



December 2008

## Recent Events

### CITES International Expert Workshop

A CITES workshop was convened 17-21 November in Cancun, Mexico to address the technical issues confronting countries in issuing Non-Detriment Findings (NDFs) for international trade in threatened species. Over 100 government, academic and NGO experts from 35 countries participated in 9 taxonomic working groups to develop recommendations to improve the NDF process. CBSG was invited to present the leopard Vortex model from the 2005 PHVA as one of 60 case studies considered during the workshop. This Vortex model was developed to assess the potential impact of various harvest quotas on the long-term viability of leopard populations in South Africa following an approved quota increase.

Major issues challenging NDFs often mirror those faced in PHVA assessments, including the lack of sufficient biological and threat data to make accurate assessments, complexity of dealing with populations that cross international borders, difficulty in assessing and controlling illegal harvest, lack of monitoring of populations and threat impacts, and the need for future assessment and adaptive management. Although the broad application of a PVA or PHVA process for NDFs is not feasible due to time, data and resource constraints, population modeling provides one tool for developing NDFs in appropriate situations.



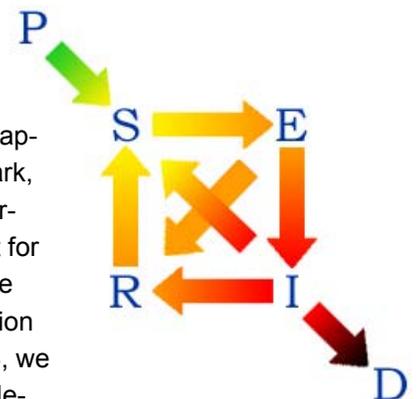
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## Ongoing Conservation Efforts

### Metamodel Research Project Update

Following up on the successful development this past summer of our two-species VORTEX metamodel, the Biocomplexity research team has set its sights on a new application of our metamodeling concept. We have been invited to Kruger National Park, South Africa, to conduct a workshop in March 2009 on management of bovine tuberculosis in the Park's lion population. In order to conduct the proper risk assessment for this project, we are collaborating with Dr. Craig Packer and Margaret Kosmala of the University of Minnesota, who have created a simulation model of socially complex lion demographic dynamics. In a meeting at the Brookfield Zoo in early December 2008, we successfully linked this software, titled SIMSIMBA, to our OUTBREAK disease epidemiology software, through our communication hub known as METAMODEL MANAGER. Through this complex modeling environment, we will be able to explore the dynamics of bovine tuberculosis infection in Kruger's lions – governed primarily through consumption of infected African buffalo – as a function of complex social structure within the Park's lion population. More details on this project will be in the next issue of *CBSG News*, in late January.



## Silvery Minnow Risk Assessment Project Update



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Work continues in the project focused on population viability analysis of New Mexico's Rio Grande silvery minnow. CBSG developed methodology for transforming information on predicted future water availability to predicted recruitment of silvery minnows the following year. This provides a better understanding of how water management scenarios in this river system may impact the viability of associated endangered species. In the coming year, we will use these models to evaluate alternative management scenarios and help the US Fish and Wildlife Service devise strategies to save the species in the short term.

## Butler's Gartersnake PHVA Update

In early 2007, CBSG conducted a PHVA workshop for the endangered Butler's gartersnake population near Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Participants recommended regulations to reduce the incidental "taking" of individual snakes due to development projects. However, gaps in our knowledge of the species' biology, as well as significant conflict among diverse stakeholders in the metropolitan Milwaukee area, has made this task difficult at best to achieve. CBSG was asked to facilitate a one-day meeting of more than 60 stakeholders in December 2008, designed to reach common ground on important aspects of the situation and move forward, creating effective regulations.



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## Upcoming Workshops

### Clouded Leopard / Small Felid Conservation Summit

Kasetsart University's Faculty of Forestry in Bangkok, Thailand has invited CBSG and the IUCN Cat Specialist Group to facilitate a three-day workshop focusing on the key conservation issues affecting clouded leopards and small felids across Southeast Asia. Scheduled for late January 2009, this conservation summit will bring together felid researchers and other stakeholders from across Southeast Asia to compile information on population status and distribution; identify key issues relating to research, trade and community education; develop collaborative conservation efforts; and create conservation strategies and funding priorities to promote clouded leopard and small felid conservation in the region. Data on species status, distribution and threats currently are being compiled, and all contributions are welcome. Data summaries will be utilized during the workshop and published in the final workshop report.

### CBSG South Asia & Reintroduction Specialist Group South Asia Joint Annual Meeting

CBSG South Asia and the Reintroduction Specialist Group South Asia will again hold their joint Annual meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 9-10 February. At these meetings, members of both groups promote the principles of conservation breeding and the implementation of IUCN reintroduction guidelines.



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