



SSC STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING WCC 3.6 BEIJING, CHINA, 13 – 16 OCTOBER 2007 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF MINUTES

The sixth IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Steering Committee meeting of the Quadrennium was held in Beijing, China. Apologies were received from L Bennun, C Campagna, J Hutton and M Maunder. The location of the meeting provided an opportunity for discussions about species issues within China, as well as the impact of species trade to China from other parts of the world. One afternoon of the meeting was dedicated to these issues and the Steering Committee was joined by colleagues from the IUCN China country office, Conservation International, Wildlife Conservation Society, the European Union and TRAFFIC for a round-table dialogue.

The main decisions, discussion points and action items of the meeting can be summarised as:

Administration, Governance and Finance

- Ms D Raimondo has been appointed as the Chair of the Southern Africa Plant Specialist Group (SG). Dr B Talukdar has been appointed as the Co-Chair of the Asian Rhino SG.
- The Sciaenid (croakers and drums) and the Caucasus Plants Red List Authorities (RLA) have been formed, and will remain in place until the end of the Quadrennium.
- The name of the Veterinary SG has been changed to the Wildlife Health SG.
- C Thouless has been appointed as part-time SSC Senior Commission Officer. A new George B Rabb Intern will be sought for the office of the SSC Chair as S Vosse will be moving on to further her career.
- D Cator and J Griffin began work as SSC Network Support Officers in July, as did L Lew as the new Marketing and Communication Officer in the Species Programme.
- Feedback was given on the results of the Chairs' Consultation and follow-up work will occur, particularly in the areas of the SSC communications, to ensure that the results of the Consultation are taken into account.
- J Smart gave a presentation on unique fundraising tools under development and the Steering Committee encouraged her to continue lateral thinking on this important issue.
- The Species Information System (SIS) was discussed in detail, and it was agreed that clarity is needed on exactly what the system can do now, what its abilities will be in the future and likewise what it is not and what it will not be. A document will be prepared in time for the next Steering Committee meeting in February 2008.

Sub-Committee and Task Force updates

- Feedback was given from the recent successful meeting of the Species Conservation Planning Task Force and the exact nature and role of the process-focused guidelines that will be produced were discussed. It was agreed that the species conservation planning guidelines should be guidelines for an endorsed SSC process for strategic species conservation approaches rather than an endorsed SSC product, in order not to become too prescriptive or restrictive. Draft guidelines will be presented at the SSC SG Chairs' Meeting and finalised for the World Conservation Congress, along with a "how to" manual.
- BASC is to develop a draft policy on taxonomic standards for consideration by the SC and will also investigate, in the context of the proposed Red List Scientific Journal, the desires of the individuals of the SSC network in terms of how they wish to be recognised and what would create incentives for them to carry out Red List assessments.
- Regarding the backlog of species assessments at the Red List Unit (RLU), the SC agreed that the Red List process should be improved as per the guidance in the SSC redesign proposal with a view to preventing further backlogs at the RLU. In future the onus for overseeing the quality of assessment submissions should rest with the appropriate RLA.

The ideal situation should be that the assessments are evaluated and then submitted to the RLU in the Data Entry Module of SIS with all the required documentation. This will ensure that the primary role of the RLU will be that of consistency checking for adherence to Red List Categories and Criteria. Specific steps to alleviate the current backlog were agreed.

- Due to time constraints, all other Sub-Committees and Specialist Group updates were included in the agenda as written submissions. This documentation was available in the meeting pack, and the SC members were encouraged to discuss any matters that they wished to raise with the relevant Sub-Committee Chairs.

Strategic Planning and the Redesign of the SSC

- The Key Species Results (KSR) for the 2009 – 2012 quadrennium, as submitted to the IUCN Global Programme Team, were accepted with agreed modifications. C Imboden, with a small team from the Species Programme and Chair's Office, was tasked with preparing SMART targets under the KSR to form the basis of the next SSC Strategic Plan and the 2009-2012 operational plan now required by IUCN. He will also rework the three statements of the to-be-adopted "state, pressure, response" model into a proposed SSC Mandate for the 2009-2012 Quadrennium.
- The proposed redesign of the SSC as presented by the Restructuring Task Force was accepted with the agreed modifications. The SC members agreed to be leaders in the change process. Two documents describing the redesign will be made available to SSC SG Chairs and stand-alone RLA Focal Points by mid-December.

Branding and Publications

- The 2007 Red List was launched on 12 September 2007 with press conferences in Washington, D.C. and Paris. The press coverage was good and the live launches worked well. At IUCN Headquarters, all staff were encouraged to wear red and the SP staff conducted quizzes in an effort to raise awareness about the Red List within IUCN.
- The Red List brand is being considered in detail and the brand will be developed into products – including the Red List Category tags to be used at zoos and botanical gardens.
- A short brain-storming session was held on both *Species* and the SSC e-bulletin and a communications team consisting of staff from the Species Programme and Chair's Office will work to implement the suggestions put forward.
- All data for the Global Mammal Assessment will be released through the 2008 Red List and via a peer-reviewed paper. An event around the GMA launch will also take place at the World Conservation Congress in October 2008.
- The next Global Species Assessment (GSA2) will be produced for 2010 allowing plenty of lead time to plan the document, identify target audiences, determine how impact will be measured, and secure funds and commitments.
- A number of fact sheets will be produced for the World Conservation Congress (WCC4), including those for which there are contractual obligations to deliver a product or publication. These sheets will be attractive, stand-alone documents that can be combined and distributed in a single folder. This will allow delegates to take only the sheets they need and support the spirit of making the WCC4 a "reduced paper" event. The entire set will be launched at the first SSC session of the Forum.

Up-coming Events

- The Chairs' Meeting, to be hosted by the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi, will take place on 11 – 14 February 2008 in Al Ain, United Arab Emirates. The detailed design of the meeting programme was discussed and the logistical arrangements overviewed.
- The six dedicated SSC sessions for the World Conservation Congress are being finalised and, in coordination with the Species Programme, the full joint programme and planned "journeys" for the Congress will be further developed in early 2008.
- The WCC3.7 Steering Committee meeting will take place either side of the Chairs' Meeting on 9-10 and 15 February 2008. The last Steering Committee meeting of the Quadrennium will take place tentatively on 3-4 October 2008 in Barcelona, just before the WCC4.