



Building Species Conservation Planning Capacity Across SSC – Session 1

Following the introduction by Jamie Copsey, two groups formed to brainstorm questions 1 & 2 (both groups were compiled for the lists included):

Question #1: Who are the target audiences for capacity building?

Species specialist groups, social/economic/political scientists (both trainer and/or trainee), zoos, aquariums, vets, government agencies (politicians, lawmakers, customs, etc...), business leaders, facilitators, individual species champions (conservation heroes), educators, universities, NGO's, field researchers, native people/local communities, stakeholders for species, funders, board members, big NGO's (WWF, etc...), fund raisers, zoo associations, CPSG participants/members, individual recovery teams, tourism industry, volunteers, field workers, corporations/industries, institution individuals

Question #2: What would be included as selection criteria for the audiences identified?

Expertise in social/economic/political sciences, understanding/"buy-in" of our planning process philosophy, institutional support/commitment, individual commitment, retention of trained (ongoing staff development), return on investment of training (monitoring program for trained/follow up), decision-maker, desire to use credentials (use the trained skills for career advancement), cultural sensitivity, recommended through our existing network, trustworthy, experience, technical and species knowledge, cooperative, out-going/enthusiastic, team players (there are innate skills required and also developed skills)

Both groups combined their ideas and continued as one large group that included the following discussion:

Discussion #1: Wider role of CPSG discussion – linking Plan development with Plan implementation (why implementing sometimes doesn't work) – where does CPSG's role begin and end?

Various reasons for this included capacity, budget, politics and in many cases, a lack of people to actually do the work. So, if we are concerned with the plan being implemented for these reasons, should we be addressing them in the actual conservation planning process? This might be a role for CPSG to play within the facilitation process in the context of the gap between plan and implementation.

The group continued discussion about the need to enhance sharing of information and ideas also referred to as "cross-pollination". This could be a larger role for CPSG as a "go to" resource center to provide resources that might help close the gap from plan development to plan implementation.

The larger group continued brainstorming regarding Questions #3 & #4.

Question #3: What is the profile of the ideal candidate for conservation planning capacity building (what skills are required to be effective)?

Facilitator, good communicator, culturally sensitive (context specific), relationship builder, team builder/player, likable, well networked/connected, “big picture view” – not tunnel-vision view, project coordinator (self-disciplined/organized), leader, have time management skills, creative, good writer, innovative, practical, focused, trustworthy, neutrality, genuine (balance of confidence and humility), sense of humor, listener, biological knowledge, financial competence, realistic, invested in the long term development of plans, acceptance of criticism, receptive to ideas/feedback, enthusiastic/passionate, engaging, bi or multi lingual, respected and respectful, self-awareness, patience

Question #4: What would the essential skills be (those that must be innate at the time of an interview)? These qualities are needed before we decide to invest in them. Other skills could be developed or trained but these would be required.

Passionate about success of conservation, good communicator (listening/conveying views), team player, genuine (confidence and humility), capacity to synthesize information, patience, sensitivity to others, self-motivated and disciplined, thinker – strategic/quick/out of the box, have institutional support, ability to balance processes and tasks, focus on outcome, likable.

Building Species Conservation Planning Capacity Across SSC – Session 2

Jamie Copsey gave a brief overview of the morning session for different members of the group that did not attend the AM session, followed by an introduction of the current capacity building program through four elements or themes:

- Development path
- Training program
- Toolkit and Practitioner’s Guide
- Planning Network

The group split into two groups to brainstorm questions 1 – 3.

Question #1: What do you like about it? – multiple approaches are good, drawing on existing capacity, has measure of effectiveness, pathways that include technical experts and planners, multi-media, multi-discipline and provides opportunity for practice and application of training (shadowing), network fosters identity and encouragement, tracks training, provides credibility, it is a longer term investment on training, in general the steps and progression are really nice, the incremental nature and networking of alumni is good. The networking of trainees/trainers could provide some avenue for continuing education opportunities.

Question #2: What do you question about it – link between planners and implementers is not clear (are we training both to ensure success?), should there be a CPSG link person included in training regarding the assurance that plans are implemented, should the training include resourcing/fund-raising skill development, are we dealing with barriers to implementation, how long do we provide mentorship (when is one certified or “signed-off”)?, could there be a longer “on the side” process of training with a mentor?, who are the current facilitators within the SSC and could they be brought along within the program for more training or as trainers? Who are the faculty that are training? (solid science or informed background is necessary), has the load on mentor/instructor been considered, what resources are needed/cost? Who validates or “signs off” on the program and/or student?

Question #3: How would you improve it – clarify the process of training the trainers (a good facilitator may not be a good teacher/mentor and others can do both), have an agreement with the trainee, diagram may need simplified and clarified, have a certification, needs a pre-training process, provide mentoring and online support and continuing education, training should include a “master” facilitator mentor, workshops should include a facilitator and co-facilitator to provide support and training, develop mentoring guidelines and agreement along with a reverse evaluation (this should include evaluating the instructors and process/program), develop a workshop schedule so trainees can attend for experience/shadowing (maybe added to newsletter) – expand available training opportunities, need a marketing plan, conduct training in range countries, training for pre and post-workshop planning, connect with zoos and aquaria as resources, identify expertise within CPSG (population management, by region, etc...), train the trainer advantages go both ways, continuing education component should be included, links to universities that are teaching conservation biology maybe a source, develop a business plan because the costs associated are not clear, possibly and “adjunct” affiliation for trainee with CPSG (assessment required if a title is provided)

Both groups came back together and combined the ideas listed above. Then as a large group brainstormed question #4.

#4: Who are the organizations/individuals to reach out to?

AZA Professional Development Committee for process development/evaluation, USFWS courses, SCBI – George Mason University, USGS, Regional hubs (training locations as hubs – such as Wildlife Reserve Singapore, CPSG Mexico, UC Davis, NUS – National University of Singapore, Society for Conservation Biology, Association of Tropical Biology and Conservation, Society for Conservation Biology Asia, Conservation College New Zealand, ZSL, Chester Zoo, Bristol Zoo, Zoo Outreach (India), Durrell Learning Network, Networks: Edge, Whitley, Zoo/field networks, MBZ network, Rufford, business/corporate training programs, Universities, student conference, Conservation Measures Partnership (CCNET), United Nations bodies, IUNC Chairs office, other IUCN commissions including Education and Communication, Organization of Tropical Studies (Costa Rican field studies; well connected to universities), IPE Brazil, EAZA Academy, Birdlife.