IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group

Course Prospectus

Changing the future for wildlife

Draft 2 12/01/2018

Welcome

I joined CPSG back in 1991 – then known as the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group — inspired by their participatory conservation planning tools for the recovery of yellow-shouldered parrots on Margarita Island, Venezuela. We designed our management plan and put it to work. The population has now more than doubled providing an example of the Assess – Plan – Act cycle that underlies the activities of SSC.

CPSG is now leading the way in species conservation planning, bringing diverse stakeholders together to find common ground for the benefit of threatened species worldwide. CPSG's approach provides a critical link between the assessment of species status, as documented through the Red List process, and the actions required to reverse declining trends.

Combining CPSG's expertise with the knowledge of other Specialist Groups, the training courses in this prospectus are a key piece of the SSC's priority to build global capacity for biodiversity conservation. I am thrilled that CPSG is scaling up their efforts and look forward to seeing more species that were assessed, having plans developed that guide conservation actions, and ultimately lead to more species with viable, long-term futures as part of what is still a beautiful world!

Jon Paul Rodríguez
Chair, IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC)

CPSG: Changing the future for wildlife

Established in 1979, CPSG has assisted in the development of conservation plans involving over 260 species and more than 600 workshops held in 71 countries. Species, such as South Africa's wattled crane (below), are in recovery thanks, in part to the collaborative, evidence-based plans that have been produced.

To date, we have trained more than 850 conservation planners and technical planning experts to enable them to lead their planning processes and launch new recovery programs.

260 species; 600 workshops; 71 countries; 850 conservationists trained

We have developed an online suite of planning tools to act as a baseline resource for conservation professionals worldwide (www.cpsg.org). We also lead on the development of international guidelines to help support conservation practitioners through the auspices of the IUCN.

"The* [CPSG] *planning workshop cleared up many of the concerns and disagreements that were limiting the development of the* [captive population]. *It gave the program its current shape and catalyzed its implementation".

Rebecca Spindler, Tasmanian devil recovery program

CPSG training: Our approach

"[CPSGs] collaborative, inclusive, and science-based approach to planning…ensures that it delivers the most effective conservation action to protect future generations of threatened species.

Simon Stuart, IUCN Species Survival Commission Chair, 2008–2016

We believe in applying scientifically sound, collaborative processes that bring together people with diverse perspectives and knowledge to catalyze positive conservation change.

We provide species conservation planning expertise to governments, Specialist Groups, zoos and aquariums, and other wildlife organizations. While our purpose has species conservation at its core, we believe in maintaining a neutral position in terms of how we view the multiple stakeholders that we will often be required to bring together and their interests.

As a training organization we believe in the power of individuals to affect change and in a focus on developing competencies, wherever it is required, to ensure that more effective species conservation plans are developed and implemented. We value people's experience and encourage learning through doing as well as learning through critical analysis of past experiences and case studies.

We are committed to monitoring our training work to evaluate its impact on conservation planning practice and the delivery of successful conservation projects that save species from extinction.

The Species Conservation Planning Cycle

Figure 1.

The Species Conservation Planning Cycle (**Figure 1**) forms the foundations of our planning and training work. It was developed through a combination of decades of experience of species conservation planning and critical review from our peers across the conservation community. It provides a platform on which we build suites of planning tools and processes that we share with others through our training work. We do not claim that there is only one way of developing effective plans, but do believe that the Cycle captures the main elements of effective conservation planning.

CPSG training: Expert faculty

Dr Onnie Byers, Chair CPSG

Onnie joined CPSG as a Program Officer in 1991. She was promoted to the position of Executive Director in 2005, and appointed Chair in 2011. Onnie has extensive experience with process design and facilitation. She is dedicated to the transfer of conservation planning tools and processes to conservationists worldwide.

Dr Phil Miller, Senior Program Officer

Phil joined the CPSG staff in 1994. He specializes in developing and applying complex risk assessment methods to species conservation planning projects across a wide range of endangered species, and against diverse human socio-cultural backgrounds.

Dr Kathy Traylor-Holzer, Senior Program Officer

Kathy joined CPSG staff in 2002 after assisting with CPSG workshops for 10 years while working at the Minnesota Zoo. She specializes in population modeling, population management, and linking *ex situ* activities to conservation needs in the wild. She has served as population advisor for multiple tiger *ex situ* programs.

Caroline Lees, Program Officer

Caroline joined the CPSG staff in 2011 as a facilitator and PVA modeler. Before joining CPSG she worked with zoos in Australasia, planning and coordinating the management of *ex situ* populations to support species recovery, and training. Since joining CPSG her primary focus has shifted to supporting planning for species conservation *in situ*, in addition to *ex situ* and all the places in between. She contributes to several threatened species recovery teams in Australia and New Zealand and co-convenes CPSG's Australasian Regional Resource Center.

Dr Robert Lacy, Senior Advisor

Bob has published more than 100 scientific papers on topics ranging from genetics to taxonomy, and conservation. His current interests include the genetic management of small populations, and the use of simulation models to understand interactions among demographic, genetic, and environmental processes in wildlife populations, to project the impacts of human activities on population dynamics. Bob established the Species Conservation Toolkit Initiative to develop new tools for species conservation planning and management.

Jamie Copsey, Director of Training

Jamie has been working in the field of capacity building for species conservation for more than 15 years. He has extensive experience in the development and design of training programs designed for current and future conservation professionals, from junior staff through to senior leadership.

CPSG Courses

The following pages detail the growing suite of courses that we run throughout the year and in multiple locations. The courses can be modified to suit particular needs. If you would be interested in attending one of the courses, or would like to consider hosting a course within your organization, then please get in touch with us at jamie@cpsg.org.

The courses are designed to build competencies around one or more of the following species conservation themes:

- **Conservation planning-** *the design and development of effective conservation plans*
- **Facilitation-** *the identification and value-neutral application of appropriate rational and interpersonal tools and processes to ensure effective multi-stakeholder decision-making can be achieved*
- **Communication-** *the collation, dissemination and reporting on planning outputs to ensure agreement over plans to be implemented*
- **Quantitative risk-assessment-** *the elicitation and analysis of best available data on which to project likely future scenarios and inform the selection of most appropriate management actions*
- **Leadership and management-** *the development of skills required by conservation managers to be able to most effectively put species conservation plans into action*

Species Conservation Planning

"…species with dedicated recovery plans... [are]…significantly more likely to be improving and less likely to be declining, than species without".

Taylor *et al* 2005

This course is designed to provide a broad overview of species-centered conservation planning processes. This course is for conservation managers working within groups such as the IUCN Specialist Groups, government departments and NGOs, who are responsible for helping to navigate multiple stakeholder groups through the stages of producing single and multi-species conservation plans.

Course learning outcomes:

By the end of the course participants will be able to:

1) Design multi-stakeholder species conservation planning processes including the facilitators role in encouraging successful outcomes
2) Apply a range of process tools for vision development, threat analysis, goal-setting and strategy selection within multi-stakeholder planning environments
3) Describe different options for incorporating climate change vulnerability assessment and adaptation into planning
4) Identify a range of quantitative risk assessment methods to support the planning process
5) Develop a monitoring and evaluation plan for species conservation projects
6) Explain how to organize people within projects

Format: The course incorporates online learning and face-to-face lectures, discussions, individual and group problem-solving activities.

Duration: 4 days

Facilitating Conservation Planning Processes

"Facilitators are experts in designing, applying and using process… …anyone can facilitate if they understand the process and how to use it".

Tony Mann, 2007

This course is designed to build capacity for the effective facilitation of species conservation planning processes. The course is designed for conservation managers within government and non-government organizations (including zoos), as well as those with a broad interest in facilitation for improved conservation management.

Course learning outcomes:

By the end of the course participants will be able to:

1) Plan and facilitate multi-stakeholder workshops and meetings
2) Describe the role of the facilitator in achieving consensual decision-making
3) Demonstrate how to facilitate an open discussion and run a meeting or workshop process
4) Explain steps involved in applying the One Plan Approach to species conservation planning processes
5) Explain the stages teams go through in their development as they move towards decisions
6) Identify how to deal with conflict under different circumstances
7) Describe how to provide feedback to individuals to improve relationships and effective work

Format: The course incorporates online learning and face-to-face lectures, discussions, individual work and group problem-solving activities.

Duration: 4 days

Population Viability Modelling Using Vortex

"The models* [CPSG] *created have been at the core of every decision we made…"

Kerryn Morrison, International Crane Foundation, Endangered Wildlife Trust 2017

This course is designed to introduce the population viability analysis software package *VORTEX* and its use in quantitative risk assessment as support for evidence-based species conservation planning. The target audience for the course includes biologists with a solid background in population biology and a basic familiarity with the concepts of simulation model development and analysis.

Course learning outcomes:

By the end of the course participants will acquire skills to:

1) Design the appropriate demographic model structure to address the species of interest and the threats to its persistence
2) Analyze species demographic and ecological data to create *VORTEX* model input parameter sets
3) Navigate the *VORTEX* model interface to generate a suite of scenarios for evaluating population viability under a host of future conditions
4) Interpret *VORTEX* model output to assess population viability
5) Use model results to guide species conservation planning efforts

Format: The course will be taught through a mix of lectures interactive discussions, and hands-on exercises with the software. Participants will work individually and in small groups to build population viability models and explore their dynamics under a range of realistic scenarios.

Duration: 4 days

Modeling Disease Impacts in Wildlife Populations

"Anthropogenic changes…are likely to increase emerging disease threats to biodiversity and it is critical to further develop strategies to manage these threats."

McCallum 2012

This course provides conservation managers and policy-makers with simulation tools to develop evidence-based predictions about the likely trajectory of particular disease outbreaks within wild populations, and the likely impact of different management actions. The course is targeted at those interested in learning how to apply OUTBREAK- a software package for modeling the dynamics of infectious disease in wildlife populations and for testing the effectiveness of alternative disease management actions- to species conservation projects.

Course learning outcomes:

By the end of the course participants will be able to:

1) Build models of infectious disease dynamics in wild populations
2) Analyze an array of scenarios to explore factors contributing to and possible consequences of disease epidemics
3) Project the likely effectiveness of disease management actions such as vaccination, isolation, or removal of animals
4) Integrate findings about disease risks into broad conservation plans for endangered species

Format: The course will be taught through a mix of lectures, group discussions, and individual work. Participants will work in small groups to build and explore models of disease for several sample scenarios, and will have the opportunity to examine the dynamics of diseases that are important in their own work.

Duration: 4 days

Wildlife Disease Risk Analysis (DRA)

"Recognition of the potential impact of disease in wild animal populations is the first step in prevention."

Scott 1988

Based on the OIE/IUCN Manual of Procedures for Wildlife Disease Risk Analysis (co-developed with the IUCN Wildlife Health Specialist Group), this highly interactive workshop aims to familiarize participants with this process and associated risk analysis tools. A follow-up mentoring service can be negotiated to further enable the application of the process post-workshop.

The course is targeted at individuals with a demonstrated interest in wildlife disease who are interested in applying this technique to their work in biodiversity conservation, public health or domestic animal health. This could include veterinarians, wildlife biologists, ecologists, epidemiologists, risk analysts, public health professionals and others.

Course learning outcomes:

By the end of the course participants will be able to:

1) Understand and apply the OIE/IUCN DRA process and tools to the evaluation and management of wildlife-associated disease risks
2) Work effectively within a cross-disciplinary, collaborative environment

Format: The course combines lectures, plenary sessions and working through real-life wildlife disease scenarios in small cross-disciplinary groups.

Duration: 2 days

Applying IUCN Guidelines for *Ex Situ* Management for Conservation: the One Plan Approach

"When used strategically, ex situ management can be a potent tool for species conservation."

Traylor-Holzer et al. 2018

This course is designed to teach participants how to evaluate the conservation needs of species and recommended role(s) of *ex situ* management. Such an evaluation brings together knowledge and interests of field conservationists and *ex situ* population managers to promote a One Plan approach to species conservation. The five-step decision-making process outlined in the IUCN SSC Guidelines for the Use of *Ex Situ* Management in Species Conservation is applied to achieve this.

The course is targeted at anyone involved in species conservation planning as well as for those responsible for the implementation of *ex situ* activities recommended in such plans.

Course learning outcomes:

By the end of the course participants will be able to:

1) Develop a status assessment and threat analysis for both *in situ* and *ex situ* populations
2) Identify potential conservation roles for *ex situ* management
3) Assess program characteristics required to meet potential roles
4) Conduct a feasibility assessment for potential *ex situ* activities
5) Recommend *ex situ* management actions, if any, to support species conservation

Format: The course mixes lectures, group discussions and practical exercises, using real world examples relevant to the course participants as appropriate.

Duration: 3 days

Ex Situ Population Management for Conservation

""…When existence in the wild is threatened, populations of that species, wherever they are, are of potential conservation value…."

Byers 2014

This course is particularly relevant for managers looking for a deeper understanding of how to plan and coordinate conservation-directed captive programs successfully. It provides a practical overview of how to integrate conservation goals with the needs and expectations of contributing stakeholders, focusing particularly on role and practice of genetic and demographic management.

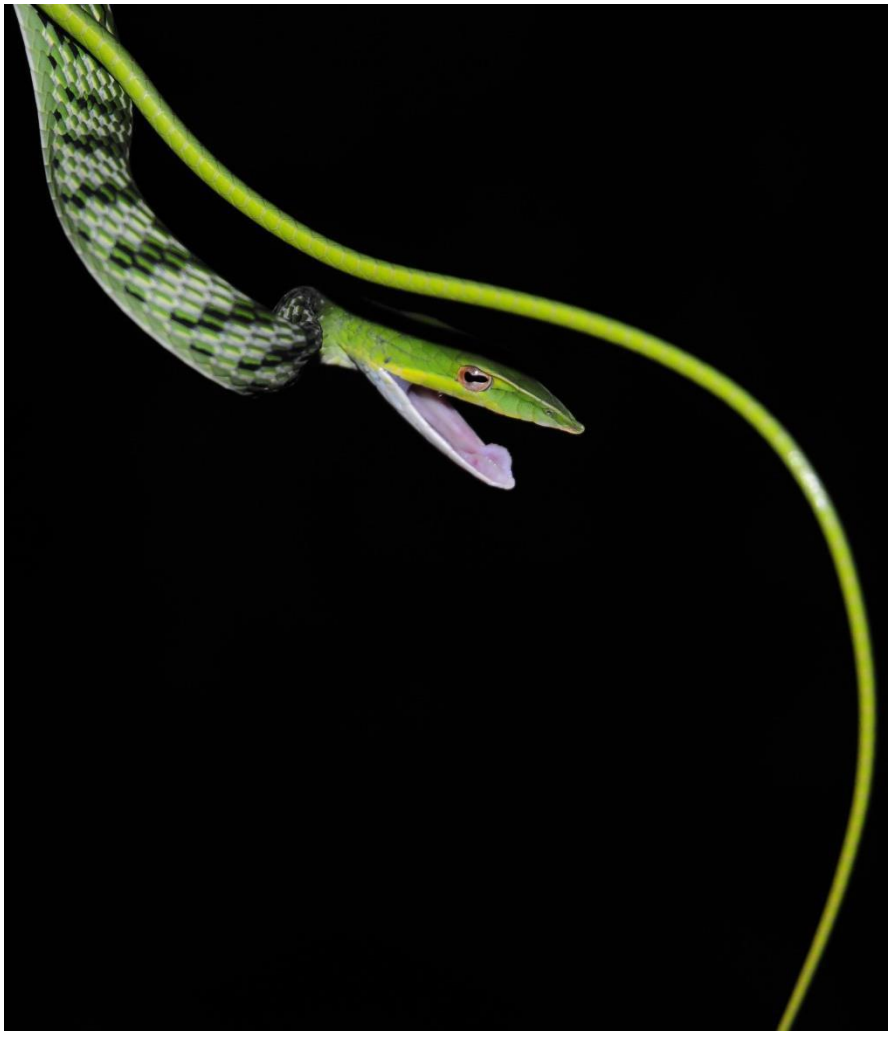
Course learning outcomes:

By the end of the course participants will be able to:

1) Explain the importance of the One Plan Approach to planning and managing conservation-directed *ex situ* programs
2) Set appropriate goals and objectives for conservation-directed *ex situ* programs
3) Explain the role of genetic and demographic management in maintaining population health and achieving program goals
4) Analyze and describe key population attributes using the PMx program
5) Generate goal-directed genetic and demographic management recommendations using the PMx program
6) Draw on facilitation tools and local networks to engage program stakeholders effectively, in program delivery.

Format: The course incorporates face-to-face lectures, discussions, individual work and group problem-solving activities.

Duration: 3 days



Conservation Planning: Train the Trainers

"Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do."

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1749-1832

This course is designed to equip individuals who already possess species conservation planning or related technical skills, with the additional competencies they need to be able to convey these skills to others in such a way that they can practice apply them themselves. The aim is for participants on this course to be able to adapt to each context and identify the most appropriate way to convey to others what they understand and can do.

Course learning outcomes:

By the end of the course participants will be able to:

1) Apply a learning process to coach and mentor others
2) Identify between different adult learning styles and how to account for this in training program design
3) Provide (and receive) feedback positively and constructively
4) Develop instructional objectives
5) Apply effective listening and questioning skills to aid in the development of coaching and group training sessions
6) Develop PowerPoint presentations and manage/facilitate open discussions
7) Develop lesson plans for group sessions
8) Design monitoring and evaluation schemes to assess achievement of learning outcomes

Format: The course incorporates online learning and face-to-face lectures, discussions, individual work and group problem-solving activities.

Duration: 3 days

Wildlife Disease Risk Assessment: Train the Trainers

Using the OIE/IUCN Manual of Procedures for Wildlife Disease Risk Analysis as a primary resource, this intensive workshop aims to increase capacity in the use of this process and associated risk analysis tools. The OIE/IUCN-endorsed wildlife DRA process provides a science-based, multi-stakeholder process for development of effective disease risk evaluation and management plans in the face of high levels of uncertainty.

The course is targeted at veterinarians, wildlife biologists, ecologists, epidemiologists, risk analysts, public health professionals and others with a strong background in wildlife disease from a biodiversity conservation, public health or domestic animal health perspective. Successful applicants will be in a position to apply the DRA process to their work and keen to extend the training to others.

Course learning outcomes:
By the end of the course participants will be able to:

1) Understand and apply the OIE/IUCN DRA process and tools to wildlife-associated diseases
2) Train others in this DRA methodology

Format: The course will involve a mix of lectures, group discussions, and individual work. In small groups participants will build and explore model disease scenarios, including those important in their own work.

Duration: 4 days

Planning Conservation Translocations

"Reintroduction is a globally important form of conservation management, but reintroduction programs are complex and require numerous decisions, all of which are subject to uncertainty."

Taylor *et al,* 2017

This course is run in collaboration with the IUCN Reintroduction Specialist Group. It is designed to enhance the capacity of conservation managers and decision-makers involved in the design and implementation of species conservation translocation plans. We explore core elements of the IUCN guidelines on translocation and provide a suite of planning tools to help with effective development of such projects within multi-stakeholder contexts. The course is targeted at a broad practitioner audience with a range of backgrounds and skill sets.

Course learning outcomes:

By the end of the course participants will be able to:

1) Interpret effectively the IUCN Guidelines for Reintroductions and Other Conservation Translocations
2) Surface stakeholder values in order to set plan objectives
3) Develop consequence tables to select between alternative strategies
4) Apply Structured Decision-Making processes to the development of species conservation translocation plans

Format: The course mixes lectures, training exercises and small-group breakout sessions where translocation problems proposed by participants are worked on under the guidance of experienced reintroduction practitioners.

Duration: 4 days

CPSG Alumni profiles

Here we provide some examples of existing CPSG alumni and how the training has helped them professionally.

Sanjay Molur, Chair, CPSG South Asia, and Executive Director, Zoo Outreach Organization.

"I have applied the Facilitator Training to more than 50 conservation planning and prioritization workshops I've facilitated in India and abroad since 1995. The impacts of the trainings are felt in everyday decision making, conservation actions and priorities, policy, organizational functioning, and many more spheres directly and indirectly linked to conservation practice."

Cathy Dean, CEO, Save the Rhino

"The balance of theory and practice [in the CPSG course] *was just right…Two months after the course, I was asked to take part in a workshop to develop the next 5-year national strategy for the conservation of black rhinos in Kenya...Once there, I was asked to facilitate one of the working groups…I was able to put many of the skills learnt into practice..."*

Stephanie Sanderson, Executive Director of the European Association of Zoo and Wildlife Veterinarians

I used the skills learnt almost immediately and designed and ran a two day strategy planning workshop for EAZWV involving 35 participants. The skills I learnt gave me the tools, understanding and confidence to facilitate these events and guide participants of different backgrounds in working together collaboratively.

Partners in conservation

CPSG delivers its training in part for and in part with its Regional Resource Centers in 10 locations worldwide (**Figure 2**).

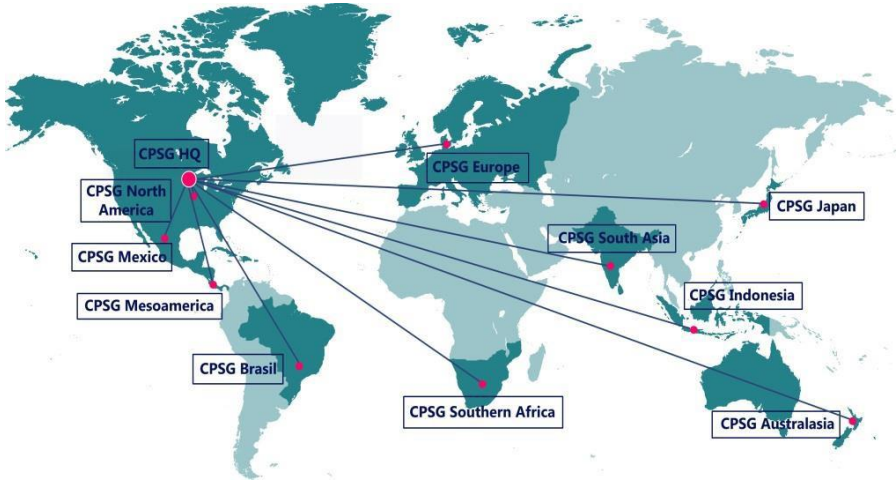


Figure 2.

The regional centers allows us to both draw from a larger team of trainers (with abilities to deliver training in multiple languages) and work locally with potential host organizations for our training courses.

In addition, we are able to access expertise from across the IUCN and its membership to give you first-hand access to some of the world's leading conservation planning professionals.

We work closely with the Species Conservation Toolkit Initiative (http://www.cpsg.org/new-initiatives/species-conservation-toolkit-initiative), giving you access to some of the latest conservation management tools and expertise available.

Join the Network

As a CPSG alumnus, you will join more than 850 conservationists who have been trained through the years and the many more who will be trained in the future. In 2018 we will be developing a learning network for our alumni, to help them further in their professional growth and provide access to the expertise and tools they need to do their most effective work.

Further information

For further details on our training contact Jamie Copsey at jamie@cpsg.org or Sofia Bilkadi at sofia@cpsg.org.

Also visit our website at www.cpsg.org for access to planning tools, reports and other resources

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