



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 trans-versal 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:

Kemp, L. and Datta, A. 2024. 2023 Report of the Hornbill Specialist Group. In: IUCN SSC and Secretariat. *2023 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. 6 pp.

IUCN SSC Hornbill Specialist Group



CO-CHAIR
Lucy Kemp (Africa)
Mabula Ground
Hornbill Project,
South Africa

CO-CHAIR
Aparajita Datta (Asia)
Nature Conservation
Foundation, India

RED LIST AUTHORITY
COORDINATOR
BirdLife International

NUMBER OF MEMBERS
141

SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE
Facebook: @iucnhornbills
Instagram: @iucn_hornbills
X: @iucn_hornbills
Website: <https://iucnhornbills.org>

Mission statement

The Hornbill Specialist Group aims to use our combined knowledge and skills for evidence-based conservation action of hornbills and their habitats.

Projected impact 2021–2025

By the end of 2025, the Hornbill Specialist Group (HSG) will have carried out conservation planning for all Endangered and Vulnerable Hornbill species in both Asia and Africa, with implementation agencies supported by the HSG to meet their targets. Conservation planning will include Indigenous Knowledge Systems to be used in designing bespoke conservation actions/models where the threats are anthropogenic in nature. We will have enabled and supported research for greater understanding of lesser-studied species, especially in Africa and for some Asian species. The knowledge will be used for evidence-based conservation action for hornbills and their habitats. By 2025, we will have built a strong and active collaborative hornbill research and conservation network in Asia and established one in Africa.

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-006 Continue to publish and share *Hornbill Natural History and Conservation* (HNHC) newsletter/journal.
Status: On track

T-007 Publish a book on the status and conservation (state of current knowledge) of the world's hornbills.
Status: Not initiated

T-009 Prepare – or share existing – ‘advice’ on release/reintroduction of (e.g. confiscated) hornbills into the wild.
Status: On track

T-010 Organise Red List assessment workshops for African and some Asian species.
Status: On track

T-011 Conduct climate change assessment for Southern Ground Hornbill (*Bucorvus leadbeateri*).
Status: On track

T-012 Encourage some national-level assessments/action plans.
Status: On track

T-013 Compile and publish bibliography of hornbill publications.
Status: Achieved

T-021 Obtain better range-wide population and habitat assessments for global population estimates based on science to inform Red List threat category.
Status: On track

T-022 Identify threatened species priority areas.
Status: On track

T-034 Revise and publish the hornbill research training manual online.
Status: On track

T-050 Document research projects and compile case studies by HSG members and others on hornbills and create knowledge database.
Status: On track

T-060 Liaise with the Green Status of Species Task Force to test this approach for ca. 2-5 threatened hornbill species.
Status: On track

PLAN

T-014 Update, review and implement existing plans.
Status: On track

T-015 Publish multi-species Visayan Action Plan and ensure collaboration between groups.
Status: Achieved

T-016 Publish range-wide action plan for the Plain-pouched Hornbill (*Rhyticeros sub-ruficollis*).
Status: Not initiated

T-017 Publish range-wide action plan for Northern Ground Hornbill (*Bucorvus abyssinicus*).
Status: On track



Wreathed Hornbill (*Rhyticeros undulatus*) male on a visit to the nest at Pakke Tiger Reserve, India
Photo: Aparajita Datta

T-018 Publish Action Plan for the Mindoro Hornbill (*Penelopides mindorensis*).

Status: Not initiated

T-019 Publish range-wide action plans – with adequate government representatives/all relevant stakeholders – for at least a few Vulnerable and Endangered species (Sunda Hornbills, Indo-Chinese and Philippine endemics).

Status: On track

T-020 Assess 2 Plan (A2P) for African hornbill species.

Status: Not initiated

T-054 Push for precautionary CITES listing/trade issues for *Bycanistes*, *Ceratogymna*, *Bucorvus*, Sulu Hornbill (*Anthracoseros montani*), follow up on Helmeted Hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*).

Status: On track

T-055 Motion for new names/taxonomy.

Status: On track

T-056 Develop an IUCN motion/resolution on the importance of hornbills for habitat – especially forest – restoration (UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration).

Status: Not initiated

T-057 Hold a Helmeted Hornbill update/side event and 'All Hornbills' side event at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2021.

Status: Not initiated

T-058 Convention on Migratory Species: support inclusion of the case of the Plain-pouched Hornbill.

Status: Not initiated

T-059 Submit phylogeny recommendation to BirdLife.

Status: On track

ACT

T-025 Finalise and share 'Hornbill Basic Care Guidelines'.

Status: On track

T-027 Collect data and analyse trade in hornbills; assist in preparation and lobbying of CITES listings for (all African) hornbills, e.g. *Ceratogymna* spp. and perhaps

Bycanistes spp.

Status: On track

T-028 Continue to drive/support existing action plans.

Status: On track

T-029 Continue with field surveys that assess the status of hornbills in the wild, e.g. hotspots for protection/management.

Status: On track

T-030 Engage with governments on hornbill conservation issues.

Status: On track

T-031 Develop and publish sustainability best practices guidelines.

Status: Not initiated

T-032 Develop best practices guidelines on community engagements: lessons from existing projects, with nest guardian programmes.

Status: Not initiated

T-033 Encourage establishment of conservation actions/programmes in countries with less work undertaken or poor information: collaborations/training.

Status: On track

T-044 Provide land use guidelines.

Status: Not initiated

T-045 Support rural communities involved in species conservation: nature tourism/nest guardians.

Status: On track

T-046 Undertake more policy-level work with governments that leads to real change.

Status: Not initiated

NETWORK

T-001 Explore having a government liaison for Indochinese countries that we can work with.

Status: Not initiated

T-002 Compile and profile HSG members, organisational affiliations, projects, publications, contributions, skills and expertise.

Status: On track

T-003 Provide training in Red List assessment for members: representatives from different range countries.

Status: On track

T-004 Provide training in scientific research skills/writing/data analysis: workshop needed for members/students.

Status: On track

T-005 Build conservation capacity and competency, both individual and organisational – Conservation Planning Specialist Group training – e.g. using Asian Species Action Partnership approach.

Status: On track

T-023 Build partners/networks in range countries that are poorly represented or with information gaps, e.g. Indo-China and most of Africa.

Status: On track

T-035 Improve and increase communication and functioning with existing HSG members and the Steering Committee.

Status: On track

T-036 Harness members' skills and delegate tasks to more members: increase engagement and involvement of members in actions/activities.

Status: On track

T-037 Re-invite members; ensure representation and diversity.

Status: On track

T-038 Build relationships with non-hornbill groups and promote successful outcomes (SNAPP Opportunity).

Status: Not Initiated

T-039 Encourage our members to contribute to global/regional databases: iNat, eBird, etc.

Status: Not Initiated

Wreathed Hornbills (*Rhyticeros undulatus*) in a large communal roost (around 100 birds) near Pakke Tiger Reserve, Arunachal Pradesh, India
Photo: Aparajita Datta



T-040 Approach Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), a regional intergovernmental organisation.

Status: Not initiated

T-041 Engage with potential large funders for highlighting threats to hornbills and seeking partnerships for support.

Status: On track

T-042 Look at engaging relevant industry partners in conservation partnership.

Status: On track

T-043 Concession land management: engage with relevant government stakeholders (regional/federal).

Status: On track

COMMUNICATE

T-047 Establish a blog on the website where members can write, contribute, host podcasts.

Status: On track

T-048 Host online events and/or talks by members on their work (engagement and mentoring): invite partners, funders, SSC main office, Conservation Planning Specialist Group (CPSG), etc.

Status: On track

T-049 Improve quality and frequency of communications through websites, social media and listserv.

Status: On track

T-051 Organise International Hornbill Conference, Bhutan 2022.

Status: Achieved

T-052 Manage the implementation of a communication strategy (social media and events).

Status: On track

Activities and results 2023

ASSESS

Communication

T-022 Identify threatened species priority areas. (KSR 5)

Number of readings/citations per scientific paper published: 0

Result description: A paper on Important Hornbill Landscapes in Peninsular Malaysia

was published. The important hornbill landscapes in Sarawak were also identified.

Research activities

T-009 Prepare – or share existing – ‘advice’ on release/reintroduction of (e.g. confiscated) hornbills into the wild. (KSR 5)

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

Result description: The Hornbill Basic Care Guidelines document is available on the IUCN SSC HSG website.

T-013 Compile and publish bibliography of hornbill publications. (KSR 5)

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

Result description: The Asian Hornbill bibliography is already on the HSG website, while the African Hornbill bibliography is being developed and not yet available on the website.

PLAN

Planning

T-014 Update, review and implement existing plans. (KSR 8)

Number of species conservation plans/strategies updated: 3

Result description: The Southern Ground-Hornbill Biodiversity Management Plan (South Africa) the Helmeted Hornbill Action Plan and Species Conservation Strategy and Action for Sulu Hornbill are available on the IUCN SSC HSG website.

T-015 Publish multi-species Visayan Action Plan and ensure collaboration between groups. (KSR 8)

Number of species conservation plans/strategies developed: 2

Result description: The Visayan Action Plan was published and can be viewed on our [website](#).

T-019 Publish range-wide action plans – with adequate government representatives/ all relevant stakeholders – for at least a few Vulnerable and Endangered species, e.g. Sunda Hornbills, Indo-Chinese and Philippine endemics. (KSR 8)

Number of species conservation plans/strategies developed: 0

Result description: A three-year programme for four Sundaic countries, i.e. Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei and Thailand, was developed.

ACT

Conservation actions

T-025 Finalise and share ‘Hornbill Basic Care Guidelines’. (KSR 10)

Number of actions addressing major drivers/emerging threats of species or population loss: 1

Result description: The first draft was completed and published in 2023 and is currently being translated into multiple other languages.

T-027 Collect data and analyse trade in hornbills; assist in preparation and lobbying of CITES listings for (African) hornbills, e.g. *Ceratogymna* spp. and perhaps *Bycanistes* spp. (KSR 10)

Number of actions addressing major drivers/emerging threats of species or population loss: 1

Result description: Our members worked on creating the [Hornbills in Trade Database](#) that was launched in early 2024. The group is leading the CITES Proposal for all remaining species to be listed on Appendix II for CoP 2025.

T-029 Continue with field surveys that assess the status of hornbills in the wild, e.g. hotspots for protection/management. (KSR 10)

Number of actions addressing major drivers/emerging threats of species or population loss: 1

Result description: Multiple field surveys were conducted at sites in India and across Southeast Asia. A paper on the Important Hornbill Landscapes in Peninsular Malaysia was published.

Synergy

T-033 Encourage the establishment of conservation actions/programmes in countries with less work undertaken or poor information: collaborations/training. (KSR 11)

Number of rural communities involved in species conservation programs and sustainable use practices: 0

Result description: Ongoing work for the Northern Ground Hornbill's conservation in Ghana and Senegal.

T-045 Support rural communities involved in species conservation: nature tourism/nest guardians. (KSR 11)

Number of rural communities involved in species conservation programs and sustainable use practices: 9

Result description: Ongoing in several countries: India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, and Myanmar. Some countries include multiple sites.

Technical advice

T-030 Engage with governments on hornbill conservation issues. (KSR 10)

Number of technical consultations provided to support conservation actions: 9

Result description: This is an ongoing work in Namibia, South Africa and India.

NETWORK

Capacity building

T-004 Provide training in scientific research skills/writing/data analysis: workshop needed for members/students. (KSR 2)

Number of people trained in other fields: 55

Result description: A training was held in Thailand in May 2023. Approximately 25 participants attended the Experimental Design workshop, and around 30 participants joined the Writing Paper workshop at the 8th International Hornbill Conference in Bangkok, Thailand, in May 2023.

T-005 Build conservation capacity and competency, both individual and organisational, i.e. Conservation Planning Specialist Group training, using Asian Species Action Partnership approach. (KSR 2)

Number of people trained in conservation planning: 65

Result description: Several trainings for the Forest Department staff in hornbill monitoring were held in two sites in India. Sixty-five people attended those trainings in 2023.

Membership

T-002 Compile and profile HSG members, organisational affiliations, projects, publications, contributions, skills and expertise. (KSR 2)

Number of SSC members recruited: 0

Result description: A part-time programme officer was hired to help the Chairs and Steering Committee with the membership engagement. As part of her job scope, she will work on updating the members' profiles in 2024.

T-035 Improve and increase communication and functioning with existing HSG members and the Steering Committee. (KSR 2)

Number of SSC members recruited: 20

Result description: A part-time programme officer was hired to help the Chairs and Steering Committee with the membership engagement.

T-036 Harness members' skills and delegate tasks to more members: increase engagement and involvement of members in actions/activities. (KSR 2)

Number of SSC members recruited: 0

Result description: A part-time programme officer was hired to help the Chairs and Steering Committee with the membership engagement.

Synergy

T-023 Build partners/networks in range countries that are poorly represented or with information gaps, i.e. Indo-China and most of Africa. (KSR 4)

Number of governments supported to develop species conservation policies: 1

Result description: Several conversations have been initiated with Ethiopia, Benin, Nigeria, Vietnam and Cambodia, and more details will be confirmed in the coming years.

T-039 Encourage our members to contribute to global/regional databases: iNat, eBird, etc. (KSR 3)

Number of members participating and contributing to various global databases: 5

Result description: A part-time programme officer was hired to help the Co-Chairs and Steering Committee with the membership engagement. As part of her job scope, she will be sending relevant opportunities to the members, so that they can contribute their knowledge.

T-041 Engage with potential large funders for highlighting threats to hornbills and seeking partnerships for support. (KSR 1)

Number of 'funding' partners established and maintained: 2

Result description: The funds for the Sundaic Hornbill conservation were secured. Mandai Nature has continued financial support for the HSG.

T-042 Look at engaging relevant industry partners in conservation partnership. (KSR 1)

Number of 'funding' partners established and maintained: 1

Result description: HSG members are engaged with the insurance industry for human-wildlife conflict in Africa and the paper-pulp company for the Sundaic Hornbill project.

T-043 Concession land management: engage with relevant government stakeholders (regional/federal). (KSR 1)

Number of 'in-kind' partnerships established and maintained: 0

Result description: The work has started on one conservation concession area in Riau, Indonesia, linked to paper-pulp company.

COMMUNICATE

Communication

T-047 Establish a blog on the website where members can write, contribute, host podcasts. (KSR 12)

Number of media articles mentioning IUCN Species theme: 0

Result description: A part-time programme officer was hired to help the Co-Chairs and Steering Committee with the membership engagement. As part of her job scope, she will be working with the website editor to add the Blog session to the website and engage members to contribute in 2024.

T-049 Improve quality and frequency of communications through websites, social media and listserv. (KSR 12)

Number of followers across the HSG social media platforms: 2435

Result description: A part-time programme officer was hired to help the Co-Chairs and Steering Committee with membership engagement, in particular through e-updates. Social media and website continue to be managed by the Steering Committee members.

T-052 Manage the implementation of a communication strategy (social media and events). (KSR 12)

Number of followers across the HSG social media platforms: 2435

Result description: Social media (Instagram, Facebook and X) were actively used in 2023 to engage the public. The internal report was compiled and shared with the members.

Summary of achievements

Total number of targets 2021–2025: 56

Geographic regions: 1 America, 44 Africa, 52 Asia, 2 Europe

Actions during 2023:

Assess: 3 (KSR 5)

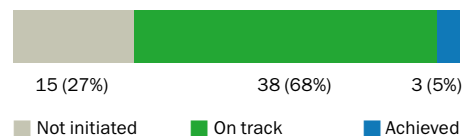
Plan: 3 (KSR 8)

Act: 6 (KSR 10, 11)

Network: 10 (KSR 1, 2, 3, 4)

Communicate: 3 (KSR 12)

Overall achievement 2021–2025:





Nothobranchius fuscotaeniatus
Photo: Csenge Nagy



Tetra Parnaiba
Photo: Karina Molina



Trioceros hoehnelii
Photo: Christopher V. Anderson



Sternberia lutea
Photo: Hayri Duman



Egretta rufescens
Photo: Ernesto Gómez



Lactifluus neotropicus
Photo: Aida Vasco



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