



SSC STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING WCC3.8 BARCELONA, SPAIN, 4-5 OCTOBER 2008 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF MINUTES

The eighth and final IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Steering Committee meeting of the Quadrennium was held on the mornings of the two days before the World Conservation Congress (WCC) in Barcelona, Spain. Apologies were received from C Campagna, C Imboden, J Robinson, F Launay and M Maunder. S Stuart and D Leaman were present to represent their Sub-Committees, and J Smart and JC Vié attended on behalf of the Species Programme.

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

Administration, Governance and Finance

- Support to the SSC Network was a major challenge in this Quadrennium, but two Network Support Officers are now in place in the IUCN Species Programme. Staffing of the Species Programme will need to be examined in more detail in the new Quadrennium.
- In the long run up to the WCC4 in Barcelona, all staff of the Species Programme and Chair's Office devoted most of their attention to the tasks at hand. In future it should be remembered that the last year of the Quadrennium is substantially dedicated to Congress preparations, while the first year or two are focused on establishing the network and ensuring its functionality. This does limit the amount of time to focus on the needs, outputs and outcomes of the network.
- The IUCN Council is currently dealing with a number of issues to close the Quadrennium, including: the One Programme Working Group's efforts (which have been met with enthusiasm from the IUCN Secretariat, but concern over IUCN's funding model remains); the IUCN Programme for 2009-2012; and IUCN's relationship with the private sector. These issues are likely to be raised in the Members' Assembly of the WCC and are the subject of various motions.
- The Red List brand/logo presents an initial step towards increasing the power and protection of the Red List. Opportunities with the zoo, botanical garden and aquarium communities will be explored.
- The SSC Commission Operations Fund was well-managed in this Quadrennium and a substantial reserve will be carried forward into the new Quadrennium.
- The Species Programme would like to leverage more financial support for the Specialist Groups, and has been trying to do this through building opportunities for them into the projects developed by the Programme staff. However, there is a need for a better co-ordinated fund-raising strategy for the SSC and the Species Programme, with full agreement on what the priorities are, what proposals are to be written and by whom.

Restructuring and Red List Processes

A discussion took place that encompassed L Boitani's Restructuring Task Force report, H Dublin's memo to W Jackson and J Marton-Lefèvre after the meeting between herself, L Boitani, J Smart and S Stuart in July, the Red List Process meeting report, the letter from G Mace to S Stuart and H Dublin, and S Stuart's comments on this letter, which had not been read by many as it was only sent to all SC members on 3 October 2008 and most were already travelling to Barcelona. The main elements of the discussion were:

- Given the higher-level deliberations and uncertainties on the IUCN One Programme implementation, the SSC Restructuring Task Force inadvertently entered a realm much bigger than its mandate. This made it difficult to conclude within the SSC on matters that extend far beyond it; importantly the relationship between the Species Programme and the SSC.
- A very challenging but positive meeting was held in July, attended by J Smart, L Boitani, S Stuart and H Dublin. H Dublin then wrote a letter to W Jackson and J Marton-Lefèvre to inform them of suggested ideas for allowing the SSC and Species Programme to work more effectively together in future.
- One aspect of the redesign where it was thought progress could be made was the Red List process, and consequently a Red List Process meeting took place in September. Its main outcome was that more investment should be made at the data-compilation stage of the Red List process in order to significantly reduce the cost of and time involved in the evaluation and consistency checking stages.
- The redesign process has been put on hold until the new Quadrennium. At that time the Chair of the SSC will determine whether s/he would like to reopen the process. There is much experience and ideas amassed, and it could be taken forward once a clearly-articulated relationship between the SP and the SSC has been decided upon between the leadership of the SSC and the Species Programme, with input from IUCN Senior Management.

Sub-Committee and Task Force Final Reports

- An agreement has been signed between the SSC Chair and the Chair of the World Commission on Protected Areas to establish a joint Task Force on Protected Area Management Categories and Biodiversity Outcomes.
- The Chairs of each Sub-Committee, Task Force and disciplinary Specialist Group represented at the meeting gave a brief overview of their progress over the Quadrennium and recommendations for the future. Actions and decisions can be summarised as follows:
 - The *Biodiversity Assessments Sub-Committee (BASC)*:
 - The Guidelines for Appropriate Uses of Red List Data were adopted on the understanding that they will continue to evolve and be improved. A creative way will be sought to ensure that all IUCN Members receive a copy of the Guidelines.
 - The SSC Steering Committee endorsed the proposed Red List Pre-publication Data Use Policy in the context of the higher-level IUCN Provider/Contributor Agreement and the IUCN Red List Terms of Use.
 - BASC will further investigate and evaluate the following early in the new Quadrennium: securing appropriate recognition for Red List assessors; the next steps for RapidList; further work on the utilisation and livelihoods Classification Schemes; recommendations for SSC's involvement in national and regional level Red Listing; taxonomy and nomenclature issues; the handling of species extinction and the periodicity of Red List updates and releases.
 - The *Biodiversity Indicators Sub-Committee (BISC)* concluded that if IUCN is to continue working on indicators, it should be undertaken at a more in-depth level with dedicated resources allocated.
 - The *Sustainable Use Sub-Committee (SUSC)* noted that their survey revealed that sustainable use remains a critical issue and resources need to be found to implement the aspirations of the sustainable use community within the SSC and beyond.
 - The *Plant Conservation Sub-Committee (PCSC)* concluded that good work had been done on priorities for plant Red Listing, but more work is needed. Some changes in the establishment of the SSC plant network will be needed in the new Quadrennium.
 - The *Marine Conservation Sub-Committee (MCSC)* had a successful Quadrennium, which has culminated in the launch of their booklet "Adrift – tales of ocean fragility".

Already there is a desire to translate the book, and there have been suggestions that a similar booklet be done every few years, along with related web-stories.

- The Invertebrate Conservation Sub-Committee (ICSC) was praised for its work in creating a structure that is now capable of handling the Red Listing of any invertebrate species in the world. There are many lessons to be learned from the work of the ICSC, and it was suggested that an article is written for a future edition of *Species* that would explain how they have succeeded in tackling the challenges of such a speciose group.
- The Species Conservation Planning Task Force (SCPTF) concluded the Quadrennium by producing overview Guidelines and a Handbook on “Strategic Planning for Species Conservation”. These will be released at Congress and then tested in practice. Discussions continue around providing the most effective mechanism to assist SSC Specialist Groups who would like to implement the process.
- The Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG) took some time this Quadrennium to attempt to re-define itself and will in future be prioritising more deliberately; forming more partnerships with other SGs and returning to its roots: supporting *ex situ* contributions to *in situ* conservation efforts.
- The Wildlife Health Specialist Group (WHSG) has many ideas for the future, not least of which is to continue their dialogues with the pharmaceutical industry on the impact of pharmaceuticals on the environment and look for other potential WHSG outputs and outcomes that members of the group can contribute to collaboratively.
- The Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG) has had many trials this Quadrennium, including a never-ending battle for core funding. Its Global Invasive Species Database is, however, a world-renown tool and much has been achieved in its development. The group will require a new Chair, as M Clout announced his intention to step down after 15 years as Chair.

Communications

- It was recommended that a Communications Task Force be re-established in the new Quadrennium, with a goal to focus on improving our various communications tools, such as: *Species*, the SSC E-bulletin, the species website, the wiki “Global Voice for Species Conservation”, blogs and other networking tools, and the IUCN Sharepoint platform which has been tested for SSC use. There also remains a need to improve internal communications within the greater IUCN and external communications with the outside world.

World Conservation Congress

- Due to diligent management of the Commission Operations Fund, it was possible to sponsor the largest number of SSC members ever to attend the 4th WCC.
- There are 11 joint SSC/Species Programme sessions taking place at the WCC, and many more being run by Specialist Groups and partner organisations. The Steering Committee members were encouraged to attend as many sessions as possible, particularly the two main SSC sessions (both of which featured awards for service to the SSC) and the SSC social function on the first night of the Forum.

The meeting was adjourned with warm thanks from the SSC Steering Committee being given to H Dublin for her leadership of the SSC for the 2004-2008 Quadrennium.