



Assessing the Conservation Status of Plants using IUCN Tools

(The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species & RapidList)

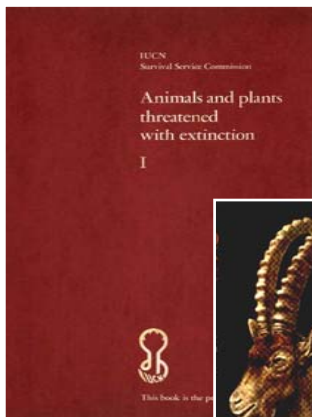
Red List Workshop

Nairobi, Kenya, February 16-20, 2009

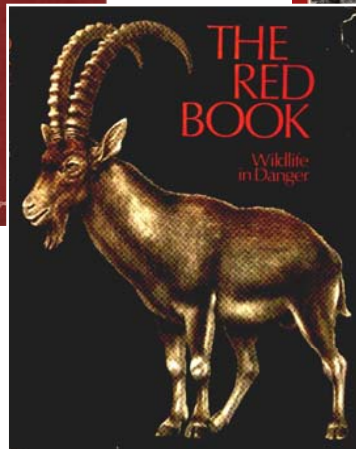
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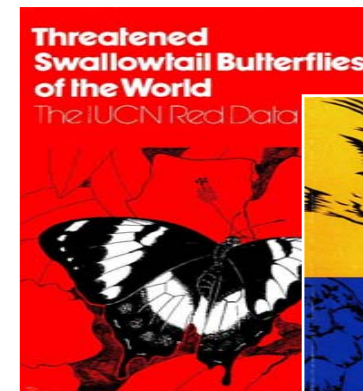
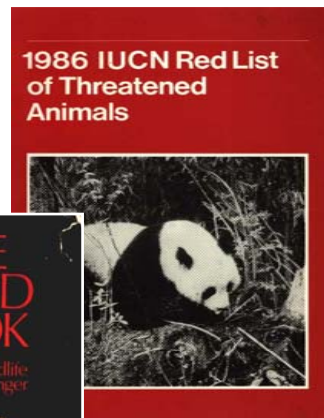
IUCN has been producing Red Data Books and Red Lists for more than 40 years ...1963: Sir Peter Scott - 'a register of threatened wildlife that includes definitions of degrees of threat'



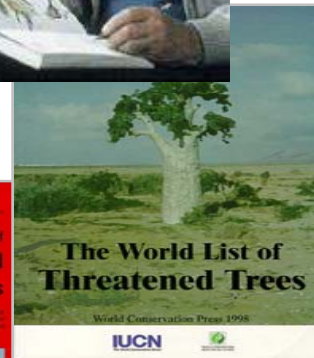
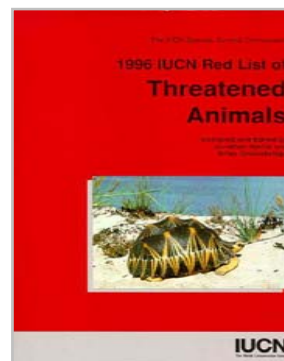
1963



1969



1970s: thematic & regional lists



1990s: plant & animal lists

What is The IUCN Red List?

- The IUCN Red List is the world's most comprehensive information source on the conservation status of plant and animal species
- An objective system for assessing extinction risk
- Species are assigned to one of eight categories based on criteria linked to population trend, population size and geographic range
- Species listed as Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable are collectively described as 'Threatened'

What is The IUCN Red List?

- The IUCN Red List is not just a list of names and threat categories
- It includes information on threats (e.g. invasive species), ecological requirements, and conservation actions
- The most credible, scientific and trusted benchmark for gauging the status and threats of the world's species
- A product of the IUCN 'triple helix': hundreds of the world's top species experts (in and beyond the SSC), the IUCN Species Programme, and also IUCN members

What is The IUCN Red List?

- It is managed, and published by the IUCN Species Programme
- SSC: develops the standards – and provides information as volunteers!
- The flagship product of IUCN
- The global gold standard for informing conservation action
- Provide a global index to monitor the status of the world's biodiversity
- Published on a website: www.iucnredlist.org

The 2008 IUCN Red List: c. 44,000 species

- As of 2008: 44,838 species assessed, of which 16,928 are threatened with extinction
- Many more unknown ... many more thought to be threatened



Red List Assessments – progress so far

- Amphibians – all 6,000+ species assessed
- Birds – all 9,990 species assessed
- Mammals – all 5,500+ species assessed
- Marine – good progress on some groups: corals, sharks, groupers
- Freshwater – good progress: Africa, Europe, Mediterranean
- Reptiles – just started (16%)
- Plants – **only 3% assessed!**
 - Approximately 12,000 plants on the IUCN Red List

Addressing the lack of plant assessments

*GSPC Target 2: A preliminary assessment of **all** known plant species at national, regional and international levels by 2010*

RapidList as one response to Target 2

While full assessments on the IUCN Red List remain the priority, IUCN is also providing RapidList:

- A simple software tool for **preliminary** assessments
- Based on the IUCN Red List Categories & Criteria (2001)
- Designed to quickly classify species into one of three criteria:
 - Likely threatened
 - Likely not threatened
 - Likely data deficient

About RapidList

- Does not replace full biodiversity assessments or the tools for these
- Does not replace the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species
- Should not to be used when conservation status could be disputed
- When there is enough data for a full Red List assessment, RapidList should not be used as an alternative
- RapidList can be a useful tool to prepare for a full Red Listing exercise

Developing and improving RapidList

- 2006: logic designed and tested for accuracy of results
- 2007-2008: online tool developed and tested for usability (Cuba, Nairobi, Singapore, Tunisia and presented at CBD SBSTTA and Planta Europa)
- Early 2009: testing feedback being incorporated into version 2
- Mid 2009: final testing and finalization of Version 2.0

RapidList Version 2.0 – key changes

- Offline capability
- Improved usability
- Batch changes to data
- Improved export/import functions
- Improved navigation and management of data sets
- Easy to export directly to SIS to continue on to full assessments

RapidList will:

- Help achieve Target 2 of GSPC
- Encourage users to move to full Red List assessments
- Introduce new users to the basics of the IUCN Categories and Criteria

How?

- IUCN provides the tool, users provide the data
- Botanists, conservationists, herbaria and botanic gardens are encouraged to use RapidList as it best suits their needs, e.g.
 - To coarsely sort before a Red List workshop
 - For a quick preliminary overview of the status of the flora of a region
- IUCN will *not*: authenticate entries, check consistency, resolve conflicts in assessments, provide taxonomy

RapidList questions



- Is the species of unknown provenance?
- Is the species taxonomically uncertain?
- What is the most likely number of locations?
- What is extent of occurrence most likely to be?
- Is area of occupancy likely to be smaller than 20 km²?
- Is a 30% or larger population reduction likely?
- Is continuing decline likely in population size, subpopulations, area, or habitat quality?
- Is the number of mature individuals likely to be less than 1,000?
- Is the number of mature individuals likely to be less than 10,000?
- Is severe fragmentation of the species likely?
- Are extreme fluctuations likely?

Version 2.0 of RapidList is being developed and will be available around May 2009.

The current RapidList is still available for use, but new users are advised to wait for Version 2.0.

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RapidList from 2007-2009