

Crocodile Specialist Group Steering Committee Meeting

Skukuza, Kruger National Park, South Africa

22 May 2016

Public Education & Community Participation Report

The CSG Steering Committee agreed in Manila, Philippines (21 May 2012), that the “Zoos and Community Education” thematic group be split into two thematic groups, with one covering “Community Education” and the other covering “Zoos” (Vice Chairman Dr. Kent Vliet). It was decided to broaden the scope of the “Community Education” group to include “community participation”, which has been identified as a key element for conservation in many situations. It also is relevant where community livelihoods are involved.

Although it has taken quite some time for the PECP group to be activated, its terms of reference were finally drafted in July 2014 with the appointment of Dr. Myrna C. Cureg as Vice Chair. Membership to the thematic group was facilitated with the support of Dr. Grahame Webb (CSG Chairman) and Mr. Tom Dacey (CSG Executive Officer), who facilitated the circulation of invitation for membership to the thematic group. However, the thematic group went on hibernation following a work conflict that the PECP Vice Chair had to face but it was revived in the later part of 2015 with a few accomplishments.

This report presents the terms of reference, the activities that were facilitated in relation to organizing the PECP Thematic Group and the information that were gathered in relation to PECP projects around the world.

PECP TERMS OF REFERENCE

Mission

The Mission of the Community Education group is: *to assist the IUCN-SSC Crocodile Specialist Group (CSG) to meet its mission with regard to the conservation, management and sustainable utilization of world crocodilians through public education and community participation.*

Goal

Facilitate information sharing among members about educating the public and encouraging community participation in the conservation, management and sustainable utilization of world crocodilians.

Objectives

In general, the PECP thematic group seeks to set up means by which members from different regions can share strategies and experiences in educating communities and encouraging and/or implementing community participation in the conservation, management and sustainable utilization of crocodilians.

Specifically, the PECP thematic group aims to:

1. encourage interested CSG members to join/participate in the activities of the PECP group;
2. assign key individuals from different regions to specific tasks that the PECP group will identify;
3. compile information on public education and community participation to be posted on the CSG website;
4. discuss activities that can be facilitated in order to help educate people and encourage community participation in the conservation and management of crocodilians; and,
5. explore areas for possible resource sharing among members of the PECP group.

Membership

The PECP group will comprise interested people who can meet and/or communicate to discuss how public education and community participation can be used to advance the conservation and management of crocodilians. Interested CSG members will have two options for membership status. These are:

1. Active Member - individual opts to participate actively in the different discussion sessions and other activities of the group.
2. Passive Member - individual is interested in receiving information about the output and other information resources being shared in the group.

Preliminary Actions

The following actions were proposed in 2014 with respect to establishing the membership of the PECP group, and subsequent development of goals and activities:

- Action 1. Establish membership of the group. This may involve the development of simple protocols for membership, and assignment of key people in different regions.
- Action 2. Compile information that can be posted on the CSG website, describing the group's goals, aims, etc.
- Action 3. Facilitate information exchange between members, particularly with respect to the development of short-, medium- and long-term goals.
- Action 4. Establish a "priority circulation list" for new information and progress.
- Action 5. Conduct affairs in an open, transparent and professional manner.

Accomplishments

Based on the preliminary plan of action, the following activities were undertaken:

- The Vice Chair for the CSG Public Education & Community Participation Thematic Group (Myrna Caulan-Cureg) composed an e-mail that was distributed from July to August 2014 by the CSG Executive Officer to all CSG members introducing the group and requesting who wants to be part of the group.
- An e-mail group was set-up (pecpgroup@yahoo.com) wherein all CSG members who have indicated their interest became group members, receive information, post/share information and also consult each other on how to deal with certain issues. This, however, worked for only a few months (August-September) as work-related schedule conflicts emerged (my apologies).
- Some members of the group reviewed the draft terms of reference prepared by the Vice Chair and based on solicited suggestions, the terms of reference was improved and finalized.
- The profile of the CSG members who signified interest in participating in the PECP was established and presented in a matrix (Attachment A). A total of 21 PECP members were included in the list composed of 19 active and two passive members as follows:

Name	Organization
1. Myrna C. Cureg	Isabela State University & Mabuwaya Foundation (Philippines)
2. Merlijn Van Weerd	Mabuwaya Foundation, Inc. (Philippines)
3. Chris Banks	Zoos Victoria (Australia)
4. Jennifer Andringa	Disney (USA)
5. Oswald Braken Tisen	Sarawak Forestry Corporate Office, Kuching (Malaysia)
6. Clara Lucia Sierra Diaz	Asocaiman (Colombia)
7. Avishka Godahewa	(Sri Lanka)
8. Robert Carmichael	Wildlife Discovery Center; College of Lacke County Division of Biological Sciences
9. Silvia Ten	CIBIOMA, Universidad Autónoma del Beni
10. Sergio A. Balaguera-Reina	Texas Tech University
11. Gowri Mallapur	Madras Crocodile Bank Trust/Centre for Herpetology (India)
12. Colin Stevenson	Crocodiles of the World
13. Marisa Tellez	Dept of Ecology, Evolution and Marine Biology, UCSB (USA)
14. Paolo Martelli	Ocean Park (Hongkong)
15. Tarun Nair	Gharial Conservation Alliance (India)
16. Rainier Manalo	Crocodylus Porosus Philippines
17. Nikhil Whitaker	Madras Crocodile Bank (India)
18. Christine Lippai	(South Africa)
19. Marites G. Balbas	Mabuwaya Foundation, Inc. (Philippines)
20. Joni T. Acay (Passive)	Mabuwaya Foundation, Inc. (Philippines)

Name	Organization
21. Luis Pacheco (Passive)	Instituto de Ecología, Universidad Mayor de San Andrés (Colombia)

- With assistance from Merlijn van Weerd of Mabuwaya Foundation, a proposal to include a session/workshop on PECP at the CSG regional meeting held in Cambodia in May 2015 did not materialize because the meeting was focused on conservation, management and utilization of *C. siamensis*.
- As such, instead of having the PECP session/workshop in Cambodia, the proposal to have a scientific session and conduct an out of session workshop on Public Education and Community Participation was revived, this time, during the 24th Working Meeting of CSG in South Africa. The proposal was made in order to provide an avenue for the PECP thematic group to be firmly established, meet the most active members and assign people in different regions or on different topics. To date, the plan is to have 7 PECP presentations on the afternoon of Monday, 23 May 2016. An out of session workshop for PECP members and other interested delegates will be scheduled in the succeeding days of the meeting in Africa.
- Case studies on PECP were solicited from CSG members through a general email to all members. The summary of solicited case studies on PECP, some of which will be presented during the CSG meeting in South Africa, is presented below:

Name	PECP Project/Paper	Organization/Species
1. Clara Lucia Sierra Diaz	2015 educational campaign/fund raising for an educational school material for school children	- ASIOCAIMAN (Colombia) - <i>Crocodylus actus</i>
2. Oswald Braken Tisen	‘3M Buaya’. ‘Mengenali, Memahami, Memelihara (3M) Buaya’	- Sarawak Forestry Corporate Office (Malaysia) - <i>Crocodylus porosus</i>
3. Yusuke Fukuda	“Be Croc Wise” for crocodile safety	- Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory (Australia) - <i>Crocodylus porosus</i>
4. Matthew Brien	Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (DEHP) Crocwise education and awareness campaign.	- Queensland Government, DEHP (Australia) - <i>Crocodylus porosus</i>
5. Tarun Nair	Short, but extensive awareness/outreach programs for gharials in India in 2014	- Researchers for Wildlife Conservation (India) - <i>Gavialis gangeticus</i>
6. Rainier Manalo	Crocodile CARE campaign program in Mindanao	- <i>Crocodylus Porosus</i> Philippines Inc. (Phil.) - <i>Crocodylus porosus</i> &

Name	PECP Project/Paper	Organization/Species
		<i>Crocodylus mindorensis</i>
7. Marites Balbas	Public Education and Community Participation (PECP) in Philippine Crocodile Conservation in Northern Philippines	- Mabuwaya Foundation (Philippines) - <i>Crocodylus mindorensis</i>
8. R. J. Rao	Gharial Education and Conservation Awareness Campaign Since 1989	- Jiwaji University (India) - <i>Gavialis gangeticus</i>
9. Mei Len Sanchez-Barr and Dr. Brady Barr	EcoAdventures Center for Education, Enrichment, and Conservation. Educational hands-on Center	- Ecoadventures (USA) - Focuses on all crocodilians/herps and rainforest conservation
10. Dr. Brady Barr, Juan Bolanos, Dr. Laura Porras, Karen Vega, and Mei Len Sanchez-Barr	Acutus Project- Incubated and headstarted <i>acutus</i> babies with local school children and released them in the Tarcoles River, Costa Rica. Educational Outreaches and hands-on programs.	- 2000 National Geographic Funded and 2007 Crocodilian Advisory Group Funded Project (Costa Rica)
11. Dr. Brady Barr	2016 Dr. Barr kids book publication about headstart program « After a While Crocodile » Alexa’s Diary and Nat Geo chapter book «Crocodile Encounters »	- National Geographic
12. Dhaval Patel	Charotar Crocodile Count: The VNC’s ‘Conservation of Crocodiles in Charotar ’ Project	- Voluntary Nature Conservancy (India) - <i>Mugger crocodile</i>
13. Cyrille Mvele	Project Faux Gavial Reducing bushmeat commerce of the slender-snouted crocodile through community outreach in the lake region of Gabon	- Project Faux Gavial (Gabon, Africa) - <i>Mecistops catapraectus</i>
14. Georges Codjo Hedegbetan	Know and Protect Nature (CPN) campaign for community and youth club.	- Biodiversity Monitoring at CREDI-ONG* (Benin)
15. Vince Shacks and Sven Bourquin	Human Crocodile Conflict in the Okavango: The use of social media to educate and communicate with small communities	- <i>Crocodylus niloticus</i>
16. Allan R. Woodward	Internet site that provides information on alligators and crocodile safety, and is available to the public. http://myfwc.com/conservation/	- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (USA) - <i>Crocodyles and Alligators</i>

Name	PECP Project/Paper	Organization/Species
	you-serve/wildlife/gators/	
17. Sergio A. Balaguera-Reina	Crocs Geo-Visor Initiative - a geographical/friendly/easy going database focused on gathering crocodiles' spatial information regarding sights, nests, and conflicts under a historical context as an effort to share, easily, crucial data in conservation and management process. Citizen science project called crocodiles in the world is an application that you can download on your phone and collect information about crocodiles.	- Texas Tech University (USA) -
18. Marisa Tellez	Citizen science project of the American crocodile on Ambergris Caye, Belize Eco-tourism project with the American crocodile in collaboration with high school students of Caye Caulker, Belize	- Dept. of Ecology, Evolution and Marine Biology, UCSB (USA) - American crocodile
19. Colin Stevenson	Very interested in a discussion at the CSG meeting, as there is plenty of scope for PECP programs as such projects will form the basis of sound management plans for the more critical of the endangered croc species.	
20. Myrna C. Cureg	Educating The Public And Promoting Community Participation In Crocodile Conservation: An Overview Of Efforts Around The World	IUCN-SSC-CSG PECP Thematic Group, Isabela State University & Mabuwaya Foundation

FUTURE PLANS/ACTIVITIES

Based on the specific objectives set for the group, the following activities need to be conducted in the future:

- Review of “PECP Terms of Reference” for final approval of the body.
- Assignments of key people representing different regions.

- Compile information that can be posted on the CSG website, describing the group's goals, aims, etc.
- The possibility of having online resources on public education about crocodilians (articles, manuals, examples of communication and educational materials, etc.) will be explored to facilitate information exchange between members, particularly with respect to the development of short-, medium- and long-term goals. Assistance from the CSG Executive Officer on setting up online resource-sharing will be sought.
- Establishment of a "priority circulation list" for new information and progress.

Prepared by: Myrna C. Cureg, Vice Chair, PECP Thematic Group

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