

IUCN SSC Wild Pig Specialist Group



2018 Report



Johanna Rode-Margono



Erik Meijaard

Co-Chairs

Johanna Rode-Margono ⁽¹⁾
Erik Meijaard ⁽²⁾

Red List Authority Coordinator

Kristin Leus ⁽³⁾

Location/Affiliation

- ⁽¹⁾ The North of England Zoological Society / Chester Zoo, UK
- ⁽²⁾ Borneo Futures/Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia
- ⁽³⁾ Scientific Department, Copenhagen Zoo, Denmark

Number of members

58

Social networks

Facebook:
IUCN / SSC Wild Pig Specialist Group
Website:
<https://sites.google.com/site/wildpigspecialist-group/home>



Mission statement

The SSC Wild Pig Specialist Group (WPSG) has not yet defined a mission statement. Key components of such a statement would be: (1) viable wild pig populations, (2) all wild pig taxa, (3) threat management, (4) conservation breeding, (5) reintroduction, (6) habitat restoration and management, and (7) resolution of conflicts with people. Most wild pig species are in decline, especially the various species and subspecies in Indonesia and the Philippines. The WPSG uses a combination of strategies to try to reduce these population declines. This primarily includes (1) research on taxonomy and distribution (the cornerstone of any conservation management), and (2) management of captive and wild populations to prevent the extinction of the most threatened species.

Projected impact for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

We aim to safeguard the small populations of the two Critically Endangered suid species, Pygmy Hog (*Porcula salvania*) and Visayan Warty Pig (*Sus cebifrons*) and continue the captive breeding and release programmes. The target for Pygmy Hogs is to ensure a population in the wild of at least 250 individuals. For Visayan Warty Pig, we still need to confirm that the species survives in the wild, as no such information has been forthcoming. For all other species, we are still in the stage of assessing population status and trends, and we do not have conservation programmes that can realistically aim to stabilise populations in the wild. For Wild Boar (*Sus scrofa*), we aim to revise the taxonomy of the current 18 subspecies.

Targets for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

Assess

Red List: Red List assessment of all pig species completed.

Research activities: (1) status update of the Hairy Babirusa (*Babirusa babyrussa*); (2) Javan Warty Pig (*Sus verrucosus*) status surveys; (3) genetics of Javan Warty Pig and Bawean Warty Pig (*Sus verrucosus blouchi*); (4) taxonomic research on Giant Forest Hog (*Hylochoerus meinertzhageni*) and Wild Boar; (5) Giant Forest Hog status in Uganda; (6) Warthogs research in Kenya; (7) Red River Hog (*Potamochoerus porcus*) ecological research in Sierra Leone; (8) Sulawesi ungulate project (phylogenetic/taxonomic research); (9) Philippines pigs programme 4: Mindoro Warty Pig (*Sus oliveri*) survey 1 and 2; (10) comprehensive surveys for all species of pigs in the Philippines and Indonesia; (11) phylogeny of Philippine wild pigs; (12) first worldwide scale book on wild pigs and peccaries.

Plan

Planning: (1) Conservation Needs Assessment and Planning Strategy with the Conservation Planning Specialist Group (CPSG); (2) collaborative captive breeding of Javan Warty Pigs; (3) Pygmy Hog Species Action Plan workshop to be held in Guwahati, Assam, November 2018; (4) complete the update of the Pygmy Hog Species Action Plan (in progression of the Pygmy Hog Conservation Programme).

Policy: recommendation to the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) for the status of Wild Boar in the UK.



Javan warty pig
Photo: Florian Richter



Act

Conservation actions: (1) Babirusa Global Species Management Plan; (2) release programme for Javan Warty Pig; (3) European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) Tapir and Suiform Regional Collection Plan; (4) Philippine pigs programmes 1, 2 and 3 of captive breeding of Visayan Warty Pigs; (5) collaborative captive breeding of Javan Warty Pigs.

Network

Agreements: a new MoU (International Conservation, Management and Research MoU) between the partners (Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust; WPSG; Forest Department Government of Assam; Ministry of Environment and Forest, Government of India and local partners Aaranyak and EcoSystems-India) for five years for continuation of Pygmy Hog Conservation Programme.

Membership: update membership and recruit new members for neglected species and other disciplines.

Proposal development and funding: develop fundraising plan, making contacts to the pig production industry for fundraising.

Synergy: formalise advisory committee and regional advisors.

Communicate

Communication: (1) publish *Suiform Soundings*; (2) update website, include restricted member area for communication.

Scientific meetings: organise African Pigs Conference.

Activities and results 2018

Assess

Research activities

i. Survey of Hairy Babirusa has been conducted on Buru and published in *Suiform Soundings*; Red List update not yet done. (KSR #12)

ii. Survey of Javan Warty Pig is ongoing, and will be finalised in 2019. (KSR #12)

iii. Genetic studies of Javan and Bawean Warty Pigs are ongoing. Preliminary results have been published, but final results depend on more samples (currently being collected). (KSR #32, 42)

iv. Erik Meijaard and Colin Groves submitted a manuscript on Giant Forest Hog and Wild boar to *Zootaxa*, but it was rejected. Colin sadly passed away and the manuscript requires further work. We proposed recognising two or three distinct species, because the morphological differences are not clinal and change abruptly in eastern Africa. Reviewers requested further morphological work and supporting genetic data. As the latter is not forthcoming, it is unclear whether the current taxonomic proposal should be pursued. This requires discussion among specialist on this species. (KSR #43)

v. Two reports on Giant Forest Hog status in Uganda delivered, one book chapter update. Funds obtained for additional research. Data will be discussed during African wild pig meeting in 2019. (KSR #12)

Pygmy hog hoglet suckling
Photo: Parag



Infant pygmy hog
Photo: Tammo Buss

vi. Research on Sulawesi ungulates continues; one paper was published (Frantz, L.A.F., et al. (2018). Synchronous diversification of Sulawesi's iconic artiodactyls driven by recent geological events. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 285. [<https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2017.2566>]) and other papers are in preparation. (KSR #43)

vii. Book published by end of 2017. (KSR #43)

Plan

Planning

i. Pygmy Hog Species Action Plan workshop was held in Assam in the last week of November 2018. The Species Action Plan was facilitated by a CPSG facilitator and organised by Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust on behalf of WPSG. (KSR #15)

Act

Conservation actions

i. Global Species Management Plans are running very well, with improvements in relationships and cooperation every year. In 2018 a second planning workshop was conducted and new master plan drafted. (KSR #25)

ii. A temporary holding and release enclosure for the Javan Warty Pig release programme has been built at Baluran National Park, with currently one rescued piglet held. The Javan Warty Pig consortium has been built to monitor progress and is meeting every 6 months. Currently, source of release population is being discussed. (KSR #24)

A captive-bred Critically Endangered Pygmy Hog released into the wild
Photo: Aaranyak



Network

Agreements

i. International Conservation, Management and Research MoU between the partners (Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust; WPSG; Forest Department Government of Assam; Ministry of Environment and Forest, Government of India and local partners Aaranyak and EcoSystems-India) drafted, currently at last stages of being checked and signed. (KSR #29)

Membership

i. Updated membership and new members for neglected species and other disciplines recruited.

Communicate

Communication

i. Publication of *Suiform Soundings* has been continued every 6 months. (KSR #28)

Scientific meetings

i. Internal SSC grant received, meeting planned for October 2019. (KSR #28)

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the WPSG members who actively contribute to the work of the WPSG, especially to the Regional Advisors, to the *Suiform Soundings* Editor and Social Media Officer, Thiemo Braasch. I would also like to offer sincere thanks, on behalf of all WPSG members past and present, to the former Chair, Erik Meijaard, for his commitment to leading the group over the past years, and to Chester Zoo for generously providing the new Chair with the time to work on WPSG activities. A thank you also to Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust for fundraising for the species action plan for Pygmy Hog and also helping to initiate the process and organise the workshop on behalf of WPSG.

Summary of activities 2018

Species Conservation Cycle ratio: 5/5

Assess	7	
Plan	1	
Act	2	
Network	2	
Communicate	2	

Main KSRs addressed: 12, 15, 24, 25, 28, 29, 32, 42, 43

KSR: Key Species Result