:

@IUCN\_CPSG

Website:

www.cpsg.org



## Mission statement

The mission of the IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group is to save threatened species by increasing the effectiveness of conservation efforts worldwide. For over 40 years, we've accomplished this by using scientifically sound, collaborative processes that bring together people with diverse perspectives and knowledge to catalyse positive conservation change. We provide species conservation planning expertise to governments, Specialist Groups, zoos and aquariums, and other wildlife organisations.

## Projected impact for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

Through the implementation of the IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group (CPSG) 2017-2020 Strategic Plan, we will more efficiently prioritise and plan for target species; develop and apply best practice planning methods that are based on a One Plan approach; increase species conservation planning capacity across the SSC, governments and other key partner organisations; improve the ability of governments to reach biodiversity targets through species conservation planning; and continuously improve species conservation planning methods by evaluating their impact and effectiveness. Together, these goals will allow us to enhance our and the SSC's ability to plan more effectively for threatened species and ultimately improve the status of biodiversity worldwide.

## Targets for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

### Assess

Red List: explore deployment of a more rapid risk assessment tool for Specialist Groups-driven risk assessments, particularly for species-rich taxonomic groups, to accelerate the diagnosis of taxa for which planning might be needed.

### Plan

Planning: (1) deploy a universally applicable conservation needs assessment tool; (2) improve complementarity between Red Listing, conservation needs assessments, and conservation planning; (3) develop and test new mechanism(s) for evaluating the impact of conservation plans and enhancing the SSC's species conservation planning process to increase probability of implementation and facilitate future evaluation; (4) implement and manage the SSC monitoring and evaluation mechanism; (5) lead, guide and support SSC Specialist Groups in species conservation planning.

### Act

Conservation actions: (1) increase awareness and consideration of potential *ex situ* conservation roles and activities where appropriate among all species conservation planners and population managers; (2) provide tools and processes for evaluating and incorporating *ex situ* options into species conservation and collection planning; (3) promote integrated species conservation planning by involving both *in situ* and *ex situ* communities in the One Plan approach to species conservation and collection planning processes.



Group photo of CPSG headquarters staff and members of CPSG's Regional Resource Centers who were in attendance at the CPSG 2018 Annual Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand  
Photo: Zoological Park Organization

## Network

Capacity building: (1) establish and implement CPSG's Species Conservation Planning Training Programme; (2) launch Species Conservation Planners Development Path programme. By 2020, a minimum of 50 participants will have passed through the development path.

Synergy: establish CPSG Species Conservation Planning Learning Network (SPLAN).

Technical advice: (1) provide a generic process for species prioritisation for planning, adaptable to a range of relevant situations; (2) increase the rate of conservation planning (number of species with identified conservation needs and actions); (3) explore opportunities to strengthen the tools and processes used for single-species conservation planning activities; (4) develop a suite of planning tools and templates that can be applied to planning activities for multiple species on a landscape; (5) contribute to enhancing the SSC Species Conservation Planning Guidelines; (6) increase the value to SSC planning of the IUCN SSC Species Conservation Planning Tools Library; (7) create facilitation skill sub-section of the species conservation planning processes tools library; (8) within our area of influence, develop a clear and practical response to the challenges facing countries in achieving Biodiversity Targets; (9) assist governments to use the SSC species conservation planning process to help them meet their obligations under Target 12 of the CBD 2020 Strategic Plan; (10) play a meaningful role in influencing the next iteration of biodiversity targets, post 2020, ensuring that species conservation planning is included in the next set of internationally agreed biodiversity conservation targets; (11) CPSG to expand capacity in South-east Asia.

## Activities and results 2018

### Assess

#### Red List

**i.** After exploring options for developing a more rapid risk assessment tool for Specialist Groups, we decided the best option was to refer Specialist Groups with high Red List commitments to the Red List Unit for support. (KSR #6)

### Plan

#### Planning

**i.** A prototype of a conservation needs assessment tool was developed following a one-day workshop in Minnesota in February 2018. The tool will be tested out at a Red List workshop in 2019. (KSR #15)

**ii.** We began to research Red List data using selected mammals and birds as examples in order to evaluate the extent of apparent concordance between identified Threats, their specific priority, and the identified Actions Needed. Information on the following was collected: Threats, Actions in Place, and Actions Needed. The research will be ongoing through the first half of 2019. Our new process "Assessing to Plan" (A2P) was designed as an add-on to Red Listing workshops in order to help move threatened species into the action planning stage. (KSR #15)

**iii.** We developed a counterfactual method for evaluating the impacts of Population and Habitat Viability Assessments (PHVAs) and are in the process of piloting it. We are testing out a plan implementation tracking tool that we developed on two 2017 projects. (KSR #16)

**iv.** In 2017, we established an online inventory of SSC-enabled conservation planning projects, dating back to 2012, that new and future projects can be added to. (KSR #16)

**v.** We continued to support and guide SSC Specialist Groups in species conservation planning through our training courses and the development of new planning tools. (KSR #20)

### Act

#### Conservation actions

**i.** We taught two courses and one mini-course on how to apply the IUCN Guidelines on the Use of *Ex Situ* Management for Species Conservation to multi-stakeholder groups in Brazil, Taiwan, and Thailand. We delivered keynote addresses at the Brazilian and Southeast Asian zoo associations' annual conferences. We published a chapter titled 'Integrating *Ex Situ* Management Options as Part of a One Plan Approach to Species Conservation' in the book *The Ark and Beyond*. We submitted the '*Ex Situ* Management for Conservation' chapter for the *Encyclopedia of the UN Sustainable Development Goals: Life on Land*. We submitted an article to the journal *Zoo Biology* on the Integrated Collection Assessment and Planning (ICAP) multi-species assessment and planning tool. We participated in a workshop in Nuremberg, Germany on the application of the One Plan approach to small cetacean conservation planning and provided expertise during the workshop on the use of the IUCN SSC *Ex Situ* Guidelines in prioritising application of *ex situ* management activities to overall conservation management. (KSR #25)

**ii.** We started the development of a multi-species assessment and planning processes for *ex situ* conservation activities (i.e. ICAP, *ex situ* conservation assessment), and applied the processes in multiple workshops, including



Participants of the Facilitating Species Conservation Planning Processes course taught at Chester Zoo  
Photo: Chester Zoo



A breakout group is working hard during the Tamaraw Population and Habitat Viability Assessment workshop in the Philippines, facilitated by CPSG  
Photo: CPSG archives

confiscated turtles in Taiwan and Amazon parrots in Brazil. The ICAP process was adopted by the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) for regional collection planning. We provided assistance to the Species Conservation Toolkit Initiative (SCTI) in developing tools for plant *ex situ* management. (KSR #25)

**iii.** We facilitated nine workshops which had involvement from both *in situ* and *ex situ* communities: Whooping Crane Population Viability Assessment (PVA), Javan Leopard PHVA, Amazon Parrot *ex situ* conservation assessment, Asian songbirds ICAP/Regional Collection Plan (RCP), turtle and tortoise ICAP, Formosan threatened species ICAP, pangolin conservation workshop, cetacean workshop, and Tamaraw action plan workshop. (KSR #25)

### **Network**

#### Capacity building

**i.** We developed and circulated a course prospectus which details 10 courses we offer linked to species conservation planning. We delivered nine courses to over 200 participants including Facilitation Skills, Applying IUCN *Ex Situ* Guidelines, and Disease Risk Analysis, an increase from 2017. Additionally, we launched our first free online Facilitating Species Conservation Planning Workshops course, which was positively received. Out of the 42 participants in the online course, 60% were IUCN SSC Specialist Group members, with others being from IUCN member state government authorities (e.g. ICMBio in Brazil). (KSR #17)

**ii.** Species Conservation Planners Development Path programme: The Development Path was launched with eight mentees in the inaugural cohort. Each mentee was assigned their



own mentors. Mentees will progress at their own pace, but most candidates will be ready to co-facilitate multi-stakeholder planning workshops in 2019. We began to identify candidates for a Technical Development Path to be mentored in tools such as Population Viability Analysis and their application to participatory planning processes. (KSR #17)

### Synergy

**i.** Species Conservation Planning Learning Network (sPLAN): We established a trial learning network through Facebook but it did not receive the desired level of engagement. We set up a second trail network through Google and will receive feedback from participants in spring 2019. In addition, we will launch a monthly webinar series in early 2019, in part as a response to feedback from course participants to maintain contact and continue their learning. (KSR #29)

### Technical advice

**i.** A decision-making subgroup within CPSG was established, which will work towards developing a generic process for species prioritisation for planning. (KSR #21)

**ii.** We expanded our planning capacity and made progress toward developing a multi-species planning tool. (KSR #21)

**iii.** We initiated the development of a modified process for single-species conservation planning that specifically incorporates the aspect of human behaviour change management. Experts in behaviour change and social marketing were collaborated with to design an expanded conservation planning process, which integrates traditional tools used for quantitative population risk assessment with techniques used for addressing human behaviour change in

order to reduce threats to endangered species. The National Planning for Chimpanzees in Liberia (2019-2021) was chosen as an initial test case for the enhanced process. We were able to explore the integration of interacting PVA and species distribution modelling (SDM) quantitative tools during the Javan Leopard PHVA workshop in Indonesia. (KSR #18)

**iv.** The “Assessing to Plan” (A2P) tool and process was developed and will be tested in 2019. We continued the development of multi-species assessment and planning processes for *ex situ* conservation activities. (KSR #18)

**v.** As we worked towards expanding our capacity for conservation planning through training and tool development, we were able to increase awareness of the tools available in our Tools Library. (KSR #18)

**vi.** A draft of the ‘Facilitator’s Handbook to Species Conservation Planning’ was produced and feedback is currently being sought. Once it is ready, the handbook will be circulated as a valuable resource for all conservation planners, which will be made available through our Tools Library. (KSR #21)

**vii.** We began to work with the 2020 Biodiversity Task Force to develop a single, unified approach to CBD’s Target 12 on behalf of the IUCN SSC as a whole. (KSR #21)

**viii.** We established CPSG Southeast Asia, our 11th Regional Resource Centre, which will help increase our impact in the region. (KSR #21)

### Acknowledgements

The Global Conservation Network (GCN) is a non-profit that supports the activities of the IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group (CPSG). We thank all of our 132 generous institutional and individual donors, our 280 members, our 11 CPSG Regional Resource Centres and host institutions, and our many project partners. With their support, CPSG’s work is made possible. A special thanks to Minnesota Zoo for hosting our offices for over 40 years.

### Summary of activities 2018

Species Conservation Cycle ratio: 4/5

Assess	1	
Plan	5	
Act	3	
Network	11	

Main KSRs addressed: 6, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 25, 29

KSR: Key Species Result