

Conservation news

Scientific writing and publishing workshop for Indonesian early-career primatologists

Scientific writing and publishing are integral to advancing science and providing access to information for researchers and decision makers. Unfortunately, students and early-career researchers face barriers in publishing their work. They often lack training opportunities, and navigating the process of writing and publishing, particularly for those without scientific writing experience and for whom English is not their first language, can be problematical.

Based on an online assessment in March 2022 for the Indonesian Primatology community, we found the challenges include: (1) lack of confidence because of difficulties writing in English, (2) lack of mentoring and adequate information about the process of manuscript submission, and (3) lack of knowledge about how to develop a good writing framework.

In a 3-day scientific writing and publication workshop during 4–6 July 2022 at the National University Jakarta, we embarked upon an initiative to encourage early-career Indonesian primatologists to write and publish. This was a collaboration between The IUCN Species Survival Commission Primate Specialist Group Section on Small Apes, Yayasan Konservasi Ekosistem Alam Nusantara, the Indonesian Primatological Society and the National University.

Interested applicants submitted draft manuscripts prior to the workshop. From 35 applications received, we chose 24 participants. The selected participants are Indonesian early-career primatologists with less than 5 years of professional experience and little or no experience of scientific publishing.

The workshop began with plenary sessions from three national, regional and international primate journal editors who covered the various stages of writing a scientific manuscript, publication ethics, choosing the most appropriate journal, and tips for publishing a paper. Participants then worked in smaller groups, receiving intensive mentoring sessions with senior primatologists from Indonesian and other universities, along with peer learning.

The views of the participants after the workshop can be summarized as follows: (1) The mentoring session in small groups is helpful for developing the quality of writing and sharing tips and knowledge. (2) Peer support and feedback are beneficial for learning and helping to overcome the challenges of working alone. (3) Support from senior researchers and experts is valuable to build confidence and assist with the writing process. (4) The workshop was an opportunity for networking and potential collaboration for young primatologists.

Although the 3-day workshop was constrained by time, we believe the participants developed the skills and confidence they require to publish their work. We strongly

recommend that more workshops of this type be offered to all conservationists, as required, to ensure that the high quality of their research can be shared widely.

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New online training course launched for IUCN Green Status of Species

The *IUCN Green Status of Species* was launched in July 2021 as a new, integral part of the *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* (Grace et al., 2021, *Oryx*, 55, 651–652). Whereas the Red List has traditionally served as the most widely-recognized means of establishing a species' risk of extinction in the wild, the Green Status adds a much-needed means for assessing species recovery.

To be assessed as Fully Recovered, a species must be viable and ecologically functional in all parts (termed spatial units) of its indigenous range, including those areas that were occupied prior to major human impacts. The degree to which these criteria are met by a species translates into a Green Score, with which species are placed in categories (as in the Red List) that reflect where a species lies on the path to recovery. But the Green Status of Species framework does not stop there: it estimates the impact of past conservation actions on the current status of a species, and what is expected to happen in the future if actions are either halted, or continued and enhanced, over the short and long term (dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.CH.2021.02.en).

As with the Red List, correctly applying the Green Status framework requires an understanding of key terms (e.g. indigenous range), concepts (e.g. functionality) and procedures (e.g. estimating outcomes of scenarios with and without conservation). To support efficient and consistent assessments, in September 2022 IUCN launched an online training course to support both assessors and stakeholders to understand and apply the categories and impact metrics correctly. Comprising seven modules and 14 lessons, the course takes approximately 7 hours to complete and covers concepts, definitions and procedures.

The Green Status of Species training course is available for learners to access freely on conservationtraining.org,

together with the Red List training course. Prior completion of the latter, or at least familiarity with the Red List categories and criteria, is encouraged before beginning the Green Status training course. Since its inception, more than 12,530 learners have enrolled in the Red List training course (C. Pollock, pers. comm., 2022).

The new course covers all key information needed to undertake a Green Status assessment. Future planned development includes modules on mapping and supporting information, and a final exam. After successfully passing the exam, learners will be awarded a certificate of achievement to prove they have completed the course and have a good understanding of the IUCN Green Status of Species and the assessment process. The course will soon be available in Spanish and French.

We look forward to hearing from the experiences of learners. Lyda Hill Philanthropies is gratefully acknowledged for supporting the development of the course.

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More is not enough: Central Africa and the proposed 30% protected and conserved areas by 2030

In December 2022, governments will decide on the new global biodiversity framework, which aims to conserve 30% of the world's surface by 2030, the so-called 30 × 30 target (cbd.int/article/draft-1-global-biodiversity-framework). The Congo Basin Forest Partnership convened in Gabon during 4–8 July 2022 and in its final communiqué invited the member countries of the Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC) 'To align the size of conservation areas with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) target of 30% conservation areas by 2030 by (i) increasing funding, (ii) improving management, (iii) identifying other effective conservation measures (OECM), and (iv) focusing scarce resources on smaller areas to improve the management effectiveness of protected areas' (pfb-cbfp.org/meetings-news/RDP19-Programme-fina-len.html).

The 30 × 30 target was also the central theme at the subsequent African Protected Areas Congress in Rwanda during 18–24 July 2022, where we were panellists and speakers.

Here we summarize the discussions regarding how Central African countries could achieve the 30 × 30 target by addressing the following four matters. (1) Several financing mechanisms centred on forest carbon sequestration have started. Yet despite awareness of the importance of biodiversity and the fight against climate change, funding remains cruelly short of the required 10-fold scaling up. (2) Public–private partnerships, in which governments delegate the management of protected areas to private partners, have shown increased management efficiency and financing. Governments should actively prepare and oversee these partnerships, and private partners should make themselves dispensable by improving the capacities of national management staff and actively involving local communities (Scholte, 2022, *Oryx*, doi.org/10.1017/S0030605321000752). (3) Eight Central African countries have reached the 2020 CBD target of 17% of land surface conserved, and seven countries have > 25% and three > 40% of their land conserved (Doumenge et al., 2021, *State of Protected Areas–2020*, observatoire-comifac.net/publications/edap/2020?lang=en). This includes trophy hunting zones that, unlike those in southern African countries, are not internationally recognized but could be considered OECMs because of their conservation importance. This is also true for certified forestry concessions with elaborate quality controls (Eba'ata Atyi et al., 2021, *State of the Forests–2021*, observatoire-comifac.net/publications/edf/2021?lang=en). Once certified hunting and forest concessions are recognized as OECMs, 30% of Central Africa will be protected and conserved. The real challenge is, however, to effectively manage the vast trophy hunting and certified forestry concessions that are under pressures that jeopardize their economic viability. Congress participants also stressed that the opportunity should be taken to integrate local communities and Indigenous people in the equitable governance of OECMs. (4) Where these measures are not feasible, a strategic retreat, concentrating scarce financial and human resources on smaller areas, should be pursued. From these well-protected nuclei, a viable conservation network may ultimately be rebuilt (Scholte et al., 2022, *Conservation Biology*, 36, e13860).

Addressing these four matters, Central Africa may seize the 30 × 30 target not only to respond to international expectations, but above all to transform its protected and conserved areas to ensure they are effectively managed, equitably governed and provide the required economic benefits.

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