



IUCN Species Survival Commission Leaders' Meeting

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
15–18 September 2015

Meeting Report

The leadership of the Species Survival Commission and Global Species Programme coming together to advance the species conservation agenda for the next quadrennium and beyond



The SSC Leaders in Abu Dhabi, 2015. Photo: EAD.

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Acronyms

AAZ	Al Ain Zoo
ABS	Access and Benefit-sharing
ACAP	Amphibian Conservation Action Plan
AED	African Elephant Database
AESR	African Elephant Status Reports
AEWA	Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds
AfESG	African Elephant Specialist Group of IUCN SSC
AOO	Area of Occupancy
API	Application Program Interface
ARO	Asia Regional Office of IUCN
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASW	Amphibian Species of the World
AZE	Alliance for Zero Extinction
BGCI	Botanic Gardens Conservation International
BIOPAMA	Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme
CAFF	Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna
CAMP	Conservation Assessment and Management Plan
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBMP	Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme
CBSG	Conservation Breeding Specialist Group of IUCN SSC
CC	Climate Change
CCSG	Climate Change Specialist Group of IUCN SSC
CEESP	IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy
CEM	IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management
CGSG	Conservation Genetics SG of IUCN SSC
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CMS	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
CoC	Code of Conduct
CoL	Catalogue of Life
CoP	Conference of the Parties
CR	Critically Endangered
CWRSG	Crop Wild Relative SG of IUCN SSC
DAPTF	Declining Amphibian Populations Task Force
DD	Data Deficient
DRA	Disease Risk Analysis
EAAF	East Asian-Australasian Flyway
EAAFP	East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership
EAZA	European Association of Zoos and Aquariums
EDGE	Evolutionarily Distinct and Globally Endangered
EEZ	Economic Exclusion Zone
EID	Emerging Infectious Diseases
EN	Endangered

EOO	Extent of Occurrence
ESARO	Eastern and Southern African Regional Office of IUCN
ESBA	Eastside Sustainable Business Alliance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FCSC	Freshwater Conservation Sub-Committee of IUCN SSC
GBIF	Global Biodiversity Information Facility
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GFBA	Global Freshwater Biodiversity Assessment
GIS	Geographic Information System
GISD	Global Invasive Species Database
GMSA	Global Marine Species Assessment
GSP	Global Species Programme of IUCN
GSPC	Global Strategy for Plant Conservation
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HQ	Headquarters
HWC	Human-Wildlife Conflict
IAS	Invasive Alien Species
IBA	Important Bird Areas
IBAT	Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool
ICBN	International Code for Botanical Nomenclature
ICSC	Invertebrate Conservation Sub-Committee of IUCN SSC
ICF	International Crane Foundation
ICZN	International Code for Zoological Nomenclature
IFAW	International Fund for Animal Welfare
ILCP	International League of Conservation Photographers
IMLS	Institute for Museums and Library Services
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
ISSG	Invasive Species Specialist Group of IUCN SSC
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing
IWC	International Waterbird Census
IWT	Illegal Wildlife Trade
KBA	Key Biodiversity Areas
LC	Least Concern
LPI	Living Planet Index
MBZ	Mohammed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund
MCSC	Marine Conservation Sub-Committee of IUCN SSC
MFF	Mangroves for the Future
MIKE	Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRL	National Red List
NT	Near Threatened
ODA	Official Development Assistance

OIE	World Organisation for Animal Health
ORMACC	Regional Office for Mesoamerica and the Caribbean of IUCN
ORO	Oceania Regional Office of IUCN
PA	Protected Areas
PACO	Regional Office for Central and West Africa of IUCN
PCSC	Plant Conservation Sub-Committee of IUCN SSC
PSC	Policy Sub-Committee of IUCN SSC
Q&A	Question and Answer
RCF	Regional Conservation Forum
RCP	Regional Collection Planning (EAZA)
REDD+	UN Collaborative initiative on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in developing countries
RGB Kew	Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
RL	The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species
RLA	Red List Authority
RLTWG	Red List Technical Working Group of IUCN SSC
RLU	Red List Unit of GSP
ROWA	Regional Office for West Asia of IUCN
RSG	Reintroduction SG of IUCN SSC
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the CBD
SC	Steering Committee of IUCN SSC
SCPSC	Species Conservation Planning Sub-Committee of IUCN SSC
SDM	Species Distribution Model
SG	Specialist Group
SIS	IUCN Species Information Service
SOS	Save Our Species
SPAW	Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife
SPSC	Standards and Petitions Sub-Committee of IUCN SSC
SRLI	Sampled Red List Index
SSC	IUCN Species Survival Commission
SULi	Sustainable Use and Livelihoods SG of IUCN CEESP and SSC
SUR	Regional Office for South America of IUCN
SWOT	State of the World's Sea Turtles
TAG	Taxonomic Advisory Group
TFSP	Task Force on Systemic Pesticides of IUCN CEM and SSC
TK	Traditional Knowledge
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WAZA	World Association of Zoos and Aquariums
WCC	World Conservation Congress
UNEP-WCMC	United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WCPA	IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas
WDPA	World Database on Protected Areas
WFF	Wildlife for the Future
WH	World Heritage

WHC	World Heritage Convention
WHO	World Health Organisation
WHSG	Wildlife Health SG of IUCN SSC
WI	Wetlands International
WSC	World Species Congress
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
WWT	Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust
ZSL	Zoological Society of London

Introduction

Simon N. Stuart, Chair, IUCN Species Survival Commission

The Third Leaders' Meeting of the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) was held in Abu Dhabi, 15–18 September 2015. The meeting was supported by the overwhelming generosity of Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi (EAD), and was a unique and invaluable opportunity for the leadership of the SSC to meet and to network, to forge new collaborations and build on existing ones, to learn new things and to pass experience and knowledge on. This is the third time that EAD has supported a meeting of the leadership of the SSC in Abu Dhabi, in the United Arab Emirates. The first such meeting took place in February 2008; the second was held in February 2012. Each of these meetings was deemed to have been a great success, and that was also the overwhelming view of the participants in the 3rd meeting. All those present were united in expressing their sincere thanks to EAD Secretary General HE Razan Khalifa Al Mubarak, whose vision and commitment to the SSC has made these meetings possible.

As well as building a new sense of teamwork and vision for the SSC leadership, the objectives were:

- To allow the SSC leaders to get to know each other better and to develop new collaborations;
- To develop partnerships with IUCN Commissions, Programmes, Regional Offices, Members and Partners;
- To assess the effectiveness of SSC's actions on biodiversity conservation and consider how this might be increased;
- To develop major new initiatives to address critical conservation issues;
- To learn about new products and tools;
- To have an opportunity to consult on developing policies, guidelines and standards;
- To complete plans for SSC's work in 2017-2020;
- To celebrate the volunteerism of the Chairs, to acknowledge their enormous continued contribution to global species conservation and to inspire and encourage them in their continued contribution to the vital work of species conservation;
- To use the opportunity to network!

The constant turnover in the SSC leadership presents challenges in maintaining a close network of experts and so the opportunity to bring together the members of this diverse group is truly momentous. The following groups of people took part in the meeting:

- SSC Steering Committee members;
- SSC Sub-Committees and members;
- Chairs and Co-Chairs of SSC Specialist Groups (SGs) (well over half the meeting);
- Chairs and Co-Chairs of SSC Task Forces;
- Stand-alone Red List Authority Coordinators;
- SG Programme Officers;
- Donors to the SSC Chair's Office;
- Red List Partner organizations;

- Other partner organizations of the SSC;
- SSC Chair's Office staff;
- IUCN Global Species Programme (GSP) staff;
- IUCN regional office staff (Regional Directors and Species Focal Points);
- other IUCN staff;
- colleagues from Abu Dhabi; and
- other guests.

An ambitious agenda befitting the calibre of the group was developed through an interactive process, including with EAD. The agenda was built on the lessons learned from the 2008 and 2012 meetings, and was based on the same basic objectives as the 2012 meeting. There was also an opportunity for the SSC to prepare its own input into the planning of the 2017–2020 IUCN Programme, which will include the 2017–2020 IUCN Species Strategic Plan.

For me personally, this was one of the most useful and inspiring meetings I have attended during my 30 years with the SSC. I have never seen such a positive spirit and complete dedication to the cause of species conservation. It seemed that everyone was working incredibly hard, but enjoying themselves immensely at the same time. The energy that was generated in Abu Dhabi seems still to be driving the SSC forwards as I write these words three months later.

I must record the following words of thanks:

- Once again to HE Razan Khalifa Al Mubarak, Frédéric Launay and others at EAD for their extraordinary support and generosity.
- To Nabil Zhakhour and Nicolas Heard from the Mohammed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund for their help with the local logistics.
- To the staff of my office: a) first Rachel Roberts for running the whole meeting flawlessly and with such good humour. She managed to pull off being chief organizer of a major, complex international meeting attended by many very strong personalities! No mean achievement; b) Mike Hoffmann for organizing the agenda, and for his exceptional facilitation of the plenary and other sessions; c) Jon Paul Rodríguez, also for plenary facilitation, including the “challenging SSC” session; d) Kira Mileham for arranging one-to-one meetings with so many people, and showing such dedication and enthusiasm; e) Jennifer Luedtke for taking the Steering Committee minutes the day before, and her great organization of the awards ceremony, getting all the certificates, cheques and medals lined up; and f) Vera Hugues Salas for managing my agenda and back-stopping me and others so efficiently and helpfully.
- To our wonderful conference organizer, Kim Collins, who was always one step ahead on everything, handling all the logistics to perfection.
- To the staff of the IUCN Global Species Programme: a) the staff in the Red List Unit, Freshwater Biodiversity Unit, Marine Biodiversity Unit and Biodiversity Assessment Unit who all went well beyond the call of duty in searching out SSC members, working on resolving issues, and leading and participating actively and constructively in workshops; b) Dena Cator, Olivier Hasinger, Claire Santer, Ackbar Joolia and others on the helpdesks who seemed to be constantly in small discussions with key people; c) Sugoto Roy, Alessandro Badalotti, Dan Challender, Annabelle Cuttelod, and Jamie Carr who were all operating in seamless unity with their SSC counterparts; d) Jane Smart, Jean-Christophe Vié and Richard Jenkins who played their leadership roles wonderfully; and e) Caroline Edgar, whose

constant cheerfulness and good spirits on the registration desk and elsewhere did a huge amount to make people feel welcome and comfortable.

- To Robert Zellner at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel who did an outstanding job of coordinating and managing everything, both in the lead-up to and during the running of the meeting.

I think I speak for many meeting participants in finding two particular moments in the meeting to be especially moving. The first of these was on the first morning when we remembered 49 SSC members who had passed away since the 2nd meeting in 2012. Three of these people, Malcolm Coulter, Angela Leiva Sánchez and William Oliver, were actually present with us in 2012. As we saw the photos of these great people, many of them personally known to us, pass by slowly on the screen, we had the opportunity to reflect on their lives and their dedication to the cause of the SSC. For me personally, it was a very emotional time.

The second such moment was altogether more happy, the SSC awards ceremony at the close of the meeting. It was a huge privilege for me to give out the awards to 38 people and to see their surprised, often stunned, faces when their names were read out. After this, as I tried to close the meeting, I knew that I had lost control when the SSC silver-backs, Russ Mittermeier, Frédéric Launay and Luigi Boitani, got out of their seats to give me a Peter Scott Award. I was very moved by the extremely generous citation they gave me. As I wrote to the SSC Steering Committee after the meeting, I have simply tried to do my best for the species and the Commission that I love, and if I have achieved anything, it is because of the thousands of SSC members and their total commitment to the cause. Chairing the SSC is such an enormous and humbling privilege, and I frequently marvel at the vision, foresight and daring of Sir Peter Scott who constructed the decentralized, empowering, bottom-up, innovative SSC that we know today, a model which has since been used by other IUCN Commissions.

In the current institutional climate that is being promoted around the world to take disproportionate centralizing and controlling measures to reduce risk (reputational, legal, financial, etc) to near-zero, the whole concept of the SSC and the way we do business is under challenge. Increasingly we are seen as some sort of out-of-control threat to those who have to manage risk. However, for us the paramount risk is failing to get conservation done. While risks of course have to be managed, we are nevertheless going to have to be vigilant in protecting the SSC from the type of controlling measures that would reduce our conservation effectiveness and our scientific integrity and independence. Our long-standing practice of empowering the best people to use the name of IUCN and SSC to do conservation work that they otherwise could not do on their own, is the cornerstone of who we are – and it has also hugely strengthened the good name of IUCN over many decades. This is Sir Peter's legacy; and this is why it was such a profound honour for me to receive the Sir Peter Scott Award.

May the seeds of new ideas and new collaborations sown in Abu Dhabi in September 2015 bear fruit as solid conservation successes for many years to come.

Tuesday, 15 September

1.1 Plenary. Meeting Opening (Simon Stuart)

- **Welcome from SSC Chair (Simon Stuart)**
- **Welcome from the Environment Agency of Abu Dhabi (HE Razan Khalifa Al Mubarak)**
- **Welcome from the IUCN Director General (Inger Andersen)**
- **Welcome from IUCN Vice President (Marina von Weissenberg)**
- **Welcome from Global Director, Biodiversity Conservation Group (Jane Smart)**

Simon Stuart called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the 3rd SSC Leaders Meeting. He thanked Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) for their extremely generous support of the meeting, without which it could not have taken place. He then introduced EAD Secretary General, Her Excellency Razan Khalifa Al Mubarak, who gave her address. Her Excellency expressed her warm welcome to all the delegates and expressed her hope that the meeting would be productive, and that everyone would be enriched by their stay in Abu Dhabi Emirate. She remarked on how Abu Dhabi has benefitted from the advice and expertise of the SSC over the years, and that EAD was delighted to be able to provide support for the SSC's work. She thanked Simon Stuart for his support of Abu Dhabi over many years, and declared the meeting open.

The Director General of IUCN, Inger Andersen, then gave her welcome to the meeting. She said how impressed she was with all that she had learnt about the SSC since she joined IUCN in January 2015. It was clear that IUCN's global leadership role in species conservation was due to the SSC's unparalleled expertise, dedication and professionalism. This meeting was her first opportunity to meet most of the leaders of the SSC, and she looked forward to the discussions that would be taking place over the two days that she could be present.

This was followed by an address by IUCN Vice-President Marina von Weissenberg. She welcomed everyone on behalf of IUCN President Zhang Xinsheng. She noted that the SSC was able to mobilize its network to deliver knowledge (for example the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and the Global Invasive Species Database), undertake conservation planning, advise international agreements, develop policy, and promote conservation action. The SSC is an example of how the IUCN Secretariat and the SSC voluntary network can work in a single team.

Simon Stuart had all the different groups of people stand in turn so that everyone was able to see who was present: SSC Steering Committee; SSC Sub-Committees; Chairs and Co-Chairs of SSC Specialist Groups (SGs) (well over half the meeting); Stand-alone Red List Authority Coordinators; SG Programme Officers; donors to the SSC Chair's Office; SSC Chair's Office staff; IUCN Global Species Programme (GSP) staff; IUCN regional office staff; other IUCN staff; colleagues from Abu Dhabi; and other guests.

Jane Smart, Global Director, IUCN Biodiversity Conservation Group, and Director, GSP, concluded the opening session. She was delighted to have attended all three SSC Leaders' Meetings that had been held in Abu Dhabi since 2008, and hugely looked forward to the next 4 days. She introduced the GSP staff in greater

depth and said that all the GSP were at the disposal of the SSC members to assist in whatever way they could over the coming days.

1.2 Plenary. Brief report from the SSC Chair (Simon Stuart); Reviewing SSC's impact 2012-2015 (Jon Paul Rodríguez)

Simon Stuart then gave his introductory address. He said that the scope of the work in the Commission was now so broad that he could not possibly attempt to summarize everything. However, every meeting participant will have received a printed copy of the 2014 SSC Annual Report which includes reports on the work of every single SSC SG. To give an idea of the diversity of the SSC's work, he presented some slides showing all the issues that had crossed his desk over the previous month:

- Threats to endemic species on Kanthan Hill in Malaysia due to limestone quarrying
- Plans to cull fruit bats on Mauritius
- Threatened endemic plants in Thailand
- Saving the Vaquita and Totoaba in Mexico
- The impacts of the expansion of the Suez Canal
- Release of an invasive toad in Madagascar
- Save Our Species project on a Critically Endangered conifer in Fiji
- The recently published West and Central African situation analysis
- Illegal wildlife trade, especially of Pangolins
- IUCN's participation in the United for Wildlife collaboration convened by the Royal Foundation in the UK
- The "Beyond Enforcement" initiative to engage communities in combatting wildlife crime
- Illegal crocodilian trade in Colombia
- The recent CITES Animals Committee
- The bear-farming situation analysis
- The consequences of the illegal shooting of Cecil the lion in Zimbabwe
- The work of the Amphibian Survival Alliance
- The work of the Asian Species Action Partnership, especially on the Asian songbird crisis
- The new paper showing the effects of conservation action on all the world's ungulate species
- The new Charismatic Mega-invertebrate Project
- The recent introduction of unique DOI numbers for every IUCN Red List account
- Recent work on Cameroon plant Red List Assessments
- The Global Fungal Red List Initiative
- The Starfruit conservation action plan
- Working on completing the Key Biodiversity Areas standard
- The IUCN biodiversity offsets policy development process
- The Task Force on Systemic Pesticides
- Leadership transitions in the Asian Elephant, Marine Turtle and South American Camelid SGs
- The Building Bridges initiative between the ex-situ community and SSC SGs

Simon then outlined progress in implementing the 2013–2016 Species Strategic Plan which covers SSC, GSP and the Red List Partner organizations. The plan has 36 Key Species Results and 36 time-bound Targets, 40 of

which are no longer priorities. Of the priority Targets, 72% should be implemented by the end of 2016, but 147 Targets are behind schedule. The most common reason for delayed implementation is funding constraints (affecting 105 Targets), followed by lack of people to lead of certain issues (affecting 66 Targets). Other reasons for delay are much less significant. Overall, performance is strongest for planning for species conservation action, and weakest for generating knowledge. However, this might not be meaningful as the targets for knowledge generation were probably much more ambitious. Funding constraints are the main cause of delay for both generating knowledge and promoting conservation action. However, for developing policy, lack of people to lead is the most common cause of delay. Simon thought that these overall results were useful to guide the SSC in its planning, but the most pressing need now was for SSC to move beyond measuring outputs, to measuring outcomes and impacts.

Finally, Simon gave some reflections on the SSC after almost 30 years working with it (including 7 as SSC Chair:

Diversity

- Hugely diverse in scope (taxonomically, geographically, disciplines)
- Diverse in terms of cultural/ethnic diversity of its membership (though much less in its leadership, something that needs to be worked on)
- Diverse in terms of views and opinions – SSC is a place where people with divergent outlooks can work together

Commitment

- SSC members go to extraordinary lengths to prevent extinctions and reduce threats
- SSC members are hugely creative in working on creative solutions to huge problems and challenges
- SSC members give a huge amount of unpaid time to the work of SSC and IUCN

Excellence

- SSC values scientific and technical excellence very highly
- SSC seeks to be an objective and authoritative voice on biodiversity
- SSC's expertise, objectivity and independence are highly valued by governments and others
- SSC's affiliation to IUCN gives it formal standing

Next, Jon Paul Rodríguez focused on the question of how to measure the impact of SSC. He began by examining the 2014 Annual Report of SSC, and presenting metrics that were collated by the Global Species Programme staff (for example on the use of social media by SSC SGs). There is abundant information on activities and communication, but the challenge is that most of the SG reports present measures of output and it is difficult to link these to impact.

A major theme of SG activities is science. With the exception of policy and fundraising work, all other activities reported are linked to research. To examine SSC impact on science, Jon Paul presented a brief analysis of SSC's presence in scientific publications and the Internet more broadly. He searched the Web of Science for "IUCN Species" in the field Author Address, and found 84 records from 1984 to July 2015. Although this is probably an underestimate, a clear trend emerged: the number of articles per year has significantly increased, especially since 2008 onwards.

Google Scholar produced many more articles, as this search engine is more inclusive than Web of Science. A search for “iucn species survival commission” produced ~10,000 records from 2000–2015. Again, the number of articles per year after 2008 more than doubled the figure before that.

Finally, a search in Google for “iucn species survival commission” and “iucn red list of threatened species” produced ~28,000 and 260,000 records, respectively, from 2000 to 2015. The trend repeated itself, the figures for 2008 onwards were substantially larger than in previous years.

In conclusion, the visibility of SSC and its work seems to be increasing, but it is still difficult to determine how these activities impact species conservation. Jon Paul offered the following four recommendations for moving forward: 1) In planning activities for 2017–2020, try to focus on outcomes and how to measure them; 2) A key finding of the review of the Species Strategic Plan 2013–2016 is that successful implementation is linked to having someone in charge; 3) Use SSC as a second address in scientific publications to increase visibility of the Commission; 4) Consider expanding presence in social media.

1.3 Plenary. SSC remembers

Time was dedicated for delegates to give thought to all of the members of the SSC which have sadly passed away since the last SSC Chairs’ Meeting. In a moving tribute each person was named together with the SG(s) they were affiliated to, and a special mention was given to, “*the many unnamed and unsung who devoted their lives to conservation*”. Please see [here](#) for a copy of the presentation.

1.6 Plenary. Panel discussion (Frédéric Launay)

- **Habitat mapping in the UAE (Husam El Alqamy)**
- **Reintroduction of the Scimitar Horned Oryx into Chad (Justin Chuyen)**
- **Marine Endangered Species Conservation (Himansu Das)**
- **Biodiversity monitoring in Abu Dhabi (Pritpal Soorae)**
- **Turtle conservation (Marina Antonopoulou)**

Frédéric Launay (Environment Agency of Abu Dhabi) introduced and moderated the first formal panel discussion on conservation in the UAE.

Husam El Alqamy (Environment Agency of Abu Dhabi) presented some of the extraordinary work that EAD has been doing to map in detail the habitats, both marine and terrestrial, in the UAE. It is hoped that the project will help improve biodiversity, urban planning, crisis management and food security. The satellite-based mapping project, completed in only 18 months and perhaps one of the most detailed in the world, employed the use of advanced image-processing techniques together with validation from field surveys. The result is habitat data of extremely high accuracy (exceeding 90 per cent in the land). An innovative aspect of the approach is a method for repeat versions of the map to be created in the future enabling the loss or gain of specific habitats to be detected. The data will be updated every two years and are freely available via an online platform (<http://enviroportal.ead.ae/geoportal/>).

Justin Chuyen (Environment Agency of Abu Dhabi) provided the opening introductory talk focusing on ongoing plans led by the UAE to reintroduce the Scimitar-horned Oryx into Chad. Formerly widespread

across much of the Sahara, the Scimitar-horned Oryx is now listed as Extinct in the Wild; it was hunted to extinction in its natural range, but by the late 1980s only a few dozen survived in the wild in Chad and since then there have been no confirmed reports of any wild oryxes. Justin outlined ambitious plans, and the considerable challenges faced, to reintroduce oryxes to the gigantic Ouadi Rime-Ouadi Achim Faunal Reserve in Chad using several hundred captive animals from the UAE and from the US, in close collaboration with the Government of Chad, and thereby return this species to the wild.

Himansu Das (Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi) provided a report on the status and conservation of Dugongs in the United Arab Emirates. Dugongs are a formally protected species in the UAE, and the UAE is thought to have the second largest population of these sirenians after Australia. Indeed, the secretariat for the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs (under the CMS) is hosted by EAD in Abu Dhabi. Dugong surveys were undertaken in 5 zones based on the availability of seagrass meadows and previous sightings. Dugongs were reported to be surviving in healthy populations in the UAE, and data from satellite tags suggest that animals are not moving large distances. Although there appears to be an increase in the documented numbers of dead dugong records (due to vessel strikes for example), Dugongs benefit from extensive MPA coverage, a ban on drift net and shark fishing, and regulations that require the use of traditional fishing gear only.

Pritpal “Micky” Soorae (Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi) then spoke on biodiversity monitoring in Abu Dhabi Emirate. Dr Soorae introduced the results of the Abu Dhabi terrestrial baseline survey undertaken from 2013–2014, which had as its main aim to provide a snapshot of the key invertebrate, amphibian, reptile, bird, mammal and plant species present across the Emirate and to identify areas of high species richness. During the course of the survey a number of new invertebrate species were recorded and several range extensions were documented (such as the first record of the Dwarf Palm from the Emirate). Through the use of camera traps, the surveys documented only the second sighting record (the first since 2012) of Sand Cat from Abu Dhabi Emirate.

Finally, Marina Antonopoulou (Emirates Wildlife Society - WWF) concluded with a presentation on marine turtle conservation in the UAE. By using satellite tracking, the EWS-WWF Marine Turtle Conservation Project (spanning the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Gulf) has succeeded in improving our understanding about movement patterns, habitat preferences and feeding behaviour of hawksbill turtles. These scientific findings will help inform future conservation plans and policies at a local, national and regional level.

1.8 Plenary. Q&A with the SSC Chair (I) (Simon Stuart)

Three Q&A sessions took place during the Leaders’ meeting. These were moderated by Simon Stuart and addressed questions collected prior to and during each session. These were closed sessions for SSC SG Chairs and their Programme Officers. Because of the nature of some of the discussions, only an outline summary of the topics discussed is included below.

1. Measuring the outcomes and impacts of SSC work

The topic was initiated by Rich Young (Small Mammal SG) and Claudio Sillero (Canid SG). It was noted that SSC monitors its impacts, but not its outcomes or impacts. Although monitoring outcomes and impact would not be easy, there are possible ways ahead, perhaps based on standardized case studies, and posting examples on the Union Portal. One option of SSC members recording their SSC affiliations on scientific papers emanating from their SSC work was discussed. In the discussion it was

specified that it is the impact of work of the SSC and its groups that we want to track, not the activities of the individual SSC members that they would carry out regardless of whether or not SSC exists. It was agreed that the SSC would look at developing a means to measure its outcomes and impact; Rich Young from the Small Mammal SG agreed to assist with developing this.

2. What should be done when claims are made about new species that come outside the SG?

The topic was initiated by Mariana Altrichter, Peccary SG. In such a situation, the Tapir SG convened a panel of experts to review a paper on the situation and produced a recommendation. A workshop discussed the paper from the panel, resulting in a group decision of gathering further information for future consideration. It was noted that for the IUCN Red List, SG's are the taxonomic authority for their species. New guidelines are being developed to outline what lines of evidence should be used to make taxonomic designation. Some SGs, such as the Orchid and Conifer SGs, work from an accepted list which evolves, but is not prescriptive in how people can describe species. The SSC cannot have an inflexible policy because of the diversity in the SGs. The Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle SG decided to come up with an official list of the species they recognized. However, taxonomy is constantly changing so they established a Turtle Taxonomy Working Group which publishes a list every year of recognized species, including the species on which they cannot decide which opens up the discussion to others.

3. Is Red Listing so expensive because extensive field work is required?

No, this is not usually the case. Sometimes it is because of the sheer number of species to be assessed. Sometimes it is because of the detail in the assessments, and assessing controversial, high profile species is always more costly. However, some SGs, such as the Carnivorous Plant SG, have deliberately conducted field surveys to reduce the number of Data Deficient assessments. Another reason is the "clunky" nature of the SIS software, which is currently being updated such that the cost is reduced. There have been recent attempt to quantify the cost of Red List assessments, including an overall costing study of the knowledge products of IUCN, BirdLife International and UNEP-WCMC, and a more detailed study by the Global Tree SG.

4. What do we need to do to improve the profile of Red List assessments, such that they are acceptable as the basis of peer-reviewed publications and can convince journal reviewers that the Red List is robust science?

A number of ideas emerged in the discussion. Repeated assessments are one way to increase the robustness of the data. There is a large and growing body of information which is helping the profile of Red List data. It was noted that value-added publications containing analyses of the Red List data, rather than just the assessments, increases the likelihood of acceptance by journal editors. It was suggested that educating journal editors to increase their awareness of the potential of the Red List might be a useful undertaking. On a show of hands, there were over 12 journal editors in the room.

5. What do we have to do to raise the profile of freshwater ecosystems?

Freshwater ecosystems are some of the most threatened in the world and SSC has a Sub-Committee dedicated to this work, including representation from several SGs. The Freshwater Conservation Sub-Committee also feels that freshwater conservation does not receive enough attention, but it is considering ways to promote these issues, including collaborating with the Invasive Species SG.

There is also a need to bring freshwater science to policy fora through Sustainable Development Goals, Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the Ramsar Convention.

1.9 Plenary/Parallel. Market-places (I): Thematic Specialist Groups, Policy Sub-Committee and Species Conservation Planning Sub-Committee (Simon Stuart)

1.9(a) Access and Benefit Sharing (Tomme Young and Lily Rodriguez)

Two people came to this session to talk about ABS. Both sought an overview of the Nagoya Protocol.

1.9(b) Climate Change (Wendy Foden, Jamie Carr and Bruce Young)

Bruce Young talked to people from the Duck, Anguillid Eel, Spider and Scorpion, Mid-Atlantic Islands Invertebrate and South Asian Invertebrate SGs. Bruce also consulted with Taej Mundkur (Program Manager Flyways - Wetlands International), Luc Bas (IUCN European Union Representative Office), Marco Barbieri (UNEP/CMS) and Justin Cooke (Cetacean SG).

Jamie Carr: arranged a meeting with the Lichen SG. The Chytrid, Zygomycete, Downy Mildew and Slime Mould SG (wanted to know more about DD species that are suspected to be threatened by climate change). He followed up with: Sarina Jepsen from the Bumblebee SG about assessments of vulnerability of bumblebees (and possible inclusion of butterflies and/or grasshoppers) to climate change; Vololoniaina Jeannoda (Madagascar Plant SG) concerning an old proposal; and Gabriel Martin (New World Marsupial SG) on mammal traits in relation to climate change.

Wendy Foden: talked to David Obura (Coral SG), Neil Burgess (Diver/Loon SG), José Courrau (IUCN-ORMACC), and Andrew Smith (Lagomorph SG). Wendy and Bruce talked to James Harris (Crane SG).

1.9(c) Conservation Breeding (Onnie Byers and Caroline Lees)

Twenty CBSG members attended the meeting and 15 of them were present for a series of group photos. During this session (and in side meetings) we met with IUCN and SSC leaders to promote the One Plan approach to species conservation and to progress or shape CBSG's involvement in some existing projects: Chacoan peccaries; orangutans; Sumatran and Javan Rhinos. In addition we came away with a number of potential collaborations and projects to explore: planning for cycads, otters and ASAP species; Red-Listing and Key Biodiversity Area work for New Zealand molluscs; embedding CBSG and other SSC planning work outcomes into the Red-List database; issues around Conservation Breeding and CITES; and genetic and demographic management planning for ibis and banteng.

Though most of CBSG's work involves planning for wild populations, it was clear from many conversations that within the SSC we are considered to be solely captive-focused. Over the coming year we hope to discuss with the SSC Office ways in which we might address this, so that we can realise our potential contribution to the wider IUCN network.

1.9(d) Conservation Genetics (Michael Bruford and Gernot Segelbacher)

There were two primary themes discussed during this gathering of interested SSC members:

1) A variety of questions on issues related to conservation genetics from members who needed guidance on these issues and, 2) A request from the Conservation Genetics SG Co-Chairs for advice on how best to grow this nascent SG. A limited sub-sample of examples of theme 1 were:

- Resit Akcakaya (SPSC) pointed out that very little is known about the relationship of genetic health and other genetic indices to the Red List Assessment process and that understanding this would be a major contribution to the SSC (the rapporteur pointed out that after 13,000 marine RL assessments the only time that genetics came into play was for occasional delineation of stocks as units of assessment and to understand connectivity for the 'rescue effect' during regional assessments).
- Patrick Griffith (Cycad SG) asking about guidelines for maintaining genetic health in ex-situ collections of cycads.
- Harmony Patricio (FCSC) on latest practices in environmental genetics.
- Susana Gonzalez (Deer SG) on help with bioinformatics in advanced genomics datasets.
- Ehsan Dulloo (CWRS) asking about the use of genetic databases to track origin of trees in lumber industry.
- Mary Seddon (Mollusc SG and ICSC) asking about the use of population genetics to delineate units of management and species delineation.
- Kent Carpenter (Marine Fish RLA) asking about the use of groups of Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms under local selection for assignment tests of marine populations.

The Co-Chairs of the new CGSG were also interested in feedback about how to grow the SG to best serve the SSC. Michael Bruford specifically stated that he envisioned that "50% of their work is to help other SSG's." Examples of this that he offered were:

- Advice on genetic health in translocation activities
- Questions about genetic change due to phenotype selection for financial gain.
- Ideas on how to use transcriptomics to understand gene expression in a climate changing world.
- The need to get government officials and politicians to understand simple genetic terms so that they will understand the value of conservation genetics.
- Use of genetic barcodes to track the species identification and provenance in illegal wildlife trade.

The CGSG is wondering if the main way to grow the SG would be to focus on taxonomic diversity or regional diversity with the idea in mind that to try to grow both ways may be unwieldy. A consensus of the group appeared to be that the best way to grow would be to gain members with the widest range of genetic expertise in order to best serve the SSC greater membership. Perhaps this would be best achieved by focusing on taxonomic diversity representation.

1.9(e) Invasive Species (Piero Genovesi and Shyama Pagad)

- Around 34 visitors described the work of the ISSG.
- Demonstrations were given on the restructured Global Invasive Species Database (GISD) and its enhanced functions including dynamic links to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
- Discussion on possible collaborations with representative from the CMS following up on the recent review of impacts of invasive species on migratory species on CMS Appendices completed by the ISSG for CMS.
- Brief discussion with member of the PCSC on reviewing the targets (with relation to impacts of invasive alien species) in the Species Strategic Plan.

- Discussions with South Asia, West Asia and East Africa and Southern Africa IUCN office representatives on possible links to country species experts.

1.9(f) Reintroduction (Axel Moehrensclager, Micky Soorae and Phil Seddon)

RSG leaders illustrated various RSG knowledge products, with a special emphasis on the 2013 Guidelines for Reintroductions and Other Conservation Translocations. Recent translations into French, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, and Korean were showcased. RSG books encompassing over 300 case studies spanning taxa and geography world-wide, were also available, and preliminary discussions ensued regarding the imminent 2015 edition which will be available shortly. Leaders assisted SSC taxonomic SG Chairs regarding various proposed or reintroduction considerations and approaches of various species that are currently proposed or underway. The RSG Market Place also aimed to achieve SSC feedback regarding the relative merit of 8 potential priority themes. Ranking by participants yielded the following ranking in order of highest to lowest priority:

- 1) Training: developing in-person and online training and facilitation tools for conservation translocations
- 2) Communication: Develop communication mechanisms to connect practitioners, decision-makers, and the public to conservation translocation practices, outcomes, and knowledge products
- 3) Planning: Developing Planning / Risk Assessments that integrate all major areas of conservation translocation risk
- 4) Science: Solidifying reintroduction biology as a recognized conservation discipline
- 5) Policy: Increasing regional, national, and international policy statutes reflecting the 2013 International Guidelines for Reintroductions and other Conservation Translocations
- 6) Alignment: Aligning strategic interests with other IUCN-affiliated groups
- 7) Guidelines: Develop position statement / guidelines identifying conditions under which rehabilitated or confiscated animals could be used in conservation translocations
- 8) Engagement: Increasing RSG membership and conservation translocations in underrepresented regions

1.9(g) Sustainable Use (Rosie Cooney and Michael Murphree)

This market-place offered an opportunity to discuss issues related to sustainable use and livelihoods and for networking. In particular one of the key issues discussed was trophy hunting (impacts, perspectives, opinions) and examples were given about sustainable use and the distribution of benefits to local communities (specifically, a Mexican example from Rodrigo Medellin, Bat SG).

Very useful contacts were made and later meetings were planned to follow up on issues of interest (e.g., with the Crane, Anoline Lizard, Duck, and Galliformes SG).

1.9(h) Wildlife Health (Catherine Machalaba (note: Richard Kock was unable to attend))

- Follow up with Tom de Meulenaer (CITES Secretariat) about the issue of emergency diagnostic specimens.
- Dissemination of Manual of Procedures for Wildlife Disease Risk Analysis and Guidelines for Wildlife Disease Risk Analysis to several people.
- Exchange of information with:
 - Philippe Chardonnet (Co-Chair Antelope SG) who will send newsletter to Catherine to provide information on health issues with buffalos and antelopes.
 - Baird Fleming, Honolulu Zoo, interested in biosecurity measures for controlling salamander chytridiomycosis.

- Tigga Kingston and Rodrigo Medellin (Co-Chairs Bat SG) on issues that they and the WHSG might tackle (physiological stress in bats from heat resulted in bat mortality in Australasia, and developing a joint position statement on the messaging on disease related to bats).
- Follow up with Phil Bishop (Co-Chair Amphibian SG) regarding Amphibian decline, in particular on salamander chytridiomycosis.
- Follow up with Sarina Jepsen (Bumblebee SG) about potentially developing a coordinated policy effort on addressing the bee decline in coordination with ISSG and WHSG.
- Follow up with Gopi Sundar (Stork, Ibis and Spoonbill SG) and Jim Harris (Crane SG). Catherine to first follow up with Neil Burgess (Diver/Loon SG) to obtain info on eco-toxicological labs in Asia and share these and other appropriate contacts with Gopi and Jim.

1.9(i) Policy Sub-Committee (Phil McGowan, Noel McGough and Justin Cooke)

The PSC was well represented at the Thematic Market Place, with some members also assisting thematic SG discussions as well. It was also notable that many policy issues at this Leaders' Meeting were incorporated more fully throughout the entire agenda than previously resulting in much more significant consideration of SSC's potential for engagement and influence. As a result, many issues, such as the CBD, IPBES, CITES, etc, were covered fully elsewhere. Some of the topics discussed during the marketplace were the contrasting roles of science and policy (development and implementation) in debates surrounding polar bear offtake and the significant potential that exists for SSC to contribute to the WHC's work on natural sites, including on sites being nominated and contributing to the monitoring of already listed sites.

1.9(j) Species Conservation Planning (Mark Stanley Price, David Mallon and Nigel Maxted)

The Conservation Planning market-place session allowed SG representatives to engage one-on-one with a member of the SCPSC to ask specific questions related to their planning situation. The goal of the session was to improve the quantity and quality of species conservation plans by empowering SG leaders and representatives to create or improve plans related to species conservation and/or recovery.

Six members of the SPSC engaged representatives from ten SGs during the session. The results ranged from resolving specific questions related to editing/publishing plans, to discussing opportunities for future planning exercises. The challenges that the SG representatives portrayed were ones that are commonly-faced: lack of resources (funding) for bringing specialists and stakeholders together to create plans; difficulty engaging stakeholders across large (i.e. multi-national) ranges; how to implement plans and evaluate progress; and difficulty coordinating efforts for species conservation.

The marketplace style of engagement worked well because the SCPSC had enough members present to be able to engage multiple species specialists simultaneously. It appeared that the group was able to address all specialists interested in asking species conservation planning questions. The group used a cloud-based Google tool to allow SPCSC members to simultaneously upload information about each of the SGs they engaged. Mark Stanley Price will use this information to facilitate following up with the species specialists.

Wednesday, 16 September

2.1 Plenary. How can SSC improve its collective effectiveness: an external perspective (Jon Paul Rodríguez)

- **Inger Andersen (inter-governmental perspective)**
- **Christoph Imboden (corporate engagement perspective)**
- **Ashok Khosla (international development perspective)**
- **Frédéric Launay (governmental perspective)**

Panellists were asked to make a brief presentation, from their particular perspective, challenging SSC and inviting SGs to innovate and think “out of the box.” Each one of the panellists had a unique background (summarized bios, below).

Inger Andersen: Was appointed Director General of IUCN in January 2015. Inger has more than 30 years of experience in international development economics, environmental sustainability and policy-making, as well as in designing and implementing projects and generating on-the-ground impact. She has played a key role in supporting riparian countries on international water management and hydro diplomacy. Prior to joining IUCN, Ms Andersen held various leadership roles at the World Bank and United Nations.

In her address, Inger Andersen highlighted the importance of planning and reporting the activities of SSC in a systematic way. More than ever before donors demand evidence of successful performance. Transparency and accountability have become key elements in management, and this is a challenge for SSC as the network sometimes functions in diffuse, informal manner. There is no doubt that SSC is a powerful, mobilized network, but we should think about strengthening the methods by which we communicate our results and prove our impact.

Christoph Imboden: Is an ecologist and for the past 20 years a consultant in conservation, development, business and environment. Wide range of different assignments with national and international NGOs, governments, international agencies and business sector in the fields of strategic planning, policy development, supervision and evaluation of biodiversity conservation programmes, CSR strategies and programmes for corporate sector. Between 1980 and 2007, he had close involvement with SSC and IUCN, including strategic planning for the Commission. Previously worked as CEO of WWF Switzerland, Advisor of WWF Africa Programme, CEO of BirdLife International (16 years); Senior Scientist and Director of Research New Zealand Wildlife Service.

In his address, Christoph Imboden also mentioned the importance of improving monitoring and evaluating within SSC, and recommended organizing SSC’s areas of work in a hierarchy, from the themes addressed by the Chair and the Steering Committee, through the activities pursued by Sub-Committees, finalizing in the spheres of influence of the SGs. Especially important is to delineate the unique niche to be filled by SSC globally, highlighting the topics not covered by anyone else. Finally, he recommended stepping up the engagement with business, and advocate within the IUCN family for a deeper socio-economic systems analysis of the complex forces that drive us towards unsustainability – so that we can identify more clearly where we have a chance of making a difference.

Ashok Khosla: Became Director of the Indian Government's first Environment Office in 1972 and joined the IUCN Council in 1975, where he served in several capacities including Regional Councilor and Chair of CEESP before becoming President of the Union in 2008. He is Chairman of Development Alternatives, one of the largest environment and development organisations in India. Currently, he is also Co-Chair of the UN's International Resource Panel and was President of the Club of Rome (2005 to 2012). Recipient of the OBE from the UK Government, the UN Sasakawa Environment Prize, the Zayed Environment Prize, and WWF's Duke of Edinburgh Medal.

In his address, Ashok Khosla challenged us to think about the root drivers of biodiversity loss and develop solutions that take into consideration people and their interactions with nature. He encouraged SSC not to shy away from complex issues such as human population growth. Although he recognized that the per capita impact of people is very diverse around the world, providing employment to women in developing countries has the multiple positive effects of improving their well-being, reducing population growth and decreasing unsustainable dependencies of nature. He encouraged us to keep our eyes open on the socio-environmental dimensions of species conservation.

Frédéric Launay: Has been working in the environment field in Abu Dhabi for over 20 years and was part of the team creating the Environment Agency-Abu Dhabi in 1996. He has held a number of positions within the Agency, including Assistant Secretary General and Executive Director of the regulatory and monitoring arm of the Agency. He is now the senior advisor to the EAD Secretary General. In addition he is Director General of the Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund.

In his address, Frédéric Launay began by mentioning that although he was speaking to us as an officer in the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD), over the years he has been involved in other dimensions of nature conservation, which has given him a unique experience and perspective. He encouraged SSC to engage more actively with governments, as these are key users and implementers of species conservation science. For IUCN member governments and governmental agencies, it is not always clear how to interact with SSC beyond making use of data served through the Red List. Building stronger links could result in identifying means by which SGs can be involved in hand-on conservation action.

2.2 Parallel. SSC influencing international policy

2.2(a) The World Heritage Convention (Tim Badman and Frédéric Launay)

About 30 people attended. The session started with a brief overview of the World Heritage Convention (WHC) and proceeded to explain the link between the WHC and IUCN.

UNESCO heads the Convention, signed since 1972 by 191 out of its 195 state members. The Convention focuses on two lists: the "World Heritage List" (WH List) and the "List of World Heritage in Danger". Currently there are 1,031 sites in the WH List of which about 20% are listed as natural heritage sites. These cover 279 million hectares (including 8% of all protected areas). The WH list is not intended to be an all-encompassing list of protected areas and key biodiversity areas (KBAs) around the world but rather to focus on "beacon sites" selected for their outstanding beauty.

The formal role of IUCN as written in the Convention is to (1) act as advisor to the WH Committee, (2) evaluate all the new nominations for natural heritage sites, (3) monitor – together with UNESCO – the natural and mixed WH sites, and (4) provide training and capacity building opportunities.

An annual WH Committee meeting takes place and new nominations of sites are discussed there. This meeting is much politicized with IUCN having to face all the member states at each meeting. IUCN

In preparation for the annual WH Committee meetings, the IUCN WH Panel meets every November/December to carry out the necessary technical reviews of all WH issues. The engagement of the WH Panel with the SSC has not been systematic over the years but this should change in the future as Frédéric Launay was appointed to the Panel in 2015 as the SSC representative. The SSC members often ask how they can better input into nominations being put forward by WH member states. Nominations are very expensive politically and economically and have only about 60% chances of success at the first round. Hopefully the SSC, as well as helping review nominations, can also help influence them before they are put forward by member states and help countries prioritize from a species-specific point of view. Decisions from the Committee and IUCN Resolutions can be moved forward faster if members of SSC put them on the right desks in government agencies in relevant countries.

A number of useful overview documents have been developed in recent years including the World Heritage Outlook.

A potential important area of work for IUCN within the WH Convention is linking nature and culture. This has not been done in the last 40 years and this is perhaps a bit of a missed opportunity to influence nature conservation in cultural heritage sites. Other future opportunities of collaboration on the WH Convention for IUCN and SSC include: the wish of indigenous people to have some of their sites nominated; and the opportunities to expand nominations to urban sites and agricultural sites. Some room to tackle invasive species and climate change issues also exists but more needs to be done to address these issues within nominations.

Participants in the meeting enquired about the designation of marine sites, the deletion of sites from the WH list, and the listing of invertebrates in nominations. The presenters stressed that deletion from the WH list should be discouraged and that the focus of any input from IUCN and SSC should be on promoting good practices in WH sites as well as monitoring bad ones. Marine sites are difficult to list as the WH Convention requires its sites to have clearly defined boundaries to apply the Convention's rules. Invertebrates are usually listed in a very general way as a high variety of species being present – there may be some room to put forward more detailed listings in future nominations.

An analysis of the SOS – Save Our Species Initiative portfolio showed that 20% of SOS funded projects have been implemented in WH sites. Perhaps similar, more strategic links can be developed in the future with this and other initiatives.

2.2(b) CITES: the Road to Johannesburg and CoP17 (Richard Jenkins, Tom de Meulenaer and Steve Broad)

This session focused on engagement by the SSC with CITES, both at CoP17 (Sep-Oct 2016) and beyond. The session was introduced by Richard Jenkins (GSP) who stated the objectives of the session and canvassed who had attended CITES CoPs in the last decade, and what their species/issue focus was at the meetings they had attended. Most attendees had attended CITES CoPs before and most people in the room had a terrestrial species focus, followed by a few with marine interests, even fewer with a freshwater focus and only two with a plants focus (Sara Oldfield, Global Tree SG and Mike Fay, Orchid SG). After the introduction, Tom De Meulenaer (CITES Secretariat) gave a presentation on CITES and presented examples of how SSC SGs could engage with CITES by providing technical information and expertise. He noted specifically the opportunity

for plant-focused groups to engage with the Convention. Steve Broad (TRAFFIC International) then gave his thoughts and perspective on SSC engagement with CITES, including providing information on the IUCN/TRAFFIC Analyses of Proposals to Amend the CITES Appendices, which had now been produced for 10 successive CoP meetings.

In the remaining 30 minutes, questions and comments were taken from the floor by Tom – and some points were to be followed up offline. Issues raised included the following:

- Traceability (Grahame Webb, Crocodile SG)
- IUU fishing and the notion of by-catch or ‘by-take’ was introduced (Amanda Vincent, Seahorse, Pipefish and Stickleback SG)
- Orchid trade and the disenfranchisement of the orchid community regarding CITES (Mike Fay, Orchid SG)
- The listing of spiders and scorpions in CITES (Pedro Cardoso, Spider and Scorpion SG)
- Timber issues at CoP17 and beyond (Sara Oldfield, Global Tree SG).
- Livelihood issues and potential interest in a document detailing livelihood impacts and appropriate mitigation approaches for consideration by the Parties at CoPs (Rosie Cooney, SULi).

2.2(c) Convention on the Conservation Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Jean-Christophe Vié, Marco Barbieri and Lyle Glowka)

60-70 people attended. A brief overview of CMS was presented by Marco Barbieri and Lyle Glowka (CMS Secretariat), including the various types of agreements under CMS: 7 legally binding treaties; 19 non-binding MoUs. In relation to CITES, CMS takes on species that are not traded – leaving the traded species for CITES. CMS relies on the SSC for Red List assessments (only threatened species go on CMS Appendix 1); technical advice, conservation planning. This support is much appreciated. Many examples of SSC / CMS involvement were presented including for the sharks and saiga antelope. The successes and difficulties of these collaborations were discussed. The main challenge was to ensure all range states are signed up.

IUCN is represented on the CMS Scientific Council by Jean-Christophe Vié, and so SGs can have input to the agenda and issues through him. CMS does not have much funding, and so actions for listed species depend upon additional funds being obtained. An example is the SOS support for sharks.

It was suggested CMS might set up an interdisciplinary working group for co-existing species such as dugong, sawfish and marine turtles.

Members of the freshwater SGs present (Salmon, Sturgeon, Anguillid Eel, Freshwater Fish) highlighted the need for a greater focus on migratory freshwater species – many of which are heavily impacted by dams. Marco is keen to see how CMS can focus more on freshwater species and to put this to the CMS Technical Advisory Group.

Jean-Christophe agreed to circulate the CMS communications to those interested SSC SGs. It was suggested we might use the IUCN portal or CMS workspace to keep SSC better informed (Rachel Roberts offered to assist with this if required).

2.2(d) Supporting implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and the Aichi Targets (Jane Smart and Natasha Ali)

SSC is built on a network of specialists who are constantly gathering scientific data that can inform progress towards the Aichi targets, particularly targets 11 and 12 and 13.

The most recent edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO 4: <https://www.cbd.int/gbo/gbo4/gbo4-summary-en.pdf>) highlights very poor progress towards Target 12; insufficient progress towards Target 13; and for Target 11, although countries are on track for achieving the targets for percentages of protected area coverage, often they fail to focus these areas on critical sites for biodiversity.

IUCN is developing a guidance paper to help governments understand how they can work towards achieving Target 11. A set of standards for identifying Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) has also been developed (the final draft is now available for comment). Some SGs are already contributing in various ways. For instance, the CWRSG's contribution to the notification to CBD regarding strengthening *in situ* conservation of Plant Genetic Resources: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/notifications/2015/ntf-2015-092-gspc-en.pdf>; and the RSG's conservation translocation guidelines now being used by some countries and the SG working with the PSC on ways to encourage more use of these guidelines.

SSC members can work with IUCN to do more to encourage governments to implement appropriate policy mechanisms and make positive steps towards achieving the aims of these targets. For example, referring to the Aichi Targets in relation to the work members are doing (e.g., in funding proposals and meetings); providing input into guidelines being prepared by IUCN; highlighting existing guidelines and encouraging the use of these.

If any SGs have information they feel is relevant to the Aichi Targets (and in particular Targets 11, 12 and 13) that can be used by IUCN to ensure the needs of species are pushed more effectively in the CBD process, please contact Natasha Ali (GSP) (natasha.ali@iucn.org).

2.2(e) Understanding what SSC can contribute to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) (Thomas Brooks and Phil McGowan)

The aims of the session were to be 1) an informational session including examples of how SSC has already been involved, 2) a discussion on recommendations of ways SSC should be contributing to the IPBES programme, specifically as relates to assessments, 3) a brainstorming discussion on what SSC and IUCN would like to emerge from the functions of IPBES beyond undertaking assessments (knowledge generation, policy, capacity, etc).

Following an introduction to the functions of IPBES (by Tom Brook, IUCN Head of Science and Knowledge, and Phil McGowan, PSC), brief verbal presentations were given by SSC members who have been most involved in the process to date covering their level of involvement, perceived challenges and suggested improvements. The remainder of the session consisted of questions from the participants and answers from both the facilitators and participants with expertise. Further comments were submitted at the end in response to the following prompt: 1) communicate whether the participant is interested in a particular regional or thematic assessment so the facilitators can connect them to the process, 2) communicate whether they can offer capacity building through their institution, SG or if they are generally interested in this process.

2.3 Plenary. Q&A with the SSC Chair (II) (Simon Stuart and Inger Andersen)

The discussion in the second Q&A sessions focused on the management of SGs, and the development and promulgation of policy.

1. **How to deal with unruly SG members and what is the procedure for dismissing a member?**

When it comes to the behaviour of SG members, there are inevitable grey areas and SG Chairs need to use their discretion. Chairs have a right to dismiss members whose behaviour is out of line. There is a move to develop a basic code of conduct (CoC) for IUCN Commissions based on the IUCN Secretariat CoC, and included in the SSC bylaws in the next Quadrennium. S Stuart explained that in the recent past there had been a number of unfortunate problematic issues of unfortunate behaviour by a very small number of SG members. It was noted that there is a difference between unethical behaviour and differences of opinion. The latter can occasionally give rise to the former, sometimes exacerbated by misunderstandings due to cultural differences. It is important to anticipate when things might blow up and take preventative action. It was suggested that mentoring of new SG Chairs by longer-serving ones could be helpful.

2. **Why do SG Chairs not change after 2 Quadrennia?**

The vast majority of Chairs have been appointed since 2008, but a few go back a long way. Under the rules, Chair positions are 4-year positions, renewable. Some SGs have difficulty finding able and willing leadership, so if leadership is working well, there is a tendency to hang on to it. On the other hand, change is good. Overall, the terms of reference have remained flexible, but Chairs should plan for succession. The Crocodile SG has been focusing on leadership succession and sustainability. They have a future leaders' programme, and other means to encourage young professionals. The Orchid SG has an early career group. The Amphibian SG has a capacity building programme that brings new members in through a project, paired up with an existing member. Some SGs have the problem of too many people wanting to be members. This is managed by having a broad list, watching who is active and inviting these ones to join. SG Chairs are appointed rather than elected positions that carry significant responsibilities to IUCN and reputation, requiring certain skills. A system that allows for the SG members to nominate Chair candidates for consideration achieves a balance between democracy and autocracy. The Cetacean SG has a membership policy (posted on their website) which was drafted after years of receiving applications from people who wanted to become members but who were not appropriate. Some other SGs, for example the Giraffe and Okapi SG, have the opposite problem and face the challenge of finding members from range states.

3. **What is an acceptable size for an SG (and what is too big)? Also how to balance the role of providing scientific advice with the risk of missing out on critical expertise (communication, legal, etc) – do groups include members who are not scientific experts?**

The SSC Chair can only provide general guidance because the situation for each SG is different. SGs with global membership, like the Crane SG, have members from non-range and range countries; those from non-range countries could not afford to attend the global SG meeting resulting in biases. Now they run regional meetings but have lost some of the coherence of having the global meetings. Despite the diversity of situations, sharing experiences can be very useful.

4. **Is the number of Chairs or Co-Chairs limited for species-rich SGs?**

The current practice is having a maximum of two Co-Chairs; or one Chair with one or more Deputy Chairs. Then the leadership can be further decentralized into regional Chairs. For example, regional and thematic decentralization has been key for managing the Primate SG.

5. **Can membership be managed directly by SG Chairs in the IUCN Portal?**

Currently the database holding all the members must be managed by Claire Santer, but when it comes to reconstituting the membership after the next Congress, Chairs will be able to remove members they do not want to keep. However, adding new people will still need to be done by her for the time being.

6. **Must there be consensus on SSC and SG policy statements, or should disclaimers be published when this is not reached?**

Consensus is not normally possible and is not essential, and so disclaimers can be used. It is desirable to get as close to consensus as is practically possible.

7. **What should be done when a member puts out a policy in the name of the SG without the consensus of the Group or Chair?**

This is a breach of the SSC Bylaws, and would warrant disciplinary action. The earlier discussion on the Code of Conduct would be relevant.

8. **What is the procedure for SGs to send letters to national leaders?**

There is an intervention letter process in SSC that is managed by R Roberts. This includes a fact-checking process to ensure that all sides on the issue are known and explained. If an SG is addressing a major crisis and an intervention by IUCN is required, get in touch with Rachel. Should intervention letters be made public? The SSC intervention letters are measured, evidence based and offer assistance. It could be useful for these to be placed on a webpage without comment, as this might increase the pressure a bit, but it should not become a campaign. Each situation should be weighed to determine whether making the letters public is appropriate, and the practice of checking letters with IUCN Regional Directors should continue. The Afrotheria SG gave the example of a situation during which they became concerned about oil exploration. Instead of working on the global scale through IUCN, the SG approached local NGOs which had a good impact.

2.4 Plenary/Parallel. Market-Places: Regions (Jon Paul Rodríguez)

2.4(a) Asia (Aban Marker Kabraji, Robert Mather and Scott Perkin)

Discussions

Several themes categorized discussions. These are outlined below:

What IUCN ARO does

- Discussions around the boundaries, and the roles
- What is the link to the China office do and how does it relate?

Help

- Help needed with setting up Irrawaddy dolphin workshop in Myanmar, neutrally with different NGOs
- Help with taxonomic workshops for rare invertebrate capacity building in India – can we help with putting in touch with local experts?
- Help with finding members with conifer expertise in Southeast Asia

Species focus

- Saola – can IUCN help with negotiations for a Saola reintroduction campaign in Lao and Vietnam, acting as a neutral party in discussions.
- Can IUCN get involved in a bamboo/rattan project
- Vultures - what is happening in Northeastern India and can we recommend partners for ongoing vulture work in Assam?
- Seabream, Snapper and Grunt SG - can ARO help with setting up a workshop on identification and red listing in Myanmar?

Site focus

- Mekong – development, canalization, and concrete banks, dams
- Links between China and IUCN initiatives on community based protected area management (IAPA, APA, etc) to avoid overlap and duplication.

2.4(b) Central America and the Caribbean (Grethel Aguilar and José Courrau)

- The ORMACC staff (Grethel Aguilar and José Courrau) informed the session of ongoing IUCN projects on PAs in Mexico, Belize and Guatemala.
- ORMACC wants to include species information in these projects. Participants from the SSC and GSP suggested that they use IBAT and Red List information on species.
- Benjamin Morales-Vela (Sirenia SG) proposed to use the Caribbean manatee as a flagship species to bring all three countries involved together.
- The ORMACC staff asked people at the table to let them know of projects in the region.
- The importance of connecting with the IUCN members and members of the different Commissions in the region was raised as there are many SSC members.
- Maarten Bijleveld van Lexmond (TFSP) talked about a project in the forest of Belize sponsored by the Dutch government and a botanical garden in Switzerland, noting possible interest in sponsoring other projects in the region.
- Luis Santiago Cano Alonso (Stork, Ibis and Spoonbill SG) will reach out to his SG to find experts on the relevant species in Latin America. Topiltzin Contreras MacBeath (FCSC) and José Courrau (ORMACC) will assist him in contacting ornithologists in the region
- The importance of ORMACC taking species into consideration and promoting the Red List was mentioned and how linking species (e.g., plants) to human livelihoods might help push projects forward
- Participants asked the ORMACC staff to talk more about what they do. They explained they have the following projects:
 - Forest restoration in several Mexican states.
 - Adaptation measures in Chiapas, Mexico
 - Transboundary water issues
 - Landscape and restoration
 - Indigenous people rights

- Protected areas
- Access to biodiversity and benefit sharing in the Caribbean and Central America.

2.4(c) East and Southern Africa (Luther Anukur and Leo Niskanen)

The ESARO staff present, Luther Anukur and Leo Niskanen, held a number of conversations. Leo noted the following:

- He will contact Tom Butynski concerning small mammals
- He will contact Phil Bowles (Snake and Lizard RLA) to see if he has ideas concerning Red Listing of Central and Southern African reptiles
- He had many conversations with many SGs, generally about what they are doing or planning for the region;
- Follow up action: to try and look around for experts on small mammals in the region and to pass any suggestions to Richard Young, Co-Chair of the Small Mammals SG.

Luther Anukur noted the following:

- He will contact Vololoniaina (Yari) Jeannoda (Madagascar Plant SG) concerning national SSC programme in Madagascar. Yari wants to participate in the IUCN regional programme development in Madagascar.
- Teodor Denchev (Rust and Smut SG) wants a list of botanists from the region.
- Luther contact Mennobart Van Eerden (Cormorant SG) concerning fish and livelihoods conflict resolution (linking back to cormorants).

2.4(d) Europe, North and Central Asia (Luc Bas, Boris Erg and Ana Nieto)

This market-place offered an opportunity to discuss current and future projects in particular:

- Red Listing at the regional (Europe and Central Asia) and national (Ukraine) levels;
- Key Biodiversity Areas for either some taxonomic groups (e.g. plants) or a European biogeographical region;
- Ideas for cooperation on medicinal plants in Central Asia; and
- The urgent issue of onager conservation.

Also discussions took place on how to fund this work. It was a great opportunity for networking and make new contacts in the region of Europe, North and Central Asia.

2.4(e) Mediterranean (Violeta Barrios)

The session was a great opportunity to meet with ongoing as well as with potential collaborators. The following issues were discussed:

- Co-Chair Dragonfly SG (Geert De Knif): we agreed on the way forward with current issues on some regional (old) Red List assessments. Violeta will agree with RLU best way to proceed on this and contact Geert subsequently. Also agreed to explore means to reassess the Mediterranean dragonflies in the near future.
- Chair Mediterranean Plant SG (Bertrand de Montmollin): fruitful exchange to update the status of ongoing works of the Mediterranean Office as well as update on initiatives carried out by the SG.

- Monica Böhm: Violeta provided information on the status of work on the Mediterranean Red List of dung beetles. Violeta will inform Monica when these assessments will be published as they will be useful for Monica's work on the Sampled Red List Index.
- Co-Chair Stork, Ibis and Spoonbill SG (Luis Santiago Cano Alonso): discussed ways of collaboration for an action plan for Black Stork along with CMS/AEWA involvement. Also discussed possible ways of collaboration to search for funds for the northern bald ibis conservation project in Andalucía. Luis will send summary of his ideas for this ibis project to best explore possible donors.
- Chair Freshwater Plant SG (Richard Lansdown): exchange on the status of current work for the Mediterranean Red List of Monocots to which Richard is contributing.
- Co-Chair Antelope SG (David Mallon): scheduled a meeting for later in the week to discuss ongoing initiatives in North Africa.

2.4(f) North America (Craig Beatty)

There was no participation for this session.

2.4(g) Oceania (Helen Pippard and Nunia Thomas)

Helen Pippard (ORO) and Nunia Thomas (SSC Steering Committee, Fiji) hosted a wide range of enquiries. A non-exhaustive subset of these included (given that it was difficult to monitor all the conversations around the table):

- Vincent Tanguy (New Caledonian Plant RLA) has a database of plants that he hopes to upload into SIS to help with RL of plants in Oceania.
- Kelly Malsch (Head of Species Programme WCMC) wanted to know of CITES-related issues in Oceania.
- Philip Seddon (RSG) was interested in records of translocations of plants and animals both terrestrial and marine in Oceania.
- Tigga Kingston (Co-Chair of Bat SG) was interested in expanding membership of Bat SG and was looking for potential candidates from within Oceania.
- Beth Polidoro (Co-Chair Marine Fishes RLA) was interested to learn if the IUCN has any marine debris projects in Oceania.
- Marie Bruegmann (Chair Hawaiian Plant SSG) was interested to catch up on plant issues in Oceania.

2.4(h) South America (Victor Hugo Inchausty and Arturo Mora)

Main points

- Presentation of the IUCN-SUR Regional Office and collaborations with SSC:
 - Designation of an IUCN-SUR focal point for the SSC (Arturo Mora)
 - IUCN-SUR Species Newsletter
 - Liaisons between SSC members and National Red List activities
 - Policy work (South American Camelid SG/Convenio de la Vicuña)
 - Coordination with National IUCN Committees
 - Coordination with IUCN members on projects and initiatives
- Compilation of comments from SSC members regarding potential future collaborations:
 - Improve the link among the National IUCN Committees in South America:

- Elaboration and distribution of a list of the Focal Points in each National Committee and of a list of the SSC members in each country
 - Improve the visibility of the Committees in the web Portal
 - Possible events for the IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2016
 - Indicate the interest on this in the next meeting of the IUCN South American Committee meeting
 - Identify possible regional projects/initiatives to link SSC members
 - Promote collaborations among the different IUCN SGs
 - Send the IUCN-SUR working plan (2013-2016) and the minutes of the latest Regional Conservation Forum in Quito to the market place participants
- IUCN-SUR will send the documents mentioned above as well as the list of contacts in the Regional Office for establishing future collaborations.

2.4(i) West and Central Africa (Aimé Nianago and Sebastien Regnaut)

This meeting with a SG chairs, experts and partners focused on options for increased collaboration with IUCN PACO. Most encounters were relevant to a pending project to develop a proposal for Belgian Cooperation to invest in West and Central African capacity development in taxonomy in order to reduce poverty and to improve national and global Red Listing.

- Tigga Kingston (Bat SG)
- Viola Clausnitzer (Dragonfly SG)
- Mary Seddon (Mollusc SG)
- Kelly Malsch (UNEP-WCMC), timber listing in Central Africa. Liaising with Gretchen Walters.
- Caroline Pollock (RLU). Red List training in West and Central Africa.
- Mennobart Van Eerden (Cormorant SG)
- Holly Dublin (AfESG)
- Hans de Iongh (SC) and Claudio Sillero-Zubiri (Canid SG), carnivores of northern Cameroon.
- Claire Mirande (Crane SG)
- Liz Williamson (Section on Great Apes, Primate SG)
- Zebedee Njisuh (Mangrove SG)
- Mike Bruford (CGSG), on great apes, genetic fingerprinting and on conservation projects in Guinea Bissau

Next Steps:

Putting forward to the Belgium Cooperation the enormous red listing efforts taking place at the moment by the scientific community and encourage them to contribute by focusing on mechanisms that will make the taxonomic knowledge developed for red listing more sustainable and more focused on economic outcomes.

PACO also proposes to stimulate the SSC in Africa by gathering a small number of known experts associated with PACO's Programmes Thématiques Régionaux and encourage them to engage with the SSC through SGs focusing on West and Central Africa. The Programmes Thématiques Régionaux group will have the task to identify potential active people who could be effective SSC members and engage with them.

2.4(j) West Asia (Fadi Al-Shraideh and Ziad Samaha)

Below are the main points of discussion on this market stall:

- Al Ain Zoo is going to seek to become an IUCN Member, and be part of the forthcoming IUCN RCF in Jordan.
- ROWA is hoping to get project support from BirdLife for conservation work on birds in Gulf countries;
- EAD is to collaborate with IUCN on habitat mapping/monitoring of habitats in UAE.
- The Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle SG discussed potential areas of cooperation especially within the ROWA Water Programme, and how to promote research in the area and motivate new and existing specialists and experts to join the SG.
- Also discussed was potential cooperation with CMS and the Shark SG on improved shark conservation in the region through developing a road map and using ongoing marine projects as awareness platforms to reduce shark bycatch, targeted fishing and finning in the region. This comes as a follow up the 2014 Shark MoU signed by 9 Arab states and held in UAE and hosted by IFAW.
- Some highlights of the market place have been discussed subsequently with Simon Stuart, including the participation of an SSC Chair / Co-Chair from the region during our next RCF in November 2015; the RCF will also highlight the new IUCN approach to KBAs as discussed with Jane Smart.
- Another market place topic was cooperation with Orchid SG Chair Mike Fay regarding the Orchids Private Protected Area in Lebanon, a project managed by Dr. Hany El Shaer, linked to the ROWA Business and Biodiversity Programme.

Thursday, 17 September

3.1 Plenary. The IUCN Red List: IUCN's flagship knowledge product (Craig Hilton-Taylor and Mike Hoffmann)

Mike Hoffmann, Chair of the Red List Committee, began the session by highlighting 10 key messages for all delegates to the meeting to take home and remember about the Red List. He highlighted that despite many assertions that we aren't making much progress, actually assessment continues apace, making reference to, among others, assessments of freshwater shrimps, cone snails, and the world's cacti. The past quadrennium also saw the birth of the National Red List Alliance, which aims to support Red Listing efforts at the national level, and foster incorporation of national Red List data into the global Red List. Reassessments have also been continuing, and 2015 saw the production of the first Red List Index for plants for all the world's cycads. Of course, work continues to improve consistency in application of the criteria, with the major change in guidance recently being the instruction to measure Extent of Occurrence using a strict minimum convex polygon. Considerable work has also been put into training, most notably through the development of an online training module and exam, which is available in all official IUCN languages. IUCN and Partners have also continued to promote uptake of Red List data among business and commercial interests, not least through the licensing of Red List data through IBAT. Notwithstanding, the technology infrastructure on which the Red List is built is now very outdated, and we are overdue major investment in our front-facing interface, the Red List website and so considerable effort will be invested in the next year on this. We also now have a much better idea of what it costs to maintain the Red List website, thanks to efforts to try obtain a better handle on running costs as well as volunteer efforts. At the end of the day, the Red List remains a

Partnership effort, not just between the Red List Partner institutions, but including the many many hours spent by SSC SG members and others around the world.

Craig Hilton-Taylor, Head of the IUCN Red List Unit, then provided an update of progress on red listing activities, noting that the number of species assessed has increased from ~62,000 to ~77,000 since the SSC Chairs last met. The website continues to attract considerable attention, in the order of 3.5 million visitors / year. A dedicated API provides a means for external databases to link to the Red List data. Most importantly, 2015 was the 50th year of the Red List and so a huge amount of work was spent on events intended to raise the profile of the Red List and to fund-raise, including the launch of a special book, a special issue of *Terre Sauvage*, a Red List video, several exhibits and events in London, Geneva and other major cities around the world, and all finally culminating in the BioPhilia Ball, held jointly with IUCN Patron of Nature Synchronicity Earth at London's Natural History Museum in November 2014. Caroline Pollock then went into further detail on the online Red List training course, highlighting the various modules covered, explaining how the exam works, and current efforts to expand the network of Red List trainers and assessors.

However, the best news was kept until last, with Anders Rhodin (former Chair of the Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle SG and current member of the Red List Committee) introducing the very exciting new initiative to make all assessments on the Red List available as published downloadable PDFs with associated DOIs (digital object identifiers). This exciting initiative, made possible through a lot of hard work by the Red List Unit, brings the Red List into the 21st century, and hopefully will serve as a massive incentive to the many thousands of volunteer scientists who contribute their information and expertise to the Red List.

3.2 Parallel. Conservation issues (I)

3.2(a) Developing an IUCN situation analysis on marine by-catch (Yvonne Sadovy and Claudio Campagna)

Objective: help frame the content and scope of the emerging IUCN situation analysis on marine by-catch led by the SSC Marine Conservation Sub-Committee

This session was attended by approximately 34 participants, including a number of SGs (e.g. Tuna and illfish, Marine Turtle, Sea Snakes, Sharks, etc). The IUCN SSC Marine Conservation Sub-Committee (MCSC) has worked on by-catch since 2005, publishing reports on invertebrates and fish. This remains a priority area for the MCSC but it must identify how the SSC, through its species focus, can provide additionality and impact to the issue. The MCSC acknowledges that the traditional issue of by-catch, where unwanted species are discarded, is now rapidly evolving into “biomass fisheries” where there is no faunal bycatch because all animals are sold for consumption or processing. This type of indiscriminate fishing has both direct and indirect negative impacts on species and ecosystems. Such biomass fisheries often arise as the result of the decreasing viability of the fishery of the original target species and the industry is only sustained by the sale and use of species of a low unit-value. An IUCN situation analysis will be developed by MCSC, spanning a range of fisheries from by-catch to biomass, along with a motion for the next IUCN World Conservation Congress and a peer-reviewed publication. In addressing this issue, the MCSC intends to focus on two types of fishing gear and three regions, and is seeking information on potential funding, case studies, observations, contacts and relevant literature from the participants to construct a funding proposal (\$100k is needed in the next two months). The final outputs need to be relevant to species conservation, and should include mobile megafauna and more sedentary invertebrates and small vertebrates, and should be designed to

contribute to CITES and CMS. Equally, the implications for food security should be incorporated because biomass fisheries remove the prey of species that humans rely on for food.

3.2(b) Developing Wildlife for the Future to tackle illegal wildlife trade (Scott Perkin)

Ms. Aban Kabraji, IUCN Regional Director for Asia, ARO, highlighted the devastating impacts of the illegal wildlife trade (IWT) and introduced Wildlife for the Future (WFF), a new initiative to help tackle IWT in Asia and Africa. She noted that most efforts to address the problem to date have focussed on law enforcement and awareness raising, and that relatively little attention has been accorded to the potential role of local communities.

Robert Mather, Head, IUCN Southeast Asia Group in ARO, then presented Mangroves for the Future (MFF), the successful model that will be replicated by WFF. MFF spans 11 countries and uses a multi-faceted approach to enhance the resilience of coastal communities and ecosystems, including small and medium grants, capacity building and multi-stakeholder governance processes.

Scott Perkin, Head of IUCN-Asia's Natural Resources Group, ARO, introduced the proposed objectives, activities and structure of WFF. The core of WFF will be a small grants mechanism for local communities. "Non-charismatic" species affected by IWT but which have received little attention will be prioritised. WFF is still at the concept stage and a more detailed proposal must be developed.

After the presentations, the discussion focussed on the following queries and suggestions:

- Does WFF recognise that legal sustainable use systems are effective in addressing IWT?
- WFF should not exclude flagship species, as their conservation benefits many other species.
- The WFF concept seems over-simplified, given the complexity of IWT.
- Is the focus on local communities appropriate?
- How will success be measured?
- Will WFF compete with IUCN Members for funding?
- WFF should incorporate an active outreach component.
- How can WFF ensure that grants for alternative livelihoods do not simply become additional income? Some species affected by IWT are of such high value that alternative livelihoods cannot compete.
- WFF should place greater emphasis on encouraging government action.
- WFF should incorporate emergency grants for the care/ repatriation of trade-confiscated specimens.
- Will WFF tackle the US\$ 1 billion trade in Madagascan rosewood?
- Demand in Europe and the Middle East contributes to IWT; WFF should be global.
- What is the relationship between WFF and IUCN's Save Our Species (SOS) programme?
- WFF should focus on key actors (e.g. customs officials) in selected countries.
- IWT is not a livelihoods issue. A criminological approach is needed which seeks to understand the conditions which allow crime to occur.

In response, the ARO team noted that:

- WFF will promote legal sustainable use.
- The selection of species to be addressed will be undertaken by communities.

- The focus on communities is because their potential role in addressing IWT has largely been neglected.
- Defined baselines, monitoring protocols, an understanding of community dynamics and a strong communications component will be incorporated.
- Alternative livelihood schemes need to be carefully designed and are only applicable in some contexts.
- The idea of incorporating an emergency mechanism to assist trade-confiscated wildlife will be explored.
- Discussions about the relationship between WFF and SOS are ongoing.

3.2(c) Mitigating the impacts of invasive alien species in freshwater ecosystems (Piero Genovesi, Topis Contreras MacBeath and Will Darwall)

Invasive alien species (IAS) are a huge driver of freshwater species loss across the world, and can have major impacts on human livelihoods and health. With IAS constantly on the increase, it is essential to be more proactive in finding effective ways to address this problem.

The Invasive Species SG (ISSG) is already working with the IUCN Secretariat on this issue. The Global Invasive Species Database (GISD) now has good links to The IUCN Red List allowing the impacts of IAS on biodiversity to be highlighted; a new IAS Officer position is being opened up in the IUCN Global Species Programme to strengthen synergy between IUCN and other organisations; and ISSG is actively involved in various international meetings and conventions (e.g., CMS, Ramsar, World Water Week, CBD CoP13).

Additional potential activities to help mitigate the impacts of IAS include:

- Strengthening cross linkages between SGs.
- Quantifying the global and regional impacts of IAS and assessing these.
- Producing best practice guidelines for local retailers and international trade.
- Suggesting native species to the horticultural sector to replace actual and potential IAS (e.g., in the horticultural sector but also for other groups where invasive species are a problem).
- Engaging with sustainable use groups to acknowledge and highlight importance of traditional fisheries over introduced commercial species.
- Building up the evidence base (case studies, success stories, etc.) to strengthen communications and to feed into policy. Highlight success stories, to develop guidelines for protocols to apply elsewhere.
- Working with governments, international development agencies and the World Bank (e.g., identifying alternatives for local communities and aquaculture, ensuring appropriate checks are in place).
- Ensuring IUCN and SSC have a strong presence at international conventions to highlight the key issues.
- Developing projects with regional focuses: small islands are ideal project sites since the impacts of invasive species are often extreme, but because they are spatially small and isolated, they are easier to manage and represent good case study sites for testing methods.
- Investigating development a GEF proposal to secure funding for IAS work.
- Developing projects that study the 2nd order effects of freshwater invasive species (e.g., the effects of pesticides to control invasive species).
- Studying the impact of invasive species of ecosystem function (potential for collaboration with the IUCN CEM); also compare the positive or negative ecosystem changes that result from IAS and their subsequent management. Developing an Action Task Force for eradication of invasive species in

management areas (e.g., islands, as discussed above); also need to focus on prevention of introduction of invasives in the first place.

- Working with the pet and horticultural industries to highlight the dangers, legislation, and to encourage less use of actual and potential IAS.
- Developing projects that focus on how to change policy.
- Preparing a Motion for a Resolution, Recommendation to be presented at the World Conservation Congress. Perhaps a motion to develop a standardized process for quantifying the effects of invasive species.

3.2(d) Combatting the unregulated use of poisons in Africa (Richard Kock, Andre Botha and Leo Niskanen)

The main aim of this session was to explore the potential collaboration between SGs and IUCN Regional Offices to co-develop an approach to combat the unregulated use of poisons and toxins across Africa. With the knowledge that this issue has fallen well short of eliciting global attention, discussions focused on what action is urgently needed and how might IUCN drive this action forward to achieve the best impact. It was proposed that the SG network could be essential in filling many of the vast data gaps that currently exist, and are also likely to play a critical role in tackling the human-wildlife conflict element of poisoning incidents. There is also an urgent need to address the concerning lack of engagement by governments and CMS could be a mechanism through which to achieve this. Since many wildlife poisoning incidents can be associated with human health issues, it was felt that this should be better exploited to leverage wider attention at higher levels (e.g., to governments and the chemical industries). This has a much greater chance of attracting attention to the seriousness of the problem, and may also be a way to stimulate donor interest. Immediate points of action include drafting of a motion for World Conservation Congress and liaising closer with the CMS Poison Working Group.

3.2(e) Achieving the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC): strengthening IUCN SSC contributions on plant conservation (Olivier Hasinger and Sara Oldfield)

Presentations by Sara Oldfield, Barbara Goettsch and Domitilla Raimondo on the history and focus of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC), data from the IUCN Red List and Cactus and Succulent SG and a case study on South African implementation, respectively. In a previous evening session, chairs of plant SGs were asked to describe their main challenges to assist implementation of the GSPC for discussion in this session. These were identified in the following areas:

- 1) Difficulties with red list assessments – chairs of some plant SGs reported difficulties in assessment process, delays in publication of assessments, problems adding data to SIS (including maps); and issues with data collection due to international agreements such as CITES and the Nagoya Protocol.
- 2) Poor institutional support and/or national recognition of efforts;
- 3) Issues with data availability – for example, the taxa that some SGs work on tend to be Data Deficient (DD) species, as they are often located in extremely remote, inaccessible or often dangerous areas;
- 4) Lack of funding and capacity for conservation planning and action planning, and sufficient numbers of trained people in plant Specialists Groups;
- 5) Issues with the application of different approaches to conservation;
- 6) Lack of focus – for example, some groups felt there is too little work on sustainable use of wild plants, or for awareness-raising and fundraising for conservation of less charismatic plants (e.g. bryophytes).

The meeting chair responded to some of these challenges with possible solutions, There was not time to consider how plant SGs might work together to address the GSPC, but agreed to meet the following day over lunch to consider coordinated sessions on plant conservation at the World Conservation Congress.

3.3 Parallel. Workshops (I)

3.3(a) Addressing the barriers to national Red List implementation (Jon Paul Rodríguez, Katherine Secoy and Domitilla Raimondo)

Species' status can vary dramatically across their global distribution, and so regional and national Red Lists are valuable for informing national policies and conservation planning. Not all countries have developed Red Lists, and most lack robust baseline information or capacity for this. In 2013, the National Red List Alliance was established to work on raising the profile of national Red Lists (NRLs) by making NRL data available in a central online resource (the National Red List website: www.nationalredlist.org); and encouraging capacity building through shared experience and tools.

There are potential solutions to some of the challenges limiting development and implementation of NRLs, including:

- Improved linkages between The IUCN Red List and NRLs through encouraging consistent use of IUCN criteria; providing advice and tools for managing national data in a format compatible with the IUCN Species Information Service (SIS); allowing non-English language assessments of endemic species onto The IUCN Red List; including NRL status within global assessments on The IUCN Red List; providing an assessment review service for NRLs using IUCN criteria; and improving access to data downloads from The IUCN Red List for national use.
- Building capacity for NRL processes through increasing efforts to attract funding for NRLs, including training and data management; training young scientists to encourage the next generation to push this work forward; and encouraging countries to create trained, dedicated teams to work on NRLs as a long-term programme rather than a short-term project.
- IUCN continuing to work with CBD to emphasize the importance of NRLs; development of guidelines and communication strategies to emphasize the importance of NRLs, the NRL process, and use of NRLs; encouraging international donors to acknowledge NRLs as essential resources for national level policy and conservation planning.

3.3(b) Successful species conservation: taking the mystery out of planning (Mark Stanley Price and Lee Pagni)

Objective: to show every SG can plan effectively and confidently

This session was attended by almost 40 participants, including a number of SGs (e.g., Peccaries, Equids, Sharks, Palms, etc). The IUCN SSC Species Conservation Planning Sub-Committee works to raise the awareness, and uptake, of effective planning for species conservation in the SSC and beyond. The key steps to species planning were discussed and the participants divided into two groups to discuss these elements in more detail. The practicalities of planning across taxonomic units and geographic scales were addressed and it was recognised that the principle of good conservation planning can apply in every situation. It was noted that Red List assessments provided an ideal opportunity to inform species planning and some SGs have developed methods to identify which species are in most need of a dedicated species plan. A number of SGs

that intend to conduct planning in the near future participated and participants found the in the session helpful and informative.

3.3(c) Could partnerships support your Specialist Group? (Kira Mileham)

42 people attended, including SG Chairs and representatives from zoo, aquarium and botanic garden community.

The session began by discussing top priorities for SGs themselves; the most commonly cited responses were:

1. Conservation planning,
2. Red List assessments,
3. Awareness raising,
4. Facilitating conservation action

Kira Mileham then provided background to her role as IUCN SSC Director of SG Partnerships, including recapping discussions from previous SSC Chairs' Meeting and the overlapping role in conservation of SSC SGs with zoos, aquaria and botanic gardens. The contribution of *ex-situ* communities in leading their own conservation projects, research and education was highlighted as well as their large financial commitment to species conservation and their reach to approximately 1 billion visitors per annum. Discussions then covered attributes that SGs are looking for in a 'partner' from the *ex-situ* community; the most common responses were:

1. Complimentary expertise
2. Awareness raising support
3. Collaborative conservation planning
4. SG guidance on prioritizing conservation implementation and approaches.

Some discussion was had on the distinction between accredited and non-accredited zoos and the discernment required in establishing partnerships to avoid “green washing”. SGs were challenged to identify unique attributes they offer as a “partner”; the most common responses were:

1. Expert advice
2. Global network
3. Credibility

Examples of partnerships were then given by Mariella Superina (Chair, Anteater, Sloth and Armadillo SG); Patrick Griffith (Co-Chair, Cycad SG and Director of Montgomery Botanic Garden); and Christoph Schwitzer (Bristol Zoological Society and Regional Vice-Chair, Madagascar of the Primate SG). Kira invited SG participants to complete an application form requesting her support in seeking partnerships.

3.3(d) The new IUCN standard for KBAs: what it means for Specialist Groups (Penny Langhammer, Annabelle Cuttelod and Stephen Woodley)

Annabelle Cuttelod and Penny Langhammer provided an overview of the IUCN Standard to identify Key Biodiversity Areas (as sites of particular importance for biodiversity) and how Specialists Groups could engage in the KBA process – from identification and proposal, through to reviewing proposals to monitoring and re-assessment. Participants broke into working groups to discuss: how the expertise of RLAs and SGs

could best be engaged in KBA identification; how to review proposals and use SSC data for the reassessment process; and how KBAs can support the work and aims of the SGs. Overall there was high interest from the Chairs in the engagement of SGs in the whole of the KBA process. Common issues raised by participants for consideration by the KBA Standard drafting team (in relation to these questions) include: recognition of existing national and regional processes; transboundary sites; concerns about additional work burden and funding requirements – and the need to identify focal points within SGs; differences between taxonomic and regional approaches taken by SGs; sharing of information with SSC groups using an online Portal; and the need to build capacity in SGs to enhance their participation in the process.

3.3(e) How to speak to journalists: communicating scientific messages to the media (Ewa Magiera and Arthur Neslen)

About 90% of the media enquiries received by IUCN Global Communications concern species, hence Global Communications look to the SSC members and staff of Global Species Programme to handle these requests. It is therefore important for IUCN to provide some support and guidance on how to handle the media. This session was therefore intended to do this but from the perspective of a journalist (Arthur Nelsen) who works closely with IUCN.

Arthur started off the session by providing some guidance on what to do and not do. He then went on to do some role play with two of the participants; one of the scenarios involving a hostile confrontational journalist. After each mock interview Arthur asked the audience to comment on how the interviewee performed and he also provided additional feedback and comment.

The session ended with some more general questions about handling the media, about being more proactive ourselves in using the media to put out our messages, and briefly how to deal with live radio and television interviews.

The session was very useful although needed to be longer. Below is a summary of the main points presented by Arthur (this was meant to be given out as a handout, but copies could not be printed in time, hence it is important to include all of these in this report):

What are journalists looking for?

- Reliable and credible experts to explain the situation on the ground;
- Accurate information;
- Fair presentation of material

What's the value in engaging with the media?

- Communicating vital information;
- Informing the public and policy-makers of risks and possibilities;
- Setting the terms of public debate.

What is news?

- *News* is about change – information that describes a quantifiable difference from what was before. It may be a statistic or assessment entered into the public debate, but it should carry enough gravitas to demand attention. Whether it's a plane crash, a film star's premiere, or a parliamentary vote of confidence, its '**newness**' is the first measure of its editorial value.
- *News* should also be important enough to have consequences – after the 'top' or 'lead' telling the reader what the story is the second paragraph of a story tells the reader **why they should care**.

- News should be supported by strong **quote** from an authoritative source.

What makes a story big?

- **Legal, policy or business implications** - could it lead to a change of government policy? What effect will it have on jobs and business? Government, law and business are perennial concerns in editorial.
- Is it **sexy**? Will it pull in readers? Is there a celebrity dimension? Will it get picked up across the world? Is there a human interest angle?
- **Exclusivity and sufficient time** for the journalist to cover the story.

How to speak to the media (and not get into trouble)?

- **Think like a journalist** - be sensitive to what the journalist is looking for – a dramatic development that will grab the reader;
- **Act like a scientist** - don't go beyond your brief;
- **Talk like a lawyer** - make your case as strongly, persuasively and elegantly as you possibly can.
- **Prepare ahead!** Jot down three key sentences that convey the essence of what you want to communicate.
 - o **What is the problem?** Use examples and scientific data if appropriate.
 - o **Why should the reader care?** Use evocative and vivid language.
 - o **What should be done about it?** Use analysis and make a policy demand, which can form the basis of subsequent journalistic inquiries to officials or others.
- Start with the **empirical facts** at your disposal, and if this is not enough to draw conclusions, then say so.
- Use colour in the form of **adjectives**.
- Allude to reference points that a **wider audience** will be familiar with, including pop culture.
- When the available data is not enough to draw conclusions, **bargain** with the journalist's need for sources.
- **Question** the journalist's priorities if you think the wrong question is being asked, or need to expand the terms of discussion.
- **Remain in control** of what you say.
- **Work out what you want to say first.** Don't be evasive unless the journalist is asking leading questions that proceed from a false or mistaken premise. In that case, **explain clearly** why the question has been misphrased – using a **neutral and factual tone** - and calmly return to your key themes.
- React **honestly and openly** to questions.
- Don't be distracted by attempts to spin or misinterpret your words. **Stick to your script.** Don't follow a bad journalist's narrative line.
- Deal with journalists **as scientists**.
- **Remember the value of the work that you are doing for the planet, and all those who live on it.**

3.3(f) A possible situation analysis on the relationship between non-subsistence hunting and conservation and livelihoods (Simon Stuart and Mike Hoffmann)

This was a workshop session on a possible situation analysis on the relationship between non-subsistence hunting and conservation and livelihoods. It was jointly hosted by Mike Hoffmann and Simon Stuart. Mike introduced the session noting that in the wake of 'Cecilgate', IUCN had been put on the back foot and there were issues around whether IUCN representatives wanted to speak to the media on the issue due to

potential concerns from donors. Mike suggested the proposed situational analyses could seek to answer the question, 'What would the conservation landscape look like if trophy hunting didn't exist?' Simon then gave some institutional background to IUCN and the SSC and noted IUCN adopted its policy statement on the sustainable use of wildlife in 2000. He also noted there had been lots of discussion on trophy hunting over the years, but an evidence base on the impacts of trophy hunting and its contribution to livelihoods, and negative impacts is weak, but providing the evidence base is IUCN's role. It was suggested to conduct a situational analysis without recommendations following initial discussions with a few people prior to this session. Simon also noted he had spoken to WWF who are marshalling evidence for their policy on trophy hunting and there could be efficiencies in data collection between the two organisations. The remainder of the session involved discussion on the specific focus of the situational analysis, and sought to determine whether a situational analysis would take IUCN to where it wants to be on this issue.

3.4 Parallel. Conservation Issues (II)

3.4(a) Advancing an agenda for action in the inter-tidal wetlands of the East Asia-Australasia Flyway (Nicola Crockford and Scott Perkin)

Note: This session was changed to an informal discussion as there were few participants

The session reviewed implementation of Resolution 28 from the IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2012 on *Conservation of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway and its threatened waterbirds, with particular reference to the Yellow Sea* since its adoption, with emphasis on BirdLife involvement. The International Crane Foundation updated the meeting on its Yellow Sea activities (monitoring, awareness raising, advocacy). A Cornell Lab of Ornithology video promoting the Yellow Sea's importance for migratory shorebirds had been developed.

On national implementation, a workshop at Beijing Forestry University involving key national and provincial governments and site managers from the Yellow Sea, plus international experts, resulted in a Declaration which is influencing the 13th five year plan of China. Korean funding is enabling a South Korea Ministry of Environment national workshop (after one by the Ministry of Fisheries) and a trilateral meeting about transboundary management, including a potential World Heritage nomination. The Ramsar Convention is organising a meeting in North Korea in 2015. A desk study on ecosystem services of East Asian tidal flats is to feed into the IPBES Sub-regional assessment.

WWF Hong Kong funded an EAAFP Collaborative Work Programme on shorebirds focussing on five Yellow Sea sites; BirdLife is working on the Geum Estuary (South Korea), including through ecotourism and habitat restoration. For the Chinese coast, there are suggestions of a possible ecotourism trail. Increased media attention includes, in 2016, a CCBC/Channel 4 TV documentary about Rudong spoon-billed sandpipers and a BBC/Australian BC radio series on Yellow Sea shorebirds.

A major reclamation project at Tiaozini, Jiangsu was due, this year, to destroy the most important spoon-billed sandpiper site, but is postponed pending a review by the State Ocean Administration. A *Spartina* eradication feasibility study is proposed for the Chinese Yellow Sea.

The Arctic Council's Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative is supporting key objectives, including through foreign ministry funding, diplomatic interventions and sharing experience. Responding to the need for restoration of

coastal wetlands globally the Caring for Coasts Initiative is being established by CBD, Ramsar, EAAFP, BirdLife and Wetlands International for launch at CBD CoP13 in 2016.

Resolution 28's success depended on buy in from consultation on the preparatory IUCN Situation Analysis, and coordinated implementation by several partners through the EAAFP. A WCC workshop is planned to plan further follow up. Funds are being sought for a similar process on the Arabian coast.

3.4(b) Species on the brink: the Asian Species Action Partnership (Lesley Dickie and Madhu Rao)

The session was introduced by Madhu Rao who presented the history and mandate of ASAP, the rationale for its work, and its programme, structure, and membership. In addition to an update of progress the Partnership has made, Madhu also presented several challenges to both its work and conservation efforts in Southeast Asia more generally.

Following a brief Q&A from participants about the nature of ASAP's work, Leslie Dickie moderated a discussion on the practical barriers to conservation work in Southeast Asia, particularly for Critically Endangered species, on which ASAP is focused. Participants offered ideas and solutions to the barriers; feedback on how ASAP might best determine CR species' conservation needs and subsequently match them up with the appropriate donors.

3.4(c) Beyond Enforcement: strengthening community engagement in combatting illegal wildlife trade (Rosie Cooney, Holly Dublin and Leo Niskanen)

This was a conservation issue session focused on the Beyond Enforcement body of work being led by the IUCN CEESP/SSC SULi SG. Rosie Cooney, Holly Dublin and Leo Niskanen introduced the session by delivering presentations on the Beyond Enforcement work to date, the Theory of Change developed and plans to test the theory of change in East and Southern Africa respectively. This was followed by soliciting input from attendees on case studies with which to test the theory of change, and other feedback. The following feedback was solicited:

- The Great Crowned Crane was raised as an example of a species in illegal in trade in SE Asia, and which is traded by wildlife syndicates. Follow up with Claire Mirande (International Crane Foundation)
- In Kenya, the link between behaviour, community and poaching is an interesting example (Steve Broad, TRAFFIC International)
- The TOC looks like it has been put together by conservationists – to improve the ToC we should perhaps look towards the criminological literature and theory, e.g., situational crime prevention (Barney Long, WWF-US)
- I'm keen to be involved in the future – we should look at social psychology and drivers of human behaviour change (confidence to act and social norms) (Rob Steinmetz, Bear SG)
- All of this is cyclical not linear (Perran Ross, Crocodile SG)
- Successful examples of reduced illegal fishing include the Yellow fin, big eye and skipjack tuna; an unsuccessful example is the bluefin tuna. Follow up with Bruce Collette, Tuna and Billfish SG.
- For snow leopard and Polar Bear examples follow up with Olga Krever, SSC Steering Committee.
- There are successful examples of wildlife management in Peru – including freshwater turtles, peccaries, deer, vicuña and communities protect habitat.

- Re vicuña, it is more about the distribution of income as opposed to the communities wanting higher income (as Peru example above). Benefits are being removed from local communities – this is resulting in increases in poaching now. Follow up with Gabriela Lichtenstein, SSC Steering Committee.

3.4(d) Defining a role for SSC in human-wildlife conflict (Claudio Sillero and Rachel Roberts)

The objective of this session was to explore ideas of how SSC can best position itself to assist with human-wildlife conflict (HWC) issues. A brief discussion touched on how HWC should be defined, and views tended to vary according to the experiences and knowledge experts had of various species which were affected by the issue. There was general agreement that establishing a Task Force was a positive way forward, but that this needs to add value in addition to what the SGs are already doing (while also using their work to guide the objectives of the Task Force). The Task Force must also look to make a real contribution in a fairly crowded arena, perhaps using the influence of IUCN to gain impact where it is most needed, and to consider engaging the social sciences since the common denominator of HWC issues is people and how they react. Following the model of the Reintroduction SG, there was also a general interest in compiling case studies which provide a simple – but engaging and interesting – standard format for providing information at a glance for things tried and worked / failed. A proposal for a Task Force will be developed and sent to the SSC Chair's Office and Steering Committee for review, led by Claudio Sillero and Alex Zimmerman.

3.4(e) Species monitoring: overcoming the challenges to collecting, sharing and using data (PJ Stephenson)

Species populations and their habitats and threats are monitored for a range of different reasons by a range of different people. Monitoring is important, for example, for conservation project managers to demonstrate and adapt to the changes they bring about in biodiversity, for donors to show the impact of their funding, for scientists and NGOs to identify threatened species and stimulate action, for local communities to manage their natural resources, and for governments to demonstrate the delivery of national biodiversity strategies and their contribution to the goals of Multilateral Environment Agreements (e.g., CBD, CITES, CMS, etc). Efforts are therefore being made to track temporal and spatial trends in, for example, species populations, species range, legal and illegal offtake and trade, habitat cover, protected area coverage and protected area management effectiveness.

Many challenges exist in the collection of data and its use in monitoring and related decision-making, including inadequate capacity or resources for monitoring, weak indicators and monitoring plans, gaps in existing databases, and blockages to data access and sharing. There is urgent need for increased capacity building in national agencies, enhanced collection of data by conservation and research projects, improved harmonization of indicators and methods, and greater sharing of data in formats of use to conservation practitioners. As the world's largest body of scientific expertise on species, the SSC is already playing an active role in species monitoring. Many SGs (e.g. those concerned with birds and large mammals) collate and share data of use in Red List assessments and in monitoring local and global conservation targets. However, some of the other groups are struggling. The Afrotheria SG is a good example. In conducting Red List assessments, we had no accurate population data for our 80 target species and limited data on distribution, habitats and threats. Reasons for data shortages include difficulties in monitoring small, nocturnal, cryptic species, as well as challenges with taxonomy and the general lack of interest in small mammals. Other groups have their own unique challenges.

This interactive session discussed the main challenges with the collection and use of species monitoring data (populations, habitats, threats, etc.) and sought to identify how SGs could realistically work together and with partners (especially NGOs and donors such as species conservation funds) to increase data on their species for use in Red List assessments and national and global monitoring efforts.

3.4(f) Mitigating the impacts of oil palm expansion on biodiversity (John Garcia Ulloa, Erik Meijaard and Mike Hoffmann)

This session was chaired by Mike Hoffmann, who introduced the reasons why the IUCN SSC decided to conduct a situation analysis on oil palm and the type collaboration established with ETH Zurich to do so. Erik Meijaard followed-up with a presentation on oil-palm agriculture in Southeast Asia, which is the region with the largest planted area worldwide. His conclusions were that not all deforestation in Indonesia has been driven by the oil-palm industry, but that oil-palm has been part of many of these land transitions. Finally John Garcia Ulloa, who has been leading the situation analysis on oil palm, presented a quick summary of the conceptual framework developed and some of the results obtained so far before opening a discussion with the audience.

Main take-home messages from the presentations:

- Currently the sustainability initiatives in the oil-palm industry are insufficiently addressing mechanisms of biodiversity change resulting from the oil palm expansion in the tropics.
- Various aspects such as spatial and temporal scale considerations from this expansion are not being accounted by these sustainability initiatives (e.g., climate change, development of other industries, cumulative impacts in the landscape).
- Sustainability initiatives mostly address habitat loss, but little attention has been given to the consequences of fragmentation, alteration of ecosystem processes, human migration and rural development.

Main points raised during the discussion (mostly on the role of the SSC, and IUCN in general, towards this issue):

- IUCN and the SSC should focus on identifying what are the specific conservation needs and on filling these knowledge gaps (how many species are at risk and what are the concrete interventions needed to reduce the impacts of the oil-palm industry? Is oil-palm a threat to rare habitats?).
- IUCN and the SSC could engage with governments and the private sector to increase their support to the current sustainability initiatives.
- IUCN could play a role to raise awareness within the organizations behind these sustainability initiatives since the situation analysis has already identified some of their weak points.
- Any actions on these issues should be centered on addressing consumer patterns as well.
- IUCN could be issuing a strong statement on what are the good practices on oil-palm, including which areas are a “no-go” for the industry.
- IUCN and the SSC should create a task force on this issue, who could further develop an agenda within IUCN for addressing the expansion of oil-palm in the tropics.

3.5 Plenary. Q&A with the SSC Chair (III) (Simon Stuart)

The topics discussed on the third and final Q&A sessions included, among other things, SSC engagement at the IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC) in Hawaii, intellectual property rights, and avoiding conflicts of interest.

1. **SSC participation in the WCC**

Jane Smart explained that the deadline for submitting proposals for events (such as workshops) in the Forum is 5 October 2015; she clarified how proposals should be made. There will be a species pavilion which will be organised between the SSC and GSP, but the deadline for proposing events at the pavilion is much later. A new motions process has been adopted. Motions must be submitted by 12 February 2016; they will be posted online for two months of debate, and it is hoped that most will be adopted in an e-vote ahead of the WCC, leaving a reduced number to be discussed during the WCC.

2. **Can the intellectual property of IUCN be used to forward conservation, rather than for IUCN making money off of its Commission members?**

The Red List data are available free of charge. But if someone wants to download it for commercial use, then the entity in question has to enter into discussions with IUCN about the conditions. The idea is that commercial entities should contribute to the system from which they are benefitting. Income derived from such relationships is allocated by the Red List Committee by consensus. At the moment, 50% goes to upgrade the systems underpinning the technology, 25% goes to new assessments, 25% goes to reassessments. To date, the funds being divided this way are not large. IUCN does not take any such funding for its own use; it is all allocated by the Red List Committee.

3. **Avoiding conflicts of interest**

An issue had arisen concerning an SG Chair getting business for his consultancy and undertaking activities as a result of their SSC position. The Marine Turtle SG has a policy stating reports resulting from such consultancies should contain a disclaimer that the report is not from or endorsed by the SG. A statement of conflicts of interest, perhaps based on the Marine Turtle SG one, will appear in the next version of the SSC Bylaws. A conflict of interest policy for assessors is being developed by the Red List Committee. IUCN is also developing new guidelines on engagement with the business sector. SSC needs to be both guided and guarded such that it do not turn away donors who are trying to contribute to conservation, but have some baggage. SSC should not close itself off and exclude people related to private or commercial activities to try and protect ourselves. Simon Stuart: noted that when he has looked into situations, SGs are usually doing the right thing already. There is a high level of integrity in SSC.

4. **What is the relationship between IUCN Business and Biodiversity Programme and SGs?**

The BBP is engaged in helping SGs with the private sector, such as the Cave Invertebrate SG.

5. **What is the logic behind having other NGOs co-sponsor SSC SGs, such as Wetlands International (WI)?**

This is partly a historic matter in the sense that many of these groups started in WI and then joined SSC as an SG later. No SGs now comes under the umbrella of a full NGO WI is partly inter-

governmental). The hosting of SSC SGs by other institutions is a different matter that is not only fine but very helpful.

6. When does evidence-based advice end and advocacy end?

Sometimes SSC SGs are the only ones working on their species; who else will advocate for the species? When an intervention letter is insufficient, what about having influential IUCN or SSC ambassadors step in to increase the pressure? There may be something to learn from World Heritage process (writing formally to the government for an explanation, and sending a delegation of experts, which garners quite a bit of national attention). Can SSC engage celebrities for this work (perhaps tapping into the potential of celebrities on social media)? Can the relationship between United for Wildlife and IUCN be used to encourage the members of the Royal Family and celebrities to take more action? There were also cautionary notes about using celebrity ambassadors: other aspects of their reputations could become a risk rather than an asset. Making loud noises on social media should be done with caution. Intervention at the local level can also be important.

7. How does one scale up membership for a new disciplinary SG?

This came from the Conservation Genetics SG. Having regional or thematic subgroups is one way to organize.

8. What are Simon Stuart's priorities for his last year?

a) finding a way to keep the current donors loyal to SSC, thus allow the next SSC Chair to come on full-time and avoid losing momentum; b) finding ways to improve the sustainability of SGs; c) contributing to the WCC; and d) trying out some of the ideas that have come up in the discussions during these meetings. Simon Stuart concluded by urging the mammal SGs to continue towards the completion of the mammal reassessment as soon as possible.

Friday, 18 September

4.1 Plenary. An introduction to the work of SSC's sister Commissions (Jon Paul Rodríguez)

- **Ernesto Enkerlin (WCPA)**
- **Aroha Te Pareake Mead (CEESP)**
- **Piet Wit (CEM)**

In order to foster understanding of IUCN's Commissions and encourage collaboration between them, the Chairs of the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP), and Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM), made brief presentations of their work and the opportunities to collaborate with SSC. Questions and comments from the audience completed the session.

Ernesto Enkerlin opened the conversation by describing the work of WCPA. The dominant activity during his tenure as Chair of WCPA was the organization of the IUCN World Parks Congress, held in Sydney in November of 2014. Over 5,000 delegates attended, representing national governments and governmental agencies, academia, the private sector, civil society, and community and indigenous organizations. The theme for the Congress was “Parks, people, planet: inspiring solutions.” The primary document that emerged from the meeting was the Promise of Sydney, which summarized the outcomes and initiated a discussion about possible solutions. The WPC was a good example of IUCN working under the one programme approach, as all sectors of the Union actively contributed to make it a success. Ernesto also highlighted the work of the WCPA/SSC Joint Taskforce on Biodiversity & Protected Areas, which is an example of how two Commissions have worked together with staff and members in developing the IUCN Standard for the Identification of Key Biodiversity Areas, expected to be formally adopted by IUCN soon.

Aroha Te Pareake Mead began by outlining the work of CEESP, and summarizing the mandate of the Commission. Its work is structured around the development and promotion of a conservation ethic, increasing the use of rights-based approaches to natural resources, implementation of nature-based solutions that seek sustainability, social equity and environmental integrity, and strengthening civil society, governments and the private sector to ensure corporate social and environmental accountability and reduce the negative impact of industries on climate change, bio-cultural diversity and food security. Aroha described some of the activities of the Commission, highlighting their interest in influencing conservation policies within IUCN and with the global conservation community in general. CEESP has been promoting the use of the term “knowledge baskets” instead of the currently applied “knowledge products” following the tradition of Māori (and other cultures), who use baskets as a metaphor for knowledge and/or wisdom. She reported on recent developments on two knowledge baskets that CEESP is very involved with: Natural Resources Governance Framework and Humans in Nature Framework. She closed by mentioning that an important part of the work of CEESP is alongside other Commissions. They currently have three inter-Commission Specialist Groups – Customary and Environmental Law with WCEL, Indigenous Peoples and Customary Law with WCPA, and Sustainable Use and Livelihoods with SSC – and are in early talks for a fourth, Culture and Ecosystem Management with CEM.

Piet Wit began by explaining the CEM’s mission (to provide expert guidance on the integrated approaches to the management of natural and modified ecosystems, in order to promote effective biodiversity conservation and sustainable development), and objectives (promote the adoption of, and provide guidance for, ecosystem approaches to the management of landscapes and seascapes and build resilience of socio-ecological systems to address global changes). CEM works very closely with IUCN’s Global Environment Management Programme, as they have an integrated work plan. Their thematic groups and taskforces are organized by biome types (e.g. arctic, steppes, oases, wetlands, drylands, mountains, Mediterranean, urban, etc.) and major themes (e.g. ecosystem services, ecosystem restoration, ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change, disaster risk reduction, deep-sea mining, nanotechnology, etc.). The links with SSC are strong, collaborating actively in the development of the Red List of Ecosystems and the Task Force on Systemic Pesticides. Other topics where engagement with SSC could grow are: fisheries, invasive species and ecosystems, and sustainable use and management of ecosystems. Piet also examined the challenges that the Commission faces. They include: reliance on a volunteer network, limited support staff, the culture of development aid, and the need to improve collaboration with others within the Union. Their largest test ahead was the First World Forum on Ecosystem Governance, to be held immediately after the meeting of Council, in Hainan, China, in October 2015.

4.2 Parallel. Workshops (II)

4.2(a) Incorporating traditional knowledge in Red List assessments (Rosie Cooney and Dena Cator)

This was a workshop session on incorporating traditional knowledge in Red List assessments. Rosie Cooney introduced the session, and introductory presentations followed from Aroha Mead (CEESP) on why draw on TK in species assessments, from Dena Cator on what has been done on this to date, and from Rosie Cooney who outlined what the purpose of the session was – to solicit feedback, examples and issues relating to incorporating TK in Red List assessments.

Key points included the following:

- CAMP (Conservation Assessment and Management Plan) was introduced as used by the Medicinal Plants SG (Dana Leaman)
- Recent Red List assessments for pangolins did not use TK beyond what was captured in published and grey literature – but would definitely be considered in the future using a targeted approach.
- There is a need for reciprocal relationships in acquiring/accessing TK - this could be captured in research partnership agreements. For example, outlining how the knowledge will be used, what it means in a global context, and assurances it won't be used against the providers of the knowledge.
- It was also recognised that TK would need to be evaluated as to how reliable it is both in a time sense (e.g., in relation to key historical events) and in terms of actual reliability (which could be achieved by asking unloaded, open questions).

4.2(b) A demonstration of tools available for Red List assessments (Craig Hilton-Taylor, Ackbar Joolia and Caroline Pollock)

A range of tools and features has been developed for the Species Information Service (SIS) and the Red List web site. Red List Unit staff demonstrated key tools and web site features that are now available to help assessors, including:

Species Information Service

- The *Integrity Checker* runs automatic checks on required data fields (on single assessments or all assessments within a working set). This returns a full report, allowing users to quickly identify missing information to complete before submitting assessment.
- The *Submissions System* allows users to submit assessments to the Red List Unit. All submitted assessments enter the submissions queue (also visible in SIS). This system includes the integrity checker, ensuring that only fully completed assessments are submitted.
- Red List Index data can now be stored in SIS through a new set of data fields in the draft assessment.
- A new *Data Upload* system is in test phase. This will allow easier flow of large datasets into SIS (and back out again).

IUCN Red List web site

- Regional assessments are more visible on the web site. The *Other Search Options* panel includes a checkbox to include these assessments in your search. Hyperlinks to existing regional assessments also appear by default on species account pages for global Red List assessments.

- Web site searches can be saved for later use, and saved searches include a search results permalink to share with others.
- Use the *Spatial Data Download* page (in the *Resources* section) to request spatial data exports for groups of taxa. Download individual map data from the map browser (follow the map link in the species account page).
- The *Spatial Data Resources* page contains a wealth of GIS mapping tools and guidance documents. Free Esri GIS licences are also available to SSC members (contact the Red List Unit for more information).
- APIs (application program interface) allow automatic data flow between the Red List and other systems. The new API system is currently in test phase.

4.2(c) Developing taxon-specific reintroduction guidelines (Axel Moehrensclager)

The session received comments from various species and taxon-specific groups. Highlights of comments received were:

Primates:

- There was huge taxonomic variation in response to translocations.
- There were many specific challenges linked to different species.
- A rapid response was needed to early failures and a need for emphasizing post-release monitoring.

Galliformes and Waterbirds

- A need to be consistent with global guidelines.
- When dealing with multiple key stakeholders a need to ensure that all critical aspects of translocations are understood.
- Ensure success indicators, objectives and targets are set before conducting releases.
- Also should play a key role in preventing inappropriate releases.
- Disseminate guidelines widely and demonstrate success where guidelines used.

Rhino

- There is a need to bring varied expertise together.
- Enable expansion of translocations also in other regions such as Asia
- Stimulate collation of information from many sources
- Evaluate methods and determine best practices.
- Capture individual personal and institution knowledge in one document.
- Highlight need for expert input.
- Determine when translocations not appropriate.
- Emphasis resource needs in long-term.
- 4 sections:
 - I. Planning/feasibility
 - II. Implementation
 - III. Post-release monitoring
 - IV. Lessons learned
- SG's in good position to facilitate guidelines production

Cat

- Avoid need for repeat taxon-specific guidance.

Amphibian

- Development process based on experience of other taxon groups
- Focus is to provide examples linked to section of global guidelines.
- 1 individual in-charge and the core group should have specific tasks.
- Need detailed review process.
- Taxon specific guidelines are a subset of global guidelines therefore no need to go through IUCN policy approval process.
- Start and end dates of process and develop MoU.

Ideas and Comments

- Produce as e-books
 - Link to technical data
 - Facilitate regular updates
- Provide leverage to prevent hasty actions
- Issues around mitigation/salvage translocations
- Translocation in to urban environments
 - Need for guidance
 - Some existing guidelines for European city areas
- Guidelines around release of rehabilitation/confiscations – could be one or multiple species
- Global guidelines useful to prevent releases
 - Basis for taxon-species position statement (e.g. Seahorse SG)
 - RSG – need to communicate to aquarium world in simple “punchy” term.

4.2(d) How to meet donor and funding agency requirements: experience from SOS, MbZ and ITHCP (Nicolas Heard, Alessandro Badalotti and Sugoto Roy)

40+ participants. Aim: Learn how these three donors might help grant recipients to add value to projects such as through data collection and further utilisation.

Initial background was provided on the three funds:

MbZ (Nicolas Heard): 29 million USD in an endowment. Focus is on species conservation in the field. 1,300 funded projects to date. Keen to fund non-charismatic threatened species.

SOS (Alessandro Badalotti): This is not an endowment so has to be replenished. Focus is on conservation action on the ground for Red List threatened species only. Currently searching for additional funding.

Tiger Fund (Sugoto “Soggy” Roy). KFW German Government funding of 20 million EUR to be allocated over 5 years. Aim to focus on tigers, ecosystems, habitats and people in tiger conservation areas. The aim is to double the global population of tigers.

Response to general points of interest: i) Donors do consult with SG’s in determining funding priorities, and; ii) Membership of SGs adds credibility in the eyes of the donor when applying.

The main discussion topic of the meeting was: How to maximise impact of grants:

- 1) Value added – donors encouraged data collection and sharing; contribution to other databases; contribution to related projects; data pooling to build something bigger.
- 2) Lessons learned – donors asked if grantees are open to providing information on lessons learned and to receive feedback. The response was positive.

A lively group discussion on this topic followed and raised a number of points including:

Difficulties in publishing negative results; concern that reporting negative findings will not be favourable with a donor (the donor representatives assured people this is not the case); a proposal that donors might require grantees to make data freely available and that SSC SG's might act as a data repository, and; a proposal that grantees should have to make relevant data available to the Red List for threatened species.

SOS (Alessandro) asked the grantees in the room to say if SOS reporting requirements are: excessive (response = no); just right (response = yes) – too lenient (response = no). Participants also replied that they would be willing to complete a monitoring report to feedback project findings to the relevant SGs.

4.2(e) Understanding how and why protected areas are effective in conserving species (Stephen Woodley and Penny Langhammer)

During this session the work of the WCPA/SSC Joint Task Force on Biodiversity and Protected areas was presented, specifically a set of global and regional studies examining the best predictors of success for protected areas in conserving biodiversity. The participants of the session worked in three separate working groups and discussed their views in relation to three main questions:

- How can species conservation programmes best be served by protected areas?
- How can species conservation programmes contribute to protected areas?
- Are there other questions for the Task Force to take on?

During the breakout session, the need for management plans to consider the needs of invertebrate and freshwater species was highlighted (e.g. planning at the catchment scale is needed). It was acknowledged that protected areas offer good test beds for finding out about species, because they often contain the best habitat and highest densities of species. Lack of data accessibility and availability were raised as issues that hamper the management of protected areas, and insufficient research funding limits long term monitoring. Many good ideas were suggested in relation to other potential areas of work for the Task Force, including evaluating which species are the most effective indicators for measuring the success of protected areas and developing guidelines for counterfactual data collection.

4.2(f) Assessing climate change vulnerability of species (Wendy Foden, Bruce Young, Jamie Carr and Resit Akcakaya)

This session included three presentations by the panelists followed by questions from the participants. Jamie Carr presented the results of a survey of the SG needs. The main results are: the products developed by the CCSG are medium to very useful; there is a need for access to and guidance to GIS layers, guidance on conducting vulnerability species assessments, guidance on Red Listing and climate change, research on CC interactions with invasive species; most respondents are interested in using species distribution modelling and identified the synthesis of the results for use by managers as a problem; the main constraints by the SGs are lack of quality data, lack of expertise and finance and time constraints.

Wendy Foden presented the Guidelines for Climate Change Vulnerability Analysis (CCVA). She explained the conceptual steps for assessing the vulnerability of species to CC. Questions in the discussion included: how to deal with multiple stressors (response: it depends on the approach that you use, e.g. the mechanistic approach can include multiple stressors); how to deal with stochasticity of climatic events (severity) and their impact on reproductive success (response: extreme events can be included and calibrated in the different methodological approaches by looking at the mechanisms by which they impact species, and provided that we can decide on likely parameters for those events); another issue is the variable quality of climate data for different regions (response: downscaling and ground-truthing of the data). Final suggestions include looking at the examples within the guidelines; using more than one approach and look at the best and worst case scenarios to deal with uncertainty.

Resit Akcakaya presented on CC and Red Listing. He mentioned the new section (as of 3 years ago) on using Species Distribution Models (SDMs) to infer population reduction and continuing decline due to CC and explained the 4 options to incorporate CC in Red Listing. He included an example of a recent assessment for the polar bear. Some issues raised during the Q&A session were the quality (e.g. difference in ocean data taken near shore versus off-shore), and the scale and resolution of the climate data (example of Andean bear model). A suggestion was made for a review service to provide feedback on the models developed by the SGs in terms of the data and methods used and interpretation of results. Another suggestion was to make a list of people (with their contact information) that have used SDMs for Red Listing to build a community of practice.

4.3 Parallel. Consultations

4.3(a) Guidelines on recreational fishing as a conservation tool (Pete Rand and Rajeev Raghavan)

The purpose of this session was to seeking feedback on a document intended to provide guidance to government policy makers, NGOs, interested stakeholders and others on best practices to minimize stress and mortality on threatened fishes in recreational fisheries. Pete Rand, Chair of the Salmonid SG, briefly described the outline of the document and invited the audience to comment on and review the draft [IUCN SSC Guiding Principles for Recreational Fishing of Threatened Species](#) available on the Union Portal for consultation. More specifically the IUCN SSC SGs with relevant expertise on this topic were asked during the session:

- to propose solutions to identify recreational fishing effects in the IUCN Red List assessment;
- to think about the best way forward to institute, where feasible, voluntary and legally-mandated regulations to minimize negative effects of recreational fishing;
- to provide examples of recent researches on species-specific effects of recreational fishing;
- to think about the best way forward for setting in motion process leading to 3rd party certification.

An interesting and heated discussion took place during this session and there was a clear consensus in the room on the importance of developing such guidelines or at least an IUCN SSC situation analysis in a first place. Some of the specific points raised by the audience during the session were:

- that more research is needed to assess the impact of recreational fishing (including catch and release) and that these researches should go beyond measuring the level of hormones related to stress and really assess the mortality related to different type of recreational fishing;

- to carefully consider the scope of these guidelines (guidelines or proposed best practices regarding recreational fishing, all fisheries worldwide or some species in some region);
- the importance of taking into consideration national legislation framework (e.g.: in Switzerland, catch and release is illegal because of the lobbying of the animal welfare organisations);
- to assess the level of mortality following catch and release: e.g. to which degree the fish has chances to survive when the fish is completely exhausted (related to sport fishing)
- the question of the end-users of these guidelines: fisherman, NGOs, governments? Need to clarify better the audience.

4.3(b) Guiding principles on de-extinction for conservation benefit (Phil Seddon and Axel Moehrenschrager)

Phil Seddon gave a presentation on the guiding principles for de-extinction. The main objectives of the guidelines are to highlight critical areas of concern regarding de-extinction, to acknowledge opportunities, risks and uncertainties, to link into other areas of the SSC and to provide guiding principles to maximize conservation benefits and minimize harm. He provided a series of issues to be discussed in 4 groups and then to recap the comments from each group.

The main points from the different groups were:

The case for the conservation benefit of de-extinction has not been yet proved. We need to focus on what is the difference between bringing something back from 0 (extinct) than from a more advanced stage (extinct in the wild). The resources required will be much larger for bringing a species back from 0. Are there ethical issues? What happens if the re-introduction is detrimental? You must be careful with de-extinction if an extant species already does the ecological role of the species that is brought back from extinction. Only do it when the extinction happened due to an existing problem.

The task force indicated that there should not be concerns regarding the diversion of funds from conservation of extant species towards de-extinction, because they come from different funding sources. However, a point was made that if a species is brought back from extinction (or a proxy created), then it may become CR or EN and it will be an economic burden to the conservation community. To the costs of genetic de-extinction you will need to add the cost of reintroduction and habitat protection.

The guidelines should probably focus on recommending when de-extinction is recommended (i.e. beneficial for conservation) and when not, instead of actually providing general guidelines for de-extinction. There should be recommendations in the guidelines on preserving material (e.g. cryopreserved tissues, seed banks) in case we need to tap into them in the future.

Engage other commissions (e.g., CEESP) to assess what the public and communities think about this. Engage with religious sector to get their opinion.

4.3(c) Guidelines for the management of confiscated species (Neil Maddison and Kira Mileham)

An introduction and overview were given on the current revision of the IUCN Guidelines for the Management of Confiscated Species. This document is intended to replace the previous “Guidelines to the Placement of confiscated species” released in 2000. In addition to providing a more modern context to guide the management of confiscated wildlife (including plants and animals), this update is intended to transform the document into a more accessible and simple “tool” for use by confiscating authorities and their agents to

better understand the appropriate considerations and actions when dealing with confiscations. This tool involves two flow-charts, one for species of conservation value and one for species of non-conservation value, and a guideline document that sits behind the charts for reference.

The major components and considerations in developing the guidelines were presented to the group before opening the workshop to discussion and input. The key features of the discussion and feedback were:

- More consideration is required of immediate response (i.e., ensuring the confiscated wildlife do not die from lack of water, food etc while initial decisions are being made).
- The challenges of local species identification expertise
- The level of determining conservation value – e.g., Genetic vs Species
- The amount of ongoing capacity required to support the document – i.e., Referencing local networks and resources, the creation of an SSC confiscated wildlife taskforce etc.
- Whether two flowcharts were necessary or could it be condensed into one?
- And should the document discuss species of non-conservation value or should the IUCN only have a position on the management of conservation value species?

Neil Maddison is going to revise the current version of the document in light of the workshop discussion and then circulate to the SSC for approval and adoption.

4.3(d) Guidelines on use and trade of species threatened by extinction (Rosie Cooney and Dan Challenger)

This was a consultation session on draft guidelines being developed as an annex to “Guidelines on Appropriate Use of Red List data” covering harvesting of threatened species from the wild, including for commercial, subsistence, cultural or recreational purposes. The draft guidelines were briefly reviewed and then discussed by approximately 30 participants representing a range of animal and plant taxa. A number of points were raised by the participants including the need for the guidelines: to be supported by case studies, to be visible and accessible on the IUCN Red List, to emphasize a precautionary approach for the most threatened taxa and the implications on species for both initiating and ceasing harvests. It was also emphasized that the guidelines should reflect the importance of understanding the conservation benefit of harvesting. The next draft should be edited to strengthen the wording about recommendations and to make all language consistent in tone and balance. All agreed that the guidelines will be extremely helpful in supporting the work of the SSC.

4.3(e) Making the most of SOS (Jean-Christophe Vié and Alessandro Badalotti)

The session was attended by about 40 people including some former SOS grantees. The session started with a short introduction of the first 5 years of SOS (2010 to 2015). It also included the Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme (ITHCP) as this is a species conservation fund based on the SOS structure and also administered by the IUCN Global Species Programme. In total these two funds have committed close to 30 million USD so far and funded a portfolio of about 100 projects (SOS) and between 10-15 projects (ITHCP). The first phase of the SOS initiative is coming to an end and the Global Species Programme is collating lessons learned and monitoring data as well as planning and fundraising for the transition to a second phase.

The funding for the first phase was distributed through taxonomic and geographical priorities selected by the SOS Technical Advisory Group and rotating among different regions and taxonomic groups. In the future SOS will seek funding through a mixture of thematic proposals (building on successful taxonomic focus of some past calls such as conifers, cycads, sharks, etc.) and strong initiatives (with taxonomic or geographical focus

supported by Species Action Plans or other initiatives such as: lemurs, Asian Critically Endangered species etc.), as well as through opportunistic proposals (such as one for India focusing on connectivity and corridors for species dispersal).

Participants were asked to discuss their experiences with SOS and their aspirations to develop joint proposals for large initiatives focused on taxonomic and/or geographical priorities.

Themes emerging from this discussion included possible collaborations between Specialist Groups and the SOS Secretariat to develop initiatives in the future, the branding of the SOS – Save Our Species initiative to indicate a more explicit link to the SSC (e.g. Species Survival Fund), possible ways of including multiple taxonomic groups (e.g., redwoods and communities living on them) under proposals being developed and of circulating species data at the closure of the projects.

The likelihood for different species (charismatic vs less charismatic) being the focus of future funding proposals as well of future calls for proposals was also discussed. Charismatic species are likely to remain a feature of future calls for proposals as they would possibly be privileged by future donors, but the SOS Secretariat will continue its efforts to fund as many taxonomic groups as possible.

SSC Specialist Groups are encouraged to consider SOS as a mechanism under which to develop large fundraising initiatives in collaboration with the SOS Secretariat for conservation on the ground.

4.3(f) Development of objective criteria for a Green List of species (Barney Long and Liz Bennett)

The session began with a presentation of the general Green List concept and rationale, as a contribution to the Red List of Threatened Species. The concept was proposed at last WCC, to investigate the idea of a green list. The participants were then asked to respond to a series of questions. There was a full discussion, in summary there were comments on:

- a) How the Green List and associated activities would be funded, in relation to the development of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species;
- b) How to assess the impact of conservation action (and whether this should be taken into account at all);
- c) The technical detail behind how to assess if a species is fully conserved and how the Red List category Least Concern (LC) is measured;
- d) Examples of how a Green List might work for freshwater and marine species, vipers, amphibians, invertebrates and tigers;
- e) How the Green List will be used and interpreted, and whether it will incentivize conservation action for a given species;
- f) How the Green List could help SSC SGs in their existing aims – how it might help with conservation action and how the costs balance with the benefits; and
- g) An outline of next steps for the development of the process, and the needs of the consultation process.

4.3(g) Framework for Action on Strengthening the Union (Marina von Weissenberg)

The following people took part: Bertrand de Montmollin (SSC Mediterranean Plant SG); Janice Astbury (Universalis, 2015 external review of IUCN); Michael Murphree (SULi); Lynne Labanne (GSP); Caroline Edgar (GSP); Aroha Mead (CEESP); Ernesto Enkerlin (WCPA); Marina von Weissenberg (IUCN Vice-President)

Background

The Framework for Action on Strengthening the Union (FASU) is a process established by IUCN Council to respond to the call of IUCN Members at the World Conservation Congress (WCC) in Jeju in 2012 to clarify and build on IUCN's added value in comparison to other organisations. The group running FASU, chaired by Marina von Weissenberg, is working on modernizing and streamlining IUCN's processes (for example through the new e-voting process for motions to reduce the amount of time at the WCC spent on motions, freeing up the time for important strategic issues).

Ongoing actions linked to FASU

- Reform of the motions process and e-voting (mentioned above). The Members responsibility to help implement the motions needs to be made clearer. IUCN resolutions can be very powerful (for instance IUCN's sustainable use policy influencing CBD)
- Development of the IUCN Programme 2017-2020. The IUCN Programme is the major strategic document which needs much more attention in the Congress and from the Members. The draft Programme is now out for consultation. Council should be responsible for oversight of the annual work plans. The SSC is implemented the "species" part of the IUCN Programme, in collaboration with the Global Species Programme in the Secretariat.
- Too many emails coming from IUCN, overwhelming many Members. New processes are under discussion.
- Membership categories and membership fees (e.g., special Membership Categories for indigenous peoples, local governments, local communities, etc.). This is under discussion.
- Regional issues. Need to resolve friction between Members and Secretariat in some regions.
- Need for a budget committee during the WCC. Members never get a chance to prioritize issues within a WCC budget committee.

Discussions

- How can IUCN respond to changes, for instance the Sustainable Development Goals?
- IUCN's comparative strengths and weaknesses relative to other international actors in the biodiversity conservation and sustainability field
- IUCN's convening power, its huge networks with brilliant people being the strength of the Union.
- Improving the internal programmatic linkages, e.g., between the regional programmes, the headquarters Secretariat, and the Commissions, through a "system-wide approach" which includes resource allocation. Regional programmes should developed after the formal IUCN Programme has been adopted.
- European Members sometimes feel that IUCN works only in developing countries. If they don't get anything in return, they may stop paying their membership fees.
- State Members may also think the same thing. They get one letter yearly telling them to pay their fee, but no feedback or follow-up messages on the IUCN work. Need for DG to communicate with the State Members at least twice a year.
- The different IUCN products need to be linked and messages organized in a more informative way.
- Need for much better briefing of Commission Chairs on their roles after they are elected.
- Need for greater clarity on reporting requirements for both Commissions and Secretariat, including indicators, etc.

- The role of the Secretariat should be of a convening nature, making sure that it communicates with the Members on a regular basis (dialogue) and that Commissions are supported both financially and administratively. The triple helix should be strengthened.
- IUCN as an organisation should respond to the big picture, for instance the 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the SDGs, the biodiversity related conventions challenges, natural capital, climate change and gender.
- IUCN should focus even more, and make better use of the Commissions' work (products and science-based outcomes).
- Is IUCN a consulting firm, in competition with its Members? Secretariat staff are required to raise funds to cover their costs. Do we need a smaller organisation? Need to look at location of offices/HQ and staff allocation. Decentralisation versus centralised approach.
- IUCN disappeared off the radar in southern Africa (South Africa office closed in 2013/14). What was the rationale for this? "The only thing that keeps people thinking that IUCN exists are the Commissions working in that region", said a participant.

4.4 Parallel. Workshops (III)

4.4(a) Applying the IUCN Red List categories and criteria (Resit Akcakaya)

The IUCN Red List Criteria were developed to evaluate extinction risk. The *Guidelines for Using the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria* (the "Red List Guidelines") explain in some detail how to apply the criteria to different situations. These guidelines are updated regularly, therefore it is important that assessors check The Red List website to ensure they have the most recent version of these guidelines. The next update of the Red List Guidelines will include recommendations from a recent workshop on applying the criteria to marine taxa; further standardization of parameter estimation methods; inclusion of methods for using sparse, uncertain and qualitative information; recommendations on the use of new data types; and evaluating extinction risk under changing threats (e.g., methods to facilitate use of climate change and land use scenarios).

Some of the most frequently misunderstood areas in the Red List Criteria include extent of occurrence, severely fragmented, location, reduction and continuing decline calculations, and incorporating climate change into Red List assessments.

Questions and comments during this session included recommendations for reinstating the term "conservation dependent" for LC species and revisiting the 5-year time period for NT species based on ongoing conservation actions; estimating number of locations based on deforestation or invasive species; use of locations and severe fragmentation for small island species; counting mature individuals for monocarpic plant species; and estimating population size where number of mature individuals is only known for one sex within the population.

Two main action points emerged from this session:

- The Red List Technical Working Group (RLTWG) will discuss introducing a "Conservation Dependent" tag in SIS for LC species that rely on ongoing conservation actions.
- The Standards and Petitions Sub-Committee (SPSC) will revisit the 5 year time period recommendation for NT species that rely on ongoing conservation actions.

4.4(b) Multi-species conservation needs assessment: bridging the gap between Red List assessments and conservation action (Onnie Byers and Caroline Lees)

The session was attended by ca. 40 participants covering a range of institutions as well as both plant and animal SGs. The session sought to explore options for conducting multi-species planning to build on IUCN Red List assessments and to inform conservation action. Different approaches to multi-species planning were presented, including site-focussed efforts through key biodiversity areas and lemurs, as well as decision-making matrices used by national Red List projects in Colombia and the Antelope SG. Working groups considered four key questions and shared their experiences on the tools opportunities for multi-species planning. The results of the session will feed into the work of the SCPSC as well as work of individual SGs.

4.4(c) The SSC Wildlife Disease Risk Analysis tool: Applications and Utility for Conservation (Richard Kock, Catherine Machalaba and Axel Moehrenschlager)

This session was a workshop session on the SSC Wildlife Disease Risk Analysis (DRA) Tool and in particular its applications and utility for conservation. The session was hosted by Richard Kock, Alex Moehrenschlager, and Catherine Machalaba. Richard gave a 30 minute presentation on the DRA tool for conserving wildlife and biodiversity. He presented the DRA tool and explained the rationale for the tool, how it works and the benefits it could deliver in managing wildlife disease for conservation. He then drew on the example of the recent mass Saiga antelope die-off examining the problem and challenges faced in determining its cause which were reportedly unresolved. Alex's presentation followed where he introduced the topic of conservation translocations and wildlife health, including exploring definitions of and the theory behind conservation translocations, discussion of risk assessments related to translocation for conservation purposes, and he also drew on his own experience and shared personal insights on examples including a range of different taxa. In the final 30 minutes of the session there was a question and answer session which included discussion of: links between managing wildlife disease and CITES; the need for transdisciplinary approaches to addressing wildlife disease both in general and in conservation terms and as well as in a wildlife disease and humanitarian context.

4.4(d) Conservation Assured protected area management standards: an opportunity for Specialist Groups (Barney Long)

This session focused on the concept that the application of expert designed standards can incentivize improved management effectiveness of sites for species conservation.

The session described the process and purpose of the Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA|TS); an approach that sets standards for all aspects of management in areas containing tigers. Covering aspects of management that are relevant in any area managed for conservation, to tiger-specific management issues such as monitoring, maintenance of prey species and effective enforcement against poaching, CA|TS is both a distillation of best practise and a means of verifying effectiveness. CA|TS accreditation is closely linked to the IUCN Green List process so should not confuse site. Sites can apply to be registered as CA|TS sites and following audit, those meeting the standards are accredited as CA|TS Approved, which provides evidence of excellence in conservation. By encouraging any site containing or potentially containing tigers to register, CA|TS not only recognises well-managed sites, but also helps to strengthen management in less effectively conserved areas, by introducing and applying best practice standards in these sites. CA|TS therefore moves a step beyond consideration of conservation management effectiveness, by linking a site's management to the application of expert driven standards development, as increasingly demanded by governments and international agencies.

The discussion for the session focused on the applicability of this approach for other species, groups or species or any collection of conservation areas that share objectives. The Conservation Assured approach could provide the link between Aichi target 11 and 12. Some key discussion topics included:

- Do the tiger standards capture everything required for all species? The first five pillars of Conservation Assured standards should be applicable for all protected areas, but the last two pillars would need species-specific development. This would mean one site looking at attaining standards for multiple species would only have to look at multiple species standards and not the entire assessment.
- Could the approach work for groups of species? Probably. As long as the management needs for each species are consistent; primates in region x for example.
- What kind of species would this work for? A discussion on this came up with a range of examples which demonstrate the versatility of the approach to Specialist Groups: great apes, butterflies in UK, sites along bird migration flyways, tortoises in KBAs/AZEs designated for their presence, crop wild relatives.
- The idea of a kite mark or branding was suggested and linking this to eco-tourism to help incentivize improved management.
- Agreement was made that the approach warranted further testing on a variety of taxa.

4.4(e) Using social media effectively (Lynne Labanne and SSC members)

Of the approximately 20 attendees, 50% were currently using social media. At the outset two broad questions were posed by the audience - How can we use social media to, a) drive traffic to our website, and b) to stimulate engagement in conservation action?

IUCN social media channels are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and blogs. Species/SSC is promoted via the [IUCN Red List Facebook](#) and [IUCN Red List Twitter](#) accounts, the strategy being to build awareness about The IUCN Red List, the work of the SSC and the work of the IUCN Global Species Programme. The IUCN Red List social media accounts (Facebook: 124,000 followers, Twitter: 39,000 followers) have experienced tremendous growth over the past two years due to having quality content. This social media presence is increasing awareness of our work and is an important element in the package that can be presented to potential donors.

IUCN Red List tweets *always* include a hyperlink to background web content and/or the Facebook account to maximise impact. SSC groups should consider their capacity to commit time and resources before entering the social media arena. It may be more effective to channel messages via the IUCN accounts with their established base of followers.

Although there was no general agreement as to the value of social media to conservation, it was felt that conservationists have no choice; it's here, it's growing and it's the means of communication favoured by the younger generation. Social media reinforces conservation messages and relationships with partners.

A concern that was raised that people feel that they have done something for conservation if they like a post yet that in itself is not enough – we need people to act differently, donate etc.

What language to use? The Crane SG experience in China highlighted the challenge of translating content to and from English and Chinese - necessary to be able to check accuracy and content. But if SSC wants to

stimulate conservation action on the ground then social media must be in the local language to reach local people who can make a difference.

IUCN social media contacts:

- IUCN Red List Olivia.nater@iucn.org and lynne.labanne@iucn.org
- IUCN Kathryn.pintus@iucn.org

4.4(f) How to influence policy at the national level (Gabriela Lichtenstein and Rachel Roberts)

This session provided an opportunity for Chairs of SGs to share their experiences of engagement with national and regional policy work. Individuals within SGs as well as whole Specialists Groups can play a role in influencing national policy. The speakers provided a case study of species conservation to influence national and local policy, outlining successes, barriers and lessons learned. SSC members provided their views on the challenges and successes of trying to influence national policy, and of providing expert opinions and data.

Challenges include: tackling a conflicts of interest, including economic and scientific conflicts; the problems of being associated with IUCN (which can also be seen as highly beneficial, but may be perceived by others as pro-European and not supportive of government interests); handling the differences between scientific language and policy-language - and the need to communicate effectively; managing the difference in timescales associated with government decision-making (often 3 – 5 year cycles, in line with electoral terms), which does not necessarily fit with that of conservation outcomes (such as the timing of delivery of a conservation project on the ground); some government authorities don't wish to work with non-governmental organisations; lack of understanding of biodiversity data, such as understanding the Red List and how to apply the data from it to aid decision-making; issues with national sovereignty and needs to apply in-country solutions, rather than regional approaches (relating to differences in national laws); lack of clarity in national legislation; perceptions of corruption; and that staff turnover in government departments means that new relationships need to be built frequently.

Successful example of influencing policy highlighted the value of: building long term human relationships (when and where appropriate); working through a large, reputable organisation such as IUCN; use of champions; mentoring local people; ensuring that messages are clear and brief; good collaboration with private sector and civil society has proved beneficial for lobbying; helping countries to meet their international commitments; providing options and recommendations (highlighting costs and benefits); remembering that policymakers have to take a lot of other things into consideration; understanding the limitations of the law; and finding out where corruption exists. Successful examples of working with national authorities (particularly for red listing) were shared;

In particular, participants highlighted: the need to understand the policy context: the fact that challenges are common across countries: to provide relevant information at the relevant scale, to the relevant people, and the need of collaboration between SGs to have a collective voice.

4.6 Plenary. Awards and Closing Remarks

Simon Stuart started the closing session which included the SSC Awards ceremony. Firstly he asked Marina von Weissenberg to read out the Abu Dhabi Declaration which was then adopted by the meeting by

acclamation (subject to minor changes agreed by meeting participants following the meeting). The final version is attached as Annex 1.

Secondly, he thanked:

- The Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi for their continued overwhelming generosity in providing the funds which enable these inspiring and invaluable meetings to take place;
- The Mohammed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund for supporting the meeting; t
- Those members of staff who helped prior to and during the meeting – particularly to those individuals who contributed more than was asked of them by offering to assist whenever needed;
- The Ritz-Carlton Hotel staff who, without doubt, contributed to the success of the meeting through their impressive efficiency and dedication;
- Mike Hoffmann for leading on the assembly of a complex but well received agenda; and
- Especially Kim Collins and Rachel Roberts for the huge amount of effort expended in arranging and running the meeting.

Simon Stuart then listed all of the previous recipients of the SSC awards from 2006 onwards. He made special mention of four people who had already received the SSC Chair's of Excellence since the 2012 meeting.

Dr David Mech (2013)

In recognition of his lifelong contribution to Grey Wolf research, his founding of the International Wolf Center, his long tenure as Chair of the SSC Wolf Specialist Group, and his global leadership of wolf conservation.

Professor Gordon McGregor Reid (2014)

In recognition for his exemplary, visionary and charismatic leadership of the Freshwater Fish Specialist Group, between 2004 and 2013.

Dr Stuart Butchart (2014)

In recognition of his energetic, efficient and focused leadership of the Red List Technical Working Group from 2009-2013 resulting in important and long-lasting improvements to the overall effectiveness of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Professor Michael Samways (2014)

In recognition of his highly charismatic leadership of the Invertebrate Conservation Sub-Committee, and for successfully raising the profile of the often forgotten invertebrate world in the SSC for over a decade.

Simon Stuart then started to announce the awards that were given at the meeting itself:

SSC Chair's Citation of Excellence

Dr Ariadne Angulo

In recognition of her tireless, conscientious and dedicated leadership of amphibian conservation in the SSC, including through the Amphibian Specialist Group and Amphibian Red List Authority.

Brazil Plants Red List Authority

In particular the team at the Jardim Botânico do Rio de Janeiro led by Gustavo Martinelli, in recognition of their exceptional work in preparing the national Red List of Brazilian Plants.

Professor Kent Carpenter

In recognition of his leadership of the Global Marine Species Assessment, the Marine Biodiversity Unit, and the SSC Marine Fishes Red List Authority resulting in a huge increase in the number of marine species assessed on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species over the last decade.

Ms Dena Cator

In recognition of her greatly appreciated and committed support for SSC Specialist Groups, and her meticulous and conscientious underpinning of IUCN's and SSC's participation in meetings of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

Ms Annabelle Cuttelod

In recognition of her energetic leadership of IUCN Red List assessments in the Mediterranean region, and of her committed management of the process to develop a consistent and scientifically robust global standard for identifying important sites for the persistence of biodiversity.

Dr Nicole Duplaix

In recognition of her commitment to otter conservation in the SSC for over 40 years, including chairing the Otter Specialist Group on two separate occasions.

Dr Aljos Farjon

In recognition of his strong leadership of two separate assessments of the Red List status of every species of conifer in the world, and his chairing of the SSC Conifer Specialist Group.

Dr Ian Harrison

In recognition of his dedicated and strategic contributions to SSC's work on freshwater biodiversity, and especially to the Freshwater Fish Specialist Group and the Freshwater Conservation Sub-Committee.

Dr Simon Hedges

In recognition of his huge contributions to SSC's work on Asian large mammals, especially through the Asian Elephant Specialist Group and the Asian Wild Cattle Specialist Group.

Dr Jeffrey Lang

In recognition of his exceptional work on the conservation of the Gharial, his pioneering and inspirational support to young conservationists, and his participation in the SSC Crocodile and the SSC Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group.

Dr Alejandro Larriera

In recognition of his highly effective leadership of crocodylian conservation and research in South America and his participation in the SSC Crocodile Specialist Group.

Dr David Mallon

In recognition of wide-ranging commitment to the SSC over many years, including through the Species Conservation Planning Sub-Committee, the Red List Committee, the Antelope Specialist Group, and representing IUCN and SSC at meetings of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory species of Wild Animals.

Dr Rod Mast

In recognition of his long-term commitment to the SSC, and his huge contributions to the conservation of sea turtles worldwide, especially as Co-Chair of the SSC Marine Turtle Specialist Group.

Ms Shyama Pagad

In recognition of her long-term commitment to the SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group, and especially her management of the Global Invasive Species Database.

Mr Paul Pearce-Kelly

In recognition of the strong voice that he provides for invertebrate conservation, and his passionate advocacy for climate change action through the SSC and the international zoo community.

Professor Paul Racey

In recognition of his long-term support of young bat researchers, and his global leadership of bat conservation, including chairing the SSC Bat Specialist Group for 29 years.

Ms Rachel Roberts

In recognition of her huge contributions as the SSC Network Coordinator, encouraging and guiding the work of many SSC Specialist Groups, coordinating SSC's interventions on urgent conservation issues, managing the Amazing Species project, and supporting the SSC Chair.

Dr Lorenzo Rojas-Bracho

In recognition of his unwavering commitment to saving the Vaquita from extinction, and for his long-term service to the SSC Cetacean Specialist Group.

Ms Claire Santer

In recognition of her exceptional contributions as the SSC Membership Coordinator, assisting SSC Specialist Groups in the management of their memberships, helping Specialist Groups to take advantage of the Union Portal, and managing the SSC e-bulletin.

Dr Mary Seddon

In recognition of her long-term leadership of invertebrate conservation in the SSC, her deep engagement in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, and her chairing of the SSC Mollusc Specialist Group.

Professor Claudio Sillero-Zubiri

In recognition of his major contributions to species conservation, including through the Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Programme and his chairing of the SSC Canid Specialist Group.

Dr Tran Triet

In recognition of his pioneering work on wetlands and freshwater species in Southeast Asia integrating local livelihoods into conservation programmes, and of his participation in the SSC-WI Crane Specialist Group.

Dr Stephen Woodley

In recognition of his leadership of the work to understand how protected areas can deliver biodiversity outcomes, and his wisdom in helping to facilitate the process develop a consistent and scientifically robust global standard for identifying important sites for the persistence of biodiversity.

*Harry Messel Award for Conservation Leadership***Ms Elham Abtin**

In recognition of her courageous leadership of crocodile conservation and scientific research in the Sistan and Baluchistan Provinces of Iran, and her participation in the SSC Crocodile Specialist Group.

IUCN Global Fungal Red List Initiative

In particular to Anders Dahlberg and Greg Mueller, in recognition of their vision to develop and lead the innovative work on the red listing of fungi, now resulting in a huge increase in the number of fungi species assessed for their extinction risk.

Ms Cathy Dean

In recognition of her passionate and committed leadership of Save The Rhino International, greatly benefitting rhinoceros conservation in Africa and Asia, and her long-term support of the SSC African Rhino Specialist Group.

Mr Quentin Luke

In recognition of his exceptional leadership of plant conservation in East Africa, and especially for founding and driving forward the SSC East African Plant Red List Authority.

Dr Goutam Narayan

In recognition of his pivotal role on leading the Pygmy Hog Conservation Programme in north-eastern India since 1995, thus saving a whole genus from extinction, and his long service to the SSC Wild Pig Specialist Group.

Dr Mijoro Rakotoarinivo

In recognition of his pioneering leadership on the conservation of palms in Madagascar, including his huge contributions to the SSC Madagascar plants and Palm Specialist Groups.

Dr William Robichaud

In recognition of his extraordinary leadership in raising global attention for the conservation of the Saola through the SSC Saola Working Group, building a dedicated network of scientists and practitioners in Laos and Vietnam focused on saving this iconic species.

George Rabb Award for Conservation Innovation

Mr Michael Hoffmann

In recognition of his leadership on developing novel means to measure the impact and success of conservation on a global scale, as well as his inspirational leadership of the IUCN Red List Committee, and his growing influence as one of the most articulate advocates for species conservation.

Dr Penny Langhammer

In recognition of her exceptional leadership in developing a consistent and scientifically robust global standard for identifying important sites for the persistence of biodiversity, drawing together multiple different stakeholders and scientific disciplines.

Peter Scott Award for Conservation Merit

His Excellency Mohammed Al Bowardi

In recognition of his inspirational leadership of conservation in the United Arab Emirates over many years, including as Managing Director and board member of the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi, as and as Deputy Chairman of the Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund and the International Fund for Houbara Conservation.

Dr Holly Dublin

In recognition of her untiring commitment to species conservation in general and to the SSC in particular for over 30 years, including as Chair of the SSC and of the SSC African Elephant Specialist Group.

Mr Tom Milliken

In recognition of his unrelenting work in TRAFFIC and SSC over three decades to understand and find solutions to the problems of illegal trade in ivory and rhino horn, including his exceptional leadership of the Elephant Trade Information Service.

Mr Widodo Ramono

In recognition of his lifetime's work to save the Javan and Sumatran Rhinos from extinction, from his days in the field in Ujung Kulon National Park, to his exemplary commitment as a senior Indonesian government official, to his current leadership of the Indonesian Rhino Foundation.

Dr Mark Stanley Price

In recognition of his dedication to the SSC over four decades, including as the founder and first Chair of the Reintroduction Specialist Group, as the driving force for developing the 1995 and 2012 IUCN Reintroduction Guidelines, and his current leadership of the Species Conservation Planning Sub-Committee.

As Simon Stuart was closing the meeting, Luigi Boitani, Frédéric Launay and Russell Mittermeier came forward to announce that the SSC Steering Committee had decided to give the Peter Scott Award to Simon Stuart with the following citation:

Dr Simon Stuart

In recognition of his extraordinary contributions to species conservation through decades of generous and unparalleled service to the IUCN Species Survival Commission. His vision, underpinned by his tremendous wealth of understanding of the complex issues facing the Commission and biodiversity, is realized and amplified by his tireless leadership, good humour and constructive support to all. Known, admired and respected around the world, Simon is a colossus in contemporary conservation.

After this Simon Stuart thanked all those present for this great honour and declared the meeting closed.

Annex 1. Declaration from the 3rd SSC Leaders Meeting

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 15-18 September 2015

We, the participants in this 3rd Leaders Meeting of the IUCN Species Survival Commission, express our deep gratitude to the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi for its generosity in supporting and hosting this meeting in the inspiring and beautiful setting of Abu Dhabi Emirate.

We deeply appreciate the excellent arrangements made for the meeting and the special courtesy and warm hospitality extended to the participants by our friends from Abu Dhabi.

Safeguarding the Earth's biodiversity, its genes, species and ecosystems, is a moral responsibility. We believe that all species have a right to exist, and as a practical matter their conservation and sustainable use is essential to the future of humanity and to sustainable development. Our efforts to support species conservation are threatened by rapid and inequitable economic growth without regard for ecological limits, poor governance, ongoing increases in human populations, expansion of infrastructure, and unsustainable natural resource exploitation, production and consumption patterns. These pressures are undermining human well being and the biological wealth of our planet.

Our research indicates that the conservation of biodiversity needs to become a major public priority aimed at securing long-lasting livelihood benefits to humanity and providing the enabling conditions for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be met by 2030. It is thus essential to increase efforts to assess and monitor the status and trends of species, enhance conservation planning and policy development, build capacity in resource management, strengthen public awareness, and implement effective actions to achieve conservation and sustainable use on the ground and in the water.

Effective implementation of existing decisions taken through international agreements and processes including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, the World Heritage Convention, and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD - including the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, with its 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation), can help reverse the alarming decline of life on Earth.

We call on the all nations and biodiversity-related agreements to step up efforts to prevent extinctions and improve the status of wild species, thereby implementing Aichi Target 12, including by considering the development of a CBD programme of work on species conservation. We note that conserving important places for biodiversity is a key part of any strategy to reduce the rate of extinctions and restore species' populations, and so should feature in any such species conservation efforts.

Over 10,000 SSC members comprise the worldwide network of experts that generate the knowledge for the IUCN Red List, and develop conservation plans for conserving priority species. Using objective quantitative criteria, we have now assessed over 77,000 species for the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, and our goal is to assess the conservation status of 160,000 species by 2020, thereby making the IUCN Red List more representative of the diversity of life on earth. SSC members are also working on a wide variety of of

important issues, including on innovative responses to illegal wildlife trade, and addressing the threats to biodiversity from fisheries bycatch, oil palm expansion, wildlife disease, invasive species, and many others.

In Abu Dhabi we have had the opportunity to work together on solutions to the challenges affecting the world's species. As a result of this meeting we renew our commitment to safeguarding the diversity of life on earth in all its diversity, wonder, and beauty.