



ONLINE COURSE

Ex situ Conservation Assessment

ECA



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"[The Canadian Snake *ex situ* planning workshop] was an amazing event ... and should be a great conservation tool for this species."

Dr. J. Jesús Sigala Rodríguez, Co-Chair, IUCN Viper Specialist Group

INTRODUCTION

Today, species in the wild face increasing threats and challenges, such as habitat loss and climate change, that reduce and fragment wild populations. For many taxa, intensive population management may be required to ensure short-term viability while concurrent efforts are made to reduce or eliminate threats driving species decline. To prevent further decline (or extinction) and achieve population recovery, we need to consider all potential conservation options and partners – a concept known as the One Plan approach.

Ex situ conservation assessment (ECA) enables *in situ* and *ex situ* experts to evaluate if and how *ex situ* management should be a recommended component of a comprehensive conservation plan for a species. This process can be applied to all taxa (flora, fauna and fungi), regardless of current or historical *ex situ* management, and can be used to inform single or multi-species conservation or collection planning.

The IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group (CPSG) led the development of the [IUCN SSC Guidelines for the Use of Ex Situ Management for Species Conservation](#), published in 2014. ECA applies this five-step decision process to evaluate the value, feasibility and appropriateness of *ex situ* activities for the conservation of a species.

COURSE AIM

CPSG supports the One Plan approach to species conservation, in which all stakeholders and species experts consider all potential conservation tools to support species recovery. This course equips participants with the knowledge and skills to undertake a collaborative *ex situ* conservation assessment as part of this integrated approach.

Our target audiences include government wildlife agency staff, researchers, IUCN SSC Specialist Groups members, and other conservation professionals working in zoos, aquariums, botanic gardens, wildlife rescue centers, universities or field programs, and anyone involved in planning for the conservation and management of wildlife.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course will equip participants with an understanding of how to conduct an *ex situ* conservation assessment as part of conservation or collection planning.

By the end, participants will be able to:

- Apply the IUCN SSC Guidelines for the Use of *Ex Situ* Management for Species Conservation.
- Describe the broad diversity of potential *ex situ* conservation roles.
- Evaluate the value, feasibility, and risks of potential *ex situ* activities for a species.
- Design an *ex situ* assessment process that meets the conservation planning needs for the species.



"The plan produced following [the *ex situ* assessment workshop for prairie butterflies] is referenced constantly, and has provided a tremendous structure and transparency that our partners sincerely appreciate."

Erik Runquist, Conservation Biologist, Minnesota Zoo

CORE COURSE FACULTY



KATHY TRAYLOR-HOLZER

Has 30 years of experience in *ex situ* population management and conservation planning. During her 20 years as CPSG staff, she facilitated conservation planning or provided population modeling for about 400 taxa on six continents. She is a core contributor to the IUCN SSC's Guidelines on the Use of *Ex Situ* Management for Species Conservation, and has served as an instructor and mentor for *ex situ* conservation assessment processes.



KRISTIN LEUS

Is employed by Copenhagen Zoo and divides her time working for CPSG Europe and the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA). Her 25 years of experience in *ex situ* population management and species conservation planning include serving as a facilitator, population modeller or trainer for conservation planning workshops and courses (including *ex situ* conservation assessments) around the globe and providing scientific guidance to EAZA's *ex situ* programs and structures. She is a core contributor to the IUCN SSC's Guidelines on the Use of *Ex Situ* Management for Species Conservation.

CONTRIBUTORS

Field and *ex situ* wildlife managers, researchers, and other conservation practitioners from around the world provide real-world experiences through recorded interviews to broaden your exposure to *ex situ* conservation activities and planning processes.





"This [intensive management] workshop is a really important step in turning the tide of bird extinctions in Brazil."

Pedro Develey, CEO of SAVE Brasil

COURSE FORMAT

This online course consists of pre-recorded lectures, reading materials, and problem solving activities along with pre-recorded presentations by conservation practitioners around the globe to share their experiences. A knowledge check is provided at the end of each module.

COSTS

We are committed to making our courses as accessible as possible and, since 2026, we offer a fee structure **based on country of residence**. This approach allows us to keep our training accessible to conservation professionals around the world while sustaining course quality.

The cost for participating in this course is:

List 1: \$300

List 2: \$240

List 3: \$150

List 4: \$90

List 5: \$60

Find the country lists [here](#).

A limited number of training grants are available for this course. If you would like to discuss this opportunity, or have other questions, please contact: training@cpsg.org

COURSE DURATION

The course is comprised of seven modules, with **2-4 hours** of work per module, depending on how quickly you work through the material. Estimated total time commitment is about **20 hours** to complete the course.

COURSE DATES

Please [click here](#) for course registration. This course is offered continually and can be taken at any time and according to your own schedule. There is no closing date for applications as this is a self-paced course.

CERTIFICATION

Participants successfully completing the course will receive a Certificate of Completion.

Further information
training@cpsg.org