

IUCN SSC Otter Specialist Group



2018 Report



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Number of members

338

Social networks

Facebook:
IUCN SSC Otter Specialist Group
Instagram:
iucn_otterspecialistgroup
Twitter:
@IUCN_OSG
Websites:
www.iucnosg.org
www.himalayanotternetwork.org



Mission statement

The Otter Specialist Group (OSG), founded in 1974: (1) provides leadership for the conservation of all 13 otter species; (2) determines and reviews on a continuing basis the status and needs of otters, and promotes the implementation of necessary research, conservation and management programmes by appropriate organisations and governments; (3) communicates the status and conservation needs of otters and promotes the wise management of otter species.

Projected impact for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

By the end of 2020, we hope to reduce the extinction risk of four Asian otter species, our current high priority. We published the Asian Otter Conservation Manifesto in 2016 and our Global Otter Conservation Strategy in late 2018. The Strategy lists regional conservation priorities for each of the 13 otter species and the budgets required, which will help accelerate project funding and implementation. We published our second and third TRAFFIC reports on the Illegal Otter Trade in Asia in 2018, which will expand targeted conservation actions and community programmes. In South America, we bolstered national initiatives and programmes for three endangered otter species in Brazil, Peru, Chile and Argentina with targeted field research, local assistance from NGOs, and national parks. In April 2019, we held our 14th International Otter Congress in the Tangjiahe Nature Reserve, Sichuan, China, with 140 participants from 39 countries in attendance. Representatives from Chinese Nature Resources and National Park ministries participated and pledged to finance a China-wide survey with the OSG's assistance.

Targets for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

Assess

Green List: collaborate with setting up an Otter Green List.

Red List: Red List reassessment of 13 species.

Plan

Planning: (1) discuss conservation of otters at the 'Southeast Asian Otter Conservation Planning Meeting', Singapore, September 2018; (2) expand projects of the African Otter Network; (3) co-host the 'European Otters in the Alps: towards a common strategy across boundaries' meeting, October 2018.

Policy: advise for uplisting of two Asian otter species to CITES Appendix 1.

Network

Synergy: expand the OSG Otters in Zoos Task Force.

Communicate

Communication: (1) publish the Global Otter Conservation Strategy; (2) publish two issues of the OSG Bulletin per year.

Scientific meetings: (1) European Otter Workshop, UK; (2) prepare the 14th International Otter Congress, Chengdu, China; (3) prepare and participate in 2nd Nepal Otter Network meeting.

Marine otter (*Lontra felina*), Endangered
Photo: V.B. Scheffer



Sea otter (*Enhydra lutris*), Endangered
Photo: Nicole Duplaix



Activities and results 2018

Assess

Green List

i. Agreed in 2018 to participate in the Green List process planned for the OSG Congress in 2019, including a training workshop. (KSR #11)

Red List

i. Red List revisions of 13 species announced, but will be submitted between 2019 and 2020. (KSR #1)

Plan

Planning

i. Global Otter Conservation Strategy draft reviewed. Discussed new conservation initiatives and applications in Southeast Asia. (KSR #15, 20, 21)

ii. Meeting scheduled in South Africa, January 2020, to expand projects of the African Otter Network. (KSR #15)

iii. Published the Gran Paradiso Otters in the Alps Manifesto: https://www.otterspecialistgroup.org/osg-newsite/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Manifesto_OSG-Gran-Paradiso-2018-1.pdf. (KSR #15, 21, 26)

Policy

i. Contacted Asian CITES authorities and NGOs to assist in gaining support for uplisting proposal. (KSR #21, 26)

Network

Synergy

i. Change of Otters in Zoos coordinator to promote expansion of network. (KSR #29)

Communicate

Communication

i. Publication of Global Otter Conservation Strategy accomplished. The Strategy details goals and objectives of the OSG, and an in-depth review of the 13 otter species,

including conservation status, threats, funding opportunities. It is our Species Conservation Focal Point for years to come. (KSR #15, 21, 26, 28)

ii. Two newsletters published in 2018. The *IUCN OSG Bulletin* is the scientific journal of the IUCN/SSC Otter Specialist Group. We publish peer-reviewed manuscripts containing information from original research that contributes to understanding of any aspect of the biology of the 13 otter species. Topics include investigations into physiology, ecology, conservation, status, diet, behaviour and can cover observations from the wild or animals in captivity. (KSR #28)

Scientific meetings

i. The lengthy preparations and fund-raising for the 14th International Otter Congress took place in 2018.

ii. Participation in 2nd Nepal Otter Network meeting accomplished. Third meeting planned and funded for 2020. The Himalayan Otter Network that the OSG set up in 2017 has become the otter conservation leader in Nepal. (KSR #28)

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Summary of activities 2018

Species Conservation Cycle ratio: 4/5

Assess	2	■ ■
Plan	4	■ ■ ■ ■
Network	1	■
Communicate	4	■ ■ ■ ■

Main KSRs addressed: 1, 11, 15, 20, 21, 26, 28, 29

KSR: Key Species Result