

IUCN SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group



2016-2017 Report



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Co-Chairs

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Number of members

140

Social networks:

Mailing list for members:

https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/MPSG_IUCN/info

Medicinal
Plant
Specialist
Group



Mission statement

The Medicinal Plant Specialist Group (MPSG) is a global network of specialists contributing within our own institutions and in our own regions, as well as world-wide, to the conservation and sustainable use of medicinal plants. The MPSG was founded in 1994 to increase global awareness of conservation threats to medicinal plants, and to promote sustainable use and conservation action.

Main activities by Key Priority Area (2016 & 2017)

Barometer of life

■ Red List

i. Four University of Hawaii students self-trained on-line with MPSG mentoring, eight draft assessments completed, under review. Three North American MPSG members trained (one self/on-line, two in Red List Programme workshop). (KSR #1)

ii. One global assessment published (*Hydrastis canadensis*). (KSR #1)

iii. ca. 110 North American "at risk" species entered into SIS, compilation of drafts likely to begin for these and other NA priority species in 2018, if funding is available. SIS working sets for CITES-listed and WHO-monographed species have been created and drafts likely to begin in 2018 if funding is available. (KSR #1)

iv. Additional progress unquantified, pending comparison of MAPROW (Medicinal and Aromatic Plants of the World) database with current species included in IUCN Red List. We estimate an increase of ca. 1,500 species assessments above 2,010 baseline; however, many of these are not included in the 1,500 MPSG priority species for assessment. (KSR #1)

Communications

■ Communication

i. Presentations include Natural Health Products Research Society, United Plant Savers' The Future of Ginseng and Forest Botanicals (it should be noted that funding is difficult to secure to cover these costs). (KSR #28)

ii. Efforts were made to relaunch *Medicinal Plant Conservation* newsletter - lots of member interest, but insufficient institutional support so far. (KSR #28)

iii. Efforts to update MPSG website stalled by difficulties within IUCN to enable SGs to manage own sites; work in progress on Conservation Outlook for Medicinal Plants. (KSR #28)

iv. MPSG contributed to the first FairWild week in August 2017, a public-focussed event raising the profile of the importance of the sustainable practices in sourcing of medicinal and aromatic plants (August 2017), plans are being made for the second FairWild week in June 2018. (KSR #28)

■ Scientific meetings

i. MPSG members have actively engaged with the IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC), held in Hawai'i in September 2016, as an important event for shaping the conservation agenda globally. MPSG and TRAFFIC were active to raise the importance of facilitating sustainable and legal wildlife trade, including through the workshop on Responsible Sourcing of Wild Plant Ingredients, livelihoods benefits from high value wildlife trade chains, as well as the event covering the Biodiversity and Health collaborative programme between the CBD Secretariat and WHO.

■ Synergy

i. An ad hoc MPSG meeting took place in June 2016 at the David Attenborough Building in Cambridge, many Europe-based members attended this one-day planning meeting.



Liquorice in Herat Province, Afghanistan, ICARDA Oxfam-Novib Project
Photo: Klaus Dürbeck, 2005

Conservation action

■ Conservation activities

i. Graduate level course developed and delivered in collaboration with University of Hawai'i, Sept-Dec 2017 (Approaches to assessing the conservation of culturally important plants: a collaboration with the IUCN Medicinal Plants Specialist Group). (KSR #31)

■ Proposal development and funding

i. Priority species assessments and funding proposals for conservation action being developed for South Pacific Islands, North America, Europe. None secured so far.

ii. Funding application submitted (via TRAFFIC) to analyse the applicability of market mechanisms like FairWild certification scheme to trade in CITES-listed medicinal and aromatic plants. Another application is to pilot the implementation of FairWild for CITES-listed Himalayan flagship species *Nardostachys grandiflora*. (KSR #32)

■ Technical advice

i. Ongoing technical advice for risk analysis and management planning for plants included in the FairWild Standard certification scheme. (KSR #27)

ii. Preliminary development of risk analysis matrix for fungi in collaboration with SSC Fungi Sub-Committee and Lichen SG. Funding application submitted (via TRAFFIC) to adapt the matrix to fungi, with the initial focus on those species, harvested in China. (KSR #27)

iii. Support and input provided into the German government (BfN) review of the ISSC-MAP and FairWild Standard. (KSR #27)

Policy

■ Policy advice

i. CITES NDF guidance for perennial plants presented (via TRAFFIC and BfN) to both the Plants Committee and CITES CoP in 2016-2017 and several capacity-building events delivered via TRAFFIC for CITES Management and Scientific authorities. (KSR #26)

ii. The case studies of FairWild global implementation have been prominently highlighted in the report Progress in Implementation of the Targets of the Global Strategy for Plant

Conservation, launched during the First meeting of the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Implementation in May 2016, as a benchmark towards the implementation of Targets 11 and 12 of GSPC. (KSR #26)

iii. The review in trade and use in several CITES-listed medicinal plants and the FairWild Standard are included among the relevant tools to support the implementation of the traceability requirements for trade in CITES-listed species in the UNCTAD BioTrade report (illustrated on the examples of medicinal plant species traded from the Mekong region), presented to the Parties and other participants of the CITES CoP17 in September-October 2016, and the CITES Plants Committee in July 2017. (KSR #26)

iv. MPSG has contributed to information and discussions leading up to adoption of SBSTTA Recommendation XXI/3 on Health and Biodiversity (2017). This included MPSG member (TRAFFIC) participating in the CBD-World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Capacity Building Workshop on Biodiversity and Health for the European Region (Helsinki). A presentation was delivered to the meeting on the role that the trade in wild plants plays in contributing to human health. (KSR #26)

Acknowledgements

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Red List activities; Kira Mileham at SSC for support to develop institutional partnerships; Prof. Susan Murch for ongoing fundraising effort for a North American Plants for People initiative.

Barometer of life

Red List: complete IUCN Red List assessment of 1,500 priority species of medicinal and aromatic plants.

Communications

Communication: increase the visibility and recognition of the contribution of medicinal and aromatic plant conservation and sustainable use to livelihoods, health, food security and biodiversity.

Conservation action

Conservation activities: (1) develop and implement Plants for People initiatives for medicinal plants in at least three regions; (2) contribute to the implementation of the FairWild Standard and certification scheme for sustainable use of wild plants for at least 50 species, 50 companies and 20 countries.

Policy

Policy advice: promote the recognition of the sustainable use, trade and conservation of medicinal and aromatic plants in policy and action at the global, regional and national levels (action via CBD, CITES, WHO, ITPGR, WHO and other policy fora).

Projected impact for the quadrennium 2017-2020

By the end of 2020, we envision a significant increase in knowledge of the conservation status of priority species of medicinal and aromatic plants, actions to conserve and sustainably use these species, and broader industry and consumer awareness and participation in the conservation of threatened species.

Summary of activities (2016-2017)

Key Priority Area ratio: 4/7

Key Priority Areas addressed:

- Barometer of life (4 activities)
- Communications (6 activities)
- Conservation action (6 activities)
- Policy (4 activities)

Main KSRs addressed: 1, 26, 27, 28, 31, 32