Species Survival Commission

Mandate 2017–2020

1. Mission

In the intersessional period of 2017–2020, the Species Survival Commission (SSC) will continue to play a leading role in enabling IUCN to be the world's most authoritative voice on behalf of global biodiversity conservation and the sustainability of natural resource use. In particular, SSC and its worldwide network are uniquely placed to enable IUCN to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity of biodiversity, and to ensure that the use of species is both equitable and sustainable, through:

- providing knowledge on status and trends of species;
- undertaking analyses of threats;
- developing policies and guidelines;
- facilitating conservation planning;
- catalysing action on the ground and in the water; and
- providing advice on ways to reconcile biodiversity conservation with economic development and societal changes.

2. Vision

A just world that values and conserves nature through positive action to prevent the loss of diversity of life on earth.

3. Goal

The overriding Goal of the Commission is:

SSC will strive to ensure that the species extinction crisis and massive loss of biodiversity are universally adopted as a shared responsibility, and addressed by all sectors of society taking conservation action, and avoiding negative impacts worldwide.

4. Objectives

For the intersessional period 2017–2020 SSC, working in collaboration with Members, National and Regional Committees, other Commissions and the Secretariat, will pursue the following key objectives in helping to deliver IUCN's "One Programme" commitment:

a. Assessing and monitoring the status of biodiversity, especially at the species level
To assess and monitor trends in the status of biodiversity, especially at the species level, and to inform the world of the measures needed to improve the health of the biosphere.

b. Analysing and communicating the threats to biodiversity, especially at the species level
To analyse and communicate the threats to biodiversity at the species level, and disseminate information on appropriate conservation actions widely and effectively at global, regional, national and local levels.

c. Developing policies and guidelines to advance nature conservation
To develop evidence-based and scientifically-supported policies to guide the conservation community on the most critical issues facing the world's wild species, and to provide advice to influence and shape decisions made by governments, international agreements and institutions, non-governmental organisations, and the corporate sector that may affect species.

d. Facilitating conservation planning for species
To provide leadership in scaling up multi-stakeholder species conservation planning and priority setting in order to: i) support efforts to conserve and restore populations of species under threat; and ii) to halt species extinctions by 2020.

e. Stimulating, facilitating, supporting and engaging in conservation action for species
To stimulate, promote and support conservation actions for halting biodiversity decline, preventing species' extinctions, and restoring and conserving intact habitats and ecosystems, both on the ground and in the water.

f. Reconciling biodiversity conservation with economic development and societal changes
To explore options, and provide guidance, on ways to reconcile the needs of nature conservation with the needs of people, particularly those of poor communities that live with wild species, with a view to seeing this reflected in biologically sustainable trade, use and consumption practices.

g. Convening expertise for species conservation
To provide a forum for gathering and integrating the knowledge and experience of the world's leading experts on species conservation science and management, and promoting the active involvement of subsequent generations of species conservationists through the transfer of knowledge and capacity building.

5. Programme Areas

The specific working priorities of SSC are derived from, and focused on, the three **IUCN Programme Areas.** Under each of these Programme Areas, SSC has Key Species Results (KSRs):

Programme Area: Valuing and conserving nature enhances IUCN's heartland work on biodiversity conservation, emphasising both tangible and intangible values of nature.

KSR1.   *IUCN Red List taxonomic and geographic coverage is expanded.* Taxonomic coverage of the Red List is expanded so that it better informs biodiversity conservation.

KSR2.   *More IUCN Red List assessments are prepared at national and, where appropriate, at regional scales.* The ongoing development of national and regional Red Lists is catalysed.

KSR3.   *IUCN Red List Index is widely used as an effective biodiversity indicator.* Wide use of the Red List Index (RLI) as an indicator for monitoring trends in the status of different species groups is developed and promoted at multiple geographical scales, from national to global.

KSR4.   *The IUCN Red List is a scientifically rigorous tool for conservation.* The Red List contains the necessary information to make it a reliable tool for informing biodiversity conservation.

KSR5.   *IUCN Red Listing capacity built through expanded training programmes.* Capacity developed to ensure that the IUCN Red List Criteria are applied rigorously and

consistently to increase further the credibility of the Red List and its implementation at the national level.

KSR6. *The IUCN Red List is underpinned by cutting-edge information management technologies.* The information technology infrastructure to support Species Strategic Plan objectives is enhanced.

KSR7. *The IUCN Red List is used effectively to inform policy and action.* The IUCN Red List data and information is increasingly used to inform policy and action in the private and public sectors.

KSR8. *The IUCN Red List is widely communicated and recognised.* The Red List is further developed as a global brand, applicable at multiple geographical scales, from national to global.

KSR9. *The IUCN Red List is sufficiently and sustainably financed.* Funds are secured to ensure the sustainability of the Red List.

KSR10. *Strategic oversight is provided to the IUCN Red List.* Strategic oversight for delivering the Red List is provided by the Red List Committee.

KSR11. *Measuring conservation success.* State-of-the-art methods for measuring and categorising the success of conservation are in place.

KSR12. *Population-level monitoring and analysis.* Monitoring programmes are established for selected species and groups of species.

KSR13. *Invasive species.* Measures to manage invasive species are greatly enhanced through focused efforts involving knowledge, policy and action.

KSR14. *Integrating IUCN Knowledge Products.* IUCN's key biodiversity knowledge products (e.g. Red List and World Database on Protected Areas) are fully integrated to allow interoperability, promote cost-effectiveness and maximise the delivery of information to guide conservation decisions.

KSR15. *IUCN SSC species conservation planning efforts are significantly expanded, especially for priority species.* A method for prioritisation of species planning is developed and more conservation action planning is undertaken to halt the loss of biodiversity, and protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.

KSR16. *IUCN SSC species conservation planning efforts are monitored for impact and effectiveness.* Evaluation approaches are developed and implemented to measure, improve and report on the impact and effectiveness of IUCN SSC's species conservation planning efforts.

KSR17. *Species conservation planning capacity is built through expanded training programmes.* Capacity is developed to expand effective species conservation planning efforts throughout the SSC network and beyond, and ensure that these efforts are considered valuable and accessible to all relevant parties.

KSR18. *IUCN SSC provides rigorous guidance for species conservation planning through the continued development and application of cutting-edge, science-based tools and processes.* IUCN SSC Species Conservation Planning features best practices using an adaptive, evidence-based approach, with application of tools and processes that contribute to, and are informed by, emerging scientific and technological advances in conservation biology and related fields.

KSR19. *IUCN SSC species conservation planning is sufficiently and sustainably resourced.* Funding and human resources are secured to ensure the growth and sustainability of IUCN SSC's species conservation planning.

KSR20. *The discipline of 'Species Conservation Planning' is formally embedded in SSC's organisational framework in a way that reflects its increasing importance to SSC's work.* A Species Conservation Planning structure is put in place, catalysing and guiding the governance and implementation of species conservation planning in SSC.

KSR21. *IUCN SSC is recognised as a leader in species conservation action planning.* IUCN SSC Species Conservation Planning processes are increasingly adopted or built upon, and evidently guide conservation actions and influence policy.

KSR22. *Applying IUCN standard for identification of sites of global biodiversity conservation significance.* Biodiversity conservation action is improved through the application of the Key Biodiversity Area Standard.

KSR23. *Wildlife Health.* Wildlife health monitoring is in place where needed, and advice given on remedial actions required.

KSR24. *Re-introductions.* Information and advice service is in place to support species reintroductions.

KSR25. *Conservation breeding, and links to ex situ community.* Advice and facilitation is in place to support *ex situ* species recovery programmes.

KSR26. *Global and regional policy for biodiversity conservation.* Global and regional policy mechanisms are influenced to enhance the effectiveness of biodiversity conservation.

KSR27. *Policy and action at national and cross-boundary levels.* Scientific advice from SSC used to drive actions and policies for species and sites at the national level (linking to National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and national red lists).

KSR28. *Communicating species conservation.* The effectiveness of IUCN's species conservation work is enhanced through strategic and targeted communications.

KSR29. *Building mutually-beneficial institutional partnerships for SSC Specialist Groups and the wider work of SSC.* Institutional partnerships enable species conservation efforts that are more strategic, sustainable and integrated.

KSR30. *Fostering conservation on land and in water.* Conservation is supported through existing and novel funding mechanisms.

KSR31. *Special initiatives to tackle major conservation crises.* Focused attention is brought to resolving major crises in biodiversity conservation.

KSR32. *Analyses and investigations into pressing conservation issues.* High profile scientific analyses and investigations that have wide implications are completed and published.

Programme Area: Promoting and supporting effective and equitable governance of natural resources consolidates IUCN's work on people-nature relations, rights and responsibilities, and the political economy of nature.

KSR33. *Understanding and communicating sustainable use.* Greater common understanding is achieved of the theory and practice of sustainable use of biodiversity, and key linkages to human livelihoods; the importance of species to supporting livelihoods, particularly of the poor, is demonstrated; and innovative, experience-based and adaptive approaches to sustainable use are explored.

KSR34. *Conservation decisions and livelihood impacts.* Livelihood impacts of conservation decisions are analysed and communicated.

KSR35. *Traditional knowledge and species management.* Traditional knowledge is integrated with science in approaches to species assessment and management.

KSR36. *Enabling and implementing strategies for sustainable use.* Any use of living natural resources is legal and sustainable; sustainable use is recognised as a positive tool for achieving long-term conservation; and the importance of species to supporting the livelihoods of the poor is recognised by key stakeholders, leading to improved governance for people and nature.

KSR37. *Human wildlife interaction (including marine).* Livelihoods of people and species conservation are enhanced through improved human-wildlife interactions.

Programme Area: Deploying nature-based solutions to address societal challenges expands IUCN's work on nature's contribution to tackling problems of sustainable development, particularly in climate change, food security and economic and social development.

KSR38.   *Biodiversity and climate change understanding.* Impacts of climate change on species and the response of species to climate change are documented, analysed and their vulnerability better understood.

KSR39.   *Biodiversity and conservation practice under climate change.* Approaches for conservation under changing climates are developed, tested and shared.

KSR40.   *Biodiversity and climate change policy.* Biodiversity considerations are taken into account in public and private sector adaptation and mitigation policies and practices at global and regional levels.

KSR41.   *Biodiversity and food production.* Biodiversity considerations are introduced into emerging policies in the food production sector (agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture).

KSR42.   *Maintaining genetic diversity of wild relatives of crops and domesticated animals.* The long-term supply of food resources is secured through the conservation of wild relatives of crops (CWR) and domesticated animals.

KSR43.   *Biodiversity information for public, private and financial sectors increases their commitment to nature conservation.* Biodiversity information is contributed to enhance positive impacts of these sectors on biodiversity and to reduce any negative impacts of their activities on biodiversity.

Under these KSRs SSC has developed a set of measurable **Time-bound Targets** to be attained by the end of 2020. Each KSR is also linked to the component of SSC in charge of implementing it (e.g. Steering Committee, particular Specialist Group) and a focal point responsible for reporting and monitoring results, working in all cases with the IUCN Global Species Programme, and in many cases with IUCN Members and the Red List Partner organisations.

6. Structure

The Commission is led by the Commission Chair elected by the IUCN membership and a Deputy Chair appointed by the IUCN Council on the recommendation of the Chair. The Steering Committee of SSC is also appointed by the IUCN Council on the recommendation of the Chair in accordance with the IUCN Statutes and Regulations. The Steering Committee assists the Chair and Deputy Chair in setting the strategic direction and providing oversight of the activities of the Commission. The Steering Committee delegates certain aspects of its work to specially designated Sub-Committees, which report to the Chair and the Steering Committee on a regular basis. The bulk of the work of SSC is implemented through its Specialist Groups, Red List Authorities, Task Forces and Working Groups. The roles of these entities are defined in the Bylaws of the SSC.

7. Membership

Membership of SSC is conferred by becoming a member of one of the Commission's sub-groups (e.g. Steering Committee, Sub-Committees, Specialist Groups, Red List Authorities, Task Forces, Working Groups). Membership of these groupings is voluntary and by invitation. SSC seeks to engage cutting-edge experts in all disciplines relevant to the conservation and management of biodiversity. It engages such people with due regard for diversity, be it in terms of gender, age, culture, language, nationality and expertise. By design, SSC members do not hold a common view on most conservation-related issues. Rather, SSC cherishes its diversity and fosters open, respectful, rigorous and evidence-based debate among its members.