IUCN SSC Species Survival Commission

Species

ISSUE 64

2023 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat

Stand-alone report
IUCN SSC Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe 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

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.

Animalia

Fungi

Plantae

National Species

Disciplinary

Action Partnership

Task Force

Red List Authority

Committee

Center for Species Survival

Example for the recommended citation:
Boitani, L. 2024. 2023 Report of the Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe 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 Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe Specialist Group

CHAIR
Luigi Boitani
University of Rome Sapienza, Roma, Italy

NUMBER OF MEMBERS
57

SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE
Facebook: @LCIEIUCN
Website: https://www.lcie.org

Mission statement

Maintain and restore, in coexistence with people, viable populations of large carnivores as an integral part of ecosystems and landscapes across Europe.

Projected impact 2021–2025

The Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe (LCIE) works to improve the management of six species of large carnivores in Europe. The LCIE provides updated data on species presence and abundance and supports management through the technical guidelines on best practices to enhance the coexistence of carnivores and human economic activities.

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-016 Produce a report on the greatest misconceptions/fake news concerning large carnivores.
Status: Not initiated

T-018 Update status and distribution maps of large carnivores for Europe for the period 2017–2024 and publish a report in 2025.
Status: On track

T-019 Streamline data collection and publication for large carnivore status and distribution in Europe.
Status: On track

T-030 Assess the conservation status of wolf in Europe for the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention.
Status: Achieved

PLAN

T-001 Ensure regular inclusion of policy statements, guidelines, and publications on the LCIE webpage.
Status: On track

T-020 Produce an updated vision for conservation goals for large carnivores in Europe, including a vision for the nature of human-large carnivore coexistence.
Status: On track

T-021 Identify the 'neglected' populations (e.g. the Balkans) and define/plan priorities for action by LCIE and authorities.
Status: Not initiated

T-022 In view of the continuing expansion of some wolf and bear populations, propose a more robust way to define/draw the line among different populations.
Status: On track

ACT

T-025 Hybridisation of wolves with dogs and proper dog management: provide recommendations at national levels, scientific paper with evidence of interventions, and guidelines on detection and estimation of hybrid presence.
Status: Not initiated

T-026 Revise guidelines on how to manage 'bold wolves' based on hard data and experience from different countries.
Status: On track

T-029 Produce a report on rehabilitation and release of large carnivores, touching on all aspects of rehabilitation of rescued animals – e.g. large carnivores injured in car accidents or snares, orphaned large carnivore young because of human activity – and guidelines (when, where and how to help).
Status: On track

NETWORK

T-005 Reach out to and engage with major European conservation NGOs and open dialogue on common goals.
Status: Not initiated

T-007 Form taxonomic and/or geographic subgroups in which each member will take part.
Status: Achieved

T-008 Implement a more effective method of communication between LCIE members.
Status: Achieved

T-011 Improve communication and collaboration with national and international authorities for large carnivore conservation and management.
Status: Not initiated

T-012 Maintain and expand the LCIE role as advisor of the European Commission on large carnivore policy.
Status: On track

Endangered Iberian Lynx (*Lynx pardinus*),
El Acebuche Breeding Center, Doñana National Park,
Matalascañas (Huelva), Spain
Photo: Alexander Sliwa

T-031 Carry out LCIE Meeting of all members.
Status: Achieved

COMMUNICATE

T-002 Post news regularly on the LCIE Facebook page.
Status: On track

T-003 Participate in public talks and webinars on large carnivores.
Status: On track

Activities and results 2023

ASSESS

Research activities

T-018 Update status and distribution maps of large carnivores for Europe for the period 2017–2024 and publish a report in 2025. (KSR 5)

Number of research projects completed or supported by SSC members per taxonomic group and region: 0

Result description: In 2023, we secured funding to complete this task in the first six months of 2024.

PLAN

Planning

T-022 In view of the continuing expansion of some wolf and bear populations, propose a more robust way to define/draw the line among different populations. (KSR 9)

Revised approach to define populations approved: 0

Result description: A dedicated workshop was held on this issue in October 2023. The benefits and the problems of using the population approach at the European scale were the objects of long discussions. The conclusions will inform the next collection of data on carnivores' distribution and abundance expected to be completed by July 2024.

Policy

T-001 Ensure regular inclusion of policy statements, guidelines and publications on the LCIE webpage. (KSR 9)

Number of documents provided to support/guide policy-making: 0

Result description: The LCIE website (lcie.org) is regularly updated.

T-020 Produce an updated vision for conservation goals for large carnivores in Europe, including a vision for the nature of human-large carnivore coexistence. (KSR 9)

Number of policies where SSC members provided technical input:0

Result description: Funding for this activity was secured in 2023 for the activity to be carried out in 2024. A final report is expected for delivery to the European Commission in early 2025.

ACT

Policy

T-026 Revise guidelines on how to manage 'bold wolves' based on hard data and experience from different countries. (KSR 10)

Number of position statements addressing major drivers/emerging threats of species or population loss: 0

Result description: The LCIE is directly involved in a new EU-funded project (LIFE WILDWOLF) entirely dedicated to the issue of managing confident and bold animals. The project involves eight countries.

NETWORK

Documents review

T-012 Maintain and expand the LCIE role as advisor of the European Commission on large carnivore policy. (KSR 4)

Collaboration with the European Commission established: Ongoing.

Result description: LCIE supported the bid submitted by a consortium of European NGOs to a tender of the European Commission for a 4-year project on a series of activities on the conservation of four large carnivores. The bid was successful and LCIE will contribute to the project for the next four years. Funding will be available for several LCIE activities such as providing scientific data on carnivores' abundance and distribution and reports on several technical issues (Favourable Reference Values, the effectiveness of methods to prevent livestock depredation, etc.).

T-031 Carry out LCIE Meeting of all members. (KSR 2)

LCIE meeting held: Ongoing.

Result description: A meeting of all LCIE members was held in Ohrid, Northern Macedonia on October 2-5. The agenda included the revision of the LCIE Manifesto which was discussed and updated to respond to the latest data and challenges of carnivore conservation in Europe.

Summary of achievements

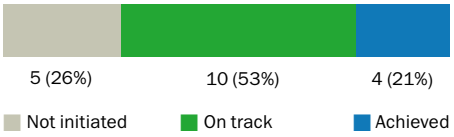
Total number of targets 2021–2025: 19

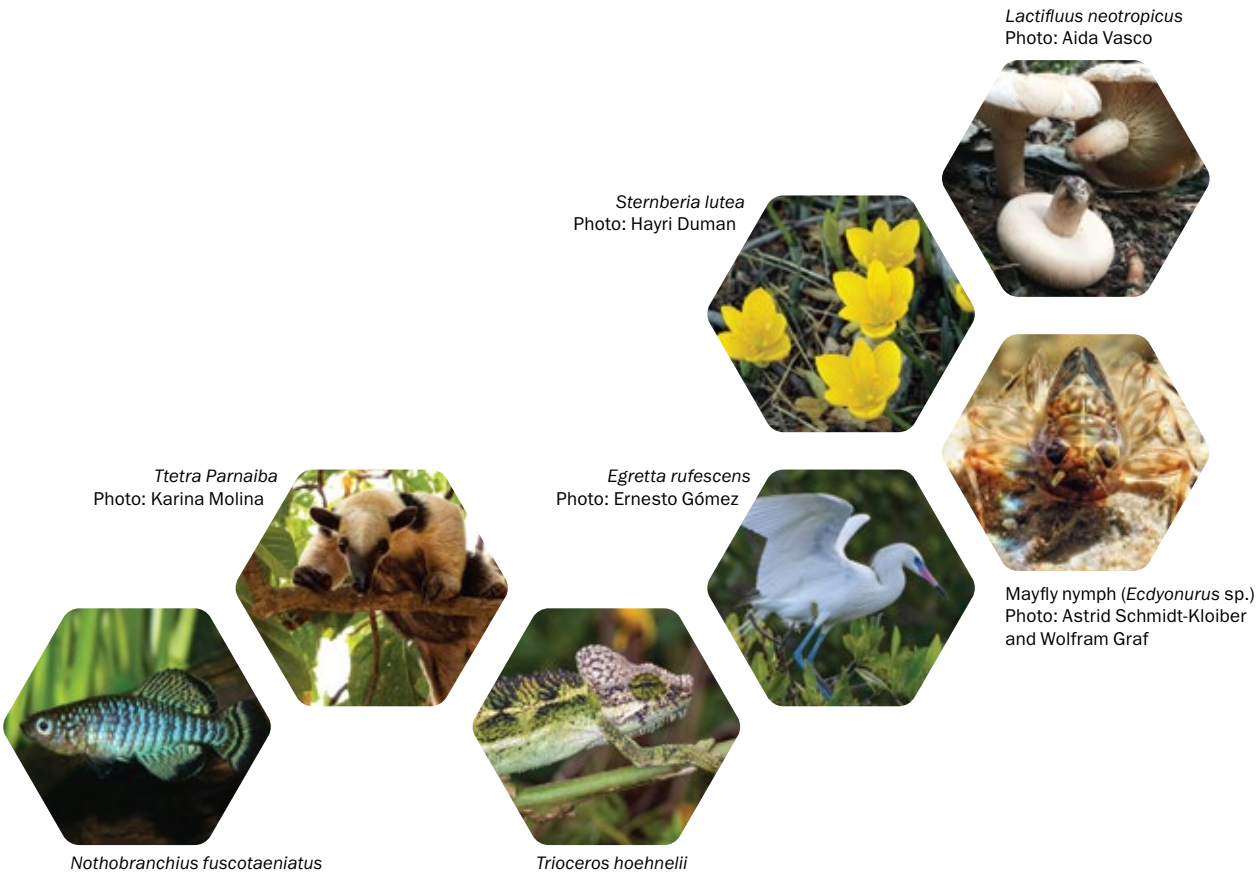
Geographic regions: 19 Europe

Actions during 2023:

Assess: 1 (KSR 5)
Plan:3 (KSR 9)
Act: 1 (KSR 10)
Network:2 (KSR 2, 4)

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