



Species

ISSUE 62

2022 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat



The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC)

The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) is a science-based network of thousands of volunteer experts from almost every country of the world, all working together toward achieving the vision of “a just world that values and conserves nature through positive action to both prevent the loss and aid recovery of the diversity of life on earth.”

Members of SSC belong to one or more of near 200 Specialist Groups, Red List Authorities, Action Partnerships, Task Forces, and Conservation Committees that make up the Network, each focusing on a taxonomic group (plants, fungi, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fishes, and invertebrates), national species, or a disciplinary issue, such as sustainable use and livelihoods, translocation of species, wildlife health, climate change, and conservation planning.

Framed by the Species Conservation Cycle, SSC’s major role is to provide information to IUCN on biodiversity conservation, the inherent value of species, their role in ecosystem health and functioning, the provision of ecosystem services, and their support to human livelihoods. This information is fed into the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

2021-2025 Species Strategic Plan

The IUCN Species Strategic Plan encompasses the joint work of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and a number of partnerships to achieve more than 2,700 targets proposed by the Network during the 2021-2025 quadrennium.

To accomplish those targets, the Species Conservation Cycle was established, which is the conceptual framework for the Network activities. The Species Conservation Cycle’s main purpose is to guide efforts for valuing and conserving biodiversity through three essential components that are linked to each other:

ASSESS: Understand and inform the world about the status and trends of biodiversity.

PLAN: Develop collaborative, inclusive and science-based conservation strategies, plans and policies.

ACT: Convene and mobilise conservation actions to improve the status of biodiversity.



Their implementation requires two transversal components:

NETWORK: Enhance and support our immediate network and alliances to achieve our biodiversity targets.

COMMUNICATE: Drive strategic and targeted communications to enhance our conservation impact.

SSC Species Report

Annual progress in the implementation of the 2021-2025 Species Strategic Plan is documented in the SSC *Species Report*, which consists of a comprehensive description and analysis of the activities and results generated by the members of the SSC Network each year. Each SSC Group contributes to this document by providing a yearly summarised description of their achievements, which is presented in stand-alone reports.

Structure of the IUCN SSC Stand-alone Report

Stand-alone reports summarize the activities conducted and results generated by each group member of the SSC. Following, is the structure of the stand-alone report and the contents under each session.

Title of the SSC Group

Photograph(s) of the Chair / Co-Chairs

Group information

Includes names of Chair / Co-Chairs, Vice-Chairs, Deputy Chairs, Red List Authority Coordinators and Program Officers, their institutional affiliations, number of members and social networks currently active.

Logo of the SSC Group

Mission statement

Includes the mission of the group.

Projected impact for the 2021-2025 quadrennium

Includes the description of the impact on species conservation resulting from the implementation of the targets formulated by the group for the 2021-2025 quadrennium.

Targets for the 2021-2025 quadrennium

Includes the targets planned by the SSC Group for the 2021-2025 quadrennium ordered alphabetically by component of the Species Conservation Cycle. Each target is labeled with a numerical code (e.g., T-001, T-012) that identifies it in the SSC DATA database and its status for the reported year is indicated (Not initiated, On track or Achieved).

Activities and results

Includes the targets for which activities were conducted and results were generated during the reported year, ordered alphabetically, first by component of the Species Conservation Cycle, and second by Activity Category. Description of activities and results includes the indicator that best describes progress, its associated quantitative or qualitative result, and the narrative description of the activity conducted or result obtained. Each activity or result reported is linked to the Key Species Result to which it is mainly associated (e.g., KSR#1, KSR#5).

Acknowledgements

Includes the acknowledgements to funding agencies, partners, and persons who contributed to the progress of the targets of the group.

Summary of achievements

Summarises information of the group's strategic plan for the quadrennium and progress achieved implementing targets for all the components of the Species Conservation Cycle during the reported year.

Example for the recommended citation:

Green, C. 2023. 2022 Report of the Heron Specialist Group. In: Nassar, JM, García, L, Mendoza, L, Andrade, ND, Bezeng, S, Birkhoff, J, Bohm, M, Canteiro, C, Geschke, J, Henriques, S, Ivande, S, Mileham, K, Ramos, M, Rodríguez, A, Rodríguez, JP, Street, B, and Yerena, E (Eds.). 2022 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat. International Union for Conservation of Nature. 4 pp.

Animalia

Fungi

Plantae

National Species

Disciplinary

Action Partnership

Task Force

Red List Authority

Committee

Center for Species Survival

2022 Report

IUCN SSC Heron Specialist Group



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**RED LIST AUTHORITY
COORDINATOR**
BirdLife International

NUMBER OF MEMBERS
33

SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE

Facebook: HeronConservation

Flickr: HeronConservation

Twitter: @HeronCons

Website: <https://www.heronconservation.org>

Mission statement

The mission of the Heron Specialist Group (HSG) is to promote the conservation of herons and their habitats worldwide by encouraging research, inventory, monitoring and conservation action. To achieve its mission, the HSG maintains worldwide communication linkages among heron specialists, assesses the conservation status of heron populations, provides syntheses of information and action plans for the conservation of heron populations, and otherwise facilitates conservation action on behalf of herons and their habitat.

Projected impact 2021–2025

For this quadrennium, our planned and ongoing conservation targets will foster an increase in networking, exchange of ideas and attention to conservation issues concerning herons, egrets and bitterns of the world. We will leverage virtual platforms to become better connected across the globe.

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-004 Publish annual volumes of the Specialist Group's journal (*Journal of Heron Biology and Conservation*).
Status: On track

T-006 Develop expertise listing to ensure all Near Threatened (NT), Vulnerable (VU), Endangered (EN) and Critically Endangered (CR) species are reviewed for Red List assessment.
Status: On track

PLAN

T-001 Update the Global Plan for Heron Conservation.
Status: On track

ACT

T-007 Establish Species Working Groups for Vulnerable, Endangered and Critically Endangered species.
Status: Not initiated

NETWORK

T-002 Establish Sub-Saharan Working Group.
Status: Not initiated

T-005 Complete Strategic Review of Heron Specialist Group governance and operations.
Status: On track

T-008 Organise and host virtual meetings of Heron Specialist Group.
Status: On track

T-009 Secure financial support for Coordinator for White-bellied Heron Working Group.
Status: Not initiated

COMMUNICATE

T-003 Organise and carry out the 2nd Herons of the World Symposium.
Status: Achieved

Activities and results 2022

ASSESS

Research activities

T-004 Publish annual volumes of the Specialist Group's journal (*Journal of Heron Biology and Conservation*). (KSR 5)

Number of publications produced in internal journals of SSC groups: 7

Result description: Volume 7 of the Journal of Heron Biology and Conservation was published in 2022, with seven original peer-reviewed manuscripts published in this volume.

T-006 Develop expertise listing to ensure all Near Threatened, Vulnerable, Endangered and Critically Endangered species are reviewed for Red List assessment. (KSR 6)

Number of species that have been assessed through the different tools: 0
Result description: While not completed, the Heron Specialist Group has initiated contact with all HSG members and others to develop an expertise list for all NT, VU, EN, and CR species.



Near Threatened Reddish Egret (*Egretta rufescens*) in breeding plumage in mangrove colony, Yucatan, Mexico
Photo: Ernesto Gómez

Least Concern Great Egret (*Ardea alba*) at Nimati Wetlands, Jorhat, Assam, India
Photo: Udayan Borthakur



PLAN

Planning

T-001 Update the Global Plan for Heron Conservation. (KSR 8)

Number of conservation plans/strategies updated: 0

Result description: While no actual work has begun on Heron Global Plan for Conservation, recruitment of HSG members has begun for those interested in developing and drafting the global plan.

NETWORK

Documents review

T-005 Complete Strategic Review of Heron Specialist Group governance and operations. (KSR 2)

Review and strengthen governance and operating principles of Specialist Group: Ongoing

Result description: Strategic review of Heron Specialist Group is ongoing. Membership was contacted to begin review and a listserv was created to formalize primary means of communication.

Membership

T-008 Organise and host virtual meetings of Heron Specialist Group. (KSR 2)

Number of SSC members recruited: 6

Result description: A Heron Specialist Group in-person meeting was held in

Victoria Fall, Zambia in November 2022.

The meeting is used to present original research and network and recruit heron specialists from Africa.

Capacity building

T-008 Organise and host virtual meetings of Heron Specialist Group. (KSR 2)

Number of people trained in conservation planning: 1

Result description: One person completed the Conservation Planning Specialist Group training.

COMMUNICATE

Communication

T-003 Organise and carry out the 2nd Herons of the World Symposium. (KSR 13)

Number of SSC members' presentations developed in relation to specific taxonomic groups: 6

Result description: The 3rd Heron Symposium was conducted in conjunction with the Pan African Ornithological Congress, November 21-25, 2022. Symposium entitled: African heron research and conservation: global linkages, local impacts. Additionally, six papers were presented during the symposium. Partial funding for the symposium was supported by SSC Internal Grants Program and The Waterbird Society.

Acknowledgements

The Heron Specialist Group would like to thank Doug Harebottle and Phil Atkinson for supporting and hosting the Heron Symposium in conjunction with the Pan African Ornithological Congress in November 2022. We also thank the IUCN SSC Internal Grants Program and the Waterbird Society for providing funding to support travel costs for symposium presenters. Additionally, we thank Chip Weseloh and Katsutoshi Matsunaga for their continued roles as Editor and Layout Editor, respectively, for the HSG journal.

Summary of achievements

Total number of targets 2021–2025: 9

Geographic regions: 5 Global, 1 Africa, 1 Asia

Actions during 2022:

Assess: 2 (KSR 5, 6)

Plan: 1 (KSR 8)

Network: 3 (KSR 2)

Communicate: 1 (KSR 13)

Overall achievement 2021–2025:

