



Species

ISSUE 65

2024-2025 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat



The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC)

The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) is a science-based network of thousands of volunteer experts from almost every country of the world, all working together toward achieving the vision of “a just world that values and conserves nature through positive action to both prevent the loss and aid recovery of the diversity of life on earth.”

Members of SSC belong to one or more of near 200 Specialist Groups, Red List Authorities, Action Partnerships, Task Forces, and Conservation Committees that make up the Network, each focusing on a taxonomic group (plants, fungi, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fishes, and invertebrates), national species, or a disciplinary issue, such as sustainable use and livelihoods, translocation of species, wildlife health, climate change, and conservation planning.

Framed by the Species Conservation Cycle, SSC’s major role is to provide information to IUCN on biodiversity conservation, the inherent value of species, their role in ecosystem health and functioning, the provision of ecosystem services, and their support to human livelihoods. This information is fed into the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

2021-2025 Species Strategic Plan

The IUCN Species Strategic Plan encompasses the joint work of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and a number of partnerships to achieve more than 2,700 targets proposed by the Network during the 2021-2025 quadrennium.

To accomplish those targets, the Species Conservation Cycle was established, which is the conceptual framework for the Network activities. The Species Conservation Cycle’s main purpose is to guide efforts for valuing and conserving biodiversity through three essential components that are linked to each other:

ASSESS: Understand and inform the world about the status and trends of biodiversity.

PLAN: Develop collaborative, inclusive and science-based conservation strategies, plans and policies.

ACT: Convene and mobilise conservation actions to improve the status of biodiversity.



Their implementation requires two transversal components:

NETWORK: Enhance and support our immediate network and alliances to achieve our biodiversity targets.

COMMUNICATE: Drive strategic and targeted communications to enhance our conservation impact.

SSC Species Report

Annual progress in the implementation of the 2021-2025 Species Strategic Plan is documented in the SSC *Species Report*, which consists of a comprehensive description and analysis of the activities and results generated by the members of the SSC Network and Centers for Species Survival (CSS) each year. Each SSC and CSS group contributes to this document by providing a yearly summarised description of their achievements, which is presented in stand-alone reports.

Structure of the IUCN SSC and CSS Stand-alone Reports

Stand-alone reports summarize the activities conducted and results generated by each group member of the SSC and CSS. Following, is the structure of the stand-alone report and the contents under each session.

Title of the group

Photograph(s) of the Chair/Co-Chairs

Group information

Includes names of Chair/Co-Chairs, Vice-Chairs, Deputy Chairs, Red List Authority Coordinators, Program Officers, Species Survival Directors, and Species Survival Officers, their institutional affiliations, number of members and social networks currently active.

Logo of the group

Mission statement

Includes the mission of the group.

Projected impact for the 2021-2025 quadrennium

Includes the description of the impact on species conservation resulting from the implementation of the targets formulated by the group for the 2021-2025 quadrennium.

Targets for the 2021-2025 quadrennium

Includes the targets planned by the SSC or CSS group for the 2021-2025 quadrennium ordered alphabetically by component of the Species Conservation Cycle. Each target is labeled with a numerical code (e.g., T-001, T-012) that identifies it in the SSC DATA database and its status for the reported year is indicated (Not initiated, On track or Achieved).

Activities and results

Includes the targets for which activities were conducted and results that were generated during 2024 (full year) and 2025 (first quarter), 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:

Leaman, D, and Timoshyna, A. (2025). 2024-2025 Report of the Medicinal Plant Specialist Group. In: IUCN SSC and Secretariat. *Species: Annual Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat 2024-2025*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. 6 pp.

IUCN SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group



SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITES

X: @PlantSsc



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NUMBER OF MEMBERS

117

Mission statement

The Medicinal Plant Specialist Group (MPSG) is a global network of specialists contributing within our own institutions and in our own regions, as well as worldwide, to the conservation and sustainable use of medicinal plants. The MPSG was founded in 1994 to increase global awareness of conservation threats to medicinal plants, and to promote sustainable use and conservation action.

Projected impact 2021–2025

A significant increase in knowledge of the conservation status of priority species of medicinal and aromatic plants, planning and actions to conserve and sustainably use these species, and broader industry and consumer awareness of and participation in the conservation of threatened species.

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-001 Complete global assessments of all North American medicinal plant species.
Status: On track

T-008 Complete re-assessment of European medicinal and aromatic plants.
Status: On track

T-009 Complete Red List assessments of all CITES-listed medicinal and aromatic plants.
Status: On track

T-012 Complete global Red List assessments for endemic and medicinal plants of south Sinai Egypt (25 species in total).
Status: No longer a priority

PLAN

T-004 Contribute technical expertise to policy development and implementation for medicinal plant conservation and sustainable use.
Status: On track

T-007 Develop medicinal plant conservation plans/strategies for priority taxa and regions that apply A2P processes, identify KBAs, and incorporate sustainable use.
Status: Not initiated

ACT

T-005 Contribute to sustainable use of priority species of medicinal plants.
Status: On track

NETWORK

T-002 Maintain six formal partnerships providing in-kind support to MPSG targets 2021–2025.
Status: On track

T-003 Expand capacity for applying IUCN assessment tools within MPSG membership.
Status: Achieved

COMMUNICATE

T-006 Contribute to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CITES CoP19) and the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD CoP15) side events.
Status: Achieved

T-010 Spotlight medicinal and aromatic plant conservation and sustainable use issues in media and with multiple stakeholders.
Status: On track

T-011 Make MAPROW (Medicinal and Aromatic Plants of the World) database secure and accessible.
Status: Achieved

Activities and results 2024-2025

ASSESS

Red List

T-001 Complete global assessments of all North American medicinal plant species. (KSR 6)

Number of new global Red List assessments completed: 60

Harvesters collect maydi (frankincense) from *Boswellia frereana*, a species endemic to Somalia. The harvest operated by Allamagan Trading Company is certified as sustainable by the FairWild Foundation in partnership with the Medicinal Plant Specialist Group
Photo: Violet Wambui



Blue Cohosh (*Caulophylla thalictroides*), a medicinal plant endemic to North America, assessed by MPSG
Photo: Clayton Meredith

Result description: Draft assessments were completed for 60 medicinal plant species native to North America that are included in the United Plant Savers "At Risk" list. These assessments are currently in review. Completion of remaining assessments is planned for 2025.

T-008 Complete reassessment of European medicinal and aromatic plants. (KSR 6)

Number of global Red List assessments completed: 50

Result description: Draft reassessments were completed for all medicinal plants native to Europe, completing the reassessment of ca 400 species. Draft assessments are currently in review.

PLAN

Policy

T-004 Contribute technical expertise to policy development and implementation for medicinal plant conservation and sustainable use. (KSR 9)

Number of policies where SSC members provided technical input: 2

Result description: In 2024, MPSG members contributed to the 27th CITES Plants Committee meeting in Geneva, Switzerland (July 2024), and to the 16th CBD CoP held in Cali, Colombia. In preparation

for the CITES PC meeting, MPSG contributed to a study undertaken on behalf of the CITES Secretariat by TRAFFIC, in partnership with the Royal Botanic Garden Kew. The study identified key actors involved in supply chains for CITES-listed medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs), including Candelilla (*Euphorbia antisiphilitica*), Holy Wood (*Bulnesia sarmientoi*, recently reclassified as *Plectrocarpa sarmientoi*), African Cherry (*Prunus africana*), and orchids (such as *Dendrobium* spp.) used in biomedical, traditional and alternative medicine, in cosmetics and personal care products, and in food sectors. The full details of this study are outlined in CITES CoP19 Decision 19.26. Conclusions of the study are summarized in a [draft report](#), presented as a document for consideration by CITES PC27. The findings of the study will be presented at CITES CoP20 in November 2025. Additionally, MPSG contributed to a draft Resolution on medicinal and aromatic plant species to be considered at the next PC (following the CITES CoP20) which will be discussed during the next meeting of the CITES Plants Committee. At the CBD CoP16, held in Cali, Colombia in October 2024, side-event discussions on conservation and sustainable use of plants offered opportunities to highlight a new initiative to which MPSG contributes: 'Scaling the conservation of Himalayan plants and fungi through sustainable trade' (2024-2029), implemented by TRAFFIC, supported by the UK Government Darwin Initiative. Jatamansi (*Nardostachys jatamansi*), a Critically Endangered, CITES-listed medicinal plant, is among the keystone species addressed by the project.

ACT

Conservation actions

T-005 Contribute to sustainable use of priority species of medicinal plants.

(KSR 10)

Number of threatened species benefiting from *in situ* conservation action: 59

Result description: Members of MPSG contributed to the implementation of the FairWild Standard for Sustainable Wild Collection by providing assessments of harvest risk for candidate and certified species of wild-harvested plants and providing technical inputs to the implementation of a [new version \(3.0\) of the FairWild Standard](#), published in early 2024.

The MPSG also contributes to a broader application of the FairWild Standard to a broader range of taxa, such as fungi, to reintroduced and naturalised plant populations, and to landscape-level conservation and management (1,7 million ha of managed harvest areas in 2024), benefiting more than 12,000 harvesters of [FairWild-certified ingredients](#). MPSG contributes, in partnership with TRAFFIC, to the Darwin-funded initiative '[Scaling conservation of Himalayan plants and fungi through sustainable trade in Nepal's Himalayas](#)', implemented in Nepal, India and China, and linking to European trade chains. MPSG also contributed to three innovative tools and mechanisms supporting the design of approaches for better conservation and sustainable use practices: (1) Trialling Wild Harvest Improvement Projects for a sustainable wild plant trade, with piloting experience in Uzbekistan (liquorice harvesting) and Morocco (argan nut harvesting). These [projects create opportunities](#) for access to voluntary certification and markets through continuous improvements, inspired by the fisheries management approaches; (2) [Five-dimensional Sustainability Assessment Framework](#), developed jointly by IIED, TRAFFIC, IUCN SuLi, Epic Biodiversity, and EWT. The framework provides a minimum set of meaningful principles and criteria describing wild species harvest, use and trade, which is sustainable from ecological, social, economic, health, and welfare (relevant to fauna species) perspectives; (3) [Guidance on integrating sustainable use of plants and fungi in restoration projects and programmes](#). MPSG contributed tools (risk

assessment, sustainable species management guidance) to the development of the tool, which will be launched in 2025.

NETWORK

Synergy

T-002 Maintain six formal partnerships providing in-kind support to MPSG targets 2021–2025. (KSR 1)

Number of 'in-kind' partnerships established and maintained: 8

Result description: Our partnership with New Mexico BioPark Society/Albuquerque BioPark continues to advance our priorities for Red List assessments globally, supported in North America by our partnerships with NatureServe and United Plant Savers. Our partnership with the FairWild Foundation advances our work on sustainable use of wild-harvested medicinal and aromatic plants globally. We continue to work closely with TRAFFIC and the CITES Secretariat on international trade issues, and with the American Botanical Association and the Sustainable Herb Initiative on outreach to the herbal industry.

COMMUNICATE

Communication

T-010 Spotlight medicinal and aromatic plant conservation and sustainable use issues in media and with multiple stakeholders. (KSR 13)

Number of communication products using innovative tools: 1

Result description: MPSG members led and contributed to publication of a journal article reporting on work toward conservation and sustainable use of medicinal plants in the Nepal and proposing how it can be applied to developing conservation strategies for medicinal and aromatic plants across the globe: '[A roadmap to sustainable management of commercial medicinal and aromatic plants, fungi, and lichens in Nepal](#)'.

Medicinal Plant Red List training hosted by United Plant Savers, Rutland, Ohio
 Photo: Clayton Meredith



T-011 Make MAPROW (Medicinal and Aromatic Plants of the World) database secure and accessible. (KSR 12)

Number of databases secured and accessible: 6

Result description: MAPROW (Medicinal and Aromatic Plant Resources of the World) is an offline ACCESS database created and managed by MSPG’s previous Co-Chair/Chair, Dr Uwe Schippmann, with regular inputs from and outputs to support MSPG and many partners, including CITES, RBG Kew’s Medicinal Plant Names Services (MPNS), the IUCN Red List, TRAFFIC, FAO, the FairWild Foundation, and MSPG members. Database MAPROW contains records relevant to MSPG’s work on conservation and sustainable use and trade for more than 25,000 species of medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) globally. In 2024,

MPSG implemented an SSC Internal Grant (received in 2023) to support the migration of MAPROW to a more secure platform and more accessible software. Much of the data migration was successfully completed in 2024. Additional work remains to ensure accessibility and sustainable management of MAPROW.

Acknowledgements

MPSG thankfully acknowledges the support of our partners in our progress on SSC targets in 2024 and 2025: New Mexico BioPark Society (particularly Clayton Meredith); United Plant Savers and NatureServe; TRAFFIC; FairWild Foundation; CITES Secretariat; the American Botanical Association and the Sustainable Herbs Programme. We also acknowledge the support of the IUCN SSC, through and Internal Grant awarded in 2024, to our progress on making the MAPROW database more accessible and sustainable.

Summary of achievements

Total number of targets 2021–2025: 12

Geographic regions: 9 Global, 2 America, 2 Europe

Actions during 2024-2025:

Assess: 2 (KSR 6)

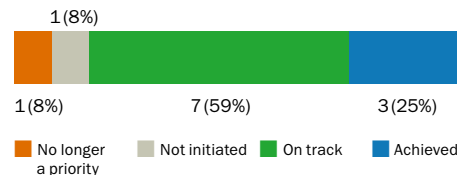
Plan: 1 (KSR 9)

Act: 1 (KSR 10)

Network: 1 (KSR 1)

Communicate: 2 (KSR 12, 13)

Overall achievement 2021–2025:



Suweon Treefrog
(*Dryophytes suweonensis*)
Photo: Amael Borzee



Marsh Cinquefoil
(*Comarum palustre*)
Photo: Magnus Goransson



Phallus aureolatus
Photo: Juliano Baltazar



Eurasian Griffon (*Gyps fulvus*)
Photo: Andre Botha



Black Rhino (*Diceros bicornis*)
Photo: Save The Rhino Trust Namibia



Azores Nursery Spider
(*Pisaura acoreesins*)
Photo: Paulo A.V. Borges



Black and White Snapper
(*Macolor niger*)
Photo: David B. Snyder