

Species

Newsletter of the Species Survival Commission
IUCN—The World Conservation Union
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SPECIES SURVIVAL COMMISSION
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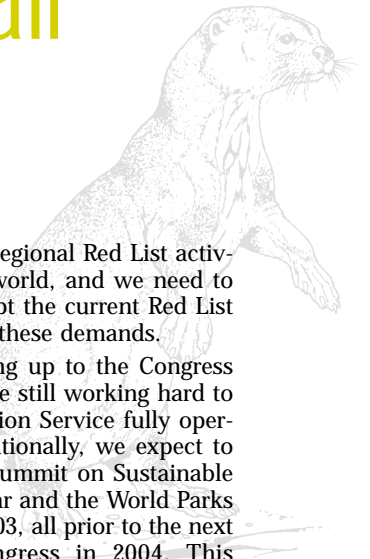
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Message from the Chair



This issue of *Species* marks the halfway point between meetings of the World Conservation Congress. The last meeting of the IUCN Council agreed to intensify the search for a Host Country, with a view to holding the next World Conservation Congress in the last quarter of 2004. The fact that preparations are now beginning for the next Congress is a salutary reminder for us all to take stock of what we set out to accomplish in this inter-sessional period, and how far we are along that road.

Once again, I must emphasize the importance of the guidance provided by the SSC Strategic Plan, and its utility in providing a framework for integrating the work of many individual Specialist Groups. Some Specialist Groups have made very good use of the Strategic Plan in developing specific work plans for this period, and for assessing the contribution of their work to the wider conservation goals of the Commission and IUCN. I encourage others who wish to follow these examples to do so.

Over the past several months, the SSC E-Bulletin has become an important means of improving communication within the network. It provides a ready vehicle for getting summary information to a large number of SSC members. Coupled with the ssc-members listserv, and the electronic version of *Species*, we now have a range of vehicles that should allow better dissemination of information of interest to Commission members. And using the electronic version means big savings for the Commission (the mailing costs for the new, lighter, version of *Species* is still more than 20,000 Swiss francs per issue!). But these tools will only be as effective as your participation allows – please register your email address with Team Species (ssc_iucn@ec.gc.ca) for the ssc-members listserv and the E-bulletin, and let them know if you are willing to receive *Species* electronically.

The results of the Study into Voluntarism in the SSC are now posted on the SSC website, and the Executive Committee is continuing to draw on the conclusions of the study as it plans the future development of the network.

Responding to concerns raised in the voluntarism study about connections to other parts of the SSC and IUCN, the Executive Committee has taken up a more in-depth examination of the question of regionalization as an emerging issue. With the increasing importance of the regional structure of IUCN itself, and the potential these structures offer for implementation of conservation actions recommended by the Specialist Groups, the Executive Committee felt it was important to take a closer look at how we can improve our connections to the IUCN Regional and Country Offices, as well as the regional IUCN membership structures such as National and Regional Committees. There is also a clear

appetite for national and regional Red List activity in many parts of the world, and we need to consider how we can adapt the current Red List Programme to respond to these demands.

The next two years leading up to the Congress promise to be busy. We are still working hard to have the Species Information Service fully operational by that time. Additionally, we expect to participate in the World Summit on Sustainable Development later this year and the World Parks Congress in September 2003, all prior to the next World Conservation Congress in 2004. This increased activity demands more attention from the SSC leadership. In addition, as the voluntarism study noted, personal and frequent contact between members and the SSC Chair is highly valued – as is being better aware of and included in the affairs of the SSC.

To have time to devote to the membership, the SSC Chair needs to have time to commit! To this end, as of May 1, 2002, I have changed position in the Canadian Wildlife Service to have considerably more time to devote to the work of the SSC. My thanks go to Conservation International for donating the bulk of the funds necessary to make this possible, and to the Canadian Wildlife Service for their continued support of the SSC Chair's office.

I have a number of goals for this new era, first among them is seeing an increase in funds raised for SSC activities through more personal attention to fundraising. I also expect to respond to the desire for more effective communication within the SSC network, and with the greater IUCN family. Most of all, I am looking forward to working more closely with you, the SSC member.

I am looking forward to working more closely with you, the SSC member

David Brackett—SSC Chair



SPECIES SURVIVAL COMMISSION

IUCN

The World Conservation Union

Species is the newsletter of the Species Survival Commission of IUCN—The World Conservation Union. Commission members, in addition to providing leadership for conservation efforts for specific plant and animal groups, contribute technical and scientific counsel to biodiversity conservation projects throughout the world. Commission members also serve as resources to governments, international conventions, and conservation organizations.

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A Word from Team *Species*

Team *Species* would like to thank the many SSC members who responded to the Commission's membership expertise questionnaire in the last issue of *Species*. Thanks for letting us know who you are and allowing us to identify gaps in the network!

Readers will also note our new special feature – Lessons Learned in Regionalization. Several SSC members have identified a need to help Specialist Groups interact and share experiences. To this end, the new "Lessons Learned" section of *Species* has been created, with each issue examining a different theme identified by the network. This issue looks at the subject of "regionalization" among Specialist Groups. We need your advice on future themes – please send your suggestions or questions to Team *Species* at ssc_iucn@ec.gc.ca.

Team *Species*

Launched last December:

The Red Book: The Extinction Crisis Face to Face

The Red Book: The Extinction Crisis Face to Face produced by CEMEX, one of the world's largest cement companies, in partnership with IUCN-The World Conservation Union, the largest international conservation network and Agrupación Sierra Madre, a Mexican conservation organization, is a dramatic new tool to communicate the issues surrounding extinction and conservation to broad audiences.

Drawing on the *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*, the world's most objective and authoritative inventory of species at risk of extinction, the Red Book combines awe-inspiring imagery with solid science and factual accounts. More than 100 stunning photographs from some of the most renowned photographers reflect the extraordinary beauty and diversity of the natural world. The IUCN Red List is a powerful scientific device used by governments, policy makers and NGOs around the world to stimulate conservation action. Although it already plays an important role in conveying the urgency and scale of the current extinction crisis to the international community, the Red Book brings the message to a broader audience. It describes the extinction process, its causes, and the measures needed to reverse it, in terms accessible to everyone. The book provides a snapshot of the Red List, how it is compiled, and offers unique insight into a selection of species included, together with the actions needed to save them.

More than an awareness-raising tool, The Red Book is a call for action to all sectors of society from industry to governments to educators, to work together to save biological diversity. By joining forces with IUCN, CEMEX is showing the

positive role that industry, particularly large multinational companies, can play.

Team *Species*

To order your own copy, contact IUCN Publications Services Unit, 219c Huntingdon Road, Cambridge, CB3 0DL, United Kingdom, Tel: + + 44 1223 277894; Fax: + + 44 1223 277175; Email: info@books.iucn.org; www.iucn.org/bookstore, Cost: \$65.00 USD or £45.00 GBP; IUCN Order No: B1122

Global Amphibian Assessment makes rapid progress

The Global Amphibian Assessment (GAA) project is progressing rapidly with regional coordinators now in place for all parts of the world, data collection complete for most regions of the Old World, and data collection well underway in the Americas.

Initial data have been received for about half of the world's 5,000 amphibian species and although it is too early to draw an overall picture of the results, there are some reasons for concern. For instance, preliminary evidence suggests 28% of Africa's 632 amphibian species appear to be globally threatened with extinction. It is clear that there is a much larger number of threatened amphibians in Africa than previously known. In Madagascar, where 99% of the species are endemic and many new species have been discovered in recent years, the tiny, beautiful Mantella frogs - the jewels of the rainforest floor - are especially threatened by a combination of habitat loss and over-collecting.

Several important steps need to be taken over the next few months. These include:

Completing the data collection, organizing the data, incorporating information on trade and use of amphibians into the database and resolving the taxonomic issues. The Assessment is intended to be the start of an ongoing process to implement long-term monitoring of amphibians

worldwide. In addition, the Global Amphibian Assessment is a great opportunity to help develop the new IUCN/SSC Global Amphibian Specialist Group (GASG) which consists of regional sections. It is hoped that the process of collecting and reviewing data will encourage herpetologists to join the Group.

Coordination of this project is being provided by the Conservation International/Center for Applied Biodiversity Science – IUCN/SSC Biodiversity Assessment Unit. The team, consisting of Simon Stuart, Janice Long and Neil Cox, is responsible for program administration and technical support. Significant assistance is being provided by NatureServe, with Dr. Bruce Young coordinating for the Americas (excluding the Caribbean Islands) from which over half the amphibian species are known.

Simon Stuart, Coordinator, Conservation International/Center for Applied Biodiversity Science – IUCN/SSC Biodiversity Assessment Unit

Lape Forever –

The sustainable use of Melanesian Megapode eggs

The coup in 1999 and subsequent economic collapse in the Solomon Islands has resulted in people there being even more dependent on their natural resources for sustenance and cash. Nowhere is this more true than on Simbo Island, where local people derive most of their cash income from the sale of eggs of the Melanesian Megapode (*Megapodius eremita*), locally called Lape. Over 180 000 eggs were harvested in 1998 alone. According to Simbo Islanders, throughout the 1970s and 1980s the number of birds on the island and the harvest of eggs declined dramatically. Unfortunately, it appears a similar fate is befalling almost all nesting fields of colonial-laying megapodes, many of which are now abandoned.

Because of their dependence on megapode eggs and their concern about the declining harvest, in the early 1990s Simbo Islanders introduced a management plan that included a ban on harvesting eggs for two months each year. This plan was based on a paucity of data on megapode breeding biology and the harvest continued to decline throughout the 1990s. In 1997 the Simbo Island Megapode Management Committee formed a partnership with WWF Solomon Islands and the SSC Megapode Specialist Group to conduct research into ways to better manage harvests of megapode eggs. The use of hatcheries and extending the closed season were tested, among other measures, over 18 months of participatory research. One interesting result was learning the mean incubation period of eggs is longer than the closed season! As a result, the Simbo Island community revised its manage-

ment plan in 1999, including extending the closed season to three months. Since the introduction of the new management plan, Simbo Islanders believe there are now more megapodes on the island, although the theft of eggs and predation of hatchlings by feral cats and dogs remain problems. WWF and the Megapode Specialist Group are continuing to work with Simbo Islanders to help them address these problems and achieve their stated aim of having "Lape Forever".

Ross Sinclair, Megapode Specialist Group

Global Strategy for Plant Conservation adopted

In April SSC celebrated the news that the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation was adopted by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Conference of the Parties.

This was a landmark in the history of the CBD, as it was the first time that plant conservation issues received such detailed scrutiny by the governments of the world (183 countries are Parties to the Convention). It was also the first time that targets, albeit voluntary, have been set to guide as well as monitor progress by the Convention.

Parties noted that countries vary greatly in their wealth of plant diversity and capacity to conserve this diversity, and felt that accepting global targets was useful, allowing their national conservation strategy and priorities to feed into an overall global target. They noted that capacity-building to increase plant conservation was necessary, in order for biodiversity-rich countries to contribute to the targets.

While all of the 41 countries and regional blocks that spoke about the Strategy welcomed and supported it, the need for additional funding to implement the Strategy was raised. Botanical Gardens Conservation International offered to second a staff member to the CBD Secretariat for two years to shepherd through the Strategy and ensure that action is undertaken. This gracious offer was warmly greeted by CBD Parties, and opened up a new phase of private and governmental collaboration.

However, it is clear that increased financial resources to implement the Strategy are needed. If the Strategy is to reach its targets by 2010, every country will need to contribute whatever resources possible to promote plant conservation. It was also noted that the link between poverty alleviation and rural livelihoods with the conservation of plant diversity is essential, and should be supported by donors.

A landmark in the history of the Convention on Biological Diversity



David Brackett and Amie Bräutigam, author, launch *The Red Book*

Many Parties also commended the development of the regional European Plant Conservation Strategy, and recommended that other regional plant Strategies are undertaken. Africa is particularly interested in producing a draft strategy in time for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg in September 2002.

In welcoming the adoption of the Global Plant Conservation Strategy, SSC recognizes the daily dependence of many of the world's people on plants. Sustainable use, capacity-building, education and awareness, increased networking, and community involvement are vital elements of the Strategy if it is to achieve lasting results on the ground. The SSC Plant Conservation Committee stands ready to continue contributing to its future development and implementation.

Team Species

New directions for the SSC Network

Adoption of the SSC Strategic Plan 2001-2010, with its ambitious targets, brought into sharp focus some existing gaps within the current SSC network. In particular, marine and invertebrate species are under-represented, yet are integral to achieving the Commission's targets. For instance, although the number of Specialist Groups addressing either strictly marine or marine/freshwater taxa is slowly growing, most of the world's marine biodiversity is still not covered by an SSC Specialist Group or incorporated in SSC's suite of marine activities. Similarly, invertebrates represent the vast majority of the planet's biodiversity and comprise over 95% of all described species, yet there are only six invertebrate Specialist Groups. Further, one of the major challenges of the IUCN Red List is the generally poor representation of marine and invertebrate organisms.

In response, the SSC held two scoping workshops: a marine program-planning meeting, convened by the Ocean Conservancy, and an invertebrate strategic planning workshop, facilitated by Onnie Byers of the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group.

During the marine program-planning meeting, targets and priorities for marine biodiversity conservation were identified. Targets covered four main issues (use and exploitation of marine resources; habitat loss and degradation; invasive species; and climate change), and tools to help meet these targets were outlined. There was strong consensus on the need for a paper explaining why and how fishing pressure can drive species to extinction. Other top priorities included an analysis of damaging, non-selective

fishing gear; an improvement of fish monitoring methods; a need to address the mariculture issue; production of a briefing on vulnerable life histories for fisheries; closer working relations with the SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group; addressing threats to spawning aggregation; compilation of case studies on non-consumptive uses of live marine resources; and identification and assessment of marine "hotspots".

The invertebrate workshop aimed to develop a strategy for enhancing IUCN's input to global invertebrate conservation through the SSC's invertebrate network. Participants noted that problems facing invertebrate survival into the future need bringing to the fore, especially threats posed by invasive alien species, habitat destruction, loss of pollinators, and exploitation in its various forms. An urgent need to enhance the taxonomic base for dealing with these problems was recognized, as was the importance of networking to address problems. One immediate result of the meeting was the creation of the South Asian Invertebrate Specialist Group, co-chaired by Dr. B.A. Daniel and Dr T. N. Ananthakrishnan.

Team Species

Invertebrate Specialist Groups

A new synergy

For the most part, IUCN/SSC Specialist Groups have been taxon-based. However, recent thinking has put the concept of region-based groups on the table. One such group has now come into being, the Southern African Invertebrates Specialist Group. Some concern has been expressed that these regional groups may in fact duplicate some of the activities of taxon-based groups where there is overlap with existing Groups, or worse still, compete with them. A possible example exists in the case of the Mollusc Specialist Group and the Southern African Invertebrates Specialist Group.

While I do not wish to detract from the importance of taxon-based Groups, they can be fragmented entities with members dotted around the globe and not able to meet on a regular basis.



Sarah Fowler and Alison Rosser work to identify marine priorities for SSC

Furthermore, although the members may share common interests in the taxon concerned, and have similar goals in terms of its conservation, they may in fact be operating under widely differing regional/national paradigms. Indeed, in many respects, Specialist Group members from one region working on different taxa may have a lot more in common with their regional colleagues belonging to other Groups than might at first be apparent. Shared issues may, for example, include:

- **Inadequate institutional support for biodiversity research**
- **Declining human capacity within the fundamental biodiversity research sector**
- **Insufficient collaboration between the research and conservation sectors**
- **Low profile of (for instance) invertebrate conservation**
- **Lack of regional coordination to facilitate joint funding proposals and larger-scale collaborative projects**

Issues like these may have a profound effect on the rate at which our knowledge and understanding of biodiversity grows and on our ability to meet IUCN and SSC objectives. This is particularly true for the "other 99%", with which both the Mollusc and Southern African Invertebrates Specialist Groups are concerned.

Although there may be global trends regarding conservation issues, much of the related decision making is done at a national level and thus remedial action is best targeted at that level. Collectively, members of a region-based group stand a far better chance of making their concerns heard. Also, with members based in relatively close proximity to each other, Groups should be able to meet more regularly.

The Southern African Invertebrates Specialist Group promises to add a new dimension to the growing interest in invertebrate research in southern Africa, and invertebrate conservation is likely to benefit considerably through the focus and leadership provided by the Group. I believe that this Group will be of considerable assistance to the Mollusc Specialist Group, through its enhanced ability to address many of the issues that are currently impacting negatively on our capacity to identify molluscan conservation priorities in the southern African region.

There are precious few committed invertebrate conservationists around and we need to capitalize on the synergy of collaboration. If we team up, we may have sufficient critical mass to achieve substantially more in the local context than any of us could do individually. At the same time, a number of groups not represented by Specialist Groups will also be brought into the fold. It matters not whether one is specifically interested in dragonflies, millipedes, molluscs or whatever else, the fact is

that many of our problems are shared and we need to address them collectively.

Dai Herbert, Mollusc Specialist Group, Southern African Invertebrates Specialist Group

First printed in Tentacle, No. 10, January 2002.

Action Plan Evaluation

The Species Survival Commission has been publishing Action Plans under the auspices of IUCN since 1986 and more than 60 plans have been published in what is now a well-established series. SSC commissioned an evaluation of its Action Plan Programme to examine the amount of real conservation action that they may stimulate. An earlier, unpublished phase of this work sought to assess the implementation of recommendations outlined in six (equids, lagomorphs, otters, crocodiles, cetaceans and canids) Action Plans. Four complete responses reported on the progress of 284 recommendations, 18% of which were considered complete, 50% ongoing and 32% not started. A lack of resources (funds and/or personnel) was the reason that nearly half had not been started, and political sensitivity accounted for a further 17%. The majority of implemented actions were either research or ecological management.

Five of the above-named plans Action Plan were evaluated on four principal areas: Specialist Group planning and process; SSC Secretariat management; product quality and distribution; and implementation of priority projects.

Specialist Group planning and process:

The detailed rationale for Action Plans varies among Specialist Groups because of differing perceptions of the target audiences (i.e. who will act on the recommendations). This materially affects the content of the plans. In addition, the voluntary nature of the Groups means that there is a trade-off between compiling plans quickly and being inclusive of all information and expertise.

Management by SSC Secretariat:

The number of plans being dealt with by the Secretariat has increased dramatically in the last 10 years, leading to problems in processing them effectively and finding funds for them. The current process seems unsustainable, especially as SSC Programme Officers are required for other activities and the reliance on interns is high. Clearer guidelines on how Action Plans should be compiled may help address some of these issues.

Product quality and distribution:

Action Plans are only useful if they are credible. Credibility is built on confidence in the informa-



tion provided and ability to access that information. Broadly speaking, Action Plans are acknowledged as being sources of sound biological information. In contrast, however, distribution of the plans is weak, both in terms of the limited target audiences they reach and in determining who the key people are in each organization/agency. Therefore, distribution strategies of Plans should receive much more attention.

Implementation of Action Plan priorities:

Action Plans are intended to focus attention on urgently needed conservation measures and encourage action to take place. The Action Plans evaluated here appear particularly successful and the Specialist Groups have pursued the recommendations actively. Outside the Specialist Groups, uptake is variable, with little promotion within IUCN and to external audiences. This may be partly due to differing perceptions of what Action Plans are versus what they should be. However, there is no doubt that some agencies outside IUCN find them very useful and this demonstrates their potential effectiveness.

There has been a considerable amount of activity in pursuit of Action Plan recommendations, and this has involved individuals from government research and management agencies, universities and non-governmental organizations.

The plans are seen as valuable resources by stakeholders as diverse as multilateral environmental agreements (CITES and the International Whaling Commission), non-governmental

organizations (Wildlife Conservation Society, WWF-US and the People's Trust for Endangered Species) and other parts of IUCN (Protected Areas Programme). It is difficult to specify the degree to which conservation actions have taken place solely because of publication of Action Plans. An appropriate question would be "Do Action Plans play an important role in the conservation process?" The results of this evaluation would indicate that the answer is yes.

There are three options facing the SSC with regards to the future of Action Planning, namely: continuing the current process; stopping publication; and adapting the current process. Continuing with the current process does not appear feasible, partly because of SSC Secretariat resource constraints, but also because it is clear that a single document cannot satisfy all of the conservation information needs of all target audiences. Discontinuing production of Action Plans may result in reduced conservation action as the combination of an Action Plan, an active Specialist Group and the IUCN and SSC 'seal of approval' is a strong force for conservation.

Therefore, SSC should adapt the current Action Planning Programme by addressing the issues identified in this evaluation including identification of and collaboration with target audiences. SSC needs a clearer idea of exactly who the target audiences are so that the recommendations can be framed appropriately and to ensure that the plans reach those most able to act. This evaluation has identified some audiences that believe strongly in the SSC Action Plans and it would seem desirable to build partnerships with them both to provide additional resources, as well as valuable input in developing recommendations. Also, guidance on plan development and content, in particular for recommendations, is needed. The key elements to include in guidelines would be related to clarity and comprehensiveness of recommendations; and a clear support strategy for the implementation of the recommendations.

Phil McGowan, World Pheasant Association

Greening European Agriculture

A team of IUCN scientists has just completed the first year of a €2.2 million (US\$1.9 million) European Union research project (AEMBAC) designed to make European agriculture more favorable to biodiversity and landscape conservation. Coordinated by SSC's European Sustainable Use Specialist Group (ESUSG) and administered by the Regional Office for Europe (IUCN-RoE), partner institutions in seven countries are working to produce a scientifically based decision-making framework for the development of agri-environmental schemes under which the EU, national, and regional authorities pay farmers to adopt more environmentally sustainable practices. During the last year the project partners have been analyzing the significant environmental functions performed by 15 agricultural ecosystem pilot areas in the countries involved: Germany, Italy, Estonia, Hungary, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland. "If the EU is enlarged as projected and agricultural support is shifted towards buying environmental goods, it is vital that taxpayers' money is well-targeted. We believe our research will assist this objective," says Dr Riccardo Simoncini, who coordinates ESUSG's Agricultural Working Group with Visi Garcia, and is the project's Scientific Coordinator.

The project began with an acknowledgment by the European Commission that the agri-environmental schemes supported by the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and implemented by member states during the 1990s were complete-

ly *ad hoc*. Not only were the benefits largely unmeasured but the value for money and the sustainability scarcely considered. If the importance of these schemes was going to grow and the ambit of the CAP, however reformed, to extend to 10 new member states via enlargement then some rational system of targeting the available funds was highly desirable. The idea of an analytical framework for programs designed to improve the conservation of biodiversity and landscape in agricultural systems was seen as a potential way of moving towards such a rational system. Fundamental to it is the conviction that you have to examine each level of operation - field, farm, agricultural system - and that each must be considered in relation to ecological, economic and social factors.

In phase 1 the team has looked at the performance of environmental functions, related to biodiversity and landscape conservation, in two agricultural systems in each of the seven countries taking part to test the theoretical framework. In phase 2 the emphasis will shift to economic and social features in the study areas, as well as a study of the special factors involved in enlargement and the alternatives of regulation versus incentives. In phase 3 there will be trials of the instruments devised involving local farmers and administrators. If a workable framework does emerge and is adopted as policy - and rational policy in this area is a rare bird indeed - then we might have cause to celebrate. Reports and more details can be found at www.aembac.org

Robin Sharp CB, European Sustainable Use Specialist Group Chair

Towards the Biodiversity Commons

A huge amount of information has accumulated over the last few centuries in museum or university collections, in printed media and more recently in digital databases. Much of this information is not generally available, either because of proprietary restrictions or because of lack of coherent organization or management. BCIS (the Biodiversity Conservation Information System) is advocating the creation of a global "Biodiversity Commons", to create a free, persistent and stable information environment (on the Web) for biodiversity information and data.

The past decade has seen information increasingly being treated as a commodity and subject to new proprietary restrictions. Even organizations that do not seek direct profit from information are often hesitant to make their data and information freely available for fear that they will be taken advantage of. The notion of the "public

domain" recognizes there is broad social value to placing information in a public commons for free, general use by all (including commercial uses).

An "information commons" defines a community of use and guarantees free unhindered access to data and information for that community within a defined information space. Such a commons is composed of public domain data and information as well as otherwise protected information that is made openly available and that limits the full exercise of intellectual property rights by rights holders. Producers of information may assign rights to such a commons while maintaining traditional controls over their intellectual property rights in the larger, international commercial market domain. This is sometimes described as a "conditional" (or even "impure") domain of use.

Such an open system will have several favorable consequences. Offering convenient access to a diversity of scientific opinions should foster new analysis and progress in conservation. For example, the notion of biodiversity hotspots may be subject to renewed debate and/or revision by the provision of new and more extensive data and information. The Commons should also help to close the North/South information divide. One important characteristic of electronic information is that its distribution, once the infrastructure is built, has almost no cost, and thus a number of colleagues can have simultaneously access to data which has in the past been inaccessible.

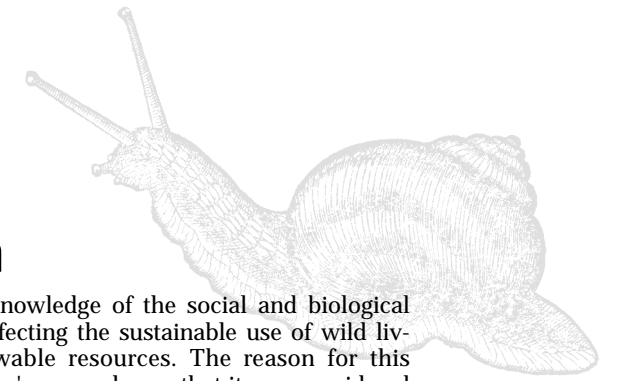
No single institution or individual has the complete data sets on biodiversity. Thus by providing a more complete "sample" (the added value of the Commons approach), the case of conservation is served. Moreover, the more data is accessible, the more it will be used and gaps in the currently available "sample" will be more readily identifiable. This should spur the production of more data, such as from the systematics community. Practically, the SSC Social Insect Specialist Group is trying to implement the Biodiversity Commons idea by developing a public domain knowledge-base for social insects (antbase.org). We encourage the conservation and scientific community to support the Biodiversity Commons.

Donat Agosti and Tom Moritz, Social Insects Specialist Group

Offering access to a diversity of opinions should foster conservation progress

Do Action Plans play a role in conservation?





Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SUSG) – looking at fisheries

South Asia SUSG: Goa Fisheries Workshop

The South Asia SUSG held a fisheries workshop that brought together experts from a number of government fisheries/marine agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the fisheries trade/export sector. The workshop, held in Goa, India, was characterized by open dialogue and knowledge sharing and was the first time such individuals had been brought together to discuss fisheries and marine issues. Participants proposed several recommendations relating to inland freshwater, riverine and estuarine fisheries and marine fisheries. One recommendation called for the establishment of a 'South Asia Sustainable Fisheries Network' (SASFIN) for the exchange of information on species of interest to more than one country and to initiate trans-boundary (collaborative or complementary) research projects. The recommendations stemming from the workshop will guide the South Asia SUSG's activities vis à vis sustainable fisheries management. Visit the SUSG website <http://iucn.org/themes/ssc/susg/> to view the recommendations, or request a copy of the SUSG newsletter from susg@iucn.org.

Ashis Banerjee, South Asia Sustainable Use Specialist Group Chair

ESUSG Fisheries Working Group

The Fisheries Working Group (FWG) was established in December 1997 as one of the thematic working groups of the European Sustainable Use Specialist Group (ESUSG). The FWG includes over 30 eminent fisheries and marine experts from 24 countries in the Pan-European region who come together on a voluntary basis. Its membership includes a range of disciplines and activities—fisheries scientists, academics, managers, politicians, representatives of fishermen's organizations and the fishing industry.

So far the main work has been to analyze existing fisheries management regimes in Europe. This includes some global concerns related to fisheries management from the European perspective, to assess the sustainability aspects and to provide advice both to policy makers in Europe and to the various components of IUCN, especially its Marine Programme. Furthermore, the group is a useful forum for bringing together experts from the EU and the non-EU members states to discuss upcoming issues in an informal setting.

Recently, several papers of the FWG were placed on the SUSG website: <http://iucn.org/themes/ssc/susg/>. The papers collected represent some of the Working Group output between 1999, when the overall strategy and working methods were established, and 2001. They include the FWG Strategy Plan, two regional surveys (assessing the management of the Baltic Sea Fisheries and

the management of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries), a scientific paper on by-catch from a perspective of sustainable use, and a substantive response to the Commission's Green Paper on The Common Fisheries Policy after 2002. For those without access to the Internet, a full list is available from dbeamont@iucn.org.

Despina Symons, Fisheries Working Group Coordinator and Robin Sharp CB, European SUSG Chair

Congratulations to our network

Dr. Georgina Mace, OBE, of the Zoological Society of London and Chair of the Red List Committee has been elected to the Fellowship of the Royal Society. Dr. Mace is recognized for her leading role in the field of assessment and management of threatened species.

John Mauremootoo of the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation, and member of the SSC Indian Ocean Island Plant Specialist Group has won the Whitley Award for International Nature Conservation. The award is in recognition of his relentless work in spearheading community initiatives to restore the fast-disappearing native forests of the Island of Rodrigues, Mauritius.

María Elena Zaccagnini, Vice-Chair of the SSC Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SUSG) and Chair of the South America - Southern Cone SUSG, was presented with a Francisco de Asis Award by the Natural Science Society of the Argentine Litoral (a region in Argentina). Every year a small number of Francisco de Asis Awards are presented to Argentinian scientists and journalists who make important contributions to nature conservation.

Chair of the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG), **Dr. Ulysses Seal**, has been honored with the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians (AAZV) Duane Ullrey Lifetime Achievement and Contribution to the AAZV award. Members of the AAZV community have played an instrumental role in the wildlife work of Dr. Seal for more than 30 years. The award is intended for non-veterinarian scientists.

Professor **Michael Samways**, Chair of the IUCN/SSC Southern African Invertebrate Specialist Group and Director of South Africa's Invertebrate Conservation Research Centre, has been awarded the National Research Foundation's (South Africa) highest accolade, an 'A-rating'. Michael's work has been primarily on insect ecology and conservation, especially in sub-tropical and tropical systems.

Lessons Learned in Regionalization

The SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group has begun to establish regional sub-groups because we believe this change in our current structure (executive/general membership) will enable us to more effectively animate a large and widely distributed membership around regional issues and priorities.

We will benefit from the lessons other Groups have learned (what has and has not worked well) related to the structure and logistics of sub-groups, for example:

How have Specialist Group management structures been altered to accommodate sub-groups; How have membership and program responsibilities been divided between the Group and the sub-groups; How has communication been managed between Group/subgroups/other partners; Are there alternative structures, other than regional sub-groups, that have been effective in achieving the program goals of the Group?

We would also be interested in any comments around the establishment of various levels of Group membership, such as types of sub-groups or committees, and their advantages and disadvantages.

Danna Leaman, Medicinal Plant Specialist Group Chair

Response from the Sustainable Use Specialist Group

The SSC Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SUSG) was established in 1994/5 following IUCN's General Assembly in Buenos Aires. At the General Assembly, the *Guidelines for the Ecological Sustainability of Non-consumptive and Consumptive Uses of Wild Species*, produced

by SUSG's predecessor, the Specialist Group on Sustainable Use of Wild Species, were rejected as unworkable. As a result, a Task Force established by the Director General and SSC Chair recommended a new start via a regional structure. With substantial financial and staff support, SUSG became a more regionally-based, decentralized group, providing ground-

truthed knowledge of the social and biological factors affecting the sustainable use of wild living renewable resources. The reason for this 'bottom-up' approach was that it was considered that the necessary social and economic context for assessing ecological sustainability was the regional level. Therefore, the processes that established SUSG place it apart from conventional Specialist Groups.

Today, SUSG comprises 17 decentralized networks of Regional SUSGs (RSUSGs) which analyze and compare local use systems through case studies, regional reviews, workshops, and symposia. The key lessons described herein are offered in the hope that they will be useful to other Specialist Groups which may be considering regionalizing their network.

SUSG adopts a regional approach because each region has different priorities and agendas. It is only through decentralization that the SUSG can fully hope to identify regionally-grounded information and knowledge. RSUSGs can also operate at speeds commensurate with their capacity (membership and financial base, for example) as opposed to being led by energetic groups which may lead to dysfunction such as over-stretching of resources. Synthesizing results and lessons learned across regions is extremely complex and requires themes and concrete activities/outputs to focus and sharpen activities. Interaction with IUCN Regional and Country Offices is essential. Collaboration on activities can be explored and duplication of efforts is minimized through communication.

Programme

Pursuing a decentralized regional approach does create significant challenges. The ability to gather information and knowledge that is based on regional experiences is certainly a great strength of the SUSG network. However, decentralization can also result in a tendency to under-emphasize the other major benefit of operating via a regional network: the capacity to consolidate and compare knowledge and information across regions, generating syntheses and recommendations at the global level.

The new SUSG Programme Framework adopted at the beginning of 2002 seeks to address this imbalance by providing a clear sense of the themes and activities that the RSUSGs will work on collectively. This will strengthen links between RSUSGs and enable coordinated fundraising approaches focusing on selected products for delivery at specific venues. The Programme Framework also provides a basis for strengthening relationships between the RSUSGs and the IUCN RCOs around specific projects. This should help to build collaboration, foster connections with regional IUCN members, and avoid competition.



Each region has different priorities

The SUSG Programme comprises two layers: regional and global. At the regional level, activities are ever-changing as they stem from evolving regionally-specific priorities and agendas. At the global level regional efforts are focused and brought together. For example, a fisheries workshop coordinated by the South Asia SUSG is an example of a regional activity where an event is convened to facilitate interaction between parties that have an interest in sustainable fisheries management. At the global level, an SUSG-wide sustainable fisheries network will build on the work undertaken by the regional groups and create partnerships whilst still maintaining regional diversity.

Whilst the revised Programme Framework reflects the continuing commitment and enthusiasm of the SUSG membership, the resources available to SUSG for undertaking these activities are far reduced in comparison to the early days. As a result, it remains to be seen to what extent SUSG may have to re-orient its structure for it to remain IUCN's main vehicle for promoting understanding of sustainable use.

Communication

An official SUSG website is the main vehicle for communicating the work of the SUSG to others. Each RSUSG has its own web page within this site, thus helping to emphasize the regional nature of the network. A quarterly newsletter contains many articles that first appear on the website. RSUSGs regularly contribute news items.

An SUSG listserv for Steering Committee members and selected others is used frequently for governance and management purposes and to conduct Steering Committee business. RSUSGs will be offered their own listserv now that SSC is offering this service to Specialist Groups. Cultural differences and access to reliable electronic connections and phonelines (including cost) will dictate to what extent these regional listservs are used. In most regions outside North America and Europe, virtual communications mechanisms such as listservs are difficult to sustain and face-to-face contact is essential.

Currently, inter-Specialist Group communication occurs infrequently. Interaction with taxonomic groups is generally limited to groups which consider sustainable use to be a viable conservation option or groups that deal specifically with species in use (such as Medicinal Plants). Interaction among RSUSGs has occurred, with examples such as the African RSUSGs' convening of two Pan African Symposia on Sustainable Use and Conservation of Natural Resources, and exchanges among the Latin American RSUSGs in developing regional overview papers examining

the status of sustainable use. Collaboration on specific projects and knowledge-sharing is likely to increase with the implementation of the new SUSG Programme Framework.

Governance

Each RSUSG decides its own membership, leadership, activities, and priorities within a governance framework adopted by the SUSG Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is chaired by the SUSG Chair, and comprises the Chairs of the RSUSGs, the SSC Chair (ex-officio), a senior staff representative from IUCN, and up to two co-opted members. The roles and responsibilities of the RSUSG Chairs are similar to those of the SUSG Chair. RSUSG Chairs also maintain updated membership lists. Often, an RSUSG Chair will be supported administratively by a volunteer in that region. RSUSG Chairs report to the SSC Chair through the SUSG Chair.

An Executive Committee comprising the SUSG Chair, three members of the Steering Committee (elected by the Steering Committee), the SSC Chair and senior representative of the IUCN Secretariat conducts business and assumes the powers of the Steering Committee, including financial decisions, between meetings of the Steering Committee.

Working Groups or Advisory Committees are established to develop specific products and activities. The Technical Advisory Committee for example, was established to develop an Analytic Framework to be used to guide assessments or particular uses. It is likely working groups will be used in overseeing the development of global themes and activities as the SUSG Programme Framework is implemented.

David Beamont, Sustainable Use Team

Response from the Tapir Specialist Group

The Tapir Specialist Group has gone through several structural changes during the last two years. Its membership has increased to 71 professionals from 22 countries (South, Central and North America, Asia, and Europe) all with varied backgrounds and expertise. In an effort to create a stronger organization, we appointed officers and created committees based on the group's needs. These are an Evolutionary Consultant, Newsletter Editors, Veterinary Support Committee, Zoo Liaison Committee, Red List Authority and Committee, and Fundraising Committee.

In addition, Species Coordinators were appointed for each of the four tapir species. These positions were created primarily to distribute the workload. The main idea behind these appointments was that the coordinators would know the region

and the languages involved with each species and would be aware of the problems and priorities in their areas.

The primary responsibilities of the Species Coordinators focus on maintaining current information on the status of the species, current conservation efforts, past and current research, including a directory of researchers, and developing a list of research needs for the species. Secondary are communication, networking and promotional aspects towards tapir conservation.

It is hoped that the Coordinators will help to establish a system of Coordinators for each tapir range country.

Two countries are already well advanced in this process. The Colombian Tapir Network was formed to share information in Spanish about tapir ecology and conservation projects in Colombia; promote the study and conservation of tapirs; and, discuss policies concerning tapirs in their country. Mexican researchers created the Mexican Committee for Tapir Conservation and Recovery. The Committee's goals are to become an official consultant for national and international institutions and professionals related to conservation, management and research on tapirs and their habitat in Mexico, to suggest and promote actions and policies for the conservation and recovery of Mexican tapir populations, and to facilitate communication among people and institutions interested in tapir conservation in Mexico. In the near future, Species Coordinators, country Specialist Groups and country representatives will be involved in the process of reviewing and updating the Tapir Action Plan.

Patricia Medici, Tapir Specialist Group Chair

Response from the Orchid Specialist Group

When Dr. Phillip Cribb (Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew) became Chair of the Orchid Specialist Group (OSG), his vision was for a more effective Group through a process of restructuring. In 1999, the OSG Plenary Meeting passed a motion to form several regional subcommittees and cross-cutting thematic committees. Since then, regional groups have been formed and three thematic committees have developed for *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation, and education.

Finding an appropriate leader

Each regional and thematic committee must have a committed and driven leader prepared to devote time and energy to the Group. Nominating a person to take on such a role is not always the most effective approach, since for many people, turning down such an offer may be more difficult than admitting that they do not have the time or resources to meet expectations. Therefore, a timely and cautious approach is required, whereby given time, the natural leader of such a group emerges. This approach means that not all the committees the Group aspires to form were set up immediately, but in the long-term, it leads to a situation where a successful committee and a sustainable program are more likely to result.

Subcommittee Chairs

Terms of reference (TOR) presenting clear guidelines regarding responsibilities and expectations form the basis of an agreement between the Group Chair and subcommittee Chair. The subcommittee Chair may choose to appoint a Co-Chair and/or Secretary. They may share their duties with the Co-Chair or Secretary, and may delegate duties to other members of the group. However, they remain fully responsible for decision-making, overall coordination of the group, and for maintaining contact with the Orchid Specialist Group Chair and Secretariat.

Membership

If a regional or thematic group Chair wishes to recruit a new member, they must first receive an official invitation from the Orchid Specialist Group Chair and register as a member of the SSC. Membership continues to be controlled by the central Group Secretariat. Regional group members do not have to reside within the designated region. Many specialists reside in one area and work on the orchid flora of another region. In this case, the regional group Chair would invite the specialist to participate in their regional group. Members are encouraged to join more than one regional or thematic group if they have the appropriate expertise, thereby improving networking within the Group.

Regional and thematic groups are central to the Orchid Specialist Group's success

The SUSG comprises two layers: regional and global



Funding

The main limitation to the success of subcommittees has been a lack of financial support. Firstly, funding is needed for the continued operation of the Group Secretariat, which is currently run on a voluntary basis, to provide subcommittees with the necessary support. Secondly, direct funding and resources are required for subcommittees to be able to function in a professional and consistent manner.

Voluntarism

A further limiting factor to the success of the restructured Orchid Specialist Group is its dependency on volunteers. If the Group is to meet its goals, professional staff are required. The Group is increasing rapidly in size and is broadening its activities through the subcommittees. This large-scale approach cannot continue to be managed on a voluntary basis. Most active members are professionals who deserve to be paid for their time.

Conclusion:

Has restructuring been successful?

The regional and thematic groups are now considered central to the success of the Orchid Specialist Group. By acting as catalysts for activities at a local and thematic level, similar challenges and experiences can be shared, members can meet on a regular basis, links can be formed with other organizations that have associated interests, and local government can be more effectively influenced.

While the subcommittees are encouraged to become largely autonomous within the overall umbrella of the Specialist Group, a permanent paid Secretariat is needed to provide the necessary support. Direct funding is also required for regional and thematic group offices. Funding is now the key issue for the continued success of the restructured Orchid Specialist Group.

Shelagh Kell, Executive Officer

Response from the Otter Specialist Group

At the start of the current IUCN triennium, the Otter Specialist Group (OSG) saw a fundamental shift from a two level organizational structure (chair, continental coordinators) to a four level structure. A Continental Coordinator for four of the five continents hosting otters (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin-America, North-America) is helping the Chair to coordinate the Group's activities. These Coordinators are supported by a network of Representatives. In Africa for instance, where only very few otter specialists are available, the

English speaking Continental Coordinator is assisted by a Regional Representative for the African French speaking countries. In Latin America, where the situation of the four otter species varies significantly, Species Representatives support the Continental Coordinator. Europe has a well-developed infrastructure of individuals and organizations involved in otter conservation so that, for most countries, National Representatives have been appointed. These Representatives are the contact points for the Affiliated Members of OSG and for other relevant people or institutions.

In addition, a special group of Appointed Members has been created to handle specific tasks for the group (such as editing the Bulletin, or heading a task force). Also, under certain conditions, non-specialists can also join the group as Supporting Members.

Currently the Group has over 110 members. To keep the balance between a high level of expertise and a sufficient regional representation, a maximum of 150 members seems to be adequate. Yet to handle the bureaucratic demands of the SSC and of the Group members, this number is already too high, especially for a volunteer Chair. Fortunately the German Association for Otter Conservation (Aktion Fischotterschutz) supports the Group by providing an assistant to the Chair who can manage the simple, but time consuming, tasks such as updating the membership database or answering general questions.

However, a tremendous amount of time and effort is needed to ensure that the network is functioning and communicating. The OSG Bulletin (published twice a year) and an e-mail listserv (an internal listserv for members and various continentally based open listservs) are the main communication tools for the Otter Specialist Group. A website is under construction. Another important contribution is the frequent regional workshops, especially the International Otter Colloquium that takes place every three to four years. These meetings not only serve as a forum for personal communication, but also offer the opportunity for the Chair to become acquainted with Group members. The fact that more than 90% of all members are personally known to the Chair contributes to the increased efficiency of the Group's work. Last, but not least, these personal relationships also might be the reason why many members regard the Otter Specialist Group as an "otter family".

Claus Reuther, Otter Specialist Group Chair

Response from Pheasant Specialist Group

Since its foundation in 1993, the Pheasant Specialist Group has been run principally by the Chair, with advice and assistance mainly coming from members of the UK-based Chair's Advisory Committee, appointed by the Chair. The Group is best described as a "voluntary self-help network" and is typical of SSC Specialist Groups in this respect – relatively few have either substantial funds or paid staff. However, we differ from many other Specialist Groups in having our executive function centered in a country (UK) which is outside the native range of our species (principally Asia), which is clearly a less than ideal situation.

A major aspect of the Pheasant Specialist Group's routine operation is the peer-review of project proposals submitted by members and others for endorsement by the Group. According to a recent audit of our activities, this is an area in which we are exceeding SSC's expectations, but we have identified a number of other areas in which our performance is less than adequate (see page 26). The current operation of the Group, together with a great increase in activity, has made the Chair's workload unsustainable. From now on, much greater use needs to be made of the expertise and commitment of Group members worldwide, and especially in Asian countries rich in pheasants.

Particularly with respect to endorsing projects, three new roles are proposed to increase the involvement of Pheasant Specialist Group members worldwide in its routine activities. Firstly,

experienced and local Project Advisors may be identified by the Chair to assist people with less experience in project planning, implementation or reporting. Secondly, the Chair will routinely request confidential comments on project proposals and reports from Group members (and others) worldwide. Thirdly, there will be a policy of deliberately but

gradually transferring responsibility for core functions and communication with other organizations beyond the Chair's Advisory Committee and towards the membership in Asian countries. It is hoped these organizational adjustments will internationalize the work of the Group, and move its center of gravity into Asia from Europe, while presenting all those choosing to become more involved with manageable workloads.

Peter Garson, Pheasant Specialist Group Chair

Response from the Antelope Specialist Group

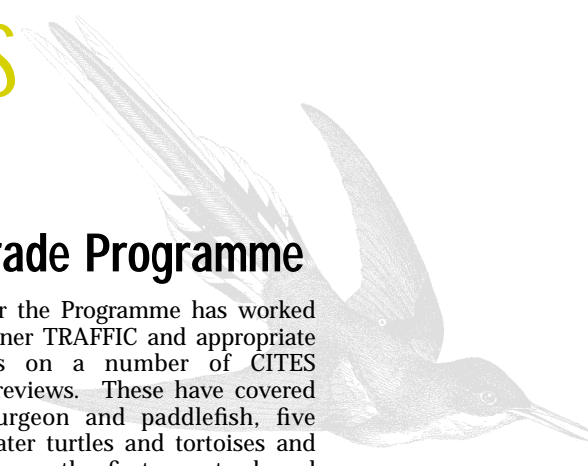
The end of the 1997-2000 Triennium offered a good opportunity to restructure the Antelope Specialist Group to make it more effective. We wanted to reorganize on the basis of geographical regions, each to be headed by a Vice-Chair or two. It was not a new idea – Southern Africa has been treated as a sub-region for the last decade and there has been a de-facto Asian antelope sub-group headed by David Mallon who, to his everlasting credit, took on the task of producing the *Antelope Survey Part 4*. In addition to the regional sub-groups, we decided that sub-groups could be taxonomically based.

The responsibilities of the Vice-Chairs include inviting people to become Group members by inviting them to the sub-group. While there is no restriction on the number of people who can be invited, choosing members who have specialist knowledge of, and a strong interest in antelope conservation, and who are prepared to actively contribute should keep the sub-group to a workable size. Also, Vice-Chairs should ensure the sub-group contributes, where possible and appropriate, to the main aims of the Antelope Specialist Group. Since the Vice-Chair positions are voluntary, like all other positions within the Group, how much each Vice-Chair can contribute will be limited to what can be fitted in around his/her other commitments. Note the phrase "where possible and appropriate" above! Those who accept Vice-Chair positions will be left to decide to what extent they can feasibly be involved in the Antelope Specialist Group. Our thanks go to the many members who have consented to act as Vice-Chairs.

Richard Estes, Antelope Specialist Group Chair

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Response from the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group

Regionalization is a current topic in SSC today but not a new subject for the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG). As long ago as 1990, a CBSG member working in India, proposed a plan and structure for a "CBSG, India". This was immediately granted and CBSG, India – over the next few years - built a group of 400 conservation experts and enthusiasts, conducted six Population and Habitat Viability Assessment (PHVA) workshops, and initiated Conservation Assessment and Management Plan (CAMP) workshops in India. During this time, CBSG, Indonesia, CBSG, Mexico, CBSG, MesoAmerica were initiated using CBSG advice and CBSG, India as a model.

These CBSG satellites or "nodes" were all spontaneously created by CBSG members living in range countries who had a particular interest in the principles and values of this unique Specialist Group. As time went on, other groups formed in Nepal and Sri Lanka

which, combined with the group in India, led to the formation of CBSG South Asia. Soon after, CBSG, South Africa came into being.

Networks or branches of SSC Specialist Groups in range countries have many advantages. They are a means of locating and training many people from a variety of related fields and disciplines. CAMP and PHVA workshops can be initiated from the range country, populated with individuals with first-hand knowledge of species and habitats of the country or region, and, perhaps most importantly, followed up with implementing actions by local conservationists. An active CBSG network can create a conservation community and identity within a country or region.

CBSG itself is not an implementing agency. As the world is a very large place, a global Specialist Group has to spread itself pretty thin. CBSG conducts workshops and relies on the host country organizations and agencies to implement them. CBSG regional and national networks can take a more proactive role in tracking recommendations and lobbying government for specific conservation or conducting further studies on species themselves.

CBSG has a few simple principles that guide the organization and function of country- and region- based CBSG networks. The first is the commitment of a person to take responsibility for organization of the network and guiding its activities. The second is that CBSG networks are made up of people who volunteer to participate in the CBSG projects and program, regardless of their other organizational affiliations. Thus all CBSG projects are open and intended to provide a neutral forum for people to share their interests

and expertise to assist conservation in their country and region. The third is that a newsletter is produced and distributed to all network members and other interested parties. The fourth is to serve as an organizer of CBSG workshops to help bring people together to find common ground on difficult conservation problems and to develop conservation action and management programs which can be implemented through the commitments of people participating in the workshops. The fifth important guideline is that all CBSG workshop results and recommendations are the product of the participants' work and are provided as advice to the responsible official authorities. CBSG works with the official wildlife authorities at their invitation in all such programs. CBSG is an advisory and support organization - not a confrontational advocacy organization. Its strengths are vested in its credibility and recognition as a science-based advisory group with skills in helping diverse groups find common ground for conservation problem solving.

Innovative thinking is part of CBSG's vitality. Having individuals all over the world participating in CBSG to the extent of running a network vastly adds to the substance of new ideas and evolution of tools and processes. This has proved an excellent method of reaching many parts of the world which CBSG core would not otherwise have time or resources to do.

Onnie Byers, Conservation Breeding Specialist Group and Sally Walker, CBSG, South Asia

Final note

We see that this new intersessional period has been a time for reflection and change in a number of Specialist Groups and hope the comments from the respondents have provided all Groups with food-for-thought on Group organization and function. You will also be interested to note that SSC representatives have been appointed in each of the IUCN Regional and Country Offices. Further, the new SSC Steering Committee includes Regional Vice-Chairs to represent the needs and concerns of SSC members within a region (see *Technical Information*, page 34). If you have further comments or responses to Danna's questions, or would like more information on SSC representatives in the regions, please email Team Species at ssc_iucn@ec.gc.ca.

Species Information Service (SIS)

A definitive version of the standalone software has been installed at the Red List Programme office in Cambridge and is being "debugged". The version incorporates the agreed Authority Files for Conservation Measurements, Threats, and Habitats. Based on the "field" experience of the Global Amphibian Assessment some changes have been recently suggested for the Habitat Authority File and will be incorporated shortly. In addition, a Trade/Use Module was developed and integrated into the software. As soon as the full working version of the SIS software tool is finalized, it will be distributed to SSC Specialist Groups.

Planning is underway for the next phase of SIS - the construction of an Oracle-based web system to support the Service. The scope, objectives and approach of WESIS (Web-enabled SIS), along with a comprehensive review of the technical needs for this initiative, have been fully detailed by two specific SIS teams (Technology Team, led by Fabio Corsi and Long Term Business Plan Team, led by Sue Mainka).

Red List Programme

The last few months have witnessed the release of a number of publications from the Red List Programme including the second draft of the regional application guidelines, published in *Conservation Biology* 15: 1206-1212, and an article on the application of the Red List Categories and Criteria to plants (*Plant Talk* 26: 34-37). In addition, the *IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria Version 3.1* was published in English, French and Spanish in booklet form.

The ever-increasing demand for Red List training workshops is far exceeding capacity. To address this, a draft set of user guidelines on the Red List Categories and Criteria and their application is being produced. This has a specific reference to freshwater species, and includes a training package that can be used by anyone to either run a Red List training course or to teach themselves. Dr. Elodie Hudson (a member of the former Criteria Review Working Group) has been contracted to put together the guidelines and she is working very closely with the Standards and Petitions Subcommittee on this. Dr. Jinie Dela (formerly an educational officer with the IUCN Sri Lanka office) is developing the training package, working closely with the IUCN Commission for Education and Communication. Products will include a training manual, an interactive training programme on CD-ROM and an advertising brochure.

Wildlife Trade Programme

Over the past year the Programme has worked with its close partner TRAFFIC and appropriate Specialist Groups on a number of CITES Significant Trade reviews. These have covered 14 species of sturgeon and paddlefish, five species of freshwater turtles and tortoises and work is underway on the first country-based Significant Trade study in Madagascar and a review of trade in the pink conch (*Strombus gigas*).

The Programme is now preparing for the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to CITES to be held in November in Chile. The booklet, *CITES A Conservation Tool*, has been published and circulated on CD for the first time. It is available on the SSC website and has a new section providing guidance on procedures at the COP. The *IUCN Analyses of CITES Amendment Proposals* are now underway in conjunction with TRAFFIC. This project aims to undertake a review of the proposals submitted for the forthcoming CITES COP.

Last year the Programme initiated a new area of work to look at the conservation impacts of commercial cultivation of plants and animals for international trade. With the burgeoning demand for wild resources for food and medicinal security, and to supply livelihoods, there is the dilemma of how to ensure supply, while conserving wild species. As seen with traditional crop and livestock varieties, cultivation, whilst taking pressure off wild stocks in the short-term, can lead to long-term loss of genetic variation and a lack of incentives to conserve the species *in situ*. Recommendations resulting from a past workshop endorsed the need for risk assessments before initiating new cultivation operations and started to develop a checklist to guide such assessments.

In the context of the review of the CITES listing criteria, the Wildlife Trade Programme has been interacting more with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Together with TRAFFIC and WWF, a briefing paper was produced on CITES and fish for FAO delegates. In addition, the Shark Specialist Group has been active in reviewing progress with implementation of the FAO International Plan of Action, the development of which was originally stimulated by a CITES Resolution. Two years after adoption of the voluntary plan, progress has been disappointing and the majority of shark fisheries remain largely unregulated. The CITES Animals Committee is looking at how the situation can be improved.

Innovative thinking is part of CBSG's vitality

Plant Programme Update

The highlight of the past year has been the adoption of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (see page 5). Now that it is in place there is a clear mandate for plant conservation along with guidelines for priority areas for activity and funding. It must be emphasized that the development of the strategy has been a cooperative effort involving time and resources from many organizations and dedicated individuals, of which SSC has been only one. The Plant Programme produced two IUCN policy papers on the Strategy (one for the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) meeting in November 2001 and another at the CBD COP in April 2002), and was also involved in two side events at these meetings.

Funding is being sought for the "Conservation of Wild Relatives of Crop Plants—Developing Capacity and Knowledge" project. This is linked to the International Plant Genetics Research Institute-led, Global Environment Facility-funded project "In situ Conservation of Crop Wild Relatives (CWR) through Improved Information Management and Field Application", which will involve five countries (Armenia, Bolivia, Madagascar, Sri Lanka and Uzbekistan). Its goal is to improve the *in situ* conservation of the wild relatives of crop plants and their increased availability for crop improvement in the participating countries. The SSC component will focus on the creation of a new Crop Wild Relative Specialist Group to gather, in collaboration with a number of other Specialist Groups, conservation status information on the wild relatives of crops, as well as produce action plans for these very important species.

The "Top 50" threatened plants project is being developed to address the increasing need for case studies for education, the media, and publicity to encourage funding agencies to invest in plant conservation. It was decided that each Specialist Group should present 50 examples of plants within their area of specialization to raise awareness among conservation practitioners, decision-makers and the general public. A pilot project involving the Mediterranean Island Plants Specialist Group has been submitted for funding.

Finally members of the SSC network outside the Plants Programme may like to note that a logo has been finally adopted.

The New Freshwater Biodiversity Assessment Programme

The SSC/IUCN Freshwater Biodiversity Assessment Programme was initiated in January 2002 with the appointment of Will Darwall as the Freshwater Biodiversity Assessment Officer, based in Cambridge, UK.

Records for endangered species tell us that, on average worldwide, freshwater biodiversity is more threatened than terrestrial. Of those species considered in the IUCN 2000 RedList, 25% of reptiles, 20% of amphibians, 27% of molluscs, and 30% of fishes (mostly freshwater) were listed as threatened. Despite the evident biodiversity crisis in freshwater conservation, activities focused on freshwater habitats and species lag far behind those for terrestrial habitats and species. This program aims to direct attention and conservation action towards freshwater biodiversity issues on global, regional and local scales. The overall Programme objective is the maintenance of freshwater biodiversity and a halt to the rapid loss of its components. This will be achieved through increasing regional or national capacity and expertise to manage freshwater ecosystems. To do so, tools and methods to gather baseline data on the status of biodiversity and threats to that biodiversity on a regional scale are needed.

The program will be actively involved in developing regional networks of expert volunteers that can update and maintain information databases and translate information into conservation action. SSC will provide this service through expansion of its current network to include more freshwater taxa. It will also prepare global baseline assessment of freshwater biodiversity for selected taxa. Funding opportunities are currently being pursued to assess mollusc, fish and selected invertebrate taxa. The Global Amphibian Assessment is underway and should be completed by mid-2003. Global assessments are also planned, or are ongoing, for other groups which include freshwater-dependent species such as mammals, reptiles, and birds in collaboration with various international partners. In addition, the Programme will be involved in the storing, managing and analyzing freshwater biodiversity data within the Species Information Service (SIS), developing methods for prioritizing freshwater sites for conservation and promoting increased awareness on freshwater biodiversity conservation at all levels of society throughout the regions.



New logo for the Plant Programme

African Elephant

Report on the fifth Members' Meeting

The fifth members' meeting of the African Elephant Specialist Group took place in the Shaba National Reserve in Kenya, early in 2002. Attended by 36 out of the current 48 Group members, the meeting was made possible by funding from the European Commission and the United States Fish & Wildlife Service with additional support from the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

The meeting began with presentations from three geneticists who described findings from recent studies that suggest the existence of multiple species of African elephant. After lengthy discussion, the Group concluded that although strong evidence does exist to support the view that there is more than one species of African elephant, the taxonomic status of elephants still remains uncertain. Furthermore, some populations of high conservation value may consist wholly or partly of inter-specific hybrids under a multiple species scenario. The premature allocation of Africa's elephants to two or more species could result in significant populations being left in taxonomic limbo. Therefore the Group strongly encouraged further genetic and morphological studies to resolve this situation. Suggestions were also made for further sampling of specific elephant populations.

The Group once again agreed to become the IUCN Red List Authority on the African Elephant and to carry out the global listing for *Loxodonta africana* as it is now described. It was further recommended that separate listings be carried out for savanna and forest populations in anticipation of further clarification on African elephant taxonomy. A new Red List Task Force was set up to take this process forward in close collaboration with the IUCN Red List Programme.

Memberships of the Human Elephant Conflict and Data Review Working Groups were re-appointed and a new group, the Technological Advances Working Group was established to examine the latest developments in the field of GPS radio tracking and other technological innovations relevant to elephant conservation.



Fifth Members Meeting

As shown by the many case studies presented at the meeting, elephant translocation is a highly technical and expensive undertaking. Many movements of animals have taken place in recent years in Africa often with little technical guidance from elephant experts. In an effort to fill this technical vacuum, a new Re-introduction Task Force (RTF) was formally appointed to help draft guidelines for the re-introduction and translocation of African elephants. The task force will be working closely with the African Elephant Specialist Group and Re-introduction Specialist Group Secretariats.

Other topics discussed at the meeting included development of national and sub-regional elephant conservation strategies, progress of the CITES Monitoring of Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) program and other issues relating to illegal killing, trade and human-elephant conflict. A detailed report on these discussions will be published in the June issue of *Pachyderm*.

In true Group fashion the meeting was both productive and enjoyable, which made all the hard work done by the African Elephant Specialist Group Secretariat in the months leading up to the meeting seem worthwhile.

Leo Niskanen, Programme Officer

African Rhino

Cameroon black rhino conservation strategy

The African Rhino Specialist Group has decided to no longer actively support the Cameroon black rhino conservation program following an extensive survey which failed to locate any rhino (although old spoor confirmed the likelihood of there being five rhino left, with the probability of a further three).

At a technical experts meeting, concerns were raised about the number of poaching camps and cable snares encountered, and the apparent low intensity of law enforcement. The decision to stop supporting the strategy was based on the failure to establish whether a nucleus for a viable population remained, together with the extreme difficulty and cost of procuring, establishing and conserving a population in a fenced sanctuary. However, the Cameroon government was encouraged to protect the remaining rhinos *in situ* and to create conditions conducive to their long-term survival.

Biological management recommendations

One of the recommendations to emerge from the biological management workshop hosted by the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Rhino Management Group was that the proposed revised strategy for black rhino should be actively communicated to relevant conservation agencies and management teams (see *Species* 36). The proceedings of this workshop served as the background document for an Ezemvelo-KZN Wildlife black rhino management strategy meeting held in April 2002, at which this organization formally adopted the strategy for all its populations. The revised strategy and proceedings will be presented at a workshop held by the South African National Parks to revise their black rhino strategy. Plans are also being made to present the revised biological management strategy to both the Namibian Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs and Kenya Wildlife Service for their consideration.

Other news in brief

In a most encouraging development, a viable founder population of white rhino is being re-established at Chief's Island, Moremi National Park. This is a joint initiative between the Botswana Department of Wildlife and National Parks and the private sector. The inaugural meeting of the SADC Rhino Recovery Group took place in late May 2002 in Malawi. This group comprises representatives of African range states that have either lost or almost lost their rhino populations and wish to plan for their re-establishment and recovery. The Group is concerned about the situation in various rhino areas, not least Tsavo East National Park, Kenya, where at least four black rhinos were recently poached in the free-release area, and also in Zimbabwe. In the latter case, land invasions into the rhino conservancies pose a major threat. Following major enforcement efforts in Tsavo East, Kenya Wildlife Service is to be commended for a number of successful operations against poachers in the area. The Group would like to especially thank WWF for their continued financial assistance, without which it would be impossible for the Group to operate effectively.

Martin Brooks, Chair

Arabian Plants

Shortly before the World Conservation Congress in Amman in 2000, a workshop to provide training and information about the Red List Programme was organized and hosted by the National Commission for Wildlife Conservation and Development (NCWCD) in Riyadh. The IUCN Red List Programme Officer, Craig Hilton-Taylor and the IUCN Plant Officer, Wendy

Strahm, ran the workshop, which was attended by some 20 participants from Saudi Arabia and the region. The Group will now focus on preparing a checklist of the flora of the Arabian Region, assessing all species against the Red List Categories, and most importantly, encouraging conservation action on the most threatened species. It is envisaged to adapt the Global Plant Conservation Strategy, recently adopted by the CBD COP, to suit conditions in the Arabian Peninsula.

The Group has identified three immediate needs to place the conservation of plants in the region on a firm footing. These are to publish the Flora of the Arabian Peninsula, to establish an Arabian Plants Database and to prepare an Action Plan for the Conservation of Flora in the Arabian Peninsula. The first of these recently moved forward when a sponsor for the publishing expenses of the remaining four volumes was found. The Group, through NCWCD, has an agreement with the Royal Botanical Garden Edinburgh to compile the existing knowledge, edit and publish the remaining volumes.

During a recent visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Dr. Peter Wyse Jackson announced that Botanical Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) will donate US\$ 1 million to the establishment of a botanical garden in Riyadh with the main objective being the *ex situ* conservation of regional plants.

The Specialist Group, through NCWCD, is planning a workshop on junipers in June. The problem concerns the widespread die-off and die-back of juniper (*Juniperus procera*) in the Asir Mountains, south-western Saudi Arabia. The phenomena have occurred over a number of years and in a number of localities. Naturally, there have been many studies on aspects of the problem, including a three-year collaborative project between NCWCD and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). This project has produced a considerable body of data on plant associations, habitat characteristics, micro-meteorological conditions, plant growth and other parameters thought to be integral to understanding the problem.

Unfortunately, none of these studies seems to have unequivocally pinpointed the cause of the die-off. Obviously, if the cause cannot be identified, no clear solution can be offered. As a means of moving forward on this extremely important conservation issue, the main objective of the workshop will be to formulate research projects that will contribute to management strategies to restore juniper woodlands.

Abdulaziz H. Abuzinada, Chair

Asian Elephant

The Asian Elephant Specialist Group has in recent years made a special effort to stimulate interest among governments as well as local scientists and conservationists in Southeast Asia, particularly the Indo-Chinese region. This is being largely achieved through partnering with other international conservation organizations working here. The Chair and the Deputy Chair (Southeast Asia) have also attended regional meetings of range states to facilitate dialogue on transboundary elephant conservation programs. The most recent of these was the Bilateral Conference between Vietnam and Cambodia to discuss the proposed Daklak-Mondulkiri Transboundary Reserve.

The other main activities of the group include establishment of a Southeast Asian office to facilitate conservation activities in this region, updating the Asian Elephant Action Plan, and a meeting of the group in May 2002 to discuss the Action Plan.

The Group entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Fauna and Flora International in December 2001 to benefit from the assistance in its activities in Southeast Asia. Under this MoU, Mr. Joe Heffernan, Programme Coordinator of the FFI Indo-China Elephant Programme based in Cambodia, is also acting as the Programme Officer (Southeast Asia) for the Group. Support for this office comes from the UK government. This development would benefit the Group by enabling better networking and communication with members, especially from the southeast Asian region. The countries covered by this office are Cambodia, Lao PDR, Vietnam, China, Thailand, Malaysia (Peninsular and Sabah), and Indonesia (Sumatra and Kalimantan). Other range states will be served from the Chair's office in India.

Country nationals have been working on the drafts for updating the Asian Elephant Action Plan with the Asian Elephant Conservation Fund of the US Fish & Wildlife Service and the UK's Chester Zoo as principal supporters. The Action Plan will be eventually available on the web and translated into local languages where needed.

A full meeting of the group was held 27-30 May 2002 at Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The broad agenda for the meeting covered presentations of status papers on the Asian elephant in the range states, discussion and revision of the Asian elephant Action Plan, initial meetings of three task forces on elephant-human conflict, captive elephant welfare and management, and poaching and the ivory trade. The reports of the task forces will be part of the Action Plan. Other Specialist Group issues such as communications, publication of the journal *Gajah* and a newsletter, and future directions for the group were also discussed.

Prof. Raman Sukumar, Chair, and Prof. Charles Santiapillai, Deputy Chair

Bison – North America

The Bison Specialist Group is producing a conservation status survey for bison in North America. Delaney Boyd, a graduate student at the University of Calgary, Faculty of Environmental Design, and Officer of the Group, is coordinating the effort by gathering status information and drafting the document in collaboration with Specialist Group members. Upon completion of the status survey, the Group will prepare an IUCN/SCC Conservation Status Survey and Action Plan for North American Bison.

The highlight for this update is the newly developed Bison Specialist Group website (www.notitia.com/bison). The site provides information on bison and bison conservation for the general public and facilitates collaboration among Group members and other partners across Canada, the United States, and Mexico. The password-accessed Member Forum features member contact information, a Group Briefing Note archive, and documents requiring Group comment.

The Status Survey Collaboration page accessible from the Forum page enables members to review draft sections of the survey and to provide feedback on the validity and comprehensiveness of the material. On-line collaboration enhances the efficiency of the work of the Bison Specialist Group in drafting the status survey.

Delaney Boyd, Officer, and Dr. Cormack Gates, Co-Chair

A highlight is the newly developed website

Cactus and Succulent

New ideas and initiatives for the Cactus and Succulent Specialist Group were developed at the Group's biennial meeting in April. This took place during the Congress of the International Organization for Succulent Plant Study (IOS) in Phoenix, Arizona.

Red Listing of Cacti and Succulents

A review of the events of the last two years showed a tremendous first success with the Red Listing of cacti and succulents. A total of 396 Red List Assessments using the revised IUCN Red List Criteria (IUCN 2001) were submitted to the Red List Officer. The Group acknowledges the efforts of the participant members and extends its warmest thanks. With 199 Mexican, 196 Brazilian and one Argentinean cactus species assessed, large gaps are left to be filled.

Future goals and priorities for the Group were clearly marked. The Red Listing of cacti and succulents remains the Group's most important activity. Gaps in the Red Listing of South American cacti and the lack of assessments of the 'other succulents' have to be addressed. Every member holding relevant information and

expertise to help fill these gaps is urgently requested to contribute and contact the Secretary for further information.

The future of the Cactus and Succulent Plant Action Plan

The IUCN Cactus and Succulent Plant Action Plan and its future were extensively discussed during a plenary discussion meeting of members at the IOS Congress. The proposal to review and revise the Action Plan was eagerly supported by nearly all attendees. A revised Action Plan could be a new flagship project for the IOS. It should contain a review of what has been achieved since the first edition, lessons learned, and proposals for future actions and their implementation.

Philip Downs, Group Member and Principal Coordinator of the IOS Conservation Section, has volunteered to be the driving force behind the revision in collaboration with Wolfgang Stuppy, Secretary of both the Specialist Group and IOS. Like the first IUCN Cactus and Succulent Plant Action Plan, the new edition would also be a strongly collaborative effort of IOS and the Group, whose memberships strongly overlap.

Wolfgang Stuppy, Secretary

Conservation Breeding

Minneapolis, May 22, 2002—Dr. Ulysses S. Seal has announced to the membership of the CBSG that he has been diagnosed with a large cell adenocarcinoma of the lung with metastases. The Conservation Breeding Specialist Group of the IUCN Species Survival Commission has been led by Ulie for 22 years. The treatments he is undergoing make it difficult for him to maintain, in the near term, the very heavy schedule that he is accustomed to keeping.

Meetings of CBSG Steering Committee members were held in May 2002 in Marwell, UK and Minneapolis, US to discuss the management of CBSG during the period of Ulie's illness. As a result, Dr. Lee Simmons, director of Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo, has agreed to assume the duties of Deputy Chair of CBSG to assist Dr. Seal for the immediate future in the leadership of the Group. Dr. Onnie Byers will continue to manage the CBSG office, based at the Minnesota Zoo.

Discussions have been held with many of CBSG's key donors and stakeholders. All have committed their continued support for the organization.

CBSG's Program Staff, composed of Dr. Byers and Dr. Phil Miller, will continue to develop its important work program and deliver innovative conservation programs. To meet increasing demand, CBSG is actively seeking additional pro-

gram staff. More than 14 CAMPs, PHVAs, conservation planning, and training workshops will be delivered over the remainder of the current year, and more are being scheduled. With the assistance of CBSG Regional Networks (Sally Walker, CBSG South Asia; Yolanda Matamoros, CBSG Mesoamerica; Amy Camacho, CBSG Mexico; and Yolan Friedmann, CBSG South Africa) and Strategic Associates, including Dr. Harrie Vredenburg, Dr. Frances Westley, Dr. Robert Lacy and Dr. Doug Armstrong, all of the current commitments will be met.

CBSG intends to maintain its active schedule. The 2003 schedule is currently being developed and organizations considering using the CBSG tools and processes should contact the CBSG office as soon as possible to ensure inclusion in the CBSG schedule.

Ulie is dealing with his illness in the same energetic and pragmatic manner that he has brought to the work of the CBSG. Ulie welcomes messages from colleagues and friends. If you wish to contact him, messages can be sent to a message board set up for this purpose (www.cbsg.org).

Cracid

During the V International Congress on Management of Amazonia and Latin American Fauna (Cartagena, September 2001), a Symposium took place entitled "The Status of the Family Cracidae in Colombia: Perspectives of Use and Conservation". This was coordinated by Ana Maria Franco and Luis Miguel Renjifo (Instituto Alexander von Humboldt); Isabel Melo and Jose Manuel Ochoa (Sociedad Antioqueña de Ornitología) and Diana Arzuza (Orniat). The objective of the Symposium was to unite scientists interested in studying cracids, to exchange and discuss information contributing to their management and conservation.

The symposium included a number of presentations on cracids in Colombia. A workshop took place to identify information gaps in basic field research, *ex situ* conservation, and management. Subjects highlighted included research and *ex situ* conservation relating to threatened species and management pertaining to opportunities and limitations that the national legislation offers, determine what alternatives to cracid use in Colombia can be offered without creating false expectations to local communities. A list of ideas was created to propose conservation action for cracids, with priority for threatened species. This list conformed with the ideas of the Colombian Cracidologist community. The Proceedings of this Symposium will be published at a later date.

The Cracid Specialist Group is pleased to announce its latest publication, *Cracid Ecology and Conservation in the New Millennium* (D.M. Brooks and F. Gonzalez-Garcia, Eds. - Misc.

Publ. Houston Mus. Nat. Sci., No. 2.), partly underwritten by Crax International Conservation Group. It contains cracid papers presented at regional symposia held in Monterrey, Mexico (with emphasis on Middle America and Colombia) and Asuncion, Paraguay (emphasis on Paraguay and Argentina) in October 1999, as well as Santa Cruz, Bolivia (emphasis on Bolivia and Peru) in 1997. The book is 225 pp. and costs US\$17. Four of the 13 contributions are in Spanish, but all contributions have English, Spanish and Portuguese abstracts. If you are a distributor or would like to order five or more copies, contact us directly for bulk prices. Please contact Jennifer King (jking@hmns.org) directly for ordering information: Jennifer King; Houston Museum of Natural Science; 1 Hermann Circle; Retail Services; Houston, Texas 77030-1799; USA.

A number of cracid field projects have been implemented since publication of the Cracid Action Plan. Of the 19 projects listed for support in Appendix V of the Action Plan, all but three have been realized, receiving full or partial support!

The Group continues its strong commitment to the publication of cracid research through the trilingual *Bol. CSG (Bulletin of the Cracid Specialist Group)*. This Bulletin has been published and circulated biannually, every March and September, with generous help from the World Pheasant Association. The Bulletin reaches nearly 400 individuals around the globe, predominantly in Latin America. Check out the Group's website:

<http://www.angelfire.com/ca6/cracid>

Dan Brooks, Chair

Equid

The Equid Specialist Group has secured funding for research and conservation of the African wild ass in Eritrea and Ethiopia. The Eritrean Project received a Whitley-Laing Continuation Award for Nature Conservation. Fanuel Kebede (Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Organization) received funding for conservation research on both the African wild ass (*Equus africanus*) and Grevy's zebra from the Wildlife Trust. The Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Organization has received a grant from the French Government and the United Nations Development Programme for the conservation of African wild ass in the Yangudi Rassa National Park. The Group is working in cooperation with the national wildlife authorities and local residents to develop management plans that will maintain ecosystem integrity, conserve the endangered species, and provide long-term food security.

Preliminary analyses done by Dr. Ann Oakenfull

indicate that the African wild ass populations in Ethiopia and Eritrea are the same genetic population and that there is no evidence of breeding with domestic donkeys. Dr. Oakenfull has received funding from the Brookfield Zoo and the San Diego Zoo and is currently using microsatellite analyses to investigate paternity and relatedness in the Eritrean African wild ass population. This technique will also be used to determine the number of different individuals in the Ethiopian African wild ass population.

Dr. Stuart Williams completed a survey on the Grevy's zebra in Northern Kenya and the data are being analyzed. Dr. Williams has also secured funds for further surveys of Grevy's zebra (*Equus grevyi*) in Ethiopia. Dr. Nita Shah received funding from the San Diego Zoo for surveys of the Kiang (*Equus kiang*) in China. Dr. Dan Rubenstein has a long-term research program underway on the mating systems and multilevel social organization of the Plains zebra. Finally, Wildlife Trust provided funding for conservation protection of the Kulan (*Equus hemionus kulan*) in Turkmenistan. This is part of a much larger program being led by Dr. Olga Pereladova and WWF Central Asia.

Mr. Fanuel Kebede completed his MSc at the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology (DICE) at Kent University, Canterbury, England with the support of the Wildlife Trust and the Equid Specialist Group. He wrote his thesis on 'The ecology and conservation of the African wild ass in the Danakil desert, Ethiopia'. Upon his return to Ethiopia he was appointed a research biologist with the Department of Research and Veterinary Medicine at the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Organization. Hagos Yohannes, Head of the Eritrean Wildlife Conservation Unit, has also completed his MSc at DICE, Kent University, with support from the Equid Specialist Group and the Wildlife Trust.

The Equid Specialist Group has held meetings and symposia in 1997, 1998, 2000, and 2001. The 2001 meeting was held at the 8th International Theriological Congress in South Africa and open to both Group members and Congress delegates. A Symposium on Equid biology, behavioral ecology, and conservation was convened by Patricia Moehlman.

The new Equid Action Plan has been submitted to the Species Survival Commission and is in the final editing stage.

Patricia D. Moehlman, Chair,
and Mace Hack, Deputy Chair



Iguana

The rock iguanas of the West Indies (genus *Cyclura*) are among the most endangered lizards in the world. Because they are important seed dispersers for native plants, their loss has serious consequences for the health of Caribbean dry tropical forest ecosystems. The Grand Cayman blue iguana, *Cyclura nubila lewisi*, is among the most Critically Endangered of the group, with no more than 100-200 individuals remaining. For this reason, support for conservation efforts aimed toward recovery of this unique animal have been a high priority of the Iguana Specialist Group since its inception.

Immediately following the Group's annual meeting in November, 2001, a two-day workshop involving the entire Iguana Specialist Group,

together with local participants, developed a Species Recovery Plan for the Grand Cayman blue iguana. The workshop, held at the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park on

Grand Cayman, was hosted by the National Trust for the Cayman Islands and facilitated by Group member Quentin Bloxam (Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust).

The Recovery Plan's goal is "to restore a wild population of the Grand Cayman blue iguana sufficient to remain viable in the long term." Drawing on a groundswell of support from Specialist Group members and the international conservation community that has been stimulated by the workshop, the National Trust has now launched into work on the Recovery Plan, under the direction of Group member Frederic Burton.

The five-year plan coordinates diverse aspects of an integrated and ambitious conservation program, ranging from habitat protection, *in-situ* and *ex-situ* captive breeding and head-starting, reintroduction and restocking, research, fundraising and public education. It builds on a substantial program already established by the National Trust, which since 1990 has been operating a successful *in-situ* captive breeding program, leading, via field research and habitat management, to the restocking of a wild blue iguana population in the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park. This small nucleus of released captive-bred animals began breeding in the Park in 2000. Field studies led by the National Trust in the past, combined with significant efforts in public education over the years, provides a strong base of information and local support from which to carry the Recovery Plan forward. However, preliminary results from a new survey of the wild population suggest that there is little time left to act. There is evidence of a major reduction in the range of wild blue iguanas on Grand Cayman compared with data from the early 1990s, bringing this taxon perilously close to functional extinction in the wild.

The recovery plan will shortly be available on the Iguana Specialist Group website (<http://www.iucn-isg.org/>).

Frederic Burton, Steering Committee Member

Insectivore

Veterinary Liaison

The Insectivore Specialist Group has appointed Linda W. Ruth, D.V.M. as "Veterinary Liaison" (lindaruth@earthlink.net). Her task is to answer questions from the general public directed to "The Shrew Shrine" (<http://members.vienna.at/shrew>) about matters involving insectivores. The Shrew Shrine has been a forum for insectivore information since 1996 and an electronic newsletter associated with the site, "Shrew Talk", is distributed to over 600 registered recipients.

Since August, Dr. Ruth has answered questions covering a broad range of topics, from the care of shrews and other insectivores found orphaned or injured, to concerns about zoonotic diseases, parasites, crop damage, conservation matters, behavior and ecology. Besides answering urgent questions whenever possible (the survival of captive orphaned or injured shrews depends upon receiving care within a matter of hours), Dr. Ruth is collecting data in order to establish a frequently asked question, or FAQ page for the website. The Shrew Shrine is a first-line resource for people interested in information about these animals and receives frequent inquiries about the care of found insectivores.

We hope that this service and the FAQ page, when developed, will help those who care enough to inquire about the insectivorous wildlife they find in their gardens, and raise general awareness and appreciation of insectivores. The answers stress the important role insectivores play in the ecosystem, encourage the use of non-lethal control measures whenever possible, and highlight the beneficial effects of insectivores in the urban environment. Hopefully, readers will begin to see that shrews and moles are not pests to be eliminated, but valuable partners in the homeowner's battle against crop, garden and home-destroying insects. Also, by learning about the role of insectivores in the ecosystem, both as predators and as prey, people become more aware of the connections between all living organisms, enhancing their understanding of ecology.



Rock Iguana, *Cyclura nubila lewisi*

RISCINSA

To address the needs of insectivore conservation in tropical regions, the Insectivore Specialist Group has developed links with RISCINSA, the Rodentia, Insectivora and Scandentia Conservation and Information Network of South Asia, which now represents the Group in South Asia. RISCINSA was established in response to a recommendation coming from a group of rodent and insectivore biologists at a Conservation Assessment and Management Plan (CAMP) workshop. In the workshop more than 50% of the 102 Indian rodents and insectivores were categorized as Data Deficient. RISCINSA members work to improve knowledge of data deficient species.

RISCINSA organized a training workshop in field techniques and taxonomy in Trichur, India, 21-25 July 2002. Dr. Mike Jordan, Small Mammal Chair of the Re-introduction Specialist Group, will act as lead resource person with local specialists assisting. Part of the training will be devoted to the IUCN Red List and the CAMP process, in an attempt to prepare the field biologists for a full South Asian Rodent and Insectivore CAMP to be held November in Coimbatore, India. The training workshop, and the network itself, is fully sponsored by the Knowsley Safari Park, United Kingdom.

Werner Haberl, Chair, Linda Ruth, ISG Veterinary Liaison, and Sally Walker, RISCINSA

Otter

Basics for Africa

A project has been started to increase the knowledge of the distribution of otters in Africa. This includes the preparation of a leaflet introducing the four otter species occurring in Africa and asking, via questionnaire, who has seen otters. Considering the low level of knowledge of African otters, this basic information can form a foundation for further studies. Also, the German Association for Otter Conservation (Aktion Fischotterschutz) is preparing a database to form the basis for a future experts network providing information on the distribution of otters in Africa. The leaflet is printed in three languages: English, French and Portuguese and was made possible through a donation from WWF South Africa. In Africa, it can be ordered from Prof. Jan Nel (University of Stellenbosch, Private Bag X1, Matieland, 7602 Stellenbosch, South Africa). Others can contact the Group chairman (c.reuther@otterzentrum.de).

The second initiative is focussing on the Congo clawless otter (*Aonyx congicus*), a species about which virtually nothing is known but is expected to be limited to the Congo Basin. Extensive efforts were undertaken to identify its relation-

ship to the Cape clawless otter (*Aonyx capensis*) and, to increase knowledge of its biology and distribution. Aktion Fischotterschutz organized a genetic study at the Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research in Berlin, carried out on museum samples. Efforts were also made to find evidence for the existence of this otter in Africa. It is hoped that these efforts will soon clear this last mystery among the otter species.

Public awareness and illegal trade in Asia

Increasing public awareness is one of the most important contributions to otter conservation in Asia. In February, more than 40 participants met at Rach Gia, Vietnam for a workshop on "Conservation and Public Awareness of Otters in U Minh Thuong National Park, Vietnam". This unique reserve is home to one of the rarest otter species in Asia, the hairy-nosed otter (*Lutra sumatrana*). Recently upgraded to a National Park, U Minh Thuong is part of a rural development project of CARE International in Vietnam. As always, attempts to combine the interests of rural development and of conservation require the understanding and participation of the local people.

The Otter Research Group of Japan also supported a second workshop in New Delhi, India, in March 2002. While considering "How to promote otters as the wetland ambassador", the participants clarified a major challenge to otter conservation in Asia - otters are not as popular as tigers or elephants in this region. The participants tried to assist the Wildlife Trust of India, which hosted this meeting, to prepare a strategy to change this situation.

At both workshops, an issue that may have been underestimated in the past, came to the foreground. Several reports demonstrated that illegal trade of otters in Asia, as well as their use in traditional medicine, is greater than previously assumed. Asian otter specialists need to investigate more thoroughly and develop ideas on how to reduce this threat.

Claus Reuther, Chair

We hope to raise awareness and appreciation of insectivores



Pheasant Specialist Group

Earlier this year, the Pheasant Specialist Group completed a formal audit of its operations using the Specialist Group Chair's Terms of Reference as a framework providing an account of SSC expectations.

Pleasingly, we concluded that our project management activities were very well developed, from encouraging people to write proposals, through the details of project planning and implementation, to helping with writing reports and refereed journal papers. We view our project management activities as a training regime for our less-experienced members as well as a means of producing research results that should lead to conservation action on the ground.

We have deliberately departed from the SSC guidelines in two areas. First, rather than fundraising as a Group, we help principal investigators responsible for developing our projects by issuing an endorsement letter on behalf of

SSC, BirdLife International and the World Pheasant Association, our three parent organizations. This letter evidently carries some weight when appended to grant applications. Second, we set priorities in Action

Plans with a five-year shelf-life rather than developing an annual workplan.

We have been falling short of SSC's expectations in several other respects. We are now striving to operate more by consensus from Asia, where all but one of our species occur (see *Special Feature*, page 15). We are only just setting up an independent web presence (<http://www.gct.org.uk/psg>) with generous assistance from the Game Conservancy Trust in the UK. We are still poorly represented in several Southeast Asian countries that are rich in pheasants, but are now working to fill the gaps. As a first step towards investigating sustainable use options, Rahul Kaul and Jitender Jandrotia are now undertaking a study designed to assess the impact of hunting on pheasant populations near Chamba in the western Himalayas (India). We have generally not been effective in converting our research findings into advice for conservation managers to take action on the ground. However, in the eastern Himalayas, Sarala Khaling is taking forward her earlier work on the status and ecology of the Satyr tragopan by involving local villagers in monitoring both the tragopan population (as a ecotourism flagship), and the various impacts of human activities on the forest habitats that they share. A survey in northern Myanmar by Alexander Pack-Blumenau revealed pristine forests and a population of Blyth's Tragopan in the Hpungran Razi Range, which has now been given protected area status as a result.

As we approach the halfway mark in the life of our second Action Plan (2000-04), 18 of its 25 listed priority projects are receiving some attention. Major species-focused work is underway in China on the ecology of Elliot's pheasant in Guizhou (Liang Wei), Reeves's pheasant in Henan (Zhang Zhengwang) and Sclater's monal in Yunnan (Han Lianxian). Elsewhere, surveys continue for both Germain's peacock-pheasant in south Vietnam (Nguyen Tran Vy) and green peafowl in Cambodia (Tan Setha). A comprehensive review of all available status information on Indochinese Galliformes species is being undertaken by Nick Brickle with a view to identifying the most urgent action required. During August, a workshop is being organized in Beijing by Peter Garson and Philip McGowan to facilitate the publication of more research findings in international journals.

Peter Garson, Chair

Pigs, Peccaries and Hippos

During the past decade there has been increasing recognition of both the economic and ecological importance of peccaries in many South and Central American countries. The Peccary Sub-group has been involved in a large number of field-based research and public awareness activities, workshops and conferences, intended to promote more applied research and the improved conservation management of all three peccary species, namely the white-lipped peccary (*Tayassu pecari*), collared peccary (*T. tajacu*) and the giant or Chacoan peccary (*Catagonus wagneri*).

The Sub-group last met in Cartagena, Colombia, where amongst the more important issues addressed, were the opening of the peccary pelt trade in Bolivia and the current peccary pelt trade in Peru. The Sub-group is also involved with an analysis of the Peruvian peccary pelt trade and ways of incorporating this trade into conservation initiatives. Peru is the only country that is legally exporting peccary pelts to Europe. This peccary trade might be a means of establishing a "green leather" program or "certification", which would enable the peccary pelt trade to be used as a means of promoting wildlife conservation through economic incentives. This project is still in the initial phase, but related research intended to improve understanding of the market, the movement (sale and re-sale of pelts), hunters' attitudes and correlates of pelt quality, are also underway.

The European Commission has just begun a new three-year INCO Collared peccary project that involves members of the Peccary Sub-group. The project is entitled "Development of different production systems for the sustainable exploitation

of the collared peccary (*Tayassu tajacu*) in Latin America", and is led by Dr. Ferran Jori of France. Other new and exciting peccary projects are being developed throughout Central and South America, many with the involvement of members of the Peccary Sub-group. These include a new white-lipped peccary project in Bolivia, a project looking at the status of peccaries in the Chaco of Argentina, and projects in Mexico focused on the impact of hunting on peccary populations in Chiapas and peccary habitat use in the Yucatan.

The Sub-group is also planning a project entitled "Evaluating the Geographic Status and Landscape Dynamics of white-lipped peccary", which intends to assess and implement a more coordinated conservation strategy for this species. White-lipped peccary range from the Yucatan of Mexico, through continental South America, to the Chaco of Argentina. However, numbers vary considerably over this range, the species being on the verge of extirpation in some areas, whilst still maintaining large healthy populations in other areas. This variance in population size and structure is key to understanding future conservation strategies of these animals. For example, a large, healthy population of white-lipped peccary in western Amazonia can be incorporated into a strategy based on sustainable hunting and the peccary pelt trade. In contrast, fragmented populations in places such as Central America, São Paulo, or the Argentine Chaco require a landscape conservation strategy that protects populations and tries to link them through reforestation and corridor projects.

*Richard E. Bodmer, Regional Coordinator,
Peccary Sub-Group*

Re-introduction

Proposed Mission:

To combat the ongoing and massive loss of biodiversity by using re-introductions as a responsible tool for the management and restoration of biodiversity through actively developing and promoting sound inter-disciplinary scientific information, policy, and practice to establish viable wild populations in their natural habitats.

Strategic Planning Workshop - March 2002

A strategic planning workshop defined the Re-introduction Specialist Group Strategy for the next three to five years, within the framework of the IUCN/SSC Strategic Plan; including considerations of the mission, vision, role and structure of the Group.

Main outcomes include noting the positive impact of the Group through the development of policies (such as *Guidelines for Re-introduction*) and its newsletter *Re-introduction News*; which provides up-to-date information on re-introduc-

tion programs worldwide. The Group also provides the necessary expertise on re-introductions through its extensive network and also plays an advocacy role in stopping inappropriate releases. To function more effectively, permanent staff, stable background resources, a more proactive *modus operandi*, a motivated membership and greater clarity and accountability from Section Chairs are needed.

Also identified was a need for a technical body on re-introductions to develop core skills for re-introductions and play a technical role in proposal evaluation. The Group can also develop program evaluation processes and, besides advocating the benefits of re-introduction, recommend 'best practices'.

The Group noted a need to focus on capacity building and technical support in developing nations and a need to provide expertise to other SSC Specialist Groups as well as to policy-makers and re-introduction practitioners. Also, the Group identified a need to be more involved with the science and theory of re-introductions, to enhance its capacity in developing post-reintroduction project evaluation/assessment protocols and to provide leadership in this area.

Major tasks and activities for the Chair, Vice Chair, and Regional and Taxon representatives were identified in accordance with policies of the SSC Secretariat, SSC Chair's office and host institution. Other officers appointed by the Chair should be proactive, accountable and committed to promoting the Group's mission and objectives. Activities for the near future include increasing awareness and communications, building strategic alliances with suitable partners, planning and running re-introduction training workshops with various organizations and initiatives worldwide, developing a fund-raising strategy, and planning an annual meeting.

The meeting concluded that the strategic plan developed is ambitious and visionary. The strategy removes dependence on only one individual, the Chair, and represents a pragmatic approach that can be tested over the next two years and adapted as necessary.

Thanks to Dr. Frederic Launay, Chair and Mr. Majid Al Mansouri, Secretary General, Environmental Research & Wildlife Development Agency (ERWDA), Abu Dhabi, UAE for hosting the various attendees and thanks to Dr. Mark Stanley Price, Executive Director, Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust (DWCT), Jersey, Channel Islands for facilitating this workshop.

The detailed Strategic Plan can be accessed at <http://iucn.org/themes/ssc/programs/rsg.htm>

Pritpal S. Soorae, Executive Officer



Seaduck

In November 2000, the Seaduck Specialist Group held its first meeting since 1994. The meeting included the members meeting, a major workshop on scoters and an evening workshop on Steller's eider. During the members meeting, an update of recent and future activities was given and discussed. Several members volunteered to undertake some of the tasks so far carried out by the Chair. Peter Cranswick of the UK, promised to edit the Seaduck Bulletin after the next issue and Antra Stipniece, Latvia, took over maintenance of the member's list.

The scoter workshop proved a great success representing the first ever gathering of scoter experts from around the globe and confirming the substantial lack of knowledge relating to the species! Nevertheless, an impressive amount of information was presented in the form of national reports which gave an overall picture of what was happening throughout the Western Palearctic flyways. Important contributions included studies of the breeding biology of common and velvet scoters in Europe and we were especially pleased to have Jean-Pierre Savard from the Canadian Wildlife Service to offer a transatlantic perspective on the discussions. The meeting allowed for quick feedback from experts

regarding the current real and perceived threats to the populations. All agreed that the continued increase in ship traffic and infrastructure development in the shallow off-shore environment posed the most significant threats

in the Western Palearctic. There was also agreement that the most pressing research needs relate to improving our understanding of linkage between different breeding, moulting, staging and wintering areas. Although we were able to synthesize a simple overview of the major important staging, moulting and wintering sites, in the absence of ringing data, we know nothing about how birds use these different areas. Proceedings from the meeting are currently being prepared for publication.

The objective of the Steller's eider workshop was to set up a working group to implement the Steller's eider Action Plan and maintain the existing network of experts. As a first step, an e-group was formed with Diana Solovieva, Russia, as coordinator and Baz Hughes, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, UK, kindly offering to set up the listserv while Umberto Gallo-Ursi will be the link to BirdLife International and its partners. The listserv is open to anybody interested in Steller's eider. To enlist please write to Majordomo@wwt.org.uk with "subscribe stellers" (without quote marks) in the body of your e-mail message. A great deal of interesting news has

already been forwarded through the listserv, most notably the recent results of the satellite telemetry project which has given indications of a major moulting site for West Siberian birds along the southeastern shores of Novaya Zemlya.

The next meeting took place in Estonia in April 2002 with the overall theme of eiders and the reasons for the recent rapid declines in the Baltic population.

Stefan Pihl, Chair

Southern African Invertebrates

This Specialist Group has become very active and is currently working on a two-tier management system. There are 19 officially registered core members although the Group's newsletter goes to over 50 other 'participants'. Core membership though, is not restricted. The first two newsletters have been launched, calling for suggestions for a name for the publication, two of which have been suggested.

Networking among participants in invertebrate conservation in the area has been given a top priority as this was a shortcoming in invertebrate conservation in general, as identified by the IUCN/SSC scoping workshop on invertebrate conservation held in Washington at the end of last year (see *News*, page 6).

Two other major developments are the production of a Special Issue of African Entomology, edited by Melodie McGeoch and myself, on "Arthropod diversity and conservation in southern Africa". The second development is the Inland Invertebrate Initiative being championed by Rob Slotow at the University of Natal, with the aim of co-ordinating invertebrate conservation, at least in KwaZulu-Natal.

A further exciting development is the formation of the South Asian Invertebrates Specialist Group with whom we shall link and cooperate to maximize conservation efforts.

It seems now that the little creatures have some friends and allies coming on board!

Michael Samways, Chair

Sustainable Use Specialist Group

SUSG Revises Programme Framework, Guiding Objective Sharpened

Recently, the Sustainable Use Specialist Group's Executive Committee agreed to sharpen the overall guiding objective for 2002-2004 to focus on the relationship between sustainable use of bio-

logical systems and human livelihoods. The revised SUSG Programme Framework reflects this. Our guiding objective until the next IUCN World Conservation Congress is as follows: *SUSG will use a multidisciplinary, scientific, and technical approach to understand and test how the sustainability of use of biological systems is related to human livelihoods, and communicate this knowledge to policy- and decision-makers.*

In pursuing this objective, our network of regional Specialist Groups will contribute to the collation of global experience on the relationship of livelihoods and sustainable use, and the compilation of tools and methodologies for analyzing this dimension of sustainability. A key point is that the SUSG knowledge base must have multidisciplinary credibility. These activities will result in new SUSG products that will be delivered to key policy fora and to IUCN members.

Leif E. Christoffersen, Chair

Analytic Framework for Assessing Factors that Influence Sustainability of Uses of Wild Living Natural Resources

IUCN recognizes that sustainable use is a complex process. It is a moving target, affected by a multitude of factors that interact and change over time. The IUCN Policy Statement on Sustainable Use reflects this view and outlines the broad approach that IUCN has adopted. Yet the challenge of applying this approach to concrete situations remains. How do we take complexity seriously in working towards sustainability? What tools can we use to analyze our use practices and orient our activities along increasingly sustainable paths? How do we ask the right questions so that we can make better decisions?

The analytic framework, developed by the Sustainable Use Specialist Group's (SUSG) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), is offered as an early contribution to the broad set of analytic and management tools that will need to be assembled by IUCN and others to assist societies to use biological systems sustainably. This tool was produced by a multidisciplinary team, and provides an overview of the different issues that must be considered in assessing use practices including economic, ecological, socio-political, and institutional. The framework includes various modules of analysis to aid understanding of the complexities of sustainability, and provides a systematic way to guide assessments of specific use practices.

Next steps include field-testing and refinement of the framework. However, there is no desire to develop a single, all-purpose template, as that runs contrary to IUCN's approach to sustainable use. Rather, it is expected that a variety of frameworks and assessment tools might be developed in the context of specific use sectors

and/or regions. Comments and observations about the framework are welcome. The analytic framework is available from the SUSG website: <http://iucn.org/themes/ssc/susg/> and can be requested from dbeamont@iucn.org.

Ruth Barreto, Head, IUCN Sustainable Use Team

Tapir

The First International Tapir Symposium held in Costa Rica in November 2001 proved to be a major boost to tapir conservation and was the first time that tapir experts gathered to share their knowledge and address the challenges facing their species.

The event was organized by the Tapir Specialist Group, the AZA Tapir Taxon Advisory Group (TAG) and the Tapir Preservation Fund and involved many key players in the development and implementation of tapir conservation programs. Presentations and posters provided the audience with an overview of current tapir research. During the symposium, we established priorities and created committees to work on specific tasks related to the structure of the Tapir Specialist Group, internal/external communication, and fundraising.

Charles Foerster continues his research on Baird's tapir (*T. bairdii*) in Corcovado National Park, Costa Rica. Charles has radio-collared 27 tapirs since 1995. Radio-telemetry and direct observations

are being used to document home range size, habitat use, reproduction, offspring and adult sex ratios, offspring survival rates, juvenile dispersal, spatial distribution, population density, mortality, and genetic variability. Patricia Medici continues her study on the lowland tapir (*T. terrestris*) as landscape detectives in the Atlantic Forests of Brazil. Patricia has radio-collared 20 tapirs since 1996, and is documenting home range size, territorial behaviour, dispersal routes, activity patterns, genetics and health status. Emilio Constantino with the Red de Reservas in Colombia continues to travel all over the country trying to find out if tapirs inhabit specific regions from which they have been reported in the past. This project is revealing pertinent information about Colombia's tapir populations. Diego Lizcano from Colombia continues his study on the mountain tapir (*T. pinchaque*) at Los Nevados and Ucamari Parks.

Four members have recently joined forces to study the role tapirs and other large herbivores play in maintaining and shaping Neotropical forests. Charles Foerster, Diego Lizcano, Patricia Medici and Silvia Chalukian will examine how

Continued increase in ship traffic and infrastructure development pose significant threats

The 1st International Tapir Symposium proved to be a boost to tapir conservation

Communication Notes

Websites and Listservs

IUCN/SSC now has the facility to host a website for all Specialist Groups within the SSC domain, with the provision that groups are responsible for managing and updating their own sites. For those that do not yet have a web presence, the communications team can help you create a home page in the expectation that this can be developed into a full site when time allows. Similarly, IUCN/SSC can also host a listserv for all Groups that are interested. Note that two people are needed to manage the listserv. For more information contact alk@hq.iucn.org

E-Bulletin

By now, many of you should be familiar with the SSC monthly E-Bulletin. This has proven to be a popular addition to SSC communications and an excellent way to share information about the goings on in the network. The E-Bulletin is posted on the SSC website. If you are interested in receiving it, please contact ssc_iucn@ec.gc.ca

Calling all owners of film and photographs of endangered species –

ARKive wants to hear from you!

ARKive will be the world's centralized library of images and recordings of endangered species, accessible to all for educational and scientific use—the Noah's Ark for the Internet era.

Films and photographs are a powerful means of raising public awareness, as well as providing an increasingly important historical record of the world's endangered plants and animals. However, these records are scattered throughout a huge variety of commercial, specialist and private collections, with no centrally-held catalogue, and no means of safeguarding them. Much is inaccessible and unavailable for public, educational or scientific use.

ARKive is leading the virtual conservation effort—finding, sorting,



Found in ARKive, images of the golden toad

the removal of the herbivores will affect the structure and floristic diversity in four different ecosystems of Costa Rica, Colombia, Brazil and Argentina. The results will provide insights into the ecological functions of the herbivores, which will, in turn, enhance future management plans.

Debbie Martyr and Jeremy Holden of Fauna & Flora International continue their work at Kerinci Seblat National Park in Sumatra and have been reporting on the Asian tapir (*T. indicus*) situation in that area. Also in Sumatra, Matt Linkie is undertaking fieldwork on the effects of deforestation on tapirs. Bengt Holst of the Copenhagen Zoo and the Malaysian Department of Wildlife and National Parks are establishing a radio-telemetry study on the Asian tapir in the Krau Reserve in Malaysia. Budsabong Kanchanasaka is studying the species in Khlong Saeng and Khao Sok Parks in Thailand.

Adrian Naveda with Earthmatters and Denis Torres with the Fundación Andígena in Venezuela are working on a tapir studbook for that country. The AZA Tapir TAG and the EAZA Tapir and Hippo TAG keep working closely with Group and both groups have been supporting research and conservation both in captivity and in the field.

Patricia Medici, Chair, and Charles Foerster, Deputy Chair

cataloguing and copying the key records and building them into a comprehensive and enduring audio-visual record. ARKive will be a global resource, preserved for future generations, where everyone can learn about the importance of the Earth's biodiversity and the urgent need to conserve it.

Each page of the ARKive website will illustrate the life history of a particular endangered species using up to 10 minutes of moving footage, six still images and two minutes of audio, together with useful facts and cross references.

ARKive is a not-for-profit initiative of The Wildscreen Trust, and the visionary behind ARKive is Christopher Parsons, former head of the BBC's Natural History Unit and creator of the Life on Earth television series. The project has the support of all the world's key conservationists including Ed Wilson, IUCN, UNEP-WCMC, WWF and Conservation International. Images are being donated by the most famous names in natural history broadcasting including the BBC, National Geographic, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, as well as commercial picture libraries, scientific institutions, and a huge number of private individuals.

More than £2million of funding has already been received from the UK's Lottery Fund and the first focus of activity is an initial group of 500 of the world's threatened species (in parallel with a "British Chapter" featuring 1000 species).

If you own photographs or moving footage of any Red List species please contact us. Copies of your images will be viewable at low-level resolution on the ARKive website (although held at high quality in the project's digital vault for posterity). Copyright remains with the image owner, and all images are credited with links to the owner's contact details.

If you have rare or interesting materials to donate, or know of any specialist collections

ARKive should see, please contact:

harriet.nimmo@wildscreen.org.uk

www.arkive.org

Harriet Nimmo, ARKive

Promoting your Species

Specialist Group Chairs and SSC listserv subscribers were electronically introduced to ARKive earlier this year and told, if interest is expressed in commercial use of donated images, the owner of the image will be contacted directly to undertake any further negotiations. Perran Ross of the Crocodile Specialist Group had this to say on the benefits of promoting images of your species.

The Crocodile Specialist Group has become a source of crocodylian images for numerous educational and commercial uses since estab-

lishing the Crocodile Photo gallery on the Crocodile Specialist Group web page—<http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/natsci/herpetology/crocs.htm>. Many Group members have provided excellent photos and the majority of these have agreed to allow us to display their images and use them for fundraising. All images are marked with the photographer's name and "copyright CSG".

We have received inquiries for use of our images from a wide selection of people ranging from students and schools for individual and class project websites through magazines and printed media, several illustrated books for children, commercial advertising, and most recently for the National Geographic "Supercroc" promotion. The Group routinely provides images in low-resolution format without charge for personal and educational use, requesting that users acknowledge the source and retain the photographer credit and copyright statement.

We routinely receive requests for images for obviously commercial use, that is the user will sell a product or otherwise generate revenue from our image, and have successfully negotiated fees ranging from \$100–\$5000 USD per image depending on use. The average is around \$150/image for one-time, non-exclusive use, and we have found little or no hesitancy from a wide variety of publishers and media outlets to pay these fees. I now routinely explain to commercial image requests that we run a program funded by donations and we wish to negotiate a suitable fee. We can usually quickly agree to a rate and terms and define these in a short standard agreement. We then provide the image either electronically in the users preferred format or sometimes as a (returnable) hard copy.

Sometimes we luck into more profitable arrangements. An inquiry from National Geographic TV led to our providing them with an image of each of the 23 species for the "Supercroc" promotional poster. We also successfully arranged an exclusive unlimited use of an image to a private company who will use it on the packaging and promotional material for a waterproof battery torch (The 'Gatorlite') for which they will pay \$5000, again with credit to the Group on the material.

In all cases where the Crocodile Specialist Group will receive a donation, I contact the photographer to confirm again in writing their agreement and to offer to share the revenue. In nearly every case the photographers willingly allow the Group to keep the donation and occasionally we split it by mutual consent. The only downside to these operations is that each image use agreement requires several person hours of effort over a period of days, e-mails, phone calls, administration and servicing.

Perran Ross, Crocodile Specialist Group Officer

Further information

Reproduction or License fee—A license allows the purchaser to use a picture in a certain way, once an appropriate fee has been agreed. It reflects the specific use of the image and is determined by how, where, and size the image is reproduced, rather than by what the image depicts. The more commercial your product, or the greater scope of your use (the more exposure of the picture), the more costly the fee.

Examples from the UK:

- Publication such as a school text book, one country – 70 GBP (100 USD)
- Corporate brochure, one country, 5000 copies - 245 GBP (350 USD)
- Project: Advertising poster, 100 copies, 3 month run, one country - 1074 GBP (1560 USD)
- Website use - 50 GBP (70 USD)
- For publication, single use, worldwide - 150 GBP (220 USD)
- Multiple use worldwide - 350 GBP (510 USD)

The above information was obtained at <http://www.bapla.org.uk> or via links from there.

Bridging the gap between corporations and the natural world

New company seeks affiliate biologists

How can the needs of the environment tie in with the needs of major corporations in mutually beneficial ways? XN Institute addresses this question through a venture that bridges the gap between businesses and the natural world.

We believe that the critical funding needs of biodiversity conservation can only be met with the integrated involvement and support of leading businesses. To accomplish this, XN works with companies to highlight the many ways in which their involvement and funding can help conservation. In parallel, we show companies how to learn from the natural world – from organizational structures and processes, to wilderness expeditions and programs that boost company morale and tie in with relevant conservation projects and wildlife specialists.

A major part of our work promotes wildlife stewardship as core to business. The beneficiaries of our programs include XN's growing global network of Affiliate Wildlife Specialists (AWS) whose critical work requires exposure and funding. These professionals recognize the enormous benefits that can be accrued through businesses, but do not have the time, knowledge or resources to pursue them. XN serves the scientific community by creating those connections, and then managing them.

Evidence shows that progressive Fortune 500 companies have identified the "environment" and "sustainability" as important business issues. This raised awareness benefits wildlife biologists and the work they do to understand and protect biodiversity. Therefore, acting as a conduit, XN offers unique products and programs to corporations, each of them built around carefully designed wildlife conservation initiatives that our AWSs are looking to promote.

As XN evolves, so does the potential role for Affiliate Wildlife Specialists – from consulting with an XN client about specific wildlife/habitat protection options to escorting field expeditions or helping with the strategic development of a multi-million dollar initiative. We are committed to bringing many benefits to all Affiliate Wildlife Specialists as our position gains momentum, whether they are directly involved with present XN initiatives or not.

Our current activities are numerous and ambitious. We continue to forge relationships with governmental and non-governmental organizations, and attract additional Affiliate Wildlife Specialists. Our work is being received with enthusiasm and anticipation. In 2001 we began discussions with IUCN-SSC regarding the potential to partner on one or more wildlife initiatives, and we look forward to working together.

Everything XN does is fueled by our commitment to assist biologists and other scientists with their work to protect the earth's precious natural resources. We invite the involvement of IUCN-SSC members and encourage you to communicate with us regarding your ideas and thoughts. We look forward to helping you.

Join our growing network of Affiliate Wildlife Specialists: Contact Chris Morgan (Director Science Strategies): chrismorgan@xninstitute.com. Tel: + 360 758 4193 (USA Pacific Standard Time). More information: www.xninstitute.com.

Chris Morgan, XN Institute, Inc.

Publications

In Brief

The SSC Occasional Paper *Links Between Biodiversity Conservation, Livelihoods and Food Security* was published as an Occasional Paper at the end of May and launched on the SSC/IUCN sites in conjunction with TRAFFIC and FAO. The Equid Action Plan is now in press, as well as an Occasional Paper on shark conservation. The updated Cetaceans Action Plan is progressing well.

With the help of intern Luke Watson, efforts are being made to make SSC Action Plans available online. The SSC website has 10 including the five updated Galliformes Action Plans at <http://www.iucn.org/themes/ssc/actionplans>

[/actionplanindex.htm](#) and a further 12 Plans are available, hosted by other organizations

IUCN's Regional Office for South America announces the launch of the Ecuadorian Birds Red List. Information, including a photo gallery, can be found at: <http://www.sur.iucn.org>

IUCN Case Studies in Sustainable Use

The IUCN Sustainable Use Team (SUT) and NORAGRIC, Agricultural University of Norway has published *Lessons Learned: Case Studies in Sustainable Use*. Available electronically from the Sustainable Use Specialist Group website the series comprises six technical papers that highlight specific use practices and analyze the social and biological factors that enhance their sustainability. The papers use the analytic framework (see page 29) as a starting point from which to analyze marine resource use, forestry regimes, Multiple Use Marine Protected Areas, trophy hunting, and community wildlife management.

The 'lessons' gleaned from these cases in some instances challenge the efficacy of some current thinking in conservation (such as the role of protected areas) while in other cases they reinforce prevailing thought (such as, participatory methods and equitable sharing of benefits). Nevertheless, because the cases document management systems in such diverse regions and cultures, ranging from indigenous peoples in Argentina to communities managing protected areas and natural resources in Africa and Central Asia, the applicability of the lessons may have some global relevance.

For more information contact David Beamont, IUCN Sustainable Use Team, dbeamont@iucn.org

Veterinary Specialist Group joint publications

The Veterinary Specialist Group is pleased to announce the release of two new booklets, jointly published by the Specialist Group, the World Organization for Animal Health, Care for the Wild International and the European Association of Zoo and Wildlife Veterinarians. The first booklet, *Post-mortem procedures for wildlife veterinarians and field biologists*, is recommended to wildlife veterinarians and biologists as an excellent source of reliable information. The second, *Quarantine and health screening in protocols for wildlife prior to translocation and release in to the wild*, as stated in the forward by Wilbur Amand, is an excellent reference source and will enable the veterinarian to make rational decisions regarding release. Both titles are available from Care for the Wild International, info@careforthewild.org.uk, www.careforthewild.org.uk, 1 Ashfolds, Horsham Road, Rusper, West Sussex, RH12 4QX.

Meeting Announcements

The 7th International Mycological Congress - IMC7

11 - 16 August 2002, Oslo, Norway

A fantastic opportunity to meet many mycologists, to discuss during official symposiums numerous topics also concerning the conservation of fungi worldwide, and to share information and experiences. Further information at: <http://www.uio.no/conferences/imc7>

Contact: IMC7, P.O. Box 24, Blindern, N-0314 Oslo, Norway, Email: j.e.colman@bio.uio.no

1st Workshop on Maned Wolf in Argentina

12 - 14 September, 2002, Mburucuy, Corrientes, Argentina

The focus is on *ex situ* and *in situ* conservation of this threatened canid. For more information contact: Lucia Soler, Dpto. de Biología, Bioquímica y Farmacia, Universidad Nacional del Sur

San Juan 670, 8000 Bahía Blanca, Argentina, Email: luengos@criba.edu.ar

Carnivores 2002: From The Mountains To The Sea – Defenders of Wildlife 4th national conference.

17 – 20 November 2002, Monterey, California, USA

The conference will focus on the biology and conservation of a full range of marine and terrestrial predators. For more information or to receive a conference brochure contact:

Yvonne Borresen, Defenders of Wildlife, 1101 14th St. NW, Suite 1400, Washington, DC 20005, Email: carnivores2002@defenders.org, visit www.defenders.org/carnivores2002

The 4th Conference of the Working Group on Aquatic Birds of the International Society of Limnology (SIL) "Limnology and Waterbirds 2003"

4 – 9 August 2003, Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada

More information and expression of interest form at: <http://www.links.umoncton.ca/lw/>

Also contact Joseph Kerekes, Email: joe.kerekes@ec.gc.ca



The Species Survival Commission Steering Committee

Since the 2nd World Conservation Congress in Amman Jordan, David Brackett, Chair of the Commission, has been carefully building the SSC Steering Committee. The SSC has moved to a governance structure that has a relatively small Executive Committee, with each member of that committee charged with the management of a part of the network or a topic area. There is an SSC Executive focal point for plants, mammals, birds, invertebrates, marine and so forth. In addition, there are focal points for programmatic areas including the Red List, Species Information Service, Communications, and Trade.

The Executive Committee is complemented by a larger Steering Committee that includes members of the Executive plus a number of new SSC Regional Vice-Chairs. While the mandate of the Executive Committee members is bounded by topic, that of the Regional Vice-Chairs is geographic, with a responsibility for promoting interaction among IUCN and SSC members living and working within a particular region.

The new structure aims to provide a number of clear authorities who members can approach with their concerns and comments. The governance structure is in place to ensure the needs of the members are heard, and the goals of the SSC Strategic Plan are achieved.

Similarly, IUCN has made a firm commitment to serving the Commissions and every IUCN region has appointed a dedicated focal point for the Species Survival Commission. For further information see www.iucn.org or contact Team Species at ssc_iucn@ec.gc.ca.

Below are the current SSC Steering Committee focal points. Please contact ssc_iucn@ec.gc.ca for more information on contacting your regional representative.

SSC Steering Committee

- ■ Mr. David BRACKETT, SSC Chair
- ■ Dr. Cristian SAMPER, SSC Deputy Chair
- ■ Mr. Leon BENNUN, BirdLife International representative
- ■ Prof. Luigi BOITANI, Species Information Service
- ■ Dr. Corazon CATIBOG SINHA, Regionalization
- ■ Mr. Leif CHRISTOFFERSON, Sustainable Use
- ■ Dr. Gustavo FONSECA, Center for Applied Biodiversity Science representative
- ■ Prof. David R. GIVEN, Plant Conservation Committee Chair
- ■ Dr. Yoshio KANEKO, Trade
- ■ Dr. Ling-Ling LEE, Communications
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- ■ Dr. Russell MITTERMEIER, Reptiles and Amphibians, Conservation International representative
- ■ Dr. Valery NERONOV, Mammals
- ■ Dr. Ramon PEREZ-GIL, Training

- ■ Mr. Roger RUFFE, The Ocean Conservancy representative
- ■ Prof. Michael SAMWAYS, Invertebrates
- ■ Dr. Ulysses S. SEAL, Conservation Breeding
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- ■ Dr. Abdulaziz ABUZINADA, West Asia
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- ■ Ms. Rebecca DE CRUZ, Southeast Asia
- ■ Dr. Brahim HADDANE, North Africa
- ■ Dr. Véronique HERRENSCHMIDT, Europe
- ■ Dr. Elena KREUZBERG-MUKHINA, Central Asia
- ■ Mr. Roger E. MCMANUS, North America
- ■ Dr Hector MAGOME, Southern Africa
- ■ Dr. Jorge RABINOVICH, Southern Cone
- ■ Prof. Barry RICHARDSON, Australia
- ■ Dr. David C. SMITH, Caribbean
- ■ Dr. Qin HAI-NING, China

Voluntarism Study –

Findings available

With the rapid expansion of the SSC network, and the important role Specialist Groups play, there is a recognized danger of overburdening the network. To clarify these, the SSC Executive Committee commissioned a study on voluntarism.

The study noted SSC, generally, is not a typical volunteer organization in that the demands placed on its volunteers are variable, unpredictable and rely on their professional expertise. This leads to a critical role for Specialist Group Chairs as network leaders. SSC Chairs in general are a distinctive group of people who fulfill more roles for the SSC, spend more time on SSC and are generally more informed about SSC. They are the linchpins of the network. As such, Chairs demonstrated an active interest in being more involved in high level decision making – and new Chairs want the opportunity to learn from existing Chairs.

The SSC Executive Committee quickly recognized the large and complex issues that the voluntarism study brought into focus. A full day workshop examining the study, and investigating possible actions, was incorporated into the October 2001 Executive Committee meeting in order to begin to respond to the issues raised.

The results of the Executive Workshop, including short-term and long-term actions needed, are available at <http://www.iucn.org/themes/ssc/memonly/voluntarism/intro.htm>. For further information, please contact Carolina Caceres at ssc_iucn@ec.gc.ca.

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IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN an effective SSC communications network, we need your submissions and updates for *Species*. Submissions for *Species 38* are due **October 21, 2002**. Submissions should be addressed to:

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SSC members are also strongly encouraged to subscribe to the SSC e-mail listserv. To do so, send an e-mail to the following address:

[SSC-mem-owner@indaba.iucn.org](mailto:ssc-mem-owner@indaba.iucn.org)

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