

IUCN SSC Hornbill Specialist Group

2020 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

143 (Asian: 106, African: 20, Others: 17)

Social networks

Facebook: IUCN SSC Hornbill Specialist Group
Instagram: iucn_hornbills
Twitter: @iucn_hornbills
Website: <https://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 (*Anthracoceros 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) establish and maintain the website and social media.

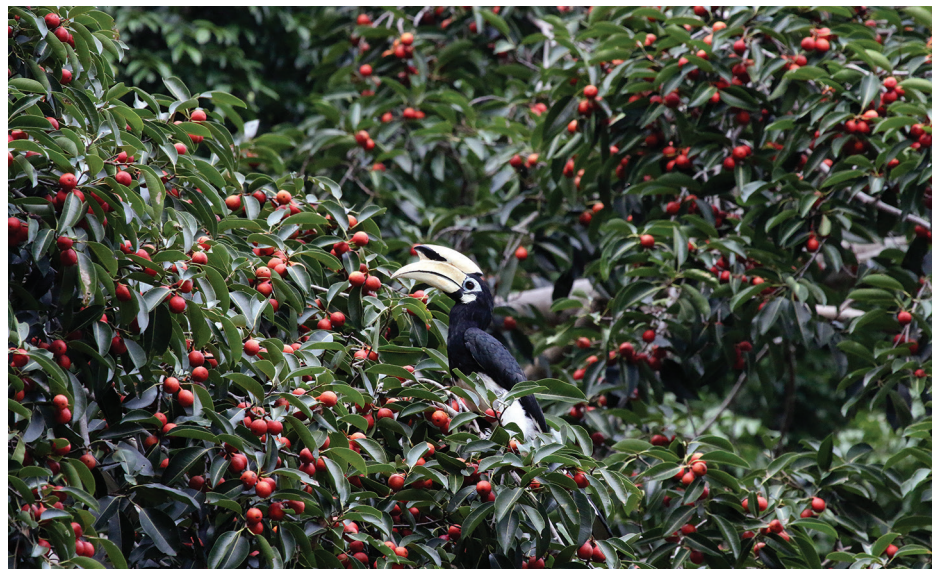
Scientific meetings: support the International Hornbill Conference, scheduled for 2022 in Bhutan.

Activities and results 2020

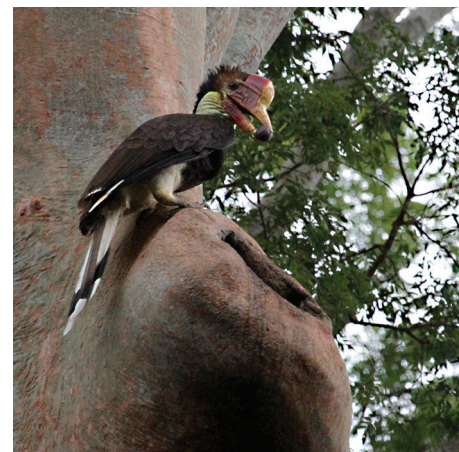
Assess

Red List

i. All of the 32 Asian hornbill species fact sheets have been revised with inputs from the HSG members and submitted to BirdLife International. Most of these have been updated on the IUCN Red List website. The threat category/status of three species were revised based on wide consultations and on the HSG's recommendations. Two species were suggested for a threat level uplisting after evaluating the criteria set by IUCN: the Malabar Grey Hornbill (*Ocyroceros griseus*), from Least Concern to Vulnerable, and Sumba Hornbill (*Rhyticeros everetti*), from Vulnerable to Endangered. The Narcondam Hornbill (*Rhyticeros narcondami*) was suggested for a downlisting from Endangered to Vulnerable based on a review of its status given new population data. These changes have been implemented. The African species require more work, due to very little data being available. The team is currently



A male Critically Endangered Helmeted Hornbill, *Rhinoplax vigil*, on a feeding visit to an active nest
 Photo: Malaysian Nature Society / Yeap Chin Aik



mapping all known distribution records and will submit to BirdLife International by the end of 2021. A research project has been initiated to resolve the taxonomy of the African Red-billed Hornbills (*Tockus erythrorhynchus*) and to lump/split *Horizocerus albocristatus* and *H. cassini*. (KSR #1, 4)

Research activities

i. We now have a PhD working on the Northern Ground Hornbill (*Bucorvus abyssinicus*), based in Ghana, and two MSc students working on the Southern Ground Hornbill (*Bucorvus leadbeateri*) in South Africa and Eswatini. (KSR #12)

Plan

Planning

i. Africa: The Northern Ground Hornbill and *Ceroptogymna* spp. are prioritised for conservation planning for Africa in the next quadrennium. Asia: Several of the threatened and endemic Philippine hornbill species have been prioritised for conservation action planning as well as range-wide action plans for several of the Vulnerable and Endangered species (Indo-China and Southeast Asia). The Conservation Planning Specialist Group-led workshop held for the Critically Endangered Rufous-headed Hornbill (*Rhabdotorrhinus waldeni*) and Endangered Visayan Hornbill (*Penelopides panini*) was done in June 2019, however, report completion has been delayed by partners. (KSR #15)

ii. The conservation plan for the Critically Endangered Sulu Hornbill has catalysed international funding and excellent on-the-ground field-work, education and conservation action for the species. (KSR #15)

Network

Membership

i. We were able to add two new members. We also expanded our Steering Committee by adding three more people, including a new African representative.

Proposal development and funding

i. Fundraising for conservation planning workshops and for support of various types of HSG activities was accomplished. (KSR #19)

Communicate

Communication

i. Two issues of the HSG Newsletter were produced in 2020 (January 2020 and October 2020). (KSR #28)

ii. The website and various social media platforms are up and running and gaining many new followers every day. (KSR #28)

Scientific meetings

i. The 2021 International Hornbill Conference in Bhutan has been postponed to May 2022 due to the global pandemic. (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 and their office for their support. The key partner organisations who have supported the activities/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, 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) now known as PhilBio, Birdlife International, Talarak Foundation, Milwaukee Zoo, Dr Kathryn Gamble, and the IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group have helped during the conservation action planning workshops and/or participated or worked in collaboration with the HSG. We thank PhilBio and the rest of the teams working so hard to conserve the Sulu Hornbill in the Philippines. We thank the Hornbill Research Foundation in Thailand for supporting the Programme Officer.

Summary of activities 2020

Components of Species Conservation Cycle: 4/5

Assess	2	
Plan	2	
Network	2	
Communicate	3	

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

Resolutions addressed: WCC-2016-Res-009

KSR: Key Species Result