



Species

ISSUE 64

2023 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat



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 stand-alone 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 Authority 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:

Ludwig, A. 2024. 2023 Report of the Sturgeon 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 Sturgeon Specialist Group



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NUMBER OF MEMBERS
26

Mission statement

The mission of the IUCN Sturgeon Specialist Group is to provide accurate information on the status of sturgeons and paddlefishes and promote their conservation and recovery.

Projected impact for 2021–2025

By the end of 2025, we envision that we will have reached increased protection for sturgeon and paddlefish species. We plan to reach this goal mainly through our support of national and trans-national management and conservation activities. In addition, we will promote efforts to develop and establish state-of-the-art forensic methods for stringent control of international sturgeon trade (e.g. caviar). We predict that jointed awareness campaigns with our close partners from WWF and World Sturgeon Conservation Society (WSCS) will increase knowledge about sturgeon species and their conservation problems among the public, especially the impact of poaching and illegal trade on population declines.

Targets for 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-003 Reassess all sturgeon and paddlefish for the IUCN Red List (27 species and 66 populations).
Status: Achieved

PLAN

T-005 Initiate a Caspian Sea Sturgeon Action Plan.
Status: On track

NETWORK

T-001 Consolidate and strengthen existing partnerships for conservation of Yangtze sturgeon (*Acipenser dabryanus*) and Chinese sturgeon (*Acipenser sinensis*).
Status: Achieved

T-002 Consolidate and strengthen existing partnerships for conservation of Sterlet (*Acipenser ruthenus*), Russian Sturgeon (*Acipenser gueldenstaedtii*) and Beluga (*Huso huso*) in the Danube River and the Black Sea.
Status: On track

COMMUNICATE

T-004 Support Freshwater Conservation Committee communications highlighting freshwater species at risk and threats to freshwater systems.
Status: Achieved

Activities and results for 2023

ASSESS

Red List

T-003 Reassess all sturgeon and paddlefish for the IUCN Red List (27 species and 66 populations). (KSR 6)

Number of global Red List reassessments completed: 0

Result description: The Group published a Conservation News piece on the sturgeon reassessment in early 2023 in *Oryx*: Congiu, L. *et al.* (2023). 'IUCN Red List reassessment reveals further decline of sturgeons and paddlefishes'. *Oryx* 57, 9-10.

PLAN

Planning

T-005 Initiate a Caspian Sea Sturgeon Action Plan. (KSR 8)

Number of species conservation plans/strategies developed: 0

Result description: The group submitted a successful application for a Side Event at CoP14 to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals in Samarkand 2024.

[SSC Grant awarded]



Thomas Friedrich holding a Russian Sturgeon (*Acipenser gueldenstaedtii*) from the Danube
Photo: Thomas Friedrich



Ship Sturgeon (*Acipenser nudiiventris*) from the Danube broodstock
Photo: Thomas Friedrich

NETWORK

Synergy

T-001 Consolidate and strengthen existing partnerships for conservation of Yangtze Sturgeon (*A. dabryanus*) and Chinese Sturgeon (*A. sinensis*). (KSR 4)

Number of governments supported to develop species conservation policies: 0

Result description: The fishing ban imposed on the Yangtze River in China in 2022 is continuing through 2023.

T-002 Consolidate and strengthen existing partnerships for conservation of Sterlet (*Acipenser ruthenus*), Russian Sturgeon (*Acipenser gueldenstaedtii*) and Beluga (*Huso huso*) in the Danube River and the Black Sea. (KSR 4)

Number of governments supported to develop species conservation policies: 5

Result description: We are running three projects in the rivers Danube and Rioni, supported by [IUCN Save Our Species](#).

[SSC Grant awarded]

Summary of achievements

Total number of targets for 2021–2025: 5

Geographic regions: 2 Global, 1 Asian, 1 Body of water, 1 Europe

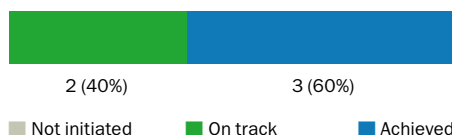
Actions during 2023:

Assess: 1(KSR 6)

Plan: 1 (KSR 8)

Network: 2 (KSR 4)

Overall achievement 2021–2025:



Lactifluus neotropicus
Photo: Aida Vasco



Sternberia lutea
Photo: Hayri Duman



Tetra 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

