



Species

ISSUE 64

2023 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat



The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC)

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

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

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

2021-2025 Species Strategic Plan

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

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

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

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

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



Their implementation requires two transversal components:

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

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

SSC Species Report

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

Structure of the IUCN SSC and CSS Stand-alone Reports

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

Title of the group

Photograph(s) of the Chair/Co-Chairs

Group information

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

Logo of the group

Mission statement

Includes the mission of the group.

Projected impact for the 2021-2025 quadrennium

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

Targets for the 2021-2025 quadrennium

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

Activities and results

Includes the targets for which activities were conducted and results were generated during the reported year, ordered alphabetically, first by component of the Species Conservation Cycle, and second by Activity Category. Description of activities and results includes the indicator that best describes progress, its associated quantitative or qualitative result, and the narrative description of the activity conducted or result obtained. Each activity or result reported is linked to the Key Species Result to which it is mainly associated (e.g., KSR#1, KSR#5).

Acknowledgements

Includes the acknowledgements to funding agencies, partners, and persons who contributed to the progress of the targets of the group.

Summary of achievements

Summarises information of the group's strategic plan for the quadrennium and progress achieved implementing targets for all the components of the Species Conservation Cycle during the reported year.

Animalia

Fungi

Plantae

National Species

Disciplinary

Action Partnership

Task Force

Red List Authority

Committee

Center for Species Survival

Example for the recommended citation:

Borzée, A., Wren, S., Luedtke, J., Chanson, J. and Angulo, A. 2024. 2023 Report of the Amphibian Specialist Group. In: IUCN SSC and Secretariat. *2023 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. 8 pp.

2023 Report

IUCN SSC Amphibian Specialist Group



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NUMBER OF MEMBERS
335

SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE

Facebook: @IUCNAmphibians

X: @ASG_IUCN

Website: www.iucn-amphibians.org

Mission statement

The Amphibian Specialist Group (ASG) provides the scientific foundation to inform effective amphibian conservation action around the world. More specifically, the ASG stimulates, develops and conducts scientific research to inform the conservation of amphibians and their habitats around the world, supports the assessment of the conservation status of amphibian biodiversity and informs the general public of amphibian conservation-related issues and priorities. This is attained by supporting and mobilising a global network of members to develop capacity and improve coordination and integration so as to achieve shared, strategic amphibian conservation goals.

Projected impact 2021–2025

Increased awareness of the amphibian decline and extinction crisis, increased support of amphibian conservation through updated Red List assessments, and

evidence-based decision making, targeted and coordinated action through an updated Amphibian Conservation Action Plan (ACAP).

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-005 The Amphibian Red List Authority (ARLA) provides advice and expertise for national Red List processes.
Status: On track

T-006 Complete the Global Amphibian Assessment update (GAA2).
Status: Achieved

T-023 Publish an update of the amphibian Red List Index.
Status: Achieved

T-024 Initiated the third Global Amphibian Assessment (GAA3).
Status: On track

T-025 GAA3: update amphibians of the Afrotropics.
Status: On track

T-028 GAA3: update the amphibians of Australasia and Oceania.
Status: On track

T-029 GAA3: update the amphibians of Indomalaya.
Status: On track

T-030 GAA3: update the amphibians of the Nearctic.
Status: Not initiated

T-031 GAA3: update the amphibians of the Neotropics.
Status: On track

T-032 GAA3: update the amphibians of the Palearctic.
Status: Not initiated

PLAN

T-001 Update the Amphibian Conservation Action Plan (ACAP).
Status: On track

T-013 ASG develops a strategic plan for the new IUCN quadrennium.
Status: Not initiated



T-018 ASG Secretariat, Regional Chairs and members contribute towards single- or multi-species conservation action plans at the international or national levels.
Status: Achieved

T-019 ASG provides scientific advice and information for the identification and conservation of species of concern in national and international contexts.
Status: On track

ACT

T-002 Increase uptake of ACAP among stakeholders.
Status: On track

T-003 ASG provides technical advice to organisations and institutions globally.
Status: On track

T-017 ASG acts as a key ally of Amphibian Ark and the Amphibian Survival Alliance with the shared vision of 'Amphibians thriving in nature'.
Status: On track

T-037 On-the-ground conservation actions through specific ASG-supported projects.
Status: On track

T-039 The Atelopus Task Force contributes to conservation actions for *Atelopus* species.
Status: On track

NETWORK

T-004 ASG leadership and membership are renewed.
Status: On track

T-014 Ensure a number of ARLA staff members are supported by donors.
Status: On track

T-015 ASG proactively recruits new members, focusing on regions with little or no representation at the start of the quadrennium.
Status: On track

T-016 Create/increase financial partnerships that support ASG staff.
Status: On track

T-033 Establish an East Asian Salamander Task Force.
Status: On track

T-034 Advance the Atelopus Task Force.
Status: On track

T-035 Establish a Caecilian Task Force.
Status: On track

COMMUNICATE

T-007 ASG actively contributes to the production of scientific publications related to amphibian research and conservation.
Status: On track

T-008 ASG reports activities to SSC Data.
Status: On track

T-009 Ensure the IUCN Red List is used to inform the project and funding priorities of NGOs and funding mechanisms.
Status: Achieved

T-010 ASG develops a communications plan laying out the intended use of each of its communications tools.
Status: On track

T-011 Together with the Amphibian Survival Alliance (ASA), ASG continues to produce *FrogLog*.

Status: On track

T-012 ASG participates in scientific or public events.

Status: Achieved

T-020 Create and populate a ResearchGate project page to collate and improve visibility of all ASG-related publications.

Status: Achieved

T-021 Maintain the Halliday-Bishop Amphibian Conservation Reference List.

Status: On track

T-027 Publish an analysis of the second Global Amphibian Assessment results.

Status: Achieved

T-036 Develop Webinar Series.

Status: On track

T-040 Develop and Release the ACAP Implementer Document.

Status: Not initiated

Activities and results 2023

ASSESS

Red List

T-006 Create/increase financial partnerships that support ASG staff. (KSR 6)

Number of global Red List reassessments completed: 0

Result description: The remaining assessments from 2022 were published on the Red List in December 2023. The ARLA analyzed the results and findings of the GAA2.

T-023 Publish an update of the amphibian Red List Index. (KSR 7)

Amphibian Red List Index assessments are published on the IUCN Red List: Achieved.

Result description: An updated amphibian Red List Index using GAA2 data was published as part of the GAA2 analysis paper in *Nature*. The updated RLI shows that the status of amphibians is deteriorating globally, particularly for salamanders and in the Neotropics.

T-024 Initiated the third Global Amphibian Assessment (GAA3). (KSR 6)

The third Global Amphibian Assessment is launched: Ongoing.

Result description: During 2023, Re:wild completed a strategy for GAA3 and GAA4. The collaboration of Global Partners such as Re:wild and Synchronicity Earth, alongside forthcoming additions, is expected soon. We are also looking forward to securing funds in 2024.

[SSC Grant awarded]

T-025 GAA3: update amphibians of the Afrotropics. (KSR 6)

Number of global Red List reassessments completed: 0

Result description: Funding was received from the SSC EDGE grants to support reassessments and new assessments in Madagascar and Tanzania, and these projects are underway. Planning and fundraising took place for a Red List workshop for amphibians of southern Africa, which will be held in 2024.

[SSC Grant awarded]

Number of new global Red List assessments completed: 0

Result description: In 2023, funding was received from the SSC EDGE grants to support reassessments and new

assessments in Madagascar and Tanzania, and these projects are underway. Planning and fundraising took place for a Red List workshop for amphibians of southern Africa, which will be held in 2024.

PLAN

Planning

T-001 Update the Amphibian Conservation Action Plan (ACAP). (KSR 8)

Number of conservation plans/strategies developed: 0

Result description: In 2023 the redrafted ACAP document was sent for formal peer review, and all chapters were revised based on the peer review feedback. Graphic design, layout and typesetting were done for each chapter, and final proofreading is underway for publication in 2024.

T-018 ASG Secretariat, Regional Chairs and members contribute towards single- or multi-species conservation action plans at the international or national levels. (KSR 8)

Number of conservation plans/strategies developed: 2

Result description: The ASG Brasil Regional working group has released the first two in a series of species action plans for threatened amphibians of Brazil, the Plano Estratégico de Conservação de Anfíbios (PECAn). The first is dedicated to the Critically Endangered tree frog *Nyctimantis pomba* [Plano Estratégico de Conservação de Anfíbios (PECAn): Perereca-pintada (*N. pomba*); 2023-2028; Brazilian Amphibian Specialist Group, ASG Brasil/IUCN SSC]; and the second for *Pithecopus rusticus* [Plano Estratégico de Conservação de Anfíbios (PECAn): Perereca-rústica (*P. rusticus*); 2023-2028; Brazilian Amphibian Specialist Group, ASG Brasil/IUCN SSC].



Gastrotheca walkeri
Photo: Ariadne Angulo

The ASG Secretariat and the ASG Atelopus Task Force have been working to secure funding for a planning workshop for *Atelopus ignescens* (CR), which we aim to be held in mid-2024.

Policy

T-019 ASG provides scientific advice and information for the identification and conservation of species of concern in national and international contexts. (KSR 9)

Number of instances where advice and information are sought and given: 0

Result description: A project is underway to identify amphibian gaps in CITES-listed species.

ACT

Conservation actions

T-002 Increase uptake of ACAP among stakeholders. (KSR 10)

Number of stakeholders pledging to support ACAP recommendations through funding or implementation: 10

Result description: This year we have finished the open review and the IUCN review process for the ACAP Status Review. In this process, we have been in touch with persons or organizations interested in editing the accuracy of the ACAP to ensure global representation and help with uptake and implementation. We are also in contact with organisations that fund species conservation through grant programs to fund ACAP implementation.

T-039 The Atelopus Task Force contributes to conservation actions for Atelopus species. (KSR 10)

Number of actions addressing major drivers/emerging threats of species or population loss: 1

Result description: The Atelopus Task Force played a key role in organizing the second in-person meeting of the ASI, held in November 2023 during the XII Latin American Congress of Herpetology in Bolivia.

Synergy

T-017 ASG acts as a key ally of Amphibian Ark and the Amphibian Survival Alliance with the shared vision of 'Amphibians thriving in nature'. (KSR 10)

Number of collaborative activities: 2

Result description: In 2023 ASG collaborated with the Amphibian Survival Alliance (ASA) and Amphibian Ark on the following: 1) conducting joint fundraising with ASA, and 2) developing a foundation to address the threat related to the combined effects of climate change and chytrid fungus.

Technical advice

T-003 ASG provides technical advice to organisations and institutions globally. (KSR 10)

Number of technical consultations provided to support conservation actions: 2

Result description: This year we have provided support to Panama's Supreme Court to decide on the development of Central America's largest open-pit copper mine by Minera Panamá, a subsidiary of Canadian company First Quantum Minerals. The ASG also provided technical advice to an NGO in New Zealand concerned about the potential impacts of planning gold mine expansion on local nature, including the Archey's Frog (*Leiopelma archeyi*, CR).

T-039 The Atelopus Task Force contributes to conservation actions for Atelopus species. (KSR 10)

Number of technical consultations provided to support conservation actions: 4

Result description: Throughout 2023, the Task Force met four times to provide technical and scientific advice to the ASI, and to support the ASI Coordinator in decision-making processes.

NETWORK

Membership

T-004 ASG leadership and membership are renewed. (KSR 2)

Number of SSC members maintained: 43

Result description: At the end of 2023 ASG had reached 335 members, 43 of which joined during 2023.

T-015 ASG proactively recruits new members, focusing on regions with little or no representation at the start of the quadrennium. (KSR 2)

Number of SSC members recruited: 43

Result description: Of the 43 new members who joined ASG in 2023, 25 members (58%) were from regions where our membership is not proportional to the amphibian conservation need, namely Central and South America, Africa, and Asia. However, we need to continue to proactively recruit members in certain regions to address this imbalance, e.g. the Caribbean and Southeast Asia.

Synergy

T-014 Ensure a number of ARLA staff members are supported by donors. (KSR 1)

Number of 'funding' partners established and maintained: 3

Result description: Re:wild and Synchronicity Earth support resulted in

Dryophytes immaculatus
Photo: Amaël Borzée



Kurixalus inexpectatus
Photo: Amaël Borzée

the retention of three ARLA positions to coordinate Global Amphibian Assessment initiatives.

T-016 Create/increase financial partnerships that support ASG staff. (KSR 1)

Number of 'funding' partners established and maintained: 0

Result description: We have been in conservation with a potential new partner regarding the development of an MOU, and a regular donation to support core activities.

COMMUNICATE
Communication

T-007 ASG actively contributes to the production of scientific publications related to amphibian research and conservation. (KSR 12)

Number of publications that acknowledge SSC affiliation: 4

Result description: This year we have produced four scientific publications using our SSC affiliation. These include the following: (1) Bishop, PJ, *et al.* (2023). "Amphibians". In Maclean (ed.) *The Living Planet: The State of the World's Wildlife*. Cambridge University Press, pp.153–176. ISBN: 9781108731652; (2) Borzée, A, *et al.* (2023). "Policy recommendation on the Rana trade towards the Republic of Korea". *Frontiers in Environmental Science* 11:1097849; (3) Borzée, A. (2024). "Continental Northeast Asian Amphibians: Origins, Behavioural Ecology, and Conservation". *Academic Press, Elsevier*. Amsterdam, Netherlands. ISBN: 9780323918572; (4) Wren, S. *et al.* (2023).



Ameerega picta
Photo: Ariadne Angulo

[“A review of New Zealand native frog translocations: lessons learned and future priorities”](#). *New Zealand Journal of Ecology* 47(2): 3538.

T-008 ASG reports activities to SSC Data. (KSR 12)

Report to SSC DATA: 1

Result description: The current report accounts for activities undertaken for the year 2023.

T-010 ASG develops a communications plan laying out the intended use of each of its communications tools. (KSR 13)

Communication matrix developed: 0

Result description: In 2023, the ASG received an SSC Internship Grant to help us work on this target. That funding is yet to come through to our account, but work will start when that is made available to our intern.

[SSC Grant awarded]

T-011 Together with the Amphibian Survival Alliance (ASA), ASG continues to produce FrogLog. (KSR 12)

Number of Species e-bulletin, Save Our Species newsletter, SSC Groups’ newsletter editions produced: 0

Result description: Issues surrounding capacity for the publication of *FrogLog* have persisted into 2023 and, despite several meetings, we have not published any issue in 2023. We will persevere, as we have received submissions that need to be published a.s.a.p.

T-012 ASG participates in scientific or public events. (KSR 12)

Number of presentations delivered in scientific events: 2

Result description: Introduction to the ASG and the work conducted during 2023 include: Borzée, A. (March 2023). “Advances in amphibian conservation research. Masterclass on amphibian conservation”. Ferghana State University. Ferghana, Uzbekistan. Presentation of amphibian translocation guidelines at the following: Borzée, A. (October 2023). “Freedom at a cost? Environmental threats linked to Giant Salamander releases, and how to remediate ecological impacts”. Conservation Action Plan Workshop for Chinese Giant Salamanders. Green Camel Bell. Lanzhou, China.

T-021 Maintain the Halliday-Bishop Amphibian Conservation Reference List. (KSR 12)

Number of references in the list: 0

Result description: Volunteer Nikhil Modak has added all items to the Halliday-Bishop library and we are working on finding volunteers to expand to titles that were not included in the original list.

T-027 Publish an analysis of the second Global Amphibian Assessment results. (KSR 12)

Number of publications in scientific journals: 1

Result description: The following paper reported an overview of GAA2 results: Luedtke, J.A. *et al.* (2023). “Ongoing declines for the world’s amphibians in the face of emerging threats”. *Nature* 622, 308–314. Further, the [State of the World’s Amphibians report](#) analysed the GAA2 results in more detail.

Acknowledgements

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Summary of achievements

Total number of targets 2021–2025: 37

Geographic regions: 28 Global, 1 Africa, 4 America, 3 Asia, 1 Europe, 1 Oceania

Actions during 2023:

Assess: 5 (KSR 6, 7)

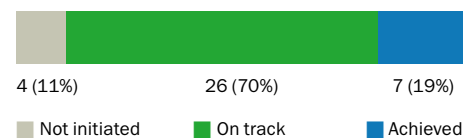
Plan: 3 (KSR 8, 9)

Act: 5 (KSR 10)

Network: 4 (KSR 1, 2)

Communicate: 7 (KSR 12, 13)

Overall achievement 2021–2025:





Nothobranchius fuscotaeniatus
Photo: Csenge Nagy



Tetra Parnaiba
Photo: Karina Molina



Trioceros hoehnelii
Photo: Christopher V. Anderson



Sternberia lutea
Photo: Hayri Duman



Egretta rufescens
Photo: Ernesto Gómez



Lactifluus neotropicus
Photo: Aida Vasco



Mayfly nymph (*Ecdyonurus* sp.)
Photo: Astrid Schmidt-Kloiber and Wolfram Graf