



range country languages, including Bengali and Malagasy. We are developing a mobile phone app to facilitate access to the recommendations.

In February 2024, we published *Responsible Primate Watching for Tourism Professionals*. Our audience includes, but is not restricted to, researchers, managers, government officials, tour operators and site managers. We examine the benefits and costs of primate-watching and discuss the issues around habituating primates for this activity. Along with general recommendations, we provide specific recommendations for primate tourism site management and for the development of new primate-watching initiatives.

Both documents are available from [human-primate-interactions.org/resources1](https://human-primate-interactions.org/resources1). We hope everyone either primate-watching or managing it in some way will read these documents to learn more about primate-watching in different contexts, and that these recommendations will ensure the coexistence of people and primates while benefiting the people who live alongside them.

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## IUCN Species Survival Commission Aquatic Fungi Specialist Group

The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) launched a new Specialist Group in October 2023: the Aquatic Fungi Specialist Group, focusing on both freshwater and marine fungi. This group developed from FUNACTION, which was funded through Biodiversa+ ([funaction.eu](https://funaction.eu)). The new Specialist Group will develop the scientific and coordination basis for conservation assessment, planning and action for aquatic fungi, and disseminate appropriate monitoring and assessment methods to practitioners, researchers and conservationists. Aquatic fungi are a polyphyletic group defined by their ecology (growing and reproducing mainly in the sea or freshwater). They belong mainly to the phyla Ascomycota, Basidiomycota, Chytridiomycota and Microsporidia, but include representatives of 13 phyla.

There is limited knowledge of the diversity and distribution of aquatic fungi and of any threats to them. Threats in aquatic environments in general are habitat decline, pollution, eutrophication, invasive species, ocean acidification, freshwater salinization, river regulation and climate change.

These are also likely to be threats to aquatic fungi, but few researchers are working on the ecology and conservation of this polyphyletic group.

There are more than 5,700 known species of aquatic fungi, with > 3,800 freshwater species and c. 1,900 marine species, but these numbers are likely to be underestimates. Existing taxonomic and distribution data are in non-integrated databases and, unlike terrestrial fungi, no aquatic fungus has yet received a conservation assessment.

The Aquatic Fungi Specialist Group will collaborate with other fungi Specialist Groups and the IUCN SSC Fungal Conservation Committee to adapt and develop conservation assessment methods and coordinate assessments of both freshwater and marine aquatic fungi. The Group will also collaborate with the IUCN SSC Freshwater and Marine Conservation Committees to focus on conservation planning for aquatic fungi, and undertake and inspire actions to conserve these species in the face of the multitude of threats affecting aquatic ecosystems. If you are an expert on aquatic fungi, please join us in this venture.

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## Launching of the IUCN Species Survival Commission Spain Species Specialist Group

National Species Specialist Groups are a new type of group promoted by the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) for the development of national species expert networks to help reverse biodiversity loss and tackle new nature-related sustainability challenges. The Spain Species Specialist Group was established in February 2024. It is the first National Species Specialist Group in Europe and the eighth globally.

The new Species Specialist Group will coordinate expertise across taxonomic groups and disciplines to support governments and other stakeholders and facilitate evidence-based decision-making and the development of policies for reversing species decline. The participatory establishment process in 2023 involved wide representation of stakeholders. The resulting group will be the nexus of diverse national scientific societies, conservation organizations, NGOs, other SSC regional specialist groups, the SSC

Centre for Species Survival Macaronesia, IUCN national and regional entities, the Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge, conservation practitioners and taxonomic specialists.

We have aligned the Group's programmes with the IUCN Species Strategic Plan 2021–2025, to support the implementation of the Species Conservation Cycle (Assess–Plan–Act, Communicate and Network). The initial membership of the Specialist Group comprises 132 experts, working on bryophytes, algae, lichens, vascular plants, cave invertebrates, hexapods, lepidopterans, spiders, molluscs, continental and marine fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals. We hope to extend expertise membership to other taxonomic groups. The Spain Species Specialist Group is hosted by the Spanish Committee of IUCN. We hope the establishment of this new Specialist Group will encourage similar initiatives across Europe.

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## The Salto Morato Manifest for Conservation Translocations

Brazil is a megabiodiverse country with a long tradition of nature conservation, mostly based on protected areas, and many threatened species in Brazil have survived as a result of this protection. However, this conservation strategy is inadequate and a more active approach to protect and restore biodiversity, mostly based on conservation translocations, is increasingly being used.

In September 2023, 30 Brazilian specialists met at Salto Morato Nature Reserve during a Conservation Translocations Training Course run by the IUCN Conservation Translocations Specialist Group. Axel Moehrenschrager, the Group's chair, encouraged us to bring lasting change that could influence policy, and this resulted in the formation of a Manifest for Conservation Translocation that we hope will be an important landmark for biodiversity conservation in Brazil. We also launched the Brazilian Conservation Translocations Network (Rede Brasileira de Translocações para Conservação), to bring together professionals who are involved in conservation translocations.

The Salto Morato Manifest recognizes that we need urgent, effective actions for the conservation of biodiversity, that conservation translocations have immense potential for biodiversity conservation, that conservation translocations and isolated releases are often confounded (the latter do not usually have a scientific basis, proper health care or a clear conservation goal), that the conservation roles of zoos and breeding centres are underestimated, and that Brazilian norms for wildlife management are outdated and inadequate.

We propose the adaptation of Brazilian legislation and formulation of a National Policy on Conservation Translocations, and public campaigns to provide informed explanation of the importance of conservation translocations. We hope that the Salto Morato Manifest and the formation of the Brazilian Conservation Translocations Network will encourage people to become more actively involved in conserving biodiversity.

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