

PROCEEDINGS OF THE **2023 CPSG Annual Meeting**



Annual Meeting | **2023**
San Diego, California, USA | 5 - 8 October



**San Diego Zoo
Wildlife Alliance**

The 2023 CPSG Annual Meeting was hosted by the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance. We welcomed 76 registrants from 21 countries to the meeting.

The 2023 CPSG Annual Meeting took place in San Diego, California, USA from 5-8 October.

Over the course of the meeting, participants took part in working groups where important conservation topics and questions were explored. Additionally, CPSG's and other partners' conservation work was highlighted through multiple presentations. As ever, it was a time for our community to come together to celebrate achievements large and small, to learn and to inspire, and to reenergize for the work ahead.

A special thank you to our keynote speaker, **James McBreen**, from the **IUCN Centre for Conservation Action**, who gave a thought-provoking and forward-thinking address on *The Use of Artificial Intelligence in Species Conservation with Consideration of its Potential Application to Planning*.

And another thank you to our conference hosts, the **San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance**, for their warm welcome to San Diego and for their generous hospitality, and for all of their work towards making the 2023 CPSG Annual Meeting a success.





Working Groups

Eight working groups were convened during the CPSG Annual Meeting:

- **Animal Biobanking for Conservation**
- **Building Capacity in Quantitative Risk Assessment and Population Viability Analysis (PVA)**
- **Developing and Implementing the “How-to Guidelines for Group-based Population Management”**
- **Developing Guidelines for the Application of Conservation Planning Principles in an Online Setting**
- **Embedding Species Conservation Planning Processes in Governmental Policies and Procedures**
- **Evaluating Conservation Impact: Sharing Challenges and Solutions**
- **Managing Conflict Within Species Conservation Planning Processes**
- **Planning for Plant Conservation**

Summaries from the working groups can be found in these proceedings, as well as links to more comprehensive reports where applicable.

WORKING GROUP SUMMARY

Animal Biobanking for Conservation

CONVENORS



Oliver Ryder,
SDZWA



Boripat Siriaroonrat,
Mahidol University
Salaya

Participants: *Andrea Putnam, Ardyta Widianti, Asasko Chaille, Boripat Siriaroonrat, Christy Powell, Eric Tsao, Ginger Elliott, Jansen Manansang, Karen Bauman, Karin Schwartz, Kristine Schad Eebes, Marina Somenzari, Monika Bohm, Oliver Ryder, Rachel Daneault, Sanjay K. Shukla*

Summary

The Animal Biobanking for Conservation Specialist Group (ABCSG) Cochairs summarized reports from two meetings held prior to the 2023 CPSG Annual Meeting: the Asian Biobanking Network hosted by Taipei Zoo in 2022, and the Inaugural Workshop of ABCSG hosted by SDZWA. Participants were invited to join the discussions on the sense of urgency on biodiversity loss, but most of the current banking and scientific collections are based on decades (centuries) of collecting samples in ways that would not conform to current best-practices standards. ABCSG feels strongly that it needs to include the implementation of Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework goals. Discussion topics included how to change the biobanking standard practices, scope of partners and stakeholders, engagement with other Specialist Groups within the SSC, horizon scans of the existing efforts and established biobanks around the world, information sharing and access, and how biobanking can assist conservation planning for species of interest under OPA.

Recommendations & Next Steps

1. ABCSG to work with the Center for Species Survival and seek personnel and technical support to plan and conduct a survey of who is collecting what for biobanking, how are the samples stored and curated, and how catalogues are managed.
2. Explore the existing reports, available information from institutional, country and regional organizations that includes review, recommendations and SOPs related to ABCSG work moving forward.
3. Start working on a membership process following SSC guidelines and establish taskforces to allow members to work together to achieve ABCSG and SSC targets.

WORKING GROUP SUMMARY

Building Capacity in Quantitative Risk Assessment and Population Viability Analysis

CONVENORS



Phil Miller,
CPSG



Simon Valle,
CPSG

Participants: Karen Bauman, Rebecca Biddle, Megan Brown, Amy Chabot, Asako Chaille, Frank Cipriano, Jamie Copsey, Chris Corpus, Carmel Croukamp, Nicole Duplaix, Ginger Elliott, Lisa Faust, Gina Ferrie, Paula Gonzalez Ciccio, Katelyn Herman, Samuel Ivande, Sanjay Kumar Shukla, Sonja Luz, Jansen Manansang, Phil Miller, Andrew Mooney, Mike Murray, Kaori Ota, Theo Pagel, Natasha Peters, Riley Pollom, Andrea Putnam, Kristine Schad Eebes, Karin Schwartz, Boripat Siriaroonrat, Gloria Svampa, Kazutoshi Takami, Helen Taylor, Josephine Vanda Tirtayani, Simon Valle, Fabio Vannucchi, Lauren Waller, Ardyta Widianti, Bill Zeigler

Summary

Participants were introduced to CPSG's Development Path program, and in particular the desired qualifications and mutual mentor/mentee expectations for those interested in joining the Technical Development Path (TDP), focused on applying population viability analysis (PVA) tools to the conservation planning process. Current TDP mentees introduced themselves and summarized their expertise and perspectives on the program to date. An open discussion covered topics including skills required for the TDP, the ways in which TDP mentees and mentors could most effectively communicate for mutual learning, and how CPSG could organize their large body of technical material into a PVA resource library for use by mentees. CPSG staff then discussed preliminary plans for an updated PVA course, with working group participants sharing ideas for how that course could best be organized and delivered to the TDP mentees, CPSG membership, and perhaps beyond.

Recommendations & Next Steps

1. CPSG staff will coordinate a regular online meeting of TDP mentees and mentors to share PVA implementation experiences, ask questions, discuss current topics, review PVA reports and papers, etc.
2. CPSG staff will begin organizing a core set of materials for an online PVA resource library.
3. TDP mentors and mentees will continue to identify opportunities for mentee training in upcoming species conservation planning workshops featuring a PVA component.
4. CPSG staff will begin constructing a broad outline for a new PVA course.

The full working group report can be found [here](#).

WORKING GROUP SUMMARY

Developing and Implementing the “How-to Guidelines for Group-based Population Management”

CONVENORS



Kathryn Rodriguez-Clark,
Smithsonian’s National
Zoo & Conservation
Biology Institute



Gina Ferrie,
Disney’s Animal
Kingdom

Participants: *Rebecca Biddle, Monika Bohm, Megan Brown, Amy Chabot, Asako Chaille, James Danoff-Burg, Candice Dorsey, Nicole Duplaix, Ginger Elliott, Gina Ferrie, Paula Gonzalez Ciccia, Lucy Kemp, Kristin Leus, Jean Linsky, Tim Lyons, Andrew Mooney, Mike Murray, Mark Pilgrim, Andrea Putnam, Kathryn Rodriguez-Clark, Oliver Ryder, Shuichi Sakata, Kristine Schad Eebes, Boripat Siriaroonrat, Gloria Svampa, Josephine Vanda Tirtayani, Simon Valle, Fabio Vannucchi*

Summary

Group-based population management is genetic and demographic management (both in-situ and ex-situ) for any species in which data may be collected and/or management actions conducted only on groups of organisms, rather than on specific individuals. The Group Management Initiative (GMI) was formed in 2020 with a vision that group-managed species are effectively conserved based on sound science, using the best available global information and tools. In 2022, CPSG annual meeting participants helped GMI to refine and finalize a Strategic Framework. One of the most-needed tools identified in the Framework was user-friendly guidelines for best practices in group management. In early 2023, GMI members developed a detailed outline for these guidelines. In this 2023 CPSG Annual Meeting working group, participants considered the draft outline first independently, and then in facilitated breakout groups, providing recommendations on how to improve structure and content, and how to effectively share and implement the guidelines once complete.

Recommendations & Next Steps

1. Incorporate all feedback to generate a revised Guidelines outline.
2. Incorporate those who volunteered to provide and review content in the next round of communications with Guidelines authors and reviewers.
3. Compile brainstormed actions and priorities for sharing guidelines, once complete, into a draft plan, and share with other GMI participants to finalize.
4. Conduct follow-up consultation with working group participants and GMI members on specific platforms and/or publishers able to support the consensus view that emerged: that Guidelines should be a living document, available on a website, but also as a PDF.

The full working group report can be found [here](#).

WORKING GROUP SUMMARY

Developing Guidelines for the Application of Conservation Planning Principles in an Online Setting

CONVENORS



Jamie Copsey,
CPSG



Eugenia Cordero,
CPSG | CSS Brazil



Fabiana Rocha,
CPSG | CSS Brazil



Stephanie Winton,
CSI | WPC

Participants: Carmel Croukamp, Chris Corpus, Eugenia Cordero Schmidt, Fabiana Lopes Rocha, Frank Cipriano, Helen Taylor, Jamie Copsey, Jessica Steiner, Kaori Ota, Katelyn Herman, Kazutoshi Takami, Kelly Swiech, Lauren Waller, Lisa Faust, Lucy Kemp, Marina Somenzari, Natasha Peters, Nicole Duplaix, Rachel Daneault, Samuel Ivande, Stephanie Winton

Summary

The aim was to develop guidelines for the application of species conservation planning principles in virtual and hybrid workshop settings. An overview of the draft guidelines was presented, and some of the practical knowledge gained to-date in the application of CPSG's seven conservation planning principles was shared. Participants then split into sub-working groups to look more specifically at each of CPSG's planning principles and their applications in virtual and hybrid meetings. [Mural](#) was used to gather information from participants on opportunities, challenges, tips, tools, and examples. Each sub-working group rotated so that participants could contribute to discussions concerning at least four of CPSG's principles. Finally, situations were brainstormed in which undertaking species conservation planning in a virtual environment would work well and when it would not.

Recommendations & Next Steps

1. Incorporate new challenges, opportunities, tools, tips, and examples into the guidelines, for both virtual and hybrid workshops.
2. Think about a possible re-structuring of the guidelines to avoid repetition.
3. Identify situations in which planning virtually is likely or unlikely to work well, and draft guidance to others to inform their decision-making.
4. Volunteers were identified to review and edit the final guidelines.

WORKING GROUP SUMMARY

Embedding Species Conservation Planning Processes in Governmental Policies and Procedures: Sharing and Brainstorming Workflows

CONVENORS



Kristin Leus,
Copenhagen Zoo | EAZA



Caroline Lees,
CPSG

Participants: Paula Cerdán, Asako Chaille, Paula Gonzalez Ciccía, Carmel Croukamp, Rachel Daneault, Nicole Duplaix, Sanna Hellström, Samuel Ivande, Mike Jordan, Lucy Kemp, Caroline Lees, Kristin Leus, Sonja Luz, Tim Lyons, Jansen Manansang, Kira Mileham, Andrew Mooney, Mike Murray, Natasha Peters, Riley Pollom, Christy Powell, Andrea Putnam, Roopali Raghavan, Fabiana Lopes Rocha, Kathryn Rodriguez-Clark, Shuichi Sakata, Karin Schwartz, Sanjay K. Shukla, Boripat Siriaronrat, Jessica Steiner, Bill Street, Helen Taylor, Josephine Vanda Tirtayani, Lauren Waller, Stephanie Winton

Summary

CPSG aims to increase its ability to provide tailored support to governments as part of scaling up global capacity for species conservation planning. Government species recovery units may find it challenging to identify (and plan and act for) those species that, despite conservation action at the level of locations (e.g., protected areas), habitats and ecosystems, and threat reduction, will not fully recover without single or multi-species planning and/or intensive care across the in-situ/ex-situ spectrum. Working group participants provided input on the questions:

- Is it CPSG's role to contribute to helping countries have a species recovery planning framework (a workflow that ensures species identified as threatened have a pathway to recovery)? If so, what could that help look like?
- Do you know your country's species recovery planning framework and do you have a personal contact?
- Do you know of others helping countries with species recovery planning frameworks?

The output of this workshop will inform already planned further work in this field by CPSG HQ and CPSG Europe (in collaboration with the other CPSG Regional Resource Centers):

Recommendations & Next Steps

1. Participants agreed that CPSG does have a role to play in this field, and listed a number of provisos that will be taken into consideration.
2. Use the country examples, contact persons, issues/challenges, and comments provided by participants for writing a review of in-country species recovery planning frameworks.
3. Evaluate the offered suggestions for the type of help and guidance that CPSG could provide and develop and take up next steps as appropriate.
4. Evaluate the suggestions for possible collaborators provided by the participants to further work in this field, and establish links as appropriate.

The full working group report can be found [here](#).

WORKING GROUP SUMMARY

Evaluating Conservation Impact: Sharing Challenges and Solutions

CONVENORS



Sonja Luz,
Mandai Nature



Roopali Raghavan,
Mandai Nature



Caroline Lees,
CPSG

Participants: Andrew Mooney, Bill Street, Bill Zeigler, Carmel Croukamp, Caroline Lees, Chris Corpus, Eugenia Cordero Schmidt, Fabio Vannucchi, Frank Cipriano, Gina Ferrie, Gloria Svampa, Helen Taylor, James Danoff-Burg, Jamie Copsey, Jean Linsky, Jessica Steiner, Josephine Vanda Tirtayani, Kaori Ota, Katelyn Herman, Kathryn Rodriguez-Clark, Kazutoshi Takami, Keith Lovett, Kelly Swiech, Kevin Buley, Kristin Leus, Laura Tucker, Lauren Waller, Lisa Faust, Lucy Kemp, Mark Pilgrim, Mike Jordan, Nadine Lamberski, Natasha Peters, Nicole Duplaix, Paula Cerdán, Paula Gonzalez Ciccía, Paulraj Subbiah, Rebecca Biddle, Riley Pollom, Roopali Raghavan, Samuel Ivande, Sanna Hellström, Shuichi Sakata, Simon Valle, Sonja Luz, Stephanie Winton, Tim Lyons

Summary

Conserving species is difficult, complicated, and can take decades to take effect. It often requires coordinated attention by multiple organizations covering a variety of disciplines. These organizations continuously strive to understand and measure their impact. This working group started off with a presentation on definition of impact. This was followed by an attempt to map the landscape of evaluating conservation impact amongst the participants. The majority of participants (74%) were attempting to measure their impact at some level, while 90% were either partly or not at all satisfied with how they were doing this. Breakout group discussions dived into (i) main motivations for measuring, (ii) specific metrics being measured, as well as (iii) the current challenges being encountered while measuring conservation impact. The working group concluded with presentations by Hiwe and San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance on two specific tools offering solutions that could be customized for the use of participants. It was acknowledged that CPSG is already working on measuring and tracking the impact of CPSG planning processes and will be suited to use this network to expand into measuring impact of actions as well.

Recommendations & Next Steps

1. Forming a working group to look at current methods of impact used, where there are commonalities and impact measuring needs, and see if methods can be standardized.
2. Build guidelines framework on impact measuring if required.
3. Explore the need and possibility to demonstrate collective impact.

WORKING GROUP SUMMARY

Managing Conflict Within Species Conservation Planning Processes

CONVENOR



Jamie Copsey,
CPSG

Participants: Amy Chabot, Ardita Widiarti, Bill Zeigler, Chris Corpus, Eugenia Cordero Schmidt, Fabio Vannuchi, Frank Cipriano, Gina Ferrie, Ginger Elliot, Gloria Svampa, James Danoff-Burg, Jamie Copsey, Jean Linsky, Katelyn Herman, Kaori Ota, Karen Bauman, Kazutoshi Takami, Keith Lovett, Kelly Swiech, Kevin Buley, Kristine Schad Eebes, Lisa Faust, Marina Somenzari, Mark Pilgrim, Megan Brown, Monika Bohm, Nicole Duplaix, Oliver Ryder, Phil Miller, Rebecca Biddle, Simon Valle

Summary

This working group began with an introductory presentation on conflict, what conflict looks like, its origins, and some methods for responding to it before, during, and after species conservation planning workshops. A plenary discussion ensued around a central question - is there a limit to the types of conflict we should be equipped to respond to as species conservation planning facilitators? While participants felt that armed conflict may be beyond our remit, they also agreed that it may not be clear the extent of conflict that will occur until you, as the facilitator, are in the process, and so we should be equipped to respond to a range of conflict situations. The group then divided between four tables with the discussion topics:

- 1.Characterizing Conflict: focused on deepening our description of conflict in its different guises and the origins of that conflict.
- 2.Cases of Conflict: surfacing examples of conflict from participants and how it was dealt with (effectively or not).
- 3.Conflict Processes Tips & Tools: generating ideas on how to effectively respond to different forms of conflict.
- 4.Conflict Course Content: concerning the practicalities of designing a course which could capture this and other learning about how to respond to conflict for species conservation planners.

Recommendations & Next Steps

Participants agreed that it would be good to develop a course on responding to conflict for species conservation planners which could complement CPSG's existing course portfolio. Next steps include:

- 1.Finalizing a list of group participants who would be keen to work together to develop a course outline.
- 2.Working group to develop a course concept note, including proposed course format, for input from broader CPSG staff.
- 3.Timetable to be developed to outline the process of course development, including completion and launch dates.
- 4.Report back on course development in the 2024 CPSG Annual Meeting.

The full working group report can be found [here](#).

WORKING GROUP SUMMARY

Planning for Plant Conservation

CONVENORS



Jean Linsky,
Atlanta Botanical Garden



Amy Byrne,
The Morton Arboretum

Participants: Amy Byrne, Bill Street, Caroline Lees, Christy Powell, Eric Tsao, Eugenia Cordero Schmidt, Fabiana Lopes Rocha, James Danoff-Burg, Jean Linsky, Jessica Steiner, Kathryn Rodriguez-Clark, Kristin Leus, Marina Somenzari, Mark Pilgrim, Mike Jordan, Monika Bohm, Oliver Ryder, S. Paul Raj, Sanna Hellström, Shuichi Sakata, Stephanie Winton, Susie Ellis, Tim Lyons, Yvette Harvey-Brown

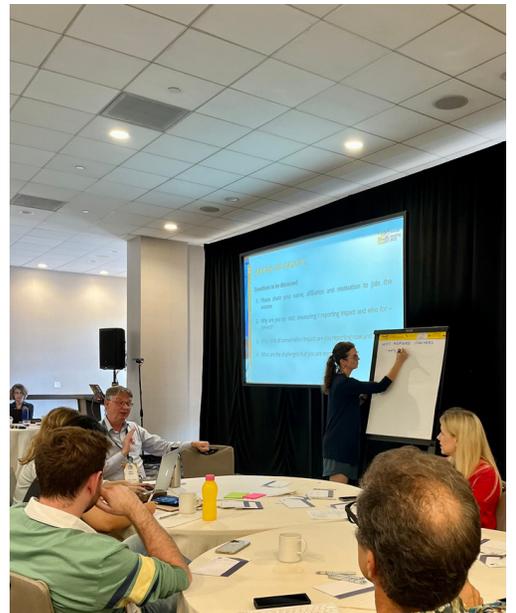
Summary

The development of conservation action plans for plants at various scales from the species to national level is a growing practice. As more and more organizations become involved in plant planning there is an opportunity to share experiences, tools, and to create collaborations amongst groups. This working group served as an open forum for discussion on current and future plant conservation planning work amongst different types of organizations. Participants of the working group heard presentations of examples of current plant conservation planning and related initiatives, including planning for trees in Kenya and Ghana, conservation gap analyses, US and Mexican oak conservation planning, cactus conservation planning in Chile, and plant conservation projects at the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance. The group then divided into smaller groups to discuss current plant conservation planning and action undertaken or planned at each institution and then reported back to the group.

Recommendations & Next Steps

1. Plant conservation planning resources and information about existing plant focused networks will be shared amongst the working group via email.
2. The conveners will explore the potential for an on-going working group in collaboration with Botanic Gardens Conservation International which could meet virtually on a regular basis to share experiences in and continue momentum for plant conservation planning.
3. Recommendation: Plant conservation planning examples and resources should be expanded upon on the CPSG website and future CPSG Annual Meetings should continue to have plant planning focused working groups with tangible interdisciplinary outputs.

The full working group report can be found [here](#).



CPSG's Planner Development Path

At the 2023 CPSG Annual Meeting, we celebrated the year's graduates from the CPSG Planner Development Path program.

The **CPSG Planner Development Path** is an 18-month program for a select group of individuals who train extensively in CPSG's conservation planning processes and tools. Each participant is paired with a CPSG mentor and supported through multiple real-world conservation planning processes. Congratulations to the class of 2023 for their hard work and dedication to the process!



Congratulations class of 2023!



Marina Somenzari,
Sao Paulo Zoo



Helen Taylor,
RZSS



Lauren Waller,
Endangered Wildlife Trust

2023 Ulysses S. Seal Award for Innovation in Conservation

Emeritus Professor Richard Frankham



It is with great pleasure that we announce that **Emeritus Professor Richard (Dick) Frankham** is the recipient of the **2023 Ulysses S. Seal Award for Innovation in Conservation**.

Prof. Frankham is a population geneticist whose pioneering work has made significant contributions to conservation biology and genetics, described as “a giant in the conservation genetics world” by colleagues.

Over the course of his career, Prof. Frankham held positions at the University of Chicago, Macquarie University, and Harvard University. He was awarded a MJD White Medal of the Genetics Society of Australasia in 2017 for his career contributions to conservation and evolutionary genetics, and a Whitley Book Award by the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales in 2019.

A focus of Prof. Frankham’s work has been population viability analysis (PVA), including demonstrating PVA’s predictive power and establishing a scientific basis for and improving default PVA values.

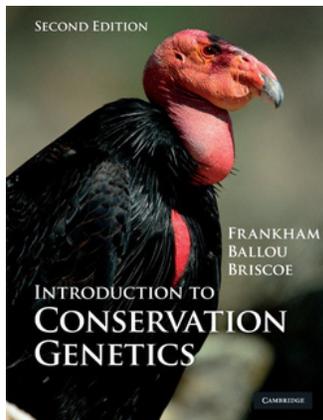


Image: Francois Gohier/Artscape
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Prof. Frankham led the writing of the first ever textbooks on conservation genetics. These textbooks remain widely used today. Additionally, he has published nearly 200 frequently cited research papers.

In his career, Prof. Frankham has played a major role in transforming conservation genetics into a rigorous scientific discipline with strong empirical support, textbooks, professional reference books, a journal, and many training courses. Congratulations Prof. Frankham!

THANK YOU

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 Leslie Kornstein Giving Tree
 Lion Country Safari, Inc.
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 Ed & Marie Plotka
 Racine Zoological Society
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 Acquari (UIZA)
 Jacqueline Vlietstra
 Wellington Zoo
 Zoo Heidelberg

\$250+

Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum
 Lee Richardson Zoo
 Ivan Rehak & Katarina Rehakova
 Roger Williams Park Zoo
 Steinhart Aquarium
 Zoo African Safari

\$100+

Alpenzoo Innsbruck
 Mazier Kazemi
 Steven J. Olson
 Kathryn Rodriguez-Clark
 Shanmuga Sundara Bharathi

\$20+

Mark Hallam
 Vicky Meretsky
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 Japan Wildlife Research Center
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 Taman Safari Indonesia
 Wilder Institute
 Zoo Outreach Organisation & WILD

The 2023 Annual Meeting proceedings are published by the Conservation Planning Specialist Group of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Species Survival Commission (SSC). The opinions and recommendations expressed in this report reflect the issues discussed and ideas expressed by the participants in the meeting and do not necessarily reflect the formal policies of the IUCN, its Commissions, its Secretariat, or its members.

CPSG

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