

# IUCN Phylogenetic Diversity Task Force

2019 Report



Nisha Owen

## Chair

Nisha Owen

## Location/Affiliation

On the EDGE Conservation, London, UK

## Number of members

14

## Social networks

Twitter: @IUCN\_TreeOfLife

Website: <https://www.pdtf.org/>



## Mission statement

The aim of the IUCN SSC Phylogenetic Diversity Task Force (PDTF) is to provide leadership and guidance on the inclusion of phylogenetic diversity in conservation strategies. By providing the necessary scientific and technical expertise, we will promote wider adoption and greater understanding of this approach by conservation practitioners, decision makers, and the public.

## Projected impact for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

Established in 2019, the PDTF has developed a work plan with the aim of delivering measurable results in the next quadrennium.

## Targets for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

### Assess

Communication: develop a consultative database by compiling information on the applied use of phylogenetic diversity (PD) in conservation around the world, including organisations and contacts, to assess the current extent of application of PD-metrics. This will contribute to better monitoring and evaluation of the impact of PD-prioritisations on the effectiveness of conservation action and inform the future PDTF membership.

Research activities: identify gaps in knowledge or application of PD-metrics as a result of the review and guidance planning. Encourage PDTF members and the wider scientific and conservation community to undertake targeted scientific research and conservation applications (such as through post-graduate research or conser-

vation projects) that will add to our knowledge base. High profile scientific analyses and investigations that have wide implications will be completed and published. These will enable the updating and generating of guidance as required, feeding back into the other objectives.

### Plan

Communication: consider a structure for information exchange and collaboration to occur more effectively to increase understanding of PD importance and application in conservation by practitioners; adding value to existing activities through conferences, meetings, grant support.

Planning: develop state-of-the-art methods for measuring and categorising the success of conservation. These will be the two indicators proposed by the PDTF to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat for inclusion in the post-2020 framework.

Policy: develop a variety of guidance documents that will include practical examples and review obstacles and lessons to share best practice on the ground. This will contribute to improved and more widely adopted approaches for species prioritisation for incorporation into conservation planning (KSR 15); creating cutting-edge tools and approaches for incorporating evolutionary history into conservation (KSR 18); supporting conservation planning processes to include evolutionary history and thus feed into policy and action (KSR 21).

Proposal development and funding: develop consultation-informed recommendations for guidance documents. Initiate guidance planning consultation with IUCN Specialist Groups, interested academics and practitioners to identify the potential for a variety of guidance documents for practitioners and policy makers that will address current barriers to the use of



PDTF members speaking at the International Congress for Conservation Biology 2019  
Photo: Roseli Pellens, PDTF

PD-metrics to inform conservation. Encourage consideration of PD and use of PD-based metrics in new sectors, such as business.

#### **Act**

Policy: (1) develop knowledge-exchange and consultation between various stakeholders to enable adoption of PD-prioritisation and guidelines to inform global and national conservation policy (KSR 26) – such as the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), the post-2020 CBD framework, CITES, Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), and Ramsar – and at national and cross-boundary levels (KSR 27). Scientific advice from PDTF used to drive actions and policies for species and sites are implemented at the national level (linking to National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and national Red Lists); (2) contribute as a Task Force to the increased awareness and wider adoption of PD-informed conservation, through representations at conferences, workshops and other events, to develop knowledge-exchange amongst attendees.

#### **Network**

Capacity building: (1) develop knowledge-exchange and consultation between academics, practitioners and policy makers. This will contribute to building capacity for species conservation planning (KSR 17), feed in to the identification of sites of global biodiversity conservation significance (KSR 22) such as Key Biodiversity Area prioritisation, building mutually-beneficial institutional partnerships for SSC Specialist Groups and increasing the number of groups that adopt PD as a prioritisation tool (KSR 29); (2) develop or support training programmes on species conservation planning

by building capacity. Capacity is developed to expand effective species conservation planning efforts throughout the SSC network and beyond and ensure that these efforts are considered valuable and accessible to all relevant parties.

Synergy: collaborate with and contribute to IUCN strategy and World Conservation Congress conferences to promote the uptake of PD in policy and conservation practices.

#### **Communicate**

Communication: communicate species conservation work, such as application of PD, best practice, PDTF achievements and activities that frame PD around evolutionary heritage as a storehouse of future benefits, and so linked to a fundamental value of biodiversity, namely the maintenance of options. This could be done through the PDTF website, social media, and other mass media avenues.

Documents review: develop and update PDTF governance documents, foundational statements, work plan and review of members to ensure continued strategic planning and progress.

#### **Activities and results 2019**

##### **Act**

##### Policy

**i.** The PDTF has submitted to the CBD Secretariat a proposal of two indicators for inclusion in the post-2020 framework, and also provided input to both IUCN and the IUCN Post-2020 Task Force on the post-2020 framework (KSR #26, 27).

**ii.** A symposium on “Prioritising phylogenetic diversity in conservation: philosophy, theory and practice”, coordinated by the PDTF, was held at the 29th International Congress for Conservation Biology, in July 2019 (KSR #28).

#### **Network**

##### Membership

**i.** We have a founding membership of 12 plus 2 new members.

##### **Communicate**

##### Communication

**i.** The PDTF website has been developed and launched ([www.pdtf.org](http://www.pdtf.org)). (KSR #28)

#### **Acknowledgements**

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#### **Summary of activities 2019**

Components of Species Conservation Cycle: 3/5

Act	2	
Network	1	
Communicate	1	

Main KSRs addressed: 26, 27, 28

KSR: Key Species Result