2021 Report

IUCN SSC Lichen Specialist Group

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NUMBER OF MEMBERS
23

Mission statement

Promote studies assessing lichen diversity, population dynamics and conservation genetics in order to evaluate the conservation status of lichen species according to IUCN Criteria.

Projected impact 2021–2025

The Lichen Specialist Group is currently building networks of people in order to improve capacity across all aspects of the species conservation cycle.

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-001 Conduct global assessment of African, Asian and European leafy Parmelioid lichens in the family Parmeliaceae.

T-002 Assess key lichen species that are harvested for food, medicine and other uses globally.

T-005 Assess lichens endemic to the Galápagos Islands.

T-006 Conduct global assessments of key lichen species that characterise the arctic/alpine biota.

T-007 Conduct global assessments of lichens endemic to Colombia.

T-014 Conduct research on lichen conservation and threatened species.

T-016 Assess threatened and near threatened lichen species worldwide.

ACT

T-009 Hold an open house for lichen conservation: a free networking and Q&A session to promote good practice in on-the-ground action.

T-018 Support Lichen Specialist Group members in applying for SSC internal grants.

NETWORK

T-004 Recruit four new active members from underrepresented regions (Asia, South America, Africa).

T-011 Recruit and train five additional active members to the SSC from established lichen conservation networks.

T-012 Internally structure the Specialist Group to add regional or thematic leads.

T-017 Host Red Listing workshops.

COMMUNICATE

T-010 Build a lichen SSC website to highlight key projects and actions.

T-015 Communicate findings of research on rare and threatened lichens to local, national and international stakeholders.

Activities and results 2021

ASSESS

Red List

T-001 (KSR 6)

Number of global Red List reassessments completed: 12

Result description: We published 12 assessments of leafy parmelioid species from all over the world. These assessments were a group effort, involving numerous authors lending their expertise.

T-002 (KSR 6)

Number of new global Red List assessments completed: 1

Result description: One species used for food, medicine and other uses was assessed.

T-016 (KSR 6)

Number of new global Red List assessments completed: 14

Result description: Group members published assessments of diverse and threatened lichen species from multiple different countries.

Research activities

T-014 (KSR 5)

Number of research projects completed or supported by SSC members per taxonomic group and region: 2

Bryoria salazinica is listed CR, with very limited numbers of mature individuals, threatened by logging, changes to humidity regimes and increasing severity of storms impacting its coastal habitats
Photo: Hayley Paquette

Flavoparmelia baltimorensis is found across the Americas, and abundant and widespread in eastern North America. The Lichen Specialist Group aims to assess 100 leafy parmelioid lichens in this quadrennium
Photo: Jason Hollinger

Result description: Results of an investigation into the population history of *Lobaria pulmonaria* and implications for conservation planning were published in: Allen, J.L., McMullin, R.T., Wiersma, Y.F. and Scheidegger, C. (2021). 'Population genetics and biogeography of the lungwort lichen in North America support distinct Eastern and Western gene pools'. *American Journal of Botany* 108(12):2416–2424. https://doi.org/10.1002/ajb2.1774. Extensive fieldwork in the eastern and western lower slopes of the southern Sierra Nevada region motivated by red listing documentation has established that two lichens, *Rhizoplaca marginalis* and *R. glaucophana*, previously regarded as Rare and Vulnerable due to limited geographic extent and small population size, are more common than previously understood; they will be assessed as Least Concern in 2022 (J. Hollinger and N. Noell, pers comm).

ACT

Conservation actions

T-018 (KSR 10)

Number of threatened species benefiting from in situ conservation action: 1

Result description: María José Chesa is leading a team focused on *Lethariella intricata* conservation in Spain, which includes population size assessments and collaborations with local and national government organisations. She was awarded an SSC Internal Grant to support this conservation work.

NETWORK

Capacity building

T-017 (KSR 2)

Number of people trained in assessment tools: 80

Result description: We hosted a Red Listing workshop at the International Association of Lichenologists meeting this summer. More than 80 lichenologists from all over the globe attended.

Acknowledgements

The Lichen Specialist Group would like to thank the many individuals who have contributed time and energy to lichen conservation work, in particular those who have supported the work of the SSC. The group leaders would like to thank their respective institutions for their support: Eastern Washington University, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, and the Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow, and Landscape Research WSL. Generous support from the Mohamed Bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund was instrumental for the Red Listing Workshop and the subsequent publication of many assessments. We are grateful to the talented photographers who have generously shared access to their photo libraries in order to share the beauty of lichens to a wider audience: Leif and Anita Stridvall, Jason Hollinger.

Summary of achievements

Total number of targets 2021–2025: 15

Geographic regions: 11 Global, 1 Africa, 4 America, 1 Asia, 1 Europe

Actions during 2021:

Assess: 4 (KSR 5, 6)
Act: 1 (KSR 10)
Network: 1 (KSR 2)

Overall achievement 2021–2025: