

# Goodbye, farewell, and hello again!

Dear members, colleagues, partners, and friends!

After 25 years of serving as co-chairs of the IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group, we are passing on the baton. IUCN has introduced a new term-of-office limit, but this has only accelerated our decision to step down. We have already been working on a succession plan for a while and are now implementing it in agreement with the new SSC Chair, Vivek Menon. We are glad to announce to you the new structure of the CatSG's Chairs' Office, which we think is offering new capacity and opportunities, while also allowing continuity.

In our discussions with Vivek Menon, we have agreed to reorganise the chair's team in a way that more regions of the world are considered, different skills are integrated, younger people are brought in, and both the big and the small cats are represented among the co-chairs. So, we are happy to announce the new core team that was discussed with and agreed by the SSC Chair.

The new Co-chairs will be Dr Sugoto Roy (Soggy) and Dr Tadeu de Oliveira. Soggy brings broad experience as a wildlife biologist and conservationist and is, as the former manager of IUCN's Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme (ITHCP) very familiar with southern and eastern Asia. He has been closely working with us over the past years and knows the CatSG's programme, projects, and partners very well. Tadeu is a professor at the Maranhão State University and runs research and practical conservation projects on small cats for many years and at very broad scale. He has been involved in assessment and planning processes of the CatSG for many years and is connected to small cat conservation groups worldwide.



Sugoto Roy, co-chair



Tadeu de Oliveira, co-chair

We have furthermore elected Dr Samantha Nicholson as a Deputy Chair of the CatSG. Sam is a lion expert and responsible for the African Lion Database. In this function, she is experienced not only on data management, but also to work with range countries, NGOs and scientific institutions with regard to sharing data for the continuous assessment of the cat species.

We have been offered the position of Emeritus Chairs and will hence remain part of the team and support the co-chairs to implement the CatSG's Strategic Plan. Tabea Lanz is ready to continue to serve as the CatSG's Red List Authority Coordinator. The RLACs will only be



Sam Nicholson, deputy chair

re-appointed in April, but considering Tabea's skills and experience, we are certain that she will continue to serve the group in this important function.

We here want to acknowledge our team, who are all ready to continue the group's work under the new leadership, namely Roland Bürki (Black Cat Book II, Digital Cat Library, etc.), Moritz Breitenmoser (Catabase and mapping), Laila Bahaa-el-din (Cat News), Malini Pittet (CatSG Website), Christine Haldimann (Digital Cat Library), and Vincent Lapeyre (implementation of the SECAP for the northern lion in Africa). The team is augmented by Elliot Carlton and Ella Le Borgne, the two species conservation officers at the Centre for Species Survival "Cats". The CSS Cats, hosted by The Big Cat Sanctuary in Kent, UK, is a new partner institution to the CatSG and is helping to broaden and deepen our engagement for the wild cats according to the SSC Assess-Plan-Act cycle.

We would like to thank all our friends and members, partners and sponsors that have supported us in all these years to advance the CatSG and hope for a continued fruitful cooperation.

Best regards,  
Urs and Christine