IUCN

SSC
Species Survival Commission

Species

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2023 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat

Stand-alone report
IUCN SSC Western Ghats Plant Specialist Group

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.

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.

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 and Centers for Species Survival (CSS) each year. Each SSC and CSS group contributes to this document by providing a yearly summarised description of their achievements, which is presented in standalone reports.

Structure of the IUCN SSC and CSS Stand-alone Reports

Animalia

Fungi

Plantae

National Species

Disciplinary

Action Partnership

Task Force

Red List Authority

Committee

Center for Species Survival

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

Title of the group

Photograph(s) of the Chair/Co-Chairs

Group information

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

Logo of the group

Mission statement

Includes the mission of the group.

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.

Targets for the 2021-2025 quadrennium

Includes the targets planned by the SSC or CSS 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).

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).

Acknowledgements

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

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.

Example for the recommended citation:

Varghese, A. and Ganesan, R. 2024. 2023 Report of the Western Ghats Plan Specialist Group. In: IUCN SSC and Secretariat. *2023 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat.* Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. 4 pp.

2023 Report

IUCN SSC Western Ghats Plant Specialist Group

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NUMBER OF MEMBERS
59

SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE
Facebook: The Western Ghats Plant Specialist Group
Instagram: @iucn_wgpsg

Mission statement

The mission of the Western Ghats Plant Specialist Group (WGPSG) is to improve current knowledge on taxonomy and ecology of plants of the entire region of the Western Ghats and thereby enhance their conservation status in the long term.

Projected impact 2021–2025

Our mission is to improve the conservation status of wild plants in the Western Ghats. There are several experts working on plant conservation in this region and the WGPSG gives us a common platform. Population-level assessments of the Critically Endangered and endemic flora are urgently needed to assess threats. We will collate regional assessments of threats to plants and bring that information into the Red List database. This will help raise awareness about the major threats to plants in this region, to prioritise and recommend conservation actions and to implement species recovery programmes.

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-001 Facilitate extinction risk assessments following the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species methodology for several key genera and species of Western Ghats and publish the finalised assessments on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
Status: On track

T-002 Facilitate assessments following the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species methodology for selected genera and species with high diversity in Western Ghats (e.g., *Ceropegia*, *Impatiens*) and publish the finalised assessments on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
Status: On track

T-011 Assess threats to habitats in collaboration with local research NGOs, especially to estimate the status of invasive species.
Status: On track

T-012 Identify Key Biodiversity Areas for Plants in collaboration with Forest departments, local NGOs, citizen groups and others. Support declaration of Important Plant Conservation Areas.
Status: On track

ACT

T-004 Undertake *ex situ* and *in situ* conservation efforts in collaboration with scientifically managed nurseries, arboretums, and botanical gardens.
Status: On track

T-008 Undertake documentation of sustainable use practices for species, plants, and livelihood linkages (wild plants in use for self and market).
Status: On track

NETWORK

T-010 Conduct regular field courses in plant taxonomy and conservation science for graduate-level students. Conduct regular courses for citizens and professionals in related fields for biodiversity conservation action.
Status: On track

COMMUNICATE

T-003 Advocate for more plant conservation work across the region among educational institutions, local/regional governments, and corporate bodies.
Status: On track

T-013 Maintain an email distribution list for workshops planned/held. Maintain a Whatsapp group and social media presence with a focus on local language campaigns.
Status: On track

Ceropegia huberi endemic to Western Ghats
Photo: Aparna Watve

Activities and results 2023

ASSESS

Red List

T-001 Facilitate extinction risk assessments following the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species methodology for several key genera and species of Western Ghats and publish the finalised assessments on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Specie. (KSR 6)

Number of global Red List reassessments completed: 10

Result description: Assessments of two Monotypic genera were completed along with eight other endemic and non-endemic species.

T-002 Facilitate assessments following the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species methodology for selected genera and species with high diversity in Western Ghats (e.g. *Ceropegia, Impatiens*) and publish the finalised assessments on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. (KSR 6)

Number of global Red List reassessments completed: 3

Result description: Assessments of all three species of *Adelocaryum* in the Western Ghats are completed and awaiting publication.

Research activities

T-011 Assess threats to habitats in collaboration with local research NGOs, especially to estimate the status of invasive species. (KSR 6)

Number of new invasive species accounts on GISD: 0

Result description: Dr Mandar Datar and Dr Aparna Watve assisted as experts in a study of invasive and alien species in the Western Ghats carried out as part of a doctoral dissertation.

T-012 Identify Key Biodiversity Areas for Plants in collaboration with Forest departments, local NGOs, citizen groups and others. Support declaration of Important Plant Conservation Areas. (KSR 6)

Number of new Key Biodiversity Areas confirmed in the World Database of KBAs: 0

Result description: Discussions are ongoing with AZE to understand potential KBAs in the Western Ghats. A map of existing KBAs is prepared and documentation lacking in the KBA database is being collated.

[SSC Grant awarded]

ACT

Technical advice

T-004 Undertake *ex situ* and *in situ* conservation efforts in collaboration with scientifically managed nurseries, arboretums, and botanical gardens. (KSR 10)

Number of technical consultations provided to support conservation actions: 5

Result description: Technical support was provided to Naoroji Godrej Plant Research Centre and Empress Botanical Garden Pune for *ex situ* conservation efforts for the species *Saraca asoca* and *Erinocarpus nimmonnii*. Three nurseries are managed by the Keystone Foundation. Arboretum 'Trees of Western Ghats' (26 species) on the campus of Keystone Foundation.

T-008 Undertake documentation of sustainable use practices for species, plants, and livelihood linkages (wild plants in use for self and market). (KSR 11)

Number of sustainable use practices supported: 5

Result description: In 2023, *Emblica officinalis*, *Sapindus emarginatus* and *Acacia concinna* sustainable harvest of NTFP to indigenous communities of the Nilgiri BR (Irula and Kurumba) linked to the producer company Adimalai was supported.

NETWORK

Capacity building

T-010 Conduct regular field courses in plant taxonomy and conservation science for graduate-level students. Conduct regular courses for citizens and professionals in related fields for biodiversity conservation action. (KSR 2)

Number of people trained in assessment tools: 25

Result description: A hands-on training workshop titled 'Red listing - understanding process and protocols' was organised by Dr Suchandra Dutta R.D. National College Mumbai (July 19-20, 2023). The Red List coordinating team Dr Aparna Watve, Aditya Gadkari and Dr Charuta Gole provided an orientation on the red listing process, conservation planning and its application for actual on-ground conservation action for threatened species. It was attended by participants from 15 colleges and conservation NGOs. A nature trail in Mahim National Park, an ecological restoration project within the Mumbai Urban area was also conducted.

COMMUNICATE

Communication

T-003 Advocate for more plant conservation work across the region among educational institutions, local/regional governments, and corporate bodies. (KSR 13)

Number of communication products using innovative tools: 1

Result description: Information on endangered endemic species was hosted on the Facebook page of the group. Dr Ankur Patwardhan worked with the Panchgani Municipal Council to prepare a booklet of wild flora of the Mahabaleshwar-Panchgani Exo-sensitive Zone, a designated KBA.

T-013 Maintain an email distribution list for workshops planned/held. Maintain a Whatsapp group and social media presence with a focus on local language campaigns. (KSR 13)

Number of digital communication outputs developed in relation to specific taxonomic groups: 2

Result description: Vernacular channel MahaMTB has developed Marathi language short films for social media on lesser-known endemic and endangered plant species, including *Aponogeton nateshii* and *Aponogeton saterensis*.

Summary of achievements

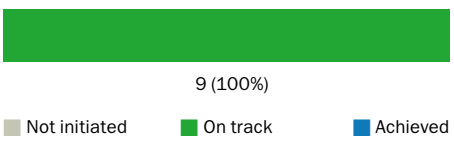
Total number of targets 2021–2025: 9

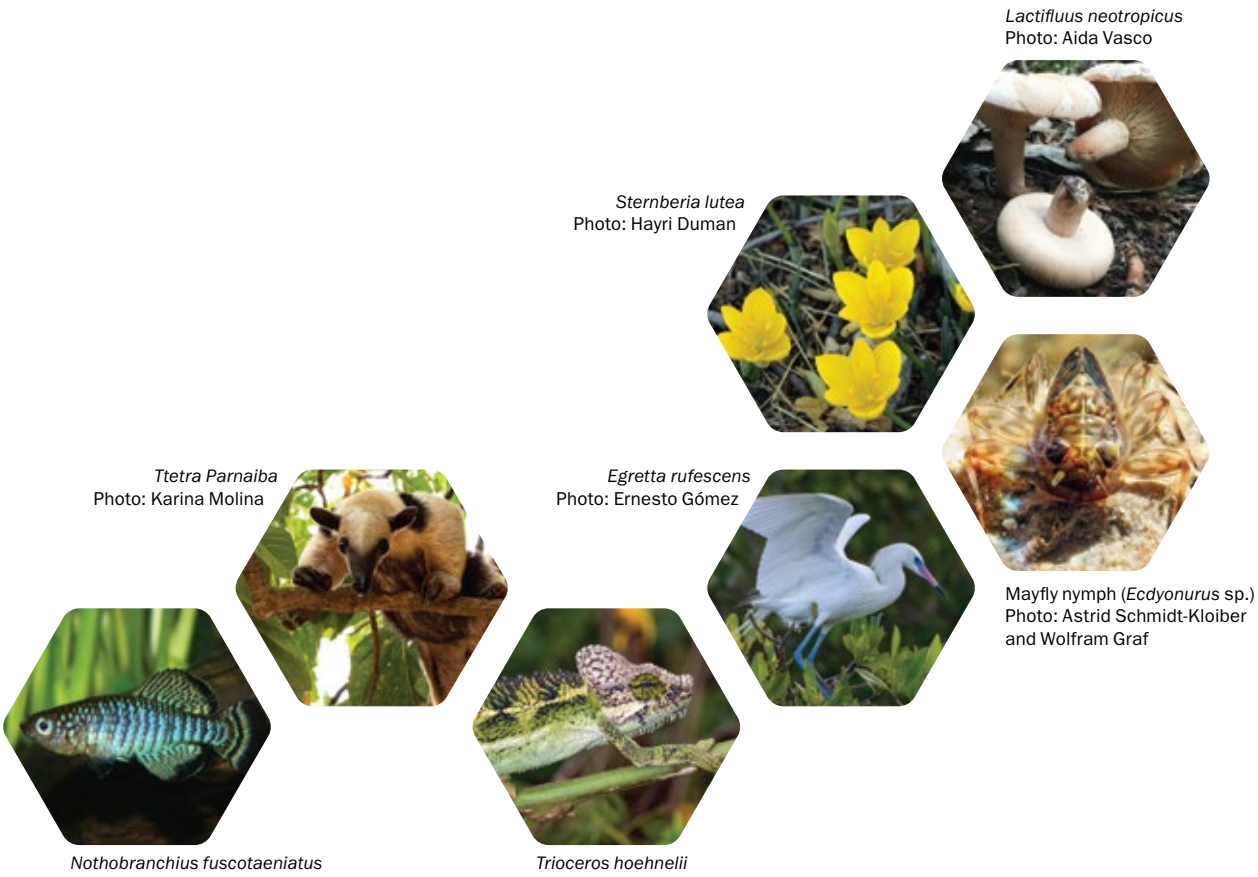
Geographic regions: 9 Asia

Actions during 2023:

Assess: 4 (KSR 6)
Act: 2 (KSR 10, 11)
Network: 1 (KSR 2)
Communicate: 2 (KSR 13)

Overall achievement 2021–2025:





Lactifluus neotropicus
Photo: Aida Vasco

Sternberia lutea
Photo: Hayri Duman

Ttetra Parnaiba
Photo: Karina Molina

Egretta rufescens
Photo: Ernesto Gómez

Mayfly nymph (*Ecdyonurus* sp.)
Photo: Astrid Schmidt-Kloiber and Wolfram Graf

Nothobranchius fuscotaeniatus
Photo: Csenge Nagy

Trioceros hoehnelii
Photo: Christopher V. Anderson