

IUCN SSC Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group

2016-2017 Report



Craig Stanford

Chair

Craig Stanford ⁽¹⁾

Red List Authority Coordinator

Carla Eisemberg ⁽²⁾

Location/Affiliation

⁽¹⁾ Department of Biological Sciences,
University of Southern California, US

⁽²⁾ RELI, Charles Darwin University, Darwin,
Northern Territory, Australia

Number of members

250

Social networks

Listserve:
TFTSG



Mission statement

The Mission of the IUCN/SSC Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group (TFTSG) is to identify and document threats to the survival of all species of tortoises and freshwater turtles, and to help catalyze conservation action to ensure that none become extinct and that sustainable populations of all species persist in the wild.

Main activities by Key Priority Area (2016 & 2017)

Barometer of life

■ Red List

- i. Ongoing Red List assessment preparation through workshops and direct engagement with assessors over email. Anders to provide actual numbers, including SARCA assessments, Galapagos and individual species like Indian Star, *Batagur affinis*, [Bolson], etc. (KSR #1)
- ii. Published 13 new or reassessed Red List accounts in 2016 and 12 in 2017. We currently have six already submitted for 2018, with another 11 nearly ready to submit. (KSR #1)

Communications

■ Scientific meetings

- i. 2nd Hicatee Conservation Forum and Workshop, including the IUCN Red List meeting for *Dermatemys mawii*, BFREE Field Station, Belize. (KSR #28)

Conservation action

■ Conservation activities

- i. Conservation Action Plan for Endangered Freshwater Turtles and Tortoises in India, third strategic workshop and IUCN red listing meeting, New Delhi, India, organized and sponsored by TSA with TFTSG. (KSR #15)

Policy

■ Technical advice

- i. IUCN TFTSG provided extensive input into early stages of IUCN-TRAFFIC Analyses of CITES proposals for CoP17. (KSR #27)
- ii. CITES adopts a proposal to include six species of African and West Asian softshell turtles in Appendix II. (KSR #27)

Acknowledgements

We thank the following donors that have helped us with TFTSG activities during the current period: Turtle Survival Alliance, The Turtle Conservancy, Global Wildlife Conservation, Wildlife Conservation Society, Turtle Conservation Fund, and Chelonian Research Institute.

Targets for the quadrennium 2017-2020

Barometer of life

Red List: annual regional Red List assessments (4 total) (50% total species assessed). Our Red List Committee (RLC) will organize three additional workshops, following the first on Asian species. We will hold workshops for South America, Madagascar and Mexico/Central America.



Sulawesi Forest Turtle (*Leucocephalon yuwonoi*),
Critically Endangered
Photo: Craig Stanford

Impressed Tortoise (*Manouria impressa*), Vulnerable
Photo: Craig Stanford

**Projected impact for the quadrennium
2017-2020**

In addition to helping the RLC supervise the assessment of half the species in the group over the next four years, my goals as TFSG chair 2017-2021 are: (1) publication of top 25 world's rarest tortoises and freshwater turtles (completed, publication Feb 2018); (2) publication of global/regional action plans (in progress) by Summer 2018; (3) publication of top tier scientific journal article analyzing patterns of extinction risk for chelonians (in prep, to be submitted Spring 2018); site visits to conservation projects for species of concern, approx. one visit per month during my four years (six site visits in eight months so far); (4) increase international and gender diversity within TFSG, and (5) increase visibility of group through public lectures and fundraising.



Summary of activities (2016-2017)

Key Priority Area ratio: 4/7

Key Priority Areas addressed:

- Barometer of life (2 activities)
- Communications (1 activity)
- Conservation action (1 activity)
- Policy (2 activities)

Main KSRs addressed: 1, 15, 27, 28

KSR: Key Species Result



Ploughshare Tortoise (*Astrochelys yniphora*),
Critically Endangered
Photo: Craig Stanford