Mission statement

The four extant species of horseshoe crabs are imperilled, because of overfishing for use as food, bait, production of biomedical products derived from their blood, and because of habitat loss or alteration due to shoreline development and armouring against coastal erosion. The group aims to protect horseshoe crabs in the world through collaborative effort in conservation of their populations and habitats, and in raising public awareness of their importance in evolutionary history, marine coastal ecology and biomedical uses.

Projected impact for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

The three species of horseshoe crabs in Asia, Tachypleus tridentatus, T. gigas and Carcinoscorpius rotundicauda, are currently listed as Data Deficient, and we expect that our current activities will lead to a change in this status in the current quadrennium. While it is premature to assign a status without a formal review of the data, most studies indicate a moderate to severe threat to local populations and a lack of genetic connectivity among populations. We expect to submit a Red List assessment for each of the three Asian horseshoe crabs as an important first step in leading to greater conservation measures for these animals, including greater protection for essential spawning and juvenile nursery habitats. Our group will continue being an active advocate for these unique animals through the support of various outreach and educational programmes that our members have developed.
Red List

i. The Red List assessment for the remaining two Asian horseshoe crab species (*Tachypleus gigas* and *Carcinoscorpius rotundicauda*) has been ongoing and planned for completion in 2021. (KSR #2)

Network

Capacity building

i. An Asian Horseshoe Crab Observation Network has been established to train participating teams to use a standardised survey protocol to record and assess population of juvenile horseshoe crabs on their spawning/nursery beaches. Currently, 12 organisations in mainland China and Hong Kong have joined the network. (KSR #18)

Communicate

Research activities

i. All manuscripts for the book on the science and conservation of horseshoe crab have been reviewed, finalised and submitted to the publisher for typesetting. (KSR #28, 43)

Scientific meetings

i. One of the outcomes of the 2019 meeting was the designation of 20 June every year as International Horseshoe Crab Day. In 2020, we celebrated the First International Horseshoe Crab Day with activities hosted by many people and organisations across Asia and North America, including webinars, public talks, exhibitions, dramas and video clips. (KSR #28)

Acknowledgements

We thank the many people and organisations across Asia and North America who contributed to and participated in celebration of the First International Horseshoe Crab Day on 20 June 2020, so as to raise public awareness of the importance of conservation of horseshoe crabs globally.

Summary of activities 2020

Components of Species Conservation Cycle: 3/5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assess</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Network</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicate</td>
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Main KSRs addressed: 2, 11, 18, 28, 43

KSR: Key Species Result