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October 04, 2004

Caracas, Venezuela

Dear _____,

I am writing on behalf of the National Red List Advisory Group (NRLAG), a subcommittee within the Red List Committee of the IUCN Species Survival Commission, and an advisory body for the national application of IUCN Red List criteria. We are conducting a survey of the 188 parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, as part of a project designed to evaluate the current and potential uses of national threatened species lists. We would like to take this opportunity to request your assistance in providing information related to the creation and use of national threatened species lists in (COUNTRY).

As a party to the Convention on Biological Diversity, (COUNTRY) has expressed a commitment to conserving and sustainably using biodiversity, including identifying and monitoring the important components of biological diversity that need to be conserved and used sustainably, and promoting the recovery of threatened species. The development of national threatened species lists is often an integral component of conservation programs and action plans directed toward conserving biological diversity. However, neither the extent to which such lists have been developed and incorporated into national conservation policies nor the issues related to elaborating these lists at a national level have been formally evaluated.

In an effort to improve the process of evaluating the status of national biodiversity, we would ask that you take the time to fill out the enclosed survey. This will allow the NRLAG to better serve the needs of nations undertaking national Red Listing efforts. We appreciate your time on this matter and respect your invaluable commitment to protecting the biodiversity with which we share the planet. Thank you in advance for your collaboration.

Yours faithfully,

Jon Paul Rodríguez
Chair, National Red List Advisory Group

Survey: IUCN Red List Criteria and National Threatened Species Listing

Name:

Contact Information (including email and phone number):

1. Has a national threatened species list be developed for this country?

Yes _____ No _____

(Note: If more than one list has been developed for all taxa, please answer the questions with respect to the most recent list. If several lists have been created for different taxonomic groups, please answer the questions with respect to each list, e.g. select more than one time period, if necessary.)

2. If so, when was the list developed? (please specify the year as well)

1980-1990: _____ 1990-2000: _____ 2000-2004: _____

3. Are there future plans to develop a national list of threatened species? (please specify if the list will be a revision of a previously existing list or if it will be an entirely new list, and provide an explanation if necessary)

Yes _____ Revision _____ New list _____

No _____

If Yes, when is it expected to be published? _____

4. Who developed or will develop the list (may select more than one)?

___ Governmental organization (ministry, department, wildlife agency, etc.)

___ Non-governmental organization

___ Regional IUCN-SSC office

___ Private organization

___ Other (please specify) _____

5. Were IUCN Red List criteria used in developing the list, or will they be, if the list has not yet been created? (If IUCN Red List criteria were not or will not be used in developing the list, please proceed to question #12)

Existing lists: Yes _____ No _____

Future lists: Yes _____ No _____

6. If IUCN Red List criteria were/ will be used, what version was it/ will it be?

Existing lists:

__ 1994 IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria

__ 2001 IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria, version 3.1

Future lists:

__ 1994 IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria

__ 2001 IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria, version 3.1

7. If IUCN Red List criteria were/ will be used (even if they were modified), why were they selected as the criteria of choice? (select as many options as apply)

__ Objectivity

__ Quantitative nature of the criteria

__ Convenience of using an already-developed system

__ Reputation of the criteria

__ Previous and current global and regional use of the criteria (outside of the country in question)

__ Increased comparability between country in question and other regions in which the criteria have also been used

__ To allow assessments to be considered or incorporated into the global Red List

__ To evaluate/apply the new Regional Guidelines

__ Other (please specify) _____

8. Were the IUCN Regional Guidelines utilized when developing the list, or will they be, if the list has not yet been created?

Existing lists: Yes _____ No _____

Future lists: Yes _____ No _____

9. If the IUCN Regional Guidelines were not utilized, did the country develop its own set of regional guidelines or modify the IUCN criteria in any way?

Yes, our own regional guidelines were developed _____

Yes, the IUCN criteria were modified _____

No, neither _____

10. If the answer to question #9 is yes, what factors were considered in developing personalized regional guidelines or in modifying the IUCN criteria? (select as many options as apply)

Population status in neighboring countries

Threat status in neighboring countries (including entire regions such as “Europe”)

Threat status within the country

Global threat status

Percentage of global population found within the country/ Degree of endemism

Pattern or rate of decline

Biogeographical information

Conservation priority

Other (please specify) _____

11. Are there any publications or documents available that explain in detail the process of developing personalized regional guidelines or in modifying the IUCN criteria (if so, please specify where they can be obtained)?

Yes _____

No _____

12. If IUCN Red List criteria were not/ will not be used, please specify why not. (select as many options as apply)

- There are special situations or restrictions specific to the country in question which IUCN criteria do not incorporate (please specify the restrictions _____)
- The criteria are not specific enough for use at the national level
- The criteria do not adequately allow the classification of certain taxonomic groups (please specify which groups _____)
- The criteria do not take into consideration conservation priority setting when classifying species
- The criteria tend to over-estimate or exaggerate the threatened status of a species when applied at a national level
- When the national list was developed, no regional guidelines for IUCN criteria existed
- Other (please specify) _____

13. What problems or issues have been encountered in the Red-Listing process that the National Red List Advisory Committee could potentially assist with or alleviate (related to the IUCN criteria, the Regional Guidelines, national listing in general, etc.)? (select as many options as apply)

- Lack of access to detailed global Red List data
- Lack of access to data from nearby countries (especially when applying the Regional Guidelines)
- IUCN criteria are not easily applied to certain species or taxonomic groups (please specify _____)
- IUCN criteria tend to exaggerate the threatened status when applied at a national level; e.g. the quantitative limits for each category are not appropriate for national use, especially in small countries (if true for certain taxonomic groups in particular, please specify which _____)
- Difficulties incorporating national assessments into global assessments

- Difficulties understanding or applying the criteria in its current form
- Vagueness of definitions of concepts used in the criteria hinder classification
- Other (please specify) _____

14. Was the resulting national threatened species list reported to the IUCN/SSC Red List Committee, or will it be, if the list has not yet been created?

- Existing list: Yes _____ No _____
 Future lists: Yes _____ No _____

15. Have the national Red List and/or the IUCN Red List criteria been incorporated into national conservation planning, policy and/or priority setting in any way?

- National threatened species list: Yes _____ No _____
 IUCN Red List criteria: Yes _____ No _____

16. How have the national Red List and/or the IUCN Red List criteria been incorporated into national conservation planning, policy and/or priority setting? (select as many options as apply)

The IUCN Red List criteria have been adopted as the criteria by which the “official” governmental threatened species list is created (i.e. the national Red List automatically becomes the governmental threatened species list; the “legal” threatened species list is identical to the list developed using IUCN criteria).

A modified version of the criteria has been adopted as the criteria by which the “official” governmental threatened species list is created.

The national Red List developed using IUCN criteria is the baseline from which the government creates its official threatened species list (i.e. the governmental list is a selected subset of the Red List).

The national threatened species list is used to divert and or mediate development.

The (national) threatened status of species according to IUCN criteria is considered in designating conservation priorities, planning conservation efforts and/or allocating conservation funds.

__ Other (please specify) _____

Please feel free to elaborate on any of the above points, or on any other point of interest (use a separate sheet if necessary).

Please send the completed questionnaire to:

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Additional Questions

(asked in subsequent phone interviews with respondents)

1a. If the national Red List was reported to the Red List Programme Committee (RLPC), what sort of feedback did the RLPC give the country? Does the country feel that the information they sent in contributed to and is apparent on the global Red List (mostly refers to endemic species)?

1b. If the national Red List was not reported, why not?

2a. Would a website run by the NRLAG containing some or all of the following be useful?

- A database of all the national red lists that have been reported to the IUCN/SSC, including the species reported on those lists, the category and criteria for each species, and a short description of the threats facing the species.
- Frequently Asked Questions (mostly related to the use of the IUCN criteria).
- A mechanism for direct online submittal of national red lists to the IUCN/SSC Red List Programme Officer.
- Contact information for individuals and/or organizations involved in developing national red lists in other countries.
- A bulletin board-like format where specific questions and discussion topics could be posted and individuals with experience in those specific areas could respond to the questions and comment on the discussion topics; the NRLAG would also monitor and participate in the discussions.

2b. Are there any other things we could include in the website that would be valuable, or is there another approach that would be more useful?

3. Are there any ways in which the process of developing national threatened species lists could be facilitated (e.g. better access to global or national red list data), especially by the NRLAG?

- more training (e.g. workshops on the use of the criteria)
- more access to global and regional info; would the web be an effective medium through which to access this information?
- location of a Regional IUCN-SSC office in or near the country, and active participation of that office in the development of the list
- other...?

4. Do the current IUCN Regional Guidelines adequately modify the criteria to allow them to be successfully applied at a regional level? If not, where do the problems lie?