IUCN SSC Species Monitoring Specialist Group

2019 Report

P.J. Stephenson

Chair

P.J. Stephenson

Location/Affiliation

Gingins, Switzerland

Number of members

40

Social networks

Twitter: @Monitor_Species
Website: www.speciesmonitoring.org

SPECIES MONITORING
Specialist Group

Mission statement

The IUCN SSC Species Monitoring Specialist Group (SMSG) aims to enhance biodiversity conservation by improving the availability and use of data on species populations, their habitats and threats.

Projected impact for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

By 2020, the capacity of the SSC network and its partners for data collection, analysis, sharing and use is enhanced, resulting in at least ten significant initiatives starting to fill identified taxonomic and geographic gaps in species data needed for IUCN Red List assessments. We therefore expect Red List assessments for at least 30 species to use richer data sets.

Targets for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

Assess

Research actions: (1) review of IUCN Save Our Species (SOS) portfolio data completed and taxonomic and geographic trends identified; (2) survey of SSC taxonomic Specialist Groups completed and trends in taxonomic and geographic data gaps, as well as Specialist Group monitoring capacity needs, identified; (3) at least one scientific paper published annually promoting the goals of the group and IUCN data products; (4) at least one project implemented per year to demonstrate monitoring tools and best practices and deliver the group's strategic plan; (5) at least three monitoring frameworks produced for specific uses (e.g. protected areas, Key Biodiversity Areas, business, restoration, etc.); (6) a database of monitoring systems, tools and data sources is available online; (7) at least one IUCN data product per year is improved through input from the SMSG.

Act

Technical advice: at least eight monitoring plans are developed for taxonomic Specialist Groups, including at least two for taxa previously unmonitored systematically.

Network

Capacity building: at least one training webinar per year offered to SSC groups and their partners to improve capacity for monitoring.

Proposal development and funding: funding secured annually (CHF) for core and project costs (value of grants received: US$ 150,000).

Activities and results 2019

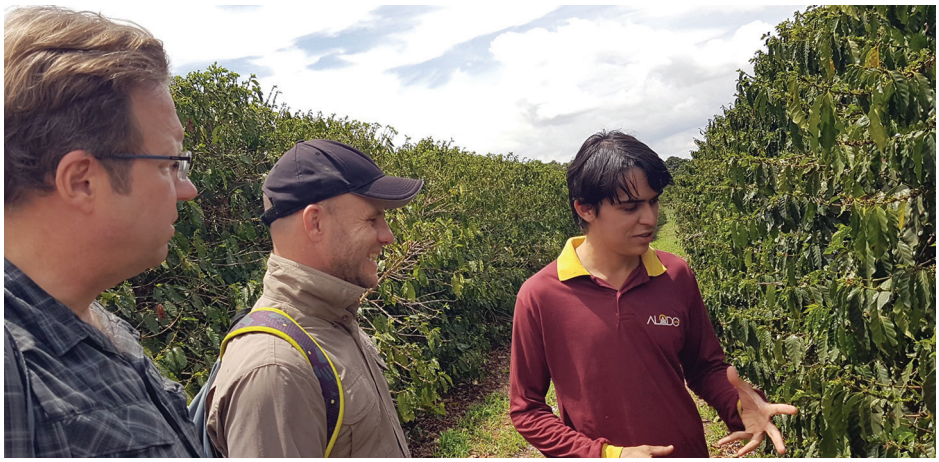
Assess

Research actions

i. Review of SOS portfolio data completed; paper submitted to peer-reviewed journal and now under revision. (KSR #32)

ii. Survey of SSC taxonomic specialist groups completed; report produced; paper in preparation. (KSR #32)

iii. In 2019, four papers were published by the SMSG Chair (with members) on biodiversity monitoring issues and IUCN data products: (1) Akçakaya, H.R., et al. (2019). Assessing ecological function in the context of species recovery. *Conservation Biology* 34(3):561–571. [DOI: 10.1111/cobi.13425]; (2) Stephenson, P.J. (2019). The Holy Grail of biodiversity conservation management: Monitoring impact in projects and project portfolios. *Perspectives in Ecology and Conservation* 17(4):182–192; (3) Stephenson, P.J. (2019). Integrating remote sensing into wildlife monitoring for conservation. *Environmental Conservation* 46:181–183; (4) Stephenson, P.J., et al. (2019). Defining the indigenous ranges of species to account for geographic and taxonomic variation in the history of human impacts. *Conservation Biology* 33(5):1211–1213. (KSR #32)



Group chair, P.J. Stephenson, discussing the sustainable production of coffee in Patrocinio, Minas Gerais, Brazil with farmer Alan Michel Batista and Nespresso's Guilherme Amado, as part of the project "Biodiversity Monitoring and Reporting Frameworks for Business"
Photo: P.J. Stephenson

Rangers from Ghana Wildlife Division setting camera traps in Shai Hills Reserve as part of the group project "Improving capacity for protected area management in Ghana"
Photo: Kofi Amponsah-Mensah.

iv. SMSG projects implemented in 2019 were: (1) a global audit of biodiversity monitoring; (2) biodiversity monitoring and reporting frameworks for business; (3) improving capacity for protected area management in Ghana; (4) assessing biodiversity data sets; (5) testing the IUCN Green List of Species. Updates are on the SMSG website at: https://www.species-monitoring.org/projects.html (KSR #32)

v. Monitoring guidelines were produced for Nespresso; monitoring guidance was developed for the IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas; the IUCN Green List of Species was tested on 15 species and the Standard improved. (KSR #14)

vi. Database of monitoring systems: a preliminary list of tools and data sources is available online. A full database of known monitoring projects, and an additional database of all available data sets, will be published online in 2020.

vii. The Chair is an active member of the IUCN Green List of Species Task Force and in 2019 he helped finalise the standard and the guidelines; he is also a member of the Green List Working Group of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas and in 2019 provided input into the guidelines for the IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas. (KSR #14)

Network

Proposal development and funding

i. We have four main funding sources: (1) funding from Nespresso supported the IUCN Global Business and Biodiversity Programme and the SMSG Chair to implement the project Biodiversity Monitoring and Reporting Frameworks for Business; (2) funding from Audemars-Watkins Foundation to the Centre for African Wetlands for the protected area project in Ghana; (3) funding from the National Geographic Society supported the testing of the IUCN Green List of Species on 15 species; (4) funding from Global Wildlife Conservation allowed an assessment of available global data sets for biodiversity. (KSR #19)

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the Audemars-Watkins Foundation and Nespresso for supporting group projects in 2019.

Summary of activities 2019

Components of Species Conservation Cycle: 2/5	
Assess	**7**
Network	**1**
Main KSRs addressed: 14, 19, 32	
Resolutions addressed: WCC-2012-Res-41	

KSR: Key Species Result