

IUCN SSC Hornbill Specialist Group

2019 Report



Lucy Kemp



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Co-Chairs

Lucy Kemp ⁽¹⁾ (Africa)
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Red List Authority Coordinator

BirdLife International

Location/Affiliation

⁽¹⁾ Mabula Ground Hornbill Project, South Africa
⁽²⁾ Nature Conservation Foundation, India

Number of members

142 (Asian: 106, African: 18, Others: 18)

Social networks

Facebook: IUCN SSC Hornbill Specialist Group,
IUCN Hornbill Specialist Group for Public
Engagement

Instagram: iucn_hornbills

Twitter: @iucn_hornbills

Website: www.iucnhornbills.org



Mission statement

The Hornbill Specialist Group (HSG) aims to use our combined knowledge and skills for evidence-based conservation action for hornbills and their habitats.

Projected impact for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

By the end of 2020, the HSG will have definitive conservation plans in place for all Critically Endangered (CR) and Endangered (EN) hornbill species in both Asia and Africa, with implementation agencies supported by the HSG to meet their targets. Asia already has a strong and active hornbill conservation network, and by 2020 we aim to have initiated and developed an African hornbill conservation network. Efforts will be made to ensure that conservation planning takes into account Indigenous Knowledge Systems to ensure that cultural data are also considered and used in designing bespoke conservation actions where the threats are anthropogenic in nature.

Targets for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

Assess

Red List: review Red List status and information for all 62 hornbill species.

Research activities: promote and support research on hornbill species in Africa.

Plan

Planning: (1) prioritise species requiring formal conservation plans; (2) initiate an action plan workshop for the Critically Endangered Sulu Hornbill (*Anthracoseros montani*).

Network

Capacity building: hold annual regional capacity building workshops.

Membership: increase African membership.

Proposal development and funding: fundraise for conservation planning workshops and for support of various HSG activities.

Communicate

Communication: (1) produce one newsletter per year; (2) website and social media established and maintained.

Scientific meetings: support the International Hornbill Conference, scheduled for 2022 in Bhutan.

Activities and results 2019

Assess

Red List

i. Updated Red List assessments are underway with two interns, supported by Chester Zoo, Dr Kathryn Gamble and Milwaukee Zoo, in both Africa and Asia, working to reassess a number of lesser-known species to ensure all species have the most accurate conservation status possible, to enable swift and prioritised conservation action for the most threatened. The species factsheets are also being reviewed and updated by reaching out to our network of members. Funding was received and review work started in December 2019. A few Asian species were evaluated and revised by December 2019; this was communicated to BirdLife International. Other assessments are underway, to be communicated by March 2020. (KSR #1, 4)

Research activities

i. A PhD student has been taken on in Ghana to start much needed research into the Northern Ground-hornbill (*Bucorvus abyssinicus*). (KSR #12)

Plan

Planning

i. A multi-species conservation action planning workshop for five endemic and endangered West Visayan species was organised by



Wreathed hornbills in the rain
Photo: Aparajita Datta

Nesting male
Photo: Aparajita Datta



Talarak Foundation, facilitated by the IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group (CPSG), and funded by Chester Zoo, Wildlife Reserves Singapore and other partners, with participation from IUCN HSG. The workshop was held in Bacolod City, Negros Island, Philippines, in June 2019. Two hornbill species were included among the five species that were part of this action planning. The HSG Co-Chair (Asia) attended the meeting and participated by facilitating and providing technical inputs during the workshop. (KSR #15)

ii. A workshop with 44 relevant local, national and international stakeholders was held in March 2019 in Manila; this was organised by IUCN HSG, IUCN CPSG, Hornbill Research Foundation and Philippine Biodiversity. (KSR #15)

Network

Proposal development and funding

i. Several grants have been raised, such as the internal IUCN Grant, funds from our host/partner Wildlife Reserves Singapore (WRS), as well as Chester Zoo, Disney and others. (KSR #19)

Communicate

Communication

i. The Editorial Board for the HSG newsletter was set up in early 2019, guidelines were finalised in June 2019, and a call for articles announced in August 2019 with a November 2019 deadline. The articles were reviewed and formatted for publication by December 2019. The Editorial Board consists of Dr Tim O'Brien, Dr Divya Mudappa, Dr Shankar Raman, and Dr Jarryd Alexander, who reviewed the submitted articles. The first issue of our newsletter, *Hornbill Natural History and Conservation*, was ready for online publication in December 2019, but was published in January 2020 after a delay due to the Christmas and New Year holidays. HSG members contributed articles. The first issue

has a good mix of papers from Asia and Africa. We had three main articles and four notes from the field with contributions from 26 authors. <https://iucnhornbills.org/newsletter/> (KSR #28)

ii. The HSG website was established in 2018, with more content added in 2019. We have developed a communications plan/strategy (prepared by our partner Rangkong Indonesia) for the HSG for external communications and conservation messaging. Social media accounts on Twitter and Instagram will be opened soon. Some awareness content has been developed (a cartoon series for a Critically Endangered species, the Helmeted Hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*), was also created and distributed/shared widely). We also established a 'Hornbill SG Network' Googlegroups listserv in February 2019 for internal member communications/discussions and sharing of information. Any member can post, share and initiate discussions. We are in the process of developing a communications plan/strategy for the HSG both for internal member engagement and communications, and for external communications and conservation messaging. (KSR #28)

Scientific meetings

i. A symposium and round table were booked for the Pan-African Ornithological Conference in Zimbabwe, in November 2020. This will be the first meeting of all African members of the group and discussions will include how to learn from other range-states, finding funding for basic research and a Red List assessment exercise. (KSR #28)

ii. Our Programme Officer, supported by WRS funds, went to Bhutan to discuss and plan the organisation of the International Hornbill Conference in May 2022. (KSR #28)

Acknowledgements

All of us are working in a voluntary capacity for the HSG and we thank our members, our Advisory Board, the Steering Committee, the Editorial Board of the newsletter and those in the IUCN SSC Chair's office for their support as we find our feet and gather momentum. The key partner organisations who have supported the activities and work undertaken thus far are the Mabula Ground Hornbill Project, Nature Conservation Foundation, Wildlife Reserves Singapore, Hornbill Research Foundation, Rangkong Indonesia, Attica Zoological Park, Malaysian Nature Society, Disney Animal Kingdom, Kasetsart University, European Association of Zoos and Aquaria Hornbill Taxon Advisory Group (EAZA Hornbill TAG), Maguari-One Zoo and Wildlife Consultants, and the Wildlife Conservation Society. Individuals from several other institutions such as TRAFFIC, Chester Zoo, North Carolina Zoo, Philippines Biodiversity Conservation Foundation Inc. (PBCFI), Birdlife International, Talarak Foundation, Milwaukee Zoo, Dr Kathryn Gamble, and especially the IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group have also helped tremendously during the conservation action planning workshops and/or participated/worked in collaboration with the HSG in the last two years.

Summary of activities 2019

Components of Species Conservation Cycle: 4/5

Assess	2	
Plan	2	
Network	1	
Communicate	4	

Main KSRs addressed: 1, 4, 12, 15, 19, 28

Resolutions addressed: WCC-2016-Res-009