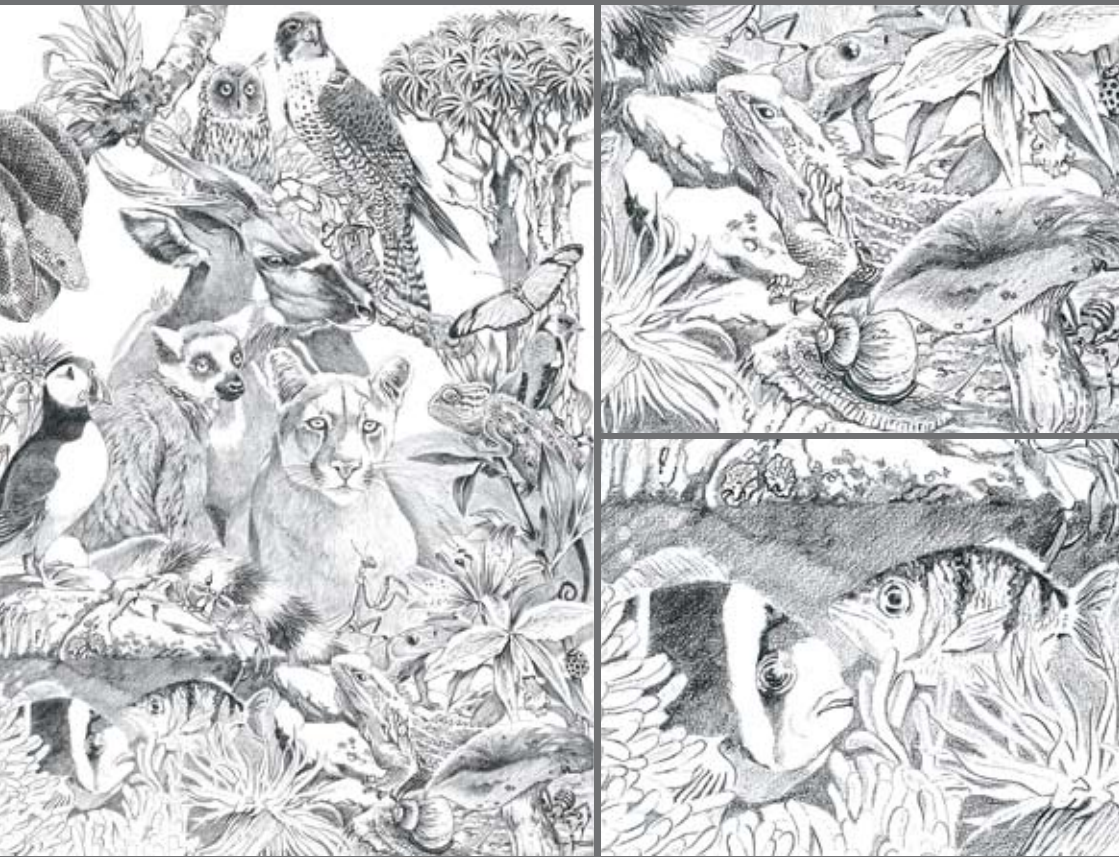




IUCN RED LIST CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA

Version 3.1 Second edition



The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™



IUCN RED LIST CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA

Version 3.1

Second edition

Prepared by the IUCN Species Survival Commission

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Preface

The first edition of the *IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria: Version 3.1* was published in 2001, after its formal adoption by the IUCN Council in February 2000. Since then it has been used as the standard for global Red List assessments published on the *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*TM. It is also used alongside the *Guidelines for Application of IUCN Red List Criteria at Regional and National Levels* (IUCN 2003, 2012), by many countries around the world as a standard system for national Red List assessments.

Over the last decade, the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria have been used to assess an increasingly diverse range of taxa occurring in a wide variety of habitats. In addition, ongoing technological advances continue to provide more scope for improving data analysis. Therefore it is necessary for the IUCN Red List to adapt to maintain and further develop its usefulness as a conservation tool. However, it is also essential that the central rules for assessing extinction risk for the IUCN Red List remain stable to be able to compare changes in Red List status over time.

This second edition of the *IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria: Version 3.1* retains the same assessment system presented in the 2001 publication. To allow for occasional changes in documentation requirements for assessments, information that was previously outlined in Annex 3 has been moved to a separate reference document: *Documentation Standards and Consistency Checks for IUCN Red List Assessments and Species Accounts*.

To ensure full understanding of IUCN Red List assessments, it is very important to refer to all of the following documents:

- (1) *IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria: Version 3.1* (IUCN 2001 and later editions)
- (2) The latest version of the *Guidelines for Using the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria* (available from www.iucnredlist.org/documents/RedListGuidelines.pdf; check the IUCN Red List website for regular updates of this document)
- (3) The latest version of the *Documentation Standards and Consistency Checks for IUCN Red List Assessments and Species Accounts* (available from www.iucnredlist.org/documents/RL_Standards_Consistency.pdf; check the IUCN Red List website for regular updates of this document)

For national and regional level assessments using the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria, the *Guidelines for Application of IUCN Red List Criteria at Regional and National Levels: Version 4.0* (IUCN 2012 and later versions) must also be used.

All of the above documents are freely available to download from the IUCN Red List website (www.iucnredlist.org). Note that documents (2) and (3) above are regularly updated, therefore it is important to check the website for the current versions.

Acknowledgements

IUCN gratefully acknowledges the dedication and efforts of the Red List Criteria Review Working Group (CRWG) in attending numerous workshops to discuss and debate the merits and demerits of the Red List Criteria. The members of the CRWG were: Resit Akçakaya, Jonathan Baillie, William Bond, Nigel Collar, Ulf Gärdenfors, Kevin Gaston, Craig Hilton-Taylor, Elodie Hudson, Bob Irvin, David Keith, Russell Lande, Charlotte Lusty, Nigel Leader-Williams, Georgina Mace, Michael Maunder, Larry Master, E.J. Milner-Gulland, Sanjay Molur, Howard Powles, André Punt, Jon Paul Rodríguez, Mary Seddon, Alison Stattersfield, Simon Stuart, John Wang, and Tetsukazu Yahara. Particular thanks must go to Dr Georgina Mace, who chaired the CRWG and who ably steered an extremely complex process through to a successful conclusion. The review process culminated in the adoption of this revised set of Red List Categories and Criteria by the IUCN Council.

The work of the CRWG and the hosting of the review workshops were made possible through generous financial support from the Canadian Wildlife Service; Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development, Germany (BMZ); Global Guardian Trust; New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, Australia; New South Wales Scientific Committee, Australia; Ministry of the Environment, Finland; Ministry of the Environment, Sweden; Swedish Species Information Centre; and WWF Sweden. The review process was co-ordinated by the IUCN Red List Programme Officer funded by the UK Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA); the Centre for Applied Biodiversity Science at Conservation International; and WWF UK.

IUCN is indebted to the hundreds of scientists who participated in the criteria review workshops or who submitted comments and suggestions during the review process. This combined input has resulted in a far more robust, user friendly and widely applicable system.

As a result of the review process, several new topics have become the focus of active research and publication in the academic community. As a greater clarity emerges on tricky and unresolved issues, these will be addressed in a comprehensive set of user guidelines. The intention is to keep this revised system stable to enable genuine changes in the status of species to be detected rather than to have such changes obscured by the constant medication of the criteria.

The ***IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria: Version 3.1*** are available in booklet form in the following language versions: English, French and Spanish from the IUCN Publications Services (www.iucn.org/knowledge/publications_doc/publications/).

They are also available to download from the IUCN Red List website in English, French and Spanish, at: <http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/categories-and-criteria>.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria are intended to be an easily and widely understood system for classifying species at high risk of global extinction. The general aim of the system is to provide an explicit, objective framework for the classification of the broadest range of species according to their extinction risk. However, while the Red List may focus attention on those taxa at the highest risk, it is not the sole means of setting priorities for conservation measures for their protection.

Extensive consultation and testing in the development of the system strongly suggest that it is robust across most organisms. However, it should be noted that although the system places species into the threatened categories with a high degree of consistency, the criteria do not take into account the life histories of every species. Hence, in certain individual cases, the risk of extinction may be under- or over-estimated.

2. Before 1994 the more subjective threatened species categories used in IUCN Red Data Books and Red Lists had been in place, with some modification, for almost 30 years. Although the need to revise the categories had long been recognized (Fitter and Fitter 1987), the current phase of development only began in 1989 following a request from the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Steering Committee to develop a more objective approach. The IUCN Council adopted the new Red List system in 1994.

The IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria have several specific aims:

- to provide a system that can be applied consistently by different people;
 - to improve objectivity by providing users with clear guidance on how to evaluate different factors which affect the risk of extinction;
 - to provide a system which will facilitate comparisons across widely different taxa;
 - to give people using threatened species lists a better understanding of how individual species were classified.
3. Since their adoption by IUCN Council in 1994, the IUCN Red List Categories have become widely recognized internationally, and they are now used in a range of publications and listings produced by IUCN, as well as by numerous governmental and non-governmental organizations. Such broad and extensive use revealed the need for a number of improvements, and SSC was mandated by the 1996 World Conservation Congress (WCC Res. 1.4) to conduct a review of the system (IUCN 1996). This document presents the revisions accepted by the IUCN Council.

The proposals presented in this document result from a continuing process of drafting, consultation and validation. The production of a large number of draft proposals has led to some confusion, especially as each draft has been used for classifying some

set of species for conservation purposes. To clarify matters, and to open the way for modifications as and when they become necessary, a system for version numbering has been adopted as follows:

Version 1.0: Mace and Lande (1991)

The first paper discussing a new basis for the categories, and presenting numerical criteria especially relevant for large vertebrates.

Version 2.0: Mace *et al.* (1992)

A major revision of Version 1.0, including numerical criteria appropriate to all organisms and introducing the non-threatened categories.

Version 2.1: IUCN (1993)

Following an extensive consultation process within SSC, a number of changes were made to the details of the criteria, and fuller explanation of basic principles was included. A more explicit structure clarified the significance of the non-threatened categories

Version 2.2: Mace and Stuart (1994)

Following further comments received and additional validation exercises, some minor changes to the criteria were made. In addition, the Susceptible category present in Versions 2.0 and 2.1 was subsumed into the Vulnerable category. A precautionary application of the system was emphasised.

Version 2.3: IUCN (1994)

IUCN Council adopted this version, which incorporated changes as a result of comments from IUCN members, in December 1994. The initial version of this document was published without the necessary bibliographic details, such as date of publication and ISBN number, but these were included in the subsequent reprints in 1998 and 1999. This version was used for the *1996 IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals* (Baillie and Groombridge 1996), *The World List of Threatened Trees* (Oldfield *et al.* 1998) and the *2000 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* (Hilton-Taylor 2000).

Version 3.0: IUCN/SSC Criteria Review Working Group (1999)

Following comments received, a series of workshops were convened to look at the IUCN Red List Criteria following which, changes were proposed affecting the criteria, the definitions of some key terms and the handling of uncertainty.

Version 3.1: IUCN (2001)

The IUCN Council adopted this latest version, which incorporated changes as a result of comments from the IUCN and SSC memberships and from a final meeting of the Criteria Review Working Group, in February 2000.

All new assessments from January 2001 should use the latest adopted version and cite the year of publication and version number.

4. In the rest of this document, the proposed system is outlined in several sections. Section II, the Preamble, presents basic information about the context and structure of the system, and the procedures that are to be followed in applying the criteria to species. Section III provides definitions of key terms used. Section IV presents the categories, while Section V details the quantitative criteria used for classification within the threatened categories. Annex 1 provides guidance on how to deal with uncertainty when applying the criteria; Annex 2 suggests a standard format for citing the Red List Categories and Criteria; and Annex 3 refers to the required and recommended supporting information for taxa to be included on IUCN's global Red List and where to find further guidance on these. It is important for the effective functioning of the system that all sections are read and understood to ensure that the definitions and rules are followed.

II. PREAMBLE

The information in this section is intended to direct and facilitate the use and interpretation of the categories (Critically Endangered, Endangered, etc.), criteria (A to E), and subcriteria (1, 2, etc.; a, b, etc.; i, ii, etc.).

1. Taxonomic level and scope of the categorization process

The criteria can be applied to any taxonomic unit at or below the species level. In the following information, definitions and criteria the term 'taxon' is used for convenience, and may represent species or lower taxonomic levels, including forms that are not yet formally described. There is sufficient range among the different criteria to enable the appropriate listing of taxa from the complete taxonomic spectrum, with the exception of micro-organisms. The criteria may also be applied within any specified geographical or political area, although in such cases special notice should be taken of point 14. In presenting the results of applying the criteria, the taxonomic unit and area under consideration should be specified in accordance with the documentation guidelines (see Annex 3). The categorization process should only be applied to wild populations inside their natural range, and to populations resulting from benign introductions. The latter are defined in the IUCN *Guidelines for Re-introductions* (IUCN 1998) as '...an attempt to establish a species, for the purpose of conservation, outside its recorded distribution, but within an appropriate habitat and eco-geographical area. This is a feasible conservation tool only when there is no remaining area left within a species' historic range'.

2. Nature of the categories

Extinction is a chance process. Thus, a listing in a higher extinction risk category implies a higher expectation of extinction, and over the time-frames specified more taxa listed in a higher category are expected to go extinct than those in a lower one (without effective conservation action). However, the persistence of some taxa in high-risk categories does not necessarily mean their initial assessment was inaccurate.

All taxa listed as Critically Endangered qualify for Vulnerable and Endangered, and all listed as Endangered qualify for Vulnerable. Together these categories are described as 'threatened'. The threatened categories form a part of the overall scheme. It will be possible to place all taxa into one of the categories (see Figure 1).

3. Role of the different criteria

For listing as Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable there is a range of quantitative criteria; meeting any one of these criteria qualifies a taxon for listing at that

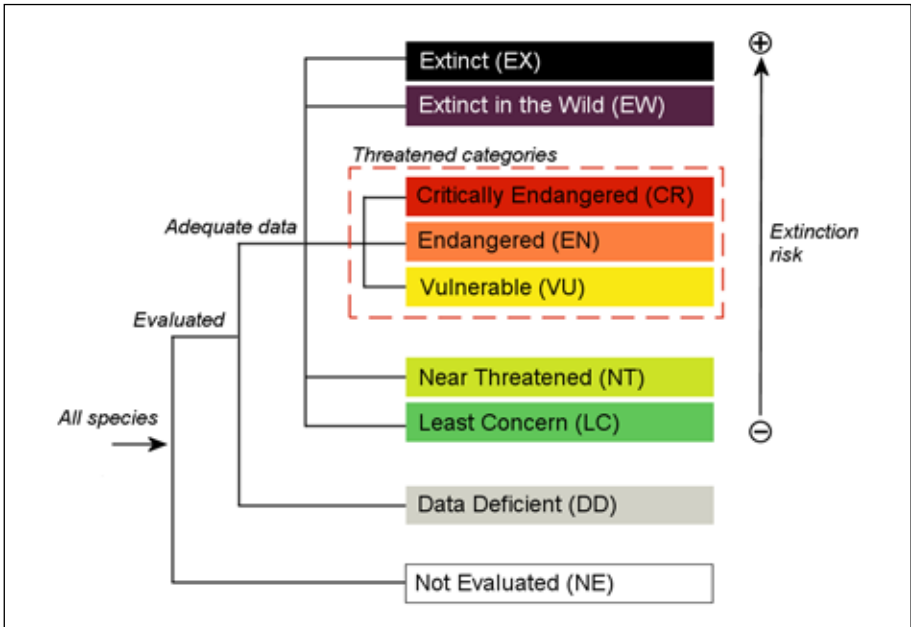


Figure 1. Structure of the categories

level of threat. Each taxon should be evaluated against all the criteria. Even though some criteria will be inappropriate for certain taxa (some taxa will never qualify under these however close to extinction they come), there should be criteria appropriate for assessing threat levels for any taxon. The relevant factor is whether *any one* criterion is met, not whether all are appropriate or all are met. Because it will never be clear in advance which criteria are appropriate for a particular taxon, each taxon should be evaluated against all the criteria, and *all* criteria met at the highest threat category must be listed.

4. Derivation of quantitative criteria

The different criteria (A-E) are derived from a wide review aimed at detecting risk factors across the broad range of organisms and the diverse life histories they exhibit. The quantitative values presented in the various criteria associated with threatened categories were developed through wide consultation, and they are set at what are generally judged to be appropriate levels, even if no formal justification for these values exists. The levels for different criteria within categories were set independently but against a common standard. Broad consistency between them was sought.

5. Conservation actions in the listing process

The criteria for the threatened categories are to be applied to a taxon whatever the level of conservation action affecting it. It is important to emphasise here that a taxon may require conservation action even if it is not listed as threatened. Conservation actions which may benefit the taxon are included as part of the documentation requirements (see Annex 3).

6. Data quality and the importance of inference and projection

The criteria are clearly quantitative in nature. However, the absence of high-quality data should not deter attempts at applying the criteria, as methods involving estimation, inference and projection are emphasised as being acceptable throughout. Inference and projection may be based on extrapolation of current or potential threats into the future (including their rate of change), or of factors related to population abundance or distribution (including dependence on other taxa), so long as these can reasonably be supported. Suspected or inferred patterns in the recent past, present or near future can be based on any of a series of related factors, and these factors should be specified as part of the documentation.

Taxa at risk from threats posed by future events of low probability but with severe consequences (catastrophes) should be identified by the criteria (e.g. small distributions, few locations). Some threats need to be identified particularly early, and appropriate actions taken, because their effects are irreversible or nearly so (e.g. pathogens, invasive organisms, hybridization).

7. Problems of scale

Classification based on the sizes of geographic ranges or the patterns of habitat occupancy is complicated by problems of spatial scale. The finer the scale at which the distributions or habitats of taxa are mapped, the smaller the area will be that they are found to occupy, and the less likely it will be that range estimates (at least for 'area of occupancy': see Definitions, point 10) exceed the thresholds specified in the criteria. Mapping at finer scales reveals more areas in which the taxon is unrecorded. Conversely, coarse-scale mapping reveals fewer unoccupied areas, resulting in range estimates that are more likely to exceed the thresholds for the threatened categories. The choice of scale at which range is estimated may thus, itself, influence the outcome of Red List assessments and could be a source of inconsistency and bias. It is impossible to provide any strict but general rules for mapping taxa or habitats; the most appropriate scale will depend on the taxon in question, and the origin and comprehensiveness of the distribution data.

8. Uncertainty

The data used to evaluate taxa against the criteria are often estimated with considerable uncertainty. Such uncertainty can arise from any one or all of the following three factors: natural variation, vagueness in the terms and definitions used, and measurement error. The way in which this uncertainty is handled can have a strong influence on the results of an evaluation. Details of methods recommended for handling uncertainty are included in Annex 1, and assessors are encouraged to read and follow these principles.

In general, when uncertainty leads to wide variation in the results of assessments, the range of possible outcomes should be specified. A single category must be chosen and the basis for the decision should be documented; it should be both precautionary and credible.

When data are very uncertain, the category of 'Data Deficient' may be assigned. However, in this case the assessor must provide documentation showing that this category has been assigned because data are inadequate to determine a threat category. It is important to recognize that taxa that are poorly known can often be assigned a threat category on the basis of background information concerning the deterioration of their habitat and/or other causal factors; therefore the liberal use of 'Data Deficient' is discouraged.

9. Implications of listing

Listing in the categories of Not Evaluated and Data Deficient indicates that no assessment of extinction risk has been made, though for different reasons. Until such time as an assessment is made, taxa listed in these categories should not be treated as if they were non-threatened. It may be appropriate (especially for Data Deficient forms) to give them the same degree of attention as threatened taxa, at least until their status can be assessed.

10. Documentation

All assessments should be documented. Threatened classifications should state the criteria and subcriteria that were met. No assessment can be accepted for the IUCN Red List as valid unless at least one criterion is given. If more than one criterion or subcriterion is met, then each should be listed. If a re-evaluation indicates that the documented criterion is no longer met, this should not result in automatic reassignment to a lower category of threat (downlisting). Instead, the taxon should be re-evaluated against all the criteria to clarify its status. The factors responsible for qualifying the taxon against the criteria, especially where inference and projection are used, should be documented (see Annexes 2 and 3). The documentation requirements for other categories are also specified in Annex 3.

11. Threats and priorities

The category of threat is not necessarily sufficient to determine priorities for conservation action. The category of threat simply provides an assessment of the extinction risk under current circumstances, whereas a system for assessing priorities for action will include numerous other factors concerning conservation action such as costs, logistics, chances of success, and other biological characteristics of the subject.

12. Re-evaluation

Re-evaluation of taxa against the criteria should be carried out at appropriate intervals. This is especially important for taxa listed under Near Threatened, Data Deficient and for threatened taxa whose status is known or suspected to be deteriorating.

13. Transfer between categories

The following rules govern the movement of taxa between categories:

- A. A taxon may be moved from a category of higher threat to a category of lower threat if none of the criteria of the higher category has been met for five years or more.
- B. If the original classification is found to have been erroneous, the taxon may be transferred to the appropriate category or removed from the threatened categories altogether, without delay (but see Point 10 above).
- C. Transfer from categories of lower to higher risk should be made without delay.

14. Use at regional level

The IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria were designed for global taxon assessments. However, many people are interested in applying them to subsets of global data, especially at regional, national or local levels. To do this it is important to refer to guidelines prepared by the IUCN/SSC Regional Applications Working Group and the National Red List Working Group of the IUCN SSC Red List Committee (e.g. Gärdenfors *et al.* 2001; IUCN 2003, 2012). When applied at national or regional levels it must be recognized that a global category may not be the same as a national or regional category for a particular taxon. For example, taxa classified as Least Concern globally might be Critically Endangered within a particular region where numbers are very small or declining, perhaps only because they are at the margins of their global range. Conversely, taxa classified as Vulnerable on the basis of their global declines in numbers or range might be Least Concern within a particular region where their populations are stable. It is also important to note that taxa endemic to regions or nations will be assessed globally in any regional or national applications of the criteria, and in these cases great care must be taken to check that an assessment has not

already been undertaken by a Red List Authority (RLA), and that the categorization is agreed with the relevant RLA (e.g. an SSC Specialist Group known to cover the taxon).

III. DEFINITIONS

1. Population and Population Size (Criteria A, C and D)

The term 'population' is used in a specific sense in the Red List Criteria that is different to its common biological usage. Population is here defined as the total number of individuals of the taxon. For functional reasons, primarily owing to differences between life forms, population size is measured as numbers of mature individuals only. In the case of taxa obligately dependent on other taxa for all or part of their life cycles, biologically appropriate values for the host taxon should be used.

2. Subpopulations (Criteria B and C)

Subpopulations are defined as geographically or otherwise distinct groups in the population between which there is little demographic or genetic exchange (typically one successful migrant individual or gamete per year or less).

3. Mature individuals (Criteria A, B, C and D)

The number of mature individuals is the number of individuals known, estimated or inferred to be capable of reproduction. When estimating this quantity, the following points should be borne in mind:

- Mature individuals that will never produce new recruits should not be counted (e.g. densities are too low for fertilization).
- In the case of populations with biased adult or breeding sex ratios, it is appropriate to use lower estimates for the number of mature individuals, which take this into account.
- Where the population size fluctuates, use a lower estimate. In most cases this will be much less than the mean.
- Reproducing units within a clone should be counted as individuals, except where such units are unable to survive alone (e.g. corals).
- In the case of taxa that naturally lose all or a subset of mature individuals at some point in their life cycle, the estimate should be made at the appropriate time, when mature individuals are available for breeding.
- Re-introduced individuals must have produced viable offspring before they are counted as mature individuals.

4. Generation (Criteria A, C and E)

Generation length is the average age of parents of the current cohort (i.e. newborn individuals in the population). Generation length therefore reflects the turnover rate of breeding individuals in a population. Generation length is greater than the age at first breeding and less than the age of the oldest breeding individual, except in taxa that breed only once. Where generation length varies under threat, the more natural, i.e. pre-disturbance, generation length should be used.

5. Reduction (Criterion A)

A reduction is a decline in the number of mature individuals of at least the amount (%) stated under the criterion over the time period (years) specified, although the decline need not be continuing. A reduction should not be interpreted as part of a fluctuation unless there is good evidence for this. The downward phase of a fluctuation will not normally count as a reduction.

6. Continuing decline (Criteria B and C)

A continuing decline is a recent, current or projected future decline (which may be smooth, irregular or sporadic) which is liable to continue unless remedial measures are taken. Fluctuations will not normally count as continuing declines, but an observed decline should not be considered as a fluctuation unless there is evidence for this.

7. Extreme fluctuations (Criteria B and C)

Extreme fluctuations can be said to occur in a number of taxa when population size or distribution area varies widely, rapidly and frequently, typically with a variation greater than one order of magnitude (i.e. a tenfold increase or decrease).

8. Severely fragmented (Criterion B)

The phrase 'severely fragmented' refers to the situation in which increased extinction risk to the taxon results from the fact that most of its individuals are found in small and relatively isolated subpopulations (in certain circumstances this may be inferred from habitat information). These small subpopulations may go extinct, with a reduced probability of recolonization.

9. Extent of occurrence (Criteria A and B)

Extent of occurrence is defined as the area contained within the shortest continuous imaginary boundary which can be drawn to encompass all the known, inferred or projected sites of present occurrence of a taxon, excluding cases of vagrancy (see Figure 2). This

measure may exclude discontinuities or disjunctions within the overall distributions of taxa (e.g. large areas of obviously unsuitable habitat) (but see 'area of occupancy', point 10 below). Extent of occurrence can often be measured by a minimum convex polygon (the smallest polygon in which no internal angle exceeds 180 degrees and which contains all the sites of occurrence).

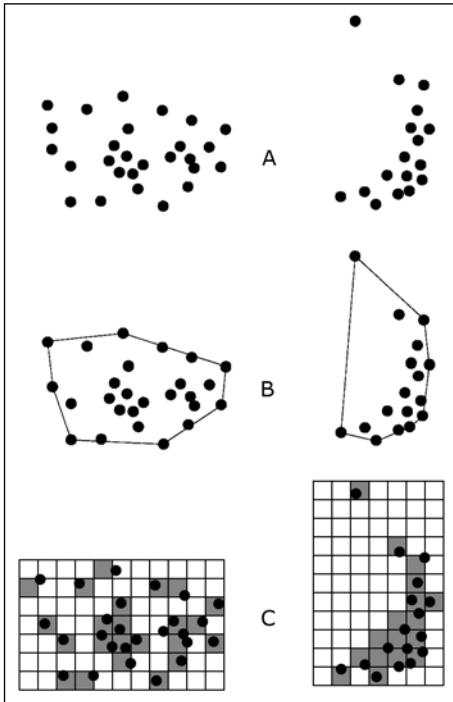


Figure 2. Two examples of the distinction between extent of occurrence and area of occupancy. (A) is the spatial distribution of known, inferred or projected sites of present occurrence. (B) shows one possible boundary to the extent of occurrence, which is the measured area within this boundary. (C) shows one measure of area of occupancy which can be achieved by the sum of the occupied grid squares.

10. Area of occupancy (Criteria A, B and D)

Area of occupancy is defined as the area within its 'extent of occurrence' (see point 9 above) which is occupied by a taxon, excluding cases of vagrancy. The measure reflects the fact that a taxon will not usually occur throughout the area of its extent of occurrence, which may contain unsuitable or unoccupied habitats. In some cases (e.g. irreplaceable colonial nesting sites, crucial feeding sites for migratory taxa) the area of occupancy is the smallest area essential at any stage to the survival of existing populations of a taxon. The size of the area of occupancy will be a function of the scale at which it is measured, and should be at a scale appropriate to relevant biological aspects of the taxon, the nature of threats and the available data (see point 7 in the Preamble). To avoid inconsistencies and

bias in assessments caused by estimating area of occupancy at different scales, it may be necessary to standardize estimates by applying a scale-correction factor. It is difficult to give strict guidance on how standardization should be done because different types of taxa have different scale-area relationships.

11. Location (Criteria B and D)

The term 'location' defines a geographically or ecologically distinct area in which a single threatening event can rapidly affect all individuals of the taxon present. The size of the location depends on the area covered by the threatening event and may include part of one or many subpopulations. Where a taxon is affected by more than one threatening event, location should be defined by considering the most serious plausible threat.

12. Quantitative analysis (Criterion E)

A quantitative analysis is defined here as any form of analysis which estimates the extinction probability of a taxon based on known life history, habitat requirements, threats and any specified management options. Population viability analysis (PVA) is one such technique. Quantitative analyses should make full use of all relevant available data. In a situation in which there is limited information, such data as are available can be used to provide an estimate of extinction risk (for instance, estimating the impact of stochastic events on habitat). In presenting the results of quantitative analyses, the assumptions (which must be appropriate and defensible), the data used and the uncertainty in the data or quantitative model must be documented.

IV. THE CATEGORIES¹

A representation of the relationships between the categories is shown in Figure 1.

EXTINCT (EX)

A taxon is Extinct when there is no reasonable doubt that the last individual has died. A taxon is presumed Extinct when exhaustive surveys in known and/or expected habitat, at appropriate times (diurnal, seasonal, annual), throughout its historic range have failed to record an individual. Surveys should be over a time frame appropriate to the taxon's life cycle and life form.

EXTINCT IN THE WILD (EW)

A taxon is Extinct in the Wild when it is known only to survive in cultivation, in captivity or as a naturalized population (or populations) well outside the past range. A taxon is presumed Extinct in the Wild when exhaustive surveys in known and/or expected habitat, at appropriate times (diurnal, seasonal, annual), throughout its historic range have failed to record an individual. Surveys should be over a time frame appropriate to the taxon's life cycle and life form.

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED (CR)

A taxon is Critically Endangered when the best available evidence indicates that it meets any of the criteria A to E for Critically Endangered (see Section V), and it is therefore considered to be facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild.

ENDANGERED (EN)

A taxon is Endangered when the best available evidence indicates that it meets any of the criteria A to E for Endangered (see Section V), and it is therefore considered to be facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild.

¹ *Note: As in previous IUCN categories, the abbreviation of each category (in parenthesis) follows the English denominations when translated into other languages (see Annex 2).*

VULNERABLE (VU)

A taxon is Vulnerable when the best available evidence indicates that it meets any of the criteria A to E for Vulnerable (see Section V), and it is therefore considered to be facing a high risk of extinction in the wild.

NEAR THREATENED (NT)

A taxon is Near Threatened when it has been evaluated against the criteria but does not qualify for Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable now, but is close to qualifying for or is likely to qualify for a threatened category in the near future.

LEAST CONCERN (LC)

A taxon is Least Concern when it has been evaluated against the criteria and does not qualify for Critically Endangered, Endangered, Vulnerable or Near Threatened. Widespread and abundant taxa are included in this category.

DATA DEFICIENT (DD)

A taxon is Data Deficient when there is inadequate information to make a direct, or indirect, assessment of its risk of extinction based on its distribution and/or population status. A taxon in this category may be well studied, and its biology well known, but appropriate data on abundance and/or distribution are lacking. Data Deficient is therefore not a category of threat. Listing of taxa in this category indicates that more information is required and acknowledges the possibility that future research will show that threatened classification is appropriate. It is important to make positive use of whatever data are available. In many cases great care should be exercised in choosing between DD and a threatened status. If the range of a taxon is suspected to be relatively circumscribed, and a considerable period of time has elapsed since the last record of the taxon, threatened status may well be justified.

NOT EVALUATED (NE)

A taxon is Not Evaluated when it has not yet been evaluated against the criteria.

V. THE CRITERIA FOR CRITICALLY ENDANGERED, ENDANGERED AND VULNERABLE

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED (CR)

A taxon is Critically Endangered when the best available evidence indicates that it meets any of the following criteria (A to E), and it is therefore considered to be facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild:

A. Reduction in population size based on any of the following:

1. An observed, estimated, inferred or suspected population size reduction of $\geq 90\%$ over the last 10 years or three generations, whichever is the longer, where the causes of the reduction are clearly reversible AND understood AND ceased, based on (and specifying) any of the following:
 - (a) direct observation
 - (b) an index of abundance appropriate to the taxon
 - (c) a decline in area of occupancy, extent of occurrence and/or quality of habitat
 - (d) actual or potential levels of exploitation
 - (e) the effects of introduced taxa, hybridization, pathogens, pollutants, competitors or parasites.
2. An observed, estimated, inferred or suspected population size reduction of $\geq 80\%$ over the last 10 years or three generations, whichever is the longer, where the reduction or its causes may not have ceased OR may not be understood OR may not be reversible, based on (and specifying) any of (a) to (e) under A1.
3. A population size reduction of $\geq 80\%$, projected or suspected to be met within the next 10 years or three generations, whichever is the longer (up to a maximum of 100 years), based on (and specifying) any of (b) to (e) under A1.
4. An observed, estimated, inferred, projected or suspected population size reduction of $\geq 80\%$ over any 10 year or three generation period, whichever is longer (up to a maximum of 100 years in the future), where the time period must include both the past and the future, and where the reduction or its causes may not have ceased OR may not be understood OR may not be reversible, based on (and specifying) any of (a) to (e) under A1.

B. Geographic range in the form of either B1 (extent of occurrence) OR B2 (area of occupancy) OR both:

1. Extent of occurrence estimated to be less than 100 km², and estimates indicating at least two of a-c:
 - a. Severely fragmented or known to exist at only a single location.
 - b. Continuing decline, observed, inferred or projected, in any of the following:
 - (i) extent of occurrence
 - (ii) area of occupancy
 - (iii) area, extent and/or quality of habitat
 - (iv) number of locations or subpopulations
 - (v) number of mature individuals.
 - c. Extreme fluctuations in any of the following:
 - (i) extent of occurrence
 - (ii) area of occupancy
 - (iii) number of locations or subpopulations
 - (iv) number of mature individuals.

2. Area of occupancy estimated to be less than 10 km², and estimate indicating at least two of a-c:
 - a. Severely fragmented or known to exist at only a single location.
 - b. Continuing decline, observed, inferred or projected, in any of the following:
 - (i) extent of occurrence
 - (ii) area of occupancy
 - (iii) area, extent and/or quality of habitat
 - (iv) number of locations or subpopulations
 - (v) number of mature individuals.
 - c. Extreme fluctuations in any of the following:
 - (i) extent of occurrence
 - (ii) area of occupancy
 - (iii) number of locations or subpopulations
 - (iv) number of mature individuals.

- C. Population size estimated to number fewer than 250 mature individuals and either:
 1. An estimated continuing decline of at least 25% within three years or one generation, whichever is longer, (up to a maximum of 100 years in the future) OR
 2. A continuing decline, observed, projected, or inferred, in numbers of mature individuals AND at least one of the following (a-b):

- a. Population structure in the form of one of the following:
 - (i) no subpopulation estimated to contain more than 50 mature individuals,
OR
 - (ii) at least 90% of mature individuals in one subpopulation.
 - b. Extreme fluctuations in number of mature individuals.
- D. Population size estimated to number fewer than 50 mature individuals.
- E. Quantitative analysis showing the probability of extinction in the wild is at least 50% within 10 years or three generations, whichever is the longer (up to a maximum of 100 years).

ENDANGERED (EN)

A taxon is Endangered when the best available evidence indicates that it meets any of the following criteria (A to E), and it is therefore considered to be facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild:

- A. Reduction in population size based on any of the following:
1. An observed, estimated, inferred or suspected population size reduction of $\geq 70\%$ over the last 10 years or three generations, whichever is the longer, where the causes of the reduction are clearly reversible AND understood AND ceased, based on (and specifying) any of the following:
 - (a) direct observation
 - (b) an index of abundance appropriate to the taxon
 - (c) a decline in area of occupancy, extent of occurrence and/or quality of habitat
 - (d) actual or potential levels of exploitation
 - (e) the effects of introduced taxa, hybridization, pathogens, pollutants, competitors or parasites.
 2. An observed, estimated, inferred or suspected population size reduction of $\geq 50\%$ over the last 10 years or three generations, whichever is the longer, where the reduction or its causes may not have ceased OR may not be understood OR may not be reversible, based on (and specifying) any of (a) to (e) under A1.
 3. A population size reduction of $\geq 50\%$, projected or suspected to be met within the next 10 years or three generations, whichever is the longer (up to a maximum of 100 years), based on (and specifying) any of (b) to (e) under A1.

4. An observed, estimated, inferred, projected or suspected population size reduction of $\geq 50\%$ over any 10 year or three generation period, whichever is longer (up to a maximum of 100 years in the future), where the time period must include both the past and the future, AND where the reduction or its causes may not have ceased OR may not be understood OR may not be reversible, based on (and specifying) any of (a) to (e) under A1.
- B. Geographic range in the form of either B1 (extent of occurrence) OR B2 (area of occupancy) OR both:
1. Extent of occurrence estimated to be less than 5,000 km², and estimates indicating at least two of a-c:
 - a. Severely fragmented or known to exist at no more than five locations.
 - b. Continuing decline, observed, inferred or projected, in any of the following:
 - (i) extent of occurrence
 - (ii) area of occupancy
 - (iii) area, extent and/or quality of habitat
 - (iv) number of locations or subpopulations
 - (v) number of mature individuals.
 - c. Extreme fluctuations in any of the following:
 - (i) extent of occurrence
 - (ii) area of occupancy
 - (iii) number of locations or subpopulations
 - (iv) number of mature individuals.
 2. Area of occupancy estimated to be less than 500 km², and estimates indicating at least two of a-c:
 - a. Severely fragmented or known to exist at no more than five locations.
 - b. Continuing decline, observed, inferred or projected, in any of the following:
 - (i) extent of occurrence
 - (ii) area of occupancy
 - (iii) area, extent and/or quality of habitat
 - (iv) number of locations or subpopulations
 - (v) number of mature individuals.
 - c. Extreme fluctuations in any of the following:
 - (i) extent of occurrence
 - (ii) area of occupancy

- (iii) number of locations or subpopulations
- (iv) number of mature individuals.

- C. Population size estimated to number fewer than 2,500 mature individuals and either:
 - 1. An estimated continuing decline of at least 20% within five years or two generations, whichever is longer, (up to a maximum of 100 years in the future) OR
 - 2. A continuing decline, observed, projected, or inferred, in numbers of mature individuals AND at least one of the following (a-b):
 - a. Population structure in the form of one of the following:
 - (i) no subpopulation estimated to contain more than 250 mature individuals,
OR
 - (ii) at least 95% of mature individuals in one subpopulation.
 - b. Extreme fluctuations in number of mature individuals.
- D. Population size estimated to number fewer than 250 mature individuals.
- E. Quantitative analysis showing the probability of extinction in the wild is at least 20% within 20 years or five generations, whichever is the longer (up to a maximum of 100 years).

VULNERABLE (VU)

A taxon is Vulnerable when the best available evidence indicates that it meets any of the following criteria (A to E), and it is therefore considered to be facing a high risk of extinction in the wild:

- A. Reduction in population size based on any of the following:
 - 1. An observed, estimated, inferred or suspected population size reduction of $\geq 50\%$ over the last 10 years or three generations, whichever is the longer, where the causes of the reduction are clearly reversible AND understood AND ceased, based on (and specifying) any of the following:
 - (a) direct observation
 - (b) an index of abundance appropriate to the taxon
 - (c) a decline in area of occupancy, extent of occurrence and/or quality of habitat

- (d) actual or potential levels of exploitation
- (e) the effects of introduced taxa, hybridization, pathogens, pollutants, competitors or parasites.

2. An observed, estimated, inferred or suspected population size reduction of $\geq 30\%$ over the last 10 years or three generations, whichever is the longer, where the reduction or its causes may not have ceased OR may not be understood OR may not be reversible, based on (and specifying) any of (a) to (e) under A1.
3. A population size reduction of $\geq 30\%$ projected or suspected to be met within the next 10 years or three generations, whichever is the longer (up to a maximum of 100 years), based on (and specifying) any of (b) to (e) under A1.
4. An observed, estimated, inferred, projected or suspected population size reduction of $\geq 30\%$ over any 10 year or three generation period, whichever is longer (up to a maximum of 100 years in the future), where the time period must include both the past and the future, AND where the reduction or its causes may not have ceased OR may not be understood OR may not be reversible, based on (and specifying) any of (a) to (e) under A1.

B. Geographic range in the form of either B1 (extent of occurrence) OR B2 (area of occupancy) OR both:

1. Extent of occurrence estimated to be less than 20,000 km², and estimates indicating at least two of a-c:
 - a. Severely fragmented or known to exist at no more than 10 locations.
 - b. Continuing decline, observed, inferred or projected, in any of the following:
 - (i) extent of occurrence
 - (ii) area of occupancy
 - (iii) area, extent and/or quality of habitat
 - (iv) number of locations or subpopulations
 - (v) number of mature individuals.
 - c. Extreme fluctuations in any of the following:
 - (i) extent of occurrence
 - (ii) area of occupancy
 - (iii) number of locations or subpopulations
 - (iv) number of mature individuals.
2. Area of occupancy estimated to be less than 2,000 km², and estimates indicating at least two of a-c:

- a. Severely fragmented or known to exist at no more than 10 locations.
 - b. Continuing decline, observed, inferred or projected, in any of the following:
 - (i) extent of occurrence
 - (ii) area of occupancy
 - (iii) area, extent and/or quality of habitat
 - (iv) number of locations or subpopulations
 - (v) number of mature individuals.
 - c. Extreme fluctuations in any of the following:
 - (i) extent of occurrence
 - (ii) area of occupancy
 - (iii) number of locations or subpopulations
 - (iv) number of mature individuals.
- C. Population size estimated to number fewer than 10,000 mature individuals and either:
- 1. An estimated continuing decline of at least 10% within 10 years or three generations, whichever is longer, (up to a maximum of 100 years in the future) OR
 - 2. A continuing decline, observed, projected, or inferred, in numbers of mature individuals AND at least one of the following (a-b):
 - a. Population structure in the form of one of the following:
 - (i) no subpopulation estimated to contain more than 1,000 mature individuals, OR
 - (ii) all mature individuals in one subpopulation.
 - b. Extreme fluctuations in number of mature individuals.
- D. Population very small or restricted in the form of either of the following:
- 1. Population size estimated to number fewer than 1,000 mature individuals.
 - 2. Population with a very restricted area of occupancy (typically less than 20 km²) or number of locations (typically five or fewer) such that it is prone to the effects of human activities or stochastic events within a very short time period in an uncertain future, and is thus capable of becoming Critically Endangered or even Extinct in a very short time period.
- E. Quantitative analysis showing the probability of extinction in the wild is at least 10% within 100 years.

Annex 1: Uncertainty

The Red List Criteria should be applied to a taxon based on the available evidence concerning its numbers, trend and distribution. In cases where there are evident threats to a taxon through, for example, deterioration of its only known habitat, a threatened listing may be justified, even though there may be little direct information on the biological status of the taxon itself. In all these instances there are uncertainties associated with the available information and how it was obtained. These uncertainties may be categorized as natural variability, semantic uncertainty and measurement error (Akçakaya *et al.* 2000). This section provides guidance on how to recognize and deal with these uncertainties when using the criteria. More information is available in the *Guidelines for Using the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria* (downloadable from www.iucnredlist.org/documents/RedListGuidelines.pdf; check the IUCN Red List website for regular updates of this document).

Natural variability results from the fact that species' life histories and the environments in which they live change over time and space. The effect of this variation on the criteria is limited, because each parameter refers to a specific time or spatial scale. Semantic uncertainty arises from vagueness in the definition of terms or lack of consistency in different assessors' usage of them. Despite attempts to make the definitions of the terms used in the criteria exact, in some cases this is not possible without the loss of generality. Measurement error is often the largest source of uncertainty; it arises from the lack of precise information about the parameters used in the criteria. This may be due to inaccuracies in estimating the values or a lack of knowledge. Measurement error may be reduced or eliminated by acquiring additional data. For further details, see Akçakaya *et al.* (2000) and Burgman *et al.* (1999).

One of the simplest ways to represent uncertainty is to specify a best estimate and a range of plausible values. The best estimate itself might be a range, but in any case the best estimate should always be included in the range of plausible values. When data are very uncertain, the range for the best estimate might be the range of plausible values. There are various methods that can be used to establish the plausible range. It may be based on confidence intervals, the opinion of a single expert, or the consensus opinion of a group of experts. Whichever method is used should be stated and justified in the documentation.

When interpreting and using uncertain data, attitudes toward risk and uncertainty may play an important role. Attitudes have two components. First, assessors need to consider whether they will include the full range of plausible values in assessments, or whether they will exclude extreme values from consideration (known as dispute tolerance). An assessor with a low dispute tolerance would include all values, thereby increasing the uncertainty, whereas an assessor with a high dispute tolerance would exclude extremes, reducing the uncertainty. Second, assessors need to consider whether they have a precautionary or evidentiary attitude to risk (known as risk tolerance). A precautionary attitude will classify

a taxon as threatened unless it is certain that it is not threatened, whereas an evidentiary attitude will classify a taxon as threatened only when there is strong evidence to support a threatened classification. Assessors should resist an evidentiary attitude and adopt a precautionary but realistic attitude to uncertainty when applying the criteria, for example, by using plausible lower bounds, rather than best estimates, in determining population size, especially if it is fluctuating. All attitudes should be explicitly documented.

An assessment using a point estimate (i.e. single numerical value) will lead to a single Red List Category. However, when a plausible range for each parameter is used to evaluate the criteria, a range of categories may be obtained, reflecting the uncertainties in the data. A single category, based on a specific attitude to uncertainty, should always be listed along with the criteria met, while the range of plausible categories should be indicated in the documentation (see Annex 3).

Where data are so uncertain that any category is plausible, the category of 'Data Deficient' should be assigned. However, it is important to recognize that this category indicates that the data are inadequate to determine the degree of threat faced by a taxon, not necessarily that the taxon is poorly known or indeed not threatened. Although Data Deficient is not a threatened category, it indicates a need to obtain more information on a taxon to determine the appropriate listing; moreover, it requires documentation with whatever available information exists.

Annex 2: Citation of the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria

In order to promote the use of a standard format for citing the Red List Categories and Criteria the following forms of citation are recommended:

1. The Red List Category may be written out in full or abbreviated as follows (when translated into other languages, the abbreviations should follow the English denominations):

Extinct, EX	Near Threatened, NT
Extinct in the Wild, EW	Least Concern, LC
Critically Endangered, CR	Data Deficient, DD
Endangered, EN	Not Evaluated, NE
Vulnerable, VU	

2. Under Section V (the criteria for Critically Endangered, Endangered and Vulnerable) there is a hierarchical alphanumeric numbering system of criteria and subcriteria. These criteria and subcriteria (all three levels) form an integral part of the Red List assessment and all those that result in the assignment of a threatened category must be specified after the category. Under the criteria A to C, and D under Vulnerable, the first level of the hierarchy is indicated by the use of numbers (1-4) and if more than one is met, they are separated by means of the '+' symbol. The second level is indicated by the use of the lower-case alphabet characters (a-e). These are listed without any punctuation. A third level of the hierarchy under criteria B and C involves the use of lower case roman numerals (i-v). These are placed in parentheses (with no space between the preceding alphabet character and start of the parenthesis) and separated by the use of commas if more than one is listed. Where more than one criterion is met, they should be separated by semicolons. The following are examples of such usage:

EX	CR D
EN B1ac(i,ii,iii)	VU C2a(ii)
CR A2c+3c; B1ab(iii)	EN B2b(iii)c(ii)
EN B2ab(i,ii,iii)	VU B1ab(iii)+2ab(iii)
EN A1c; B1ab(iii); C2a(i)	VU A2c+3c
EN B1ab(i)c(ii,v)+2ab(i)c(ii,v)	CR C1+2a(ii)
CR A1cd	VU D1+2
EN A2c; D	VU D2
EN A2abc+3bc+4abc; B1b(iii,iv,v)c(ii,iii,iv)+2b(iii,iv,v)c(ii,iii,iv)	

Annex 3: Required and Recommended Supporting Information for IUCN Red List Assessments

All assessments published on the IUCN Red List are freely available for public use. To ensure assessments are fully justified and to allow Red List assessment data to be analysed, thus making the IUCN Red List a powerful tool for conservation and policy decisions, a set of supporting information is required to accompany every assessment submitted for publication on the *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*TM.

The reference document *Documentation Standards and Consistency Checks for IUCN Red List Assessments and Species Accounts* is available to download from the Red List website (www.iucnredlist.org) and provides guidance on the following:

- Required supporting information for all IUCN Red List assessments.
- Required supporting information under specific conditions (e.g. taxa assessed under specific Red List Categories or Criteria, plant assessments, reassessed taxa, etc.).
- Recommended supporting information, if sufficient time and data are available.
- Tools available for preparing and submitting assessments for the IUCN Red List, including the IUCN Species Information Service (SIS) and RAMAS® Red List (Akçakaya and Ferson 2001).
- General formatting and style guidelines for documenting IUCN Red List assessments.

Note that the *Documentation Standards and Consistency Checks for IUCN Red List Assessments and Species Accounts* will be updated on a regular basis. Users should check the IUCN Red List website for the most current version of this reference document.

Annex 4: Summary of the IUCN Red List Criteria

See pages 28-29 for a summary of the five criteria (A-E) used to evaluate if a taxon belongs in an IUCN Red List threatened category (Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable).

SUMMARY OF THE FIVE CRITERIA (A-E) USED TO EVALUATE IF A TAXON BELONGS IN AN IUCN RED LIST THREATENED CATEGORY (CRITICALLY ENDANGERED, ENDANGERED OR VULNERABLE).¹

A. Population size reduction. Population reduction (measured over the longer of 10 years or 3 generations) based on any of A1 to A4			
	Critically Endangered	Endangered	Vulnerable
A1	≥ 90%	≥ 70%	≥ 50%
A2, A3 & A4	≥ 80%	≥ 50%	≥ 30%
A1	Population reduction observed, estimated, inferred, or suspected in the past where the causes of the reduction are clearly reversible AND understood AND have ceased.		
A2	Population reduction observed, estimated, inferred, or suspected in the past where the causes of reduction may not have ceased OR may not be understood OR may not be reversible.		
A3	Population reduction projected, inferred or suspected to be met in the future (up to a maximum of 100 years) <i>[(a) cannot be used for A3]</i> .		
A4	An observed, estimated, inferred, projected or suspected population reduction where the time period must include both the past and the future (up to a max. of 100 years in future), and where the causes of reduction may not have ceased OR may not be understood OR may not be reversible.		
		<p><i>based on any of the following:</i></p> <p>(a) direct observation <i>[except A3]</i></p> <p>(b) an index of abundance appropriate to the taxon</p> <p>(c) a decline in area of occupancy (AOO), extent of occurrence (EOO) and/or habitat quality</p> <p>(d) actual or potential levels of exploitation</p> <p>(e) effects of introduced taxa, hybridization, pathogens, pollutants, competitors or parasites.</p>	
B. Geographic range in the form of either B1 (extent of occurrence) AND/OR B2 (area of occupancy)			
	Critically Endangered	Endangered	Vulnerable
B1. Extent of occurrence (EOO)	< 100 km ²	< 5,000 km ²	< 20,000 km ²
B2. Area of occupancy (AOO)	< 10 km ²	< 500 km ²	< 2,000 km ²
AND at least 2 of the following 3 conditions:			
(a) Severely fragmented OR Number of locations	= 1	≤ 5	≤ 10
(b) Continuing decline observed, estimated, inferred or projected in any of: (i) extent of occurrence; (ii) area of occupancy; (iii) area, extent and/or quality of habitat; (iv) number of locations or subpopulations; (v) number of mature individuals			
(c) Extreme fluctuations in any of: (i) extent of occurrence; (ii) area of occupancy; (iii) number of locations or subpopulations; (iv) number of mature individuals			

C. Small population size and decline			
	Critically Endangered	Endangered	Vulnerable
Number of mature individuals	< 250	< 2,500	< 10,000
AND at least one of C1 or C2			
C1. An observed, estimated or projected continuing decline of at least (up to a max. of 100 years in future):	25% in 3 years or 1 generation (whichever is longer)	20% in 5 years or 2 generations (whichever is longer)	10% in 10 years or 3 generations (whichever is longer)
C2. An observed, estimated, projected or inferred continuing decline AND at least 1 of the following 3 conditions:			
(a) (i) Number of mature individuals in each subpopulation	≤ 50	≤ 250	≤ 1,000
(ii) % of mature individuals in one subpopulation =	90–100%	95–100%	100%
(b) Extreme fluctuations in the number of mature individuals			
D. Very small or restricted population			
	Critically Endangered	Endangered	Vulnerable
D. Number of mature individuals	< 50	< 250	D1. < 1,000
D2. Only applies to the VU category Restricted area of occupancy or number of locations with a plausible future threat that could drive the taxon to CR or EX in a very short time.	-	-	D2. typically: AOO < 20 km ² or number of locations ≤ 5
E. Quantitative Analysis			
Indicating the probability of extinction in the wild to be:	Critically Endangered ≥ 50% in 10 years or 3 generations, whichever is longer (100 years max.)	Endangered ≥ 20% in 20 years or 5 generations, whichever is longer (100 years max.)	Vulnerable ≥ 10% in 100 years

1 Use of this summary sheet requires full understanding of the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria and Guidelines for Using the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria. Please refer to both documents for explanations of terms and concepts used here.

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