

Crocodile Specialist Group Steering Committee Meeting

McNeese University, Lake Charles, Louisiana

25 May 2014 (9.00 am-4.00 pm)

Minutes and Actions

1. Opening

The Chairman, Grahame Webb, opened the meeting at 9 am and welcomed participants to the meeting.

Steering Committee members present:

Grahame Webb, Alejandro Larriera, Tom Dacey, Charlie Manolis, Samuel Martin, Christine Lippai, Lonnie McCaskill, Nao Thuok, Eric Langelet, Carlos Piña, Alvaro Velasco, Hesiquio Benitez Diaz, Luis Bassetti, Sergio Medrano-Bitar, Manuel Alfonso Tabet, Marisa Tellez, Ralf Sommerlad, Ruth Elsey, Allan Woodward, Noel Kinler, Thomas Rainwater, Don Ashley, Yoichi Takehara, Enrico Chiesa, Jerome Caraguel, Simone Comparini, Bernardo Ortiz, John Caldwell, Paolo Martelli, Kent Vliet, Val Lance, James Perran Ross, Bruce Shwedick, Ted Joanen, Phil Wilkinson.

Observers present:

Gabriela Lopez S., Rafael Crespo, Tanya Sturman, Mario Alecoa, Joe Wasilewski, Byron Wilson, Soledad Moleon, Pamela Leiva, Jazmin Bauso, Alba Imhof, Robinson Botero-Aries, Maria de la Paz Lopez Vasquez, Manuel Muñiz, Avishka Godahewa, Helen Crowley, Silke Pfitzer, Ian Colenbrander, Luis Angel Velasquez, Hector Ragusa Villegas, Andres Leonardo Rodriguez, Godfrid Solmu, Luis Sigler, Robert Godshalk, Weber Girardi, Simon Pooley, Adam Britton, Serge Castagno, Adieu Fanget, Gabriel Brull, Nairen Alonso Jimenez, Roberto Ramos Targarona, Mark Merchant, Ashley Percy, Juan Fernando Martinez, Maria Alejandra Camargo, Luis Felipe Martinez, Hernando Zambrano, Akira Matsuda, Noboru Ishii, Vicente P. Mercado, Mitsuko Takehara, Freddy Webb, Giovanna Webb, Soham Mukherjee, Dhiraj Gopinath, Gowri Mallapur, Jeff Lang, Robby McLeod, Frank Garcia R., William Belo, Careen Bello, Rainier Manalo, Brian Sibongga, Szu-Lung Chen, Li-Jen Chang, Chris Banks, Jennifer Andringa, Rio Throm, Shawn Heflick, Patrick Delaney, Brian Jeffery, Michael Cherkiss, Steve Gorzula, Theresa Aquino, Colette Adams, Curt Harbsmeier, Antoine Soler, Heng Sovannara, Sally Isberg, Matthew Shirley, Fernando Cuadra.

Apologies (Steering Committee members):

Dietrich Jelden, Alison Leslie, Howard Kelly, Tomme Young, Kevin van Jaarsveldt, Jiang Hongxing, Alfonso Llobet, Clara Lucia Sierra Diaz.

Apologies (other CSG members):

Patrick Aust, Matt Brien, Ruan Xiangdong

1.1. Chairman's Report

The Chairman drew attention to the activities of the CSG over the past year and the forthcoming years, highlighting:

- Five CSG members had passed away since the last working meeting - Keiran McNamara and Peter McInnes (Australia), Thierry Bordat (France), Robert Chabreck (USA) and Fritz Huchzermeyer (South Africa).
- Changes to the Steering Committee, including appointment of Howard Kelly as Regional Vice Chairman for Southern & East Africa, Lonnie McCaskill as Regional Chairman for East & Southeast Asia, Myrna Cauilan-Cuarg as Vice Chair for Public Education and Community Participation and Curt Harbsmeier as Vice Chair for Legal Affairs.
- The current status of trade in Madagascar, where CITES has maintained a trade suspension recommended by the CITES Standing Committee. The matter is being scheduled for further consideration of the CITES Standing Committee meeting (SC65) in July 2014.
- An overview of the current situation in Colombia. An out of session meeting with members of the Colombian industry and a Government representative was scheduled for later in the working meeting.
- Meetings attended - Siamese Crocodile Task (Thailand, 24-25 April 2014) and 27th CITES Animals Committee meeting (Mexico, 28 April-3 May 2014).
- Reviews: Ethiopia review undertaken 28 April-7 May 2014. Preliminary report being provided by Matthew Shirley, later during the meeting. Proposed Fact Finding Mission to Indonesia on the conservation of the crocodile habitat for *T. schlegelii* and *C. siamensis* in Lake Mesangat, East Kalimantan, possibly in September 2014, also to possibly include CITES issues.
- The involvement of the Responsible Ecosystems Sourcing Platform (RESP) involvement in the snake trade issue, which has been expanded to include all reptiles, including crocodilians, is a matter of some concern.
- Proposed CSG Leadership Program, which envisages the selection of about six younger CSG members and to mentor and train them in the various outside bio-political activities undertaken by the CSG (eg CITES, including its Standing and Animals Committees and IUCN).
- Nominations to host the next CSG Working Meeting were received from Argentina, South Africa and Cambodia. These were to be further considered by the Executive Committee and the decision reported back during the course of the meeting.

The report was noted.

1.2. Minutes and Actions from CSG SC Meeting, Negombo, Sri Lanka (May 2013)

Executive Officer, Tom Dacey, advised that all outstanding actions from the Negombo meeting were either reported in the minutes of the meeting or addressed as separate agenda items in the papers for the CSG Working Meeting.

The report was noted.

1.3. Executive Officer's Report

The Executive Officer highlighted:

- CSG currently has 502 members from 62 countries;

- The CSG has continued to fund in a modest way the regional offices in Latin America & the Caribbean, South Asia & Iran and Southern & East Africa; and,
- Since 2009 the Student Research Assistance Scheme (SRAS) has approved 72 projects, for which 51 reports for completed projects have been received. All details are available on the CSG website.

The report was noted.

1.4. Financial Report

Tom Dacey introduced the financial report, which highlighted a current balance of \$AUD621,660 (around \$US576,665) at 31 March 2014, including \$US25,400 for CSG-TTF and \$US7000 in the Chinese Alligator fund. Around \$AUD522,376 is invested in a short-term deposit account earning interest, which provides an income sufficient to sustain the minimum CSG executive support needed.

The report was noted.

1.5. International Association of Crocodile Specialists Inc.

The audited financial statement for 30 June 2013 was tabled. The Annual General Meeting was held on 11 November 2013.

The report was noted

2. Regional Reports

2.1. Southern and East Africa

The Regional Chair for Southern and East Africa, Christine Lippai, presented the report, highlighting recent activities:

- Angola - surveys in the Okavango catchment area confirms adult crocodiles are nesting and breeding there. Human-crocodile conflicts also occur within the region;
- Botswana - ongoing mark-recapture program being carried out by the Okavango Crocodile Monitoring Programme (OCMP). Projects planned for 2014 include (a) Human-Crocodile Conflict study and (b) mother-to-young acoustic communication;
- Egypt - a crocodile management plan is being drafted and an advisory council established with the local Aswan Government and Lake Nasser authorities. CSG member Mohamed Ezat has recently undertaken a learning visit to Zimbabwe to enhance his knowledge in order to assist him with the creation of a Crocodile Management Unit in Egypt;
- Ethiopia - review undertaken, 28 April-8 May 2014. Matt Shirley to provide a preliminary report later during the meeting;
- Madagascar - the CITES Animals Committee's Working Group met informally at AC27 to discuss progress to date. Apparently the report submitted by Madagascar was still with the CITES Secretariat and has still to be formally considered. The trade suspension will be retained and considered again at the CITES Standing Committee meeting (July 2014);

- Namibia - a study on “Nile Crocodile Genetic Diversity and Population Structure, within the Kunene and Kavango Rivers, Northern Namibia” commenced in March 2014;
- South Africa - the South African Department of Trade and Industry approved the launch of the National Exotic Leather Cluster (NELC), aimed at establishing a sustainable, world class exotic leather industry in South Africa; and,
- Uganda - monthly crocodile surveys continue along the Victoria Nile in the Murchison Falls National Park.

The report was noted.

2.2. West and Central Africa Regional Report

Samuel Martin addressed the report, highlighting:

- Crocodile monitoring in the Sitatunga Valley (CREDI-NGO project) confirmed the presence of Dwarf crocodile (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*) and the West African crocodile (*Crocodylus suchus*).
- SOS Crocodiles of La Ferme aux Crocodiles (France) continue to be involved in the funding of several projects.
- Scientific research has focused on human-crocodile interaction around agro-pastoral dams.
- Continuing to collect data on crocodile distribution and movement in Benin in order to design a local and regional action plan for crocodile conservation and management.
- Monitoring of the *C. suchus* population is continuing.

A report was provided by Matt Shirley on the work he has been undertaking in:

- Ivory Coast. West African slender-snouted crocodile captive breeding and reintroduction project being undertaken in collaboration with the Abidjan National Zoo, Ivorian National Parks Service (OIPR) and the University of Nangui-Abroguoua (UNA).
- 3rd Regional Meeting proposed to be held in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, in late November 2014.
- Gabon. Work with the Smithsonian Institute continues slowly.
- The Burkina Faso Government has recently begun enforcing wildlife legislation regarding crocodiles, on a multitude of extractive industry groups.
- The Gambian Government is exploring the possibility of establishing a limited crocodile trophy hunting initiative in response to apparently increasing human-crocodile conflict in some coastal areas.

The report was noted.

2.3. East and Southeast Asia Regional Report

The report collated by the CSG Executive Officer from various sources highlighted:

- Chinese Alligator project. Assessment of an earlier reintroduction of captive-breed Chinese alligators in Dongtan Wetland Park on Chongming Island at the mouth of the Yangtze River, indicates that the alligators are established and reproducing in the Park.

- Lao PDR. The WCS head-starting project progresses well, however, donor funding will run out at the end of 2014 and casts some doubt on the future of this successful project.
- Philippines.
 - Government is undertaking a review to develop a “National Conservation Management Plan for the Crocodiles in the Philippines, 2014-2020”.
 - CPPI, in partnership with the Silliman University Angelo King Centre for Research and Environmental Management (SUAKCREM), has initiated a 10-month research project on “Crocodiles and their Contribution to the Productivity of Wetland Ecosystems in the Philippines”.
 - The 36 juvenile *C. mindorensis* reintroduced into Paghongawan Marsh, Siargao Island, appear to be surviving well (only 2 reported deaths to date).
 - North Luzon Island (Mabuwaya Foundation): quarterly surveys during 2012 and mid-2013 recorded just over 100 wild *C. mindorensis*; 5 nests were located in 2012 and 2 in 2013; a further 29 head-started *C. mindorensis* were released, 2012-2014; and, the Mabuwaya Foundation continues its program of collaboration with local communities, and municipal and provincial governments in Northern Luzon to enhance conservation of *C. mindorensis* in the region.
- Singapore. Consistent sightings of *C. porosus* in Sungei Buloh Wetlands and nearby Kranji Reservoir are beginning to attract tourists and local visitors.
- Vietnam. There are now 9 CITES-registered captive breeding farms for *C. siamensis*. These are supplemented by some 2500 domestic contract farms.
- Sarawak, Malaysia. “Borneo Crocodile Forum 2014 - Human-Crocodile Co-existence - Roadmap to Sustainability”, to be held in Sibul, 10-12 June 2014, to discuss the possible downlisting of *C. porosus*.
- Thailand. The “1st Siamese Crocodile Conservation and Husbandry Meeting” and the “Siamese Crocodile Task Force Meeting” were held at Mahidol University, Nakhon Pathon, Thailand, 24-25 April 2014. Report at SC.6.2.

The report was noted.

2.4. North America Regional Report

The report, provided by the Regional Chairs Ruth Elsey and Allan Woodward highlighted:

- Report on American crocodile (*C. acutus*) by Mike Cherkiss and Frank Mazzotti.
- Alabama will offer a limited alligator hunt for 2014 (9th consecutive year).
- Florida population of alligators has been relatively stable over the past 25 years. Florida has three alligator harvest programs (nuisance, private lands and statewide public lands).
- Louisiana. Improvements in worldwide economics has lead to improved prices for wild and farm-raised alligators. Increased alligator egg and wild harvests in 2011, 2012 and 2013.
- US Fish and Wildlife Service have no petitions pending for reclassification of crocodylians under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

The report was noted.

2.5. South Asia and Iran Regional Report

The report was provided by Anslem de Silva, with input from the various Vice Chairs, highlighting:

- Iran. To improve legal protection, the Department of Environment has increased fines for illegal killing of Mugger crocodiles and undertaken some public awareness activities with local participation.
- India. The Tri-state National Chambal Sanctuary Management Plan has been prepared and a trans-boundary critically endangered species management programme is being planned (India and Nepal).
- Sri Lanka. Human-Crocodile Conflict continues to be a problem. Translocation of “problem crocodiles” continues, however, Crocodile Exclusion Enclosures (CEEs) are gaining popularity.
- Pakistan. 2013-2014 has seen a marked increase in the establishment of private sector, domestic Mugger (*C. palustris*) breeding facilities in Sindh Province.

The report was noted.

2.6. Australia and Oceania

The report by Regional Chairman Charlie Manolis highlighted:

- Northern Territory. Recent attempt to integrate a trial hunting component into the *C. porosus* management program was rejected by the Federal Minister for the Environment (March 2014). The effect of the cane toad on the freshwater crocodile population continues.
- Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage Protection has developed a new crocodile management policy, aimed at an improved balance between community safety and crocodile conservation. A trial wild *C. porosus* egg harvest is in its second year.
- Western Australia. Two commercial crocodile farms have largely ceased operations.
- Papua New Guinea. Biennial nest counts surveys for *C. novaeguineae* were carried out in October 2013, indicating stable-increasing trend. Surveys for *C. porosus* nests were carried out in March 2014, but data have yet to be analysed.
- Timor Leste. In April 2014, the government of Timor Leste was seeking a consultant to develop a management plan for *C. porosus*.
- Solomon Islands - HCC continues to be a major issue with increasing political pressure on government to address the problem.
- Grahame Webb has recently released his new book, “Wildlife Conservation: In the Belly of the Beast”.

The report was noted.

2.7. Europe

The Regional Chairman Samuel Martin presented the paper, highlighting:

- Zoo community activities.
- *In-situ* conservation programs supported by European institutions.

The report was noted.

2.8. Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Report

The report was presented by Deputy Chairman Alejandro Larriera, who thanked all representatives from LA&C region for their inputs into the regional report and offered an apology for all those who were unable to attend the meeting. Issues highlighted:

- Argentina. Currently there are 7 registered ranching programs in the country, producing 18,481 skins in 2013.
- Bolivia. *Caiman yacare* wild harvest program and the associated development and review of management plans.
- Brazil. The status of the 6 Brazilian crocodylian species were published in Revista Biodiversidade Brasileira 2013 (Portuguese). The first caiman slaughterhouse is almost completed.
- Belize. Public awareness and education increases throughout the country, but senseless killing and poaching also continues. Loss of habitat is a major threat.
- Guatemala. Surveys of Morelet's crocodile populations will commence in the fall of 2014, as well as heavy metal analysis.
- El Salvador. American crocodiles are starting to repopulate habitats where they were once extirpated.
- Nicaragua. Survey of crocodylians in the San Juan and Bartola Rivers have been undertaken. Students are working on the data for publication.
- Costa Rica. Marisa Tellez has been collaborating with the La Selva Biological Station in Puerto Viejo, on establishing crocodylian research and courses for students and volunteers.
- Colombia. CITES Decisions 16.63-16.66 on the Implementation of the Convention relating to captive-bred and ranched specimens, directly affects Colombia - "evaluate concerns identified in the examples in Annex to Document SC62 Doc26 – which includes Item 13: Caiman (*C.c.f*) skins from Colombia traded using as source code "C" (exports of approximately 1.2 million skins were reported as exports from Colombia during the review period). Colombia has long been exporting wild harvested caimans using the wrong source codes. It was agreed that the Executive and other SC members would meet with the Colombian Ministry representative and industry representatives during the course of the meeting.
- Cuba. In November 2013, WCS was able to co-organise a Crocodile Workshop within the IX International Wetland Symposium held at the Zapata Swamp. The workshop was considered to have been extremely successful, covering key topics relevant to future of crocodylians in Cuba.
- Mexico. The following were highlighted: reports on 9 current projects being undertaken by CSG members in Mexico; 2 PhD, 2 Masters and 3 undergraduate theses reported; a number of management and conservation actions have been instigated; production and trade; and, numerous publications.
- Paraguay is working on a draft National Program for *Caiman yacare*. Researchers are seeking funding for the Scientific Authority to implement a population monitoring program, based in local Universities.
- Peru. The report addressed the institutions maintaining breeding *C. acutus* populations, the *Melanosuchus niger* situation and other crocodylian species.

- Venezuela. The report addressed: *Caiman c. crocodilus* wild harvest; *C. intermedius* conservation program; and, the First Symposium on Ecology and Conservation of Crocodiles in Venezuela.

The report was noted.

2.8.1. Crocodile Conservation in Jamaica

Perran Ross presented the paper and the issues discussed at the *C. acutus* meeting held in Miami on 15 February 2013.

- The Jamaican Crocodile Working Group has been formed.
- Independent group of crocodile supporters (many of whom are CSG members) organised two functions, raising some \$US26,000 which is dedicated to supporting crocodile conservation in Jamaica.
- Unfortunately, the situation for *C. acutus* in Jamaica remains extremely grim. There is no specific wildlife agency in Jamaica and responsibility rests with Government Development Organisations.

The report was noted.

3. Review Updates

3.1. Cambodia: Update on Implementation of Recommendations

The detailed report from Fisheries Administration of Cambodia on implementation of the Recommendations of the 2005 CSG review was included in the agenda papers.

Recommendations 1-7, 9, 12, 19, 21-23 and 25-27 were considered to have been completed. Recommendations 8, 11, 13, 18, 20, 24 and 28-31 were considered to have been partly completed and ongoing. Recommendations 10 and 14-17 were considered to be ongoing.

Cambodia government has agreed to proceed with the registration of a further 16 captive breeding farms.

A Cambodian Crocodile Farmers Association was established to assist with the proposed reintroduction of *C. siamensis* into the wild, a project being undertaken in co-operation with NGOs.

The report was noted.

3.2. Ethiopia Review

CSG undertook a review of crocodile management in Ethiopia, 28 April-7 May 2014, utilising the services of CSG members Matthew Shirley and Ludwig Siege. Matthew Shirley presented a preliminary report on the outcomes of the review:

- Trophy Hunting. There is a healthy population of *C. niloticus* in Lake Chamo with abundant juvenile, sub-adult and adults.
- Human-Crocodile Conflict does not appear to be a big issue with local people, however, it warrants further investigation.
- The “ranching” does not appear to be running very well, although the farming facilities look good and the skin quality is very good. There appears to be a definite potential for the “ranching” program, however, there are bureaucratic difficulties hampering progress.
- Non-Detriment Finding. There is just a total lack of documentation. Therefore, there is no basis for a non-detriment submission. The Federal Government delegates responsibility to the State governments.
- The final report will become available at the end of June 2014.

The report was noted.

4. Thematic Group Reports

4.1. CITES

The report was briefly introduced by Tom Dacey/Grahame Webb, highlighting:

- Madagascar - the trade ban continues until further consideration by the CITES Standing Committee (SC65) in July 2014.
- Colombia. The Executive and Steering Committee members familiar with the situation would hold separate meetings with the industry members from Colombia to discuss problem issues, and undertake such other meetings as may be needed throughout the CSG Working Meeting, particularly with a representative of the Colombian Management Authority when she arrived, to try and resolve the ongoing laundering of wild caimans through farms, and the misuse of source codes on the CITES certificates to achieve this.

The report was noted.

4.2. Industry Report

Vice Chair Don Ashley addressed the report highlighting:

- The need to continue CSG presence at CITES meetings.
- California Assembly Bill AB2075 to extend the sunset clause, allowing the legal sale of alligator and crocodile products, through to 1 January 2025 now has to go through the Senate on 10 June 2014.
- CITES Animals Committee Meeting, Veracruz, Mexico, 28 April-2 May 2014: Working Group on Captive Bred and Ranched Specimens continues to review and provide input on ways to better ensure CITES requirements for captive breeding and ranched specimens are in compliance; and, Snake Trade and Conservation issues.
- Animal Welfare and Humane Slaughter issues. The work of the Expert Panel on the Humane Killing (slaughter) of Reptiles was completed in 2013 and is currently under review of the World Health Organisation (WHO) to be considered as international standards. Report was circulated.

- Best Management Practices for crocodylian programs is becoming increasingly important in many countries.
- Conservation Education and Marsh to Market Story. Need for dedicated efforts to better tell Conservation and Community stories to Governments, legislatures, industry, retail trade and the general public.

The report was noted.

4.3. Trade Monitoring

John Caldwell presented the report, highlighting: the source of the trade data; outstanding CITES reports. Currently, Malawi, Nicaragua and the Phillipines are 3 years in arrears and in danger of having trade restrictions imposed upon them by the CITES Standing Committee under Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev. CoP16).

The report was noted.

4.4. Veterinary Science

Paolo Martelli presented the report, highlighting:

- Passing of Fritz Huchzermeyer.
- Dr. Cathy Shilton has accepted an invitation to be Co-Chair for the Veterinary Science Group.
- Website updates include step-by-step guide and necropsy form for crocodylians, a literature compilation on crocodylian anaesthesia, a manual for parasite collection and preservation and a link to a Spectrum Web viewer histopathology reference, together with other important documents.
- Dr. Silke Pfitzer completed her MSc entitled “Physiological Parameters of Farmed Nile Crocodiles (*Crocodylus niloticus*) Captured Manually by Electrical Immobilisation”.

The report was noted.

4.5. Zoos

Vice Chair Kent Vliet presented the report, highlighting:

- Dedicated session on “The Impact of Zoos on Crocodylian Conservation and Biology” will be held during the Working Meeting.
- Requests to Zoos to accept and house confiscated crocodylians.
- *In-situ* conservation programs.
- Activities in North American Zoos, e.g. The Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA), Crocodile Advisory Group (CAG). Annual training course “Crocodylian Biology and Captive Management”. Studbooks and cooperative breeding programs. Fund-raising activities have been extremely active.
- Activities in Latin America.
- Activities in Europe. Imports to the Czech Republic.
- Activities Asia, where communications are getting better.

- Working Meeting session related to cryptic species and the number of living species of crocodylians.

The report was noted

4.6. Public Education and Community Participation

Vice Chair, Clara Lucia Sierra Diaz was unable to attend the meeting. The report was noted.

4.7. General Research

Vice Chair Val Lance presented his report, highlighting the high number of recent papers dealing with crocodylians and listing a number of specific relevant papers. The report was noted.

5. IUCN Red List Authority

Perran Ross advised that:

- Red List Assessments for *C. palustris*, *Tomistoma schlegelii* and *Mecistops* are complete and *C. mindorensis* is in final draft.
- IUCN assessments are updated in June and November each year, however, there is usually a 6 month delay from the time the CSG finalises assessments to when they actually get listed by the IUCN.
- IUCN announced the 50th anniversary of the Red List this year and will feature special announcements and publicity.
- Current list for crocodylian assessments, in priority order is as follows:
 - *Crocodylus intermedius* - CR
 - *Alligator sinensis* - CR
 - *Melanosuchus niger* - EN
 - *Crocodylus niloticus* - (eastern clade)
 - *Crocodylus suchus* - (western clade)
 - *Osteolaemus tetraspis* - VU
 - *Crocodylus johnstoni* - LR
- The remaining unassessed species are currently LR and not likely to change.
- The need to identify possible team leaders and people to assist with the Red List assessments.

The report was noted.

6. Task Force/Working Group Reports

6.1. Tomistoma Task Force

The report was presented by TTF Chair Bruce Shwedick, highlighting:

- Boyd Simpson has completed surveys in Peninsular Malaysia (North Selangor Swamp Forest in Selangor State and the South-East Pahang Peat Swamp Forest in Pahang). Report still awaited.
- Funding is coming in on a regular basis and has been provided for following projects:
 - \$US12,410 to the Peoples Resource and Conservation Foundation for Phase 1 of project “Focused Conservation of *Tomistoma schlegelii* in the Landscape of Danau Sentarum National Park (DSNP)”. Report on the first three surveys received.
 - \$US4500 to Kyle Shaney, PhD student, University of Texas, for Phase 1 of project - “Assessing Abundance and Population Genetic Structure of the Endangered False Gharial (*Tomistoma schlegelii*) in Sumatra”.
- Proposed participants (Bruce Shwedick, Lonnie McCaskill and Rob Stuebing) to undertake the fact finding mission re: Lake Mesangat, East Kalimantan, Indonesia, will meet with CSG Executive members in Louisiana to draft Terms of Reference for the Mission.
- Colin Stevenson is working on the new TTF webpage to be incorporated into the CSG website.

The report was noted.

6.2. Human-Crocodile Conflict

HCC Working Group Chairman Allan Woodward presented the report, highlighting that a special HCC session will be held during the Working Meeting, devoted to presentations of HCC case studies.

The report was noted.

6.3. Siamese Crocodile Task Force (SCTF)

SCTF Chairman Dr. Parntep Ratanakorn was unable to attend the meeting but provided a written report outlining progress from the recent meetings held at the Mahidol University, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand (24-25 May), including: capacity building development of training materials for regional training and workshops; reintroductions of wild populations in Cambodia and Thailand in 2014; and, country updates from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam.

CSG Chairman, Grahame Webb, advised that the status of *C. siamensis* in the wild is now worse than what it was 40 years ago. There is pressure on Cambodia because they still have a remnant wild population. The CSG is also encouraging Thailand to get reintroductions underway.

The report was noted.

6.4. Capacity Building Manual Working Group

Verbal report presented by Charlie Manolis, highlighting:

- That all submissions received to date have been placed onto the website.

- Perran Ross has agreed to complete the project but will need help from others who are able to provide future sections for the Manual.
- There is a need for a sunset clause for completion of the Manual.

7. General Business

7.1. International Working Group on Reptile Skins.

CSG Chairman Grahame Webb provided a summary on the background on the issue and the reaction from the fashion houses and the impact it caused on the snake trade. This then spilled over to the crocodilian trade when it shifted from the snake trade to the reptile trade (which includes crocodiles).

He warned that there will be a need to approach the issue with a great deal of caution as the ultimate cost will be borne by the producer and not the other players in the system. Top end companies are now starting to recognise the impacts of the issue.

Perran Ross, Hesiquio Benitez and Chris Banks offered further comments on the issue.

The report was noted.

8. Next CSG Working Meeting

The CSG had received three applications to host the 24th CSG Working Meeting in 2016: Proyecto Yacare, Argentina; South African National Parks, South Africa; and, Cambodian Ministry of Fisheries, Cambodia.

CSG Chairman advised that the 24th CSG Working Meeting will be held in South Africa in 2016, but SANParks will be given until the end of August 2014 to confirm all the necessary arrangements and funding. If South Africa cannot meet this deadline, then the Working Meeting will transfer to Argentina.

Cambodia has been requested to amend its offer and arrange to hold a CSG Regional Meeting in Siem Reap, Cambodia, in May 2015. It also will have to confirm all the necessary arrangements and funding are in place.

The meeting closed at 1600 h.

Prepared by: Tom Dacey, CSG Executive Officer
Date prepared: 29 May 2014