

Announcements

Upcoming Facilitation Training in Toronto

CBSG will be conducting a Facilitation and Communication Skills Training Course from 11-14 April 2016, hosted by the Toronto Zoo in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The course is being co-organized by CBSG, CBSG North America, and the Toronto Zoo. This four-day interactive training will provide conservation program managers with an opportunity to learn and practice essential facilitation skills, including decision making, team formation and management, conflict resolution, communication skills, consensus building, and cross-cultural sensitivity.

The full course announcement and registration form can be found at <http://www.cbsg.org/2016-facilitation-and-communication-skills-training-course>.

Species Conservation Planning Tools Library

CBSG recently launched the Species Conservation Planning Tools Library, a web-based resource to connect species conservation experts to the many tools and approaches available for designing and implementing an effective conservation planning process. The library includes a list of conservation planning tools that can be sorted by planning situation, step in the planning process, and tool type, as well as a framework for selecting the best tool for any given planning process. View the library at <http://www.cbsg.org/new-initiatives/species-conservation-planning-tools-library>.

Recently Added to the CBSG Document Library

- Greater Bilby Summit Report and Conservation Plan
- Junin Frog Conservation Strategy
- Cat ba Langur PVA in English and Vietnamese
- Indian Rhino Vision 2020 Population Modeling Workshop Report
- Kansas City Zoo Conservation Strategic Plan Summary

Visit <http://www.cbsg.org/document-library> to view and download these and other conservation plans and workshop reports.

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Thanks to our translators, Jean-Luc Berthier and Elizabeth Townsend (French), and Celia Sánchez (Spanish), for helping make this publication available in three languages.



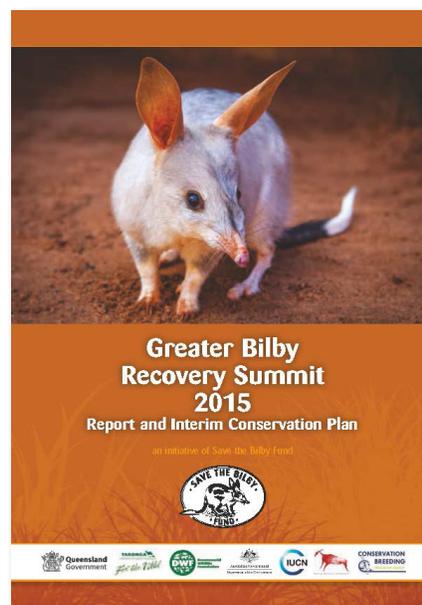
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This symbol indicates that a project follows the One Plan approach to species conservation planning. Click [here](#) to learn more about the One Plan approach.





Recent Activities

2015 CBSG Annual Meeting in Al Ain, UAE

In early October, 80 conservation professionals from around the world converged on the beautiful desert oasis city of Al Ain, United Arab Emirates for the 2015 CBSG Annual Meeting. Held for the first time in the Arab region, the meeting brought together conservation experts from as far as Australia, Brazil, Oman, and Taiwan to discuss advances to conservation planning tools and processes and to identify tangible conservation actions. Plenary sessions included: a keynote address by Majid Al Qassimi (Director of Terrestrial Biodiversity for Environment Agency, Abu Dhabi) on the Agency's efforts to reintroduce scimitar-horned oryx to Chad; an engaging session on systems thinking led by Andrea Fidgett (Chester Zoo) which asked the participants to use drawings to consider new approaches to big problems; and a call from Dalia Conde (University of Southern Denmark) for zoological institutions to enhance data collection on endangered species in their collections. In the evenings, the group visited the new Sheikh Zayed Desert Learning Center at Al Ain Zoo and ate a fantastic dinner among the sand dunes in the desert.

Outcomes from three days of intensive working groups include: next steps to provide increased support to the users of population modeling tools; a proposed expansion to the current CBSG workshop structure that would focus on recommendations regarding human behavior change with input from relevant experts; an action plan to increase support for "genetic rescue" techniques for saving species from extinction; and the formation of a working group to develop guidelines to incorporate monitoring and evaluation into CBSG processes. Reports from all working groups will be published soon in the CBSG Annual Meeting Proceedings.



CBSG would like to express our gratitude to the Al Ain Zoo for their unparalleled hospitality and expert organization in hosting the 2015 CBSG Annual Meeting. We thank the participants for their energetic work throughout the meeting and their dedication to moving species conservation planning forward by continuing these efforts in the future.



One Plan Approach Workshop for Brazilian Zoos



In August, the Sao Paulo Zoological Society hosted the III Brazilian Conservation Biology Symposium in Sao Paulo, Brazil. One of the themes of the symposium was integrated conservation, and CBSG was invited to present our One Plan approach philosophy. Following the symposium, Sao Paulo Zoo hosted a one-half day training workshop on evaluating *ex situ* conservation options within the One Plan approach context for staff working in Brazilian zoos. With planning assistance from CBSG and CBSG Europe, Jennifer Mickelberg (CBSG North America) led the workshop, which focused on the application of the recently published IUCN SSC *Guidelines on the Use of Ex Situ Management for Species Conservation*. Attendees

were divided into species-specific working groups and worked through the guidelines to determine potential *ex situ* conservation roles and strategies for those species. Participants also evaluated the purpose and roles of the most common species found in Brazilian zoos. This discussion revealed opportunities for Brazilian zoos for making more conservation connections with the species currently found in zoos and to consider conservation needs in future collection plans.

Health Contributions to Conservation in the Galápagos

In August, 30 wildlife health professionals from Ecuador, Europe, and the United States met on the island of Santa Cruz, Galápagos to discuss wildlife health in this biologically diverse archipelago. CBSG facilitated the process of creating an integrated health-focused Action Plan to define the needs and priorities for health contributions to conservation in the Galápagos. The information discussed at the workshop was organized in three distinct components:

1. Challenges to making positive health contributions to wildlife conservation in the Galápagos. These challenges were prioritized around the urgency of resolving the challenge to successfully contribute to wildlife health across the Galápagos.
2. Information assembly for each prioritized challenge. The workshop participants identified the level of accepted knowledge around each prioritized challenge, with particular emphases on trying to separate fact from assumption.
3. Preliminary goals recommended to address the challenges. Where appropriate, recommended goals include a timeline for completion and identify the responsible party for initiating action toward achieving the specified goal.



The participants recognized the critical need for robust policies and procedures for wildlife health status investigation / evaluation and disease management. Additionally, they recommended that a centralized, well-equipped laboratory for animal treatment and sample processing is built in the Galápagos with a clinical wing to treat acute disease in local wildlife.



Plains-Wanderer Conservation Planning Workshop

The plains-wanderer has recently been upgraded to Critically Endangered on the Australian list of threatened species. Since 2001, overall declines of 93-95% have been recorded at key sites in New South Wales and Victoria. There are estimated to be 250-1000 birds remaining, a record low for the species. Loss of good habitat to agriculture and inappropriate grazing regimes is considered the principle cause of long-term declines. There remains uncertainty about the nature and role of other factors in the recent, unprecedented losses.



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The overall goal of the recovery plan is to achieve a viable, self-sustaining wild population capable of persisting through extended periods of unfavorable climatic conditions, which have historically resulted in plains-wanderer numbers falling to dangerously low levels. This goal will be supported by long-term arrangements that ensure appropriate management of key plains-wanderer habitat.

In August 2015, 17 people from nine organizations met in Canberra to discuss the proposition of establishing a captive population to support plains-wanderer recovery efforts. CBSG facilitated the workshop, which was organized by the Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW, and hosted by the Department of Environment in Canberra.

Using the IUCN SSC *Guidelines on the Use of Ex situ Management for Species Conservation* as a framework for discussion, participants agreed that a captive population of plains-wanderers could support species recovery goals by:

1. Providing 15-20 years of respite from the species' currently high risk of extinction, buying time for understanding and implementing appropriate site management.
2. Generating birds for release to test alternative site management approaches and confirm appropriate regimes for plains-wanderers, as well as to boost wild population numbers.

These applications were considered by participants to be of critical importance to the immediate security of the species and likely to increase the chances of successful recovery following *in situ* management actions.

Kuwait National BioBank Initiative Workshop

CBSG, in collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution, was invited to assist in the development of a detailed plan for the establishment of the Kuwait National BioBank. The National BioBank, the first of its kind, will provide both short-term and long-term storage services of biological specimens for the purpose of sustaining biodiversity and facilitating future rehabilitation and restoration of deteriorated biodiversity in Kuwait.

In September, CBSG facilitated a stakeholder-inclusive workshop to develop consensus around the project's objectives, purposes, and vision. The participants, including a team of experts from the main scientific and academic institutions in Kuwait, envision a world-class, open, and collaborative national (and regional) reference center to promote, understand, secure and sustain the biological heritage of the nation and to ensure aid in the success of long-term policy and decision making regarding biodiversity conservation.

The group worked intensely for two days to discuss and agree upon essential issues including location, governance, staffing, management, sharing and ownership of the collections, collaboration with external partners, and potential future expansions.

Species Conservation Toolkit Initiative Update

The Species Conservation Toolkit Initiative (SCTI) is a new partnership to ensure that the innovations and tools needed for species risk assessment, evaluating conservation actions, and managing populations are developed, available, and used effectively. SCTI's founding partners are the Chicago Zoological Society (CZS), the Smithsonian Institution/National Zoo (NZN), and CBSG. CBSG is involved in ongoing software testing and manual development for a number of SCTI tools such as *VORTEX*, *PMX*, *OUTBREAK*, and *METAMODEL MANAGER*.

SCTI recently hired Taylor Callicrate as the new postdoctoral fellow in the Species Conservation Toolkit Initiative. Taylor is the first fulltime employee dedicated to the initiative's mission to maintain and improve the software tools used by conservationists around the world. Taylor is now learning the software programs currently within the Species Conservation Toolkit from the original designers (Robert Lacy at CZS and Jonathan Ballou at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute) in preparation for adding new features to meet the growing needs of species conservation. She participated in the 2015 CBSG Annual Meeting in October, and will soon be working with conservation scientists from CBSG, the International Species Information System, zoo associations, and other partner organizations to incorporate their needs and ideas into the Species Conservation Toolkit.



Taylor's position is funded by the Chicago Zoological Society, Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute, International Species Information System, Zoological Society of London, Auckland Zoo, SOS Rhino, San Francisco Zoo, Living Desert Zoo, Saint Louis Zoo, and San Diego Zoo Global. We hope that additional sponsors will allow us to add in 2016 the needed training and tech support to the Species Conservation Toolkit Initiative.

SSC Leaders' Meeting

Approximately 350 people—among them 20 CBSG members—met in Abu Dhabi for the third SSC Leaders' Meeting. These meetings are funded by Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi and designed to help the SSC improve its collective effectiveness. The SSC recognizes that in addition to promoting species assessment, it must also lead in terms of conservation action, which was the focus of this year's meeting. In her opening remarks, the IUCN Director General Inger Andersen declared, "The world is waking up ... it's time for action." More specifically, IUCN Vice President Marina von Weissenberg noted that the Red List is the starting point for action.



CBSG's core work of conservation planning – particularly the One Plan approach – lives in the space between Red Listing and action, and is essential for effective conservation solutions. We found a number of opportunities to share this message during the meeting, particularly in two formal sessions: the 'marketplace' and the workshop session.

During the marketplace session, SSC groups, including CBSG, were given informational tables and delegates were encouraged to visit these tables to learn about the work of SSC colleagues. During this session and in side meetings, we met with IUCN and SSC leaders to promote the One Plan approach to species conservation, progress CBSG's involvement in some existing projects, and explore potential planning projects for a number of species including cycads, New Zealand molluscs, and otters.



Our workshop on multispecies planning was attended by over 40 participants—who represented 18 Specialist Groups, 2 subcommittees, the IUCN Global Species Program, the SSC Chairs office and several NGOs—in spite of the fact that it was in the last session on last day and competing with four other parallel workshops. The session took first steps towards meeting the need for multi-species planning and further bridging the gap from Red Listing to effective conservation action. It was clear from the interest in the topic and the productive discussions during the workshop that there is a great deal of interest and need for such a tool across the SSC. We will be working with colleagues identified at the workshop to progress the work begun in Abu Dhabi.

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 realize our potential contribution to the wider IUCN network.