



ASIAN SPECIES
ACTION PARTNERSHIP



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

MESSAGE FROM SIMON STUART
Chair of ASAP Governing Council,
representing IUCN SSC

2020 marks a critical time for biodiversity. Ten years ago, the 194 countries that form the Convention on Biological Diversity agreed on 20 objectives, the Aichi targets, to end biodiversity loss and restore ecosystems. It was a time of optimism in conservation.

A decade on, and most targets have not been met - we are still seeing species declining at a devastating rate. The latest Living Planet Index found that vertebrate populations declined by 60% between 1975 and 2014, and this shows no sign of reversing. For those of us working in conservation, this can be discouraging.

But on the other hand, the urgency for action is becoming more widely acknowledged than ever before. Significant global coverage was given to the UN's ground-breaking statement in 2019 that 1 million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction,

many within decades. In Abu Dhabi, where 300 IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) leaders came together, an urgent call to 'massively scale up conservation action in response to the escalating biodiversity crisis' was issued, urging governments to take emergency measures to save species at the highest risk of extinction.

For the year ahead, I look forward to the IUCN World Conservation Congress, bringing together the leaders and decision-makers from government, civil society, indigenous groups and business. Achieving change in Southeast Asia requires collaboration and commitment from all these stakeholders. I truly believe that as a Partnership, ASAP can achieve a great deal for the species most at risk of extinction. SSC gives its full backing to the work of ASAP, which provides a platform for combining resources and capacity to achieve big collective impact.



Sonja Luz
Wildlife Reserves Singapore - Governing
Council member and ASAP Host

As a world-leading zoological institution located in a region of incredible biodiversity, we believe that Wildlife Reserves Singapore (WRS) has a responsibility to contribute towards the conservation of species in Southeast Asia.

Since 2016 WRS has been the proud host of ASAP, a partnership that brings together a wide range of stakeholders who have a shared interest in reversing the trend of species decline in our region. The ASAP mission is very much aligned with our own and sits at the heart of our conservation strategy. Through WRS' hosting of and collaboration with ASAP, we have been able to strengthen our conservation work and increase our positive impact for Critically Endangered Southeast Asian species. Currently, more than 50% of WRS' overall conservation budget contributes to conservation efforts for ASAP species. In the future we hope to invest even more in the recovery of the species most at-risk, in collaboration with and under the guidance of ASAP.

The threats to species in Southeast Asia show no sign of abating and especially under the concept of the "One Plan Approach" a world-leading zoological institution like WRS has an important role to play in protecting their future existence. Saving species cannot be done in isolation, so we support ASAP as we are convinced this is the right platform for sharing skills, knowledge and strengthening impact for the whole region.

Nerissa Chao
ASAP Director

In early 2019, we launched our new strategy, setting out our approach to addressing the species extinction crisis hitting Southeast Asia. Our vision of averting species extinctions, while ambitious, could not be more urgent. With every update to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™, more species are listed as Critically Endangered, known to be teetering on the brink. The number of species now captured within ASAP's focus has risen to 226, a number which calls for immediate and wide-spanning collective effort.

That's why it's so encouraging to see our partnership continue to grow. ASAP is now a collective of 98 Partners involved in progressing conservation action for ASAP species. The potential for collaboration is huge, and is something we facilitate as a Secretariat.

As we enter a new decade, we are determined to turn the tide on species declines. Catalysing conservation action for ASAP species is central to our strategy, and we believe building conservation capacity in the region is a key component in achieving this. Building on the many discussions and feedback, we will be rolling out new initiatives to support ASAP Partners over this coming year, creating new opportunities and providing tailored support. I am also delighted to announce that 2020 will see ASAP launch a Conservation Grants programme to support ASAP Partners conservation efforts on ASAP species. As we embark on these exciting new ventures, we continue to strengthen the Partnership as a whole, working together to reverse the trend of decline.

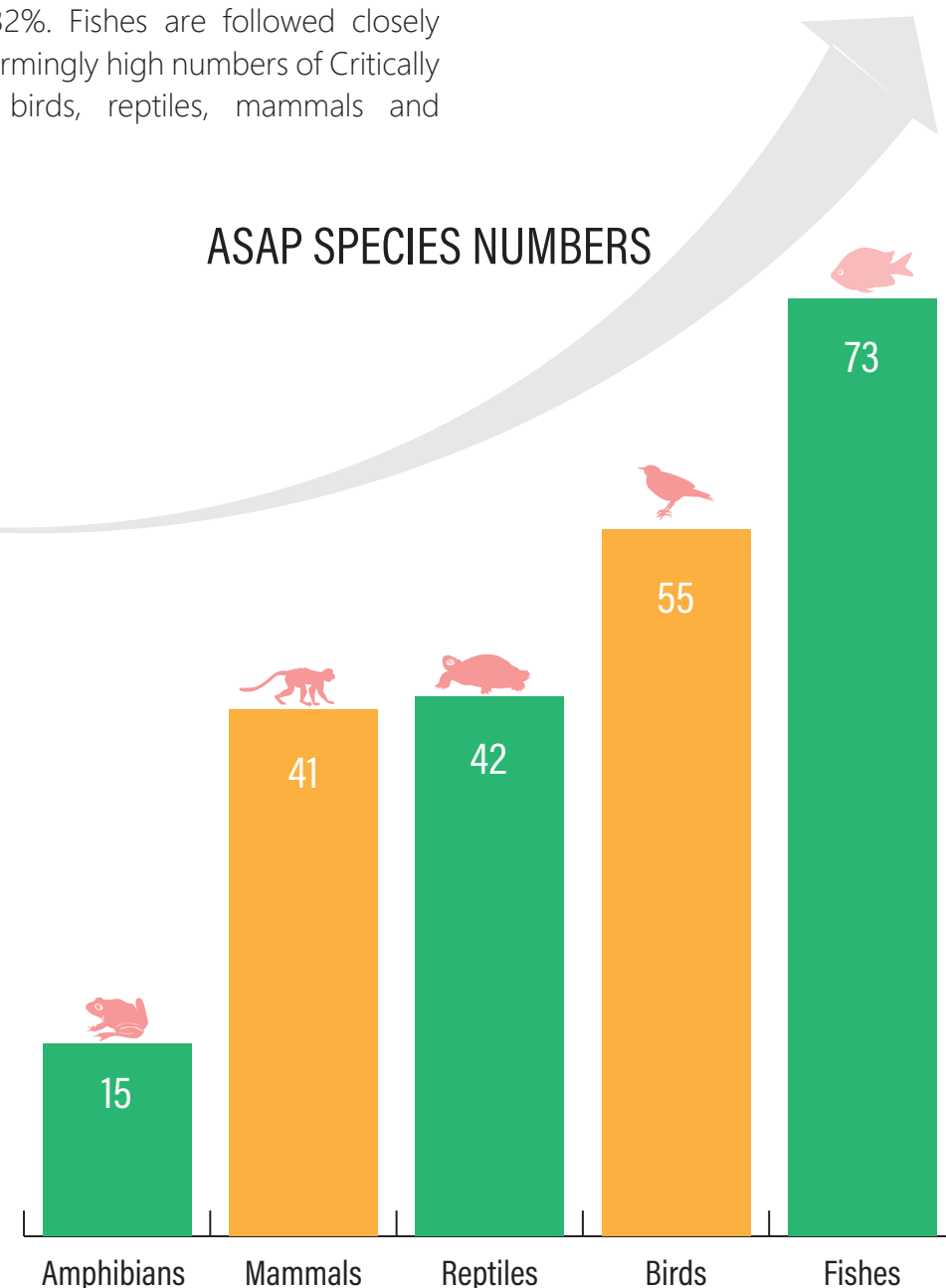
Overview

2019 saw the ASAP partnership grow from 80 organisations to 98, demonstrating the healthy appetite for species conservation in Southeast Asia. Unfortunately, alongside this, the number of ASAP species rose from 195 to 226.

Much of this increase came from fishes, which are now the biggest group of ASAP species, making up 32%. Fishes are followed closely behind by alarmingly high numbers of Critically Endangered birds, reptiles, mammals and amphibians.

Although some ASAP species have received significant conservation attention over the years, many other species are not a focus of any conservation effort. It is therefore crucial to identify priority needs and catalyse action for these lesser known species as well as ramping up species conservation efforts across the region.

ASAP SPECIES NUMBERS



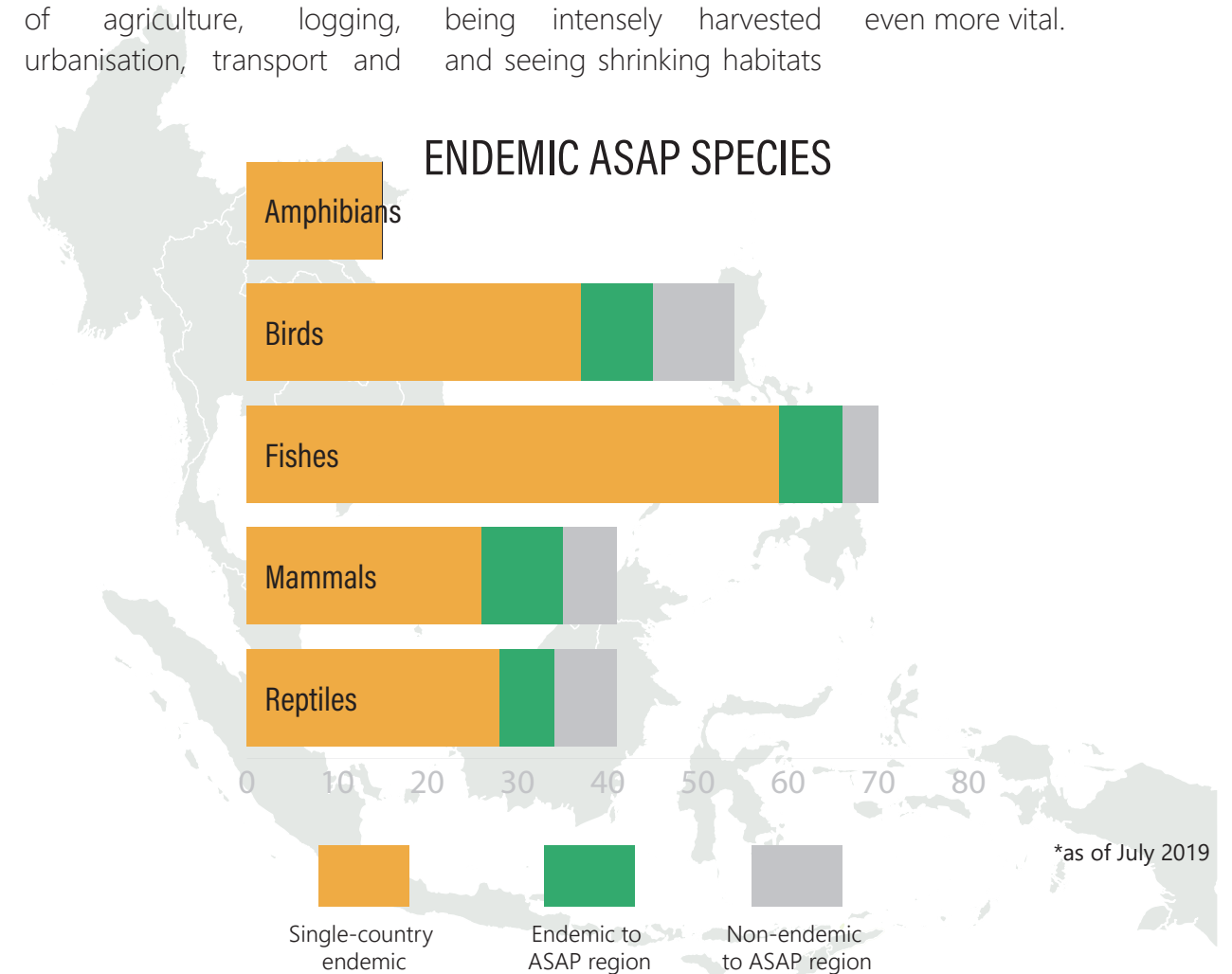
In a reflection of the global trends identified by Maxwell in Nature (2016), the same key threats are causing species to decline in Southeast Asia. Across all species groups, overexploitation and habitat loss are the single biggest threats. More than 60% of all Critically Endangered birds, fish, mammals and reptiles are being taken from the wild faster than they can reproduce. A combination of agriculture, logging, urbanisation, transport and

energy production are putting pressure on more than 90% of the mammals, amphibians and birds already listed as Critically Endangered. Suitable places for them are shrinking dramatically.

The threats facing ASAP species remain high, as we see the impacts from forest fires, wildlife trade and indiscriminate snaring. The deadly combination of being intensely harvested and seeing shrinking habitats

is worsened by the sheer number of species that have limited geographical ranges. Nearly all ASAP species are Southeast Asian regional endemics, and over 140 are found only within one country. More than half of these are hyper-endemics, meaning they are extremely localised, for example to a single mountain or tributary. This increases their vulnerability and makes the efforts of ASAP even more vital.

ENDEMIC ASAP SPECIES



The ASAP Secretariat has been working hard over 2019 to support Partners in their conservation efforts. From speaking directly with Partners to find out their needs, to engaging with donors to create new funding opportunities, all our activities have the common goal of catalysing action for ASAP species.

Areas of focus

Building conservation capacity in the region

With the increasing human pressures being put on species in Southeast Asia, having highly skilled and knowledgeable regional conservationists could not be more important. Their job is not easy; they are required to be project managers, species experts, process specialists and excellent communicators amongst other things. ASAP collaborated with colleagues from Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and Durrell Institute for Conservation and Ecology (DICE) to:

- Develop a competence register for species conservation
- Review current training opportunities
- Conduct an ASAP Partner capacity needs survey
- Review organisational capacity approaches
- Produce a roadmap for capacity development

We will be rolling out activities under this in 2020.

IUCN Red Listing workshop for Freshwater Fishes in the Sunda region

Although freshwater ecosystems cover only a small fraction of the world's surface, they support a disproportionately high number of the world's known species; yet these species and their habitats are often neglected in the wider conservation challenges. Many fish in the region had not been assessed for over a decade, if ever.

ASAP co-organised the Sunda Freshwater Fish Red Listing workshop alongside the IUCN Freshwater Biodiversity Unit and WRS. This workshop, was two-fold: firstly assessing the conservation status of freshwater fish species in the Sunda region, and secondly identifying priority conservation actions for these species, as part of IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group's (CPSG) new Assessing to Plan approach (A2P). During the year, these species were published on the Red List increasing the number of ASAP fishes from 48 in 2018 to 73 at the end of 2019, making them the largest group of ASAP species. [Read our article about the workshop, and the importance of Red Listing.](#)

CITES

In efforts to address the Asian songbird crisis, ASAP actively participated in the CITES CoP 18 and contributed to the adoption of CoP18 Doc. 79 on songbird trade and conservation management. Decisions adopted by consensus included key actions to generate recommendations to the CITES Animal Committee for its consideration and eventual communication to the 73rd meeting of the CITES Standing Committee.

In addition, ASAP was involved in action to strengthen the Helmeted Hornbill Resolution (Resolution Conf. 17.11) to place greater reporting requirements and responsibilities across both range and consumer countries.

Sunda Pangolin regional action plan launched

The plight of pangolins has received a dramatic increase in publicity during the last decade. The highly trafficked mammal has gone from receiving little conservation attention to being the focus of multiple organisations and conservation planning events. With so many stakeholders, coordination between parties is even more crucial.

The Sunda Pangolin regional action planning workshop was co-organised by the IUCN SSC Pangolin Specialist Group, ASAP, CPSG and WRS. The regional action plan aims to secure the Sunda Pangolin through six goals, which range from changing consumer behaviour and combating illegal trade, to ensuring better protection in the wild. [Read the regional action plan here.](#)

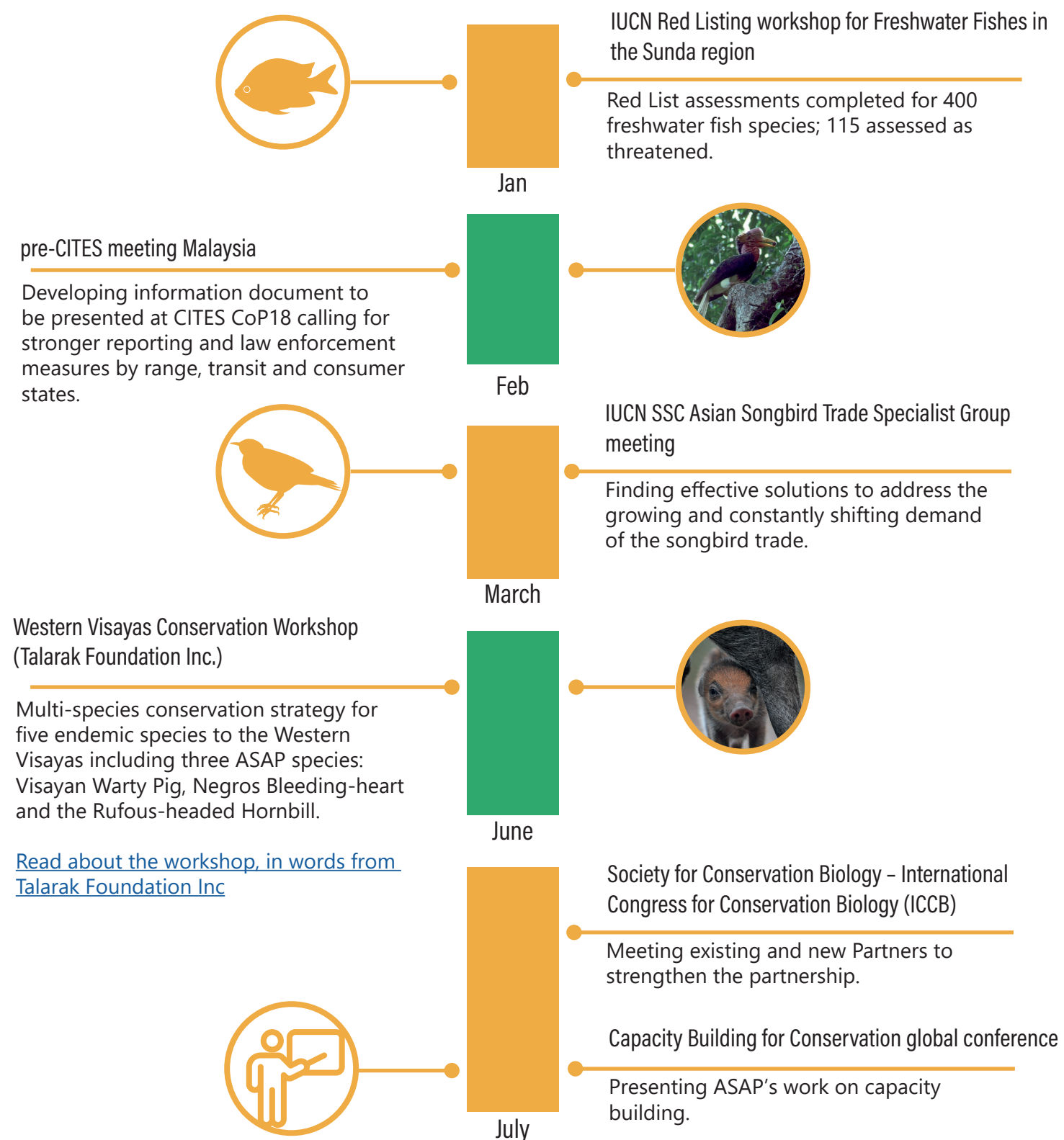
Mobilising support for ASAP Species Conservation across ASEAN

This year, ASAP has been working in collaboration with the intergovernmental ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), to raise awareness of the impending extinction crisis and increase support for ASAP species conservation in the ASEAN countries. This project is providing baseline data and analysis on ASAP species, a framework for investment priorities for ASAP species, and hopes to get direct commitment from ASEAN governments to address the needs and challenges facing species on the brink in Southeast Asia.

Partnership support

The ASAP Secretariat continues to provide tailored support to relevant stakeholders. Our team provided largely behind-the-scenes technical support and advice throughout the year, as well as linking individuals or organisations to advance ASAP species conservation.

Where we were in 2019



CITES CoP18

Drawing attention to trade of songbirds and Helmeted Hornbill.

Annual Philippines Biodiversity Symposium

The Philippines has a high number of ASAP species and high levels of endemism. Learning more about conservation efforts in the Philippines is crucial in catalysing future action.



August

4th IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Leaders' meeting

The meeting called to massively scale up species conservation action in response to the escalating biodiversity crisis.

6th ASEAN Heritage Parks Conference

Drawing attention and gaining political support to address the extinction crisis facing ASAP species is paramount. The meeting recognised the need for a declaration on ASAP species.

Oct

Building a stronger partnership

The ASAP partnership stands strong at 98 Partner organisations. While Partners work on ASAP species conservation in a whole host of ways and countries, what unites us is a desire to see a drastic reduction in the risk of species extinctions in Southeast Asia.

Across the partnership there are a great many skills and experiences that can be shared for the benefit of other organisations and individuals. From our many conversations, we understand the need for more networking opportunities, and platforms through which

ideas, success stories and novel approaches can be shared. As an initial step, we launched our quarterly ASAP newsletter in 2019, providing opportunities for ASAP Partners to share their work whilst also providing updates and news on ASAP species and funding and training opportunities.

Over the coming years, ASAP will work on creating more networking opportunities and peer-to-peer engagement. We hope to work closely with Partners and other ASAP species conservationists to shape the future of ASAP, and thus improve the status of ASAP species.

ASAP Governing Council

IUCN Species Survival Commission
Representative: Simon Stuart – Chair

IUCN Asia Regional Office
Representative: Alessandro Badalotti

European Association of Zoos and Aquaria
Representative: Myfanwy Griffith

GreenViet
Representative: Ha Thang Long

Wildlife Conservation Society
Representative: Colin Poole

Wildlife Reserves Singapore – ASAP host
Representative: Sonja Luz

Bogor Agricultural University
Representative: Mirza D. Kusri

Global Wildlife Conservation
Representative: Barney Long

TRAFFIC
Representative: Kanitha Krishnasamy

ASAP Secretariat

The ASAP Secretariat is made up of:



Nerissa Chao
Director



Madhu Rao
Strategic Advisor



Will Duckworth
Species Advisor



Vicki Guthrie
Partnerships & Communications Manager

ASAP Partners

The conservation of ASAP species would not be possible without the continued dedication and innovative approaches of ASAP Partners:

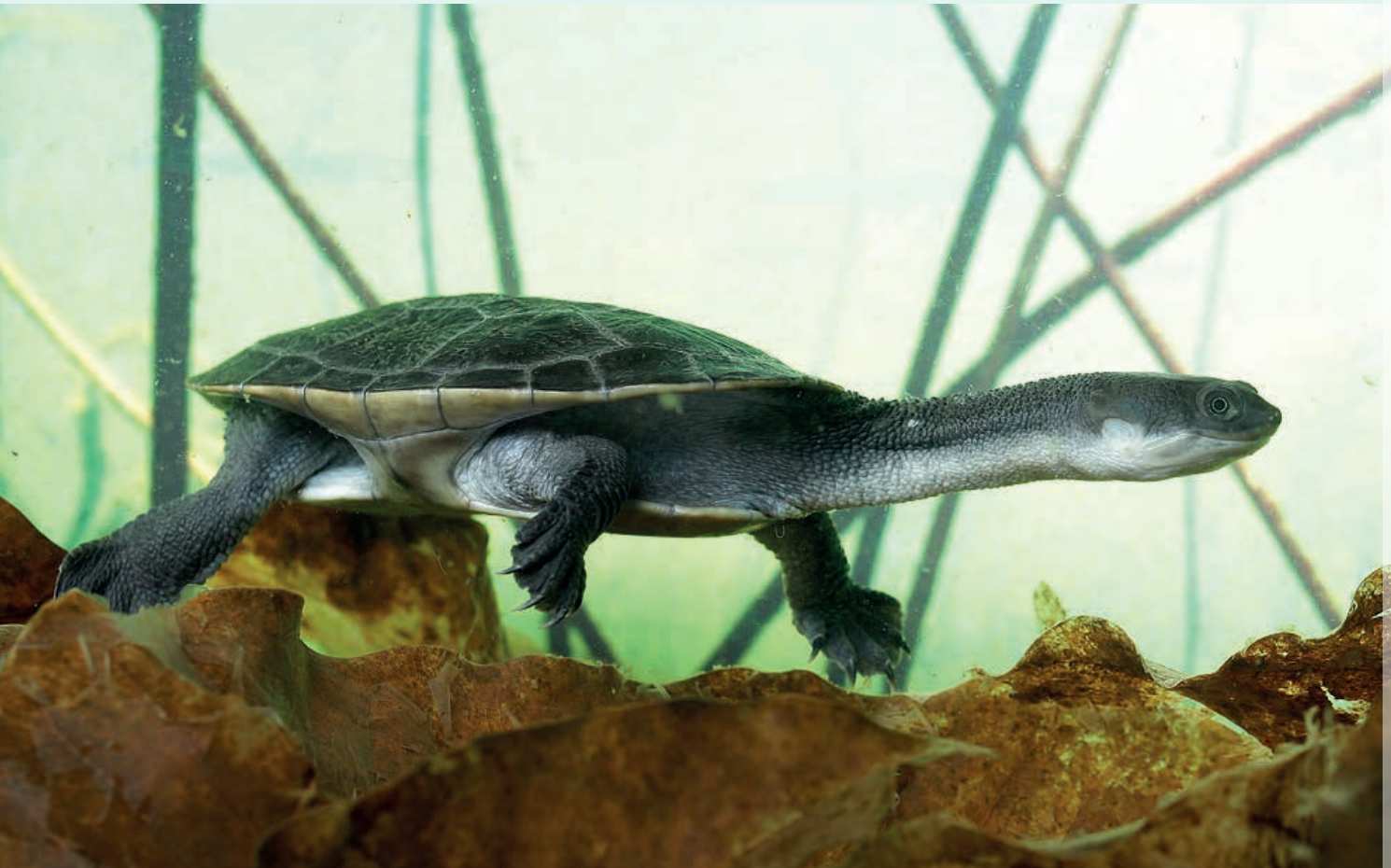
- 1StopBorneo Wildlife
Aaranyak
Allwetterzoo Münster
Amphibian Ark
Amphibian Survival Alliance
Angkor Centre for Conservation of Biodiversity
Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE)
Asian Arks
Bali Safari & Marine Park
Begawan Foundation
BirdLife International (Asia)
Borneo Nature Foundation
Bristol Zoological Society
Cat Ba Langur Conservation Project
Chester Zoo
Cikananga Wildlife Center
Cloud Mountain Conservation
Conservation International (CI)
Creative Conservation Alliance
Denver Zoo
Department of Forest Resources Conservation and Ecotourism, Faculty of Forestry, Bogor Agricultural University
Des Requins et des Hommes
Dupot
Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust
E Family Games
East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP)
European Association for Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA)
Fauna & Flora International (FFI)
Friends of the National Parks Foundation
Gaia
Global Wildlife Conservation
Greenhood Nepal
GreenViet Biodiversity Conservation Centre
Haribon Foundation (BirdLife Partner, Philippines)
Helmeted Hornbill Working Group
HUTAN
Indo-Myanmar Conservation/Asian Turtle Program
Indonesian Ornithologists' Union (IdOU)
Indonesian Parrot Project
International Rhino Foundation
IUCN – Asia Regional Office
IUCN – Species Survival Commission
IUCN SSC White-bellied Heron Working Group
Katala Foundation Incorporated
Key Conservation
Lao Conservation Trust for Wildlife
Large Marine Vertebrates Research Institute Philippines
Little Fireface Project
Mabuwaya Foundation
- Madras crocodile bank trust and centre for herpetology
Malaysian Nature Society
Manchester Metropolitan University
Monitor Conservation Research Society (Monitor)
Noe Conservation
Orangutan Foundation
Oriental Bird Club
Oxford Martin Programme on Illegal Wildlife Trade
Philippine Center for Terrestrial and Aquatic Research
Philippine Eagle Foundation
Planet Indonesia
Poh Kao
Project Anoulak
Rainforest Trust
Saola Working Group
Satucita foundation
Save Asian Vultures from Extinction
Save Pangolins
Save Vietnam's Wildlife
Southeast Asian Bat Conservation Research Unit (SEABCRU)
Seabird Indonesia
Selamatkan Yaki
Shoal
Species360
Stay Wild - Tiger Protection Trust
Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Project (SOCP)
Sumatran Orangutan Society
Sumatran Ranger's Project
Synchronicity Earth
Talarak Foundation
Taronga Conservation Society Australia
The Parosphenus Project
TRAFFIC
Turtle Conservation Society of Malaysia
Turtle Survival Alliance
Viet Nature (Birdlife Partner in Vietnam)
Vietnam Edwards's Pheasant Working Group
Whitley Wildlife Conservation Trust (WWCT)
Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust
Wildlife Alliance
Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
Wildlife Observer Community
Wildlife Reserves Singapore (WRS)
World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Greater Mekong
Yayasan Masarang – Unit Pusat Penyelamatan Satwa (PPS) Tasikoki
Yayasan Pelatuk Indonesia
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Zoological Society of London (ZSL)
Zoologische Gesellschaft für Arten- und Populationsschutz (ZGAP)

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- WCS
- An anonymous donor.

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The ASAP Secretariat is hosted by:

Wildlife Reserves Singapore Group



ASAP is an IUCN SSC initiative:

