

Meeting of the IUCN SSC Invertebrate Conservation Sub-Committee ICSC, Abu Dhabi

B.A. Daniel*



The Invertebrate Conservation Sub-Committee ICSC meeting Chaired by Prof. Michael Samways was organized from 20-21 February before the Specialist Group Chairs' meeting at Abu Dhabi. The Sub-Committee is composed of the Focal Point of the Terrestrial and Freshwater Invertebrate Red List Authority, 10 invertebrate SG Chairs/Deputy Chairs, and 1 Regional FP. The SG chairs gave a general report on the progress of the ICSC and its SGs for the period 2011. A summary of updates of ICSC activities and its Specialist Groups are given below:

Report of the ICSC

Michael Samways, Chair of the ICSC

- Formation of the new Bumblebee SG, under chairing of the Paul Williams and Sarina Jepson to address the global bumblebee decline.
- Full prioritization of invertebrate groups for conservation focus, spearheaded by Justin Gerlach, under the aegis of TIRLA.
- Development of a globally applicable strategy for invertebrate conservation using a set of operational scales from species to landscape.
- The Butterfly SG, Dragonfly SG, Freshwater Crab and Crayfish SG, Grasshopper SG, Mollusc SG and South Asian Invertebrate SG have made great progress in influencing policy.

Success stories

- African Freshwater Assessment and Conservation Management recommendations for Dragonflies, Molluscs and Freshwater Crabs and Crayfish.
- Completion of assessments of European Saproxyllic beetles, and of Dragonflies.
- Great restoration success stories in southern Africa and Seychelles.

Future goals

- Continued global assessment of various invertebrate taxa, including dragonflies.
- Prioritization and encouragement of new SGs, with Hoverflies now a priority.
- Development of methods for prioritization of taxa to be used in area assessments for their biodiversity worth.
- Further assessment of the functional



Sternocera laevigata. Photo: Shriraj Jakhalekar

value of invertebrates in various contexts, so as to align with the 2020 targets on maintenance of ecosystem services while maintaining ecological integrity.

Report of the Terrestrial and Freshwater Invertebrate Red List Authority

Justin Gerlach, Chair

- Development of priorities for terrestrial and freshwater invertebrate Red Listing.
- Establishment of a network of specialists willing to review assessments.

Success stories

- Development of priority list.
- Support for the establishment of new invertebrates Specialist Groups (SGs).

Future goals

- The primary aim of this RLA is to increase the number of assessed invertebrates.
- A major step in achieving the primary aim will be to reduce the number of species covered by the RLA through the creation of new SGs.

Report of the Bumblebee Specialist Group

Paul and Sarina: (Reported by Scott Hoffman Black)

- The IUCN Bumblebee Specialist Group (BBSG) was formed during in early 2011.
- The group is in the process of

inviting members and coordinating a worldwide status assessment of bumblebees.

- 11 individuals from 9 Geographic Regions have agreed to serve as Regional Coordinators for the BBSG.
- Membership lists from 5 regions have been identified and members are currently being invited.
- Focal points for red listing, wildlife health, and trade have been appointed.
- A Scientific Advisor was appointed.
- A Conservation Genetics subcommittee was formed.
- A website for this group has been developed.

Future goals

- The primary initial goal of this group is to accomplish a status assessment of the c.250 species of bumblebees worldwide using the Red List Categories and Criteria.
- Once accomplished, species that are considered imperiled (EW, CR, EN, VU, NT) can be added to nations' and states' respective threatened and endangered species lists and prioritized for conservation action.

Report of the Butterfly SG

Scott Hoffman Black, Chair

- The IUCN Butterfly Specialist Group (BSG) was formed in late 2010. The group has formed an initial steering committee.

*Chair, IUCN/SSC South Asian Invertebrate Specialist Group. Scientist, ZOO. Email: badaniel@zooreach.org

- We have identified over 150 people who are interested in being involved in the BSG.
- As an initial task of this group, the Xerces Society and several members of the new-identified steering committee developed a survey of butterfly conservation needs.

Success stories

- The BSG is just gearing up. We have had initial success with response to the survey of butterfly needs and identifying people who want to be engaged.
- Over 161 people from 39 countries have filled out the survey. (For the full survey go to: <http://www.xerces.org/iucnssc-butterfly-specialistgroup/>)

Future goals

- The next step will be for the steering committee to develop a needs and opportunity-based plan that will allow us to direct resources to areas with the greatest need and highest potential for our efforts to make a meaningful impact.
- Develop communication strategies to ensure that all partners are included and engaged.
- We need to raise funds for managing this effort and for projects identified through our planning.

Report of the Dragonfly SG

Viola Clausnitzer, Chair

- Start of assessments in New Zealand, Australia, Arabia.
- Publication of results from the pan-Africa freshwater assessment.
- Participation of members at various meetings (global and regional scale), e.g. LIFE meeting in England, IPBES meetings in Bonn and Nairobi, IUCN/SSC workshops in England and the USA.
- Generating knowledge on global and regional dragonfly diversity and the threat status according to the IUCN Red List.

Success stories

- Assessment and mapping of all African dragonflies, point locality database (far over 90,000 entries by now).
- Representative global assessment of dragonflies within the RLI project.
- Awarded "Highly cited Author 2008-2011" for the paper: "Odonata enter the biodiversity crisis debate: The first global assessment of an insect group" by Biological Conservation.

Future goals

- Complete global dragonfly assessment.
- Elimination of DD status of species.
- Establishing dragonflies as indicator organism for ecosystem health ("guardians of the watershed") in tropical areas.
- Focused conservation actions for Critically Endangered species.

Report of the Freshwater Crab and Crayfish

Neil Cumberlidge, Chair

- Arranged for the design of the logo for the FCCSG which is now in use.
- Appointed Red List Authority Focal Points for the FCCSG
- Completed and distribution maps for many of the assessed species of freshwater crabs, now available on the IUCN Red List website.
- Compiled a list of all of the new species of freshwater crabs described since the last global Red Listing in 2009

- with the aim of making conservation assessments for these taxa.
- Prepared an IUCN report on the conservation status of the freshwater crabs of the Indo-Burma region that is currently in the process of completion.
- Met with the Chair of the Invertebrate Conservation Sub-Committee to discuss future plans for the FCCSG.
- Began initial discussions within the FCCSG to identify suitable threatened species or groups of species of crayfish and freshwater crabs that could be the focus of a Species Conservation Strategy.
- The work of the FCCSG makes allows the inclusion of invertebrates in the Red List (which has long been dominated by vertebrates) and contributes large numbers of species to the CBD targets.

Success stories

- Co-organizer of an international conference on the Freshwater Decapods in Frankfurt, 2010; keynote address at the conference on *Freshwater Decapod Conservation: Recent Progress And Future Challenges* to be published in the conference proceedings (2011).
- Initiation of a new initiative to use the newly published world species list of the freshwater shrimps for a global Red List assessment of this species.
- A Project has been identified and funding has been secured for this assessment.

Future goals

- To arrange for first-time Red List assessments of all of the new species of freshwater crabs and crayfish which have been described since the last global assessments of these two groups.
- To complete distribution maps for the remainder of the assessed species of freshwater crabs and make them available on the IUCN Red List website.
- To work with the IUCN SSC Invertebrate Conservation Sub-Committee on Strategic Conservation Planning to develop a Species Conservation Strategy for one or more threatened species of crayfish and freshwater crabs.

Report of the Grasshopper SG

Axel Hochkirch, Chair

- European Red Listing of Orthoptera (ERO), coordinated by Baudewijn Odé, Roy Kleukers and Luc Willemse; 17 pre-assessments completed; currently assessments of all Canarian Orthoptera; Red Listing workshop planned for spring 2012.
- South African Red-Listing Initiative (SARLI), coordinated by Corinna Bazelet; currently collection records are geo-referenced.
- *Prionotropis hystrix rhodanica* project, coordinated by Antoine Foucart and Laurent Tatin; the complete population will be mapped in 2012; habitat destruction by the French army must be feared IUCN World Conservation Congress: Klaus Riede organizes a session called "Bioacoustics for species monitoring - a new tool for Red List assessment?"

Success stories

- Roberto Battiston rediscovered *Apteromantis aptera* in Morocco. He was funded by the Mohammed Bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund and accompanied by a film team.

Future goals

- The Red List assessment of European Orthoptera is

- planned to be finished until 2015.
- Orthoptera are useful indicators to identify hotspots of biological diversity. Their geographic ranges are usually even smaller than in plants. In the Cape Floral Region (South Africa), we want to test how Orthoptera diversity is covered by the existing reserves.
- Cover tropical regions in our Red List assessments. A first candidate area might be East Africa, where a lot of data exist.

Report of the Mollusc SG

Mary Seddon, Chair

- Completion of Pan-African Project on Freshwater Molluscs. 23% of Freshwater species threatened.
- Completion of European Project on Status of Non-Marine Molluscs. 43% of Freshwater species threatened, 20% land-snails threatened.
- Completion of Eastern Himalayas project, 1% Threatened, 36% DD.
- Indoburma project midpoint 32% Threatened, 21% DD.
- Cephalopoda project midpoint >30% species done.
- Conference sessions on Threatened Species in Europe, Vitoria, Spain.
- First marine mollusc assessment workshops on *Conus* species and Reefbuilding Molluscs.
- Report for EU on updating the protected species lists and emphasising the need to implement the Water Framework Directive.
- Issues of our Newsletter Tentacle (2011/2012) can be downloaded from our website.

Success stories

- Big vote of thanks for Howard Peters who brought together shell dealers with scientists for the *Conus* workshop – really effective

combination!

- Adding nearly 2000 species assessments in last 4 years, thanks to: MSG members and contributors; IUCN FBU & RL units for EU, African and Asian project: Nadia, Monika and Ben and the ZSL SRLI team of interns on the Freshwater SRLI and Cephalopoda Assessments.

Future goals

- Finalising assessments for Oceania, Indoburma, Cephalopoda, New Zealand, and Arabian Peninsula.
- New assessment projects in South America and Japan.
- Moving onto conservation actions in EU, Africa and Asia.
- Find funding to survey for Data Deficient species.
- Working out how to use the legislation in Europe to benefit Freshwater Molluscs.
- A programme of small conservation projects to aid CR range restricted species.

Report of the South Asian Invertebrate SG

B.A. Daniel, Co Chair

- Contributed for the assessment of Eastern Himalayas freshwater invertebrates: molluscs and Odonates.
- Contributed for the assessment of Western Ghats freshwater invertebrates: molluscs and Odonates.
- Represented Invertebrate Conservation Sub-Committee and SAsISG at the Global Entomology Congress, Thailand in February 2011.
- Membership for SAsISG from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka.
- Liaised with other SGs in promoting

the work of SAsISG.

- Designed education plans for invertebrate pollinator conservation.



Success stories

- 803 invertebrates (Odonates 541; Molluscs 262) assessed.
- Generated funds for education and awareness of the threatened freshwater biodiversity of Western Ghats.
- Identified partners for future hands-on training programmes.
- Freshwater biodiversity network for south Asia.

Future activities

- Assess all butterflies of South Asia.
- Follow up conservation education activities of freshwater biodiversity of India for Odonates and Molluscs.
- Organise hands on training on pollinators and pollinator education.
- Strengthen sub network: Freshwater Invertebrates.
- Conference on freshwater invertebrates of South Asia.

Jürgen, The European Focal Point reported about the ongoing citizen science project on Odonate conservation. As part of the meeting the group went through the Strategic plan for the quadrennium 2013-2016 and each group committed to take up projects of their priority. The South Asian Invertebrate SG committed to assess all butterflies of South Asia, selected spiders and millipedes of South Asia.

The Chair of ICSC invited suggestions from other members to suggest activities so as to include South America and East Asia. Identifying interested people from these regions will may help to build up the network in these areas. Rachel Roberts invited all the members to contribute for the Amazing species programme. Also requested interested people to use the IUCN web page template to build up their SG web sites.

A skype conference was arranged with Annabelle Cuttelod, Programme Officer, Conservation planning, who explained about Key Biodiversity Area Projects. The Chair proposed to have the next ICSC meeting in India however, it will be finalised at a later date.



Indrella ampulla (Ariophantidae). Photo: Aravind Madhyastha