

Crocodile Specialist Group Steering Committee Meeting
Universidad Nacional del Litoral, Santa Fe, Argentina
(6 May 2018)

Tomistoma Task Force

Current CSG-TTF Members

Chair: Bruce Shwedick

Vice-Chairs: Colin Stevenson

Core Members: Mark Bezuijen, Szu-Lung Chen, Steve Conners, Chip Harshaw, Imanul Huda, Charlie Manolis, Paolo Martelli, Pavel Moucha, Bekky Muscher-Hodges, Scott Pfaff, J. Perran Ross, Shahrul Anuar Mohn Sah, Boyd Simpson, Agata Staniewicz, Tarto Sugiarto, Mark Swingle, Joe Wasilewski, Uthen Youngprapakorn

New members: Jesus Recuero (Spain), Kyle Shaney (USA)

Funding

Two donations (total of \$US2000) were received from the Phoenix Herpetological Society for support of Tomistoma-related projects in Sumatra. The Dresden Zoo recently provided \$US371.52. Two donations (total of \$US362) were received from Croc Encounters of Tampa. The Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center has notified us of upcoming donation of \$US3000 to the CSG-TTF.

Report on Activities

1. On 11 April 2016, Bruce Shwedick spoke to staff and volunteers of the Herpetology Department of the Smithsonian's National Zoo in Washington, DC. He provided an update on the activities of the CSG-TTF.
2. 5 August 2016 marked the first World Tomistoma Day (WTD), an international wildlife awareness day established by the CSG-TTF (see CSG newsletter 34(4): 2015). The aim was simply to raise awareness for Tomistoma - perhaps the least-known of the crocodylians alive today. We agree with the oft-used quote of Baba Dioum about people only conserving what they understand, and it is up to us to help people know and understand the value of Tomistoma and its fragile habitat throughout Malaysia and Indonesia. The event was coordinated by Colin Stevenson, Bekky Muscher-Hodges, Aubrey Shwedick and Lauren Augustine, under the direction of Bruce Shwedick. WTD-related events were held at 11 zoological parks, aquariums and wildlife centers in North American, Europe and Asia. A website, www.crocday.org, was established in order to promote WTD and to allow participating institutions and others to download resource materials related to *Tomistoma schlegelii*.
3. After receiving an invitation from Rachel Roberts, IUCN-SSC Network Coordinator, to nominate a species for Arkive's Valentine's Day campaign, Grahame Webb contacted Lonnie McCaskill and Bruce Shwedick to suggest that this would be an ideal vehicle to raise international awareness for Gharials or Tomistoma. Lonnie supported Tomistoma and after approval was received from Tom Dacey, a submission was prepared by Bruce Shwedick and it was accepted by Arkive. The public was invited to vote on their most "unloved species" and as a result Tomistoma came in 17 out of 84. Although it did not make the "Top Ten" it did receive the most votes of any of the reptilian nominees.
4. To encourage formal student research focusing on *Tomistoma schlegelii* the CSG-TTF presented a proposal to Tom Dacey and Grahame Webb in March 2017 for the CSG-TTF to provide funding to match SRAS grants for research projects that focus on Tomistoma. The proposal was approved. This increases the amount of funding currently available for a Tomistoma-related SRAS grant from \$US1000 to \$US2000. The CSG-TTF prepared an announcement of this increased funding opportunity and it was circulated internationally.
5. World Tomistoma Day (WTD) was celebrated around the planet for the second time in 2017, again, recognising the contribution made to the species' conservation by the late Ralf Sommerlad by marking his birthday. The whole point of having a WTD is to make the public more aware of the species. Such a large, enigmatic crocodylian remains largely unknown outside of those who know crocodylians. This awareness is being achieved through WTD. The main target thus far has been the world's zoos - particularly those that display Tomistoma. Plans to expand WTD beyond zoos and aquariums are under consideration. In developing WTD, the idea was to build it gradually from lessons learned each year. This year, the organising team have a better understanding of what needs to be done to improve marketing, for developing resource materials and broadening the network of institutions involved. Once again, the WTD team was Bekky Muscher-Hodges, Lauren Augustine, Aubrey Shwedick and Colin Stevenson.

6. The Sumatra Crocodile Workshop, a training workshop on the medical management, conflict management and conservation of crocodiles with special focus on *Crocodylus porosus* and *Tomistoma schlegelii* was held in Medan, Indonesia, on 24-27 November 2017 for capacity building purposes [see CSG Newsletter 36(4)]. The workshop was organized by BKSDA Aceh together with the Center for Wildlife Studies at the Veterinary Faculty of the Syiah Kuala University Banda Aceh. The CSG's Veterinary Science Group and CSG-TTF worked together along with the workshop organizers to recruit presenters and establish the lecture and practical sessions. Funding for the workshop was provided by Syiah Kuala University Veterinary Faculty's Center for Wildlife Studies and the CSG-TTF, with support from the Phoenix Herpetological Society, Singapore Zoological Gardens and Krokodýlí ZOO Protivíně. The classroom and practical sessions of the workshop were presented by Dr. Paolo Martelli, Bruce Shwedick, Joe Wasilewski, Dr. Adam Britton, Dadang Suryana, S. Hut. T. and Dr. Christopher Stremme. Lectures and practical sessions were conducted in both English and Bahasa Indonesian. The presentations included an overview of the crocodilians, an introduction to the CSG, the Tomistoma Task Force and the CSG's SRAS, introduction to Human-Crocodile Conflict and Human-Crocodile Conflict management within Indonesia, an example of crocodile habitat management and introduction to field techniques for monitoring wild crocodile populations, fundamentals of crocodile biology, fundamentals of captive management, crocodile handling (manual and chemical restraint), diseases, clinical techniques and sampling for health assessment, nutritional, metabolic and infectious disease diagnosis, prevention and treatment. Participants were provided an opportunity to share case histories, experiences and for Q&A. The two days of lectures concluded with an introduction to the CSG Step by Step Guide and Reporting Form for the Necropsy of Crocodilians. The workshop participants represented the following organizations: BKSDA Aceh; BKSDA Kalimantan Barat; BKSDA Kalimantan Timur; BKSDA Nusa Tenggara Timur; BKSDA Sumatera Utara; Yayasan Inisiasi Alam Rehabilitasi Indonesia; Veterinary Faculty Syiah Kuala University Banda Aceh; Berbak National Park; Danau Sentarum National Park; People's Resources and Conservation Foundation; Orangutan Information Center; Sumatra Orangutan Conservation Program; and, PT Pal Crocodile Farm.
7. In March 2017, the latest revision of the CSG Action Plan for *Tomistoma schlegelii* was completed by a team consisting of Kyle Shaney, Bruce Shwedick, Boyd Simpson and Colin Stevenson and submitted to CSG for review.

Prepared by: Bruce Shwedick, Chair CSG-Tomistoma Task Force
Date prepared: 4 April 2018

Prepared by: Bruce Shwedick, Chair TTF
Date prepared: