



Reducing Duplication and Increasing Impact in Critically Endangered Species Planning and Conservation

Participants

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Introduction:

We are facing an increasing challenge to protect biodiversity; conservation efforts and investment continue to be outweighed by species loss. The June 2015 IUCN Red List update revealed that of the species assessed (77,340) almost 30% (22,784) are classified as threatened. Knowing which species to prioritise and what actions to take can become an overwhelming task in itself, and when these decisions are made in isolation it can lead to duplication and reduced impact.

Many tools exist to help identify, prioritise and coordinate conservation effort; but it can be difficult for zoos, specialist groups and other conservation stakeholders to know which will best suit their needs. This workshop explored three tools that can help reduce duplication, prioritise and coordinate conservation efforts, and help increase impact:

1. **Long-term partnerships between IUCN Species Specialist Groups and Zoos** to help build a platform for collaborative planning and coordinated action.
2. **CBSG's Multi-species conservation action planning** to identify and facilitate conservation action across multiple species simultaneously to highlight similar needs and coordinate approaches.
3. **The Asian Species Action Partnership** as an example of a focused mechanism to catalyse and facilitate conservation actions specifically for Critically Endangered terrestrial vertebrates in South East Asia, as a global priority for biodiversity protection.

ASAP was the predominate focus for the workshop and an example was provided by Wildlife Reserve Singapore on their approach to aligning their conservation efforts with ASAP to help guide priorities and maximize their impact.

Amphibian Ark also discussed ASAP amphibians as an example of the challenges faced in assessing conservation need for the 7 species of Critically Endangered amphibians in Southeast Asia – many of which suffer from huge gaps in understanding and data.

IUCN Specialist Group – Zoo Partnerships

There is a long history of collaboration between the IUCN Species Survival Commission

Specialist Groups and Zoos; nowhere is this more evident than CBSG. These relationships often lead to diverse skills sharing and a high level of capacity for conservation planning and coordinated actions. In 2014 the IUCN Species Survival Commission employed a Director of Specialist Group Partnerships whose role is specifically to help build and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships between specialist groups, zoos, aquaria and botanic gardens internationally. This role is working with all 133 IUCN SSC specialist groups and the zoo community at four levels: the individual, organisation (ie. Individual zoos), TAGs and Associations to increase the mutual respect, collaboration and formal partnerships across these communities.

The working group discussed the role and considerations of these partnerships and identified a number of needs, challenges and opportunities.

Building Bridges on Four Levels



Partnerships Need:

- A genuine overlap in vision or project
- Regular revision to consider their relevance, new partners that could be included, focus and effectiveness
- To identify gaps & diversity of strengths – not just overlap
- Champions to drive them
- To be created ahead of action planning to facilitate collaboration and capacity as well as following action planning to focus partnership on projects and collaborative actions.

Partnership Challenges:

- Overcoming prejudices – including breaking down the false dichotomy between in-situ and ex-situ and SGs and Zoos. These are not disparate communities or efforts but rather continuums.
- Parking egos! and being realistic about competition

Opportunities:

- Greater integration of ex-situ efforts & needs in The IUCN Red List
- Creating a global database of field efforts and priorities
- Making zoo-based information more accessible to externals

Mutual benefits of collaborations



Partnerships between specialist groups and zoos are increasingly building capacity and generating momentum for conservation action planning that either focus on priority species within the taxa of the specialist groups' focus, or across multiple species simultaneously to identify species of greatest need and highest priorities for the partnership to focus on. Utilising CBSG's One Plan Approach and multi-species planning will become increasingly important for these partnerships.

Multi-species Planning

CBSG's One Plan approach is being increasingly applied on a single species basis for integrated conservation planning which spans in-situ and ex-situ measures and involves diverse stakeholder groups. However, many species groups or geographic regions suffer from linked threats and conversely can benefit from strategically coordinated conservation efforts. The One Plan approach can be applied at a multi-species level and one of its stated aims is to "Enhance global collaboration and communication in all aspects of species conservation planning and

implementation”.

CBSG ran a workshop at the recent IUCN SSC Leaders' Meeting 2015 on the opportunities, barriers and tools for multi-species planning and will continue to refine and lead multi-species planning approaches.

Multi-species planning can be focused on a particular geographic region; one of the highest global priorities for coordinated and increased conservation action is South East Asia. The Asian Species Action Partnership has been created to help provide a mechanism for achieving this.

Asian Species Action Partnership (ASAP)

ASAP is a programme coordinated by IUCN SSC on behalf of its member organisations to assist implementing agencies and their partners to:

As a matter of urgency, reverse the declines in the wild of Critically Endangered freshwater and land vertebrates in Southeast Asia

The purpose of this program is to help catalyse and coordinate conservation actions in this area of high, but rapidly declining, biodiversity. For many of the 161 Critically Endangered terrestrial and freshwater vertebrates in Southeast Asia, there are no (or very limited) conservation efforts, and where conservation efforts have been initiated they are often inadequate in scope and scale. There is an urgent need to raise awareness, coordinate action (especially linking in-situ and ex-situ approaches and increasing intensive management efforts) and garner greater political will. Without strategic and urgent action on all of these fronts many species in Southeast Asia will go extinct. It is clear that a business as usual approach is not enough.

The workshop discussed some of the major challenges and barriers and also the strengths of ASAP for increasing effective conservation in Southeast Asia.

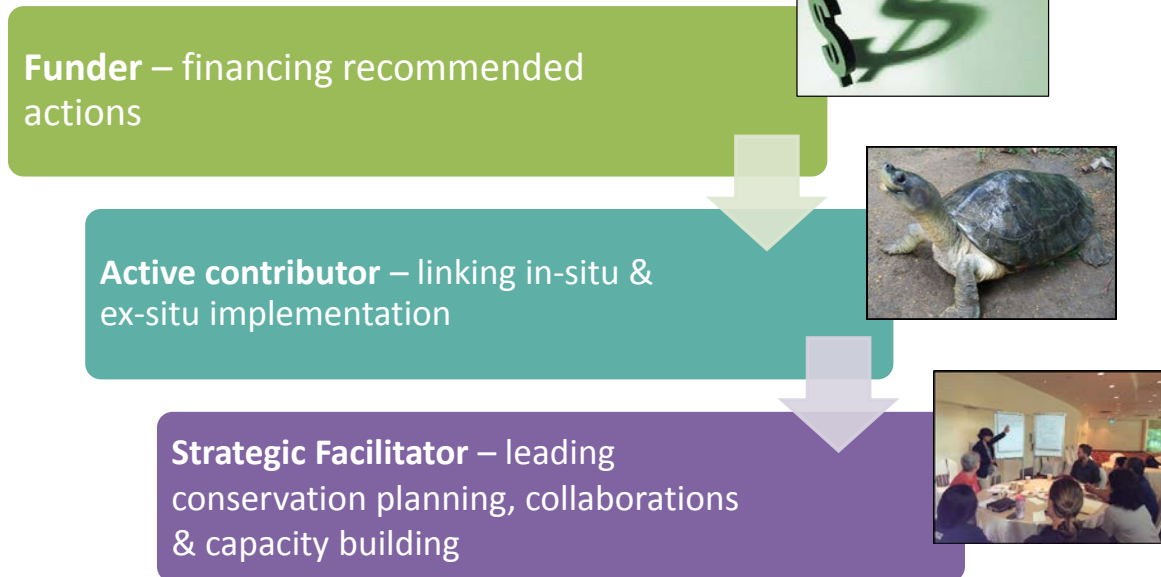
Challenges for ASAP:

- Engaging governments with strategic coordinated priorities
- Lack of local community ownership and capacity
- Cultural understandings often insufficient
- Lack of attention / resources allocated to non-charismatics
- Missing in-situ / ex-situ links

Strengths of ASAP:

- Strength of IUCN brand and multi-stakeholders to catalyse action
- Cross-border capacity for species action
- Garnering political will
- Building local capacity and conservation heroes
- Providing opportunity to guide or involve zoos in One Plan approach planning and action in critical conservation region

Opportunities to get involved:



As the momentum and work of ASAP grows there is an increasing need and expanding opportunities for zoos and aquaria to get involved or align their conservation efforts with ASAP. There are three main levels for zoos to get involved:

1. Using ASAP as a guide for prioritising funding investment on Southeast Asia species conservation projects,
2. Actively working with the ASAP networks to link in-situ and ex-situ approaches for assurance populations, awareness raising etc.
3. Becoming a strategic facilitator to lead or assist in conservation planning, collaboration and capacity building to identify and implement conservation needs of single or multi-species.

ASAP welcomes zoos and aquaria and other CBSG members to contact them to discuss opportunities to link conservation efforts, investment and skills to suit the needs of the particular zoo in a way that can lead to the greatest outcomes for species conservation in Southeast Asia.

Contacts:

ASAP Website:

https://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/species/our_work/asianspeciesactionpartnership/

ASAP Development Coordinator: Madhu Rao madhu.rao@iucn.org (general enquiries, proposals for working collaborations and details of how to engage with ASAP)

ASAP Chair: Lesley Dickie lesley.dickie@outlook.com

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