

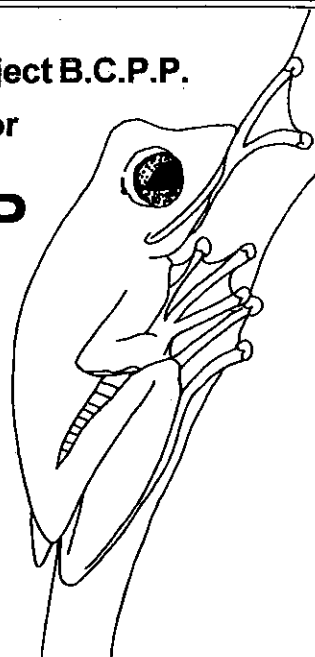
UPDATE : Biodiversity Conservation Prioritisation Project B.C.P.P.

Conservation Assessment and Management Plan Workshop for

Amphibians of India BCPP CAMP

held in Bhubaneswar

A Conservation Assessment and Management Plan Workshop for Indian Amphibians was held on 22 - 26 April 1997 at the Institute for Cooperative Management locally hosted by the Department of Zoology, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar under the Biodiversity Prioritisation Project. Major collaborators were the Southern Asian Reptile and Amphibian Specialist Group, SSC, IUCN; the Declining Amphibians Populations Task Force - Southern Asia, SSC, IUCN, the Forest Department of Orissa, and Friends of Rare Amphibians of the Western Ghats. The BCPP has been initiated by the World Wide Fund for Nature, India (WWF, India) with the Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History coordinating the Endangered Species Subgroup and Zoo Outreach Organisation/CBSG, India designing and facilitating the workshop programme and individual workshops. All workshops use the revised IUCN Red List categories as a basis for making assessments.



The Conservation Assessment and Management Plan (CAMP) Workshop Process was created by the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group, SSC, IUCN to provide a means of rapid assessment for large groups of taxa for conservation action simultaneously using and testing IUCN Red List criteria in whatever form it existed at the time. CAMP Workshops have been held in more than 40 countries over the past seven years for nearly 100 animal and plant groups. CAMP Workshops began by assessing large taxon groups such as primates, antelopes, etc. on a global basis in which a "first cut" assessment was attempted in order to provide a basis for further action -- research, monitoring, protection, etc. Now, CAMPs are being conducted more on a country or region basis, with some restricted groups being assessed even in regions of countries.

In India the BCPP CAMPs are, for the most part, taking up all-India taxon groups and are intended as a "first cut" in India as the CBSG CAMPs were globally. The BCPP CAMPs will, hopefully, provide information and impetus for further research for species for which data is not sufficient to make an assessment, as well as protection, monitoring and other conservation measures for species which are Critically Endangered and Endangered. Future assessments with further refinement after more studies are done by field biologists are another desirable result.

At the Amphibian CAMP, 206 species of Indian Amphibians were assessed by 29 participants from 22 institutions in a five day exercise. One of the major recommendations to come out of the CAMP was that another CAMP for Amphibians be held in the year 2000, after Data Deficient species have been surveyed and studied and to refine and re-evaluate assessments of other species to ascertain whether their status has improved or declined. There are also several new species with unpublished descriptions which the groups decided not to assess.

For most of the exercise there were two Working Groups -- for North/North East India and southern India -- with central Indian and Indian species being assessed by combining the groups. The strategy for the workshop was to prioritise endemics first and then non-endemics. Although the number of species was very high, the participants worked day and night, even a couple of "before breakfast" and pre-dinner sessions and completed the assessment for all listed species. On the last two days several special issue working groups met to discuss Nomenclature, Tools and Techniques, Captive Breeding, and Education. A more complete report of this CAMP will be given in next issue of FROG LEG which should come out in July ZOOS' PRINT.

As the Reptile CAMP approaches, the Taxon Data Sheets and Special Issue Working Groups reports for the Amphibian CAMP are being corrected and assembled in a DRAFT which will be sent to all participants for further correction before analysis and production of a Report.



In the meantime, the Report of the third CAMP Workshop for Southern Indian Medicinal Plants organised, hosted and sponsored by the Foundation for Revitalisation of Local Health Traditions is nearly ready for printing and distribution. The southern Indian Medicinal Plants CAMPs are not part of the BCPP but the Reports from the first and second CAMP organised by FRLHT provided convincing evidence to the BCPP Endangered Species Subgroup that the CAMP Workshop process using the revised IUCN Red List Criteria was the most viable methodology extant for a "country study" of biological diversity in India.

For the BCPP, a CAMP was held for selected species of Medicinal Plants of Northern, Northeast, North west and Central India. Whereas in the FRLHT CAMPs, the host organisation pre-listed the species to be assessed and informed participants well before the workshop, for this BCPP "all-India" CAMP, it was not possible to do this. Instead, it was decided to focus on species rather than from southern India and on the first day of the CAMP an exercise was conducted to select species of medicinal plants thought to be endemic based on participants field studies. As all participants were field botanists with vast experience in North, NE, NW or Central India, this provided an acceptable methodology in the face of an incomplete (!) list of more than 5000 species of plants "reported to be medicinal" by some system of natural medicine and the uncertainty regarding participation.



Now all but one Draft for the Northern Regional CAMP for Medicinal Plants which was held in January have been returned and the information is being collected into summary charts for analysis. The Report will be ready (depending on the missing Draft) within a month. In the meantime an interesting development has taken place with regard to the Draft Summary Reports of categorisations of the four CAMPs on medicinal plants. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has taken the output of these workshops which has depended on expertise of field biologists from 30 Indian botanical institutions to add 56 Critically Endangered and Endangered medicinal plants to the negative list of exports, to suggest these be considered for addition to Schedule IV of the Wildlife Protection Act and for protection measures at the state level. As this is precisely the manner in which the product of such exercises is intended to be used, specialists from other groups can feel hopeful that their contribution to the CAMP workshops may be considered also. The output from all the workshops is being submitted to the Committee for Amending the Wildlife Protection Act as well as to the concerned officials in the Ministry of Environment and Forests.



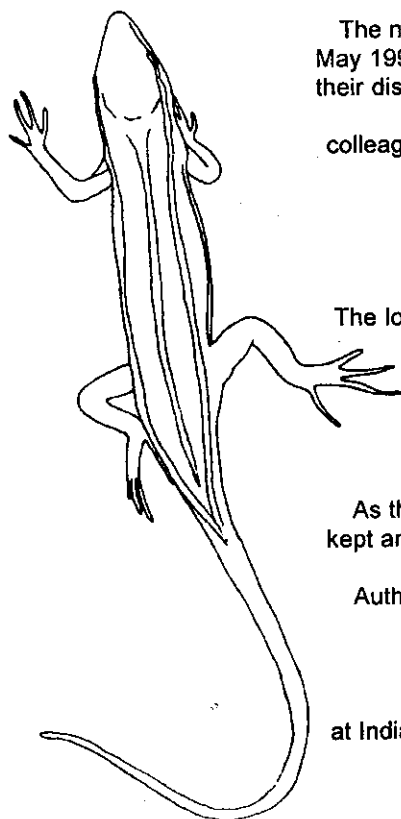
Likewise, all the Drafts for the Southern Indian Soil Invertebrate CAMP have been returned and organisation of this output is to be taken up soon.

The next CAMP Workshop -- for Reptiles of India -- will be held in Coimbatore on 19 - 23 May 1997 as this issue goes to press. A checklist of 501 species of Indian Reptiles and their distribution, prepared by Indraneil Das and Harry Andrews, has been used for listing both endemic and non-endemic species. For sake of interest, we requested colleagues from Coimbatore Zoological Park, Brij Gupta and S. Rathnasabathy, to list the 501 species individually according to their status in the Wildlife Protection Act. As this listing also includes endemism and distribution and may be of interest to readers, it has been included the following pages of ZOOS' PRINT. We hope to complete at least the endemic species of reptiles at the upcoming CAMP.

The local host and organiser for the Reptile Workshop is the Forest Department of Tamil Nadu and Zoo Outreach Organisation/CBSG, India. The Workshop will be held in the main Lecture Hall of the MOEF's Forest Training Institute in Coimbatore. Major collaborators for this workshop are the South Asian Reptile and Amphibian Specialist Group, Coimbatore Zoological Park, SACON and of course WWF-I. More than 40 specialists from 32 institutions have confirmed their attendance.

As there has been a long history of captive breeding of Reptiles and a variety of reptiles kept and bred in different zoos and parks in India, the Central Zoo Authority will participate in this CAMP as well as the mammals CAMP in a significant manner. Central Zoo Authority has deputed their Scientific Officer to the workshop and Directors of zoos with significant reptile collections have been invited.

The next CAMP on the Agenda is for Mangrove species, in July, to be held at the National Institute of Oceanography, followed by a CAMP for Mammals, in August, at Indian Institute for Science, Bangalore, and for Freshwater fishes, in September, at the Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources in Lucknow.



Reptiles of India BCPP CAMP