IUCN SSC Species Survival Commission

Species

ISSUE 65

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

Stand-alone report
IUCN SSC Anteater, Sloth and Armadillo Specialist Group

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 standalone 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 Authory 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:
Superina, M. (2025). 2024-2025 Report of the Anteater, Sloth and Armadillo 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.

2024-2025 Report

IUCN SSC Anteater, Sloth and Armadillo Specialist Group

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NUMBER OF MEMBERS
30

SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITES
Facebook: @xenarthrans
Instagram: @iucn_anteater_sloth_armadillo
Website: https://xenarthrans.org; https://pygmysloth.org; https://perezosopigmeo.org
Youtube: @xenarthrans

Mission statement

The mission of the IUCN SSC Anteater, Sloth and Armadillo Specialist Group is to promote the long-term conservation of the extant species of xenarthrans (anteaters, sloths and armadillos) and their habitats.

Projected impact 2021–2025

By the end of 2025, we envision we will have achieved increased protection for our priority species. We aim to reach this goal by reviewing and endorsing existing national or regional action plans as well as supporting the development and implementation of comprehensive action plans for xenarthrans. Capacity building through training courses will allow us to increase the number of researchers dedicated to conservation-relevant research on anteaters, sloths and armadillos. We predict that our awareness campaigns will increase the knowledge about our species and their conservation problems among the general public, especially the impact of illegal trade and the use of xenarthrans as exotic pets.

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-001 Complete global Red List assessments of recently described Xenarthra species by 2022.
Status: Achieved

T-002 Complete global Red List reassessments of all Xenarthra species by 2022.
Status: On track

T-004 Facilitate assessments of other taxa for the IUCN Red List.
Status: Achieved

PLAN

T-006 Develop an Action Plan for Pygmy Sloths (*Bradypus pygmaeus*) by 2022.
Status: On track

ACT

T-011 Review and endorse existing national or regional action plans for Xenarthra.
Status: Not initiated

T-014 Provide technical assistance to the government of Costa Rica regarding xenarthrans, particularly sloths.
Status: On track

NETWORK

T-003 Establish one new formal partnership that will provide financial and institutional support to the Specialist Group by 2025.
Status: Achieved

T-005 Recruit new members from underrepresented range countries by 2023.
Status: Achieved

T-010 Build capacity through courses on the biology and conservation of Xenarthra in range countries.
Status: On track

COMMUNICATE

T-007 Publish four annual issues of our newsletter and journal *Edentata*.
Status: On track

T-008 Raise awareness about the illegal trade of Xenarthra.
Status: On track

T-009 Strengthen our Specialist Group's outreach and education strategies.
Status: On track

T-013 Issue a position paper about the use of xenarthrans as pets.
Status: On track

Euphractus sexcinctus, Pantanal, Brazil
Photo: Mariella Superina

Activities and results 2024-2025

ASSESS

Red List

T-001 Complete global Red List assessments of recently described Xenarthra species by 2022. (KSR 6)

Number of new global Red List assessments completed: 1

Result description: Within the framework of the reassessment of all armadillo species for the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, we assessed the conservation status of the Cerrado Naked-tailed Armadillo (*Cabassous squamicaudis*) as Least Concern. Cerrado Naked-tailed Armadillo was previously treated as a subspecies of *Cabassous unicinctus* and raised to species level in 2021.

T-002 Complete global Red List reassessments of all Xenarthra species by 2022. (KSR 6)

Number of global Red List reassessments completed: 13

Result description: In 2024 we concluded the reassessment of all Chlamyphoridae armadillos and submitted them for review to the Red List Unit. In 2025 we will reassess the Dasypodidae armadillos, including the new species that resulted from taxonomic splits, to conclude the global reassessment of all xenarthrans.

T-004 Facilitate assessments of other taxa for the IUCN Red List. (KSR 6)

Number of workshops facilitated: 3

Result description: In 2024, our Chair Mariella Superina, who is also a certified Red List Trainer, provided training for the Red List assessment of aquatic species of Peru and provided advice for the assessment of endemic plant species of Argentina. Our Red List Authority Agustín Abba and our Chair have also been coordinating the national assessment of all Xenarthra for the Argentinean Red List of mammals.

PLAN

Planning

T-006 Develop an Action Plan for Pygmy Sloths (*B. pygmaeus*) by 2022. (KSR 8)

Number of conservation plans/strategies developed: 0

Result description: The action plan for Pygmy Sloths is still under review, but the authorities aim at approving it in 2025.

ACT

Technical advice

T-014 Provide technical assistance to the government of Costa Rica regarding xenarthrans, particularly sloths. (KSR 10)

Number of technical consultations provided to support conservation actions: 1

Result description: In 2024 the National System of Protected Areas (SINAC), which is part of the Ministry of Environment and Energy of Costa Rica, formally requested technical assistance from our Specialist Group to improve the *in situ* and *ex situ* management of xenarthrans, and particularly sloths. In June we held a very fruitful workshop in which several members of our Specialist Group and the staff of SINAC discussed how to address the overexploitation of sloths in tourist activities and the challenges of their *ex situ* management and reintroduction.

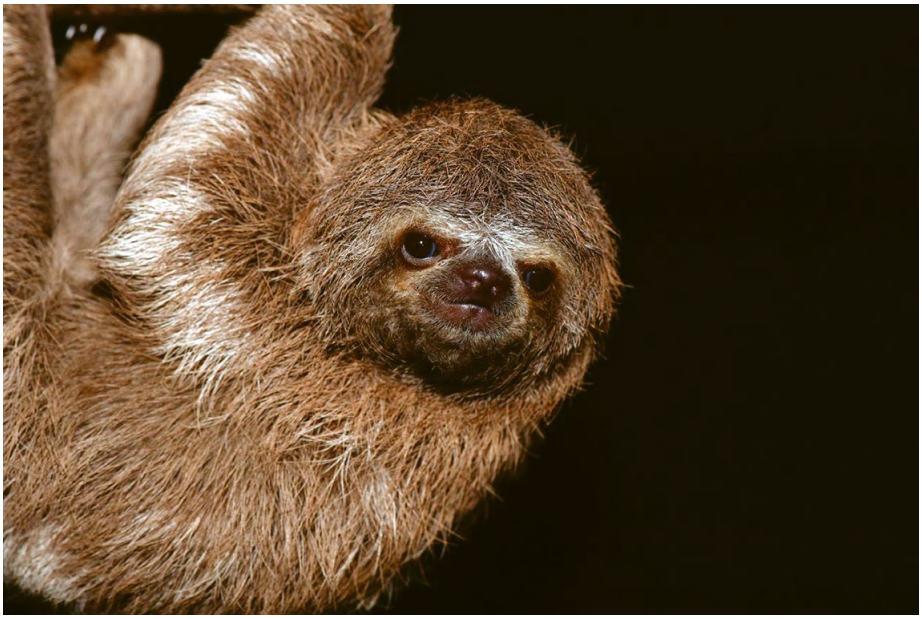
NETWORK

Synergy

T-003 Establish one new formal partnership that will provide financial and institutional support to the Specialist Group by 2025. (KSR 1)

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

Result description: We have continued working closely with our two partner institutions, Nurtured by Nature and Foundation for International Aid to Animals. Their



Brown-throated Three-fingered Sloth (*Bradypus variegatus*), Colombia
Photos: Fernando Trujillo

support and advice have been fundamental for strengthening our education and awareness strategies.

Capacity building

T-010 Build capacity through courses on the biology and conservation of Xenarthra in range countries. (KSR 3)

Number of courses taught: Ongoing.

Result description: Our member Flávia Miranda organized the 12th edition of the International Training Course for Working with Wildlife, which was held in the Pantanal of Brazil and financially supported by our partner institution FIAA. Our Chair participated as an instructor. Among many other things, the 24 participants learned about research techniques for anteaters and armadillos, and conservation programs such as the Orphans of Fire rescue program for giant anteaters in the Pantanal. They also had hands-on experiences with giant anteaters and armadillos.

COMMUNICATE

Communication

T-007 Publish four annual issues of our newsletter and journal *Edentata*. (KSR 12)

Number of Species e-bulletin, Save Our Species newsletter, SSC Groups' newsletter editions produced: 1

Result description: This year's issue of our peer-reviewed journal Xenarthra (formerly *Edentata*), number 25, includes three articles about nine-banded armadillos in Costa Rica, three-banded armadillos in Paraguay, and Chacoan fairy armadillos in Bolivia. They are available for free at the journal's website.

T-008 Raise awareness about the illegal trade of Xenarthra. (KSR 12)

Number of digital communication outputs developed in relation to specific taxonomic groups: 10

Result description: Thanks to our education coordinator's excellent work, we have published a range of social media posts to raise awareness about Xenarthra conservation and illegal trade. We have also

Giant anteater (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*),
Pantanal, Brazil
Photo: Guillermo Ferraris

recently secured an SSC Internal Grant to investigate whether the use of xenarthrans as pets is a new threat to their wild populations. This project includes a social media campaign to reduce the use of armadillos, sloths and anteaters as pets.

[SSC Grant awarded]

T-013 Issue a position paper about the use of Xenarthrans as pets. (KSR 13)

Number of digital communication outputs developed in relation to specific taxonomic groups: 0

Result description: In 2024 we have received an SSC Internal Grant to investigate whether the use of xenarthrans as wild/exotic pets is escalating. These data will be used to write the position paper. In addition, the results will help us evaluate whether one or more species should be included in the CITES appendices, to ensure that international trade does not threaten their survival.

[SSC Grant awarded]

Acknowledgements

We would like to take the opportunity to thank all stakeholders for their enthusiastic participation in the action plan for Pygmy Sloths, and especially our member Diorene Smith for leading this process. We are extremely grateful to our partner institutions FIAA and Nurtured by Nature for their continued support and encouragement. We would like to take the opportunity to thank all external reviewers for their excellent work; Gabriela Ruellan for taking care of the layout and the journal's website with so much dedication; and Gabriela Hidalgo, from the IUCN Knowledge Management, Learning, and Library Services, for her tireless help with the registration of our journal in the Directory of Open Access Journals.

Summary of achievements

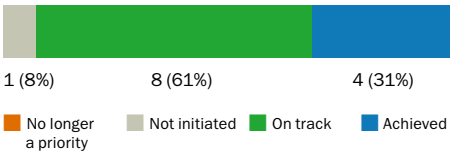
Total number of targets 2021–2025: 13

Geographic regions: 2 Global, 11 America

Actions during 2024-2025:

Assess:	3 (KSR 6)
Plan:	1 (KSR 8)
Act:	1 (KSR 10)
Network:	2 (KSR 1, 3)
Communicate:	3 (KSR 12, 13)

Overall achievement 2021–2025:



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

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

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

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

Phallus aureolatus
Photo: Juliano Baltazar

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

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