



The IUCN Species Survival Commission

QUARTERLY REPORT
JUNE 2019



Scimitar-horned Oryx, *Oryx dammah*, EW
Photo © Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD)



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is hard to express how important the upcoming Leaders' Meeting is for the network of SSC Specialist Groups, Task Forces, Committees and Stand-Alone Red List Authorities. This is their only opportunity to meet, every four years, as most of our leaders do not attend the World Conservation Congress. Their volunteer contribution to SSC occurs alongside very busy agendas and multiple commitments. Much of the learning of how to be a Chair happens on the job, supported by informal consultations with other Chairs and sharing experiences. The product of their work is often disseminated when a Red List update is published, masking the contribution of individual scientists among a large volume of new assessments. The Leaders' Meeting allows us to shine a light explicitly on all SSC Groups. It creates a space for networking, interacting and learning, discussing internal issues of how we function while examining the major conservation challenges that we face. But perhaps more importantly, the Meeting gives us a unique opportunity to celebrate the impact of our 9000-people-strong network,

Chusquea sp. Parque Nacional Guaramacal,
Estado Trujillo, Venezuela
Photo © David Southall

acknowledge the fundamental role of the SSC Leadership, and express our profound gratitude to Environmental Agency – Abu Dhabi for their generosity both in supporting the Leaders’ Meeting for the fourth time since 2008, and partnering directly with the Commission for nearly a decade.

A major advancement in managing and serving the SSC Network is reported on [page 11](#) by Claire Santer, Commission Support Unit Coordinator. She writes about the newly launched Commission System, which will streamline the process for applying to and renewing membership in the six Commissions, while complying with data protection and privacy regulations. At the end of every quadrennium, all Commission members are reappointed, a process coordinated by the Secretariat and the Chairs, mostly by hand. With the Commission System in place, not only will it be easier to keep the data updated, but also reassemble the membership swiftly.

Finally, our colleagues at IUCN’s SOS (Save Our Species) report on a creative and innovative initiative between Lacoste and IUCN. A special edition of the famous Lacoste polo shirt, but, instead of their characteristic crocodile, they featured 20 species from the IUCN Red List (10 in 2018 and 10 in 2019): 12 mammals, three birds, two reptiles, one amphibian, one fish and one insect. The campaign generated extensive interest from the media and the shirts sold out very quickly, opening the door to other similar campaigns in the future.

Resumen ejecutivo

Es difícil expresar lo importante que es la próxima Reunión de Líderes de CSE para la red de Grupos de Especialistas, Grupos de Tarea, Comités y Autoridades de Lista Roja Independientes. Esta es su única oportunidad para conocerse, cada cuatro años, ya que la mayor parte de nuestros líderes no asisten al Congreso Mundial de la Naturaleza. Su contribución voluntaria a CSE se compagina con agendas muy comprometidas y múltiples responsabilidades. Mucho del aprendizaje de cómo presidir un grupo ocurre en el hacer, con apoyo en consultas informales a otros Presidentes y el compartir de experiencias. El producto de su trabajo con frecuencia se divulga cuando se publica una actualización de Lista Roja, enmascarando la contribución de científicos individuales entre un vasto volumen de nuevas evaluaciones. La Reunión de Líderes nos permite reconocer a todos los grupos de CSE. Crea un espacio de articulación, interacción y aprendizaje, discutiendo aspectos internos de cómo funcionamos mientras examinamos los mayores retos de conservación que enfrentamos. Pero quizás de manera más importante, la Reunión nos brinda la oportunidad única de celebrar el impacto de nuestra impresionante red de 9000 personas, reconocer el rol fundamental de los líderes de CSE y expresar nuestro profundo agradecimiento hacia Environment Agency Abu Dhabi por su generosidad tanto al apoyar la Reunión de Líderes de CSE por cuarta ocasión desde 2008, como al mantener una alianza directa con la Comisión durante casi una década.

Un gran avance en la gestión y apoyo a la red de CSE es reportado por Claire Santer, Coordinadora de la Unidad de Apoyo a las Comisiones, en la [página 11](#). Ella escribe sobre el nuevo Sistema de Comisiones lanzado recientemente, el cual facilitará el proceso de postulaciones y renovaciones de la membresía de las seis comisiones, a la vez que cumple con regulaciones de privacidad y protección de datos. Al finalizar cada cuatrienio, todos los miembros de comisiones son renovados, un proceso coordinado por el Secretariado y los Presidentes de grupos, fundamentalmente manual. Con el Sistema de Comisiones no sólo será mucho más fácil mantener los datos actualizados sino también renovar la membresía de forma ágil.

Finalmente, nuestros colegas de UICN SOS (Save Our Species) reportan sobre una iniciativa creativa e innovadora entre Lacoste y UICN. Se trata de una edición especial de la famosa camisa tipo polo de Lacoste, pero en vez de su característico cocodrilo, incorporan 20 especies de la Lista Roja (10 en 2018 y 10 en 2019): 12 mamíferos, tres aves, dos reptiles, un anfibio, un pez y un insecto. La campaña despertó amplio interés en los medios y las franelas se agotaron muy rápidamente, abriendo la puerta a otras campañas similares en el futuro.

Résumé

Il est difficile d'exprimer l'importance de la participation des membres de réseau des groupes de spécialistes de la CSE, groupes de travail, des comités et des autorités indépendantes de la Liste Rouge à la prochaine réunion des Dirigeants. C'est leur seule occasion de se réunir tous les quatre ans, car la plupart de nos Dirigeants ne participent pas au Congrès Mondial de la Nature. Leur contribution bénévole à la CSE ne passe pas inaperçue, devant leurs calendriers très chargés et d'engagements multiples. Une grande partie de la formation du Président de la CSE se déroule sur le tas, appuyée par des consultations informelles avec d'autres Présidents, ce qui aboutit au partage d'expériences. Le fruit de leur travail est souvent mis en exergue lors de la mise à jour de la Liste Rouge, masquant ainsi la contribution individuelle des scientifiques face à un grand nombre de nouvelles évaluations. La réunion des Dirigeants nous permet ainsi de mettre explicitement en lumière tous les groupes de la CSE. Il crée un espace de réseautage, d'interaction et d'apprentissage, discutant de problèmes internes liés à notre fonctionnement tout en examinant les principaux problèmes de conservation auxquels nous sommes confrontés. Mais peut-être plus important encore, cette réunion nous offre une occasion unique de célébrer l'impact de notre réseau de 9 000 personnes, de reconnaître le rôle fondamental du leadership de la CSE et d'exprimer notre profonde gratitude à la Environmental Agency d'Abu Dhabi pour leur générosité, car ils soutiennent non seulement pour la quatrième fois la réunion des Dirigeants depuis 2008, mais aussi continuent de directement collaborer avec la Commission voilà près de dix ans.

Claire Santer; Coordinatrice de l'unité d'appui de la Commission, présente un progrès important dans la gestion et le service du réseau CSE est rapporté à la [page 11](#). Elle écrit à propos du système de commissions récemment lancé, et comment ce système simplifiera le processus de candidature et de renouvellement des membres des six commissions, tout en respectant les réglementations en matière de protection des données et de la vie privée. À la fin de chaque période quadriennale, tous les membres de la Commission sont réélus, sous la coordination du Secrétariat et des Présidents, essentiellement par un vote à main levée. Avec le système de commissions en place, non seulement il deviendra plus facile garder les données à jour, mais également de réassembler plus rapidement les membres desdits commissions.

Enfin, nos collègues de l'UICN SOS - Sauvons Nos espèces font état d'une innovation et nouvelle initiative entre Lacoste et l'UICN. Une édition spéciale de la célèbre chemise polo Lacoste a été mise en circulation, et cette dernière, au lieu d'afficher le fameux crocodile, elle fait honneur à vingt espèces de la Liste Rouge de l'UICN (dix en 2018 et dix en 2019): douze mammifères, trois oiseaux, deux reptiles, un amphibien, un poisson et un insecte. Cette nouvelle campagne a depuis suscité un vif intérêt de la part des médias et ces tee-shirts se sont vendus très rapidement, ouvrant ainsi la porte à d'autres campagnes similaires à l'avenir.

RECENT ACTIVITIES



CONFERENCES

WHERE THE SSC CHAIR'S
OFFICE ATTENDED OR
OFFERED A LECTURE



MEETINGS

WHERE THE SSC CHAIR'S
OFFICE PARTICIPATED



INTERVENTIONS

LETTERS SENT TO
GOVERNMENTS OR
COMPANIES TO
PROPOSE ACTIONS FOR
SPECIES AND HABITATS
UNDER THREAT





Conferences and meetings

CONFERENCES

(Jon Paul Rodríguez, JPR)

- *Saving species from extinction, one at a time*. Conservation International. 24 April, Washington, DC, USA. (JPR)
- *Past, Present and Future: IUCN Red List of Ecosystems*. Seminar on IUCN Red List of Ecosystems, the Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) Standard, and Critical Habitat. 26 April, World Bank, Washington, DC, USA. (JPR)
- *Saving species from extinction, one at a time*. Conservation Leadership Lecture. 09 May, Churchill College, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, U.K.

MEETINGS

(Jon Paul Rodríguez, JPR; Domitilla Raimondo, DR; Rachel Hoffmann, RH; Kira Mileham, KM; Bibiana Sucre, BS; Simeon Bezeng, RB; Robert Bullock; Gabriela Lischtestein, GL; Pricelia Tumenta, PT)

- *Partnership Meetings*. Oceanario de Lisboa. April. Lisboa, Portugal. (RB)
- *Owston's Civet Conservation Planning Workshop*. 01– 05 April, Hanoi, Vietnam. (RH)
- *IUCN South Africa National Committee Meeting*. 25 April 2019, Endangered Wildlife Trust, Johannesburg, South Africa. (SB)

- *Conservation Planning Specialist Group Strategic Planning Meeting*. 06–08 May, San Diego, USA. (RH)
- *25th Meeting of the Red List Committee*. 07–10 May 2019, Cambridge, U.K. (DR, JPR, SB)
- *Meeting at the World Association of Zoos and Aquarium (WAZA) on global collaboration with SSC*. 13–14 May 2019, Barcelona, Spain. (JPR, KM, RB)
- *Key Biodiversity Planning Meeting*. 20–21 May, Harare, Zimbabwe. (SB)
- *Key Biodiversity Areas Training Workshop*. 27–31 May, Maputo, Mozambique. (SB)
- *IUCN Regional Conservation Fora: Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean*. 27–31 May, Antigua, Guatemala. (GL)
- *Mapping Biodiversity Priorities: international learning exchange workshop and the 16th South Africa National Biodiversity Planning Forum*. 03–07 June, Northern Drakensberg, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. (SB)
- *Meeting with Staff of the IUCN Global Species Programme*. 17 June 2019, Cambridge, U.K. (JPR)
- *TRAFFIC Board of Trustees Meeting*. 18–19 June 2019, Cambridge, U.K. (JPR)
- *Red List Training Workshop*, 18–21 June 2019, Maputo, Mozambique. (SB)
- *IUCN Regional Conservation Fora: North Africa*. 24–26 June, Monastir, Tunisia. (PT)

INTERVENTIONS

High-level interventions address conservation issues of serious concern, through letters to governments or companies which highlight species and habitats under threat, and propose actions on their behalf. Each letter provides the necessary background and technical information, and a thorough review process led by Rachel Hoffmann, engaging the appropriate Specialist Groups, experts across the network, the IUCN regional offices and IUCN programmes.

- *Conservation status of the Termit and Tin-Toumma National Natural Reserve*: On 14 May 2019, Inger Andersen (IUCN Director General), Kathy MacKinnon (Chair, IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas) and Jon Paul Rodríguez, sent a letter to E. H. Monsieur Almoustapha Garba, Minister of the Environment, Urban Sanitation and Sustainable Development regarding the of Niger, National Nature Reserve of Termit and Tin-Toumma (RNNTT), particularly with regard to concerns of the long-term integrity of the reserve and the survival of its residual population of Addax antelopes (*Addax nasomaculatus*). According to our information, the institutional arrangements and partnerships under way for the management of the Reserve could be an obstacle maintaining the integrity of the protected area, and to prevent any negative impact on its remarkable biodiversity. The Addax in the RNNTT are likely to be the last remaining wild individuals of the species on a global scale. This alarming situation requires the development and implementation of an emergency rescue plan, in accordance with the *Plan d'action régional pour l'addax et la gazelle dama 2018-2022*. There may be a need to refocus management on the survival of the remaining Addax, both through *in situ* and *ex situ* measures. These include, but are not limited to a programme for rescuing and relocating some individuals to ensure that the genetic stock is not lost. The letter expressed IUCN's willingness to organize a mission, with the support of the Ministry and other relevant authorities, to evaluate the various possible options and propose recommendations. This mission would include experts from the World Commission on Protected Areas regarding the global status of the reserve, its governance, management and security, as well as scientists from the SSC Antelope Specialist Group.



SSC Leaders will gather in Abu Dhabi

The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) in alliance with the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD) is organizing the Fourth SSC Leaders Meeting to be held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, from October 6th to 9th, 2019.

Eleven years after the first meeting was held —2008—, the Leaders' meeting has been consolidated as a central feature of planning, thinking and cooperating within SSC and with the other components of the Union and beyond.

With an expected attendance of over 350 people, the Fourth IUCN Species Survival Commission Leaders Meeting will gather the leaders of SSC Specialist Groups, Task Forces, Stand Alone Red List Authorities and Committees, the SSC Steering Committee, delegates from the leadership of other IUCN Commissions, staff from IUCN Headquarters, Regional Offices, as well as Red List and Key Biodiversity Area partners, EAD leaders, the SSC Chair's Office and its partners, along other guests.

“This meeting will be an opportunity for the leadership of the SSC to meet and to network, to forge new collaborations and build on existing ones, to learn new things and to pass experience and knowledge on”

Jon Paul Rodríguez, SSC Chair.

An ambitious agenda befitting the caliber of the group is being developed to strengthen and empower our network to deliver the Assess-Plan-Act cycle, with an emphasis on conservation action. The meeting will be four productive and intense days of networking, articulation, learning from past experiences as well as improving skills, exploring how best to measure the effectiveness of SSC actions on biodiversity conservation and apply the outcomes of that process to improve and guide our future work, in the context of the IUCN Programme, the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Targets and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The sessions planned include plenaries to learn from success stories in species conservation, share best practices in group function and effectiveness, revisit the pathway towards achieving the Barometer of Life target, discuss how to expand conservation planning, and envision where we want to take the SSC network in 20 years. Training sessions will be carried to strengthen capacities on Red List assessments, contributing to policymaking, external communications, grant writing and fundraising, building partnerships, conflict resolution, and using the new Commission System for membership management, among others. Multiple symposia and discussion sessions will cover a broad diversity of topics such as developing the 2021-2024 IUCN Species Strategic Plan, engaging on international treaties such as CBD, CITES and CMS, IUCN Knowledge Products, taxonomic discussions, sustainable use, wildlife health, increasing SSC member diversity, engagement and collaboration across IUCN, funding mechanisms, among others. The meeting is also keeping flexible time slots to deepen discussions arising during the meeting.

A forum on challenges for Arabian species conservation is being planned to gather experts on Arabian species conservation from SSC, EAD, government agencies, universities, IUCN Member institutions and IUCN regional offices. This event will be open to the public and will focus on identifying current and most critical threats to Arabian species and discussing proposals to face them. A key outcome will be a document of recommendations for species conservation in the region.

A draft version of the agenda will soon be shared with all SSC leaders to gather feedback and continue to develop it.

“The Fourth IUCN Species Survival Commission Leaders’ Meeting will provide an invaluable opportunity to strengthen our collaborations and teamwork for improving the status of species worldwide”

Jon Paul Rodríguez, SSC Chair.



Scimitar-horned Oryx, *Oryx dammah*, EW
Photo © Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD)

"We call on all nations and biodiversity-related agreements to step up efforts to prevent extinctions and improve the status of wild species," expressed the attendees of the Third SSC Leaders Meeting (2015) in a [declaration statement](#). During the Fourth SSC Leaders Meeting it is planned to produce a declaration emphasizing conservation action for species as a shared responsibility, and calling for countries to adopt and implement a strong post-2020 global species target.

The Leaders Meeting is also an occasion to celebrate the volunteerism of the network. As part of this goal, the SSC Awards will be delivered during the meeting, to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of SSC volunteers to global species conservation and to inspire and encourage them to continue their vital work.



The IUCN Commission System

a tool to help SSC leaders manage
their membership

Claire Santer

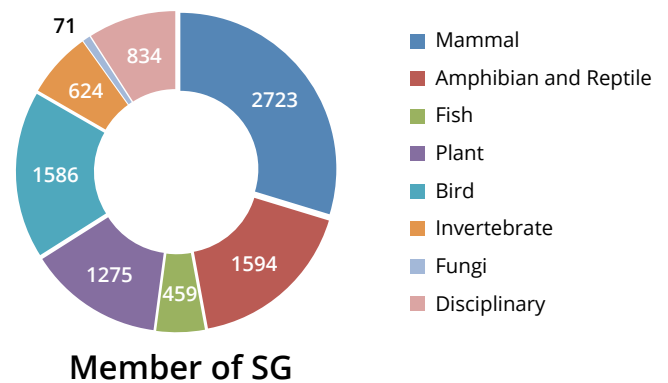
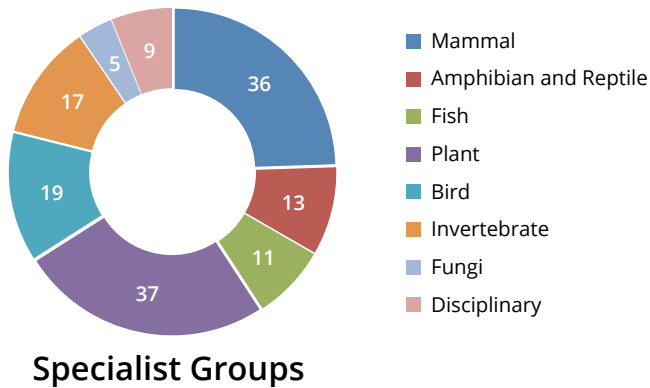
Coordinator, Commission Support Unit

Leaders of SSC Groups will be happy to hear that Phase I of the Commission System has been operational since the end of April 2019. It includes a function enabling SSC Chairs to invite and validate their members directly in the IUCN system —much quicker, easier, and less prone to error than the previous manual exchange of lists of names and addresses with IUCN HQ.

A huge (and necessary) plus is that the system is compliant with current data protection and privacy regulation. SSC members can be reassured that IUCN is taking care with their personal data.

The SSC network

By the middle of the year, the SSC network consists of 147 active Committees, Specialist Groups, Task Forces and Stand-Alone Red List Authorities. Jointly, these groups comprise 9,166 registered members.



How does it work?

The SSC Group Chairs are at the heart of the Commission System as they remain the drivers of SSC membership. All SSC members must be invited to join by the leader of a Specialist Group, Task Force, Committee or Stand-alone Red List Authority leader.

- Each SSC Group is identified by a unique code or “token”. This is shared with anyone invited to join the group.
- Every Commission member has an online account and completes a personal profile in the system. They can then apply to join the IUCN Commission(s) of choice using the relevant form(s) from a drop down list. The SSC form is very simple—all they must do is enter the group identification token and accept the standard conditions.
- In one click, the Group leader simply validates the individual in the system and the person is added to the membership of the group.
- The personal profile is common to all SSC Groups and all other IUCN Commissions so need only be completed once.



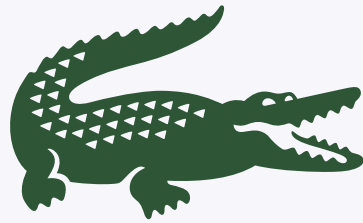
Need more information?

Information about the system (including the group “token”) was sent to all SSC leaders in April. You may have missed this, in which case:

1. You should add IUCN Commissions to your safe sender list or follow the instructions relevant to your email provider on how to whitelist IUCN Commissions
2. Contact IUCN Commissions with your question/request using this [form](#)

Looking ahead

The Commission System forms a solid foundation for membership management as we move forward to the [IUCN World Conservation Congress, Marseille](#) (11-19 June 2020). Further phases of development will address requirements for subgroup management, group communication, reporting, search, and of course membership renewal after Marseille 2020, according to agreed priorities and resources available.



**SAVE
OUR
SPECIES.**



Save Our Species
Photo © Lacoste

IUCN SOS

Teaming up with Lacoste to champion awareness of threatened species conservation

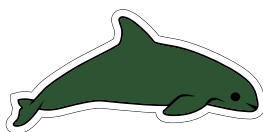
While each species faces a number of particular pressures leading to extinction risk, all are in need of increased funding to help ensure their long-term survival. The Lacoste X IUCN SOS partnership really showcases how business can make a difference by highlighting to new audiences the urgent need to protect wildlife and nature.

In February 2018, IUCN's SOS – Save Our Species launched a three-year partnership with French global fashion design company Lacoste SA. The objective is to transform public awareness and engagement in species conservation action through outreach campaigns leveraging the brand's creativity combined with support for conservation action projects on-the-ground targeting species highlighted by the awareness campaign.



The first and second awareness-raising campaigns in 2018 and 2019 respectively, each produced ten limited edition polo-shirt designs, where the iconic Lacoste crocodile made space for each of ten different threatened species. These species were selected from the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ with the help of species experts in the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC). The challenge was to strike a balance between promoting rare species perilously close to extinction, with a positive message for the general public about extinction. The message was essentially that conservation action can make a difference to the survival prospects of these and other species and supporting IUCN is a good way to make that happen because of its unique competency in species conservation. The number of shirts for each species corresponded to the number of known individuals remaining in the wild. Both campaigns featured different species of mammals, reptiles, amphibians and birds to highlight the diversity of wildlife in need of conservation. “Featuring an invertebrate and a freshwater fish in the 2019 campaign was a nice way to highlight species taxonomic diversity and sensitize people that amazing species come in all sorts of shapes and sizes”, says Simon Bradley, Communications & Business Engagement Manager, IUCN’s Global Species and Key Biodiversity Areas Programme.

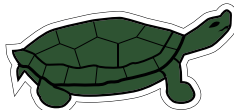
The ten threatened species featured in 2018 included:



THE VAQUITA
(*Phocoena sinus*)



THE KAKAPO
PARROT
(*Strigops habroptila*)



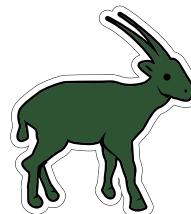
THE BURMESE
ROOFED TURTLE
(*Batagur trivittata*)



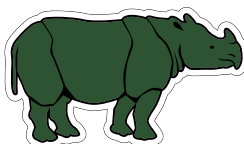
THE CALIFORNIA
CONDOR
(*Gymnogyps californianus*)



THE NORTHERN
SPORTIVE LEMUR
(*Lepilemur septentrionalis*)



THE SAOLA
(*Pseudoryx nghetinhensis*)



THE JAVAN RHINO
(*Rhinoceros sondaicus*)



THE SUMATRAN
TIGER
(*Panthera tigris ssp. sumatrae*)



THE CAO VIT
GIBBON
(*Nomascus nasutus*)



THE ANEGADA
GROUND IGUANA
(*Cyclura pinguis*)

The ten threatened species featured in 2019 included:



Beyond the connection between Lacoste's 85-year old logo (a crocodile) and the work of IUCN SOS protecting threatened species, there was a good fit in terms of shared objectives and vision. The campaign aimed to promote awareness and interest in species by engaging younger audiences who will influence the policies and spending patterns of tomorrow as well as the zeitgeist of today. Recently Lacoste has positioned itself more prominently with younger audiences through association with artists and other creative partnerships, as well as enhanced presence on social media channels such as Instagram and SnapChat, for example. New channels, messages and formats like these social media platforms, can help younger people engage with and even help to write the story about saving species in the 21st Century. This youth engagement will be key to future conservation outreach efforts.



These actions in coordination with sustained efforts by other business sectors including the financial and technological sectors for example, alongside continued international governmental cooperation on protecting species from extinction can create the support and resources needed to shift the Red List Index from decline to recovery instead. Such a cultural shift requires broad societal participation over time, fueled by supporting communications. The Lacoste X IUCN SOS campaign is a great example of pioneering that change through an inspiring and successful campaign. That is has also generated significant interest from other potential partners already, suggesting that the timing is right for species conservation to step into the limelight of people's daily consciousness.

If you are interested in collaborating with IUCN SOS, please get in touch via email at saveourspecies@iucn.org

SPONSORS AND PARTNERS





SSC

Species Survival Commission



IUCN SSC QUARTERLY REPORT / JUNE 2019

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