

# IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group

2019 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

310

## Social networks

Facebook:

Conservation Planning Specialist Group

Instagram: [iucn\\_conservationplanningsg](#)

Twitter: [@IUCN\\_CPSG](#)

Website: [www.cpsg.org](#)



## Mission statement

The mission of 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 Group-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.

Training in Indonesia on facilitating species conservation planning workshops  
Photo: CPSG



### Network

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

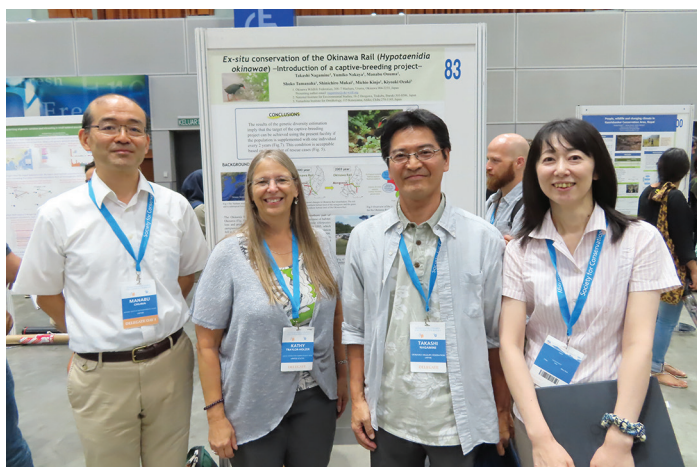
Synergy: establish CPSG Species Conservation Planning Learning Network (sPLAN).

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 a 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 challenge countries face 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 Convention on Biological Diversity 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 Southeast Asia.



Facilitating action planning for South African Cape parrots  
Photo: Wild Bird Trust's Cape Parrot Project

Connecting with Japanese colleagues at ICCB 2019  
Photo: CPSG



Arnaud Desbiez receives recognition  
for his service to CPSG  
Photo: WAZA



Snake interaction at the Conception Bank  
silver boa conservation planning meeting  
Photo: CPSG

## Activities and results 2019

### Assess

#### Red List

**i.** From 2018: "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.** The "Assess to Plan (A2P)" process was explicitly designed to operate as part of the Red Listing process, to move more threatened species, more quickly, from assessment to action via good planning. In 2019 the process was trialled in three countries, at four Red List workshops, covering more than 1,000 species. The process was presented to the SSC Steering Committee in October 2019. There is now a small, global group of A2P practitioners and further projects are planned. (KSR #15)

**ii.** An Excel tool has been developed to track plan implementation and in 2019 is being trialled by Banded Langur, Sun Bear and Helmeted Hornbill projects. Also, in 2019, a study was started to evaluate the impact of planning on species' extinction risk over time. This is due for completion in 2020. (KSR #16)

**iii.** In 2019, a number of planning projects were carried out in partnership with SSC Specialist Groups (Sulu Hornbill, Owston's Civet). (KSR #16)

### Act

#### Conservation actions

**i.** We published a paper on Integrated Collection Assessment and Planning (ICAP) in *Zoo Biology*, a chapter on *ex situ* conservation in the *Encyclopedia of UN Sustainable Development Goals*, and a paper in *BioScience* on a novel partnership – the Source Population Alliance – applying the one plan approach; we presented on *ex situ* conservation and the One Plan Approach at the International Congress for Conservation Biology (ICCB); an *ex situ* webinar was posted to the CPSG website; we incorporated the One Plan Approach and *ex situ* overviews as appropriate into CPSG training; we incorporated identification and evaluation of *ex situ* options into pre-workshop checklist. (KSR #25)

**ii.** Tools and processes for evaluating and incorporating *ex situ* options into species conservation and collection planning: Draft process document and slides have been created; we are collaborating with the Species Conservation Toolkit Initiative (SCTI) in expanded tool development for PMx (a package of demographic and genetic analysis tools) for use with IUCN *Ex Situ* Guidelines; workshop processes are being tested before finalising documentation via a workshop for the Blue-eyed Ground-dove and Alagoas Antwren as well as one for the Sunda Pangolin. (KSR #25)

**iii.** Featured presentations were given on application of the One Plan Approach to small cetaceans at dedicated planning workshops in Argentina and China. (KSR #25)



## Network

### Capacity building

**i.** CPSG's Species Conservation Planning Training Programme: By the end of 2019, we trained a further 200+ people through 10 courses with a focus on government personnel and Specialist Groups for the August 2019 online course. (KSR #17)

**ii.** Species Conservation Planners Development Path Programme: A further five mentees began the development path in 2019, joining the original eight who started in 2018. Individuals from 2018 are taking more leading roles in planning and facilitating species conservation planning processes. More mentors and funding are needed to cover mentee participation in workshops. (KSR #17)

### Synergy

**i.** CPSG Species Conservation Planning Learning Network (sPLAN): The webinar series launched in 2019 shared eight webinars with the CPSG network, from which it received very positive feedback. Two cohort-based learning networks are now running, and a Development Path network is being cultivated to encourage cross-linkages between existing development paths. (KSR #29)

### Technical advice

**i.** The generic process for species prioritisation for planning, adaptable to a range of relevant situations, is linked to Species360 Data Hub development, which is moving forward. (KSR #21)

**ii.** The new "Assess to Plan (A2P)" process has been designed to move more threatened species, more quickly, from Red List assessments into action via good planning. This process was tested at four IUCN Red List workshops in 2019, covering more than 1,000 species. (KSR #21)

**iii.** Exploring and testing specific planning elements from other processes in CPSG workshops: Work is currently underway to design a hybrid process linking population viability analysis (PVA) with Open Standards planning via the Liberian Chimpanzee National Action Planning process. Also, we are currently working with SCTI to develop a species conservation planning data hub to facilitate access to and assembly/analysis of relevant data for risk analysis and planning. (KSR #18)

**iv.** The CPSG Annual Meeting trialled application of existing CPSG planning methods to threat-based multi-species planning problems (specifically trade and disease). The "Assess to Plan (A2P)" process tool was developed and tested in 2019 and can be used to identify the conservation planning needs of multiple species on a landscape. (KSR #18)

**v.** The CPSG Facilitator's Handbook is complete; the Principles & Steps are being finalised; we plan to develop this into an online toolkit, pending funding. (KSR #18)

**vi.** CPSG staff contributed to the IUCN SSC Post-2020 Task Force and worked with the IUCN Global Species Programme on IUCN responses to relevant discussions. (KSR #21)

## Acknowledgements

The Global Conservation Network (GCN) is a non-profit that supports the activities of the IUCN SSC CPSG. We thank all of our 126 generous institutional and individual donors, our 310 members, our 11 Regional Resource Centers and host institutions, and our many project partners. With their support, CPSG's work is made possible. A special thanks to the Minnesota Zoo for hosting our offices for over 40 years.

## Summary of activities 2019

Components of Species Conservation Cycle: 4/5

Assess	1	
Plan	3	
Act	3	
Network	9	

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

KSR: Key Species Result