

Guidelines for Proposals

for the Establishment of IUCN SSC Task Force

SSC Chair's Office, March 2020

The Species Survival Commission was established by IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, in 1949. Since that time, the SSC has grown into a global, science-based network of more than 9,000 volunteer experts from almost every country of the world, all working together towards achieving the vision of, *"A just world that values and conserves nature through positive action to reduce the loss of diversity of life on earth"*.

The strength behind the SSC is the organization and knowledge of this network of volunteer experts, who donate their time and expertise to build a scientific and practical foundation for the effective delivery of conservation, into more than 150 Specialist Groups (SGs), stand-alone Red List Authorities (RLAs) and Task Forces (TFs) – hereafter “groups” – arranged taxonomically, thematically and/or regionally¹, and convened by the SSC in response to pressing conservation issues. These groups serve as the main working units of the Commission and provide the breadth of expertise and commitment that drives the SSC towards achieving its objectives. These groups are unique blends of individuals who operate independently, but are committed to SSC's vision, mission, objectives and policies and to those of the IUCN.

New groups are established as the need arises. According to SSC By-Laws “Task Force” (TF) shall mean a temporary group of people, led by a TF Chair or two TF Co-Chairs, appointed to address key emergent issues on behalf of the Commission (as per 4.1.10, 6.1 and 6.2 of the SSC By-laws). Task Forces are temporary groups formed to address key emergent issues, and will be governed by the following documents: “Terms of Reference of the IUCN Species Survival Commission Specialist Group, Task Force and Sub-Committee Chairs 2017-2020”, “Terms of Reference for Members of the IUCN Species Survival Commission 2017-2020” and “Guidelines for IUCN SSC Leaders 2017-2020”. Also a “Code of Conduct” will be observed ([download them](#)).

With this in mind, IUCN and SSC have established a set of questions (listed below) to guide the development of proposals around the establishment of new Task Forces. These questions are intended to serve as guidelines, rather than criteria. If you are interested in establishing a new SSC Task Force, please contact: sscchairstaff@iucn.org and edgard.yerena@ssc.iucn.org

¹<https://www.iucn.org/commissions/ssc-groups>

Questions to be answered for the establishment of new SSC Task Forces:

1. What are the key conservation issues or goals to be addressed by the TF ?
2. Why is a Task Force the most appropriate instance at which to address these conservation issues?
3. Is there a clear gap for the TF to fill, and a value-added benefit that the formation of the TF would deliver, rather than duplicate efforts of other existing SSC groups (Specialist Groups, Red List Authorities) or IUCN partner institutions?
4. Explain, how the TF will interact with other SSC groups with potential overlapping realms.
5. What are the key or specific outputs that the TF would deliver to better understand and address these issues, and provide a timetable to reach them out.
6. Is there a unique/core group of relevant experts willing to dedicate energy and time towards furthering a conservation agenda around a particular taxon or group of species ? See box below.
7. Is there clear leadership available to serve a Chair and/or Co Chair ? See key dot 4 below.
8. Is there an institutional source for support and coordination ? Explain what kind of institutional support will be provided, for example whether it is attached to an institution with a permanent position, which could be quite useful.

Key aspects to be considered in the proposal:

1. Provide a list with names, emails and affiliations, of potential members of the TF. This should be as diverse as possible (i.e. in terms of geographic representation and gender).
2. If applicable, consider above list as representative of the geographic distribution of the species which are to be the focus of the group.
3. Consider including in the list some experts with diverse skills and knowledge adding to the group (e.g. practitioners, lawyers, politicians, etc), who do not necessarily need to be species experts.
4. Explain how the group will be steered. This means, you need to name the chair (or two co-chairs). Consider that you are free to organize the TF.
5. Create a list of targets for the next IUCN quadrennium in case it applies