

The Zoological Society of Paris SZP hosted the inauguration meeting of a monitoring group working on cheetah conservation in the north African region on 2 February 2005. Already in 1987, a cheetah group uniting representatives from several captive facilities in France had been created with the support of the French Ministry of Environment. Some of the members recently became more involved in in-situ conservation projects for cheetahs in northern Africa. Françoise Claro, president of SZP, Thierry Petit from Zoo La Palmyre, Christelle Vitaud from Safari Parc de Peaugres, and H  l  ne Leriche from Fondation Nicolas Hulot and French Institute of Biodiversity had asked the IUCN/SSC Cat SG to help creating a group to foster and coordinate cheetah conservation in the North African region. The strong cultural and scientific bonds between the North African Region (NAR) and Western Europe, have already promoted several programmes on biodiversity conservation and sustainable development, and can now be used to advance cheetah conservation activities. During the meeting in Paris, the current knowledge on cheetahs in North Africa, threats to the survival of the species, research needs and currently applied conservation measures in the NAR were presented. The next meeting will be in Algeria in 2006 to consolidate the group and to define priority conservation actions.