

2021 Report

IUCN SSC Orchid Specialist Group



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NUMBER OF MEMBERS
145

SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITES

Facebook: IUCN SSC Orchid Specialist Group
Instagram: @orchidspecialistgroup
Twitter: @IUCN_Orchids
Websites: <https://www.orchidspecialistgroup.com>; <https://www.iucn.org/ssc-groups/orchids-sg/plants-fungi/orchid-specialist-group>; <https://globalorchidtrade.wixsite.com/home/orchids-trade>

Mission statement

Orchidaceae are the largest family of flowering plants, and they occur in a wide range of ecosystems and habitats. A charismatic group, many species are important in horticulture. Habitats of orchids are, however, threatened throughout the world, and the Orchid Specialist Group (OSG) is dedicated to their conservation and sustainable use.

Projected impact 2021–2025

By the end of 2025, the OSG will have made significant progress towards addressing some key gaps in baseline knowledge related to orchid conservation. This includes assessing the conservation status of at least 750 species and completing targeted assessments relating to species in ex situ collections, threats from trade and changes in phenology. We will have used these data to develop policy recommendations and communication strategies to improve regulation of orchid trade and to develop strategies for ex situ conservation of the family.

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-001 Complete global Red List assessments of 750 species in the family Orchidaceae by 2025.

T-009 Create a global ex situ collections list for orchids.

T-010 Develop a list of species in active commercial trade to underpin prioritisation of future work, including Red Listing.

T-013 Produce baseline reports on three under-investigated commercial orchid trades: Europe's edible salep orchid trade, Nepal's medicinal orchid trade, and Indonesia's ornamental lady slipper orchid trade.

T-014 Develop a phenological assessment using herbarium and related data to establish a baseline and shifts, if any, for native orchids including taxa with specific pollinator requirements and pollinator generalists in the North American Region.

T-015 Create a baseline report of latitudinal shifts for the invasive orchid *Zeuxine strateumatika* in the continental USA.

PLAN

T-016 Compile sequence data for 75% of orchid genera in the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot.

ACT

T-011 Develop code of conduct for orchid hobbyist societies to discourage illegal trade.

NETWORK

T-002 Complete induction of two (or more) additional Red List Authorities (RLA) for the Orchid Specialist Group by 2022.

T-003 Organise and hold IOCC 8, the 8th International Orchid Conservation Congress (2023 or 2024).

T-005 Nominate and (following ratification by SSC) complete induction of new Co-Chair for Orchid Specialist Group.

T-008 Organise and coordinate an ex situ workshop at the IOCC 8, the 8th International Orchid Conservation Congress (2023 or 2024).

T-012 Expand trade group to five new countries where commercial orchid trade is common.

COMMUNICATE

T-004 Produce two (or more) newsletters per year for OSG.

T-006 Present the talk 'Orchid Conservation in the 21st Century: What can the Orchid Specialist Group do?' at (virtual) World Orchid Conference in Taiwan.

T-007 Develop and launch stand-alone website for the Orchid Specialist Group.

Activities and results 2021

ASSESS

Red List

T-001 (KSR 6)

Number of new global Red List assessments completed: 174

Result description: In 2021, 174 global assessments (nine Critically Endangered, 47 Endangered, 42 Vulnerable, 16 Near



Anacamptis pyramidalis (pyramidal orchid; France) is a widespread European orchid, that often forms large colonies when grassland is managed sympathetically
Photo: Michael F. Fay

Threatened, 36 Least Concern, 24 Data Deficient) were added, 98 of which are for species from Africa/Madagascar. We expect this number to climb in subsequent years of the quadrennium as a result of the appointment of regionally focused RLAs (see target T-002). Thus, we are on track to reach the target by the end of 2025.

Research activities

T-010 (KSR 5)

Number of research projects completed or supported by SSC members per taxonomic group and region: 0

Result description: The OSG Trade subgroup held a meeting to discuss the listing and has begun to develop a list of selection criteria, as well as necessary information that must be collected for each species. Data collection for edible orchids has started.

T-013 (KSR 5)

Number of research projects completed or supported by SSC members per taxonomic group and region: 0

Result description: A preliminary report has been prepared for Indonesia; data collection is underway in Nepal and the Eastern Mediterranean.

T-014 (KSR 5)

Number of research projects completed or supported by SSC members per taxonomic group and region: 1

Result description: Our approach begins with our appreciation of the northern regions of Canada and the continental US (Alaska only), orchid taxa already reported from these regions, their pollination systems, and the pollinator families in the North including Diptera, Hymenoptera and Lepidoptera. Because the presence of an existing pollinator system is critical to the success or possible adaptation of any natural movement of orchids from South to North, we begin with a literature review of what has been published about pollinators and their conservation issues in the North/Arctic/High Arctic of North America.

PLAN

Planning

T-016 (KSR 8)

Proportion of genera with sequence data: 50%

Result description: We have already attained 50% coverage of all Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot genera, and the next 25% will be sequenced over the course of the next two years in collaboration with members of the OSG Asia Subgroup.

ACT

Conservation actions

T-011 (KSR 10)

Number of technical documents provided to support conservation actions: 0

Result description: Work with orchid societies in four countries was carried out in November and December to investigate receptiveness of societies to a code of conduct, and trial potential text.

NETWORK

Capacity building

T-002 (KSR 2)

Number of people trained in assessment tools: 6

Result description: In addition to the RLA Coordinator, we now have RLAs based in Africa, Asia, Australasia, Madagascar, North American and Caribbean, and South America, and induction is on track. They are all now registered as RLAs with the IUCN Red List Unit.

T-005 (KSR 2)

Number of people trained in management skills: 1

Result description: Co-Chair Amy Hinsley was ratified by SSC and is now fully functioning in the role.

T-008 (KSR 2)

Number of people trained in other fields: ongoing.

Result description: Planning for the ex situ workshop is at an early stage, since the 8th International Orchid Conservation Congress won't take place until 2024.

Membership

T-012 (KSR 2)

Number of SSC members recruited: 3

Result description: New members recruited from Bhutan, Turkey and Viet Nam.

Synergy

T-003 (KSR 2)

Congress successfully hosted: Ongoing.

Result description: Planning is still at an early stage. Given the ongoing situation with COVID-19, the congress is likely to take place in 2024 (not 2023).

COMMUNICATE

Communication

T-004 (KSR 13)

Number of digital communication outputs developed in relation to specific taxonomic groups: 3

Result description: Newsletter issues released in March, May and September 2021.

T-006 (KSR 13)

Number of SSC members' presentations developed in relation to specific taxonomic groups: 1

Result description: Co-Chair Mike Fay presented a talk on the work of the Orchid Specialist Group at the World Orchid Congress.

T-007 (KSR 13)

Number of digital communication outputs developed in relation to specific taxonomic groups: 1

Result description: The stand-alone website for the Orchid Specialist Group was launched in 2021, and is now being regularly updated with news items, newsletters and other publications, etc.

Summary of achievements

Total number of targets 2021–2025: 16

Geographic regions: 11 Global, 2 America, 2 Asia, 1 Europe

Actions during 2021:

Assess: 4 (KSR 5, 6)

Plan: 1 (KSR 8)

Act: 1 (KSR 10)

Network: 5 (KSR 2)

Communicate: 3 (KSR 13)

Overall achievement 2021–2025:

