



Getting the Most Out of the ICAP Process

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Aim

The aim of this working group was to provide an overview of the Integrated Collection Assessment and Planning (ICAP) process and a forum for comments and suggestions regarding the process, especially the pre-workshop preparation and post-workshop outcomes.

Summary

The ICAP process brings *in situ* and *ex situ* communities together to apply the decision process of the IUCN *Guidelines for the Use of Ex Situ Management for Species Conservation* to the task of regional or global collection planning by zoo and aquarium associations. The working group used the Global Canid and Hyaenid ICAP Workshop that was held in 2016 to outline lessons learned. Discussions included the intensive data collection that is critical to evaluating a large number of taxa during a short workshop. The group also discussed the incorporation of ICAP outcomes into other planning processes (e.g., species conservation plans, IUCN SSC Specialist Group action plans), options for integrating regional ICAP efforts globally, and the feasibility in replicating the process among a variety of taxonomic groups.

Overview of the ICAP Process and Outcomes

Ideally every threatened species would have an integrated conservation plan developed using the One Plan Approach (OPA) that would guide zoos in their collection planning and conservation activities. In reality, few species have such plans currently in place, and the scale of the task to develop detailed plans is onerous. Meanwhile, zoos and other organizations need to make immediate decisions regarding their collections and activities. To help address this issue, CPSG and regional zoo associations have developed a new process called ICAP – Integrated Collection Assessment and Planning. Developed in the spirit of the OPA, the ICAP process bring *in situ* and *ex situ* communities together to apply a logical and transparent decision process to the task of regional or global collection planning for species conservation benefit.

The goal of the ICAP process is to develop recommendations for *ex situ* activities for a group of taxa based upon conservation needs and practical constraints. These recommendations can inform global or regional zoo association collection plans, with an emphasis on better serving the conservation of wild populations. To ensure maximal benefit and implementation, it is important that all relevant regional zoo associations (i.e., appropriate Taxon Advisory Groups, TAGs) and IUCN Specialist Groups (SGs) be involved in the organization and development of the ICAP workshop.

The ICAP decision-making process is based on IUCN *Guidelines for the Use of Ex Situ Management for Species Conservation*, and is intended to be flexible to fit the various needs of different taxonomic groups. This includes: 1) reviewing the threats and current status of both the *in situ* and *ex situ* populations; 2) identifying potential *ex situ* conservation roles; 3) determining program characteristics and scope necessary to meet these roles; 4) assessing the resources needed, risks and feasibility; and 5) making recommendations regarding the appropriate role and structure, if any, of any *ex situ* populations or activities. An added aspect for the ICAP process is the consideration of indirect conservation roles, such as conservation education or funding of *in situ* populations by the *ex situ* community.

Much of the success of the ICAP workshop depends on extensive pre-workshop preparations. Prior to the workshop, participants compile information on the *in situ* status and conservation needs for each taxon as well as the demographic and genetic status of all regional *ex situ* populations. Resources necessary to compile the pre-workshop information include (but are not limited to) the IUCN Red List, IUCN Specialist Group Reports, PHVA reports, recovery plans, and regional zoo association collection plans, breeding and transfer plans, and studbooks. Information regarding potential *ex situ* conservation roles for each taxon are gleaned from the above sources as well as through direct, detailed surveys to field species experts identified by the appropriate IUCN Specialist Group. For the Canid and Hyaenid ICAP Workshop, this part of the process took place over many months. The summarized *in situ* and *ex situ* information is made available to all ICAP participants for review prior to the workshop.

During the workshop each species is reviewed with respect to status and potential roles (and their relative benefits, risks and feasibility), and recommendations are made for *ex situ* activities, as appropriate, on a regional or global scale. Regional associations are encouraged to incorporate ICAP recommendations into future collection plans and species management plans. The ICAP's integration of *in situ* and *ex situ* efforts can provide a comprehensive and global conservation plan for taxonomic groups.

Working Group Discussion

After an overview of the ICAP process at the start of the working group session, the convenors led the group in a discussion of several key issues, challenges, and areas where streamlining could benefit the process. The working group discussed several topics:

- Integral to the success of the ICAP process is that *in situ* and *ex situ* specialists work together to examine potential roles for *ex situ* populations. Relying on IUCN threat

assessment sheets and older SG action plans cannot replace the benefit of active participation from Specialist Groups in this process. It is important to provide sufficient background information when contacting field experts regarding potential conservation roles. Only short responses are required in the survey, but responders have the option to provide as much information and feedback as they wish.

- Developing the taxon data sheets prior to the ICAP workshop was highly valuable, not only for the ICAP workshop itself but as a comprehensive compilation of *in situ* and *ex situ* status. For many taxa this may represent the first time such information has been compiled in one place. However, the effort required a lot of work for the Canid and Hyaenid ICAP. Ways to streamline this process need to be investigated.
- ICAP recommendations regarding initiating, continuing, modifying or phasing out *ex situ* populations or activities are non-binding; thus, each zoo association (or other *ex situ* organization or facility) decides on whether they will adopt the recommendation or not. These recommendations are likely to be more valuable and accepted with inclusive participation from the various regional zoo associations and other stakeholders.
- The Canid and Hyaenid ICAP process was very helpful for both EAZA and AZA in developing their next Regional Collection Plans (RCPs). EAZA is moving to an ICAP-type process for all of its RCPs, hiring several new staff to work on the process. The ICAP process resulted in improved understanding of *ex situ* options for institutional support. It also improved links among regional TAGs and Specialist Groups. There was agreement that sharing data that were collected globally with other regions will help move process more quickly across regions and prevent duplication of work. This is particularly relevant to avoid duplication of effort from the side of the IUCN Specialist Groups. This led to discussion about the need to streamline the process and to create a single, central database containing the global data. Ideally, each region would have their own access to the data and allowing acknowledgement of each region's participation in the process.
- The ICAP process is not one size fits all. It is not feasible to examine every species for some speciose taxa; in other cases, taxonomic issues may provide challenges. Scope needs to be considered and defined at the beginning of the process. In some cases, it may be possible to focus on a single region or threat level, or some other subset. For example, some zoo associations do not have TAGs, and their ICAP process may focus on native species. Prioritization and feasibility of ICAP recommendations may be different for different zoo associations.
- Another topic of discussion was how ICAP and the One Plan approach work together. The ICAP integrates aspects of the One Plan approach so that if each zoo association uses a standardized ICAP approach, they can dovetail into one another and eventually into one integrated conservation plan for the species.

- ICAPs, and RCPs from one or more zoo and aquarium associations that are built on the results of the ICAP process, will ultimately need to be implemented by the individual zoos and aquariums (and if relevant other *ex situ* partners). It is therefore important that regional collection planning recommendations are effectively linked to the institutional collection planning process of these institutions.
- Financing ICAP workshops is a consideration. One option to minimize costs is to conduct an ICAP in conjunction with another meeting where key representatives will be present (e.g., Specialist Group meeting, Joint TAG Chairs meeting).

Recommended Actions

The following recommendations were made by the working group:

Identifying potential ICAP candidates

1. Develop and prioritize a list of Taxon Advisory Groups and IUCN SSC Specialist Groups that are interested in the ICAP process. Continue to promote the ICAP process at meetings across geographic regions.

Streamlining the ICAP process

2. Investigate if and how CPSG can host a repository (or set of web links) for documents produced by TAGs (e.g., Regional Collection Plans), IUCN SSC SGs (e.g., Action Plans), and ICAP working groups to aid in pre-ICAP preparation and dissemination of ICAP results.
3. Develop ways to make data gathering for *ex situ* holdings more efficient for the pre-workshop preparation. Is there a way to provide direct access to holdings through international and regional studbooks and Species360? Is there a way to automate data downloads? Is working with AZA and EAZA population biologists one way to help find these data? This question is broader than just pulling data from Species360's ZIMS database, but that might be a good place to start.
4. Consider convening a workshop at the next Joint TAG Chair meeting in Budapest in 2018 to explore ways to optimize using the ICAP process across regional zoo associations.

Disseminating results

5. Investigate ways to encourage regional zoo associations to incorporate the ICAP results into their regional collection plans.