



SSC STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING WCC3.7 AL AIN, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, 9,10,15 FEBRUARY 2008 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF MINUTES

The seventh IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Steering Committee meeting of the Quadrennium was held in Al Ain, United Arab Emirates. Apologies were received from C Imboden and M Maunder. The meeting took place for two days before and one day after the four-day SSC Specialist Group (SG) Chairs' Meeting. Some Species Programme staff joined the Steering Committee (SC) for certain portions of the meeting.

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

Administration, Governance and Finance

- The Species Programme Internship position is now vacant.
- The Philippine Plant, Palm, Sirenia and Duck SGs are currently without Chairs. Three other shared SSC/WI bird SGs do not have a Letter of Agreement signed.
- At the November 2007 IUCN Council meeting, Councillors discussed the IUCN Members' Survey and the External Review. The outcome of discussions was agreement that the "One Programme" approach needs more concerted effort to operationalise its delivery. A One Programme Working Group was therefore established, of which H Dublin is a member, to deliver recommendations to Council and the World Conservation Congress (WCC).
- The same amount will be allocated to the SSC Commission Operations Fund in 2008 as in 2007, but allocations to SSC Sub-Committees will be different due to the demands of WCC.
- In terms of fundraising initiatives, the trial of Google AdSense will be extended to other pages of the Red List website. The access to the online donation button will also be improved.

Sub-Committee and Task Force Updates

- The preliminary work of the Species Conservation Planning Task Force, the draft "Overview of Species Conservation Strategic Planning" is available for comment. A detailed "how to" manual containing many examples will accompany this document and both documents will be released at the WCC, but will continue to evolve thereafter. The WCC sessions will include an Alliance Workshop on successful methods for implementing species conservation planning, and a Learning Opportunity for unveiling the guidelines and manual.
- Under the Biodiversity Assessments Sub-Committee (BASC) agenda item, the following issues were covered in detail:
 - The Global Mammal Assessment is progressing and its delivery deadline is June 2008.
 - The Draft Guidelines for Data Use (focusing on the technical aspects of appropriate uses of Red List data), the Draft IUCN Red List Data Provider Agreement (intended to protect the rights of the data provider, but still allow data to be used for analyses, fundraising and other functions), and the Pre-publication Data Use Guidelines were discussed in detail. It was agreed that there is a need to consolidate the latter two documents. There was also agreement that the definitions of terms used in these documents must be clear. "Publication" means "uploaded to the Red List website" and "data" means "everything on the website unless it has been given conditionally or it is predetermined to be conservation sensitive".
 - Red List Backlog: it was reiterated that even if the Red List Unit (RLU) are concerned over data quality coming through for inclusion in the Red List, if an evaluation had occurred then the data should go into the Red List and the Red List Authority (RLA) should be notified that there may be errors. If the consistency check shows the evaluation to be inadequate, then the RLU may refuse to enter data on the Red List website. On occasions where the RLU's technical expertise exceeds that of the RLA and

data received from the RLA are found to be deficient, the RLU should inform the SSC Chair's Office that the RLA is not functioning.

- Preliminary Assessments: BASC has authorised the testing of RapidList for the purpose of conducting preliminary assessments. BASC will report to the SSC SC on results.
- National and Regional Red Listing: this new task for BASC is to prepare a discussion paper to assist in developing a strategic vision regarding SSC's roles and levels of engagement on national and regional level Red Listing. The paper will lay out the pros and cons of various levels of engagement.
- The Global Species Assessment 2, 2010: a full outline of content will be available at the first Steering Committee meeting of 2009.
- Species Information Service (SIS): The Species Information Manager, J Ragle, joined the Steering Committee meeting for this discussion. There was understanding that SIS is designed to deliver suite of tools. At present it is focussed on documentation for Red List assessments, but there is a large range of possibilities for what the next stage could be. In the future more modules can be added. There was agreement that the SIS needs another name that better reflects the nature of what it strives to be.

Strategic Planning and the Redesign of the SSC

- Regarding the Species Strategic Plan, several of the 22 Key Species Results have been reworded and now the species targets are being added into the framework. The targets will be worded in general terms to encompass as much of the work of the network as possible.
- The Steering Committee supported the basic premise of the proposed SSC redesign – that it moves towards strengthening the Red List assessment and evaluation processes and bringing the core functions firmly back into the network; that it enables greater conservation action; and that it will encourage a gradual move towards a stronger funding model. Implementing the process around the redesign cannot be immediate but will take place over the next few years.
- The principles of the redesign were agreed as follows:
 - The rationale for the redesign should be clarified and strengthened
 - It should be emphasised that the redesign should enhance conservation impact
 - There is a distinction of functions between Red Listing and other conservation activities
 - Capacity should be increased within the network for both functions
 - In Red Listing, the assessment and evaluation functions must be separated
 - The final document should be ready before July 2008 and the new framework should be presented in Barcelona as a vision and recommendations for a way forward
- At the SSC Specialist Group Chairs' Meeting, a group of five Chairs volunteered to represent their fellow Chairs and comment on the next draft of the redesign document from the Restructuring Task Force.

World Conservation Congress

- The SSC Quadrennial Report for the WCC will go to the March IUCN Council meeting for approval. The Progress & Assessment report, normally done annually, will also report on the whole Quadrennium and will be put forward for inclusion in the IUCN Quadrennial Report.
- The Fact Sheets on species assessments and indicators for WCC4 should be light, catchy material with little text, and should direct people to the website for a more detailed and referenced document.

SSC Specialist Group Chairs' Meeting

The Steering Committee reconvened after the four-day SSC SG Chairs' Meeting to debrief on the meeting. The general consensus was that the meeting was a success, and that the SG Chairs really enjoyed the opportunity to interact with each other, the IUCN Regional Office representatives, other Commission representatives, and the Species Programme staff who attended the meeting. There was agreement that SSC is an amazing group of people who demonstrate the diversity of approaches to conservation, and that the Commission is on the cusp of great things. Everything possible should be done to make this kind of meeting a regular event (possibly once every Quadrennium). There was unanimous support for the idea of a dedicated Species Congress. A website and full meeting report is available at [SGChairs'MeetingWebpage](#)