

Species Survival Commission (SSC)

Draft Mandate 2026–2029

1. Mission

In the intersessional period of 2026–2029, the Species Survival Commission (SSC) enables IUCN to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity of biodiversity, and to ensure that the use of species is equitable, sustainable and non-detrimental to the survival of species, through:

- the provision of knowledge on status and trends of species,
- developing policies and guidelines,
- facilitating conservation planning, and
- catalysing conservation action.

2. Vision

A just world that values and conserves nature through positive action to prevent the loss and aid recovery of diversity of life on Earth.

3. Objectives

For the intersessional period 2026–2029, SSC, working in collaboration with IUCN Members, National and Regional Committees, other Commissions, and the Secretariat, will pursue the following key objectives in helping to deliver IUCN's "One Programme" commitment:

- a. Network:** Enhance the SSC network and its alliances to help achieve global biodiversity targets.
- b. Assess:** Understand and inform the world about the status and trends of biodiversity.
- c. Plan:** Develop collaborative, inclusive and science-based conservation strategies, plans and policies for species within and beyond their natural ranges.
- d. Act:** Convene and mobilise conservation actions to improve the status of biodiversity.
- e. Communicate:** Drive strategic and targeted communications to enhance global conservation impact.

4. Programme Areas

The specific working priorities of SSC are derived from, and focused on, the IUCN Programme Areas, under which, SSC has Key Species Results (KSRs):

- KSR 1. Develop new and strengthen existing partnerships and sustainable funding mechanisms.
- KSR 2. Enhance the capacity of the SSC network and its partnerships.
- KSR 3. Enhance collaborations across and beyond IUCN to accomplish species conservation results.
- KSR 4. Collaborate with governments, IUCN Members and other stakeholders to achieve the 2022 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework targets.
- KSR 5. Improve biodiversity and conservation knowledge.
- KSR 6. Expand the coverage, quality and content of biodiversity assessments: The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™, Environmental Impact Classification for Alien Taxa, Climate Change Vulnerability, Assess to Plan, Green Status of Species, Species-focused Key Biodiversity Areas, Ex

situ Conservation Assessments, and other assessments undertaken by the SSC network.

KSR 7. Strengthen the Red List Index as a biodiversity indicator, at global and national scales.

KSR 8. Strengthen and expand species conservation planning efforts at local, national, regional and global scales.

KSR 9. Strengthen species conservation in national, regional and global policies.

KSR 10. Enhance biodiversity conservation action through the implementation of effective, collaborative and practical approaches.

KSR 11. Catalyse sustainable use practices to improve governance for people and nature.

KSR 12. Strengthen IUCN's species theme as a strong and credible source of biodiversity information for target audiences.

KSR 13. Increase the visibility of different taxa and species conservation through strategic and innovative communications that attract new audiences.

Under these KSRs, each SSC group, as well as the SSC Chair's Office and the IUCN Secretariat, will establish a set of measurable time-bound targets to be attained by the end of 2029, and will name a focal point responsible for each target. The indicators of these targets will be integrated to provide a measure of the progress and impact of SSC as a whole. These KSRs, indicators and targets will be published in the IUCN Species Strategic Plan 2026–2029. The SSC Chair's Office will be responsible for monitoring and reporting results, while working with the Secretariat, and where relevant with IUCN Members and partner organisations.

5. Structure

The Commission is led by the Commission Chair elected by the IUCN membership and a Deputy Chair appointed by the IUCN Council on the recommendation of the Chair. The Steering Committee of SSC is also appointed by the IUCN Council on the recommendation of the Chair in accordance with the IUCN Statutes and Regulations. The Steering Committee assists the Chair and Deputy Chair in overseeing and coordinating the activities of the Commission. The Steering Committee delegates certain aspects of its work to specially designated Committees, which report to the Chair and the Steering Committee on a regular basis. The bulk of the work of SSC is implemented through its Specialist Groups, Red List Authorities, Task Forces, and Action Partnerships. The roles of these entities are defined in the Bylaws of SSC.

6. Membership

Membership of SSC is conferred by becoming a member of one of the Commission's groups (e.g. Steering Committee, Committees, Specialist Groups, Red List Authorities, Task Forces, and Action Partnerships). Membership of these groupings is voluntary and by invitation. SSC seeks to engage cutting-edge experts in all disciplines relevant to the conservation and management of biodiversity – to the survival of species. It engages such people with due regard for diversity, be it in terms of gender, age, culture, language, nationality, ideologies and expertise. By design, SSC members do not hold a common view on most conservation-related issues. Rather, SSC cherishes its diversity and fosters open, respectful, rigorous and evidence-based debate among its members.