

activity

2010/2011

report



The IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group

The Cat Specialist Group is responsible for the global assessment of the conservation status of all 37 wild living cat species. We coordinate and support the activities of currently 203 leading scientists, nature conservation officers and wild lifemanagers in currently 57 countries. The main tasks include:

- to maintain the network of cat experts and partners;
- to continuously assess the status and conservation needs of the 37 cat species;
- to support governments with strategic conservation planning;
- to develop capacity in felid conservation;
- to provide services to members and partners;
- to assure the financial resources for the Cat Specialist Group.

For the activity reports we present some of our achievements against these six main tasks.

Christine Breitenmoser-Würsten and Urs Breitenmoser
Co-chairs IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group

Cover photo: The four participants of the Cat Conservation Course 2010

Species Assessment and Conservation Activities

IV International Seminar on Iberian lynx.....	4
Regional assessment of the cat species on the Arabian Peninsula	5
1st Borneo Carnivore Symposium	6

Strategic Conservation Planning

Implementation of the IUCN/SSC Guidelines	7
1st meeting of the IUCN/SSC Species Conservation Planning Sub-Committee.....	8
Action Plan for the cheetah in Iran.....	9
Leopard in the Caucasus (Georgia 2010).....	10
Leopard in the Caucasus (Turkey 2011).....	11
Tiger in China.....	12
Tiger and leopard in the Russian Far East.....	13
Tiger Summit in St. Petersburg	14

Capacity development

Cat Conservation Course	15
Balkan Lynx Recovery Programme.....	16
Conservation Monitoring Course for the leopard in the Caucasus.....	17

Services to members and partners

Cat News	18
Digital Cat Library.....	18
Small Cat Action Fund.....	18

Staff and Sponsors	19
---------------------------------	----

IV International Seminar on Iberian lynx

Cordoba, Spain, 10 – 11 November 2010



04

The fourth International Seminar on the conservation of the Iberian lynx has been organized in the framework of the Life Lynx Project 2006-2011. It covered various aspects of conservation biology with a specific focus on the planning of reintroductions and increasing the existing populations respecting the critical genetic situation of the species. The conference was opened by the Minister of Environment of Andalucía, José Juan Díaz Trillo. The seminar was structured as the previous events with presentations on the first day open to the public from colleagues across the world having experience in different fields of recovering carnivores: Fred Lounay (reintroduction guidelines), Christine Breitenmoser (genetic aspects of Eurasian lynx reintroductions), Tanya Shenk (reintroduc-

tion of Canada lynx into Colorado, USA), Dave Onorato (recovery of Florida panther, USA), Markus Gusset (reintroduction of wild dogs in South Africa), Ed Bangs (reintroduction of wolf in Yellowstone National Park, USA). At the end of the day, Miguel Angel Simon presented the current situation of the Iberian lynx in the field, the first results of the reintroduction trials and the reintroduction plan. The second day was organized as a closed session with four working groups focusing on the reintroduction strategy, release procedures, preparation of captive bred animals for reintroduction, and information and public awareness. Each group came up with the 4-6 most important issues for the work in the near future. The strategy group defined a preamble saying that the reintroduction project follows the IUCN reintroduction guidelines and is organized as an adaptive process of which the international seminar series is part of where on a regular base progress is assessed and next steps defined. The recovery strategy is to build up a viable metapopulation. All the "conclusiones" of the four working groups were presented at the end to the Director General of the Ministry of Environment of Andalucía, Xavier Madrid, who was then closing the IV International Seminar on the Conservation of the Iberian lynx.





© K. Breitenmoser

The 12th Conservation Workshop for the Fauna of Arabia under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohamed Al Qasimi, the Ruler of Sharjah, focused on management plans for Protected Areas and on a formal Regional Red List Assessment for the carnivores of Arabia.

The main focus in the past has been on the Arabian leopard, a Critically Endangered subspecies. The Cat SG has published country status reports in 2006 in the first Special Issue of *Cat News*, and we have facilitated the development of a Regional Conservation Strategy. Since then some new evidence has been produced in Yemen. The status remains very critical. The improved regional cooperation has led to an enhanced captive breeding program through facilitating animal transfer and exchange of information.

For the other species, very little information is available. It was debated whether cheetah ever existed on the Arabian Peninsula. The last animal was shot in Oman in 1977, but this could have been one of the many animals kept in private collections across the peninsula. The last lions went extinct in Saudi Arabia a long time ago. The caracal seems to be widespread outside the sand desert. In Oman, caracals

were absent where leopards were regularly photographed. The sand cat seems to be so elusive that it most often goes undetected. It is the only felid species that is found primarily in true desert. The distribution looks very patchy, but the gaps may not represent absence. A small study in Saudi Arabia with radio collared animals remains unfortunately unpublished. The taxonomy of the wildcat on the Arabian Peninsula remains unclear. The subspecies across most of the range was called Gordon's wildcat (*F. s. gordonii*). A male and a female were radio-collared around the Breeding Centre for Endangered Arabian Wildlife, so at least some ecological information is available. All assessments will be published in the workshop report.



1st Borneo Carnivore Symposium

Kota Kinabalu and Tuaran, Sabah, Malaysia, 18 – 24 June 2011



06

The first Borneo Carnivore Symposium was organised by the Sabah Wildlife Department, the IUCN/SSC Cat, Small Carnivore & Otter Specialist Groups and the Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research from Germany and held at the Palace Hotel in Kota Kinabalu and the Shangri-La Rasa Ria Resort in Tuaran over the span of a week. The Symposium saw almost 200 delegates from 15 countries participating in the presentations and discussions of this diverse range of carnivore species which include cats such as the enigmatic Sunda Clouded Leopard, civets such as the Malay Civet which is locally known as the Tangalunga, the Sunda Stink Badger which is more commonly known as the Malay Badger or Teledu, and the ever playful otters.

One of the goals was to establish a knowledge base for the priority areas and threats faced by these unique species, three of which only occur on Borneo. As with many other species of wildlife, the carnivores too need adequate forest range which cover a variety of different types of forest that support different communities of both wildlife and plant life diversity. The results of the workshop will also be used to upgrade some of the carnivores on the IUCN/SSC Red List of Threatened Species. The IUCN/SSC Red List is important for determining the status of species and at the Symposium, enough data have been compiled to remove the status of species listed as Data Deficient to a higher category such as under threat, which in turn helps scientists, conservationists and governmental agencies to focus on them.

The organisers took a big effort to raise enough funds to support students to attend the symposium, as one of the goals of the workshop was also to strengthen local capacity and the network of conservationists. There will be a number of output documents summarizing the results of the symposium.





The Conservation Breeding Specialist Group's global team of facilitators and invited participants from the SSC and other leading conservation NGOs met in Italy's Abruzzo National Park to share and evaluate the components of diverse species planning processes. The 22 participants from 9 countries and representing 14 institutions – including 4 Chairs of SSC Specialist Groups (Antelope, Cat, Conservation Breeding, Phasianidae), and the SSC Species Conservation Planning Subcommittee – came together to describe a wide suite of processes and tools available for species conservation planning and the relationships between them, to evaluate situations in which different processes and tools will support effective species conservation planning to identify the need for tools. This analysis is ongoing and will result in a tool kit that defines these various process design elements and the conditions under which each might be most appropriately applied, not only by CBSG and other Specialist Groups within the SSC, but by conservation practitioners worldwide. From outside the SSC network, the range wide priority setting and visioning, open

standards and structured decision making tools were presented. Participants also learnt about CBSG's first experience with web-based workshops. After an extensive evaluation of various available programs, they decided to try VYEW. Ten people met in four sessions of 60-90 minutes of a week apart. All input information and summaries of the past sessions were uploaded on a Google site. These two tools together can be a real alternative to face-to-face meetings, but only if people are fluent in a common language and from a similar cultural background as any visual clue is absent to the facilitator.



First meeting of the IUCN/SSC Species Conservation Planning Sub-Committee

Tubney, UK, 22 – 23 February 2011



08

The IUCN/SSC Species Conservation Planning Sub-Committee SCP-SC came into existence in 2010 as the SSC mechanism to catalyse effective planning for the conservation of species. SSC recognized the importance of strategic planning and dissolved the Species Conservation Planning Task Force to form a sub-committee. The first meeting of the sub-committee in person took place in March 2011 in Tubney. The Wildlife Conservation Research Unit WildCRU of the University of Oxford's Department of Zoology generously hosted the meeting at their seat in Tubney. The meeting had four ambitious goals. (1) Mo-

ving to making SSC strategic planning for species best practice; (2) enhancing the SSC model; (3) learning from experience and confirming best practice and (4) rolling out the SSC model more widely.

The SSC approach was compared with other planning tools for single or multiple species strategies. It was agreed that SSC needs a shorter document on "how to" than the existing handbook, which is long and complicated. In a next session, members shared their experiences with strategic conservation planning, from bumblebees to cats. It was then discussed on how to link with other SSC activities and on how to identify the most urgent needs for strategic conservation planning. Possible formats for cross learning experiences and storage and availability of plans were presented. This is very crucial for rolling out the SSC model more widely. The tools matrix developed at the Abruzzo meeting showed fewer tools for the implementation and monitoring phase of a plan. Many tools included there have not yet been tested for conservation planning, so the tables still need to be populated with this information. Web-based tools were discussed as well.

At the end, a list of tasks has been assigned to work towards the four goals. The sub-committee will next meet in Al Ain in February 2012 during the next IUCN/SSC Chairs meeting.



National Conservation Action Planning Workshop for the Asiatic Cheetah

Saanen, Switzerland, 29 March – 1 April 2010



The Asiatic cheetah *Acinonyx jubatus venaticus* has lost most of its historic distribution range across the Middle East, Central Asia and the Indian Subcontinent. It is today considered as Critically Endangered according to the IUCN Red List (IUCN 2008). Only 70–110 cheetahs persist in a fragmented population in central Iran, mainly in the Dasht-e-Kavir. From 2001 to 2008, a Medium-Sized GEF project advanced the conservation of the Asiatic cheetah, its critical habitats and prey populations. The Conservation of the Asiatic Cheetah Project (CACP) was implemented by the Department of Environment (DoE) of the I. R. Iran and supervised by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). International conservation organisations such as the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Panthera, the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF), and several IUCN bodies provided expert input.

The first phase of the CACP (CACP 1) helped raising awareness for the conservation of the Asiatic cheetah at all levels, to stop the further decline of the population, and to lay the foundation for its recovery by establishing important protected areas and launching research and survey programmes. However, securing a viable population of the Asiatic cheetah is a long-term task requiring continuous and well-targeted conservation activities for many years to come. Such a programme needs careful planning and purposeful cooperation between the project partners. The lack of a consistent

work plan was one of the shortcomings of CACP I, as identified in the Terminal Evaluation Report. Institutions and organisations involved in the continuous conservation of the Asiatic cheetah agreed that CACP II should base on an Action Plan developed as a logical framework (LogFrame) in a participatory workshop. The IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group, with the support of the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) of Switzerland, organised and facilitated an international meeting to develop an Action Plan for CACP II. This workshop took place in Saanen in the Swiss Alps.



Informal meeting on leopard conservation in the Caucasus eco-region

Tbilisi, Georgia, 18 May 2010



10

The leopard is a Critically Endangered flagship species of the Caucasus. In 2007, conservation experts and institutions from all six Caucasian countries joined to develop a Strategy for the Conservation of the Leopard in the Caucasus Ecoregion, based on a review of the status of the leopard population and its prey (Cat News Special Issue 2, 2007). Now, three years later, the IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group, WWF and NACRES, organised a discussion group at the annual conference of the International Bear Association IBA in Tbilisi, Georgia. The meeting was part of the symposium "Large Carnivores in the Caucasus", organised and supported by the Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention). The leopard is listed as a strictly

protected species in Appendix II of the Bern Convention. The aim of the meeting was to discuss the status of the leopard, the implementation of the Strategy and next steps with wildlife conservationists from the Caucasian countries.

The Strategy has so far been endorsed by the relevant authorities of four countries, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Turkey. The participants from the six countries presented a brief review of the situation of the leopard and leopard conservation activities. The presentation of the Range Countries reports revealed that the base of information on the leopard in the Caucasus since the compilation of the status report has not improved. Very little field activities have been carried out since, and the scarce data available do not indicate an improvement of the situation of the leopard at all. All participants agreed that the implementation of conservation measures is urgent, that however generating reliable intelligence on the situation of the leopard is the most urgent requirement.



Conservation of the leopard in the Caucasus eco-region workshop

Istanbul, Turkey, 7 – 8 March 2011



Ahead of the meeting of the Caucasus Biodiversity Council in Istanbul, Turkey, representatives from the six range countries met to discuss the next steps for the implementation of the Regional Conservation Strategy and to draft recommendations to be presented to the CBC for endorsement. Certain conservation measures such as awareness building, mitigation of conflicts, anti-poaching measures, and recovery of prey populations are obvious and can be implemented without more detailed knowledge on the status of the leopard. Other conservation actions however require better baseline data. We therefore suggested that an urgent common activity of the institutions involved in leopard conservation in the Caucasus is to perform a systematic baseline survey, which should then be transferred into a long-term standardised monitoring of the leopard population.

To achieve this, we first need to build the capacities needed in each of the six range countries, involving colleagues from scientific institutions, state agencies, and non-governmental conservation organisations. It was agreed to organize a conservation monitoring course in May to train the trainers to support the implementation of Objective 2 of the Leopard Conservation Strategy, mainly Targets 2.1 and 2.2, but also Target 2.3 as far as research is relevant for the continued assessment and conservation of the leopard. The goal of the workshop will be to explain and discuss concepts, applications, and organisation of techniques and procedures for the long-term conservation monitoring of the Caucasian leopard meta-population and related species/populations.

11



International Conference for the Conservation of the Siberian tiger and the Amur leopard

Vladivostok, Russia, 15 – 18 March 2010



12

More than 100 conservation professionals and scientists from 13 countries gathered in Vladivostok for the international conference “Amur Tiger in Northeast Asia: Planning for the 21 Century,” 15 to 18 March 2010. The conference was organized by the Institute of Biology and Soils and the Pacific Institute of Geography of the Far Eastern Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, together with WWF-Russia and WCS-Russia.

The goal of the meeting was to review the Amur tiger’s current status and its threats, as well as to review the draft of a new federal strategy for Amur tiger conservation in Russia, and develop recommendations for federal and regional actions to reverse the recent decline. The new

strategy proposes the maintenance of a sustainable, genetically viable population of at least 500 adult tigers – and up to 700 individuals – living across the subspecies’ entire historical range in Russia. On the last day, the current status of Far-Eastern leopard population, its prey base and habitat, the conservation measures were discussed. The Far-Eastern Leopard Reintroduction Program developed by Far-Eastern and international scientists was considered, and also the Far-Eastern Leopard Research, Conservation and Restoration Program conducted by the A.N. Severtsov Institute of Ecology and Evolution Problems. The number of Far Eastern leopards remaining in Southwest Primorye still remains at a critically low level of 35-45 individuals, as confirmed not only by winter track surveys, but also by means of camera traps and DNA analyses derived from scat collection. A main conservation output over the past years was the establishment of the united nature protected area including “Kedrovaya Pad” biosphere nature reserve (zapovednik) and “Leopardovyi” federal wildlife refuge (Zakaznik), which covers about 50% of the current range of Far Eastern leopards.

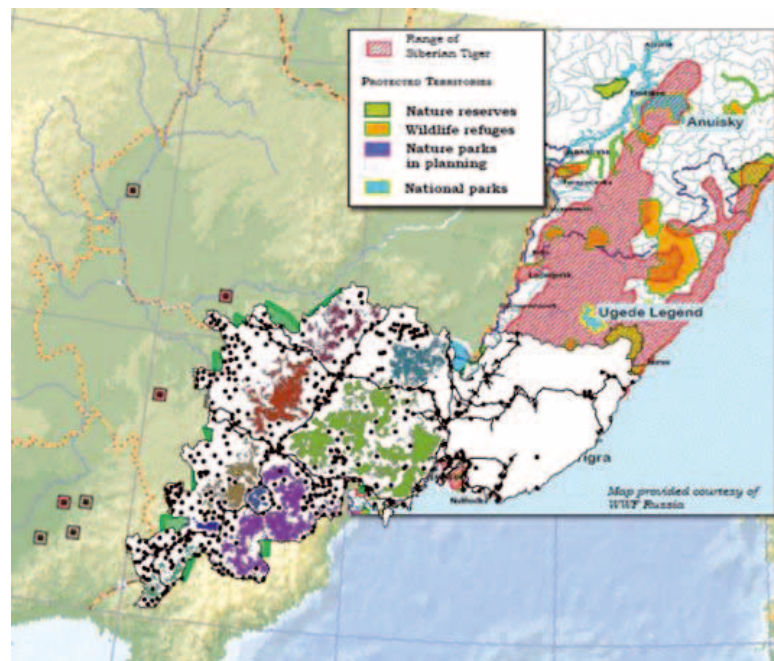




China is building nine zones in the north-eastern provinces of Jilin and Heilongjiang for the conservation of Siberian tigers. This decision is based on a habitat model produced in a common effort between WCS, WWF, Northeast Normal University, University of Montana, KORA and the Cat Specialist Group, which identified potential tiger habitat in the Changbaishan ecosystem in northeast China. The nine zones will be Huichun-Wangqing-Dongning-Suiyang, Changbai Mountains, the southern area of Mount Zhangguangcai, Muleng, Huadian, the northern area of Mount Zhangguangcai, Baishan-Tonghua-Ji'an, Lushuihe-Dongjiang and Jingyu-Jiangyuan.

The areas are all near the border of China and Russia and between China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and cover an area of 38,000 square kilometers. In the areas there are vast forests, but the prey base for tigers is still weak. Although they used to be widely distributed throughout northeastern China, wild Siberian tigers only number 20 or so in the region now due to fragmentation of forests and illegal hunting. But in the neighboring Russian Far East, the population of wild Siberian tigers is 430 to 500. The predators

often cross the Sino-Russian border. The nine nature protection zones will be places for the tigers to make homes and reproduce. By 2022, the number of wild Siberian tigers in China is expected to increase to about 40. Apart from the nine zones, Jilin has also established the Huichun Huangnihe and Wangqing nature reserves for Siberian tigers, according to the provincial forestry authority. Jilin has also exerted efforts to establish awareness of wildlife conservation among the local residents.





14

The “Tiger Summit” took place in St. Petersburg in Russia on 21–24 November 2010, and brought together some 500 representatives of the 13 Tiger Range States, the partner organisations of the World Bank’s Global Tiger Initiative (www.globaltigerinitiative.org) and further institutions important for the conservation of tigers. The global population of free living tigers today is estimated to be only 3,200–3,500 – living in less than 7 percent of the historic range – and has seen a rapid decline in recent years. This alarming news has finally found the attention of high-ranking decision makers. The high-level segment at the Forum was attended by five Heads of Government

(Russia, China, Bangladesh, Lao PDR, Nepal). Robert Zoellick, President of the World Bank, chaired the segment. Monique Barbut, CEO Global Environmental Facility GEF, was the only person not representing a government to give a speech. The US Under-Secretary of State also attended. Russian Prime Minister Putin gave a passionate talk about wildlife conservation, presenting the tiger as the flagship species for species and nature conservation in general. Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao called for a change of the economic model to make it work for the environment. Both Robert Zoellick and Monique Barbut mentioned SOS (Save our Species, a joint initiative of IUCN, GEF, and the World Bank; www.sospecies.org). The evening event was a most remarkable conservation show. The American actor Leonardo DiCaprio attended the concert and made a US\$1 million contribution through WWF and appeared in a tiger campaign the following. Top singers from Russia, China, and Malaysia performed and the Master of Ceremony was the famous model Naomi Campbell.

The goals of the International Tiger Forum were (1) to establish a global system to preserve and restore tiger in the borders of its historical range, and (2) to mobilise the world public opinion in favour of tigers. Taking the media attention as an indicator, the second goal seems easily to be reached.





The IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group, in collaboration with KORA (Coordinated Carnivore Research and Conservation Projects), and thanks to financial support from the Wild Cat Club, offers a training for the conservation and monitoring of wild cats. The course in Switzerland is open to a small number of hand-selected post-graduate candidates who are already integrated in felid research and conservation. A candidate's home institution needs to recognise the training and pay for the travel to Switzerland. Shorter courses open to a larger number of participants are organised in collaboration with local institutions to develop capacity in cat conservation for a specific region. Four candidates from China, Pakistan, Iran, and Georgia joined the Cat Specialist Group and its hosting organisation KORA in February/March 2010 in Switzerland for a three weeks training course. The course offered an intensive training in theoretical approaches, strategic concepts and practical field applications for the conservation and management of wild cat populations, with special reference to monitoring and conservation of Eurasian lynx, divided into four distinct but interrelated sections, which offered a tailor-made learning environment to meet the requirements and professional needs of the participants: (1) Biology and ecology of wild cats with special reference to Eurasian lynx, including genetics, diseases, conservation, and management;

(2) Conservation Planning: Strategic planning in species conservation, implementation and control of conservation programs, status report and baseline survey, project design and reporting; (3) Monitoring: Large- and medium-scale monitoring, quantitative monitoring (capture-recapture); and (4) Practical training: Field surveys, capture and handling of cats, radio-telemetry, camera trapping, data analysis, reporting and presentations. The course modules were delivered by KORA experts including the co-chairs of the CatSG in a participatory environment. Field excursions were arranged to make participants understand monitoring through learning by doing.



Balkan lynx recovery programme

Albania and Macedonia, 2010/11



16

After the first project period came to an end in December 2009, funding was secured to continue for another three years until the end of 2012. Besides the MAVA foundation, the Swiss National Science Foundation together with the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC) under the programme SCOPES (Scientific co-operation between Eastern Europe and Switzerland) supports the project. It is a partnership project between Swiss, Albanian and Macedonian institutions. The Balkan Lynx Recovery Programme follows closely the Cat SG approach of Strategic Conservation Planning.

In the evening of Sunday, 14 March 2010, the first Balkan lynx ever was captured in Mavrovo National Park, Macedonia. The male, named "Marko", was equipped with a GPS-collar and released subsequently at place. "Marko" will provide important insights into the ecology of this critically endangered lynx subspecies occurring in the border regions of Macedonia and Albania. The GPS-GSM technique works well for observing these elusive animals in the rugged terrain of the Macedonian mountains.

The PPNEA (Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania) research team took the first photo of an alive Balkan lynx in Albania (photo above). The individual has been photographed using camera-traps on 26 March 2011 at 18:48, in the northern mountainous region of the country. Up to that date, continuous field research since 2006, based on contemporary monitoring methods, had not proven the existence of any remaining live individual. All signs of lynx presence were so far from dead/killed individuals, which are held as trophies, and from the local knowledge of rural people. As such, this photo represents a great achievement as it definitively proves the presence of lynx in Albania and calls for greater and immediate efforts towards their conservation and the preservation of the habitats they live in.



Conservation Monitoring Course for the leopard in the Caucasus eco-region

Tbilisi, Georgia , 16 – 19 May 2011



The Persian leopard is the most prominent flagship species of the Caucasus Ecoregion. A Strategy for the Conservation of the Leopard in the Caucasus Ecoregion was developed in 2007 and is now being implemented through National Action Plans. Monitoring is an important requirement of the Strategy and the NAPs. A group of 31 leopard experts and wildlife researchers and conservationists met from 16–19 May 2011 in Tbilisi, Georgia, to discuss the monitoring at national and ecoregional scale. The Goal of the workshop was to agree on a simple and feasible plan for a monitoring scheme for leopards, co-predators and prey for the entire Caucasus Ecoregion. Specific Objectives were (1) review and discuss monitoring methods. (2) Review monitoring concepts and methods applied for cross-border baseline surveys and monitoring of cats. (3) Outline a practical, standardised and consistent monitoring for the conservation of the leopard in the Caucasus. (4) Define the needs for the implementation of the survey and monitoring plan.

The start-up for a lasting and large-scale monitoring system is a baseline survey to gather initial information. Simple and cheap

survey methods are used to screen the entire potential range and hence to compile a set of standardised and comparable information. The general approach is to collect information mainly through interrogation of the local people, especially of groups interacting with wildlife, such as hunters, livestock breeders, etc. A common protocol must be developed and adapted to local/national needs. During the workshop priority areas for the baseline survey have been identified and Turkey will run a first test in the northeast of the country in fall 2011.



Services to members and partners 2010/11 (mid-year)



18

Cat News

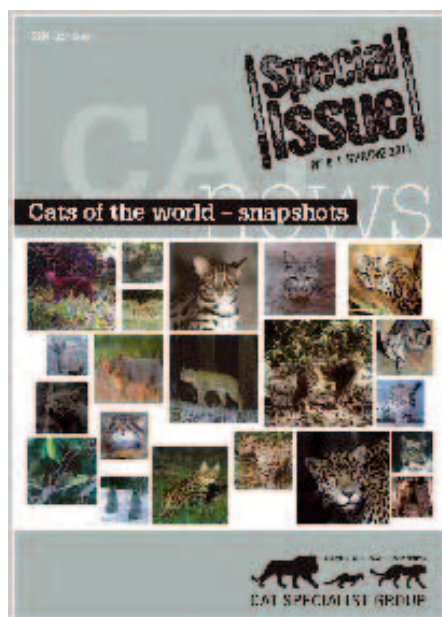
In 2010 and 2011 (until mid-year) we have published the regular issues Cat News 52–54 and Special Issue No 5 Cats in China and No 6 Cats of the World.

Digital Cat Library

We have newly integrated over 1,000 publications into the Digital Cat Library DCL in 10 uploads. These more frequent updates are possible thanks to the support by Panthera. DCL hosts currently 7,605 reports and publications relevant to cat conservation.

Small Cat Action Fund (SCAF)

SCAF is a grants programme established by Panthera with the advice of the IUCN Cat Specialist Group. The fund is supporting in situ conservation and research activities on the smaller cat species. During 2010 and 2011 (mid-year), we have reviewed 40 proposals.



Staff and ...

We wish to thank all the dedicated colleagues and members of the Cat Specialist Group for their hard work throughout 2010 and 2011 (mid-year). Working very closely with the Cat Specialist Group Co-chairs were Manuela von Arx (Assistant to the Chair), Anna Huber (book keeping), Kristin Nowell (Focal Point of the Cat SG Red List Authority), Peter Jackson (Advisor to the Chair and contributing editor of Cat News): a great thank you to all of them.

We would like to thank the many dedicated people who helped develop and run the various projects in 2010/2011: Fridolin Zimmermann (Balkan lynx project, tiger habitat model China, conservation monitoring course), Yves Tschumper and Ursula Kurt (Digital Cat Library), Kristina Vogt (Strategic Conservation planning, Cats in China, Cats of the World), Keith Richmond, Sultana Bashir and Brian Bertam (associate editors Cat News). We would also like to thank the many colleagues who have contributed to the website, Cat News and the Digital Cat Library.

Alex Sliwa has generously donated a lot of his superb cat pictures for Cat SG purposes, also for this report, many thanks.

... Sponsors

Although much of our work as an IUCN/SSC Specialist Group is done on a voluntary basis, our projects would not be possible without financial support from many committed institutions and private persons. We would like to thank the following individuals and organisations for their partnership and support: Friends of the Cat Group, Wild Cat Club, Panthera, Howard Buffet Foundation, Zurich Animal Protection Society, MAVA Foundation, Swiss National Science Foundation together with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Environment Agency, Environment and Protected Areas Authority Sharjah, UAE, Council of Europe/Berne Convention, WWF Caucasus Program Office, Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, Junta de Andalucía, Forestry Bureau of the Taiwan Council of Agriculture, Animal Trust, Innflow AG, Stämpfli Publikationen AG, and especially Patrick Meier, Peter Stämpfli and Jean-Claude and Annemarie Tschumper.