

Annual Report

2018



The IUCN SSC Asian Species Action Partnership (ASAP) was created to focus urgent attention on the species at highest risk of extinction in Southeast Asia. It recognises that Southeast Asia is a critical region that without more serious conservation intervention and immediate action, is likely to see the demise of much of its unique biodiversity.

ASAP aims to avert extinctions of Critically Endangered land and freshwater vertebrates found in Southeast Asia (ASAP species), and catalyse conservation action for species recovery.

Convened by IUCN SSC, ASAP brings stakeholders together for collective action for the conservation of ASAP species, and currently has 80 Partners signed up to the initiative.



Indochinese Box Turtle *Cuora galbinifrons* © Roland Wirth

OUR LATEST NUMBERS

The year 2018 has been an exciting one for ASAP. The Partnership has grown to include 80 Partners, each delivering on the conservation of ASAP species. Our new strategy sets a clear direction for the next five-years towards achieving our vision of secure and thriving wild populations, with ASAP species and Partners at its core. We're also thrilled to have grown as a team enabling us to develop closer ties with Partners and bringing more attention to the needs of ASAP species.

The species crisis taking place in Southeast Asia is showing no signs of slowing down, and we're encouraged to see so many regional and international organisations investing an increasing amount of time and resources to save species on the brink.

The international conservation community came together to focus on Southeast Asia during the 2018 IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group annual meeting. The event put a spotlight on the extreme challenges being faced by wildlife in this vital region.

ASAP exists to ensure the long-term survival of the most threatened species in the region and we are excited to continue supporting our Partners in 2019.

Nerissa Chao
Director, ASAP



15 NEW PARTNERS

in 2018, bringing the total ASAP Partners to 80

8/10 MATCHES

80% of matches made between ASAP Partners and other bodies resulted in funding or improved technical ability



>50 PROPOSALS



The Secretariat has provided technical reviews for at least 50 proposals

\$500,000



More than US\$500,000 has been leveraged for ASAP species through matchmaking and connections



SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Vietnamese Pond Turtle *Mauremys annamensis* © WRS

IUCN Red List Workshop for Asian Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles

Asian tortoises and freshwater turtles include some of the rarest and most threatened species on earth. The ongoing trade in wild-caught turtles and turtle products for consumption, traditional medicines and the pet trade, leaves many species on the brink of extinction.

The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ provides the most comprehensive assessments of global conservation status of species and is an important tool for conservation planning, management and decision-making. Many of the tropical Asian tortoise and freshwater turtle Red List assessments were carried out more than 10 years ago.

ASAP co-organised a Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Red List workshop with the IUCN SSC Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group to update these accounts and help focus conservation efforts on urgently needed actions. The workshop was supported by Wildlife Reserves Singapore (WRS), Chester Zoo, Nordens Ark, Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund, Synchronicity Earth and Turtle Conservation Fund, and hosted by WRS.

89 tropical Asian tortoise and freshwater turtle species were assessed during the workshop and the results will be published in 2019 on the IUCN Red List website.



© WRS



SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

White-shouldered Ibis *Pseudibis davisoni* © Roland Wirth

Helmeted Hornbill *Rhinoplax vigil* Conservation

The Helmeted Hornbill's unique solid casque is highly prized for carved jewellery and ornaments. The growing demand for these products over recent years has led to escalated poaching of wild populations.

Recognising this growing crisis, the species was uplisted as Critically Endangered in 2015 on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. Furthermore, a CITES Resolution passed at the CoP 17, called for the development of an Action Plan for the conservation of the Helmeted Hornbill, under the auspices of IUCN SSC ASAP.

In response, ASAP, the Helmeted Hornbill Working Group, Hornbill Research Foundation, Wildlife Conservation Society, Birdlife

International, Wildlife Reserves Singapore and Sarawak Forestry Corporation co-organised a workshop to develop a Conservation Strategy and Action Plan to ensure the survival of the Helmeted Hornbill across its range.

The workshop was facilitated by the IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group (CPSG) and involved more than 30 organisations. The 10-year Helmeted Hornbill Conservation Strategy and Action Plan was officially launched in Bangkok in August. The plan sets a clear path for delivering conservation action, including tackling trafficking and trade, demand reduction and behaviour change, habitat protection and enforcement, and community engagement.

Mapping conservation effort

An analysis of current conservation effort for ASAP species is underway in the countries with the highest number of ASAP species: Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam. Governing Council members Dr Mirza Kusri and Dr Ha Thang Long/GreenViet are leading on this for Indonesia and Vietnam respectively, and we will carry out similar work for the Philippines in early 2019.

This work will provide data on which organisations are working to conserve each ASAP species. It will also help to identify important gaps in effort to enable more targeted approaches for those species with lower (or no) conservation attention.



SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Mekong Giant Catfish *Pangasianodon gigas* © WRS

Strengthening capacity

Conservationists need the necessary skills to design and implement effective conservation solutions aimed at the recovery and conservation of threatened species. Equipping conservationists with the necessary skills and enhancing overall organisational capacity is a crucial step to more impactful ASAP species conservation.

Building targeted capacity in countries where ASAP species occur will ensure that the individuals and organisations best placed to implement conservation of threatened species are able to deal with the complex conservation challenges they face.

ASAP is carrying out a capacity and training needs assessment to identify the current capacity development and training opportunities and major gaps for achieving ASAP species conservation.

From this, we will develop the most appropriate approach for ASAP to support and strengthen individual and organisational capacity and support the next generation of conservation leaders in Southeast Asia.

Freshwater Fish

Freshwater fish make-up a significant proportion of ASAP species, yet few receive the conservation attention they need.

ASAP became an institutional partner to the newly formed Shoal initiative which aims to engage a wide range of organisations for freshwater species conservation, particularly fish. Both Shoal and ASAP will raise the profile of these neglected species, focus attention and efforts to the conservation of the most threatened species and increase funding for targeted conservation efforts to avert species extinctions.

The first formal Shoal meeting was held in London in January and our Species Advisor presented on the ASAP initiative, drawing attention to the Critically Endangered freshwater fishes in Southeast Asia.

Advising organisations

The ASAP Secretariat continues to provide tailored support to relevant stakeholders. Through our Species Advisor, we have been able to provide largely behind-the-scenes technical support and advice, as well as linking individuals or organisations to advance the conservation of a particular ASAP species.



SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Sunda Pangolin *Manis javanica* © WRS

ASAP Ex-Situ Working Group

For many ASAP species, in-situ conservation action alone will not be adequate to ensure recovery. The ASAP Ex-Situ Working Group (ESWG) was created to identify and catalyse ex-situ actions that would help avert species extinctions. The ESWG is currently co-chaired by Dr Sonja Luz from WRS and Danny de Man from the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA).

Nearly 70% of ASAP species are not managed in captive facilities, and fewer than 20% of those that are in captivity are considered to have ex-situ programmes well integrated into conservation

programmes/action plans. Initial activities of the ESWG have included engaging stakeholders both within the region and internationally, with presentations at the Global Joint Taxon Advisory Groups (TAG) Chairs meeting, EAZA Conservation Forum and South East Asian Zoos Association (SEAZA).

Workshops have been held with the SEAZA Conservation Committee, at the Global Joint TAG Chair meeting and at the IUCN CPSC Annual Conference to start to identify ex-situ management needs for ASAP species and identify ASAP species to focus initial efforts on.

Partnership and Communication Strategy

The ASAP Partnership and Communication Strategy will be finalised in the first quarter of 2019. The Partnership component addresses the following needs:

- Increasing the number of organisations and projects committed to conserving ASAP species
- Increasing the number of ASAP species that have effective conservation

- Supporting ASAP Partners to strengthen conservation action for ASAP species.

ASAP communications will focus on raising awareness of ASAP species conservation needs with the aim of increasing conservation action, improving the opportunities for sharing between ASAP stakeholders and raising the profile of ASAP Partners' work on ASAP species.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Javan Green Magpie *Cissa thalassina* © Cikananga Conservation Breeding Centre

Outreach and events

This year the IUCN SSC CPSG Annual Meeting was held in Bangkok, Thailand, with the ASAP theme "Towards Zero Extinction in Southeast Asia". The ASAP Director presented on "Species on the brink: enhancing the impact of the Asian Species Action Partnership" during the plenary session, and three ASAP themed workshops were held.



© Zoological Park Organization Thailand (ZPO)

The first workshop, "Planning to Act on ASAP species: how do we best support those charged with getting things done", looked at:

- A better understanding of the links between planning and implementation: barriers to successful implementation
- Support needed to increase effectiveness of individuals driving species conservation
- Elements that influence successful implementation of a plan involving multiple organisations.

The second workshop, "Ex-situ management of ASAP species", looked at understanding the ex-situ management needs of ASAP species. The third workshop, "Investigating patterns of international wildlife trade in ASAP species", looked at CITES trade data to identify patterns of international trade in ASAP species to identify species that may be illegally laundered as captive-bred. These discussions provided a wealth of information that will be used to guide ASAP activities.

Communicating to a wider audience

ASAP has continued sharing funding opportunities, species news and other relevant information directly with Partners and through online channels such as our website, and Twitter. The website continues to be improved and we have successfully grown our Twitter follower numbers by more than 120%, increasing our reach and communicating with more people about ASAP species.

Over the next year we will continue to improve our communications with Partners and other stakeholders, highlighting the work of ASAP Partners and the needs of ASAP species.



Visayan Warty Pig *Sus cebifrons* © Chester Zoo

ASAP STRATEGY 2018-2023

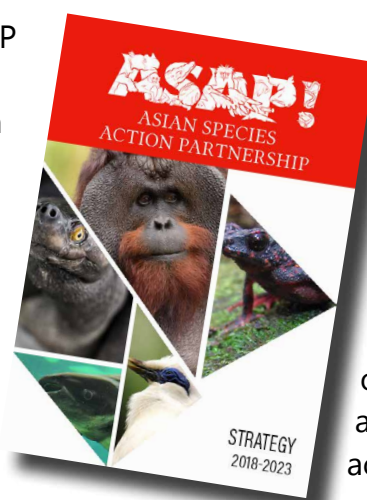
The ASAP 2018-2023 Strategy outlines how ASAP will address the challenges, draw attention to the urgent needs of these species, and catalyse action for ASAP species recovery.

The strategic plan was developed with input on the appropriate direction and activities of ASAP from ASAP Partners and other stakeholders relevant to the conservation of ASAP species.

The strategy is broken down into four key areas of intervention:

1. Create an enabling environment to catalyse effective conservation action for ASAP species
2. Increase financial resources available for conservation of ASAP species
3. Strengthen regional conservation capacity and leadership for ASAP species conservation
4. Raise the profile of ASAP species to promote their conservation.

The strategy will be officially launched in 2019.



ASAP SECRETARIAT

The ASAP Secretariat continues to be led by Nerissa Chao, ASAP Director, with Will Duckworth and Madhu Rao continuing in their Advisory roles as Species Advisor and Strategy Advisor respectively.

In July 2018, Vicki Guthrie joined the team to lead on the communications and partnership development. As Communications and Partnership Manager, Vicki works to increase our ability to raise the profile and conservation needs of ASAP species, as well as being able to engage more directly with ASAP Partner organisations and provide tailored support.






ASAP GOVERNING COUNCIL

The ASAP Governing Council continues to be chaired by Dr Simon Stuart on behalf of IUCN SSC.

Both the annual Secretariat and Governing Council meetings were held in Singapore at the beginning of December to review progress and approve the 2019 workplan and activities.

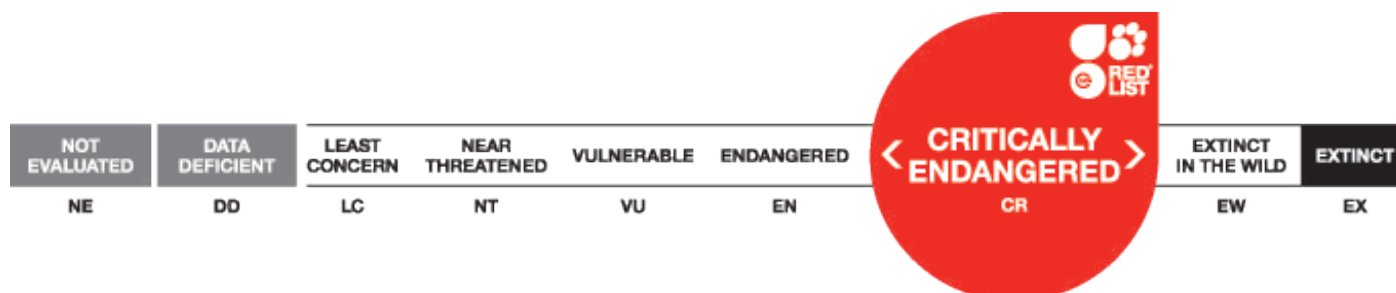
SPECIES NUMBERS

Bleeding Toad *Leptophryne cruentata* © Muhammad Yazid

		Total number of ASAP species	Additional species from the 2018 Red List update
	Amphibians	14	4
	Birds	55	1
	Fishes	48	0
	Mammals	41	2
	Reptiles	37	13
	Total	195	+20

Following the latest publication of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ in November 2018, there are currently 195 ASAP species.

All ASAP species are listed as Critically Endangered by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ one step away from extinction.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank all the organisations and individuals who have supported ASAP over the past year. A special thanks to Wildlife Reserves Singapore as the Host organisation to the ASAP Secretariat and the major financial contributor to the initiative.

To all organisations that have contributed to the core costs of the ASAP Secretariat, we are extremely grateful: IUCN SSC through their partnership with the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi, European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA), Global Wildlife Conservation (GWC), Synchronicity Earth through their partnership with the Taiwan Forestry Bureau, TRAFFIC, WCS and an anonymous donor.

We also thank Croeni Foundation and Pixel Ninja for their continued support with our website.

The conservation of ASAP species would not be possible without the continued dedication and innovative approaches of ASAP Partners, along with the donors who support their work. We look forward to continuing to support our Partners and helping to increase their vital conservation work for ASAP species.

ASAP Governing Council:

Simon Stuart (Chair on behalf of IUCN SSC), Sonja Luz (WRS), Alessandro Badalotti (IUCN ARO), Mirza Kusrini (Bogor Agricultural University), Myfanwy Griffith (EAZA), Barney Long (GWC), Ha Thang Long (GreenViet), Kanitha Krishnasamy (TRAFFIC) and Colin Poole (WCS).

The ASAP Secretariat is hosted by:

ASAP is an IUCN SSC initiative:

Wildlife Reserves Singapore Group



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