

Conservation News





Center for Species Survival Nigeria launches programme of work

The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) is driving global conservation efforts by fostering strategic partnerships to establish Centers for Species Survival. In August 2023, Africa's first Center for Species Survival was created in Nigeria through a strategic partnership between the SSC and the A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute, a centre of excellence for conservation training at the University of Jos, with > 20 years of conservation capacity development experience in West Africa. Through this partnership, the Center for Species Survival Nigeria is poised to further enhance conservation capacity in West Africa through the application of IUCN tools and knowledge products, fostering partnerships, and scaling up actions to protect and restore biodiversity in Nigeria and across the region.

The new Center initiated its programme of work in January 2024, beginning with a preliminary review of all assessed species in Nigeria, identifying > 500 species (c. 10% of assessed species in the country) that are currently categorized as threatened on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (67 species as Critically Endangered, 162 as Endangered and 274 as Vulnerable). Most are plants (54%), followed by fishes (21%), mammals (11%), and birds (5%). Other groups include reptiles (3%), amphi-

bians (3%), insects (1%) and crustaceans (1%), with bivalves, cephalopods and gastropods comprising the remaining 1%. This highlights existing gaps and also helps identify priority areas requiring conservation action in Nigeria.

The Center for Species Survival Nigeria is also fostering partnerships and collaborations with other stakeholders, including with the newly established IUCN SSC Nigeria Species Specialist Group. By working alongside partners to conduct national Red List assessments, identify priority species and facilitate conservation planning and action, the Center for Species Survival Nigeria is helping to strengthen the implementation of the Species Conservation Cycle (Assess–Plan–Act–Network–Communicate) in Nigeria and across the region in line with the IUCN Species Strategic Plan 2021–2025.

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