Mission statement
The Seagrass Species Specialist Group (SSSG) contributes to and encourages seagrass science and conservation, with the goal of protecting seagrass species biodiversity worldwide and preserving the functions and values of seagrass habitat, including its role in protecting threatened and endangered species that depend on seagrasses for their survival.

Projected impact for the 2017-2020 quadrennium
At the time of the 14th International Seagrass Biology Workshop (ISBW14) in the United States (November 2020), 10 years will have passed since the last species status review was completed (Short, F.T., et al. (2011) ‘Extinction risk assessment of the world’s seagrass species’. *Biological Conservation* 144(7):1961–1971. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2011.04.010). The SSSG will affirm the proposed updates at ISBW14. During the workshop, the Red List Authority will organise a conversation about a seagrass ‘Green List’, including contributions for a global database of seagrass population and species recovery efforts that have proved successful around the world.

The SSSG is comprised of approximately 70 seagrass biologists worldwide, who have volunteered to participate and contribute their time by reviewing the status of seagrasses in their bioregions and contributing their knowledge. This has been effective over three successive International Seagrass Biology Workshop sessions, beginning with ISBW10 in Canada (2012).

Looking forward to ISBW14 in the United States, the SSSG plans to seek final approval of the proposed updates confirmed at the last meeting. The Red List Authority will present the results of our updated Red List contributions and solicit a final round of feedback from the SSSG prior to publishing the seagrass Red List of Threatened and Endangered Species in 2021. We plan to continue strengthening the contributions to the Red List and to advance coordination of data on natural and human-assisted recovery of species in our database.

As our climate and oceans are rapidly changing, it becomes critical for the SSSG to continue encouraging research that contributes to an effective Red List assessment process, such that we are better prepared to review and investigate changes to global seagrass species conservation status in the future. We expect continued inclusion of the IUCN forum at seagrass workshops will expand the number of researchers who are aware of the Red List Authority, as well as the number of specialists actively contributing their research to the results of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species SSSG and progress towards recovery.

Targets for the 2017-2020 quadrennium
**Assess**
Red List: complete reassessment of seagrass species with changed status or taxonomy.
Research activities: review taxonomy of seagrass to improve the reassessment process.

**Network**
Capacity building: train members and collaborators on the Red List Categories and Criteria.
Synergy: expand the network of researchers and collaborators engaged in taxonomy and reassessments.

**Communicate**
Communication: increase awareness of the IUCN Red List and seagrass extinction risks.
Activities and results 2020

Assess

Red List
1. Our biennial seagrass membership meeting (ISBW14) was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and is rescheduled for 2022. More than 20 assessments are currently drafted. (KSR #1)

Research activities
1. We held four taxonomy preparation meetings and four full member meetings virtually to discuss seagrass taxonomy issues. (KSR #43)

Network

Capacity building
1. Members and team leaders were established and instructed in species assessment methodologies and draft assessments were initiated in each bioregional team, in addition to two interns who worked between the teams to assist with assessment and mapping gaps. (KSR #5)

Synergy
1. Six bioregional leaders were selected and six bioregional teams formed, in addition to a GIS coordination team that interacted with each of the groups.

Communicate

Communication
1. Two public talks were given, including one invited talk for IUCN BlueNATURA and a recorded open-source video prepared on IUCN SSC SSSG goals and processes for seagrass communities (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8kNT9T9po4). (KSR #28)

Acknowledgements

Jimena Samper-Villarreal from Costa Rica has led the most productive SSSG Bioregional Team in terms of total number of drafted bioregional reassessments, inclusion of new authors and members in a meaningful assessment process, and collaboration on mapping efforts. Jimena has done so while demonstrating patience and leadership in terms of (1) updating significant numbers of threatened species status and (2) mapping global distributions, but also through (3) networking with bioregional experts in seagrass speciation, population biology and distribution patterns. In these ways, we have found Jimena’s efforts to be outstanding and effective in supporting global action for seagrass conservation. The aim of the SSSG in 2021 is to reassess the risk of extinction for all 70+ seagrass species by the end of 2021. Bioregion 2, led by Jimena, has been the most active team by far and is the only team to successfully present revised assessments for all their assigned regional species. Jimena’s continued participation in our global seagrass documentation and conservation action process is welcome and anticipated. We long for the time when she may be able to take a stronger leadership role in our SSC group, when her time will permit it. She exemplifies great patience, expertise, leadership and collaboration skills.

Summary of activities 2020

Components of Species Conservation Cycle: 3/5

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assess</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Network</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicate</td>
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Main KSRs addressed: 1, 5, 28, 43

KSR: Key Species Result