MISSION

CPSG provides conservation planning expertise to governments, Specialist Groups, zoos and aquariums, and other wildlife organizations. Our mission is to save threatened species by increasing the effectiveness of conservation efforts worldwide. By developing innovative and interdisciplinary methodologies, providing culturally sensitive and respectful facilitation, promoting global partnerships and collaborations, and fostering ex situ contributions to species conservation, CPSG transforms passion for wildlife into effective conservation.

CPSG MEMBERSHIP

CPSG has a membership of 269 individuals from 41 countries and is supported by the non-profit Global Conservation Network comprised of 165 donor institutions, organizations, and individuals.

SUMMARY OF MAIN ACTIVITIES

- Expanded mandate and changed name. IUCN SSC Chair Jon Paul Rodríguez asked the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG) to lead a new initiative to substantially increase the SSC’s species conservation planning effectiveness. Given the continued deterioration of the world’s wildlife and wild places, species conservation planning is crucial and the need to increase its scale and effectiveness is clear. Since 1979, CBSG has been helping to conserve the world’s threatened and endangered species. To meet the new initiative, CBSG expanded its mandate significantly. In recognition of this, and in consultation with Jon Paul, CBSG changed its name to the Conservation Planning Specialist Group (CPSG).

- Elevated the One Plan Approach (OPA) to the SSC level. Among CPSG’s contributions to the SSC Strategic Plan 2017-2020 are goals dedicated to integrating One Plan Approach thinking into the fabric of the SSC Species Conservation Planning process. In addition, the revised SSC Species Conservation Planning Handbook will include a section on OPA theory and practice.

- Hired Jamie Copsey as the Director of Training. Jamie is working with the team to develop the training and capacity building aspect of our work, as we determine how best to scale up global capacity for species conservation planning. Areas of focus for him is around expanding the existing training course program, and establishing development paths for potential new conservation planners who can help deliver on the growing need for species conservation planning.
• Released our book *Second Nature: Changing the Future for Endangered Species*. The book features ten success stories about what’s possible when dedicated people who have a common purpose collaborate to save threatened species. All 10 of these stories illustrate the power of the One Plan approach. CBSG’s expertise and innovation in conservation planning provide a framework that helps them put scientific, regional, and cultural knowledge to its most effective use. After more than 35 years of conservation planning in partnership with zoos and aquariums, other conservation organizations, local communities, governments and NGOs, CBSG has a long list of success stories to tell—and many more to generate. Download Second Nature as a PDF or view it in book form.

• Led, co-led, or provided analysis for 21 species conservation planning initiatives for species such as Javan leopards, harpy eagles, and bees in Costa Rica (view the full list).

• Published seven new species conservation plans for species such as the blue billed curassow and the blue sided tree frog. The plans are available on our website (http://www.cpsg.org/document-repository).

• Concluded the Mexican wolf recovery planning project. After more than 16 months, CPSG’s involvement in the Mexican wolf recovery planning project came to a close when the VORTEX-based PVA model was submitted to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). One of the more complex models CPSG has developed to date, the detailed risk assessment model has proven to be an invaluable tool for USFWS in deriving robust demographic and genetic criteria that can be used to measure progress toward recovery of the Mexican wolf in its historic range. The draft plan was released by USFWS in June 2017.

• Launched two new resources designed to support species conservation planning growth within the SSC.
  — The Species Conservation Planning Support Directory connects SSC Specialist Group members seeking technical assistance for species conservation planning with others willing to share their expertise. http://www.cpsg.org/new-initiatives/species-conservation-planning-support-directory
− The SSC Species Conservation Project Inventory is a compilation of species planning projects conducted or enabled by SSC Specialist Groups since 2012. Specialist Groups and conservation organizations outside of IUCN are encouraged to use the inventory as reference and inspiration as they develop their own species conservation projects. http://www.cpsg.org/new-initiatives/ssc-species-conservation-planning-project-inventory

− Collaborated with the Species Conservation Toolkit Initiative to enhance software tools for species risk assessment and conservation planning. Among the tool enhancements that we have recently been made available to the community are:
  − Enabling the use of calls to R scripts to perform calculations on input and output values for VORTEX population viability analyses;
  − Providing the ability to speed up VORTEX simulations by running multiple scenarios simultaneously on different CPUs of a PC or on a Cloud-based server;
  − Distributing a new program, VORTEX Adaptive Manager, that uses simulations to estimate the optimal management actions when uncertainties in key variables make it difficult to know which actions will have the highest expectation of achieving conservation success. VORTEX AM also predicts the rate at which uncertainties can be reduced through monitoring of the managed population performance.

FUTURE GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

CPSG’s Strategic Plan 2017-2020 is out for review and, as soon as it is finalized, will be available on our website. The plan is intended to guide our activities as we continue to do our best work, just as we have for many years, while at the same time stepping up to meet the challenge posed by the expanded mandate we have received from the SSC. It’s ambitious, a bit intimidating and will only be accomplished in collaboration with our partners and donors.

The plan is centered around the following 5 goals:

1. Target species are prioritized, and conservation needs assessed for conservation plan development
2. Context-specific, best practice, planning methods are applied based on a One Plan approach
3. Species conservation planning capacity is increased across SSC Specialist Groups and IUCN members
4. The ability of governments to meet international biodiversity targets is improved
5. Species conservation planning methods are evaluated for impact and effectiveness, leading to continual improvement

These goals, when taken together, will guide achievement of the species planning–related goals of the SSC’s Strategic Plan and, ultimately, fulfillment of our shared vision of improving the status of species in the wild.
PUBLICATIONS


