



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:

Moehlman, P.D. and King, S.R.B. 2024. 2023 Report of the Equid Specialist Group. In: IUCN SSC and Secretariat. *2023 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. 8 pp.

2023 Report

IUCN SSC Equid Specialist Group



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NUMBER OF MEMBERS
84

Mission statement

The mission of the IUCN SSC Equid Specialist Group (ESG) is to conserve biological diversity by developing and executing programmes to study, save, restore and manage wisely wild equids and their habitats. Our greatest challenge is to improve wild equid conservation status, to sustain their ecosystems and to enhance the livelihoods of local communities.

Projected impact 2021–2025

The ESG assesses extinction risk of equid species by identifying threats and working with scientists, communities, organisations and governments to research, monitor and manage wild equid populations.

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-001 Complete Ethiopian PhD on African Wild Ass (*Equus africanus*).
Status: Achieved

T-002 Conduct taxonomic review of Equidae.
Status: On track

T-003 Document all known equid diseases and parasites.
Status: On track

T-006 Khomyn Talyn Takhi/Association TAKH (KTT/TAKH): Implement species monitoring programme that informs the trends and status of the population in Khomyn Tal National Park (KTNP).
Status: On track

T-008 KTT/TAKH: Develop and test hybrid Przewalski's Horse (*Equus ferus przewalskii*)/domestic detection in KTNP.
Status: On track

T-009 KTT/TAKH: Collaborate on a study of traditional pasture to rewilding.
Status: Achieved

T-015 Association Goviin Khulan: Research social composition and behaviour and water source use.
Status: On track

T-021 Grevy's Zebra (*Equus grevyi*): Complete analysis and publish results of 3rd Great Grevy's Rally.
Status: On track

T-024 Publish data on Serengeti Zebra causes of mortality and survival rates and reproductive rates.
Status: On track

T-025 Research on Asiatic Wild Ass (*Equus hemionus*) in Israel: Research association between social and genetic networks, and effect on vegetation.
Status: On track

T-028 Collect data on interaction between predators (lions and hyenas) and Grevy's Zebra to understand impact of predation.
Status: Achieved

T-030 African Wild Ass: Analyse data on population dynamics in relation to rainfall variability and diet.
Status: On track

T-032 Kiang (*Equus kiang*) and nomad livelihoods in Ladakh: Understand patterns and processes of Kiang-pastoralist conflict to come up with specific mitigation measures to manage the negative interactions.
Status: On track

T-035 Conduct new Red List assessment of Asiatic Wild Ass based on surveys and rapid assessments 2014–2020, and information from the workshop in Vilm (see Plan Component).
Status: On track



T-036 Based on experience of Green Status assessment of Iberian Lynx (*Lynx pardinus*), look into the potential for a Green Status assessment of the Asiatic Wild Ass.
 Status: On track

T-044 Monitor and manage Grevy's Zebra population health.
 Status: On track

T-045 Produce scientific publications on equid research and conservation.
 Status: On track

PLAN

T-022 Grevy's Zebra: Organise and run the 4th Great Grevy's Rally (then analyse and publish results).
 Status: On track

T-026 Minimise the potential negative impacts of infrastructure development on Grevy's Zebra habitat and populations.
 Status: On track

T-027 Maintain connectivity within northern Kenya for free movement of Grevy's Zebra to enhance genetic diversity.
 Status: Achieved

T-031 African Wild Ass: Convene a workshop to develop a conservation action plan for African Wild Ass in Eritrea.
 Status: On track

T-033 Kiang and nomad livelihoods in Ladakh: Engage with key stakeholders to develop customised management strategies for selected hotspots.
 Status: Achieved

T-037 Conduct conservation planning and development of a Khulan Action Plan for Mongolia – WCS and partners.
 Status: On track

T-038 Develop action plan for the Asiatic Wild Ass based on experience gained from the Khulan Conservation Strategy for Mongolia; workshop slot reserved within the Convention on Migratory Species Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CMS/CAMI) framework on the Island of Vilm, Germany.
 Status: Achieved

ACT

T-005 Designate protected areas for African Wild Ass.
 Status: On track

T-007 KTT/TAKH: Translocate four individual horses from Hustai National Park to KTNP to maintain genetic diversity of the population in KTNP.
 Status: Not initiated

T-016 Association Goviin Khulan: Develop a curriculum about ecology and conservation for protected area rangers and community citizen scientists.
 Status: On track

T-019 Association Goviin Khulan: Work with border troops and local community to set camera traps for Khulan (*Equus hemionus* spp. *hemionus*).
 Status: Not initiated

T-029 Enhance recruitment rate of Grevy's Zebra (maintain 30% proportion of foals and juveniles).
 Status: Achieved

T-042 Enhance inter-regional Grevy's Zebra conservation.
 Status: On track

T-043 Enhance Grevy's Zebra conservation and habitat management.
 Status: On track

NETWORK

T-010 KTT/TAKH: Explore becoming a member organisation of IUCN.
 Status: Not initiated

T-012 KTT/TAKH: Improve communication strategy towards local people in KTNP.
 Status: On track

T-013 KTT/TAKH: Organise a post-Congress visit/workshop at Le Villaret.
Status: Achieved

T-014 KTT/TAKH: Partnerships with other reintroduction sites and twinning of National Parks.
Status: On track

T-018 Association Goviin Khulan: Develop ecotourism in Gobi.
Status: On track

T-020 Grevy's Zebra: Train all data managers to use WILDBOOK to complete a National Grevy's Zebra Database.
Status: On track

T-023 Grevy's Zebra: Continue support of Kenya Wildlife Service's 'Grevy's Zebra Technical Committee'.
Status: On track

T-034 Maintain close cooperation with partners in Central Asia via CMS/CAMI.
Status: On track

T-041 Develop new stakeholder partnerships and strengthen existing partnerships.
Status: On track

COMMUNICATE

T-004 Organise Third International Wild Equid Conference.
Status: On track

T-011 KTT/TAKH: Implement national and international communication strategy for Przewalski's Horses.
Status: On track

T-017 Association Goviin Khulan: Publish scientific articles, brochures for children and a documentary.
Status: On track

T-039 Contribute to CAMI news.
Status: On track

T-040 Produce scientific publications and presentations on equid research and conservation.
Status: On track

Activities and results 2023

ASSESS

Green Status

T-036 Based on experience of Green Status assessment of Iberian Lynx (*L. pardinus*), look into the potential for a Green Status assessment of the Asiatic Wild Ass. (KSR 6)

Number of new Green Status of Species assessments completed: 0

Result description: Discussion was started with the Red List Unit about conducting a Green Status assessment and Co-Chair Sarah King undertook the requisite training to be a Green Status assessor.

Red List

T-035 Conduct new Red List assessment of Asiatic Wild Ass based on surveys and rapid assessments 2014–2020, and information from the workshop in Vilm (see Plan Component). (KSR 6)

Number of global Red List reassessments completed: 0

Result description: In 2023, materials were compiled for the new Asiatic Wild Ass Red List assessment during the CMS workshop in Vilm, Germany.

Research activities

T-002 Conduct taxonomic review of Equidae. (KSR 5)

Updated taxonomy of Equidae produced: 0

Result description: In 2023, the first workshop was held and we drafted a preliminary taxonomy of Equidae.

T-003 Document all known equid diseases and parasites. (KSR 5)

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

Result description: A literature review has been completed to document all known equid diseases and parasites.

T-006 Khomyn Talyn Takhi/Association TAKH (KTT/TAKH): Implement species monitoring programme that informs the trends and status of the population in Khomyn Tal National Park (KTNP). (KSR 6)

Monitoring underway: Ongoing.

Result description: A new field/online application named SHAMANE will be operational in 2024. The database will be accessible for data entry/consultation/extracting data. View details [here](#).

T-009 KTT/TAKH: Collaborate on a study of traditional pasture to rewilding. (KSR 5)

Number of research projects completed or supported by SSC members per taxonomic group and region: 1

Result description: Clémentine Mutillod completed her doctoral research thesis in 2023: 'Restore or rewild the ecosystems? Case study of dry grasslands on the Causse Méjean (Lozère, France)'. A paper from the thesis is [available online](#).

T-021 Grevy's Zebra (*E. grevyi*): Complete analysis and publish results of 3rd Great Grevy's Rally. (KSR 5)

Number of scientific publications about species research that acknowledge SSC affiliation: 0

Result description: WildBook, the foundation program for identifying individuals using Machine Learning, is being upgraded,

in part to handle the large influx of images associated with bio blitzes like the Great Grevy's Rally. Funding is being sought to do this, so the analysis of past results is on hold. The new system will speed up the analysis of large data sets and do so with less human involvement.

T-025 Research on Asiatic Wild Ass (*E. hemionus*) in Israel: Research association between social and genetic networks, and effect on vegetation. (KSR 5)

Number of scientific publications about species research that acknowledges SSC affiliation: 1

Result description: The diet of the Asiatic Wild Ass was studied using DNA barcoding technique and the results were published. Results of the diet analysis indicate significant differences between males and females and across seasons. The demographic analyses indicate that the amount of precipitation correlates with reproductive success. A spatial study indicated a shift in the population's distribution toward new water sources in the Negev Highlands following a water source management procedure.

Effective population size of the Asiatic Wild Ass in Israel after the water source management: Ongoing.

Result description: The diet of the Asiatic Wild Ass was studied using DNA barcoding technique and the results are published. Results of the diet analysis indicate significant differences between males and females and across seasons. The demographic analyses indicate that the amount of precipitation correlates with reproductive success. A spatial study indicated a shift in the population's distribution toward new water sources in the Negev Highlands following a water source management procedure.

T-028 Collect data on interaction between predators (lions and hyenas) and Grevy's Zebra to understand impact of predation. (KSR 5)

Number of research projects completed or supported by SSC members per taxonomic group and region: 1

Result description: Research data indicates that Lions do not heavily prey on Grevy's Zebras. Although Grevy's Zebras are part of the diet for both Lions and Hyenas, Hyenas may primarily scavenge from Lion kills.

T-032 Kiang (*E. kiang*) and nomad livelihoods in Ladakh: Understand patterns and processes of Kiang-pastoralist conflict to come up with specific mitigation measures to manage the negative interactions. (KSR 5)



Indian Wild Ass (*Equus hemionus khur*)
at Little Rann of Kutch, India
Photo: Patricia D. Moehlman

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

Result description: Following up on a 2006 study, Yash Veer Bhatnagar is now working with WWF India on a range-wide Kiang survey in the autumn of 2024. This will help compare the Kiang status after 20 years and identify the conflict hotspots. Several agencies are now working towards understanding the socioeconomics of the area and improving livelihoods.

T-044 Monitor and manage Grevy's Zebra population health. (KSR 6)

Grevy's Zebra health monitored: Ongoing.

Result description: In 2023, more scouts were trained in the application of nutritional supplements during droughts as well as the use of body condition scoring.

T-045 Produce scientific publications on equid research and conservation. (KSR 5)

Number of scientific publications about species research that acknowledges SSC affiliation: 14

Result description: Members of the Equid Specialist Group were authors or co-authors on at least 14 peer-reviewed scientific publications.

PLAN

Planning

T-022 Grevy's Zebra: Organise and run the 4th Great Grevy's Rally, then analyse and publish results. (KSR 9)

Completion of the Great Grevy's Rally: 0

Result description: Two years of drought made it dangerous to follow zebras without stressing them. Then Covid-19 hit, for which the GGRs planned for 2022 and 2023 were postponed until 2024.

T-026 Minimise the potential negative impacts of infrastructure development on Grevy's Zebra habitat and populations. (KSR 8)

Number of Grevy's Zebra in the wild: Ongoing.

Result description: GPS collars were deployed to collect data in support of the target.

T-027 Maintain connectivity within northern Kenya for free movement of Grevy's Zebra to enhance genetic diversity. (KSR 8)

Number of conservation plans/strategies developed: 0

Result description: Three migratory routes/corridors/gaps are open and have been maintained – Mount Kenya Endpass, Mount Kenya Underpass, Marania Underpass, and the Northern Gap – connecting to other conservation areas.

T-031 African Wild Ass: Convene a workshop to develop a conservation action plan for African Wild Ass in Eritrea. (KSR 8)

Number of species conservation plans/strategies developed: 0

Result description: Planning meeting in Asmara to review the priorities.

T-038 Develop action plan for the Asiatic Wild Ass based on experience gained from the Khulan Conservation Strategy for Mongolia; workshop slot reserved within the Convention on Migratory Species Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CMS/CAMI) framework on the Island of Vilm, Germany. (KSR 8)

Number of conservation plans/strategies developed: 1

Result description: A First Range State Meeting for the Asiatic Wild Ass was

organised in Vilm, Germany in 26 June-1 July 2023, organised by CMS. This meeting resulted in a draft Range-wide Action Plan prepared for the CMS Secretariat by Petra Kaczensky with input from experts from Wild Ass Range States.

ACT

Conservation actions

T-005 Designate protected areas for African Wild Ass. (KSR 10)

Number of threatened species benefiting from *in situ* conservation action: 1

Result description: In 2023, suitable and optimum habitats in Ethiopia and Eritrea have been scientifically determined for the African Wild Ass.

Number of species with increased or prevented decrease in population or range size, as a result of conservation actions: 1

Result description: In 2023, suitable and optimum habitats in Ethiopia and Eritrea have been scientifically determined for the African Wild Ass.

Number of areas under management for the species or group of species: 0

Result description: In 2023, suitable and optimum habitats in Ethiopia and Eritrea have been scientifically determined for the African Wild Ass.

T-016 Association Goviin Khulan: Develop a curriculum about ecology and conservation for protected area rangers and community citizen scientists. (KSR 10)

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

Result description: Curriculum development is in progress with the first training activities to be conducted in June 2024.

T-019 Association Goviin Khulan: Work with border troops and local community to set camera traps for Khulan (*E. h. spp. hemionus*). (KSR 10)

Number of camera traps: 0

Result description: Camera traps that were supposed to be set up between Fall 2023 and Summer 2024 have now been delayed until the end of 2024/beginning of 2025. Work with border protection officers has not been initiated yet.

T-029 Enhance recruitment rate of Grevy's Zebra (maintain 30% proportion of foals and juveniles). (KSR 10)

Number of threatened species benefiting from *in situ* conservation action: 1

Result description: Currently, 25-30% of Grevy's Zebra population consists of foals and juveniles; the data suggest that over 70% of foals are likely to survive. These findings are particularly encouraging given the recent 3-year drought.

T-042 Enhance inter-regional Grevy's Zebra conservation. (KSR 10)

Number of species with increased or prevented decrease in population or range size, as a result of conservation actions: 1

Result description: During 2023, meetings with Ethiopian and Kenyan representatives took place at COP in Samarkand and all agreed to closer cross-boundary engagement.

T-043 Enhance Grevy's Zebra conservation and habitat management. (KSR 10)

Number of threatened species benefiting from *in situ* conservation action: 1

Result description: Twenty Grevy's Zebras were issued with GPS collars to monitor their movement; habitat use and linkage to further our knowledge and provide infrastructure developers with crucial locations for mitigation measures.

NETWORK

Capacity building

T-012 KTT/TAKH: Improve communication strategy towards local people in KTNP. (KSR 3)

Communication strategy improved: Ongoing.

Result description: In 2023, the NGO Khomyn Talyn Takhi (KTT) officially became the administrator of Khomin Tal National Park. The members of the KTT Board with the new organisation will enable us to build a new cooperation strategy.

T-020 Grevy's Zebra: Train all data managers to use WILDBOOK to complete a National Grevy's Zebra Database. (KSR 2)

Number of people trained in other fields: 0

Result description: More local community members have been brought into monitoring Grevy's Zebra.

Membership

T-013 KTT/TAKH: Organise a post-Congress visit/workshop at Le Villaret. (KSR 1)

Number of members attending: 17

Result description: Florie Guyot, a scientific volunteer, carried out a field survey in Mongolia and drew up an inventory of the three reintroduction projects. A presentation of her work in 2023 brought together almost all those involved in Przewalski's Horse conservation worldwide.

Proposal development and funding

T-018 Association Goviin Khulan: Develop ecotourism in Gobi. (KSR 3)

Number of scientific expeditions conducted: 2

Result description: Partnerships with local agencies were completed, and a few tours were conducted. Involvement of the local community in progress.

Synergy

T-014 KTT/TAKH: Partnerships with other reintroduction sites and twinning of National Parks. (KSR 1)

Number of 'in kind' partnerships established and maintained: 2

Result description: TAKH accompanied Peter Csoban, Hortobagy's Scientific Manager, to enable him discovering the Hustai and Khomyn tal sites in Mongolia.

The TAKH scientific team, Florian Drouard and Julie Morisson visited the Hortobagy reserve and shared their experiences. An 'International Alliance project' was initiated between TAKH and Hortobagy. An agreement has been reached with the Miranda Foundation for the transfer of horses to the Boumort reserve in Spain.

T-023 Grevy's Zebra: Continue support of Kenya Wildlife Service's 'Grevy's Zebra Technical Committee'. (KSR 1)

Number of 'in-kind' partnerships established and maintained: 1

Result description: The Grevy's Zebra Technical Committee meets regularly to plan and activate the collaring of Grevy's Zebras and support census efforts such as the GGR. Plans to expand IT so that analyses of GGRs and the development of a national database for Grevy's Zebras and other species is under discussion as well.

T-034 Maintain close cooperation with partners in Central Asia via CMS/CAMI. (KSR 1)

Number of 'in kind' partnerships established and maintained: 1

Result description: The IUCN SSC Equid Specialist Group hosted a CMS COP 14 side event on Asiatic Wild Ass status, threats and future conservation needs.

T-041 Develop new stakeholder partnerships and strengthen existing partnerships. (KSR 1)

Number of 'in kind' partnerships established and maintained: 2

Result description: In 2023, two new funding partners were gained and cooperation between Marwell, GZT, KWS and WRTI strengthened through Grevy's Zebra collaring and the latest GGR.

COMMUNICATE Communication

T-004 Organise Third International Wild Equid Conference. (KSR 13)

Number of SSC members' presentations developed in relation to specific taxonomic groups: 0



Przewalski's Horse (*Equus ferus*)
at the Khomyn Tal reintroduction site
Photo: Sarah King/TAKH

Result description: The location and date for the organization of the Third International Wild Equid Conference were chosen.

T-011 KTT/TAKH: Implement national and international communication strategy for Przewalski's Horses. (KSR 13)

Number of digital communication outputs developed in relation to specific taxonomic groups: 1

Result description: TAKH became a member of the European Rewilding Network.

Scientific meetings

T-040 Produce scientific publications and presentations on equid research and conservation. (KSR 12)

Number of presentations delivered at scientific events: 14

Result description: Members of the Equid Specialist Group were authors or co-authors on at least 14 peer-reviewed scientific publications. A symposium on 'Future population viability predictions under different climate scenarios: threatened wild equids as an example' was organized by Patricia D Moehlman and Joseph O. Ogutu at the International Mammal Conference 13 in Anchorage, Alaska.

Acknowledgements

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Summary of achievements

Total number of targets 2021–2025: 45

Geographic regions: 9 Global, 17 Africa, 21 Asia, 4 Europe

Actions during 2023:

Assess: 13 (KSR 5, 6)

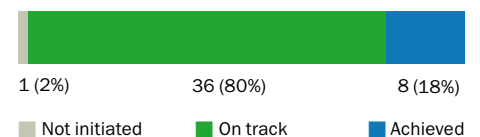
Plan: 5 (KSR 8, 9)

Act: 8 (KSR 10)

Network: 8 (KSR 1, 2, 3)

Communicate: 3 (KSR 12, 13)

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

