

The IUCN Species Survival Commission
QUARTERLY REPORT / DECEMBER 2024

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Cover Photo:

Spanish Greenish Black-tip, (*Euchloe bazae*).
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Native Species Weekend event at Dublin Zoo.
Photo © CSS Ireland - Dublin Zoo

Bowmouth Guitarfish (*Rhina ancylostomus*) CR.
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Maroon langur (*Presbytis rubicunda*) VU.
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IUCN Species Survival Commission



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Executive Summary

Once again, for the fifth time, SSC Leaders enjoyed four days of Emirati hospitality in Abu Dhabi, during the Fifth SSC Leaders' Meeting held on 25 to 28 October. Environmental Agency - Abu Dhabi, a close SSC partner for decades, was deeply involved in all aspects of the meeting, including logistics, organization and design, but also contributed actively to the agenda and linking to local experts and other stakeholders. Thanks to your huge contribution and commitment to this event. We look forward to this fundamental alliance to continue innovating and influencing SSC into the future!

A major outcome of the Fifth SSC Leaders' Meeting was the powerful and succinct declaration of participants which stated that "Saving Species Sustains Life". This declaration points out that species conservation underlies achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), emphasizing its critical importance to protecting and restoring nature. Meeting participants appealed to the world's governments, businesses, Indigenous peoples and local communities, religious groups, and individuals to halt species decline and prioritise its conservation within their activities and strategies, recognising that protecting animals, fungi, and plants is fundamental to sustaining ecosystems, regulating climate, and supporting life.

Partially overlapping with the SSC Leaders' Meeting, the Convention on Biological Diversity held its 16 Conference of the Parties (COP) in Cali, Colombia, between October 21 and November 1, with important engagement of SSC members. Under the theme "Peace with Nature," it was a "People's COP", with over 1 million participants engaging in art, cultural traditions, and interactive stalls designed to promote environmental education. Additionally, panels, workshops, talks, and other events were held across the city, enabling the public to actively engage in COP discussions and contribute to the conversation on biodiversity conservation, fostering greater awareness and participation.

IUCN's involvement at the COP16 was substantial, with a delegation of 58 Secretariat members and 17 Commission experts from the Commission of Education and Communication, Commission on Ecosystem Management, World Commission on Protected Areas, and SSC. One of the highlights was the 60th celebration of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™, with participation of the IUCN Director General and President. Reverse the Red colleagues were also present, seeking to accelerate strategic, recovery-focused action and supporting countries delivering on Target 4 of the GBF.

This final quarter of 2024 also witnessed major progress in the internal planning and reporting process of SSC. In collaboration with the Global Center for Species Survival, the SSC DATA Unit

implemented an efficient system to provide SSC Groups with a complete line of assistance to generate annual stand-alone reports. As a result of this strategy, the contribution of SSC Groups to the Species Strategic Plan reached 96% participation, with more than 3,000 targets established in 2024. We broke our historical record of annual report submission, with 95% of SSC Groups uploading their 2023 results. On top of that, for the first time during this and the previous quadrennium, we were able to reduce the time spent producing the Annual Species Report of the IUCN SSC and Secretariat to less than a year.

The Centers for Species Survival (CSS) have continued to make significant progress in their role to support species conservation globally, nationally and locally through effective collaboration and capacity building working with SSC Groups and other conservation stakeholders. These CSS teams support the SSC Network in strengthening local capacity, conservation planning, and implementing conservation action. The SSC welcomed two new CSS Partnerships in 2024, CSS Small Mammals hosted by Alpen Zoo and CSS France hosted by the Association Française des Parcs Zoologique, expanding the total global CSS Network of 20 partnerships, with a combined 45 Staff in 14 countries on 6 continents. In parallel to the SSC Leaders' Meeting, on 24 October 2024, the second in-person CSS meeting was held, bringing together species conservation teams from 14 countries and 15 organisations to strengthen relationships, share skills, strategize and prioritize future efforts. The meeting focused on the CSS mentoring process, highlighting the connections with the SSC Network and emphasizing the importance of assessment, planning, and action in conservation efforts.

Resumen ejecutivo

Una vez más, por quinta vez, los Líderes de la CSE disfrutaron de cuatro días de hospitalidad emiratí en Abu Dabi, durante la 5ta Reunión de Líderes de la CSE celebrada del 25 al 28 de octubre. La Agencia Ambiental - Abu Dabi, estrecho colaborador de la CSE desde hace décadas, se involucró a fondo en todos los aspectos de la reunión, incluidos la logística, la organización y el diseño, pero también contribuyó activamente con el programa y a la conexión con expertos locales y otras partes interesadas. Gracias por su enorme contribución y compromiso con este evento. ¡Esperamos que esta alianza fundamental siga innovando e influyendo en la CSE en el futuro!

Uno de los principales resultados de la 5ta Reunión de Líderes de la CSE fue la contundente y sucinta declaración de los participantes afirmando que «Salvar Especies Sustenta la Vida». Esta declaración señala que la conservación de las especies es fundamental para la consecución de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible, el Marco Mundial de Biodiversidad (GBF) de Kunming-Montreal, haciendo hincapié en su importancia crítica para proteger y restaurar la naturaleza. Los participantes en la reunión hicieron un llamado a los gobiernos del mundo, las empresas, los pueblos indígenas y las comunidades locales, los grupos religiosos y los particulares para que detengan el declive de las especies y den prioridad a su conservación en el marco de sus actividades y estrategias, reconociendo que la protección de los animales, los hongos y las plantas es fundamental para sostener los ecosistemas, regular el clima y sustentar la vida.

Coincidiendo parcialmente con la Reunión de Líderes de la CSE, el Convenio sobre la Diversidad Biológica celebró su 16 Conferencia de las Partes (COP) en Cali (Colombia) entre el 21 de octubre y el 1 de noviembre, con una importante participación de miembros de la CSE. Bajo el lema “Paz con la Naturaleza”, fue una “COP de la gente”, con más de un millón de asistentes que participaron en actividades artísticas, tradiciones culturales y puestos interactivos diseñados para promover la educación ambiental. Además, se celebraron paneles, talleres, charlas y otros actos por toda la ciudad, que permitieron al público participar activamente en los debates de la COP y contribuir a la conversación sobre la conservación de la biodiversidad, fomentando una mayor concienciación y participación.

La participación de la UICN en la COP16 fue sustancial, con una delegación de 58 miembros de la Secretaría y 17 expertos de las Comisiones de Educación y Comunicación, Gestión de Ecosistemas, Áreas Protegidas y la CSE. Uno de los momentos más destacados fue la celebración del 60º aniversario de la Lista Roja de Especies Amenazadas de la UICN, con la participación de la Directora General y la Presidente de la UICN. También estuvieron presentes los colegas de *Reverse the Red*, que pretenden acelerar las acciones estratégicas centradas en la recuperación y apoyar a los países en el cumplimiento del Objetivo 4 del GBF.

Este último trimestre de 2024 también ha sido testigo de importantes avances en el proceso interno de planificación y elaboración de informes de la CSE. En colaboración con el Centro Global para la Supervivencia de las Especies, la unidad SSC Data puso en marcha un sistema eficiente para proporcionar a los Grupos de la CSE una línea completa de asistencia para generar informes anuales independientes. Como resultado de esta estrategia, la contribución de los Grupos de la CSE al Plan Estratégico para las Especies alcanzó el 96% de participación, con más de 3.000 objetivos establecidos para 2024. Batimos nuestro récord histórico de presentación de informes anuales, con un 95% de los Grupos CSE cargando sus resultados de 2023. Además, por primera vez durante este cuatrienio y el anterior, pudimos reducir a menos de un año el tiempo dedicado a la elaboración del Informe Anual sobre las Especies de la CSE y la Secretaría de la UICN.

Los Centros para la Supervivencia de Especies (CSS, por sus siglas en inglés) han seguido avanzando significativamente en su papel de apoyo a la conservación de especies a nivel mundial, nacional y local mediante una colaboración eficaz y el desarrollo de capacidades trabajando con los Grupos de CSE y otras partes interesadas en la conservación. Estos Centros apoyan a la Red de la CSE en el fortalecimiento de la capacidad local, la planificación de la conservación y la ejecución de acciones de conservación. La CSE dio la bienvenida a dos nuevas Asociaciones de CSS en 2024, CSS Pequeños Mamíferos organizado por el Zoológico Alpen y CSS Francia organizado por la *Association Française des Parcs Zoologique*, ampliando la Red mundial de CSS a 20 asociaciones, con un personal combinado de 45 personas en 14 países en 6 continentes. Paralelamente a la Reunión de Líderes de la CSE, el 24 de octubre de 2024 se celebró la segunda reunión presencial de los CSS, que reunió a equipos de conservación de especies de 14 países y 15 organizaciones para fortalecer relaciones, compartir habilidades, elaborar estrategias y priorizar esfuerzos futuros. La reunión se centró en el proceso de tutoría de los CSS, destacando las conexiones con la Red de la CSE y haciendo hincapié en la importancia de la evaluación, la planificación y la acción en los esfuerzos de conservación.

Résumé

Une fois de plus, pour la cinquième fois, les dirigeants de la CSE ont bénéficié pendant quatre jours de l'hospitalité émiratie à Abou Dhabi, lors de la Cinquième Réunion des Dirigeants de la CSE qui s'est tenue du 25 au 28 octobre 2025. L'Agence de l'environnement d'Abou Dhabi, partenaire étroit de la CSE depuis des décennies, s'est fortement impliquée dans tous les aspects de la réunion, y compris la logistique, l'organisation et la conception, mais a également contribué activement à l'ordre du jour et à la mise en relation avec des experts locaux et d'autres parties prenantes. Nous vous remercions pour votre énorme contribution et votre engagement à l'égard de cet événement. Nous nous réjouissons de cette alliance fondamentale qui nous permettra de continuer à innover et à influencer la CSE à l'avenir !

L'un des principaux résultats de la Cinquième Réunion des Dirigeants de la CSE a été la déclaration puissante et succincte des participants, selon laquelle « Sauvegarder les espèces, c'est maintenir la vie ». Cette déclaration souligne que la conservation des espèces est à la base de la réalisation des objectifs de développement durable et du cadre mondial pour la biodiversité (CMB) de Kunming-Montréal, en insistant sur l'importance cruciale de la protection et de la restauration de la nature. Les participants à la réunion ont appelé les gouvernements, les entreprises, les peuples autochtones et les communautés locales, les groupes religieux et les particuliers du monde entier à mettre un terme au déclin des espèces et à donner la priorité à leur conservation dans le cadre de leurs activités et stratégies, en reconnaissant que la protection des animaux, des champignons et des plantes est essentielle au maintien des écosystèmes, à la régulation du climat et à la préservation de la vie.

La Convention sur la Diversité Biologique (CBD) a tenu sa 16ème Conférence des Parties (COP) à Cali, en Colombie, entre le 21 octobre et le 1er novembre, avec un engagement important de la part des membres du CSE. Sous le thème « La paix avec la nature », il s'agissait d'une « COP populaire », avec plus d'un million de participants s'adonnant à l'art, aux traditions culturelles et aux stands interactifs conçus pour promouvoir l'éducation à l'environnement. En outre, des réunions, des ateliers, des conférences et d'autres événements ont été organisés dans toute la ville, permettant au public de s'engager activement dans les discussions de la COP et de contribuer à la conversation sur la conservation de la biodiversité, favorisant ainsi une plus grande sensibilisation et une plus grande participation.

La participation de l'UICN à la COP16 a été importante, avec une délégation de 58 membres du Secrétariat et 17 experts de la Commission de l'Éducation et de la communication, de la Commission de la Gestion des Écosystèmes, de la Commission Mondiale des Aires Protégées et de la CSE. L'un des temps forts a été la célébration du 60e anniversaire de la Liste Rouge de l'UICN des espèces menacées, avec la participation du directeur général et du président de l'UICN.

Les collègues de Reverse the Red étaient également présents, cherchant à accélérer les actions stratégiques axées sur le rétablissement et soutenant les pays dans la réalisation de l'objectif 4 du GBF.

Ce dernier trimestre de 2024 a également été le témoin de progrès majeurs dans la planification interne et le processus de reporting de la CSE. En collaboration avec le Global Center for Species Survival, l'unité SSC DATA a mis en œuvre un système efficace pour fournir aux groupes de la CSE une ligne d'assistance complète afin de générer des rapports annuels autonomes. Grâce à cette stratégie, la contribution des groupes de la CSE au Plan Stratégique pour les espèces a atteint 96 % de participation, avec plus de 3 000 objectifs établis en 2024. Nous avons battu notre record historique de soumission de rapports annuels, avec 95 % des groupes de la CSE qui ont téléchargé leurs résultats pour 2023. En outre, pour la première fois au cours de cette période quadriennale et de la précédente, nous avons pu réduire à moins d'un an le temps consacré à la production du Rapport annuel sur les espèces de la CSE et du Secrétariat de l'UICN.

Les Centres pour la survie des espèces (CSS) ont continué à faire des progrès significatifs dans leur rôle de soutien à la conservation des espèces au niveau mondial, national et local grâce à une collaboration efficace et au renforcement des capacités en travaillant avec les groupes de la CSE et d'autres acteurs de la conservation. Ces équipes de la CSS soutiennent le réseau de la CSE dans le renforcement des capacités locales, la planification de la conservation et la mise en œuvre des actions de conservation. La CSE a accueilli deux nouveaux partenariats CSS en 2024, CSS Small Mammals (petits mammifères) hébergé par l'Alpen Zoo et CSS France hébergé par l'Association Française des Parcs Zoologiques, élargissant ainsi le réseau mondial CSS total de 20 partenariats, avec un personnel combiné de 45 personnes dans 14 pays sur 6 continents. Parallèlement à la Réunion des Dirigeants de la CSE, le 24 octobre 2024, la deuxième réunion en personne de la CSS s'est tenue, réunissant des équipes de conservation des espèces de 14 pays et 15 organisations pour renforcer les relations, partager les compétences, élaborer des stratégies et établir des priorités pour les efforts futurs. La réunion s'est concentrée sur le processus de mentorat de la CSS, en soulignant les liens avec le réseau de la CSE et en mettant l'accent sur l'importance de l'évaluation, de la planification et de l'action dans les efforts de conservation.

Recent activities

October - December 2024



CONFERENCES

Where the SSC chair's office team attended and delivered a lecture.



MEETINGS

Where the SSC chair's office team participated without making a presentation.



INTERVENTIONS

Letters sent to Governments or Companies to propose actions for species and habitats under threat.



Conferences, meetings, workshops and Intervention letters

(Jon Paul Rodríguez, JPR; Rima Jabado, RJ; Kira Mileham, KM; Nahomy De Andrade, NDA; Edgard Yerena, EY; Levi Mendoza, LM; Jafet Nassar, JN; Aritzaitz Lambright, AL; Mayerlin Ramos, MR; Milangela Dell'Aquila, MDA; Lila García, LG, Nicole Duplaix, ND)

Conferences

- La Naturaleza como Aliada del Desarrollo. *Curso de Biología de la Conservación*, Universidad Simón Bolívar, Caracas, Venezuela, 6 December 2024. (JPR)
- Generación de datos sobre biodiversidad venezolana amenazada y su aplicación para informar políticas públicas. *Diplomado de Diversidad Biológica*, Centro de Estudios Ambientales, Universidad Bolivariana de Venezuela, Maracaibo, Venezuela, 29 November 2024. Virtual. (JPR)
- Revertir el Rojo. Colaboración de los zoos y acuarios del Siglo XXI con UICN, *Máster en Gestión integral, Bienestar y Veterinaria en Acuarios y Zoológicos del Siglo XXI*, Acuario de Zaragoza, Zaragoza, España, 29 November 2024, virtual. (JPR)
- Corredores Ecológicos Urbanos para Caracas. *Ciclo de Seminarios de Ecología. Centro de Ecología*. Instituto Venezolano de Investigaciones Científicas, Caracas, Venezuela, 26 November 2024. (EY)
- Science and the Biodiversity Paradox. Rethinking science: a change of paradigm through cross and transdisciplinary approaches, *UNFCCC Conference of the Parties 29*, Baku, Azerbaijan, 18 November 2024, virtual. (JPR)
- Conservación de la naturaleza. *Fortalecimiento de capacidades de Ecoguardianes y autoridades locales*, Museo Marino, Boca del Río, Isla de Margarita, Venezuela, 12 November 2024. (JPR)
- IUCN Species Survival Commission. *International Symposium for Conifer Conservation*, Sejong National Arboretum, Sejong city, South Korea, 30 October 2024, virtual. (JPR)
- Overview of the Species Work of IUCN, *SSC Leaders' Meeting*, Bab Al Qasr Hotel, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 25 October 2024. (JPR)
- SSC Network progress (2021-2023), Species Strategic Plan 2026-2029 and experiences delivering assessment, planning and action. *SSC Leaders' Meeting*, Bab Al Qasr Hotel, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 25 October 2024. (JN, LM)
- SSC and EAD over two decades of mutual cooperation. *Convention on Migratory Species office*, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 23 October 2024. (JPR)
- European Elasmobranch Association (EEA) conference, plenary talk, October 22–24, Thessaloniki, Greece (RJ)
- Reflection on 8 years as SSC Chair. *Steering Committee meeting, IUCN Species Survival Commission*, Bab Al Qasr Hotel, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 21 October 2024. (JPR)
- *A long road to recovery: pathways to accelerate the conservation of sharks and rays, International Marine Conservation Congress (IMCC)*,. Invited Plenary address, October 14-18, Cape Town, South Africa. (RJ)
- ¿Es el murciélago cardonero (*Leptonycteris curasoae*) una especie migratoria en el norte de Suramérica? *Simpósio: Migraciones animales: conocimiento actual en el norte de Sudamérica*. 14 - 15 October 2024. (JN)

- Conservation Collaborations: Partnership Update. *79th World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) Conference* Taronga Zoo, Sydney, Australia, 7 October 2024. (KM)
- De la Ciencia a la Acción: consolidación de productos. *Encuentro anual de Akehé*, Estación Experimental Jaime Henao Jaramillo “El Laurel,” Miranda, Venezuela, 5 October 2024. (JPR)
- IUCN Species Survival Commission. *IUCN Commissions, IUCN Regional Conservation Forum for West Europe, and East Europe, North and Central Asia*, Bruges, Belgium, 2 October 2024. (JPR)
- Lost Species Panelist. *Reverse the Red Lost Species Webinar*, 1 October 2024, virtual.(KM)

Meetings

- *Convention on Migratory Species Shark Advisory Committee* (meeting 4), November 24–30, Puerto Princesa, Philippines (RJ)
- *International Biodiversity Network meeting*, Santiago, Chile. 21 November 2024, virtual. (JPR)
- Pew Fellowship in Marine Conservation, annual meeting, November 15–19, Bali, Indonesia (RJ)
- *SSC Steering Committee Meeting*, Bab Al Qasr Hotel, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 21-22 October 2024. (JPR, RJ, KM, NDA, EY, LM, JN, MR, MDA, LG, ND)
- *SSC Leaders’ Meeting*, Bab Al Qasr Hotel, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 25-28 October 2024. (JPR, RJ, KM, NDA, EY, LM, JN, MR, MDA, LG, ND)
- *IUCN Regional Conservation Forum for West Europe, and East Europe, North and Central Asia*, Bruges, Belgium, 30 September - 3 October 2024. (JPR)

Intervention letters

Letter to the staff of the Asian Development Bank Uzbekistan: In September 2024, the Co-Chairs of the Bustard Specialist Group, along with Tris Allinson, Senior Conservation Scientist at BirdLife International, and Andrey Ralev on behalf of CEE Bankwatch Network, submitted a request to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), urging the bank to pause all decision-making regarding the Samarkand 1 and 2 projects, which involve the construction of new transmission lines extending approximately 350 km across Uzbekistan. The request for this pause is aimed at allowing sufficient time to gather, present, and discuss critical information openly. This is essential to facilitate a planning process that ensures a strong and secure long-term future for the iconic steppe species: the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*), Little Bustard (*Tetrax tetrax*), and Asian Houbara Bustard (*Chlamydotis macqueenii*). This consideration is particularly important given Uzbekistan’s international commitments as the host of this year’s meeting of the Convention on Migratory Species. The signatories expressed their deep concern regarding the potential impacts on bustard species and other avian taxa. According to BirdLife International’s AVISTEP (avistep.birdlife.org) map, the southern section of the proposed transmission line falls within the highest sensitivity category for bird interactions with high voltage overhead lines. BirdLife strongly recommends that any development in such sensitive areas should occur only when the highest levels of mitigation and offset measures are implemented. This includes considerations for line burial, rerouting, and adopting a precautionary approach.

Bustards are particularly vulnerable to collisions with power lines due to their visual and flight ecology. The proposed route for the new transmission lines intersects critical migration paths utilized by all three species and is also situated near sites that serve as stopover and wintering habitats for two of them. The signatories expressed a strong desire to participate in discussions with the ADB regarding this matter at the earliest convenience.

Letter to the World Bank , Azerbaijan: In October 2024, the Co-Chairs of the Bustard Specialist Group (BSG), submitted a letter of extreme concern over the energy infrastructure project under consideration by the World Bank in Azerbaijan, as it is proposed in the “Draft Environmental and Social Scoping Report” for the Azerbaijan Scaling-Up Renewable Energy Project (AZURE Project). The Little Bustard (*Tetrax tetrax*) and the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*) are particularly threatened by the current configuration of the project. In the case of the Great Bustard, the collisions expected with power lines crossing the species’ migratory pathways, particularly those almost entirely encircling the land borders of Shirvan National Park, are likely to lead to its extirpation from the country. Also, there will be damage done to other significant bird populations particularly at the Besh Barmag bottleneck just north of Baku. These include species of global conservation concern, including Common Pochard (*Aythya ferina*), Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*), Black-winged Pratincole (*Glareola nordmanni*), Steppe Eagle (*Aquila nipalensis*) and Pallid Harrier (*Circus macrourus*). Moreover, 84-95% of birds passing by Besh Barmagh in both migration seasons have been observed to fly at altitudes of less than 50 m above ground level, a travelling height that makes them highly susceptible to collisions with power lines. The damage to be done bird species and populations has clearly not been considered or understood by the proponents of these lines and therefore petition to require the entire proposed network of overhead lines in this project to be undergrounded, which is the only way in which the migratory birds of west coast of the Caspian Sea will be completely safeguarded. The BSG is happy to provide further advice and expertise as relates to the impacts of this project on bustards.

Letter to the Secretary of Environment and the Governor of State of Sonora, Mexico: In November 2024, the Chairs of the World Commission on Protected Areas and the Species Survival Commission, sent a letter raising concerns about the proposed Saguaro Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) project near Puerto Libertad on the Sonoran coast of the Gulf of California, due to its potential environmental impacts. The gulf is known for its rich biodiversity, hosting more than 30 species of cetaceans, including the fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*), which are highly vulnerable to human activities. This region is considered by IUCN as an “[Important Marine Mammal Area](#)” which underscores the need to protect these ecosystems from industrial development. The Saguaro project, as it is proposed now, will lead to increased vessel traffic and underwater noise, which can severely impact large whales and other marine species, hindering their communication and natural behavior. This development will also impact fisheries and tourism, altering spawning patterns and fish behavior, polluting with fuels and other chemicals, and degrading water quality, affecting both the local economy and the tourism industry. Given the ecological importance of Puerto Libertad and its surroundings, it is suggested that the LNG development might be more suitable in alternative locations, such as Guaymas, where ecological sensitivities are lower. The creation of a working group including representatives of the Mexican government and experts from IUCN and the International Whaling Commission, is suggested, which could conduct comprehensive environmental assessments to determine

the best locations for LNG terminals, and examine and propose measures to reduce risks to marine ecosystems, such as speed limits, route adjustments, and noise mitigation strategies. The letter concludes with an invitation to collaboration and dialogue, highlighting the willingness of IUCN and its commissions to contribute to a more sustainable approach to LNG development in the region, emphasizing the importance of protecting marine ecosystems in the Gulf of California.

Letter to the IUCN Council: In November 2024, the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Fungal Conservation Committee (FunCC), Gregory Mueller and Giuliana Furci, made a formal request to elevate the status of fungi within conservation discourse by integrating them into communications and actions. To support this initiative, SSC, through the FunCC, is reaching out to encourage all IUCN Members, other Commissions, and the Secretariat to adopt inclusive terminology that acknowledges fungi alongside fauna and flora. Specifically, they recommend that the IUCN Council use the phrase “fauna, flora, and fungi” in all biodiversity-related communications, replacing the traditional “fauna and flora”. The letter concludes with a call for further engagement and collaboration, highlighting the critical role of fungi in biodiversity and the necessity of their explicit recognition in conservation efforts.

Achievements 2024

Membership status and SSC Network



10,555

Members

Have renewed or joined
the SSC Network for

2021-2025



194 in 186
SSC Groups Countries

15 Stand-alone Red List Authorities

13 Task Forces

1 Action Partnership

7 Conservation Committees

158 Specialist Groups



New SSC groups during 2024:

• **3 National Species Specialist Groups**

- › Nigeria Species Specialist Group
- › South Africa Species Specialist Group
- › Spain Species Specialist Group

• **2 Task Forces**

- › Inter-Commission Task Force on Dams 2021-2025 (SSC-WCPA)
- › Mass Animal Aggregations Task Force

• **4 Specialist Groups**

- › Sponge Specialist Group
- › Wild Parrot Specialist Group
- › Wild Tulip Specialist Group
- › Anoline Lizard Specialist Group



New SSC Focal Persons to
IUCN National Committees:

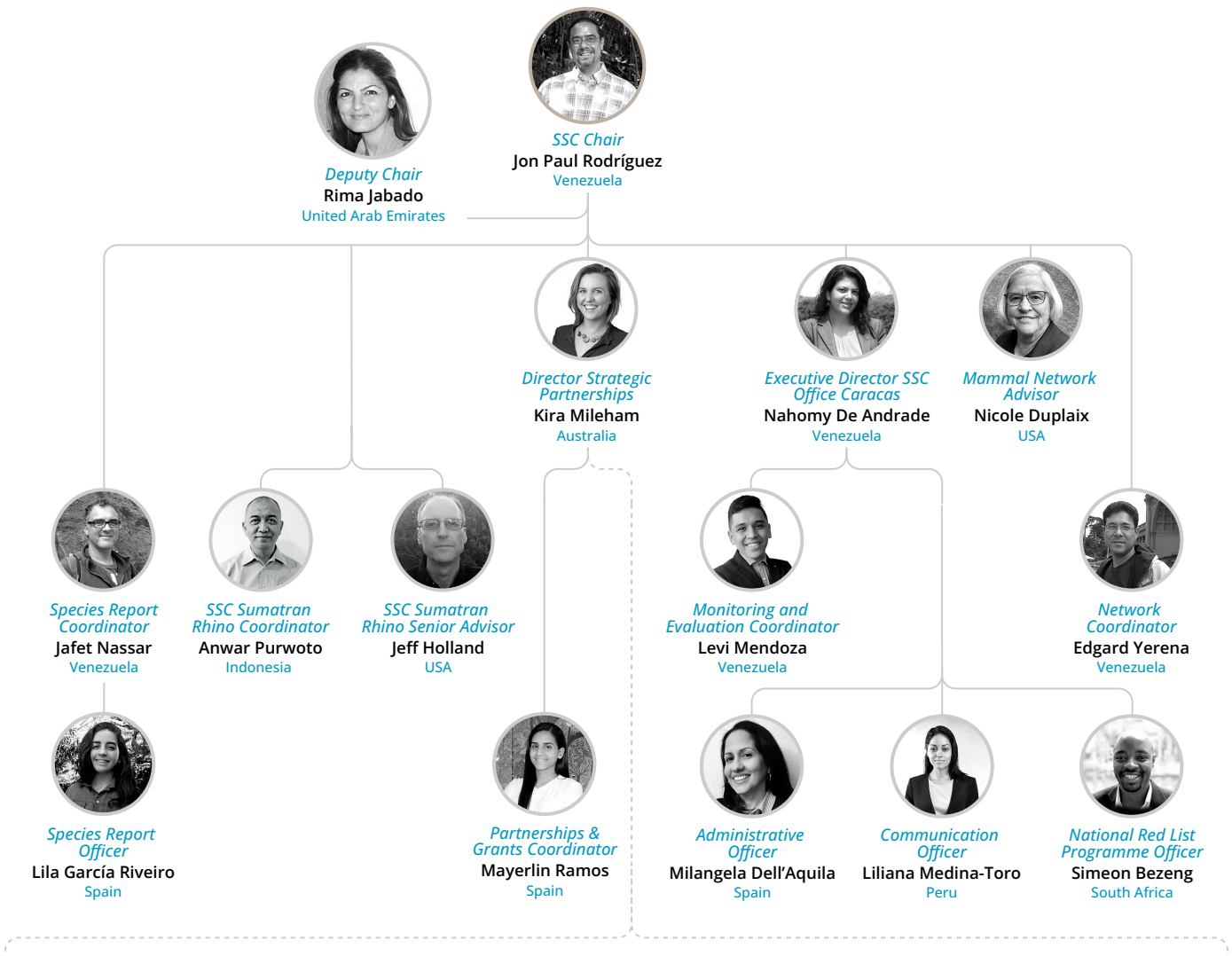
3 focal persons to East Europe,
North and Central Asia

1 focal person to West Asia

6 focal persons to Africa

3 focal persons to Oceania

Updated Chair's Office organigram



Centers for Species Survival




EUROPE

-  **CSS Marine:**
Hosted by Oceanario de Lisboa
-  **CSS United Kingdom:**
Hosted by Paradise Wildlife Park
-  **CSS Macaronesia:**
Hosted by Loro Parque Fundacion
-  **CSS Ireland:**
Hosted by Dublin Zoo
-  **CSS Cologne Zoo:**
Hosted by Cologne Zoo

AFRICA

-  **CSS Nigeria:**
Hosted by APLORI

NORTH AMERICA

-  **CSS New Mexico BioPark:**
Hosted by New Mexico BioPark Society
-  **CSS Marine:**
Hosted by Georgia Aquarium
-  **CSS Freshwater:**
Hosted by Shedd Aquarium
-  **CSS Trees:**
Hosted by The Morton Arboretum
-  **Global CSS:**
Hosted by Indianapolis Zoo
-  **CSS Biodiversity Biobanking:**
Hosted by San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

SOUTH AMERICA

-  **CSS Brazil:**
Hosted by Parque das Aves
-  **CSS Argentina:**
Hosted by Fundación Temaikèn

ASIA

-  **CSS India:**
Hosted by Wildlife Trust of India
-  **CSS Asian Elephant:**
Supported by Columbus Zoo and hosted by Wildlife Trust of India
-  **CSS Southeast Asia:**
Hosted by Mandai Nature

OCEANIA

-  **CSS Australasia:**
Hosted by the Zoo and Aquarium Association Australasia

Partnerships

The SSC Partnerships team continues striving to enhance the strategic support to the SSC Network primarily through creating SSC grant opportunities and partnerships with Centers for Species Survival; both of which work to support SSC Groups' needs and help them achieve targets throughout the Species Conservation Cycle.

The SSC Chair's Office secured 22 donor partnerships for 2024 to support the Chair's Office's annual operations and network activities, raising US\$ 931,575.70. While we are incredibly grateful for these donors, many additional partner organizations support SSC Groups in different ways. They act as host organizations and financial sponsors, provide training on various tools, facilitate integration with local communities, NGOs, and government agencies which support species conservation efforts on the ground, among other contributions. Thanks to all organizations and individuals involved in partnering to protect and save species and support more than 10,500 SSC members working worldwide.

Centers for Species Survival Partnerships

The Centers for Species Survival (CSS) have continued to make significant progress in their role to support species conservation globally through effective collaboration and capacity building working with SSC Groups and other conservation stakeholders. In 2024, 2 new centers were created. So far, 20 serve as critical support for international, national and local best practices in conservation. The CSS Network has increased public awareness and partnerships during 2024 for expanding CSS's reach and impact.

- **CSS Small Mammals hosted by Alpen Zoo** established in July 2024 to carry out, or contribute to, species status assessments using the IUCN tools to contribute to, species conservation planning exercises; and take conservation action priorities in collaboration with the IUCN SSC Small Mammal Specialist Group and other key stakeholders.
- **CSS France hosted by the Association Française des Parcs Zoologiques** in December 2024 to further consolidate and scale up the strategic support and capacity in catalysing assessments, planning and action for threatened species in France, and all its territories.

SSC Network Funding Support

Through ongoing partnerships with the Environment Agency of Abu Dhabi, On the EDGE and the IUCN Red List Unit, the SSC Chair's Office has been able to provide financial support to the SSC Network, through different funding opportunities. A total of US\$ 204,700.08 was allocated to support 48 Specialist Groups to achieve objectives across the Species Conservation Cycle.

- **SSC Internal Grants:** the SSC Chair's Office launched two rounds of this grant program (January and June) with 33 applications selected and a total of US\$ 111,280.58 allocated.
- **SSC Red List Grants:** for the first time, the SSC Chair's Office offered Red List Grants in June 2024 with 9 proposals selected for a total of US\$ 41,681.00.

- **SSC EDGE Internal Grants:** these were awarded to 6 Specialist Groups for an amount of US\$ 51,738.50.

Cross-cutting Support

This support of US\$ 102,000.00 contributes to implementing key activities from July 2024 to July 2025 of the following Specialist Groups: Invasive Species, Sustainable Use and Livelihoods, Conservation Planning, and the Key Biodiversity Area Standards and Appeals Committee.

IUCN Red List Unit

With the purpose of assisting in delivering the Barometer of Life through capacity building, species assessments and supporting the IUCN Red List website/database, the Red List Unit was granted US\$ 209,457.00.

SSC-Oryx Partnership Fund: funding for publications

The SSC-Oryx Partnership Fund supports the communication objectives of increasing the visibility of the conservation work of the network, and empowering and motivating the membership to disseminate their efforts on the Species Conservation Cycle (Assess-Plan-Act). By December 2024, 24 articles have been published, 6 more accepted and in press, and 11 under review. Below are the articles published in the last quarter:

- [Center for Species Survival Nigeria Launches a Programme of Work](#) By Bello A. Danmallam, Center for Species Survival Nigeria hosted by A.P.L.O.R.I.
- [Conservation status of newly discovered populations of two globally threatened tree species in the east Usambara mountains, Tanzania](#) by Ndangalasi, Henry, Eastern African Plant Red List Authority.
- [Lost and Found: The Rediscovery of the Lost Fern Species *Asplenium Achalense* \(Aspleniaceae\) in the wild and its conservation status](#) By Arana, Marcelo, Temperate South American Plants Specialist Group.
- [New National Species Specialist Group in Nigeria](#) by Samuel Ivande and Stella Egbe, Nigeria Species Specialist Group.

Barometer of Life [ASSESS]

Red List Partnership, IUCN Secretariat and SSC network delivered key indicators through the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species – the last Red List update was in October

- The IUCN Red List now includes 166,061 species
- 46,337 species are threatened with extinction (28% of total)

This year, the initial Barometer of Life target of assessing at least 160,000 species was achieved and it represents an incredible milestone for this powerful conservation tool.

Work at national scales [ASSESS / PLAN / ACT]

The SSC Chair's Office continues its work supporting the establishment of National Species Specialists Groups (NSSGs), including organising and hosting stakeholder consultation meetings and providing guidance to organisations and individuals keen to prepare proposals. During 2024, three new NSSGs were created in Nigeria, South Africa and Spain, for a total of nine NSSGs around the world with discussions underway to create the Australia Species Specialist Group.

We hope to work together with these Groups and those previously established to mobilise stronger, more collaborative species conservation networks in their regions, ideally in partnership with relevant government agencies and other partners.

Conservation action [ACT]

6 intervention letters and statements were delivered, jointly with SSC Groups, experts across the network, IUCN regional offices and programmes.

Intervention letters

- Urging the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Department for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, for a Sanitary and Phytosanitary agreement to allow the essential movement of zoo and aquarium animals between Britain and EU member states. Co-signed by the Chair of the IUCN Species Survival Commission, the Chief Executive of the British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums, the Executive Director of the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria, and the President of the British Veterinary Zoological Society. 31-Jan-2024.
- Concern about the ongoing lithium mining by the MAX Power Mining Corp in Cochise County, Arizona, United States of America, a unique area of habitat for several globally endemic and threatened taxa, particularly tiger-beetles. Co-signed by the Chair of the IUCN Species Survival Commission, and the Chair of the Invertebrate Conservation Committee. 14-May-2024
- Requesting action to the President of Mozambique to prevent damage to one of Mozambique's most valuable natural assets, the Inhambane Seascape, regarding the imminent risk of damage posed by the allocation of 70% of the Inhambane coastline to heavy sands prospecting and mining and the earmarking of an offshore area for seismic testing and fossil fuel extraction less than 10 km from the boundary of Bazaruto Archipelago National Park. Co-signed by the Chair of the IUCN Species Survival Commission, the Regional Director for Africa of BirdLife, the Chief Executive Officer of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and the Africa Director of Re:wild. 30-May-2024.
- Urge the Asian Development Bank to pause all decision-making regarding the Samarkand 1 and 2 projects (new transmission lines extending 350 km across Uzbekistan, from the Tashkent region to the south of Samarkand) aimed at allowing sufficient time to discuss critical information openly to ensure a strong and secure long-term future for the three iconic steppe species of bustards: the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*), Little

Bustard (*Tetrax tetrax*), and Asian Houbara Bustard (*Chlamydotis macqueenii*). Signed by the Co-Chairs of the Bustard Specialist Group, the Senior Conservation Scientist of BirdLife International, and the CEE Bankwatch Network. 19-Sep-2024.

- Environmental and biodiversity concerns about the impact of the proposed Woodside Energy Browse project to NWS Development on the Scott Reef Ecosystem, Australia. Co-signed by the Chair of the IUCN Species Survival Commission, the Chair of the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management, and the Chair of the Sydney Institute of Marine Science. 11-Oct-2024.
- Extreme concern over the Azerbaijan Scaling-Up Renewable Energy Project (AZURE Project) under consideration by the World Bank in Azerbaijan, petitioning to require the entire proposed network of overhead lines in this project to be undergrounded, to safeguard the migratory birds of the west coast of the Caspian Sea. Signed by the Co-Chairs of the Bustard Specialist Group. 31-Oct-2024.
- Concerns regarding the Saguaro Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) project near Puerto Libertad, Sonora, Mexico, suggesting alternative locations for the project, as well as the formation of a working group to assess environmental impacts and promote sustainable LNG development. The Gulf of California is an “Important Marine Mammal Area” rich in biodiversity, and home to vulnerable cetaceans like the fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*). The project, as proposed, could increase vessel traffic and noise, harming marine life and local fisheries. Co-signed by the Chair of the IUCN Species Survival Commission, and the Chair of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas. 29-Nov-2024.
- The Fungal Conservation Committee, formally requested the IUCN Council to elevate fungi in conservation discussions adopting an inclusive language, and specifically recommending the phrase “fauna, flora, and fungi” in biodiversity communications. The letter emphasizes the vital role of fungi in biodiversity and calls for enhanced recognition and collaboration in conservation efforts. 27-Nov-2024.

Progress of Sumatran Rhino Conservation in Indonesia

- Adding a new male baby rhino called Indra, which was born on November 25, 2023, there are currently ten rhinos in Way Kambas SRS. It means that the Way Kambas SRS is now fully occupied. Therefore, the management of Way Kambas SRS is planning to build another ring of rhino sanctuary.
- Learning from the experience and based on the current condition of ten rhinos in Way Kambas SRS, the management of Way Kambas SRS developed a road map with the target to have sixteen new baby rhinos by 2025.
- Due to several obstacles, the construction of the new SRS in East Aceh has been delayed. However, it is expected the new SRS in East Aceh can be completed by the end of 2024 or soon thereafter.
- The female rhino called Pari is still roaming in the wild in East Kalimantan forest and the Indonesia Government is planning to capture the rhino next year.

Communicating the work [COMMUNICATE]

This year, the work carried out on Communications was focused on three campaigns developed in collaboration with the SSC network: #WeAreSSC, Publications and SSC Leaders’ Meeting. The SSC Chair’s Office supported communication strategies of external partners through the work of Reverse the Red and the Red List.

SSC members, allies, and IUCN Secretariat contributed to producing content for the Quarterly Reports, the Species E-bulletin, press releases, and web articles. **4 Quarterly Reports** were published to share the activities of the SSC Chair's Office and highlights from the SSC Network. **7 Species e-bulletin** were distributed, with exclusive issues dedicated to "Funding Opportunities and Grant Results". **9 Press releases** were divulged as well as **19 web articles**, which included 9 news, 4 stories, 5 events, and 1 blog entry. You can find all press releases and web articles [here](#).

To broadcast Specialist Groups' work, 175 Specialist Group stand-alone Reports and 8 Regional Reports were produced. Also, **2 guides** for National Species Specialist Groups were published and the Conservation Success Stories module within the SSC Data System was developed to strengthen the visibility of the Network's conservation actions.

SSC Data

The SSC DATA Unit implemented a new system to provide personalized assistance to the Leaders and Program Officers of SSC and CSS groups in their annual reporting process. Thus, by combining tutorials, email exchanges, live training sessions, support from the Global Center for Species Survival team, and personalized assistance, we were able to publish the *2023 Species Report* in less than a year. This remarkable milestone adds to other two records achieved by the unit this year: top participation in target setting, with 96% of SSC groups contributing to the Species Strategic Plan, and top report submission, with 95% of SSC groups reporting their annual results and activities.



Leaders' Meeting Official group photo
Photo © Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD)

The 5th IUCN Species Survival Commission Leaders' Meeting

This meeting provided an open platform for Chairs of SSC Conservation Committees, Specialist Groups, stand-alone Red List Authorities, Action Partnerships and Task Forces to meet, share their experiences, and discuss ways forward on key conservation issues.

Hosted by the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD), from 25 to 28 October, the meeting brought together more than 300 conservation experts, especially SSC Chairs, but also IUCN Secretariat representatives, UAE-based conservationists and SSC partners.

An ambitious agenda was developed to strengthen and empower our network, with more than 120 sessions planned, in a program designed to guide attendees through the Assess-Plan-Act cycle, the heart of SSC's activities, with one day fully dedicated to each of these components. Plenary sessions and dozens of workshops, panel discussions, symposia, and trainings, among other diverse sessions, allowed participants to share experiences and lessons learned during the current quadrennium.

This 5th meeting continues a tradition of impactful gatherings that began in 2008 with EAD support, with subsequent sessions in 2012, 2015, and 2019, reinforcing the SSC Leaders' Meeting as a vital space for sharing, learning, collaborating and strategically advancing species conservation within SSC, the rest of the Union and beyond.

This particular edition emphasized the interconnected triple crisis of biodiversity loss, climate change, and human well-being. This gathering spotlighted the essential role of Nature’s regenerative power and the capacity of animals, fungi, and plants to regulate the atmosphere and maintain healthy ecosystems both underwater and on land. Participants had a chance to explore and discuss how addressing these crises collectively through conservation and ecological restoration can lead to sustainable solutions for our planet’s future.

Taking advantage of this gathering, several meetings were held prior to the Leaders’ Meeting. SSC Steering Committee convened on 21-22 October 21-22 — special thanks to SeaWorld Abu Dhabi for hosting an extraordinary gala dinner for our Steering Committee at their facilities! Conservation Committees met on 23 October, in parallel with a series of seminars that some Steering Committee members presented at different organizations within UEA, including EAD and the Convention on Migratory Species. Centers for Species Survival dedicated a full day on 24 October to meet and share recent results and future perspectives. All these meetings served as a preamble to the main event and set the stage for a marvelous four productive days of networking and articulation to improve and guide our future work.

None of this would have been possible without the generous support of the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi, who not only participated in all aspects of logistics, organization and design of the meeting, but also contributed actively to the agenda and linking to local experts and other stakeholders. Thanks to your huge contribution and commitment to this event.

The SSC Leaders’ Declaration

The main outcome of the 5th SSC Leaders’ Meeting was a powerful and succinct declaration which states that “Saving Species Sustains Life”. This [declaration](#) points out that species conservation underlies achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), emphasizing its critical importance to protecting and restoring nature.

This call to action appeals to the world’s governments, businesses, Indigenous peoples and local communities, religious groups, and individuals to halt species decline and prioritise its conservation within their activities and strategies, recognising that protecting animals, fungi, and plants is fundamental to sustaining ecosystems, regulating climate, and supporting life.

As a part of the next steps, and looking for ways to empower local communities, support governments, and engage civil society and businesses to prioritise species conservation at all levels, the SSC will prepare additional guidelines on how the Commission can support and guide these communities, and provide them with the IUCN tools and knowledge to achieve the goals and targets agreed to in the GBF.

The declaration is available also in [Spanish](#), [French](#), [German](#), [Portuguese](#), [Arabic](#), and [Mandarin](#).



COP16
COLOMBIA
Paz con la Naturaleza

SSC's Participation at Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity

From October 21 to November 1, the CBD COP16 was held in Cali, Colombia with great engagement by IUCN SSC members.

By Gabriela Lichtenstein,

SSC Regional Vice Chair for South and Mesoamerica

Under the theme "Peace with Nature," the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP16) took place in Cali, Colombia, from 21 October to 1 November. This was the first Biodiversity COP since the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) at COP15 in December 2022 in Montreal, Canada.

As promised by Colombia, it was a true "People's COP", with over 1 million participants engaging in the event's Green Zone, located in the heart of the city. The Green Zone was a vibrant hub showcasing art, cultural traditions, and interactive stalls designed to promote environmental education. Additionally, panels, workshops, talks, and other events were held across the city, enabling the public to actively engage in COP discussions and contribute to the conversation on biodiversity conservation, fostering greater awareness and participation.

IUCN's involvement at the COP16 was substantial, with a delegation consisting of 58 Secretariat members and 17 Commission experts from Commission on Education and Communication, Commission on Ecosystem Management, World Commission on Protected Areas, and SSC. The event was also attended by IUCN Director General Grethel Aguilar and President Razan Khalifa Al Mubarak. SSC members played an active role, offering a diverse and engaging program of panels and activities, both at the IUCN Pavilion and other venues, while also closely following negotiations.

One of the highlights was the 60th celebration of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. The event showcased testimonies of impactful conservation led by the IUCN Red List Unit and partners, followed by an IUCN members reception where the IUCN DG and President spoke on the IUCN Red List and launched the IUCN Red List @60 campaign and the road to the World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi in October 2025.

Several members of the [Global Biodiversity Framework Task Force](#) also convened in Cali. The Task Force participated in fourteen events and discussions with an emphasis on tools to support the development of effective [National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans \(NBSAP\)](#), strengthening [OECMs](#), mapping biodiversity priorities, supporting strategic approaches for implementing Goal A, measuring national progress towards targets, and facilitating the coordination of data and expert knowledge. Some highlights include the participation of Phil McGowan, chair of the Global Biodiversity Framework Task Force on a [panel discussion](#) on biodiversity data as a common thread in supporting corporate disclosures (Target 15) and assessing financial contributions (Target 19) towards the KMGBF biodiversity outcomes (Goal A) and Nature Positive. On the 23rd of October, Phil McGowan and Francesca Ridley led a [side event on supporting implementation and monitoring of Goal A for species conservation](#) that highlighted the need for strategic approaches to support the species elements of the KMGBF, given the huge number of threatened species and the range of actions needed.

SSC Conservation Genetics Specialist Group (CGSG) was also present, representing the Coalition for Conservation Genetics as well. The goal of their attendance was to help Parties to the CBD, as well as representatives of NGOs, business, finance, academia, and indigenous groups to understand the importance of genetic diversity, and the different ways to measure and report it. The team presented at 10 events in various pavilions, tents, and side events, on diverse topics such as: a Box as a tool for supporting calculating genetic indicators using satellite data; the genetic diversity elements in the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation; the species action and population elements of Target 4 and how genetic diversity is important to other Targets ([more here](#)); the Coalition for Conservation Genetics and the science policy interface ([more here](#)) including how scientists can support policy, guidance on updating NBSAPs ([more here](#)), among others relevant themes.

On the other hand, Gabriela Lichtenstein and Paola Reidl, with support from the IUCN CEESP SSC Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group (SULi), conducted a regional survey to assess the progress of NBSAP updates across Latin American and the Caribbean (GRULAC) countries and presented the results in the session: Mainstreaming the sustainable use of wild species in the NBSAPs of the GRULAC region, which also included a very interesting panel with representatives from Peru, Mexico and Colombia and a presentation by Gabriel Quijandria, Director of IUCN Sur, as an insightful summary of the importance of sustainable use in Latin America. During the event, Dr. Dilys Roe, Chair of SULi introduced new tools aimed at enhancing the sustainability of wild species, and

the Species Use Database was presented. Beyond these tools, further insights were shared on SULi's work and new products designed to support sustainable wild species harvest, use, and trade and their potential contributions to tracking progress on Targets 5 and 9 of the KMGBF.

The SSC Fungal Conservation Committee was very active at this COP. The aim of their participation was to engage and inform CBD Parties on the importance of fungi for species survival and the need to include them in national, regional, and international conservation policies and initiatives. Aida Vascos Palacios participated in various events in the blue and the green zone spreading information about how fungi are essential to achieve the objectives and goals of the KMGBF. They were also involved in the "Fungal Conservation Pledge", a proposal that seeks to call on the Parties of the CBD to commit to prioritizing the conservation of fungi within multilateral environmental frameworks and to advancing concrete measures in their NBSAPs. Events were also held at the green zone, where fungi were presented as essential organisms for maintaining life and for the functions they provide to human beings.

Reverse the Red was also present at COP16. Mike Clifford, Strategy Director of Reverse the Red spoke at five side events including "Halting Extinctions and Recovering Species is Possible", an event learning how various governments are making a measured impact for species and how many of our civil society partners play a critical role in implementation and action, and "Synergies for Species: Achieving Ambitious Species Goals", with other NGOs, the Seychelles Department of Environment, Newcastle University and Re:wild.

While several targets of the KMGBF address the need for sustainable wildlife management, significant gaps remain in measuring progress toward these goals. Specifically, Target 4 emphasizes managing human-wildlife conflicts (HWC) to promote coexistence, while Target 5 focuses on ensuring the sustainable, safe, and legal harvesting and trade of wild species. However, comprehensive mechanisms to measure progress toward these targets are currently lacking. To address this, the SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict and Coexistence Specialist Group has convened an open Working Group to develop a component indicator for the HWC element of Target 4. The Working Group, composed of technical experts and representatives from several CBD Parties, has collaboratively produced a draft indicator framework proposal following a series of online workshops held over the past 10 months.

Similarly, the TRADE Hub project team, in collaboration with organizations such as CIFOR-ICRAF, UNEP-WCMC, the University of Oxford, and the CASCADE Consortium, has developed a proposal for a binary indicator for Target 5. These efforts included an expert workshop with participation from several Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW) partners and other institutions to refine the proposed indicator. Held under the auspices of the CPW, this COP16 side event provided an opportunity to present an overview of the progress on these two initiatives and gather valuable feedback from Parties.

The events held at the IUCN Pavillion can be watched at the [following link](#).

The clock is ticking, with only six years remaining to halt biodiversity loss. SSC members have a critical role to play in driving action and implementing solutions to meet global targets and secure a sustainable future for biodiversity.



Reverse the Red Building on Momentum After the World Species Congress

Reverse the Red is focused on accelerating strategic, recovery-focused action and supporting countries delivering on Target 4 of the Biodiversity Plan. We are dedicated to supporting all those committed to reversing declines of species by:

- Amplifying success and telling stories to collectively influence change.
- Providing tools, strategies, and resources aimed at measurable impact and recovery.
- Creating strategic connections and collaborations to accelerate impact.

Although the next World Species Congress will be held virtually in four years, we have a lot of work to do between now and then. Our broad coalition of conservation impact partners, including SSC members, has the opportunity to refine our efforts, aligning programmes with the Global Species Action Plan and our national biodiversity strategies, and measuring progress against national indicators, to generate the greatest possible impact. When we apply these basic strategic principles, we achieve more at greater pace and scale, and are able to learn from one another.

Since the World Species Congress on 15 May 2024, Reverse the Red has focused on engaging a network of partners that has grown by 600% this year and collaborated with SSC on a number of engagements this quarter:

Increasing Engagement for National Biodiversity Goals

At COP16 in Cali, Colombia in October, Michael Clifford, Strategy Director for Reverse the Red led and facilitated **Synergies for Species: Achieving Ambitious Species Goals** at the IUCN Pavilion with involvement from WWF, WCS - Colombia, Bird Life International, BGCI, ICMBio, SANBI, Seychelles Department of Environment, Newcastle University, and Re:wild. Halting extinctions and recovering species is possible. This was an incredible event learning how various governments are making a measured impact for species and how many of our civil society partners play a critical role in implementation and action. We need each other and together, we can reverse the trends of the Red List.

At COP16, Mike also participated in or presented at: the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation session hosted by BGCI, the Global Species Action Plan event in the IUCN Pavilion, Empowering the Next Generation of Conservation Leaders hosted by ZSL and their EDGE programme, and Achieving Global Targets and the Role of Zoos, Aquariums, and Botanic Gardens hosted by WAZA. Being able to connect with partners in all sectors was incredibly valuable and Reverse the Red strengthened our network through these events.

Engaging Species Survival Commission Partners

At the SSC Leaders Meeting in Abu Dhabi in October, Megan Joyce, Outreach and Engagement Coordinator for Reverse the Red led and facilitated **Maximizing Your Communication Impact and Leveraging IUCN and SSC Communication Tools** and two sessions on **SSC Pathway Towards Achieving Target 4 of GBF**. Jon Paul Rodriguez also presented a plenary session to the Leaders on **Reverse the Red and GBF**. These sessions were well attended and excitement around Reverse the Red efforts in conjunction with the SSC is continuing to grow.

Megan was also able to connect with the Centers for Species Survival as part of the Centers meeting in Abu Dhabi, following up on communication work in a session led in partnership with Eugenia Cordero and Fabiana Rocha of Parque das Aves and the Center for Species Survival Brazil. Centers are keen to increase their communication efforts, helping broader understanding of the capacity and expertise Centers bring to the SSC and Reverse the Red networks.



Mark your calendars for Reverse the Red day on February 7th



REVERSE THE RED DAY
FEBRUARY 7

**Amplifying Successful
Species Recovery Efforts**



Reverse the Red has also been busy preparing for the third annual Reverse the Red Day on February 7, 2025. SSC members including Centers for Species Survival, National Species Specialist Groups, and taxonomic specialist groups are preparing social media campaigns celebrating their conservation impact and making [Reverse the Red Species Pledges](#). We are also excited to invite SSC members to two online forums where discussions will be held around species impact and national level collaboration.

SSC DATA

SSC Data and Species Strategic Plan 2026-2029

Breaking historical records and innovating

As the 2021-2025 quadrennium comes to an end and SSC DATA celebrates its seventh birthday, we would like to share with our readers outstanding accomplishments that signed this year's efforts to serve the SSC Network.

In collaboration with the Global Center for Species Survival, the SSC DATA Unit implemented an efficient system to provide SSC Groups with a complete line of assistance options to generate the annual stand-alone reports. A portfolio of tutorials available in the One Stop Shop was combined with multi-group live training sessions, permanent email communication, and a service of personalized assistance to help those groups that historically have had difficulties in navigating the system and reporting their annual progress.

As a result of this strategy, the contribution of SSC Groups to the Species Strategic Plan reached 96% participation, with more than 3,000 targets established in 2024. We broke our historical record of annual report submission, with 95% of SSC Groups uploading their 2023 results. On top of that, for the first time during this and the previous quadrennium, we were able to reduce the time spent producing the Annual Species Report of the IUCN SSC and Secretariat to less than a year.

Figure 1: Historical percentage of target setting in SSC DATA System

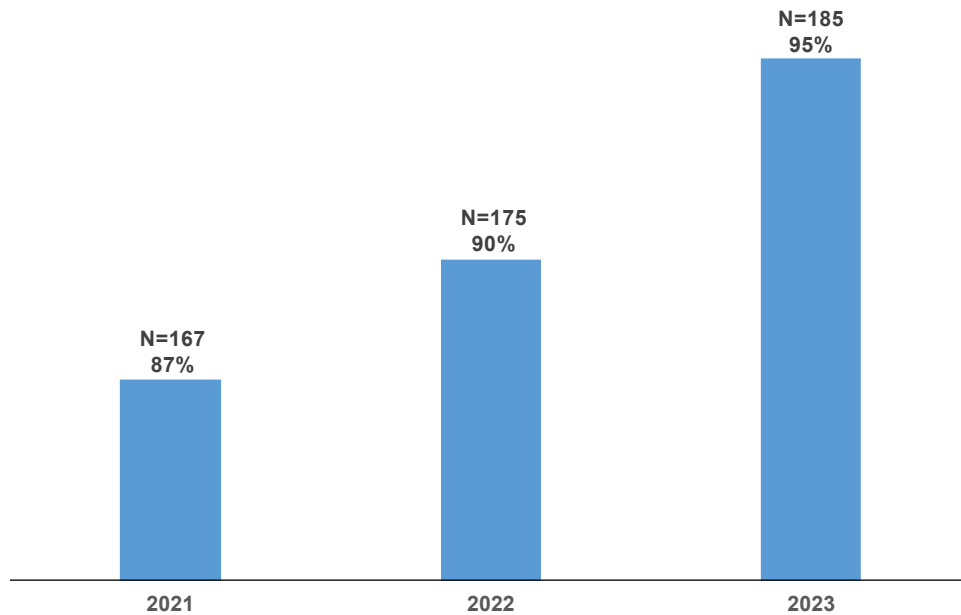
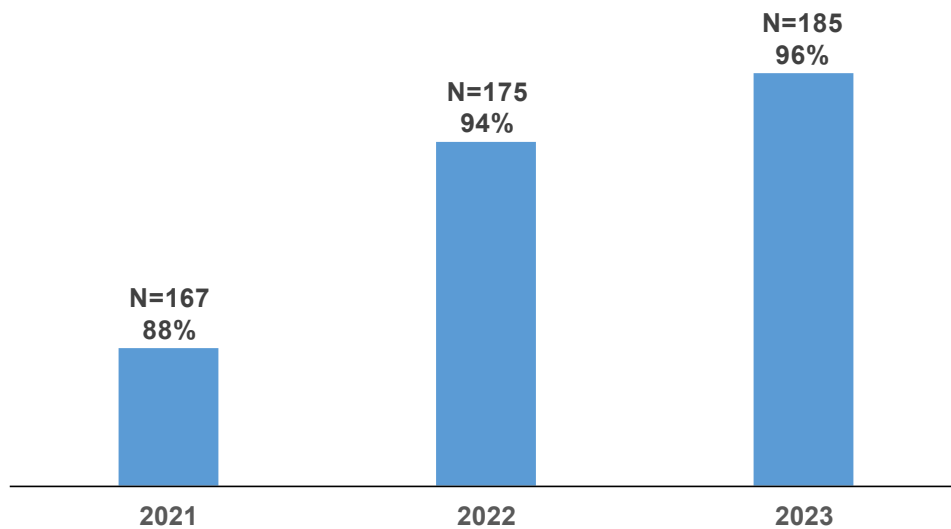


Figure 2: Historical percentage of report submission



The SSC DATA Unit ended this year with the launching of a new module in the system, aimed at collecting Conservation Success Stories of the SSC Groups in connection with targets formulated under the ACT component of the Species Conservation Cycle. In this way, we are contributing to promoting conservation actions conducted by the SSC Network with direct impact on habitat, species, and people. The stories collected will be published as a companion volume of the Annual Species Report for the 2024-2025 period, next year.

Species Strategic Plan 2026-2029: Shaping together a strong work plan

Building the IUCN Species Strategic Plan (SSP) has been an inclusive process. We have shared several drafts of the plan with SSC Leaders for over a year to get their valuable feedback. Using available data, the SSC Data Unit evaluated the previous framework in terms of its adoption, feasibility, and relevance, including inputs from the SSC Chair's Office staff and other relevant stakeholders such as the Red List Unit.

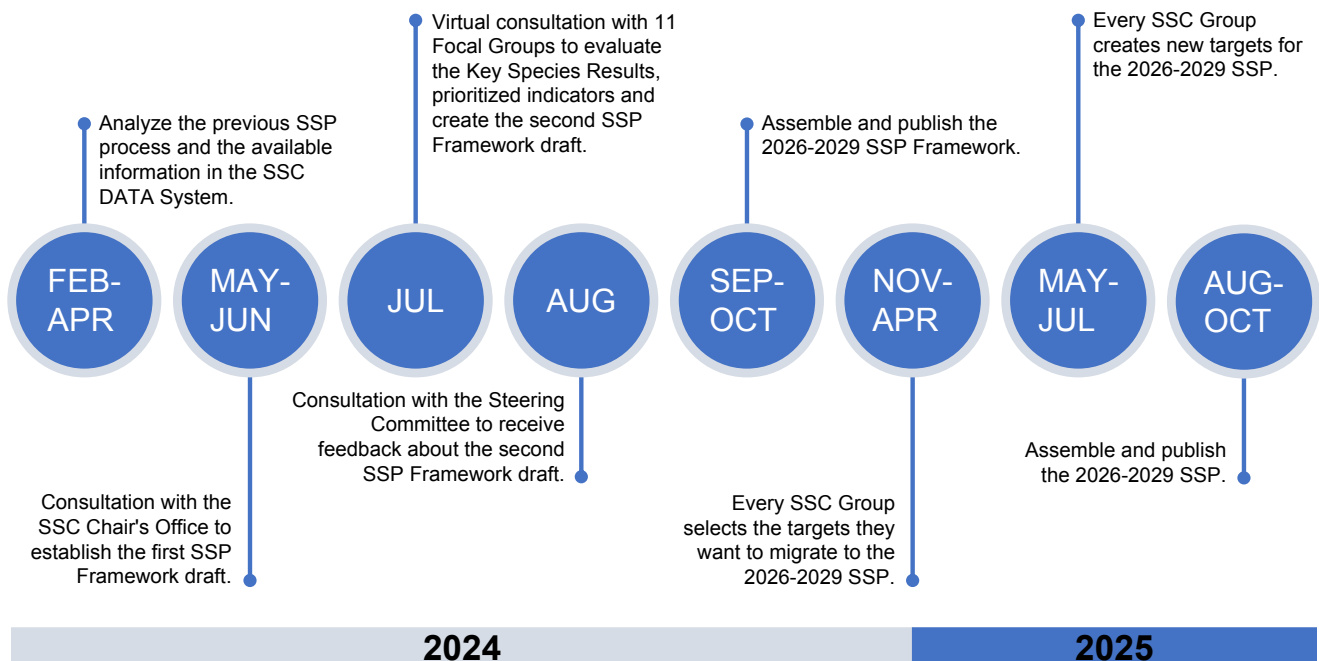
This process was focused on improving the 2021-2025 SSP framework instead of creating a completely new one. For that reason, in July 2024, the SSC Chairs' Office ran 11 virtual consultations with key SSC Leaders and focal groups for each component in the Species Conservation Cycle.

In August 2024, we received feedback from the SSC Steering Committee and the approval of the IUCN Species Strategic Plan Framework for the next quadrennium. The framework renewal includes:

- Ratification of the five components of the Species Conservation Cycle.
- Wording improvement in eight of the 13 Key Species Results (KSRs).
- Reduction in prioritized indicators, from 104 to 71. This process included wording improvement, merging to avoid redundancy and six new indicators.

Following the timeline to develop the 2026-2029 IUCN Species Strategic Plan (Figure 3), we expect all SSC Groups to establish their targets in alignment with the KSRs and indicators established for the 2026-2029 quadrennium.

Figure 3: Timeline for the 2026-2029 Species Strategic Plan formulation





SSC Centers for Species Survival in 2024

The Centers for Species Survival (CSS) have continued to make significant progress in their role to support species conservation globally, nationally and locally through effective collaboration and capacity building working with SSC Groups and other conservation stakeholders.

CSS teams support the SSC Network in strengthening local capacity, conservation planning, and implementing conservation action. **The SSC welcomed two new CSS Partnerships in 2024, CSS Small Mammals hosted by Alpen Zoo and CSS France hosted by the Association Française des Parcs Zoologique** expanding the total global CSS Network of 20 CSS centers which serve as critical support for best conservation practices.



CSS in person meeting in Abu Dhabi

On 24 October 2024, the second in-person CSS meeting was held, bringing together species conservation teams from 14 countries and 15 organisations to strengthen relationships, share skills, strategize and prioritize future efforts. The meeting was convened by the SSC Chair's Office and hosted by Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi. The meeting focused on the CSS mentoring process, highlighting the connections with the SSC Network and emphasizing the importance of assessment, planning, and action in conservation efforts.

CSS Mentoring process: importance of providing CSS onboarding packages to all Species Survival Officers. Refining tools such as Gap analysis is crucial before establishing a center to prioritize needs and ensure effective collaboration with SSC Groups; expansion of the CPSG program includes training, mentoring, and [SSC Species Plan Library](#). New CSS officers will be encouraged to complete Red List and CPSG basic training to facilitate the implementation of their activities.

Communication and collaboration improvement: highlights from this discussion include the importance of strengthening communication between centers, SSC Groups, and stakeholders to avoid duplication of work. In addition, centers discussed the importance of aligning communication efforts across various groups and audiences to enhance the impact of initiatives. Communication plays a key role in identifying and supporting key stakeholders, including governments and local organizations, and is essential for effective conservation actions.

The meeting closed with a refreshing and inspiring conversation with the Chairs of the SSC Conservation Committees around the network's ability to break down silos, create more awareness and empathy, and contribute to action for species.

CSS participation at the 5th Leaders' Meeting

The parallel sessions were designed to enhance collaboration and understanding between SSC Groups and CSS. These sessions focused on building partnerships, addressing challenges, and sharing experiences in assessments, planning, and conservation action to maximize their impact and strengthen relationships. The main inputs are:

CSS Support for Assessment

The session focused on various national Red List initiatives undertaken by different countries and CSS, highlighting partnerships, capacity-building, and outcomes. The session also showcased the diverse approaches and collaborative efforts being implemented globally to advance the objectives of the Red List.

Tim Lyons, CSS New Mexico Biopark; Catarina Fonseca, CSS Marine - Oceanario de Lisboa; Andrea Dempsey, CSS United Kingdom - Hertfordshire Zoo; Rahul Kaul, CSS India - WTI and Bello Adamu Danmallam, CSS Nigeria - APLORI, presented the work their centers have been advancing on this topic. As a result of the session, participants noted the need to foster stronger collaboration among organizations to enhance knowledge sharing and prioritize training and capacity-building initiatives to support local Red Listing efforts. Presentation slides are [available here](#).

CSS Support for Planning

The interactive discussion successfully highlighted various support mechanisms available through the Centers for Species Survival. Fabiana Rocha, CSS Brazil - Parque das Aves; Silvia Alvarez-Clare, CSS Trees - The Morton Arboretum; Lisa Hoopes, CSS Marine - Georgia Aquarium and Andrew Mooney, CSS Ireland - Dublin Zoo were in charge of this session, presenting the work their centers have done addressing conservation planning.

Each presentation provided unique insights into collaborative planning efforts and emphasized the significance of working with governmental and regional organizations to enhance conservation outcomes. Presentation slides are [available here](#).

CSS Support for Action, Networking, and Communication

The session featured an interactive discussion complemented by practical examples of how participants could scale up their action and networking efforts in collaboration with the CSSs. Sonja Luz, CSS Southeast Asia - Mandai Nature; Katie Heineman CSS Biodiversity Biobanking - San Diego Zoo; Michael Kreger, CSS Asian Elephant - Columbus Zoo and WTI and Yasmin Quintana, CSS Freshwater - Shedd Aquarium shared insights from their centers on expanding capacity and scaling up conservation actions.

In general, the sessions successfully facilitated knowledge sharing and networking among SSC members. The discussions emphasized the importance of collaboration and the role of the Centers for Species Survival and diverse organizations in achieving collective conservation goals. Presentations are [shared here](#).

Partnering for Greater Impact: Centers for Species Survival Supporting the SSC

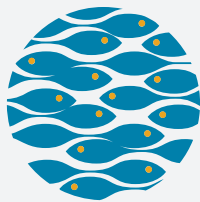
The SSC Partnerships team organized a plenary session to illustrate the significant value derived from CSS partnerships with Specialist Groups within the SSC network. The session was led by Vivek Menon, Director of Wildlife Trust of India, the host organization of the CSS India and CSS Asian Elephant. This collaborative approach not only enhances conservation outcomes but also builds a network of resources, knowledge, and shared objectives crucial for addressing global biodiversity challenges.

Tim Lyons, CSS New Mexico Biopark, raised the importance of enhanced outreach and conservation strategies through collaborative networks. It is key to share resources and expertise to achieve more effective species conservation programs. Sara Lewis, Chair of the Firefly Specialist Group highlighted the significant collaboration between the group and the center to increase visibility and awareness for firefly conservation.

Catia Canteiro, from the Global Center for Species Survival, discussed her work and its impact on Plant and Fungi Specialist Groups, coordinating across multiple groups enhances strategic priorities in conservation. Fabiana Rocha shared insights from her work in Brazil, and the strong collaboration with the CPSG and Specialist Groups enhances focus on tailored conservation initiatives for local species. Collaborative projects have amplified the success of conservation strategies in Brazil.

The Centers also participated with posters during the exhibition and videos showcasing the work done in collaboration with the SSC Groups.

The CSSs continues to contribute to the SSC Network in the implementation of the Species Conservation Cycle. Below are detailed activities of some Centers to increase the possibilities for training in key tools, updating red lists, communicating efforts and project implementation.



Oceanário de Lisboa

CSS Marine - Oceanario de Lisboa

1. During 2024, the team continued preparing draft assessments for the Red Book of Marine Fishes of Portugal, resulting in over **1128 draft assessments completed** since the beginning of the project.
2. In the last few months, **5 more assessment workshops** on the evaluation of the extinction risk for the “Red Book of Marine Fishes of Portugal” were held.

3. To sum up, by this time there were 23 workshops, with the contribution of **58 researchers from 12 scientific institutions of mainland Portugal**, Azores and Madeira.



CSS Macaronesia - Loro Parque Fundación

1. The Center for Species Survival Macaronesia attended the IUCN Regional Conservation Forum for Europe, North and Central Asia in Bruges, Belgium, where we had an opportunity to connect with other Centers for Species Survival, non-governmental organizations, zoos, regional governments, and communities involved in species conservation. Such collaborations are essential for coordinated conservation actions across the Macaronesian archipelagos, which belong to different countries. Our participation ensured that the conservation priorities of the Macaronesian region are considered in the development of IUCN's strategic direction and the next quadrennial programme. Finally, we also had the possibility to identify opportunities for training, funding, and technical support.
2. The CSS Macaronesia attended in December an in-person Red List course in Málaga (Spain), where we will meet with scientific groups of experts from different taxa from Spain. This 3-day course subsidized by the Spanish government, aims to ensure that all experts know how to use the IUCN criteria so from now on, all species can then be evaluated using the same criteria. This is very important as the ultimate goal of this project is to re-evaluate outdated species and be able to build a National Red List for our country.



Red List course in Málaga, Spain
Photo © CSS Macaronesia - Loro Parque Fundación

3. Loro Parque Fundación has approved the funding for the project proposed by the National Species Specialist Group (NSSG) from Spain to re-evaluate “hidden” species. This project will connect the Spanish scientific societies specialized in different taxa with the NSSG and our Species Survival Center, since the approval of the species proposed to be reevaluated and the logistic process will be supported by our center and our host institution, Loro Parque Fundación.

Fundación Temaikèn

CSS Argentina - Fundación Temaikèn

1. **Assess and Network:** A meeting was held with Pablo Carmanchahi (Chair of the South American Camelid Specialist Group) to explore collaboration opportunities between CSS Argentina and the South American Camelid Specialist Group. The discussion focused on jointly working on future national and regional categorizations of the species Guanaco (*Lama guanicoe*). Additionally, a conversation took place with Pablo Demaio (Temperate South American Plants Specialist Group) to coordinate efforts for the upcoming national plant categorization process in Argentina, scheduled for 2025.
2. **Plan:** We continue working from CSS Argentina together with CPSG on the planning of the East Pacific Leatherback Recovery Research Workshop. It is estimated that the workshop will take place in the first quarter of 2025 and will be held in Panama, bringing together regional experts to develop a set of interconnected research proposals aimed at recovering the East Pacific leatherback population.
3. **Communicate:** A social media communication about the 5th IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Leaders’ Meeting was shared regarding the declaration issued by SSC members and partners, highlighting the critical role of species in ensuring clean water, food security, cultural connections, economic stability, and social justice.





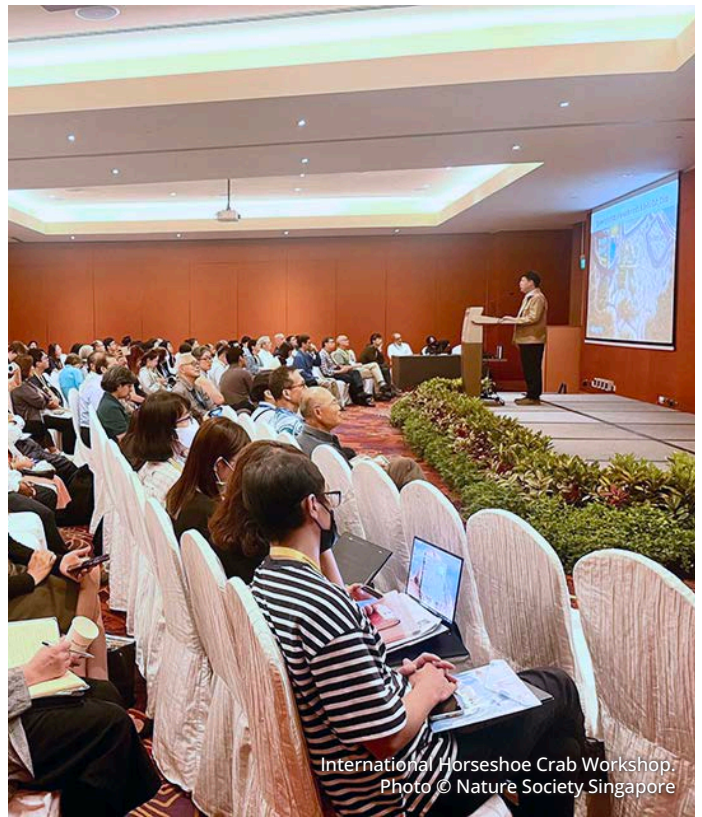
CSS Southeast Asia - Mandai Nature

- 1. First genus action plan launched to galvanise conservation for Asian langurs across Southeast Asia:** In August, Mandai Nature, in collaboration with the Primate Specialist Group, Conservation Planning Specialist Group, Re:wild, German Primate Center and Primate Conservation Inc, launched the [Asian langurs \(*Presbytis*\) Conservation Action Plan 2024-2034](#). This is the first-ever genus action plan for an endangered group of Asian monkeys. It calls for unified conservation efforts across Southeast Asia, outlining key priorities and actions over the next decade to prevent the extinction of 20 Asian langur populations in Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore and Thailand. The plan was developed following a conservation planning workshop in 2023 co-organised and co-facilitated by Primate Specialist Group and Mandai Nature as host of the Conservation Planning Specialist Group. In conjunction with the launch of the plan, an international Colobine Monkey Day was established and officially endorsed by IUCN on 25 August.
- 2. ASAP Women in Conservation Leadership Programme:** In November, the Asian Species Action Partnership (ASAP), hosted by Mandai Nature, celebrated the graduation of the 2024 Women in Conservation Leadership Programme. The event marked the completion of a transformative eight-month programme for the women. Graduates will now be invited to join an alumnae network where they can continue their learning and strengthen their connections with fellow women conservationists.

“Taking part in the programme was transformational to me. Unlike other leadership programmes in the biodiversity conservation sector, the ASAP Programme focuses on us as individuals. As women dedicated to biodiversity conservation in Southeast Asia, we all bring our different culture, values, stories and skills that collectively contribute to positive impact for the conservation of biodiversity and cultural diversity in the region. Supporting women leaders in the biodiversity conservation sector creates ripple effects in the workplace and our life for greater impact.” 2024 Graduate.

3. Conservation planning for 3 Asian horseshoe crab species at the 5th International Horseshoe Crab Workshop:

Crab Workshop: In June 2024, the Centre for Species Survival Southeast Asia assisted the Horseshoe Crab Specialist Group to facilitate multi-species conservation planning as part of the 5th International Horseshoe Crab Workshop in Singapore. Organised by the Horseshoe Crab Specialist Group and Nature Society Singapore, the workshop brought together species experts and conservationists from various non-government organisations, schools and research institutions to share knowledge and develop strategies for this “living fossil”. Using the Assess-to-Plan approach for conservation planning, key threats, challenges and opportunities to develop an action plan were outlined for the three Asian species: the coastal horseshoe crab, mangrove horseshoe crab, and tri-spine horseshoe crab.



International Horseshoe Crab Workshop.
Photo © Nature Society Singapore



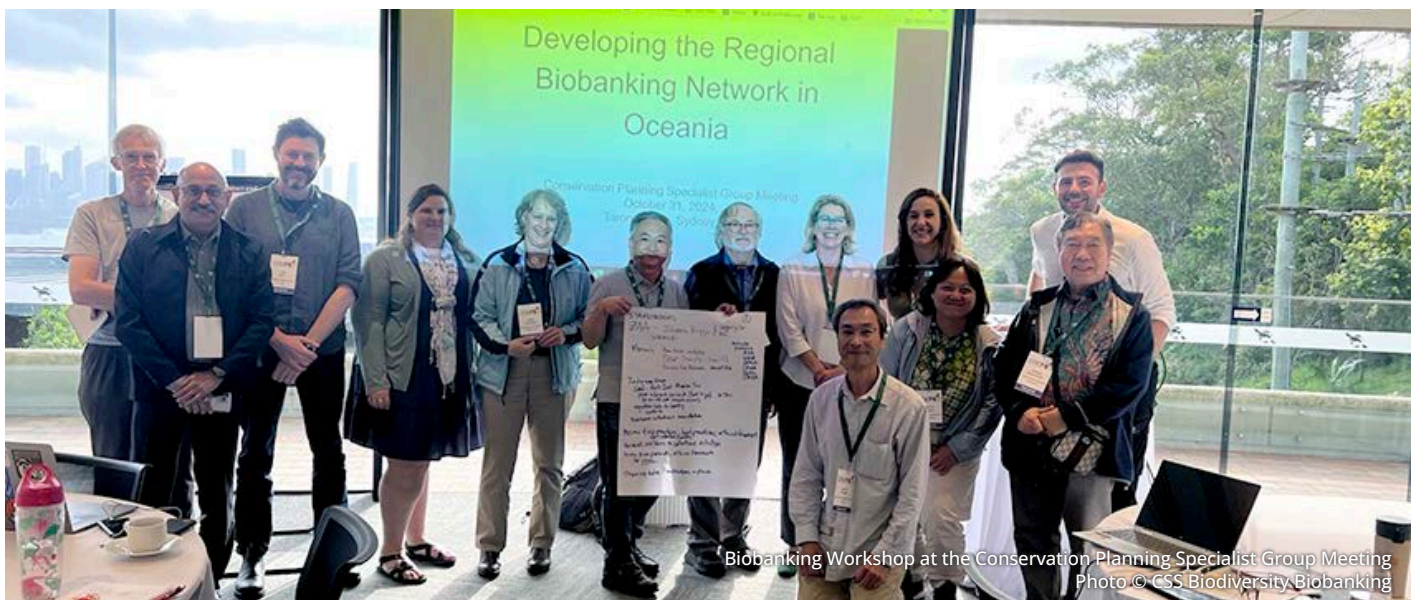
CSS Biodiversity Banking – San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

1. **Surveying Biobanking Needs of the SSC:** The CSS Biodiversity Banking co-hosted a parallel session entitled “Animals, plants, and more: Biobanking is an essential conservation tool” at the SSC Leaders Meeting in Abu Dhabi on 28 October, 2024. This session featured presentations from representatives from the Animal Biobanking for Conservation Specialist Group, Amphibian Specialist Group, and Seed Conservation Specialist Group all of whom shared their experiences integrating biobanking into conservation action within the SSC Network. In total, 40 SSC leaders attended the session and took a survey designed to characterize their interests and needs in terms of biobanking capacity. Through this survey we learned that 50% of responding Specialist Groups have experienced collecting field samples for biobanking and 70% identified access to long term biological repositories as a limitation to their biobanking work. These results point to the fruitful

potential of connecting field practitioners with biobanking facilities within the SSC Network through a more integrated global network of biobanks.



2. A Conversation about Biobanking in Oceania: CSS - Biodiversity Banking supported members Animal Biobanking for Conservation Specialist Group, including Dr. Joanna Sumner, Dr. Oliver Ryder, and Dr. Boripat Siriaronrat, in organizing a Biobanking Workshop at the Conservation Planning Specialist Group Meeting in Sydney, Australia. The goals of this workshop were to 1) emphasize biobanking as an effective conservation tool and 2) discuss how to foster collaboration between zoos, natural history museums, and indigenous communities in promoting ethical application of biobanking in Oceania. Outcomes from this workshop include plans to conduct a gap analysis of Threatened species held in biobanked collections in Oceania and samples held for native Oceania species abroad.





Global Center for Species Survival – Indianapolis Zoo

1. **IUCN SSC Leaders' Meeting & COP16** – Cátia Canteiro, Monika Böhm, Justin Birkhoff, Coralie Palmer, and Andrea Echeverry-Alcendra acted as in person co-facilitators during the 5th IUCN SSC Leaders' Meeting in Abu Dhabi for the Specialist Groups' Thematic Breakout sessions of Plants and Fungi, Freshwater, Mammals, Marine, and Reptile and Amphibians. Sérgio Henriques and Sam Ivande supported their respective Thematic Breakout sessions for Invertebrates and Birds remotely.

Kelly Griese presented a media training workshop at the Leaders' Meeting and prepared a poster about the Global Center's "Protect Species Podcast" which has hosted some IUCN SSC experts from around the world.

Cátia Canteiro worked with the Fungal Conservation Committee and the mycological community to produce a [Brief on the Contribution of Fungi to the Global Strategy for Fungal Conservation](#). This document was shared at COP16 together with pins and a bookmark highlighting two examples of the importance of fungi for the GBF targets, to encourage CBD parties in including fungi in their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.

Coralie Palmer co-facilitated the Marine Conservation Committee meetings and prepared a poster for the Committee; co-facilitated two marine sessions focusing on non-selective fisheries, marine caucuses and motions and a session on Best Practices for Specialist Groups. Coralie Palmer and Monni Böhm co-facilitated and presented at a session focusing on Aquascapes. Coralie also was a co-author on an IUCN WCPA Technical Note, "[Approaches for identifying areas of particular importance for marine biodiversity](#)" which was released at the CBD COP.

Andrea Echeverry-Alcendra translated the [5th IUCN SSC Leaders' Meeting Declaration](#) into [Spanish](#).

2. **Specialist Group Support** – Andrea Echeverry-Alcendra submitted the proposal, prepared by Dr. Anna Thonis and Jhan C. Salazar, for the Reinstatement of the Anoline Lizard Specialist Group to the SSC Chairs Office, and Cátia Canteiro submitted proposals for an Ecuador Plant Specialist Group and an Australia Plant Specialist Group. Andrea Echeverry-Alcendra attended the Annual Meeting of the Iguana Specialist Group in La Paz, Baja California Sur, and supported discussions in Spanish during a workshop with members of local stakeholders.

- 3. Conservation Committee Support** – Coralie Palmer attended the Seventh International Marine Conservation Congress in Cape Town, South Africa, hosting a session “Connecting the Dots: Expanding Our Reach and Impact through IUCN SSC Specialist Groups,” and participated in two days of workshops, including developing IUCN WCPA policy guidance on fishing in MPAs, incorporating marine conservation into 30x30 targets and developing Blue Parks’ Global MPA Standard to improve conservation outcomes.

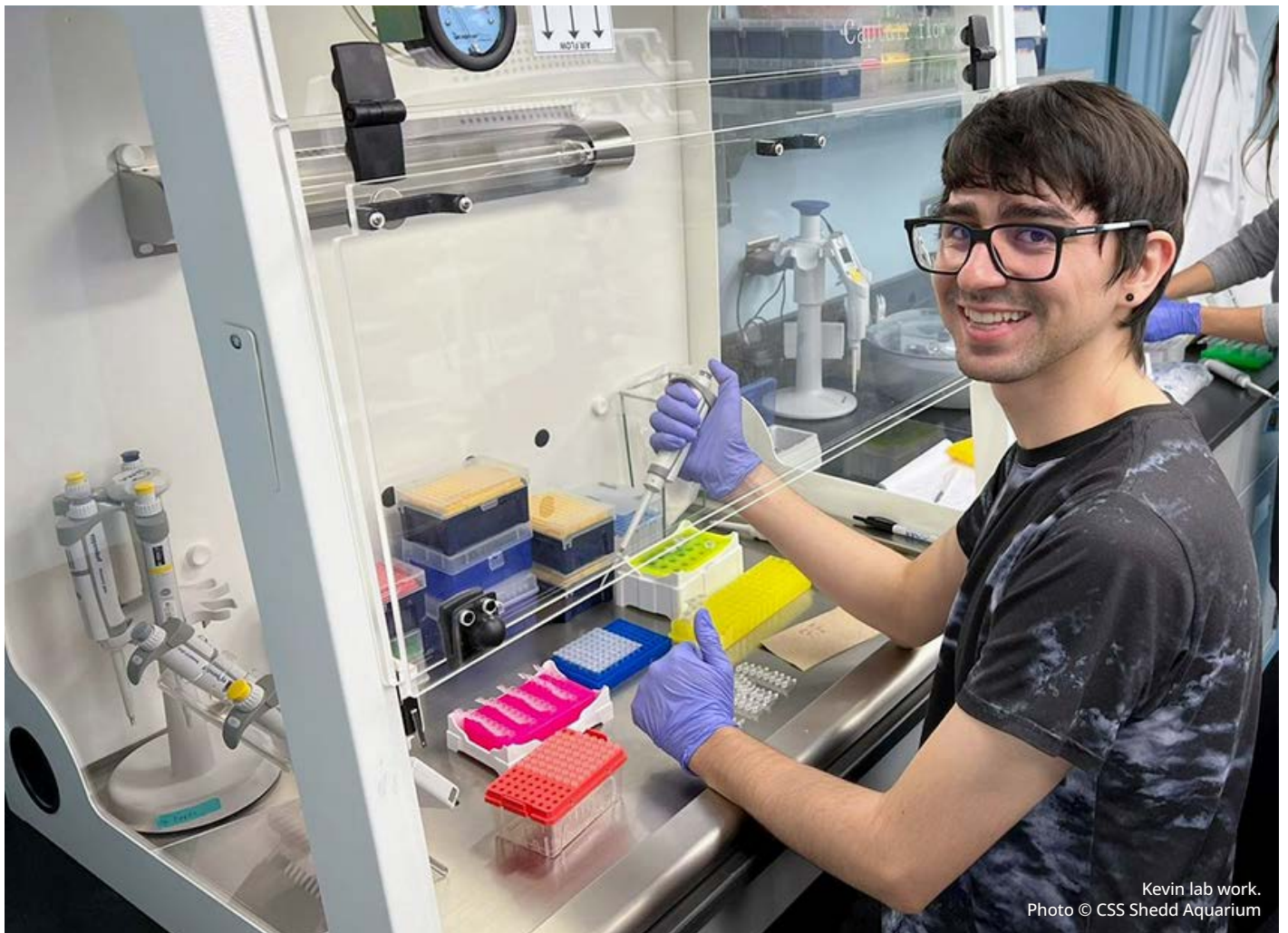


CSS Freshwater – Shedd Aquarium

- 1. Center for Species Survival: Freshwater Celebrates Freshwater Biodiversity at the Society for Conservation Biology Congress in Ecuador:** In November, Shedd’s Center for Species Survival: Freshwater (CSS: Freshwater), hosted the session “Efforts and Challenges in Freshwater Conservation under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework” at the 2024 Society for Conservation Biology - Latin America and Caribbean Conference in Quito, Ecuador. Convening freshwater-focused sessions at conservation meetings is a strategy within the CSS: Freshwater because these ecosystems and their inhabitants have traditionally been underappreciated and receive less attention within the global conservation community. We presented Shedd’s CSS: Freshwater conservation efforts in Central America, collaborating with the IUCN Species Survival Commission and local partners. Additionally, we recruited a diverse group of conservation stakeholders to speak at our session and provide their perspectives on conservation models, including Indigenous people’s movements, citizen science, the role of research to monitor the impacts of illegal mining, and the establishment of Water Protected Areas. The session was a wonderful opportunity to share challenges, success stories, and innovations for effective freshwater conservation, and provided a valuable opportunity to engage with South American researchers and conservationists.



2. **Capacity building for Central American young scientists at Shedd Aquarium:** Shedd Aquarium hosted visiting scholar Kevin Soto, a Master's student from the University of Costa Rica, sponsored through the CSS: Freshwater program. From October to November 2024, Kevin underwent training in molecular and field techniques under Dr. Kentaro Inoue, and worked on his thesis project, "Biodiversity Assessment of Freshwater Mussels in Costa Rica." During his visit, Kevin also explored mussel collections at the Field Museum of Natural History, the Illinois Natural History Survey, and Miami University in Ohio. He concluded his stay by presenting a seminar at Shedd Aquarium, where he shared insights from his research in Costa Rica. Capacity-building opportunities will expand to more Central American scientists in 2025 as part of our efforts implementing the Species Conservation Cycle.



Kevin lab work.
Photo © CSS Shedd Aquarium



Maroon langur (*Presbytis rubicunda*) VU.
Photo © Chien Lee

SSC Partners





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