



Reinstatement of IUCN / SSC South Asian Invertebrate Specialist Group

We are happy to inform that Dr. Simon Stuart, the present chairman of IUCN SSC supported the recommendations of Invertebrate Conservation Sub-Committee lead by Prof. Michael Samways to re-instate the South Asian Invertebrate Specialist Group with effect from 28th January 2010. The re-instated South Asian Invertebrate Specialist Group SAsISG will run in association with *Invertebrate Conservation and Information Network of South Asia* (ICINSA) hosted by Zoo Outreach Organisation (ZOO) / Wildlife Information Liaison Development (WILD) Society / CBSG, South Asia based at Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India. Dr. B.A. Daniel, ZOO, Coimbatore, India is the chair and Dr. Ather Rafi, National Agricultural Research Center, Islamabad, Pakistan is the co-chair of the SAsISG.

The Zoo Outreach Organisation which has been working for zoos and wildlife conservation since 1986, initiated Indian regional Invertebrate Special Interest Group under Conservation Breeding Specialist Group, India (now South Asia) in the year 1991. In the year 1995, the Indian Invertebrate Conservation Network was formed with the support of Invertebrate Conservation Centre, Zoological Survey of London. In the year 2000, the network was expanded to all south Asian countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) and is now called the Invertebrate Conservation and Information Network of South Asia (ICINSA). The objective of the network is to promote invertebrate conservation in South Asia.

In November 2001, IUCN SSC organized a scoping workshop at Washington DC and as per the recommendations of the workshop a request was made by ZOO to SSC to initiate a Specialist Group for the South Asian region considering the difficulties in forming taxon based Specialist groups for invertebrates. Crediting the manifold activities of ICINSA and its large membership, Dr. David Brackett and the committee approved the formation of region based Specialist Group for Invertebrates in December 2002. It had a total of 25 invited members in the group. However, that SG was dissolved in August 2005 along with many other SG of IUCN SSC since the new SSC Chairman after Dr. David Brackett wanted to bring in some change in the existing activities of IUCN SSC.

The reinstated South Asian Invertebrate Specialist Group will cover the following 8 countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The objectives of the SG is to assist individuals, institutions and agencies in South Asia to conserve invertebrates. Invitations for the membership are being sent out and the membership will be on invitation basis.

Some of our future activities of the Specialist Group will include:

- Identification of invertebrate specialists and interested people, networking, publication of newsletter and training.
- To strengthen the existing network activities of Invertebrate pollinator and aquatic invertebrate conservation through networking, capacity building, publication and education in South Asia
- To work on the tarantula trade issue and on the taxonomy and status of mygalomorph spiders in south Asia.
- To assess freshwater species in Eastern Himalaya and Western Ghats with IUCN freshwater Biodiversity Assessment Unit.
- To host / organise training programmes and symposium on selected invertebrates.
- To compile data for assessments on several groups of invertebrates for global, regional and national assessments in South Asia involving network members.
- To develop education manual and packets for South Asian audience on climate change and species.
- Publication of invited and special articles on themes related to invertebrate conservation and taxonomy particularly from South Asia utilizing the on-line open access peer-reviewed global journal on conservation and taxonomy, Journal of Threatened Taxa.
- To develop some action plans for select groups of invertebrates.
- To develop education materials to popularize invertebrate conservation.

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