



# Species

ISSUE 63

## 2022 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat



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## The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC)

The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) is a science-based network of thousands of volunteer experts from almost every country of the world, all working together toward achieving the vision of “a just world that values and conserves nature through positive action to both prevent the loss and aid recovery of the diversity of life on earth.”

Members of SSC belong to one or more of near 200 Specialist Groups, Red List Authorities, Action Partnerships, Task Forces, and Conservation Committees that make up the Network, each focusing on a taxonomic group (plants, fungi, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fishes, and invertebrates), national species, or a disciplinary issue, such as sustainable use and livelihoods, translocation of species, wildlife health, climate change, and conservation planning.

Framed by the Species Conservation Cycle, SSC’s major role is to provide information to IUCN on biodiversity conservation, the inherent value of species, their role in ecosystem health and functioning, the provision of ecosystem services, and their support to human livelihoods. This information is fed into the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

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### 2021-2025 Species Strategic Plan

The IUCN Species Strategic Plan encompasses the joint work of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and a number of partnerships to achieve more than 2,700 targets proposed by the Network during the 2021-2025 quadrennium.

To accomplish those targets, the Species Conservation Cycle was established, which is the conceptual framework for the Network activities. The Species Conservation Cycle’s main purpose is to guide efforts for valuing and conserving biodiversity through three essential components that are linked to each other:

**ASSESS:** Understand and inform the world about the status and trends of biodiversity.

**PLAN:** Develop collaborative, inclusive and science-based conservation strategies, plans and policies.

**ACT:** Convene and mobilise conservation actions to improve the status of biodiversity.



Their implementation requires two transversal components:

**NETWORK:** Enhance and support our immediate network and alliances to achieve our biodiversity targets.

**COMMUNICATE:** Drive strategic and targeted communications to enhance our conservation impact.

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### SSC Species Report

Annual progress in the implementation of the 2021-2025 Species Strategic Plan is documented in the SSC *Species Report*, which consists of a comprehensive description and analysis of the activities and results generated by the members of the SSC Network each year. Each SSC Group contributes to this document by providing a yearly summarised description of their achievements, which is presented in stand-alone reports.

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## Structure of the IUCN SSC Stand-alone Report

Stand-alone reports summarize the activities conducted and results generated by each group member of the SSC. Following, is the structure of the stand-alone report and the contents under each session.

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### Title of the SSC Group

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### Photograph(s) of the Chair / Co-Chairs

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### Group information

Includes names of Chair / Co-Chairs, Vice-Chairs, Deputy Chairs, Red List Authority Coordinators and Program Officers, their institutional affiliations, number of members and social networks currently active.

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### Logo of the SSC Group

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### Mission statement

Includes the mission of the group.

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### Projected impact for the 2021-2025 quadrennium

Includes the description of the impact on species conservation resulting from the implementation of the targets formulated by the group for the 2021-2025 quadrennium.

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### Targets for the 2021-2025 quadrennium

Includes the targets planned by the SSC Group for the 2021-2025 quadrennium ordered alphabetically by component of the Species Conservation Cycle. Each target is labeled with a numerical code (e.g., T-001, T-012) that identifies it in the SSC DATA database and its status for the reported year is indicated (Not initiated, On track or Achieved).

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### Activities and results

Includes the targets for which activities were conducted and results were generated during the reported year, ordered alphabetically, first by component of the Species Conservation Cycle, and second by Activity Category. Description of activities and results includes the indicator that best describes progress, its associated quantitative or qualitative result, and the narrative description of the activity conducted or result obtained. Each activity or result reported is linked to the Key Species Result to which it is mainly associated (e.g., KSR#1, KSR#5).

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### Acknowledgements

Includes the acknowledgements to funding agencies, partners, and persons who contributed to the progress of the targets of the group.

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### Summary of achievements

Summarises information of the group's strategic plan for the quadrennium and progress achieved implementing targets for all the components of the Species Conservation Cycle during the reported year.

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### Example for the recommended citation:

Menon, V, Wong, EP and Riddle, H. 2023. 2022 Report of the Asian Elephant Specialist Group. In: Nassar, JM, García, L, Mendoza, L, Andrade, ND, Bezeng, S, Birkhoff, J, Bohm, M, Canteiro, C, Geschke, J, Henriques, S, Ivande, S, Mileham, K, Ramos, M, Rodríguez, A, Rodríguez, JP, Street, B, and Yerena, E (Eds.). 2022 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat. International Union for Conservation of Nature. 6 pp.

Animalia

Fungi

Plantae

National Species

Disciplinary

Action Partnership

Task Force

Red List Authority

Committee

Center for Species Survival

# IUCN SSC Asian Elephant Specialist Group



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**NUMBER OF MEMBERS**  
110

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE**  
Website: <https://www.asesg.org>

## Mission statement

The Asian Elephant Specialist Group (AsESG) does not have a mission statement but has developed a mandate for the Group: (1) AsESG shall provide the best available scientifically grounded evidence as to the abundance, distributions and demographic status of populations of Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*) in all 13 range states. It shall also set forth advisory guidelines for range states and assist in capacity building in performing their own assessments; (2) AsESG shall analyse threats to wild populations and raise awareness of these by communicating both within and outside the scientific community, and also set forth standards/guidelines for management and welfare of wild and captive elephants, including but not limited to the surveillance of disease interfaces and economic activities that impact elephant; (3) AsESG shall use its advisory mandate to guide conservation and welfare issues of Asian elephants by governments, civil societies or any other relevant stakeholders.

## Projected impact 2021–2025

Conservation prospect of Asian Elephant across 13 Range States improved through collaborative efforts of range countries and AsESG members.

## Targets 2021–2025

### ASSESS

**T-008** Support National Red List assessment of elephants in at least two countries.  
Status: Not initiated

**T-009** Ascertain taxonomic status of Borneo Elephants and their Red List assessment.  
Status: On track

**T-010** Map the distribution of elephants in all the 13 range states in Asia.  
Status: On track

**T-014** Communicate elephant conservation and research on Asian Elephants through the *GAJAH* journal (two volumes per year).  
Status: On track

### PLAN

**T-003** Develop National Elephant Conservation Action Plans (NECAP) on elephant conservation for all 13 range states.  
Status: On track

**T-004** Develop guidelines/protocols on select issues for the conservation of Asian Elephants in Working Groups.  
Status: On track

**T-006** Assist CITES and its Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) programme with information and report on Asian Elephants for CITES Steering Committee meetings.  
Status: On track

### ACT

**T-013** Provide technical support and a plan to the Viet Nam Administration of Forestry for the recovery of the elephant population and habitat.  
Status: On track

### NETWORK

**T-001** Renew AsESG membership for the period 2021-2025 and expand it with representatives from each Range State as well as youths.  
Status: On track

**T-002** Develop proposals and generate financial resources to support AsESG conservation activities.  
Status: On track

**T-005** Along with the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), develop best practices for linear infrastructures passing through elephant habitats in Asia.  
Status: On track

**T-011** Organise two meetings (11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>) of the Asian Elephant Specialist Group members in 2022 and 2024.  
Status: On track

**T-012** Assist host countries in jointly hosting the 3<sup>rd</sup> Asian Elephant Range States meeting.  
Status: Achieved



Third Asian Elephant Range State meeting  
Photo: Prajna Panda



Third Asian Elephant Range State meeting  
Photo: IUCN SSC AsESG

## COMMUNICATE

**T-007** Maintain an updated AsESG website for dissemination of information on the species, resources and group expertise.  
Status: On track

## Activities and results 2022

### ASSESS

#### Red List

**T-009** Ascertain taxonomic status of Borneo Elephants and their Red List assessment. (KSR 6)

Number of new national Red List assessments published: 0

Result description: The discussion with the Working Group on Sabah Elephants (*Elephas maximus*) is in progress.

#### Research activities

**T-014** Communicate elephant conservation and research on Asian Elephants through the GAJAH journal (2 volumes per year). (KSR 5)

Number of publications produced in internal journals of SSC groups: 1

Result description: *Gajah* 55 has been published and uploaded on AsESG website.

#### Planning

**T-010** Map the distribution of elephants in all the 13 range states in Asia. (KSR 6)

Map showing the distribution of elephants across 13 Range States in Asia: Ongoing.

Result description: Meetings have been held with AsESG Working Group on this. A proposal has also been drafted for mapping the elephant distribution in India. Dialogue is being initiated with other countries.

## PLAN

### Planning

**T-003** Develop National Elephant Conservation Action Plans (NECAP) on elephant conservation for all 13 range states. (KSR 8)

Number of conservation plans/strategies developed: 1

Result description: The National Elephant Conservation Action Plans (NECAP) of Myanmar, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, and Sabah Malaysia has been finalised and uploaded on the AsESG website. The Action Plan of Sumatra and Nepal are under preparation.

**T-004** Develop guidelines/protocols on select issues for the conservation of Asian Elephants in Working Groups. (KSR 8)

Number of conservation plans/strategies developed: 2

Result description: The Guidelines for creating water holes in elephant habitats and welfare and use of elephants in tourism have been finalised and uploaded on the AsESG website. The Guideline on management and care of captive elephants in Musth is finalised.

## ACT

### Technical advice

**T-013** Provide technical support and a plan to the Viet Nam Administration of Forestry for the recovery of the elephant population and habitat. (KSR 10)

Number of technical consultations provided to support conservation actions: 0

Result description: Technical consultation has been provided by Dr Prithviraj Fernando (WG Chair) and Dr Jennifer Pastorini (IUCN SSC AsESG member) in the drafting of the NECAP of Vietnam. Consultation workshops have been organised.

## NETWORK

### Membership

**T-001** Renew AsESG membership for period 2021–2025 and expand it with representatives from each Range State as well as youths. (KSR 2)

Number of SSC members recruited: 6

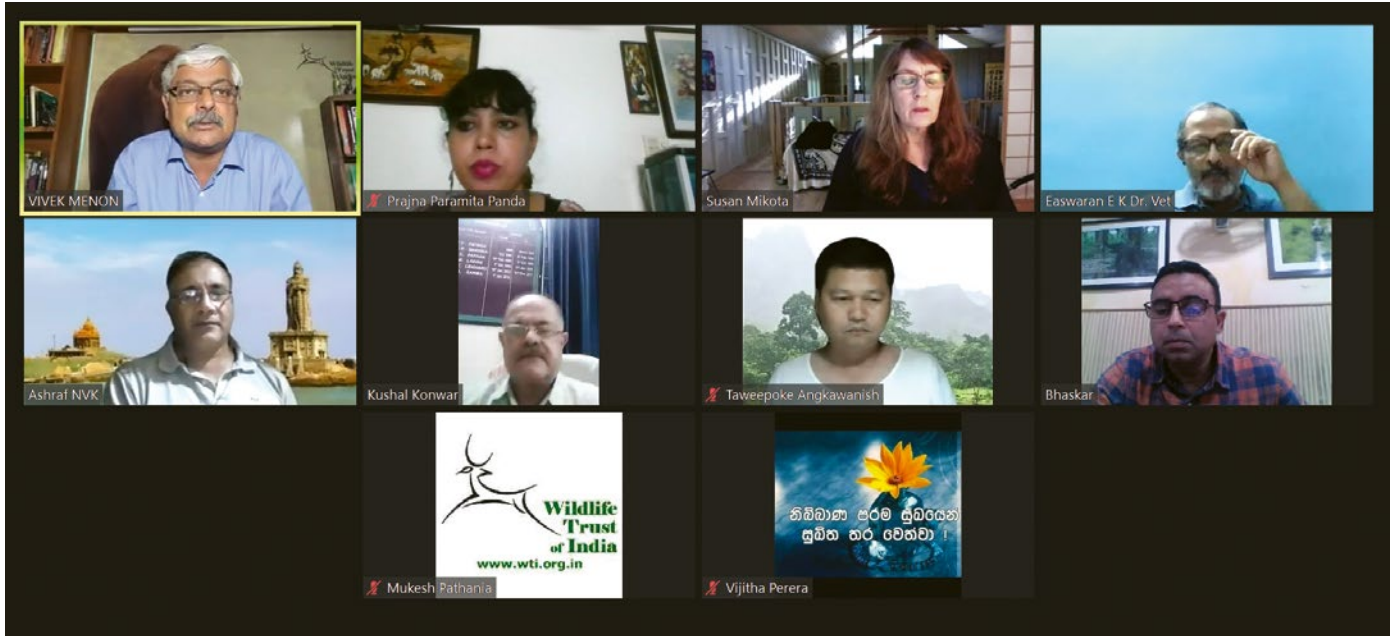
Result description: The group has a total of 110 members till 15 December 2022.

### Synergy

**T-002** Develop proposals and generate financial resources to support AsESG conservation activities. (KSR 1)

Number of funding partners established and maintained: 4

Working group meeting- Emerging diseases  
Photo: Prajna Panda



IUCN delegation at CoP 19 CITES  
Photo: Prajna Panda

Result description: In 2022 the AsESG submitted four funding proposals and is in discussion with a few others for generating funds for the group.

**T-005 Along with the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), develop best practices for linear infrastructures passing through elephant habitats in Asia. (KSR 3)**

Collaborate with WCPA on linear infrastructures in Asian elephant habitat: Ongoing.

Result description: The primer document on 'Protecting Asian Elephants from Linear Transport Infrastructures' was published in 2021. In 2022 the group had three rounds of WG meetings and are working on a second document on mitigation structures.

**T-011 Organise two meetings (11th and 12th) of the Asian Elephant Specialist Group members in 2022 and 2024. (KSR 4)**

AsESG members, Range country officials and elephant experts meeting: 0

Result description: AsESG Secretariat is coordinating between members and 13 Range countries to organize the 11<sup>th</sup> AsESG Members Meeting from 14-18 March 2023 in New Delhi and Corbett TR, India for which preparations are ongoing.

**T-012 Assist host countries in jointly hosting the 3rd Asian Elephant Range States meeting. (KSR 4)**

3<sup>rd</sup> Asian Elephant range country meeting organised: 1



Result description: The AsESG is assisting Nepal Government in reaching out to Range States. The meeting was conducted from 27-29 April 2022, with Kathmandu Declaration as an outcome: <https://www.asesg.org/PDFfiles/2022kathmandu.pdf>.

**COMMUNICATE**  
**Communication**

**T-007 Maintain an updated AsESG website for dissemination of information on the species, resources and group expertise.**  
 (KSR 12)

Functional website: Ongoing.

Result description: The updated information on members, events, WG reports and the final report on the Nepal meeting have been uploaded on the AsESG website. The website is maintained and updated regularly.

**Acknowledgements**

The AsESG Secretariat would like to thank all its members for their active participation and support in contributing to the overall goal of the Specialist Group. We also are thankful to the members of the Working Group Convenors and the WG members for organising regular meetings, leading discussions, and drafting and finalising the Working Group reports. The Chair would like to convey his sincere thanks to range States for updating/preparing their National Action Plan for tconservation of

Asian Elephants. We are thankful to the range states for their active participation in the 3rd Asian elephant range state meeting and for signing the Kathmandu Declaration. Our sincere appreciation is also to the range states who participated in the side event of stocktaking of Kathmandu declaration at CoP 19 of CITES in Panama and in the 11th Asian Elephant Specialist Group meeting in India. The Chair also expresses his thanks to the Leadership team of AsESG, the Membership Advisory Committee (MAC) and the Communication team of the AsESG for their proactive support. Our special appreciation to the editorial board of Gajah Journal for publishing the issues in time and proactively looking for quality papers. We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to all our conservation partners including International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), Colossal Biosciences, Japan Tiger & Elephant Funds (JTEF), AZA SAFE, Columbus Zoo, St. Louis Zoo, AZA, African Lion Safari, Mandai Nature, WWF- US, Hai Park, Loro Parque Fundacion, Kolner zoo, Denver zoo, White Oak Conservation Albuquerque BioPark and Toronga Conservation Society for supporting the activities of AsESG and their financial support. The AsESG Secretariat would also like to thank Prof. Jon Paul Rodríguez, SSC Chair and his team and the IUCN Office for extending all assistance and help to AsESG.

**Summary of achievements**

**Total number of targets 2021-2025: 14**

**Geographic regions: 14 Asia**

**Actions during 2022:**

Assess: 3 (KSR 5, 6)

Plan: 2 (KSR 8)

Act: 1 (KSR 10)

Network: 5 (KSR 1, 2, 3, 4)

Communicate: 1 (KSR 12)

**Overall achievement 2021-2025:**

