

IUCN SSC Marine Turtle Specialist Group

IUCN SSC MARINE TURTLE
SPECIALIST GROUP



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260

SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE
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Mission statement

The mission of the IUCN SSC Marine Turtle Specialist Group is to develop and support strategies, set priorities and provide tools that promote and guide the conservation of marine turtles and their ecological roles and habitats.

Projected impact 2021–2025

During the 2021–2025 quadrennium, the Marine Turtle Specialist Group (MTSG) will disseminate essential knowledge about the status of sea turtles globally through reports and networking that will inform scientific publications, management strategies and action plans. The group will also update Regional Management Units (RMUs) and conservation priorities for sea turtles, which guide IUCN Red Listing as well as conservation and management strategies at local, national and international levels. The MTSG's work over the quadrennium will provide sea turtle researchers and conservationists with the most up-to-date and essential information to take the most effective action to protect sea turtles and their habitats at regional or local levels, thereby benefiting the status of sea turtles all over the world.

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-001 Complete global and subpopulation Red List assessments of the Olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), Green (*Chelonia mydas*), Hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) and Flatback (*Natator depressus*) turtles.
Status: On track

T-002 Produce 10 Regional Reports (at least partially completed) covering over 80% of countries where sea turtles occur.
Status: On track

T-003 Plan, fundraise, conduct pre-workshop analyses and implement the 7th MTSG 'Burning Issues' Workshop (BI-7) focused on validating RMUs, re-assessing vulnerability of all taxa and creating a framework for 'Important Marine Turtle Areas'.
Status: Achieved

T-004 Publish three Regional Reports through IUCN.
Status: Not initiated

T-005 Update Renew Regional Management Units (subpopulations).
Status: On track

COMMUNICATE

T-006 Communicate results of the Conservation Priorities Portfolio.
Status: Not initiated

Activities and results 2022

ASSESS

Red List

T-001 Complete global and subpopulation Red List assessments of the Olive Ridley (*L. olivacea*), Green (*C. mydas*), Hawksbill (*E. imbricata*) and Flatback (*N. depressus*) turtles. (KSR 6)

Number of global Red List reassessments completed: 0

Result description: In 2022, we were finalizing the Red List assessment for the North Atlantic Green Turtle and the global assessment, as well as drafts, for Flatback Turtle subpopulations and global are on their way.

T-005 Update and renew Regional Management Units (subpopulations). (KSR 6)

Number of technical documents provided to support RL assessments/reassessments: 0

Result description: The new Regional Management Units (RMUs) will be used for future sub-population Red List assessments. Because the RMUs were created using the most up-to-date data possible, they will facilitate more accurate RLAs.

Research activities

T-002 Produce 10 Regional Reports (at least partially completed) covering over 80% of countries where sea turtles occur. (KSR 5)

Olive Ridley Turtles (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) nesting during an arribada on Playa Escobilla, Mexico
Photo: Ashleigh Bandimere



Post-nesting Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) in Colola, Mexico
Photo: Ashleigh Bandimere



A Leatherback Turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*) finishes nesting at one of the most important nesting beaches in Trinidad
Photo: Ashleigh Bandimere



A Leatherback Turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*) hatching on Matura Beach, Trinidad
Photo: Ashleigh Bandimere

Number of publications produced in internal journals of SSC groups: 9

Result description: In 2017 the IUCN-SSC Marine Turtle Specialist Group launched a regional reporting initiative that aims to harness the collective power of our global expert members to compile and summarise the most relevant data for conservation of sea turtles in each of the 10 MTSG regions and their respective marine turtle Regional Management Units (RMUs). Through this initiative, the MTSG aims to publish annual Regional Reports that summarise all known published data and pertinent unpublished data (at the authors' discretion) for each country and region in which sea turtles occur. Our hope is that the information in these Regional Reports will become a valuable reference for conservationists worldwide, and will moreover facilitate the production of future Red List assessments, a process that heretofore has been painstaking. In short, the Regional Reports are intended to: 1) help the MTSG fulfil its role as the global authority on sea turtles, and 2) spread the labour of Red List assessments to a broader force of MTSG members. In 2022 we completed nine draft reports that cover 83% of the countries where sea turtles occur. Four of these reports are considered complete and are in the publication process through the IUCN.

T-005 Update and renew Regional Management Units (subpopulations). (KSR 6)

Number of research projects completed or supported by SSC members per taxonomic group and region: 0

Result description: The core organisers of this project conducted an extensive literature review of all the published sea turtle geospatial data, mapped all the spatial information, and created a brand-new collaborative mapping system that allowed MTSG members to make edits to the newly drawn boundaries of the Regional Management Units. There were multiple rounds of review with the group and all the edits were synthesised to update all Regional Management Units (RMUs). The results are being published by Endangered Species Research and are under review now.

Summary of achievements

Total number of targets 2021–2025: 6

Geographic regions: 6 Global

Actions during 2022:

Assess: 4 (KSR 5, 6)

Overall achievement 2021–2025:

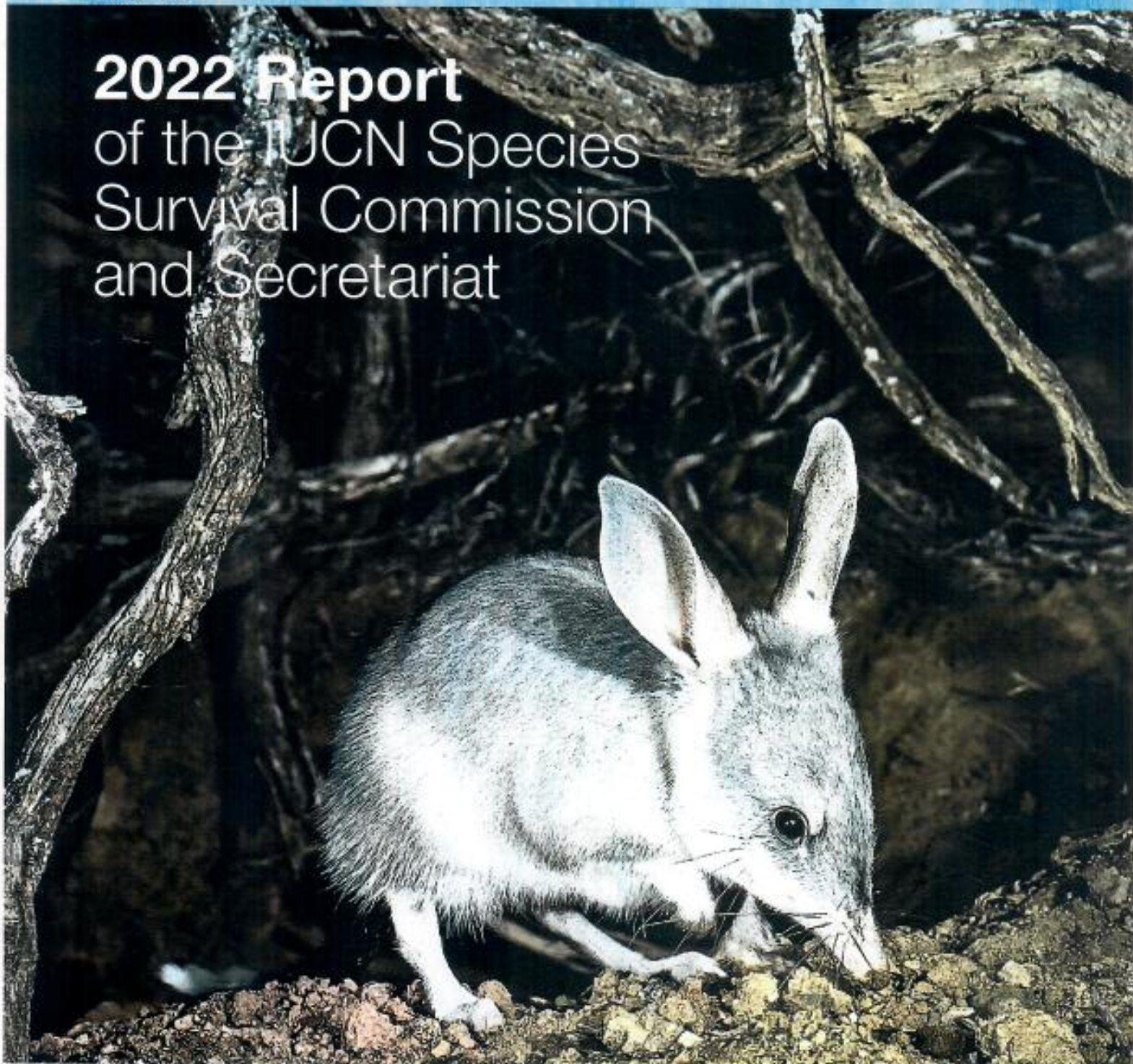




Species

ISSUE 63

2022 Report
of the IUCN Species
Survival Commission
and Secretariat



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The designation of geographical entities in this work, and the presentation of the material, do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IUCN concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

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Cover photo: A Bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*) at the entrance to its burrow - free to live a life without the constant threat of predation from feral cats and foxes. The Bilby has disappeared from over 80 percent of its former range, primarily due to predation by introduced feral cats and foxes. Bilbies were returned to Mallee Cliffs National Park in 2019 by Australian Wildlife Conservancy and the New South Wales Government in an effort to conserve the species and rebuild the population. Mallee Cliffs National Park supports the largest feral predator-free area on mainland Australia and will become home to at least 10 regionally extinct species. This is the first time Bilbies have been present in this part of the country in more than a century.

Photo: Brad Leue

Inset photos: Endangered Yellow-bellied Treefrogs (*Dryophytes flaviventris*) in amplexus. Photo: Amael Borzee (page 4).
Nepal Bright Burrowing Spider (*Haplocosmia nepalensis*) in its natural habitat, Nepal. Photo: Kiran Thapa Magar (page 4).
Endangered Knysna Seahorse (*Hippocampus capensis*). Photo: Louw Claassens (page 4).
Flavoparmelia baitimorensis is a lichen found across the Americas, abundant and widespread in eastern North America. Photo: Jason Hollinger (page 5).

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