



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.

Example for the recommended citation:

Van Der Colff, D. and Harris, L. (2025). 2024-2025 Report of the South Africa Species Specialist Group. In: IUCN SSC and Secretariat. *Species: Annual Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat 2024-2025*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. 4 pp.

Animalia

Fungi

Plantae

National Species

Disciplinary

Action Partnership

Task Force

Red List Authority

Committee

Center for Species Survival

2024-2025 Report

IUCN SSC South Africa Species Specialist Group



CO-CHAIR
Dewidine Van Der Colff
South African National
Biodiversity Institute
(SANBI), South Africa



CO-CHAIR
Linda Harris
Nelson Mandela
University, South
Africa

NUMBER OF MEMBERS
93

Mission statement

To co-ordinate expertise across taxonomic groups and disciplines to support governments and facilitate evidence-based decision making and the development of policies that will contribute towards reversing the decline of species in South Africa.

Projected impact 2021–2025

We have established our national species expert group – have had 5 group meetings – introducing the groups, doing planning for the National Biodiversity Assessment and also getting our experts to input into our NBSAP. We have set up a sub-group on Climate change to advise experts on climate change use in Red List assessments, and we are busy finalising their Terms of Reference. We have set up and started planning with the Center for Species Survival for Southern Africa for species recovery-related tasks, which includes hosting a green list assessment workshop to be conducted in 2026. Also identifying with our experts taxa in need of recovery. At the national level, we have prepared indicators for nearly 15 taxonomic groups, which include Red List assessments, trend assessments using the IUCN Red List Index

and conducted a reassessment of our national protected level. The results of the NBA will be taken up by our national government to guide decision making.

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-001 Undertake global assessments for sandy beach invertebrates that occur in South Africa.

Status: On track

T-003 Reassessment of all mammals (337), birds (728), amphibians (135), reptiles (407) and freshwater crabs (24) in South Africa was completed, including global and national assessments.

Status: On track

T-004 Conduct first time assessment of all spiders (2214 – captured and reviewed in SIS, some published and other in submission process) and Anostraca species (36 - global assessments, submitted and in queue for publication) in South Africa.

Status: On track

T-005 Conduct national assessments of a subset of marine invertebrates (11) including lobsters and abalone species highly impacted by illegal harvesting

to include in our National Biodiversity Assessment.

Status: On track

T-006 Reassessing subset of South African shark species at the national level to be more representative of the situation in South Africa.

Status: On track

PLAN

T-002 Develop a species action plan for Barrydale Redfin (*Pseudobarbus burchelli*).

Status: On track

T-007 Identification of species needing recovery action.

Status: On track

Activities and results 2024-2025

ASSESS

Red List

T-001 Undertake global assessments for sandy beach invertebrates that occur in South Africa. (KSR 6)

Number of global Red List reassessments completed: 20

Result description: Twenty beach invertebrate species have been assessed and submitted for inclusion on the IUCN Red List, marking the first time beach-dwelling species are represented on



The Barrydale Redfin (*Pseudobarbus burchelli*) showing off its red fins
Photo: Jacques Marais



Participants of the Barrydale Redfin (*Pseudobarbus burchelli*) Action Plan workshop including the Swellendam municipality, Grootvadersbosch Conservancy and the Freshwater Research Centre assessing possible hydrological monitoring sites in the Huis Catchment
Photo: Aileen Anderson

this global conservation platform. The assessments were carried out through a collaboration between the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) and researcher Dr Linda Harris. These findings will contribute to the South African National Biodiversity Assessment 2025.

T-003 Reassessment of all mammals (337), birds (728), amphibians (135), reptiles (407) and freshwater crabs (24) in South Africa was completed, including global and national assessments. (KSR 6)

Number of global Red List reassessments completed: 449

Result description: In the period 2024 to 2025, 449 assessments were completed and submitted to publications, to the IUCN via SIS.

Number of national Red List reassessments completed: 2,082

Result description: In the period 2024 to 2025, 2,082 assessments were completed and submitted to publications, to the IUCN via SIS. National assessments will be published on our national Red List Website. Other publication includes, the [Red Data Book of Birds of South Africa](#). Mammals and Amphibians assessments will go live in the next few months.

T-004 Conduct first time assessment of all spiders (2214 – captured and reviewed in SIS, some published and other in submission process) and Anostraca species (36 - global assessments, submitted and in queue for publication) in South Africa. (KSR 6)

Number of global Red List first time assessments completed: 1,309

Result description: The spider assessments was completed in 2016, however, these assessments were not in the IUCN systems, and over the last 6 years this data has been captured into SIS. In the 2024-2025 period, 106 assessments were

published and the rest are in queue for SIS review by the spider expert group or is being finalized for submission. Anostraca, have been reviewed, and is in queue for published in the next Red List website update.

T-005 Conduct national assessments of a subset of marine invertebrates (11) including lobsters and abalone species highly impacted by illegal harvesting to include in our National Biodiversity Assessment. (KSR 6)

Number of national Red List reassessments completed: 11

Result description: These assessment were conducted in a online workshop with our local experts and will be published on our national Red List Website and included in our National Biodiversity Assessment.

T-006 Reassessing subset of South African shark species at the national level to be more representative of the situation in South Africa. (KSR 6)

Number of national Red List reassessments completed: 12

Result description: Two workshops were held to update 11 assessments at the national level, with local experts in June and July 2025.

PLAN Planning

T-002 Develop a species action plan for Barrydale Redfin (*P. burchelli*). (KSR 8)

Number of species conservation plans/strategies developed: 0

Result description: The team has conducted two in-person and online workshops to prepare the needed information for the Action Plan for the Barrydale Redfin. These workshops were attended by local experts and stakeholders working on this species. Information about the species' current taxonomic status, its range, and the required actions needed to improve its conservation status was discussed.

The workshop also included a field trip to inform further actions. A draft plan has been developed, which will be reviewed further at an upcoming workshop (end of May 2025). Further public meetings are planned to raise awareness of the species' plight as well as the actions that are being implemented to reverse further impacts. This action plan is being developed through collaboration between a range of organisations, including Cape Nature, Gouritz Cluster Biosphere Reserve and WWF Green Trust and SAIAB.

[SSC Grant awarded]

T-007 Identification of species needing recovery action. (KSR 8)

Result description: Two workshops were held in 2024 and 2025. During these workshops we presented to the South African expert group the need to identify species to requiring recovery. We took part in the Reverse the Red conference in 2024 where the lists of species per taxonomic group was identified based on expert opinion and a cost estimated for the recovery work. In the follow-up workshop we assessed what active projects are available and also a review of the list of species with a broader group. The next steps are to collaborate with the SCC to support the work.

Summary of achievements

Total number of targets 2021–2025: 7

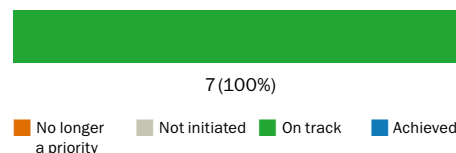
Geographic regions: 7 Africa

Actions during 2024-2025:

Assess: 5 (KSR 6)

Plan: 2 (KSR 8)

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 acoreensis*)
Photo: Paulo A.V. Borges



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