IUCN SSC Macaronesian Island Plant Specialist Group

2018 Report

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Number of members

18

Mission statement

The IUCN SSC Macaronesian Islands Plant Specialist Group (MIPSG) will act as a mechanism for driving and implementing urgent conservation actions across the region, supported by solid and updated scientific evidence, in a collaborative framework that encompasses regional Universities, Botanic Gardens and Administrations.

Projected impact for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

Considering that two of the main weaknesses previously identified for the Macaronesian Region are 'Lack of laws or enforcement' and 'Poor education and awareness', by the end of 2020 we envision to have accomplished several public outreach activities, and to have promoted meetings with political actors, aimed at an effective application of scientific results for improving and enforcing existing nature protection laws. We also aim to have completed assessments for all Azorean endemic species, in order to provide environmental government stakeholders with a tool to implement conservation actions in the archipelago.

Targets for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

Assess

Red List: (1) complete and publish new Red List assessments on Macaronesian plants on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species website; (2) update existing assessments on Macaronesian plants on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species website.

Research activities: (1) monitor populations of Critically Endangered and Endangered taxa and diagnosis of their current threat status; (2) monitor the distribution ranges of invasive plants, animals, and other consequences of global changes; (3) develop completed cartography of habitat types; (4) develop activities such as enrichment of public biological databases, and seed and herbarium material held by different institutions; (5) application of genetic and taxonomic information to reveal populations, cryptic species or lineages worthy of increased protection; (6) monitor populations of Critically Endangered, Endangered, and Vulnerable taxa.

Plan

Planning: (1) upscale the application of multi-disciplinary research results (reproductive biology, genetics, taxonomy, ecology) in the planning of reinforcements, reintroductions and/or assisted migrations of plant endemics; (2) develop Critically Endangered and Endangered species recovery plan documents in the Canaries.

Act

Conservation actions: (1) *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation (seeds and living collections) of Critically Endangered and Endangered plants and preventive sampling of seeds of more widely distributed plant taxa; (2) eradication/control of invasive plants and mammals in protected natural spaces.

Network

Synergy: (1) network with research institutions related to the conservation of insular floras; (2) develop an early warning network for the detection of invasive alien species.

Communicate

Communication: develop different outreach programmes aimed at stimulating actions and social awareness of the importance and degree of threat of insular floras.

Scientific meetings: (1) organise periodical meetings of the MIPSG panel members by video-conference or in the Macaronesian archipelagos, during FloraMAC congresses;

First group meeting at Jardín Botánico Canario "Viera y Clavijo" - Unit associated to CSIC
Photo: MIPSG

Azores workshop on Assessment of Threatened Species According to IUCN Criteria
Photo: MIPSG

(2) include sessions/discussion panels on the activities and deliverables of the MIPSG in FloraMAC or other regional or international island plant biology meetings.

Activities and results 2018

Assess

Red List

i. Two reassessments were carried out for endemic Azorean plant taxa: *Euphorbia stygiana* H.C. Watson subsp. *santamariae* H. Schaef. and *Pericallis malvifolia* (L'Hér.) B. Nord. subsp. *caldeirae* H. Schaef. Assessment of new *Umbilicus* taxa described for Cabo Verde and reassessment of *Umbilicus schmidtii*. (KSR #1)

Research activities

i. In Azores, the Seed Bank collection of Faial Botanic Garden was enriched, as well as the collections of the Universidade dos Açores herbaria (AZB and AZU). In Madeira, exchange of seeds and herbarium material was conducted with two national and foreign institutions (University of Madeira and Jardín Botanico Viera y Clavijo, Canary Islands). A list of native trees from Cabo Verde was compiled. (KSR #43)

ii. Publication of checklist of crop wild relative (CWR) species for Cabo Verde. (KSR #18)

iii. Monitoring was achieved by the Faial Botanic Garden for two species in three islands of the Azores in 17 project areas (areas under Project LIFE VIDALIA (LIFE17 NAT/PT/000510)). Additionally, monitoring of 19 species was also conducted under seed banking activities and of four species, in the islands of Faial and Pico. (KSR #12)

iv. Monitoring was achieved in Azores by the Faial Botanic Garden for invasive species present in 17 project areas (areas under Project LIFE VIDALIA (LIFE17 NAT/PT/000510)) in three Azorean islands. Additionally, monitoring of 30 invasive plants was achieved in Terceira by the University of Azores. (KSR #13)

Plan

Planning

i. In Azores, Faial Botanic Garden developed one conservation project: LIFE VIDALIA (LIFE17 NAT/PT/000510). Other results include publication of three papers and one review in a book chapter for Cabo Verde. (KSR #31)

Act

Conservation actions

i. Thirty-seven samples of 19 taxa were collected, processed and stored in the Azores Seed Bank. In Canaries, *in situ* actions were conducted during 2018 for species with "approved recuperation plans" (*Helianthemum bystropogophyllum*, *Helianthemum inaguae*, *Isoplexis chalcantha*, *Kunkeliella canariensis*, *Lotus kunkelii*, *Pericallis appendiculata* var. *preauxiana*, *Pericallis hadrosoma*, *Sideritis discolor*, *Solanum vespertilio* ssp. *doramae*). (KSR #31)

ii. In Azores, Faial Botanic Garden developed control activities in five protected natural spaces on the island of Faial. In Madeira, within the scope of the Life Recover Natura Project control of *Phalaris* sp., about 5.7 ha at Desertas Grand Island were controlled and within the scope of the After LIFE LIPS Project, maintenance work on the *Nicotiana glauca* species was conducted in Ilhéu de Cima (Porto Santo Island). Control of *Carpobrotus edulis*, *Arundo donax* and *Ricinus communis* was also conducted at Dunas da Piedade (eastern Madeira Island) in about 10 ha and control of *Ulex europaeus* and *Cytisus scoparius* was also conducted at Paúl da Serra (central plateau area at Madeira island), in about 150 ha. (KSR #13)

Communicate

Communication

i. A kick-start meeting took place 29–30 November 2018 in Gran Canaria. (KSR #28)

ii. A communication was presented at FloraMac 2018 Madeira. (KSR #28)

Acknowledgements

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Summary of activities 2018

Species Conservation Cycle ratio: 4/5	
Assess	**5**
Plan	**1**
Act	**2**
Communicate	**2**
Main KSRs addressed: , 12, 13, 18, 28, 31, 43	

KSR: Key Species Result