



Proceedings
10th Meeting of IUCN SSC Asian Elephant Specialist Group
04th to 6th December 2019

Shangri La's Tanjung Aru Resort & Spa
Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia



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The 10th meeting of the Asian Elephant Specialist Group (AsESG) was held at the Shangri La's Tanjung Aru Resort & Spa, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia from 04th to 6th December 2019. The meeting was jointly hosted along with Sabah Wildlife Department. Wide range of issues including standards and guidelines for the management and welfare of elephants in wild and in captivity, wildlife emergencies, national action plans, red-listing of Asian elephants and challenges for the conservation of elephants in Sabah were discussed that was attended by 148 people including 62 AsESG members, 17 Government officials from all Asian elephant range countries, 3 other Ex-officio members, 36 invitees from across the globe as well as 20 organizers and 10 exhibitors. The meet also provided a forum for AsESG members and young professionals to present their work. A Partners meeting between AsESG partners and Range country officials was also organized to explore the possibilities of supporting priority conservation activities of Range States

DAY 1: Inaugural Session

Dr Sen Nathan, Assistant Director- Sabah Wildlife Department extended a warm welcome to all the participants of behalf of the Government of Sabah and the Wildlife Department. He thanked the Chair AsESG for organizing the meeting in Sabah. He also briefed on the role of Sabah Wildlife Department and PERHILITAN in conservation and management of wildlife in Sabah and Peninsular Malaysia.

Mr Vivek Menon, Chair AsESG thanked the Government of Sabah and the Sabah Wildlife Department for hosting the meeting and for all the hospitality extended to the participants. He presented the report of AsESG in last 18 months. The group currently has 110 AsESG members and 20 Ex-officio members. 20 members have joined the group since the last meeting in Bangkok in April 2018 including two from Vietnam which was earlier unrepresented. He also informed that the female members have increased since he took over in 2016 and more young people have joined the group. There has been increase in members from NGO's and Government sector but decline in number of Academicians which is a concern and will look into it during the next quadrennial.

While presenting on the work of the group, he informed that 19 Working Groups worked to Assess, Plan and Act in this Quadrennial (2016-2020); three of these completed their mandate by 2017.

Assess

- The Red List coordinator and the team has successfully submitted the assessment of Asian Elephant (expect sub species *E.m. sumatranus*).
- The Working group for mapping the distribution of Asian Elephant has not completed the mapping and is still in progress.

Plan

- The group will also be discussing the various sub species of Asian Elephant and should Borneo elephant be considered as a separate sub-species will be discussed during this meeting.
- Three Working groups were formed to prepare/update their National Elephant conservation National Action plan. Bhutan that started the work in mid-2018 has finalised and published the plan in July 2019. The Sabah plan has also been prepared and pending approval from the Government. The draft of the Sumatra Elephant conservation National Action plan has been prepared and public consultation in progress and expect the plans to be ready by mid-2020. Lao PDR and India which does not have a plan has also agreed to prepare their plan after follow up by AsESG Secretariat and have constituted technical committees to prepare the plans.
- The WG that have completed and submitted their outcome document include- Guidelines for creating artificial water holes in elephant habitats, Guideline for welfare and use of elephants in Tourism, Management and care of captive elephant in musth and Guidelines for the reintroduction of captive elephants in the wild as possible restocking option.
- The WG's that are still working to complete their outcome documents include- guideline for best practices in addressing and mitigation human elephant conflict, areas and mechanism of involving AsESG members to strengthen MIKE and plans to arrest the decline of the elephant population of Vietnam.
- The work of the WG to prepare guidelines to treat, minimize and manage spread of emerging new disease, formed in July 2018 is in progress.
- The WG to prepare plan to manage the elephant habitat affected by Rohingya refugees in Cox bazar undertook field visit in Oct-November 2018 and working on the plan.

Act

- Capacity building training of Vets from Vietnam and Cambodia on radio collaring of elephants and HEC mitigation was conducted in Kaziranga, India by AsESG-WTI from 26th Nov- 2nd Dec 2018. IFAW-WTI vets went to Cambodia to assist the WWF Cambodia team in radio collaring of elephants from 26 July – 7th Aug 2019
- The membership advisory committee (MAC) and the Communications Advisory Group (CAG) are also working on their respective mandate and will continue till the end of the quadrennium.
- The editorial board of Gajah has published three volumes of Gajah Journal since April 2018. One of the major hurdle has been lack of papers for publication and urged members to submit their work for publication.
- He also presented the expenditure statement of 2018-19 and a part of it is unspent and urged the WG to use it.

He thanked Mr Jayantha Jayawardene for drafting the history of AsESG and requested members to share the photographs of previous meetings, Chairs, events (in case they have) for finalization of the document.

The Chair also brief on AsESG representative activities during the period

- Organized a session at the 29th International Congress for Conservation Biology (ICCB 2019) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 25th July 2019 jointly with IFAW and Elephant Family on “Challenges confronting conservation of Asian Elephants: *Securing corridors as a mitigation strategy*”
- Side event at CITES CoP18 at Geneva on 22nd August 2019 in partnership with IFAW, Elephant Family and WWF on *Impact of poaching and illegal trade on Asian Elephants*.
- AsESG WCPA Transport proposed Working Group- A meeting of the proposed linear infrastructure Working group with members from WCPA Transport working group of connectivity conservation and AsESG was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 8th April to discuss the formalities and TOR
- IUCN African Elephant Specialist Group Meeting- Dr Sandeep Kr Tiwari, Program Manager AsESG attend the African Elephant Specialist Group members meeting on behalf of AsESG at Pretoria, South Africa from 14th to 18th July 2019
- Chair attended the SSC Steering committee meeting as well as the SSC Leadership meeting, spoke and chaired few Parallel sessions. Few other AsESG members also attended the meeting held at Abu Dhabi, 6th – 10th October 2019

He also briefed on upcoming events and AsESG participation

- CMS COP13 – Gandhinagar, India 15-22 February 2020- AsESG assisted the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEFCC), Govt of India in preparation of proposal for listing of *Elephas maximus* in the appendices of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS). It is also partnering with MoEFCC for a side event on Asian Elephant
- Has submitted a proposal on “Critical Connectivity for Giants: Securing Wildlife Corridors for Management of Large-Ranging Mammals” at the IUCN World Conservation Congress, Marseille, June 2020

AsESG has published a paper on *Population status of Asian elephants Elephas maximus and key threats* in International Zoo Yearbook 2019

One of the major objective of AsESG and this meeting is to provide further opportunities to members, young professionals and Partners for

- Highlighting the research and conservation initiatives of our members through presentation as this meeting
- Opportunities to young profession to present their work, capacity building training and mentorship from AsESG
- Getting our Partners and Range country officials to explore possibilities of financial and technical support for conservation of Asian Elephants

The Chair also informed that AsESG is in top 4 among 160 Specialist Group and has been awarded by SSC Chair's certificate of excellence for the outstanding contribution in delivering the Species Strategic plan for the 2017-18 period.

The Chair informed that although overall elephant populations may have remained stable in Asia but elephant population of Range countries like Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar and Lao PDR are of concern. He also raised his concern at the increasing human-elephant conflict across its range of distribution, Illegal killing of elephants and poaching in SE Asia and the emerging skin trade in Myanmar and nearby countries.

Dato Abdul Kadir bin Abu Hashim, DG, Department of Wildlife and National Parks, Peninsular Malaysia welcoming the participants in Malaysia highlighted the threats and the conservation and management initiatives of PERHILITAN through a video. He said that the challenge of conserving elephants in the new millennium is not confined to the border of any country and will depend on the ability of our governments and peoples to combine the insights of science with effective governance and an ecologically aware people. Glad the meeting is being organized in Sabah, Malaysia and the meeting will be the perfect opportunity to put our minds together and plan out ways ahead as a specialist group to protect the Asian Elephant in its 13 range states and foster trans-boundary co-operation. He briefed on his participation at the AsESG side event at CITES CoP in Geneva. Malaysia is totally committed to achieving the targets of its ivory action plan by 2030 and fulfill its commitment to CITES for preventing trade of ivory and transit through Malaysia. Between 2008-2019, about 23 cases of elephant poaching reported, 37 poachers arrested and convicted. The Department of Wildlife has established intelligence and technical center for wildlife crime in 2018. It has also established cybercrime Cell to deal with wildlife cases. Trading wildlife material online, the department has applied for amendment to existing law of illegal online trade. In collaboration with Royal Malaysia police, they have carried out special operation (known as OBK) to identify wildlife crime hotspots in Sept 2019. The Department is collaborating with other agencies for intelligence sharing and skill development training. Elephant Habitat fragmentation is an issue impacting elephant conservation in Malaysia and this needs to be tackled including securing corridors and working towards land use management. Malaysia has embarked on the Central Forest Spine (CFS) masterplan in 2011 to preserve and restore connectivity of isolated forest in order to secure mutual co-existence of development and conservation by linking up 4 major forest complex by network of ecological or green corridors and 37 ecological corridors have been identified. Of the main achievement, 3 viaducts planned and constructed (in Taman Negara- Tembat FR, Tanum FR. and Temenggong FR – Royal Belum State Park) by which total of 31,700 hectare area was gazetted as permanent forest reserve including 7 ecological corridors. In 2017, 438 ha gazetted as ecological corridor.

Mr Augustine Tuuga, Director Sabah WL Department welcoming the AsESG participants thanked the Chair that the AsESG meeting is being organized in Sabah, Malaysia. Sabah presented its first NECAP at the AsESG meeting in Cambodia in 2002. The plan aimed at survival in perpetuity of a viable population of wild population in Sabah by

- Maintaining a wild breeding population in major elephant ranges in harmony with any other management objective that may exist for each specific forest area

- Assessing the option of management of minor elephant ranges so that this population link wherever possible contributing to overall conservation of the species in Sabah.
- Some of the actions that were amended were to
 - Establish close cooperation with forest concession for those that operates within the management ranges in order to ensure that forest management practices are compatible to elephant management and conservation
 - Coordinate with other Department and stakeholders to ensure that land-use development have minimal impact on elephant populations
 - Assess appropriateness of each management ranges to receive translocated elephants and establish post translocation program to monitor the movement of these elephants
 - Assess feasibility of establishment of buffer zones around the managed elephant ranges as well as corridors between them. Eg- corridor between lower Kinabatangan management range and Dharmakot and kalabatang elephant range
 - Establish regular monitoring and patrolling and enhance HEC mitigation efforts and activities involving honorary Wildlife wardens, neighboring states, villagers and NGOs
 - Ensure public are informed about managed elephant ranges and elephant management conservation policies in Sabah
 - Stimulate research in eleph ecology, behavior, genetic and pop dynamics

Sabah has completed the draft 3rd NECAP for 2020-30 and hope it will be tabled in the state meeting early next month to get Government support for implementation of the action plan. We have come a long way since our first plan and have better understanding of the Sabah elephant population and have 3 major managed elephant Range- Kinabatangan, central Sabah (about 1000 elephants) and Tabin WL Reserve (about 2000 elephants approx). Sabah WL Department will spearhead a two-year elephant population survey that will compliment other elephant population studies done by WL Department, partners to have a latest population estimation and trend. HEC has seen sharp spike in recent years with about 145 elephant death between 2010-2019, mostly due to suspected poisoning and shooting. The unplanned and uncoordinated electric fences along plantation has confused elephant movement. The Sabah WL Department needs to improve the intelligence network and enforcement and forensic. The Sabah WL Department and its partners has managed to secure nearly one million dollars to develop and train WL crime and forensic units. We are looking forward to the discussion of Sabah forum with diverse stakeholders to discuss how to minimize HEC and elephant mortality.

Action: *Approval of Sabah NECAP by the Government of Sabah (Follow up by Sabah WL Dept)*

This was followed by release of the Elephant conservation Action plan Bhutan by the Chair, DG Malaysia, Director Sabah WL Department and Mr Namgay Wangchuk.

Technical Session-I

1. *Red listing assessment of Asian elephants: process, challenges and way forward* - Dr Christy A. Williams

He briefly explained the need of having red listing of Asian Elephants and as member of Specialist group, we need to be fearless and put forward the facts there in ground. Hence, when we are in EIA or other committees, let's take up the cause of elephant conservation.

The group had done the red listing; current status is Endangered, the last one was done in 2011. For a change, from Endangered to critically endangered, there are various criteria but for EM, the only two criteria work that could be used are

- An observed, estimated, inferred or suspected population size reduction of $\geq 80\%$ over the last three generations (ca. 75 years)
- Population size estimated to number fewer than 250 mature individuals

The major hurdles encountered during red listing

1. Population numbers: There could be 45,800-53,300 elephants in the wild in Asia. Only 6% of that estimate is reliable, 80-84% of the estimated numbers is possible – validation required and 10-13% of the estimated numbers - highly doubtful. Hence, while updating red listing, we had no definite information of the changes; nothing to compare with reliable data
2. Distribution: one map that's available was of Sukumar (2011) but no idea of when the historic data was. The most recent one was the one done in Cambodia (Hedges, *et al* 2008)- nothing to compare with reliable data. Sad that we still have not been able to come up with a map and still discussing the process.
3. Global status has not changed, although it may have at National level.
4. Giving example - the clear case was that of the Sumatran sub species for red listing and how potentially could we do. The trigger was the oil palm industry. RSPO said that it will not undertake palm oil plantation in High conservation value area and the only filter will be only critically endangered species -Sumatra rhino, orang uttan, etc but not elephants. But we all know that elephants are equally critical and we had data to prove and that's when we decided to have the national red listing. We had
 - a. Forest cover map of Sumatra from 1932 – Van Steenis (1935)
 - b. In 75 years, 66.3% decline of natural forest (1932-2008) and 69.11 % of low land forests lost in 25 years
 - c. Even more alarming population decline data- Elephants were extinct from West Sumatra. Went from ca. 1340 in 1984 elephants to < 200 by 2007 in Riau Province. There were 12 elephant occupied ranges in Lampung province in 1989 and in 2002, only three still existed and only two were considered viable.

Hence, there was a clear case of doing the assessment and were able to do the red list assessment and found it to be Critically endangered. And that type of data has to be collected for red listing at National and regional/sub-species level.

Although we all are working at our individual and organisation level, but there is no consolidated data at country level. Hence important to do a National level assessment as well as sub species and ecologically significant unit level and important to know which country should we be focusing our attention as a group.

Q & A, suggestions

Q- Is there a genetic role in delineating sub species and assessment

PF- sub species is not a biological taxonomic group; species is the only biological taxonomic group and genetics alone cannot be used to define sub species. Genetics alone cannot be used for defining even species. Genetic can define only ESU (ecological significant unit).

VM: Red List Authority in consultation with members can take Red listing and this are the things that we consider as a group is redlistable. In past RLA has taken up Sri Lanka sub species and current assessment is for only mainland and have not redone Sumatran one. We can probably discuss if SL sub species be taken off and can discuss during sub species discussion

Q- Do we think if it is possible to do National red-listing ?

Yes, absolutely critical to have National red listing for Cambodia, Lao, Vietnam, China

Christy: suggested that those countries who want to take up National relisting can contact us and we can probably form a WG to provide technical support to the countries undertake it.

Action: *Take up National Red Listing for Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao PDR and China in consultation with Range States (RLC and SKT to follow up with countries).*

2. Mapping the distribution of Asian Elephants in Range States- Dr Varun Goswami

Christy: need to see how as a group and country, we can form an Asian Elephant database.

Sukumar: Hope Varun clarifies what is the criteria that we should use to map keeping into consideration that everyone uses different parameters and grid size.

Varun presented the Goal: current distribution across its range and why distributed the way there are, ecological and anthropogenic reasons to aid planning

Data needs

- Reliable point location of confirmed elephant presence within the last 5-7 years
- Existing data sources

- Location data collected during survey (single site to country wide)
- Anecdotal report of elephant presence
- GIS based data on ecological & anthropogenic factor- for reason of distribution
- Where do new data need to be collected
- How best to collect data
 - Ecological surveys (camera trap, walk survey)
 - Questionnaires surveys- places where human presence
 - Mobile-based app that could be used to collect elephant presence
 - Media reports, etc

Methods

Data collection should be done in a way which is reliable, replicable, done across distribution and could be repeatable but also flexible enough to incorporate data from different sources. Need to take care of potential biases from false negatives and false positives.

Use Occupancy models

Could also design dedicated surveys that could help in developing a data base. For example

- Questionnaires survey- use questions that are critically required, location of responded and information collected
- Camera trap- Location, dates, type of detection, shape file associated with the location, when they area active and when they are not
- Walk survey- Date, type of observation, where was this walk (location)
- Media report/mobile based apps- opportunistic; Systematically going on these kinds of report and analyze the data recorded. This could supplement the data collected from other sources

Covariates to look at: Terrain ruggedness, land use type, land cover diversity, tree cover, Ndvi, water availability, human density and density of roads

We don't have information across range of where elephants are. But information available from some area and if people are ready to share, could help.

Example -Sri Lanka used 5x5 km grid cell for questionnaire survey and has yield quite substantial information on distribution of elephants in past (1960) and now(2015). Similar efforts put in Malayisa, India and other places

Similarly, Camera trap information from WII and NTCA in tiger and elephant area (where there is overlap) in India and this could also be used to map the elephant distribution.

Synchronized elephant survey in India 2017 has data from the entire country and is a good source of information to map.

Christy: Data sharing is not in place. We need to develop a data base (based on African elephant SG); Buy someone time to lead the effort and develop as a data sharing agreement from all the member and government

Raman Sukumar

- Need to develop a single frame work for data collection
- Suggest the best method is to follow Sri Lankan frame work (5x5 km grid)
- Important to have a GIS base framework.
- Once we develop the framework, it will be possible to assemble the data

Ramond Alfred- In Sabah, in central forest, we cannot use 5x5 grid for interview styled survey because we don't have communities there. We usually used camera trap, and satellite image. We could also use dung survey but it will cost money

Vivek Menon- We should learn from Africa on elephant data base and have lot of resource to build and should try and build one form Asia. But will be a long process and what could be done till then

- Develop the framework to collect data
- Have already produced map in past. Can we update the information on these map based on current information/data that we have (SL, Malaysia, India, etc)
- In the map, probably also use colour code of what is confirmed, where we have doubt and can produce this into a document

Action:

1. *Need to develop Asian Elephant database (based on African elephant SG)*
2. *Need to develop a database agreement and develop the same and get it signed by all members and country*
3. *Need to have a dedicated person and money to help develop the database.*
4. *Finalize the framework to collect data*

A. Panel discussion on sub-species of Asian elephants, their Red listing & finalization

Panelist: Dr Benoit Gossens, Dr Prithviraj Frenando, Dr TNC Vidya; facilitated by Mr Vivek Menon

Vivek Menon : Borneo elephant still not recognized as sub-species and need to discuss on this. Giving a historical perspective, he informed that Borneo Elephant was recognized as

- *Elephas maximus indicus* (Fedric Chase 1940)
- Pocock 1943 disagreed and said Sumatra and Borneo elephants are same sub-species
- Deraniyagala (1950)- said that it's a separate sub-species- *Elephas maximus borneensis*
- Controversy if it was at all Borneo elephant and its origin-lack information; historically in 1395- Raja of Java gave two elephants to Raja of Sulu (then Philippines); In 1750- East India company brought that stock - from Sulu to Borneo

Based on the historical fact that some elephants were brought to Borneo and following the two aspects mentioned below, the entire controversy started that there was no elephant in Borneo and that it was brought from Sulu.

1. Missing archeological information to that stages of elephant in Borneo prior to that date?
2. If it was at all a Borneo elephant, why it is not colonized in the whole of Borneo and just in northern tip of Borneo?

However, from 2003 based on the mitochondrial DNA studies, that broadly showed that there has been independent evolution and the species has been there for long time and that the connection has broken from Borneo and rest of Sondaic area for about 18,000 years. Some Paleontological evidence recovered from Borneo also probably confirms.

Whatever be the status, the Red List authority and the members have to take a call if this is sub species or not and if it requires Red listing.

Prithviraj Fernando:

- Genetics alone cannot define sub species or have biological meaning.
- Sub species traditionally has been defined based on Morphology, behavior, isolation and so on.
- Elephant in Borneo are not feral population but indigenously present and this has been based on genetic studies. But we should not just use genetics but also use morphological studies to substantiate the facts on wider scale.
- Proposed listing Borneo as sub species and undertake range wide study of morphometric (using skull already present) and also compare with other Range countries. Suggested to do a Range wide studies to have a good idea of variation across the states.

TNC Vidya:

- Feels genetic is a good tool to use to define sub species looking at different populations as there is continuity in evolutionary process.
- Borneo elephant is quite different from other population and should be red listed separately.
- Morphometric probably alone is not adequate tool to define species. There could be morphometric convergence depending on ecological condition but genetically different and that's the reason these days we have lot of cryptic species which otherwise look same but are genetically very different. Morphometric cannot be a substitute, good to look at it but cannot be sole method.
- Also need to look at the concept of Phylogenetic replaceability and ecological replaceability - different population that are Phylogenetically distinct & ecologically distinct, then they could be called a different species and a sub set of it could be considered as sub species where there is some degree of separation.

Benoit Gossen:

- For last 15 years, using the Borneo sub species name and why no one commented till now.
- The sub species deserve to be protected. Agree to be listed in Red List.
- They are genetically different with Sumatran and mainland. If the sub species status helps protection, why not.
- In the paper in 2003 and then later did more detailed analysis. Confirm that Borneo elephant has only one lineage and has only one mitochondrial haplotype which is different from Sumatra and mainland. Have very low genetic diversity.
- Someone found a molar of an elephant in Sarawak. DGFV collaborate with SWD to investigate

Q & A, suggestions

1. First paper from Pruthu and Vidya- used Evolutionary Significant Unit and that's important and the borneo unit should be considered as separate.
2. Fruits dispersal such as bambangan that are widely found in borneo. Can be an evidence that elephant had been in Borneo for a long time as animals like elephant could only disperse (based on food dispersal).
3. Sub-species and ESU does not need to be same thing. Is there any intent to that? Is there any consequence for that? What could the action to follow?
 - The red listing doesn't recognize ESU.
 - Species distribution cannot be only based on genetic, esp one that differentiate recently make look alike. Genetics cannot be only tool. Vidya says that in case where there is morphological similarity, genetic difference could help.
4. In Borneo case, we could go to national red listing to argument because they have separate CITES authorities. For Malaysia we could push for it and the review committee will accept it.
5. Need to undertake further studies if we want to use morphology to define sub species.
6. We should not confuse biological definition with legal consequence.

Chair: we should take decision on the Borneo elephant and form a WG with the current panelist, Christy and others. We could write to Secretariat and take a call on the Borneo elephants.

Action: *a working group to be formed for deciding if Borneo elephants should be considered as sub species and its Red-listing. This should include Benoit Gossens, John Payne, Prithviraj Fernando, TNC Vidya, A Christy William and few other members.*

B. Status report of National Action Plans

Dr Sandeep Kr Tiwari updated on the status of National Action plan for conservation of elephants (NECAP) for each of the 13 Range States. He explained on the need of the plan and the guiding principles.

The Range states with NECAP includes- Peninsular Malaysia, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Vietnam and Bhutan. The Bhutan NECAP was drafted by Nature Conservation Division and the WG reviewed the draft plan in February 2019 and finalized in July 2019.

The Range States that are updating their plans include- Sabah Malaysia, Indonesia and Nepal.

Draft plan exists for China, Cambodia and Thailand.

Sri Lanka has Elephant Conservation Policy document but no plan.

India and Lao PDR are both working to draft their NECAP and both countries have constituted a technical committee to draft the plan on request of AsESG. India already has a National report “Gajah” that looked at the threats and measures to secure the future of elephants in India and published in 2010.

3. Bhutan National Action Plan

Mr Namgay Wangchuk informed that the draft plan was developed with inputs from the field managers and species experts. The plan seeks to address the threats and challenges faced by elephants in Bhutan and across the border for the next ten years and beyond. The plan envisions a viable population of elephants in coexistence with the people in the landscape. The vision will be realized with a goal to maintain a viable population of elephants through improved habitat and reduced conflict with human. The goal will be achieved through implementation of strategic actions under eight broad objectives as outlined below and the conservation action plan will be implemented for the period of ten years starting July 2018 to June 2028.

- To prevent habitat loss and improve the existing habitat condition.
- Reduce human elephant conflict through adoption of science based and community driven approaches.
- Increase knowledge base on elephant and its habitat.
- Improve coordination among stakeholders including trans-boundary partners.
- Strengthen institutional capacity and human resource development.
- Identify and address the current and emerging disease.
- Prevent poaching and illegal trade of elephant parts and products.
- Improved management of captive elephants.

4. Update on Sumatra National Action Plan

Was presented by Dr Wahdi Azmi and Mr Krismanko Padang. They highlighted the lessons learnt from previous Action plans- lack of political buy-in from various stakeholders (Governments, NGOs, and Donors), not sufficient budget to implement due to lack of legal base, 10 years timeline and lack of monitoring, and lack of Central government vs Local Government authority coordination to implement.

Based on these learning, the improvement suggested for the new plans include-

- The elephant Action Plan needs to be synchronized with the environment and forestry ministerial Action Plan
- More collaboration between Central government and local government for active management
- More approach to engage with legislative for elephant friendly spatial planning law to engage with multi sector development agencies (Aceh Caucus)
- A trust fund initiative for Sumatran Elephant
- Adoption of the ASERSM recommendation and the Jakarta Declaration for Asian Elephant conservation

The elephant population has decreased by 30%. About 85% of elephant population in Sumatra is outside conservation areas and emphasized on the need of a strong plan for the conservation of the species in wild. The plan should also include Legalization and strengthening the capacity for the management of captive elephants as genetic stock, regional level assessment of threats and planning and integration of eco-tourism and forest patrol to share the benefit of conservation with people.

The public consultation is in progress and the plan will be finalized by mid-2020.

5. Update on guidelines for best practices in addressing and mitigating human elephant conflict

Dr Alexandra Zimmermann explained the concept of HWC and the challenges to devise effective mitigation measures. She emphasised on the need to transfer the ownership of the process to the community and not the final solution product i.e. to involve the community from planning to implementation of the mitigation measures to develop ownership and success.

For an effective mitigation, it is important to

1. Increase understanding and awareness of the complexities of conflict
2. Facilitate more collaboration between practitioners and policy, science and community
3. Catalyze more resources and effort committed to good HWC management
4. Encourage preventative mitigation of emerging HWC
5. Integrate effective policies for HWC into major biodiversity and development agendas

She then explained on the guidelines being developed for best practice in mitigating human elephant conflict and the overall format, process and progress.

The guideline is being prepared.

Q & A & Suggestion

1. Suggestion: conflict scenario has deteriorated over the years; hence need to look for new and innovative solutions. The guidelines should be different from past.
2. Conflict due to linear infrastructures (roads/railways)- is that part of the guidelines.
 - a. Currently it's not included in wildlife conflict but if the working group is ascertaining to that, it can be added in.

6. Guidelines for creating artificial water holes in elephant habitats

While presenting the guidelines, Prof R. Sukumar informed on the unintended and often negative consequences of creating artificial watering points.

There are several, interrelated aspects of artificial waterbody management with respect to elephants that have been of interest or discussed in the literature:

- 1) changes in movement patterns and habitat use by elephants seasonally, and resulting changes in elephant densities
- 2) localized impacts of elephants on vegetation because of disproportionate browsing/grazing by elephants in areas around waterbodies
- 3) growth of elephant populations because of supplemental water.
- 4) implications for overall biodiversity.

These are, of course, not mutually exclusive. He provided a broad recommendation on small artificial water holes- in terms of precautions and needs, efficacy of provisioning of water, type of landscape and elephant population, impacts, etc.

Final report submitted.

7. Updates on Guidelines to treat, minimize and manage spread of emerging new diseases

Dr N V K Ashraf highlighted the objective of the guidelines to “*identify and map the distribution of emerging diseases affecting wild & captive elephants and develop guidelines to treat, minimize and manage its spread*”.

The WG is currently collecting relevant information on diseases that impacts elephants in wild and in captivity. Some of the potentially infectious diseases of serious threats are: EEHV (Elephant Endothelio-tropic Herpes Virus), Tuberculosis (Mycobacterium sp.), Anthrax

(Bacillus sp) and others (Salmonellosis, FMD, Pasteurellosis, Filariasis, Elephant pox, Clostridium spp., Fascioliasis etc.).

Wildlife management activities that complicate matters include- Translocation of elephants (wild to wild), letting captive elephants graze in the wild, release of captives to the wild (in range countries where captive numbers are more), mixing with temple/circus elephants and the very nomadic nature of the elephant - higher contact rate between wild elephants & human landscapes (elephant raiding human settlements)

The guideline will be finalised by mid-2020.

8. Guidelines for the effective management and care of captive elephants in musth

Dr Janine Brown presenting the guidelines provided an overview of the biology of musth, signs of musth, factors influencing musth, musth in wild and in captivity, Stereotypies and then presented on the plans for the management of bull elephants in musth. These include Musth scoring and tracking, methods of restraint (long chains in forest, steel enclosures, electric fences, large paddocks), food and veterinary care, mitigation with drugs and factors that are important for welfare of individuals in musth.

The guideline has been finalized and submitted.

Q & A & Suggestion

1. What's the suitable length to apply the long chain method in the wild because it's difficult to do it in the wild?

Answer: -adjust to the types of vegetation in the wild

2. How long bull musthing in semi captured?

Answer- -Captivity bulls musth almost all the time; -There are cases that bulls musth for 6 months . Recommend not to fed them with high calories food. eg; Banana

9. Guideline for the welfare and use of Captive Elephants in tourism

Mr John Edwards Robert presented the guideline on behalf of Dr Sonja Luz who could not attend the meeting. The guideline was produced with a goal “to use science where it is available and consensus where it is not to create a basic, living document that provides clarity for those looking to use tourism to fund the welfare of captive elephants” and **secondary Goal (ACEWG)** “to identify directions for future research into the better management of captive elephants in all situations for the welfare of those elephants”. The guideline looks at various aspects that directly and indirectly addresses the welfare of these elephants.

Q & A & Suggestion

- a. Too many guideline (diseases, captive breeding) causes conflicting statement. There should be a proper decision for it.
 - a. Will choose proper wording so that it does not contradict with others (with the chair's guidance).

- b. Suggestion: no elephant should be kept in barren land. It is though a challenge to find suitable place for elephant.
- c. The work done, is it applicable to the local camp in Thailand?
 - a. Chiang Mai University had been working as part of the Asian captive elephant working group with similar guideline.
 - b. Hopefully after getting a green light, it can be brought up to the tourist authority of Thailand and push the idea among the AsESG and make it a legitimate guideline.
- d. Suggestion: Need to have better elephant management under government control.
- e. Suggestion: tourist have ‘Wants’ not ‘Need’. When putting upon guideline, there should not be an ‘endorsement’ where it suggests that tourist can interact with elephant because that kind of interaction were deal with illegal captures and disease transfer back and forth. There should be and education to the public on what interaction is allowed with elephant.
 - a. Financial support is needed in order to be able to look after/raise the elephant. Therefore, at some point, tourist wants need to be attend to. That is why, the guideline was set up which is to fulfill the wants without harming the elephant.
 - b. Disease control is also important. So any activities that are harmful to the elephant can be prevented.

The guideline has been finalized and submitted.

10. Areas and mechanism of involving AsESG members to strengthen MIKE.

Dr Shermin de Silva presented in absence of Dr N M Ishwar, the convener of this WG.

MIKE site network review

- Most of the Range States raised concerns about the current MIKE site composition.
- MIKE CCU recommended to the MIKE ETIS Subgroup that a review should take place and it was supported.
- Report on MIKE site network review presented to Range States at sub-regional meetings that took place in October 2019.
- South Asia: Range States indicated that they entire area should be included; others proposed expansion or additional sites.
- Analysis: HEC related deaths, “anthropogenic” deaths – Is there a need to consider a different metric to be used for Asia?

Q & A & Suggestion

1. MIKE doesn’t work because cannot get the person that illegally killed the elephant and can’t find the carcasses. It is not MIKE anymore, could be something else.
 - If the existing protocol or measurement doesn’t work, there is a need to come up with something else that can be used and practical.
2. Different categories may be needed because elephant killed by poacher will be different mitigation measure, and elephant killed by road will be different mitigation. It will be good to consider to categorized that.

- There is a mandate to managing the elephant by accident and there will be further discussion how is the matter can be put on this program. Every country has their own management and priority such as infrastructure.

This has not been finalized.

11. Guideline for the reintroduction of captive elephants in the wild as a possible restocking option

Dr Shermin de Silva presented in absence of Dr Chatchote Thitaram, the convener of this WG. Giving background information of the AfESG guidelines on translocation of elephants; she explained the need for reintroduction of elephants that helps in augmenting genetic diversity, augment a depleted population and restore individuals that have no economic or ethical place in captivity and also explained the ecological role of elephants. She also briefed of the successful elephant re-introduction projects in Africa and in Asia in India, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Source populations and various consideration to plan and implement re-introduction of elephants, monitoring and the diverse skill sets required to successfully undertake the operation was also discussed.

Q & A & Suggestion

1. It is important to identify the potential areas to release and look at the Poaching threat?
 - The threat is the obvious consideration.
2. Period to monitoring for releasing?
 - Short term, Long term, Beyond (continuous monitoring)
3. Releasing the elephant is easy, the monitoring is difficult and different from each country. Their threat such as poaching. How you can change the mahout?
 - Post-release monitoring is difficult and need to track them. There is no consideration on mahout.

The guideline has been finalised and submitted.

12. Plan to arrest the decline of the elephant population of Vietnam

Ms Nilanga Jayasinghe presented in absence of Mr Ajay Desai, the convener of this WG. The objective of the WG was to develop a plan to arrest the decline of elephant population. The key challenges for the conservation of elephants in Vietnam are - most populations are small and unviable (except Dak Lak), high mortality, habitat fragmentation continues, HEC is severe, Small and declining captive populations and inadequate data to plan. It was suggested to undertake population estimation using standard methods. The plan outlines what could be done for areas that has a population of less the 10 elephants, population with 10-15 elephants and for Dak Lak that have 60+ elephants. The plan also suggested means to prevent mortality of elephants by -Using satellite collars to provide dedicated protection, better enforcement to prevent poaching, accidental snaring and retaliatory killing of elephants. In terms of AsESG role; it suggested to list the Vietnam population as Critically Endangered, generate more information of population and distribution, priorities the conservation actions and help generate revenue to undertake them.

Q & A & Suggestion

Suggestion 1. Need to know their movement, their population and the cause of the mortality.

Suggestion 2. Vietnam need to act now for the elephant with the law enforcement such as using SMART PATROL to get data on the ground.

13. Managing the elephant habitat affected by Rohingya refugees in Cox bazar, Bangladesh and minimize the human elephant conflict

Prof Anwarul Islam presented the outcome of the visit of the Working Group members and the major recommendations. With escalation of ethnic violence in Rakhine state of Myanmar since 2017, about one million Rohingya people have moved to Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh and have taken refuge in about 27 camps in Kutupalong-Balukhali Rehab sites for which about 8200 acres of forest land were cleared. One prime elephant corridor has been disrupted as the camps have come in the middle of this corridors and about 40-45 elephants are trapped on west of the Rehab camp (IUCN Bangladesh) in Teknaf WS, Inani Reserve Forest and Himchari NP. IUCN Bangladesh along with Bangladesh Forest Department has taken various initiatives to prevent HEC- elephant response team, public awareness and monitoring. The WG members visited the site in Oct-Nov 2018 and the major observation include- Strengthen elephant response team, Power fencing of the border of the camps on the western side, habitat restoration and need to provide LPG gas as an alternative to firewood. The WG suggested the following long-term management need

- To Collect information on group size, seasonal use of habitat condition, corridors used by elephants, HEC status, etc.
- Radio-Collaring of a few elephants.
- Secure the patch of elephant corridor.
- Further enhance the capacity of the Forest Department and Elephant Response Team.
- Engage the local villagers in HEC Management.
- Fence off the camp area to prevent HEC.
- Trans-boundary dialogue be initiated between Forest Department of Bangladesh and Myanmar.

Q & A & Suggestion

1. How many HEC in 2007 in that area?
 - A total of 14 human deaths and 46 human injuries have been reported between 2017-2019

Dr Ben Okita, Co-Chair African Elephant Specialist Group gave a brief presentation on the Sharing and Learning from the African Experience and AfESG range of activities.

Actions: Concluding the Day-I session, the Chair informed that:

1. *Six Working Groups have finalized their outcome documents and will be dissolved; others to complete their document by June 2020.*

2. *All Working Group documents finalized will be peer reviewed and could be published. This will also be uploaded on AsESG website and could also be published in GAJAH. This could also be put for IUCN publication.*
3. *Two new Working Groups to be formed*
 - a. *Working Group on Borneo Elephants*
 - b. *Working Group for drafting the National Action Plan for conservation of elephants in Peninsular Malaysia*

Day-II:

Formal inauguration of the AsESG meeting

Datuk Christina Liew, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister of Sabah State Government and Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment formally inaugurated the AsESG meeting. Welcoming the delegates, she thanked the Chair AsESG for organizing the IUCN Asian Elephant Specialist group Meeting in Sabah. Expressing her concern that about 145 elephants have died in Sabah between 2010 and 2019, she felt that this is the perfect opportunity to openly discuss and to look for pragmatic solutions to address this escalating mortality in Sabah's Elephant Population. Although Malaysia's last known Sumatran rhino died few weeks back but we will not let this happen with elephants and will ensure we do our best to protect this species. It is not too late to save the Bornean Elephants! We must not hesitate to take drastic actions and initiate conservation programs that will create an ultimate goal of "having a sustainable landscape to support free-ranging breeding populations of elephants in Sabah". She also emphasised on the need of planning for co-existence of elephants and humans and to work towards to change the meaning of letter "C" in HEC from conflict to co-existence.

She was happy that a special session has been dedicated to address the conservation issues of Sabah elephants. She informed that she has made the call to all stakeholders including industries to join Sabah in this urgent matter. I am pleased to have received strong response and commitment from the Malaysian palm oil industry to work with the state government to find long term solutions. It is therefore my hope, that with the conclusion of this conference, that we, together as government, industry, conservation and civil society, will have found the direction we all seek, to save the Borneo elephants in Sabah.

Working Group Discussion (Close session)

14. Communications Working Group Report

Ms Nilanga Jayasinghe and Dr Sandeep Kr Tiwari presented the new AsESG website and AsESG brochure and the hard copy of the brochure was distributed to the delegates. The monthly website hit varied from 450-650 per month with average of 526 visits per month. The WG also felt the need to use Social media like Facebook, Instagram and twitter and sought for volunteers from with the group to handle these.

Action: *Members who wish to volunteer for social media to send their name to the Program manager.*

15. Membership Advisory Group Report

Prof Anwar-ul-Islam, convener of MAC updated on the membership. A total of 44 applicants applied for AsESG Membership from January 2018 till date. Six applications, submitted after February 2019, have been kept on hold. Of the 38 applications, Membership Advisory Committee has approved 28 applicants for AsESG membership and 3 as Ex-officio members (donors). Of the 28 applicants approved for membership, only 22 completed the AsESG registration process and others are yet to complete the registration.

16. Documenting the History of AsESG

Mr Jayantha Jayawardene presented the draft note on the history of AsESG- its genesis, founder members, the reason for formation of the group, the various Chair and Co-Chairs, the major work done by the group and contribution for elephant conservations, meetings and workshops, guideline and manuals, Asian Elephant conservation Centre, role of IUCN, Newletters and Gajah, AsESG website and logo and funding's. He requested members to provide him good photographs of previous meetings, workshops, Chairs and other activities of the group to finalize the document. The document is not only a good compilation of the history of AsESG but also a great source of information for members, especially the young once.

Action: *members to provide relevant photographs to Mr Jayantha Jayawardene for finalization of the document.*

Mechanism for endorsement of proposals by AsESG

AsESG Program Manager presented detailed criteria to review proposals for endorsement. The criteria were developed looking at the request AsESG has been getting to endorse project and provide an unbiased assessment and endorsement. However, many members felt that rather than having a rigorous assessment, it will be good to have a simplified review process with no names. It could be an online submission of application (with the proposal coming in at least three weeks before deadline) which could be reviewed and endorsed.

Action: *A simplified endorsement mechanism to be developed (AsESG Program Manager).*

Sabah elephant conservation Session

The forum was briefed on the challenges confronting the conservation of elephants in Sabah. Four breakup groups were formed to address the main challenges : a) Connectivity (Wildlife corridor); b) Human Elephant Conflict or Co-existence: Land sharing Vs Land-Sparing; c) Zero Killing of elephants & enforcement ; and d) Awareness for elephant conservation.

Breakout Group 1: Connectivity (Wildlife corridor)

- Dr Sukumar emphasized on corridor and connectivity definition. Dr Benoit Goosens explained the distribution of elephants (on a map) and the possible corridors and the way elephants use the landscape in Borneo.
- Oil palm trees have 25 years cycle. When oil palm was first planted in Kinabatangan area, the planters remember the damaged done to the young crops by the elephant. The next 5 years for Kinabatangan is very sensitive as the 25-year cycle comes to an end and replanting will be done in many of these plantations.
- Dr Isabelle noted big groups- over 300 individuals have split and have broken down to small groups of about 40 individuals in last 20 years. She said only a few plantations notably the ones present in the forum today are willing to let elephant into their plantation. One plantation which for the past 1.5 years practicing “*no chasing away elephants*” policy have seen a huge reduction in damage caused by elephants; this could be psychological as it was supported by one of the member of the forum adopting examples from India with tea plantation. She added 100-meter-wide corridor is recommended in Kinabatangan landscape. Building corridor on private lands is a complicated process. The connectivity or corridor is entirely voluntary by the plantation. Small and medium holder are the most challenging ones to deal with.
- One plantation from the forum suggested that they only fence young plants less than 5-year-old, which she calls aged-related fencing. Dr Ram Chandran from Sabah Softwoods informed of an ecological corridor that his plantation has developed since 2013. This 14 km-long corridor is 400m wide in flat area and 800m wide in hilly area. This corridor was first used by elephants, then orangutans, then clouded leopards, and now sun bears. This has significantly reduced damages or losses for his plantation. The forum group suggested this could be an excellent model to convince parties to practice.

To conclude, one should identify what type of model of corridor will be suitable for Sabah landscape. Elephant friendly certification and working together among planters will be a good motivation for this initiative.

Breakout Group 2: Zero Killing of elephants & enforcement

The ground identified the responsibilities of various stakeholders to stop killing of elephants through an improved enforcement and participation of stakeholders.

1. Sabah Wildlife Department (SWD)
 - a. Strengthen the enforcement team- Need more training & capacity to investigate each elephant’s death.
 - b. Continuously re-enforce the message that elephant is totally protected species though HWW, Plantation, certification bodies.
2. Big Plantation and Medium Plantation
 - a. They should have more trained wardens.

- b. Take more collective effort with clear responsibilities assigned to staff to prevent snaring, poaching and encroachment by outsiders in plantation.
 - c. Works with SWD to carry out more awareness on fully protected species under legal consequences for poaching them, on regular basis.
 - d. Ensure that all supplier from small holder also carry out the above (1,2,3) actions (mentorship)
 - e. Help setup Farina's model (community's enforcement) among Sustainable Palm Oil Cluster (SPOC) in their supply chain.
3. Small Holders Plantation (less than 40 ha / 100 acres)
- a. Identify SPOC in elephant vulnerable area
 - b. Setup up Farinah's model
 - i. Develop SOP (from the team)
 - ii. Carry out threats assessment
 - iii. Law enforcement assessment
 - iv. Capacity assessment
 - c. Proactive to prevent retaliatory killing
 - d. Policy works for MPOC to clarify the process for more stringent measures for repeated killing

How AsESG could assist

- c. MIKE – could impart capacity assessment training
- d. Training on SMART system and support
- e. Community engagement exchange (visit to Nepal and other countries)
- f. Collaring & monitoring of elephants

Breakout Group 3: Awareness for elephant conservation

Awareness – Target Audience = Oil Palm Plantation (Industry/Smallholder); general public

Aim: Co-existence of human and elephant.

Target audience and recommendations for awareness

Individual

- a. Precaution -What they will do as precaution.
- b. Do's & Don'ts -When the individual faces the elephants.

People

- a. Information -Wildlife Law; Responsible department give a talk on awareness and law;
- b. Knowledge on Elephant- Give more information on the species such as their status of protection and threats.
- c. Frequent Interactions- Responsible department or NGO could interact with the workers and show them videos and stories about the species (Talks and dialogue) on regular basis.

Company

- a. Proactive management Strategies -Management identify their best strategies to deal with the elephant such as fencing the new crops but providing passage for elephants and other wild animals.
- b. Policies- Implementation of policies and certification such as RSPO and MSPO.
- c. Training- Training given to workers and management team on dealing with the elephant.
- d. Networking- - Build networking with government and NGO

Breakout Group 4: Human Elephant Conflict or Co-existence: Land sharing Vs Land-Sparing

- 1) It is important to know the Goal and what we are trying to achieve in a project (*To create an environment where elephants and people can coexist*).
- 2) There is not enough of background info on Sabah for IUCN specialists to provide recommendations.
- 3) The word coexistence should be defined by stakeholders not conservationists/NGOs.
- 4) It is important to know what are the underlying factors in a HEC area, ie; is it purely because of crop damage, will reducing crop damage address HEC? Are there social issues?
- 5) Sabah has 1.5 million ha of oil palm plantations; MPOC plans to develop sanctuaries in HEC hotspots to mitigate conflict
- 6) Questions from AsESG: Are people open to allowing elephants using their plantations?
- 7) There are many strategies to reduce HEC already in Sabah but no common goal
- 8) MPOC will develop collaboration with all stakeholders, ie; plantations, smallholders and communities, at a landscape level, to jointly develop mitigation options
- 9) Important to get the communities on board in any HEC mitigation work
- 10) It is crucial to know what it takes to coexist? Eg: safety issues, operational costs of barriers
- 11) There needs to be a shared coexistence, towards a shared goal and a willingness to achieve that

Day-III

Parallel Session I: Emerging Challenges for Asian Elephant Conservation

A dedicated session was organized to enable the AsESG members and few invited guests share and present their work (research and conservation) as a knowledge sharing mechanism to learn from each other's experience. A total of 17 presentations were made as indicated below:

1. *Displacement pattern and rehabilitation of rescued Asian elephant calves in Assam, India: Challenges and lessons learnt-* Dr Bhaskar Choudhury
2. *Dominance relationships amongst female Asian elephants in a small, human-modified habitat-* Dr. T.N.C. Vidya
3. *A review of different genetic techniques for population monitoring using Asian elephant faecal samples in Cambodia-* Ms. Rachel Crouthers
4. *Status of elephant corridors and strategies for their conservation in India-* Dr. Sandeep Kr Tiwari
5. *Optimizing the use of resources for elephants and humans in the Central Sumatra Landscape-* Mr. Wishnu Sukmantoro
6. *Developing Technology to monitor difficult populations-* Dr. Shermin de Silva
7. *Threats of skin trade and challenges of protecting elephants in the wild in Myanmar –* Dr. A Christy Williams
8. *Human-elephant conflict mitigation: A threat to elephants? –*Dr. Prithiviraj Fernando & Ms. Jennifer Pastorini
9. *Electrocution to Extinction – Assam’s Elephants –*Dr. Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar
10. *Mobile-mediated technological intervention for elephant conservation and conflict mitigation in a contested landscape of southern India-* Dr. M. Ananda Kumar
11. *Early warning system +: An innovative approach to reduce human-elephant conflict in Kuiburi National Park, Thailand-* Dr. Arnold Sitompul
12. *Determinants of Asian Elephant (Elephas maximus) Spatial Abundance and their Damage to Cultivated Crops in Sambalpur Elephant Reserve, East-Central India-* Dr Nagarajan Baskaran
13. *Jaw Bombs: Emerging Anthropogenic Threat on Free Ranging Elephants in Sri Lanka-* Dr. B. Vijitha Perera
14. *Asian Elephant-Human relationship through the eyes of historians, case studies from Vietnam, Cambodia and Malaysia-* Mr. Lim Teck Wyn
15. *Fund raising from Government and Charities: key considerations-* Ms. Cory Brown, US Fish & Wildlife Service
16. *Improving the effectiveness of protection for Asian elephants using the SMART approach-* Dr. Antony J. Lynam, SMART Partnership/WCS
17. *Asian Elephant Transport Working Group: ToR and plan-* Mr. Rob Ament, Montana State University

Parallel Session II: Partners Roundtable and presentation of select projects for funding by range states

The second session was Partner’s Round table with over 14 Partners/ donor and 13 Range State officials attended the session. The Partners informed of their Core area of support in terms of geography and themes. Range officials presented the priority activities from their plan for technical and financial support. This provided an opportunity for the Partners to have idea on

conservation issues in Asia and the priorities actions for the conservation of elephants in Range states. This also provided them an option to choose from the basket of priority actions what they would like to support.

ELEPHANT FAMILY, represented by Ms. Belinda Stuart-Cox, Acting Head of Conservation

- Formed in 2002 by Late Mark Shand. Now going into a merger with one of Prince Charles' NGO British Asian Trust in London which is a development agency. As they work with rural communities – so EF will support conservation work with communities with a development component and with wildlife component.
- Previously worked in many countries. Current focus: India (Western Ghats, Assam), Myanmar, Thailand. EF are focused in these landscapes for the time being during this merger with British Asian Trust – and are NOT looking to expand from these landscapes in near future.

WWF, represented by Ms. Nilanga Jayasinghe & Dr A. Christy Williams

- Presence in 100 countries, currently work in 10 of 13 range countries – not in China, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh in a number of Asian elephant landscapes; Spend around \$5-8 million/ year across Asia on elephants and rhinos
- With rapid declines in populations related to various threats, SE Asian countries and landscapes require more attention in terms of capacity and resources
- Diverse issues being supported – e.g., HECmanagement, policy, connectivity issues, habitat fragmentation, train collisions, habitat modification work, elephant collaring, anti-poaching patrol training, DNA analysis for population estimation, illegal trade of elephant parts

USFWS, represented by Ms. Cory Brown

- USFWS is a US agency within the US Government, within US Dept. of Interior.
- International program is relatively small compared to other domestic programs. Big refuge system, strong endangered species program, law enforcement, wildlife and sports fishing program, migratory birds
- Asian elephant Fund - 552 grants covering all 13 range countries. \$1.5-1.8 million.
- Funded over \$30 million dollars. Can give multi-year grants. Can get \$100K every year for 5 years.
- USFWS priorities are range country priorities.
- Has to be for wild elephants, unless captive elephants used for conservation purposes. Sumatra, India and Myanmar where captives used for conservation are funded.

- Prefer Proposals from NGOs, universities, individuals and not central agencies/government.

ASIAN ELEPHANT SUPPORT represented by Ms. Heidi Riddle

- Started in 2006, funds all types of projects With special focus on captive elephants and veterinary support & training, radio –collaring. Broad funding mandate, with small grants approx. \$5,000 USD; but has a quick turnaround with a monthly board meeting where proposals are discussed
- Can quickly provide funds to emergency situations
- No geographic focus, but definite focus on captives and veterinary issues, and flexible on non-native English writers, etc

AZA SAFE & COLUMBUS ZOO & INTERNATIONAL ELEPHANT FOUNDATION represented Mr Adam Felt

- Columbus Zoo (North America) has a strong US domestic program but has a conservation grant program that is open to all types of field work in range countries focus on capacity building; small grants that can develop into larger funding amounts
- Columbus Zoo is a board member of International Elephant Foundation – been around since 1999, grant-making is all types of projects with priority to Jakarta Declaration priorities
- AZA SAFE –with new program on captive registry in range states
- Support range state meetings

Anantara Golden Triangle & Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation represented by Mr John Roberts

- Charity started 2013 in North Thailand; set up to take captives off the streets of Bangkok and move them to better conditions in the forest
- Veterinary teams working on community development with mahouts. Supports research for wild elephants, some direct habitat protection. Often co-funding projects with other partners (EF, etc)
- Work on finding better ways of looking after captive elephants, better training methods, host researchers to work on captive elephants they care for (ie, diet, behavior)
- Support research within National Park

ST. LOUIS ZOO, Ms Katie Pilgram-Kloppe, Curator & Assistant Director for Asian Elephant Wildcare Institute

- Focus: wildlife management and recovery, human-dimensions, and supporting range state needs
- Zoo keepers are interested in working in the field and support on-the-ground activities
- Have supported EEHV, wildlife trafficking in the past and will continue
- WildCare Institute – does field conservation and research grants (likely \$10,000 each)

OREGON ZOO represented by Ms Sharon Glaeser

- Primarily right now focusing on Borneo, but she also serves on the Elephant Managers Association board, which has a small grant program
- Oregon Zoo has the only Bornean elephant in the US; with that they have a relationship with Sabah Wildlife Department and HUTAN with orangutans and Seratu Aatai. They work on orangutans in both Indonesian and Malaysian Borneo; training opportunities for elephants at WRUs in Borneo (rangers)
- They can contribute to tools such as educational materials, film making, where zoo expertise could be offered and partnered

ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON represented by Ms Monica Wrobel, Head of Asia

- Looks at species-level work and global issues impacting conservation including climate change
- Field conservation programs – working in places that were originally built up as tiger recovery projects – include Nepal & Northern India Terai Arc, Southern Western Forest Complex in Thailand, South Sumatra elephants
- Mostly an implementing organization but works to be a collaborative partner
- The spaces in between PAs and livelihoods and HEC are important to them
- No Asian elephant project currently
- EDGE – Evolutionary Distinct Globally Endangered grants program, grants to conservation fellows rotating between Africa and Asia annually; 30 fellows annually with capacity building focus; she hopes there are more Asian elephant fellow proposals next round

CHESTER ZOO represented by Dr Alex Zimmerman (no longer with them though)

- Zoo in NW of England, 800 staff, very driven by conservation in the field, and focus on HEC
- Funding model was seed funding, then bringing in other funders
- Model used is working through local NGO
- Chester Zoo has always had an interest in elephants, particularly in NE India; also very active EEHV research at the Zoo and with partners

WCS represented by Dr Tony Lyman

- WCS works in 9 of 13 range states see: www.wcs.org/our-work/species/asian-elephants
- SMART is a consortium of 10 agencies, one of which is WCS: www.smartconservation.org
- Monitor elephant numbers, population trends, and threats to elephants and their habitats; reduce HEC;
- www.Conbio.org – Tony is the President-Elect of SCB, so there is the opportunity to support those working on Asian elephant conservation across the range

LOS ANGELES ZOO, Ms Beth Schaefer, General Curator & Mr Jake Owens, Director of Conservation

- Historically Zoo has administered small grants, under the purview of the General Curator & primarily based on personal relationships with implementers
- Grants \$10,000-15,000 per year; Grant application process is mid-spring (March-April) and money distributed in July. They have some ability to fund outside that cycle.
- Many zoos are trying to switch from small grants model to providing more technical support and even accounting and HR support and capacity building – leverage their strengths for local capacity
- Zoo has long history of re-introductions, ie, California Condors which has been hugely successful program
- Now they would like to use Asian elephants and focus on that with local partners – they don't have a particular partner yet, but are looking for a long-term focus – they want to think strategically about the movie/Hollywood industry and entertainment access b/c they are in LA.
- Small grants program will continue and focus on certain areas – major focus is reintroduction and rehabilitation and release and wildlife trafficking going forward

Range Country presentation on priority actions:

BORNEO represented by Dr Benoit Goosens, representing Sabah Wildlife Department

- 3 elephant ranges, total 1,500-2000 elephants in Sabah
- Threats: poaching, poisoning; hotspots for elephant deaths in Kinabatangan conflict with plantations; Pan-Bornean Highway which will form an island of Central Sabah and further fragment the populations, so any attempt to connect east and west populations will be lost
- Sukau Bridge – project that has been put back on table with new Government, with the support of the local member of government; this will create a huge threat to leopards and other wildlife and further fragment the Kinabatangan population; expectation is more conflict
- Priority projects
 - o Budget: 1,000,000RM/year to assist Sabah Wildlife Dept. in monitoring the implementation of action plans for elephant, banteng, sun bear, clouded leopard, orangutan, proboscis monkey, pangolin; the idea is to set up an Endangered Spp. Conservation Unit that would assist the Sabah WD in implementation, would be a team of 5 local hires, to prepare annual reports, etc. Planned 5 elephant collar/ MER
 - o They'd need \$150,000USD for 3 years to map critical elephant corridors and elephant movements, data analysis to be carried out by DG??

- They'd need \$70,000US for 5 years, to create a HEC response team, to build capacity of communities, oil palms, government to cope with HEC – Farina is managing this project
- WRU – wildlife rescue unit, funded by palm oil industry, costs about 60,000RM/month to fund team of 20 staff and veterinarians;
- Require a mobile-veterinary clinic to attend to rescue cases on time

PENINSULAR MALAYSIA, Salman Saaban, PERHILITAN

NECAP for Peninsular Malaysia launched in 2013 (2013-2022)

- Asian elephant population 1,223 – 1,463
- Priority Projects:
 - developing DNA profile of elephants in Taman Negara NP, id each individual within the NP – found that approximately 196 individuals were identified and 233 unknown wild elephants
 - Request for funding: plan to do a 1st national elephant census from 2020-2022 in Peninsular Malaysia to use information for management and also meet CITES MIKE Program requirements; cost = \$135,400USD; would include field sampling, lab work, data analysis, national meetings, scientific articles and reports (3 year project)

VIETNAM, Ms. Tran Thi Hoa, Government of Vietnam (Government of Vietnam)

- Status of wild elephants – small population, fragmented, etc
- Captives n=88;
- Threats: population decline, fragmented habitats, HEC
- Threats to captives: limited breeding, calf deaths, aging population, limited interaction of captive elephants, inadequate care and conditions
- 2012-20 – Action Plan renewed by Govt of Vietnam, but again not sufficiently funded
- Priority actions:
 - National level – need knowledgeable and experienced experts; develop feasible and effective 10 year National elephant conservation action plan for 2021-2030
 - Government of Vietnam needs assistance to protect remaining elephants and habitats, increase wild populations
 - Vietnam work with scientists and pays close attention to scientific guidance; requested for support in producing scientific results in order to convince GoV to support conservation

NEPAL represented by Dr Ram Chandra Kandel, Deputy Director General, Dept. National Parks and Wildlife Conservation

- Elephant population along southern border, Terai region; 220 individual

- Have been able to establish Shuklaphanta, Bardia, Chitwan, Parsa NPs – now HEC has become a serious problem now in these region; transboundary populations with India
- Collaring operations
- N=227 estimated; with Bardia having about 110 elephants
- In both of the subpopulations high human casualties; with 197 human deaths in 15 years; and 21 retaliatory elephant deaths
- HEC activities – solar fencing, early warning systems, conservation awareness, crop insurance, maintaining corridor connectivity, elephant action plan and HEC strategy is being prepared, NPWC Act 1973 is in process of being amended, participation in range state meetings and AsESG
- Suklaphanta NP is a MIKE site, conducting workshops, collecting data, although this program has not been sufficient because of limited funds

INDONESIA represented by Mr Krismanko Padang, Head of In-Situ Preservation, Director of Biodiversity Conservation, Government of Indonesia (GoI)

- Updating new action plan NECAP 2019-2029, but also want to create an Emergency Action Plan which is in line with national spatial planning and other GoI initiatives
- Threats: poaching, HEC, snare, electrocution, poisoning
- Activities: law enforcement, new law enforcement team and have conducted 5 cases and have jailed 20+ people; rapid response teams for HEC
- Once NECAP is finalized and legalized by GoI, looking for funders to implement
- Priority actions:
 - o About \$33.5 million USD needed to be invested in Sumatran elephant conservation for 2020-2030 – focused on population assessment, HEC mitigation, law enforcement, captive management, habitat restoration, etc
 - o Mission – protect, restore, conserve Sumatran elephants and habitat; manage wild and captive elephants sustainably; collaborate with partners; community welfare; HEC, etc
 - o Targets – by 2027 all 10 major habitats of elephants are connected by corridors; by 2030 HEC diminished by 70%; 2022 shall develop a trust fund for Sumatran elephant; law enforcement cases solved by 100%

LAO PDR represented by Mr Khamkhoun Khounboline (WWF-Lao PDR), representing Government of Lao PDR (GoL)

- Wild elephant -400-500; captive - 300-400
- Threats: loss of habitat, logging, land conversion, poaching, ivory trade, bone; HEC and related killings; forest fires. Poaching has increased
- Law enforcement partnerships with provincial forest inspection office, Customs, Commerce Dept. Office of the Public Prosecutor, Provincial anticorruption police, Army, to control trafficking and check points and tourism-related trafficking
- National elephant conservation Action Plan (NECAP) - in 2020 creation approved by Ministry of Agriculture and Forest, and a technical working group was set up. DOF,

AsESG, & WWF met to discuss NECAP in February 2019, then technical working group meeting held in August 2019 and November 2019.

- Work plan for NECAP development 2019-2022 developed; mid-next year to complete action plan
- Need funding support for the NECAP development
- NIAP submitted to CITES Secretariat and now must report again on that

BHUTAN represented by Mr Namgay Wangchuck, Nature Conservation Division, Dept. of Forests and Park Services (GoB)

- NECAP – vision: viable population of elephants in coexistence with the human (2018-2028)
- 3 forest divisions, 2 wildlife sanctuaries, 1 NP – they have secured GoB funds for these region through Bhutan For Life which is for protected area funding only
- The southwestern region – 3 forest divisions outside of PAs but it has elephant habitat. No funding for this region and need financial support.
- Eight objectives in the Bhutan NECAP, with several activities each, and budget requests of \$40,000 to \$1.2 million USD required for each activity. A total request of \$3.05 million USD over 8 years needed on top of what GoB can contribute
- No NGOs in Bhutan, so the Forest dept. and field divisions would be implementing!

BANGLADESH represented by Md. Tohidul Islam, Bangladesh Forest Department (GoB)

- Bangladesh has the National Elephant conservation action plan (NECAP) for 2018 – 2027
- Population captive = 96; resident = 268; transboundary = 93 (seasonal movement from India & Myanmar)
- Resident elephants in 7 forest divisions mainly in the eastern parts of Bangladesh
- Threats: insufficient food, habitat loss and fragmentation, direct killing
- HEC @ Cox's Bazar, with Rohingya refugee camps from 2017 – 2019 14 people killed and several injured here
- Has formed Elephant Response Team – 50 ERTs with 610 members, guarding from 95 watch towers at 18 Rohingya camps, protecting 371,580 resident refugees, no damages reported since ERT implemented
- Priority actions:
 - o \$14 million USD needed for 4 years
 - o Activities: research on HEC, appropriate HEC technology, develop management techniques for isolated elephants, develop a national awareness campaign strategic

CHINA represented by Prof Shi Kun, National Forestry and Grassland Administration

- Population n=300 estimated in 3 prefectures
- Isolated populations in several patches, 4 groups have fewer than 50 individuals

- Threats: habitat loss, degradation, HEC, poaching and illegal trade of ivory and derivatives
- Challenges: small population size, population fragmentation, isolation; escalating HEC, insufficient capacity of local conservationists, insufficient funding
- Opportunities: increasing attention domestically and abroad; implementation of National Ecological Protection Program, Belt and Road Initiative and promotion of National Park System;
- Activities: research such as a long term study on population dynamics, adopting new techniques such as drone monitoring; genetic capture mark recapture using dung DNA; camera traps used widely, each nature reserve has systematic monitoring using camera traps; molecular analysis on population diversity, etc; monitoring of MIKE sites and holding meetings to track MIKE progress and make reports.
- In June 2019 meeting held to identify priorities for conservation of Asian elephants
- Working on a draft National Action Plan
- Design and planning of Asian Elephant National Park in Yunnan Province, underway
- Public engagement – to engage locals and Chinese citizens;
- HEC – initiatives involving stable fences around villages, drones, monitoring center operational 24 hrs, with thermal camera, with megaphone/speakers to announce to villages that elephants are present;

CAMBODIA represented by Mr IN Visattha, Chief of Conservation and Ecosystem Restoration Office, Department of Terrestrial Protected Areas Conservation, Ministry of Environment, Cambodia

- Elephant Population - 400-600
- Cambodian NECAP drafted and finalized – but not yet approved by Minister of Environment
- NECAP has 8 objectives – habitat loss, connectivity, prevent poaching and live capture, mitigate HEC, awareness and education, research and monitoring of elephant populations, plans for future linear infrastructure.
- Snaring – 1000s of snares in forests
- Actions: support law enforcement through training, improving patrol activities, monitoring patrol rangers, monitoring shops selling ivory & elephant derivatives; research and monitoring of elephant movement and population involving NGOs, MoE rangers, local communities
- No elephants collared
- Issue of Snares/traps is high- Forest department patrolling is done more on bike rather than walk

SRI LANKA represented by Mr Pubudu Suranga Rathnayake, Department of Wildlife Conservation Sri Lanka

- 5,600 elephant in the wild
- Many translocations undertaken in the past years
- Does not have National Action plan till date

THAILAND represented by Mr Thiti Sonsa, Department of National Parks, Thailand

- 3168-3440 elephants in 69 Protected Areas (38 NP, and 31 WS)
- Very high HEC
- Conservation efforts include anti-poaching, scientific research, manage HEC, political action and regulatory change
- Conservation strategy include mitigate HEC, ensure connectivity between elephant population, improve knowledge on population and habitat, change negative perception of public

MYANMAR represented by Dr Zaw Min Oo and Mr San Win, Myanmar

- Has Action plan for wild and captive elephants
- In captivity, Myanmar Timber Enterprise – 3140, Forest Department ~ 100. Private owned est, 2400-2500
- In wild ca. 1500-2000
- Main threats include loss of habitat, fragmentation, and degradation of elephant habitat, illegal killing (poaching or killings related to human–elephant conflict, lack of conservation fund of govt, need to be strong law enforcement
- Main threats for captive loss of habitat, job opportunities, diagnostic for various diseases, capacity building, costs for elephant taking care, proper registration system for private elephants
- Myanmar has Myanmar Elephant Conservation Action plan (MECAP) 2018-2027.
Priority actions:
 - o Regular SMART Patrol in Elephant habitat especially in Protected Areas and Reserved forests
 - o Mitigation of Human elephant conflicts in and around elephant habitats
 - o Combatting illegal elephant and their parts trade
 - o Awareness Raising Activities
 - o Limited Human Resource for Patrolling and Law enforcement
 - o Limited Patrolling Budget in Protected Area and elephant range outside the protected area
 - o Poor law enforcement action taken and need to collaboration between the institutions
 - o Security Issue and insurance for staff who are working for elephant protection
 - o Increasing Human-Elephant Conflict
 - o Increasing market demands of elephant parts trade
 - o needs more action and implementation for MECAP

INDIA

- States are coordinating well on elephant movements
- 500 people killed by elephant/ year; Government provides ex-gratia support for human death and crop loss to farmers.

- Working with government of Bangladesh, Nepal & Bhutan for transboundary conservation
- Immuno-contraception for population control is still not ruled out

Concluding the session, Mr Vivek Menon suggested to keep the bilateral free flowing between partners and donors.

Suggestions-

- Updates to each other depending on the requirement
- Donor links and names can be shared on the website
- Specialist group along with donors could arrange a meeting with Range countries focusing just on technical workshops/trainings
- Certain priorities of each country can be clubbed and addressed together eg. Capacity building/ Joint training programmes which can be facilitated by AsESG
- AsESG website can share the donor list with their focus areas (Without budget specifications)
- Update on follow- up meetings should also be shared
- Need to have a standard protocol to certify and validate projects funded by big plantation companies

Actions:

- *Work updates every year*
- *Include donor's link in website*
- *Share all meeting events widely including to donors (in AsESG website)*

Parallel Session III: Young Professionals workshop

The third session was on Young Professionals workshop and capacity building training. The session was organized to provide a forum for young researchers and conservationist working on Asian elephants but not a member of AsESG to present their work to the AsESG members and Range officials. This will also provide them an opportunity to interact with subject experts and Range State officials as well as conservation partners to support their research/ conservation activities. Six youths from three countries presented their work

1. Stress, reproductive states, and sociality in free-ranging Asian elephants in the Western Ghats, southern India- Sreedhar Vijayakrishnan, *Nature Conservation Foundation, Mysore, India*
2. High Conservation Value (HCV) assessment of Rare, Threatened and Endangered mammals of Sabah: a case study of Bornean elephant- Hong Ye Lim, *Sabah Malaysia*
3. Evidence-based policy and protocols for Human-elephant conflicts (HEC): lesson learnt from the world's largest producer of Certified Sustainable Palm Oil (CSPO).-

Nur Aida Ab Ghani, *Management and Ecology of Malaysian Elephant (MEME), University of Nottingham Malaysia*

4. Preliminary Result of Bornean Elephant (*Elephas Maximus Borneensis*) Feeding Ecology in an Oil Palm Plantation. A Case Study in Kinabatangan, Sabah- Syasya Najihah J.R., *Institute for Tropical Biology and Conservation, Universiti Malaysia Sabah*
5. Challenges, solutions, and wild elephant protection in Myanmar- Paing Soe, *Wildlife Programme Manager, WWF-Myanmar*
6. An Assessment of wild Asian elephant population status in Peninsular Malaysia- Or Oi Ching, *Management and Ecology of Malaysian Elephant (MEME), University of Nottingham Malaysia*

After presentations by the young professionals, capacity building and training session was organized for them by subject experts. These included

1. New SMART conservation tools for monitoring Asian elephants by Dr Antony J. Lynam, SMART Partnership/WCS
2. Principles of effective HEC management by Dr Alex Zimmerman
3. Proposal writing: key aspects by Ms. Cory Brown, US Fish & Wildlife Service

Mr Vivek Menon concluding the session said that there are many threats to conservation of species or habitat and at time one gets frustrated because you don't win the battle in all cases. Conservation is like a game of chess. You play even when you know you may lose. We cannot sit back and watch the natural world die an unnatural death because of some human follies. You have to be tactful and devise strategies that works. You may lose several times, but that should not deter you for working; play again with new strategies. Remember the passion to serve for nature and the species is utmost and let not that get dampen by failures, just find the way to keep the passion alive. Sharpen the passion with skill and proper training and look for good people to guide you. This meeting is one such opportunity that provides good resources both in terms of experts and training.

Ms Nur Aida Ab Ghani received the best presenter award. This was a certificate and a binocular. All other members received the Certificate of appreciation.

Concluding session:

The meeting ended with concluding remarks by Mr Vivek Menon and Mr William Baya, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Environment. The Chair felicitated all the WG conveners who have completed their mandate. Dr Ben Okita, Co-Chair, AfESG was also presented a memento by the Sabah Wildlife Department. Dr Sandeep Kr Tiwari gave the Vote of Thanks.

AsESG meeting participants list

Sl. No.	ASESG Members	Country
1.	Andrew Mclean	Australia
2.	Mohammed Abdul Aziz	Bangladesh
3.	Md. Anwarul Islam	Bangladesh
4.	Nasir Uddin	Bangladesh
5.	Rachel Jane Crouthers	Cambodia
6.	Becky Shu Chen	China
7.	Anand Kumar	India
8.	Nagarajan Baskaran	India
9.	Anwaruddin Choudhury	India
10.	P. Easa	India
11.	E.K. Easwaran	India
12.	Varun Goswami	India
13.	A. J.T. Johnsingh	India
14.	Bibhuti Prasad Lahakar	India
15.	Vivek Menon	India
16.	B. Ramakrishnan	India
17.	K. Ramkumar	India
18.	Raman Sukumar	India
19.	Sandeep Kumar Tiwari	India
20.	Surendra varma	India
21.	T.N.C. Vidya	India
22.	N. V. K. Ashraf	India
23.	Bhaskar Choudhury	India
24.	Wahdi Azmi	Indonesia
25.	Arnold F. Sitompul	Indonesia
26.	Wishnu Sukmantoro	Indonesia
27.	Donny Gunaryadi	Indonesia
28.	Khamkhoun Khounboulina	Lao PDR
29.	K. Yoganand	Lao PDR
30.	Ahimsa Campos Arceiz	Malaysia
31.	Salman Saaban	Malaysia
32.	Nurzhafarina B. Othman	Malaysia
33.	Marc Ancrenaz	Malaysia
34.	Benoit Goossens	Malaysia
35.	Sen Nathan	Malaysia
36.	Wong Ee Phin	Malaysia
37.	Ramond Alfred	Malaysia
38.	A. Christy Williams	Myanmar
39.	Narendra Man Babu Pradhan	Nepal
40.	Ashok Ram	Nepal
41.	Sudath Abeyasinghe	Sri Lanka
42.	Prithviraj Fernando	Sri Lanka

43.	Manori Gunawardena	Sri Lanka
44.	Jayantha Jayewardene	Sri Lanka
45.	Jennifer Pastorini	Sri Lanka
46.	B. Vijitha Perera	Sri Lanka
47.	Wayuphong Jitvijak Aek	Thailand
48.	Chatchote Thitaram	Thailand
49.	John Edward Roberts	Thailand
50.	Chution Savini	Thailand
51.	Khyne U Mar	U. K.
52.	Belinda Stewart- Cox	U. K.
53.	Monica Wrobel	U. K.
54.	Alexandra Zimmermann	U. K.
55.	Janine Brown	U.s.a
56.	Shermine De Silva	U.S.A
57.	Nilanga S. Jayasinghe	U.S.A
58.	Susan Mikota	U.S.A
59.	Heidi Riddle	U.S.A
60.	Erin Ivory	U.S.A
61.	Nguyen Dao Ngoc Van	Vietnam
62.	Cao Thi Ly	Vietnam
	Ex-Officio Members	
63.	Md. Tohidul Islam	Bangladesh
64.	Namgay Wangchuk	Bhutan
65.	In Visattha	Cambodia
66.	Wen Zhanqiang	China
67.	Shi Kun	China
68.	Noyal Thomas	India
69.	Krismanko Padang	Indonesia
70.	Chanthone Phothitay	Lao PDR
71.	Abdul Kadir Bin Abu Hashim	Malaysia
72.	Augustine Tuuga	Malaysia
73.	San Win	Myanmar Forest
74.	Zaw Min Oo	Myanmar Timber Enterprise
75.	Kyaw Soe	Myanmar Timber Enterprise
76.	Ram Chandra Kandel	Nepal
77.	Pubudu Suranga Rathnayake	Sri Lanka
78.	Thiti sonsa	Thailand
79.	Tran Thi Hoa	Vietnam
80.	Cory Brown	USFWS
81.	Megan Stannard	Elephant Family
82.	Rob Ament	Connectivity Conservation Group
	Observers	
83.	Mary Malangking	Malaysia
84.	Thea Carroll	Cites MIKE, Kenya
85.	Jumrafia Abd Shukor	SWD
86.	Nurain Ampuan Aceh	SWD
87.	Hussien Muin	SWD

88.	Maryati Abdulla	SWD
89.	Natalia nadia yahya	SWD
90.	Jibius Dausip	SWD
	Special invitee	
91.	J. Antony J. Lynam	WCS, USA
92.	Adam Felt	SAFE AZA
93.	Ahmad Shadan	Malaysia
94.	Alexander Yee	Malaysia
95.	Anna Norliza	Malaysia
96.	Benson Okita	Chair, Afesg
97.	Beth Schaefer	Los angeles zoo , usa
98.	Chyerl Cheah Phaik Imm	Malaysia
99.	Indra	Sfd
100.	Isabelle Lackman	Hutan, malaysia
101.	Jack Owens	Los Angeles Zoo, USA
102.	John Payne	Malaysia
103.	Katie Pilgram-Kloppe	St Louis Zoo, USA
104.	Lim teck wyn	Meme, malaysia
105.	Micheal ng	Mpoc, malaysia
106.	Naresh Subedi	Nepal
107.	Nur Aida Ab Ghani	Malaysia
108.	Or Oi Ching	Malaysia
109.	Paing Soe	Myanmar
110.	Prajna P. Panda	India
111.	Robert Hi	Malaysia
112.	Sharon Glaeser	Oregon Zoo, USA
113.	Sharon Koh Pei Hui	Malaysia
114.	Sreedhar Vijaya Krishnan	NCF, India
115.	Wong Wong Siew Te	Malaysia
116.	Divya Vasudev	CI, India
117.	Lucy Liew	DGFC, Malaysia
118.	Nguyen Thi Mai	Vietnam
	Organizers	
119.	Benjamin Kotiu	SWD
120.	Lyduina Taim	SWD
121.	Debra Daniel	SWD
122.	Andrew Ginsos	SWD
123.	Vincent Anthony	SWD
124.	Roonie David	SWD
125.	Xenia Suridai	SWD
126.	Azlin Ahmad	SWD
127.	Beddy Tuin	SWD
128.	Herman Sharin	SWD
129.	Navaneetha Roopan	Rapporteur
130.	Queen Wilma Malim	Rapporteur
131.	Bong Ai Yin	Rapporteur

132.	Syasya Najjihah Binti Jee Rosly	Rapporteur
133.	Dairysia Anthony Yukin	Rapporteur
134.	Olivia Magritta Lapis	Rapporteur
135.	Snehaa Sundaram	Rapporteur
136.	Jason Isley	Scuba zoo
137.	Kaniwa Berliani	Indonesia
138.	Ruhaizam	
	Exhibitors	
139.	Ahbam Abulani	Hutan
140.	Noratika Husir	Hutan
141.	Audrey Adella Umbol	DGFC
142.	Leona Wai	DGFC
143.	Ahmad Shafie	Seratu aatai
144.	Olivia Lapis	WWF
145.	Elaine Mah	WWF
146.	Michael Ng	MPOC
147.	Ahmad Shahdan	MPOC
148.	Anna Norliza	MPOC

10th Asian Elephant Specialist Group (AsESG) Members meeting
Sabah, Malaysia
04-06th December, 2019
Followed by Field Visit Kinabatangan 07-08 Dec 2019
Shangri La's Tanjung Aru Resort & Spa
Kota Kinabalu

Day 0: 03th December 2019, Tuesday		
18.00-20.00	Ice Breaker	<i>Sunset Beach/ Pavillion</i>
Day I: 04th December 2019, Wednesday		
08.00 – 8.30	REGISTRATION	<i>Ballroom Foyer</i>
	Inaugural session: Open Session	Ballroom 2 & 3
Time	Details	Speaker/Facilitator/Chair
8.30 -8.45	Welcome address	Sen Nathan Asstt. Director Sabah Wildlife Department
8.45 – 9.45	AsESG Chair's Address and Report on FY 2018-19	Vivek Menon Chairperson, IUCN SSC AsESG
9.45- 10.00	Address by the Director General of Department of Wildlife and National Parks, Peninsular Malaysia	Dato. Abdul Kadir bin Abu Hashim Director General of Department of Wildlife and National Parks, Peninsular Malaysia
10.00- 10.15	Address by the Director, Sabah Wildlife Department	Augustine Tuuga Director, Sabah Wildlife Department
10.15-10.30	Release of National Action Plan	Dignitaries on Dias
10.30-11.00	TEA	Foyer Ballroom 2 & 3
	Working Group Presentations (Assess) (For AsESG and Ex-Officio members only)	Chair: Raman Sukumar Co-Chair: Ram Chandra Kandel
11.00-11.30	Red list assessment of Asian elephants: Process, challenges and way forward	Christy Williams and Sandeep Kr. Tiwari
11.30-12.00	Mapping the distribution of Asian elephants in Range states	Christy Williams and Varun Goswami
12.00-12.30	Discussion of sub-species of Asian elephants, their Red Listing & finalisation	Panel: Benoit Goosens, John Payne, Pruthu Fernando, Vidya TNC Facilitated by Vivek Menon
12.30-13.30	Lunch	Tanjung Room

	Working Group Presentations (Plan) (For AsESG and Ex-Officio members only)	Chair: Anwarul Islam Co-Chair: Augustine Tuuga
13.30-13.40	Status report of National Action Plans	Sandeep Kr. Tiwari
13.40-14.00	Bhutan National Action Plan	Namgay Wangchuk
14.00-14.20	Sumatra National Action Plan	Wahdi Azmi and Krismanko Padang
14.20-14.45	Guidelines for best practices in addressing and mitigating human elephant conflict	Alexandra Zimmermann
14.45-15.00	Guidelines for creating artificial water holes in elephant habitats	R Sukumar
15.00-15.20	Guidelines to treat, minimise and manage spread of emerging new diseases	N V K Ashraf
15.20-15.40	Guidelines for the effective management and care of captive elephants in musth	Janine Brown
15.40-16.00	Guideline for the welfare and use of captive elephants in tourism	John Edwards Robert
16.00-16.30	TEA	Foyer Ballroom 2 & 3
	Working Group Presentations (Plan/Act) (For AsESG and Ex-Officio members only)	Chair: Jayantha Jayawardene Co-Chair: Noyal Thomas
16.30-16.50	Areas and mechanism of involving AsESG members to strengthen MIKE	N M Ishwar (presented by Shermin de Silva)
16.50-17.10	WG document: Guideline for the reintroduction of captive elephants in the wild as a possible restocking option	Shermin de Silva
17.10-17.30	Plan to arrest the decline of the elephant population of Vietnam	Ajay Desai (presented by Nilanga Jayasinghe)
17.30-17.50	Managing the elephant habitat affected by Rohingya refugees in Cox bazar, Bangladesh and minimise the human elephant conflict	Anwarul Islam and Nasir Uddin
17.50-18.10	Sharing and Learning from the African Experience	Ben Okita Co-Chair African Elephant Specialist Group
18.10-18.20	Housekeeping	
18.20-19.00	Free time	
19.00-22.00	Cultural Program & dinner at <i>Shangri La's</i> (for all participants)	Grand Ball Room

19.00-19.30	Arrival of invited guest, Asian Elephant Specialist Group (AsESG) Meeting Participants, Head of Delegations of Participating Countries and Heads of Department State and Federal Government's
	Arrival of Mr. Augustine Tuuga, Director of Sabah Wildlife Department
	Arrival of Dato' Abdul Kadir Bin Abu Hashim, Director General of the Department of Wildlife and National Parks of Peninsular Malaysia
	Arrival of Datuk William Baya, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Environment
19.30 -19.35	Arrival of Yang Berhormat Datuk Christina Liew, Deputy Chief Minister of Sabah State Government /Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment
19.35-20.05	Welcoming Remarks by Yang Berhormat Datuk Christina Liew, Deputy Chief Minister of Sabah State Government /Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment
20.05-22.00	Presentation of Memento from Yang Berhormat Datuk Christina Liew, Deputy Chief Minister of Sabah State Government /Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment to the Head of Delegation of each Country:
	1. Bangladesh
	2. Bhutan
	3. Cambodia
4. China	
5. India	
6. Indonesia	
7. Lao PDR	
8. Malaysia	
9. Myanmar	
10. Nepal	
11. Sri Lanka	
12. Thailand	
13. Vietnam	
14. Chairman of Asian Elephant Specialist Group (AsESG)	
	Dinner served
	Cultural Dance and Singing performance

Day II: 05 th December 2019, Thursday		Ballroom 2 & 3
Time	Details	Name of Speakers
	Plenary Session (Open)	
8.00	Arrival of Asian Elephant Specialist Group (AsESG) Meeting Participants	
8.30	Arrival of Heads of Department State and Federal Government's	
8.45	Arrival of Heads of Delegation of Participating Countries	
8.55	Arrival of Consulate Generals of Foreign Country based in Sabah	
9.05	Arrival of Members of the State Legislative Assembly	
9.20	Arrival of Mr Vivek Menon, Chairperson, IUCN Asian Elephant Specialist Group	
9.25	Arrival of Dato' Abdul Kadir Bin Abu Hashim, Director General of the Department of Wildlife and National Parks of Peninsular Malaysia	
9.30	Arrival of Yang Berhormat Sabah State Secretary	
9.35	Arrival of Yang Berhormat Datuk Christina Liew, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister of Sabah State Government /Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment	
9.40	Arrival of YANG AMAT BERHORMAT DATUK SERI PANGLIMA HAJI MOHD. SHAFIE BIN HAJI APDAL , Hon'ble Chief Minister of Sabah	
9.45	National Anthem and Sabah State Anthem	
9.50	Welcoming Dignitaries	Vivek Menon Chairman IUCN SSC AsESG
	Opening speech by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Sabah Malaysia	YAB Datuk Seri Panglima Haji Mohd. Shafie bin Haji Apdal
	Opening Ceremony Gimmick Presentation	
	Exchange of Memento Between Mr Vivek Menon, Chairman of Asian Elephant Specialist Group (AsESG) and YANG AMAT BERHORMAT DATUK SERI PANGLIMA HAJI MOHD. SHAFIE BIN HAJI APDAL , Chief Minister of Sabah	
	Presentation of Memento from Yang Berhormat Datuk Christina Liew,	

	Deputy Chief Minister of Sabah State Government /Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment to YANG AMAT BERHORMAT DATUK SERI PANGLIMA HAJI MOHD. SHAFIE BIN HAJI APDAL , Chief Minister of Sabah	
	Group Photo	
	Exhibition tour	
	Press Conference	Pavillion
12.00	Opening Ceremony Program Ends	
12.30-1.30	LUNCH	Tanjung Room
13.30 -16.00	Discussion on Sabah elephant conservation issues (Open Sessions)	Chair: Vivek Menon Co-Chair: Dato. Abdul Kadir bin Abu Hashim
	Overview of challenges faced in the conservation of Borneo elephants in Sabah Briefing on Forum and breakout groups	Sabah Wildlife Department (Ballroom 2 & 3)
	Participants divide into respective breakout groups	
	Break out Group 1: Connectivity (Wildlife corridor)	Facilitated by AsESG and HUTAN (Ballroom 2 & 3)
	Break out Group 2: Human Elephant Conflict or Co-existence: Land sharing Vs Land-Sparing	Facilitated by AsESG and Malaysian Palm Oil Council (Ballroom 2 & 3)
	Break out Group 3: Zero Killing of elephants & enforcement	Facilitated by AsESG & WWF Malaysia (Kinabalu-2)
	Break out Group 4: Awareness for elephant conservation	Facilitated by AsESG and Sabah Wildlife Department (Kinabalu-3)
16.00-16.15	TEA	Foyer Ballroom 2 & 3
16.15-16.45	Breakout Group Presentation & discussion	Chair: Tran Thi Hoa (Ballroom 2 & 3)
17.00-18.00	Working Group Presentations (For AsESG and Ex-Officio members only)	Chair: A J T Johnsingh Co-Chair: Heidi Riddle
17.00-17.15	Communications Working Group Report out	Nilanga Jayasinghe and Sandeep Kr Tiwari
17.15-17.30	Membership Advisory Group Report	Anwar-Ul-Islam
17.30-17.45	Documenting the History of AsESG	Jayantha Jayawardene
17.45-18.00	Mechanism for endorsement of proposals by AsESG	Vivek Menon
18.30-21.00	Dinner (Outside <i>Shangri La's</i> at City Veggie, Kg Nosoob Penampang)	Organisers will arrange for travel of guests

Day III: 06th December 2019, Friday		
Time	Details	Name of Speakers
	Parallel Session I: Emerging Challenges for Asian Elephant Conservation (Members presentation) (Open Session)	Chair: Prithviraj Fernando Co-Chair: Wen Zhanqiang (Ballroom 2 & 3)
8.00 -8.20	Dominance relationships amongst female Asian elephants in a small, human-modified habitat	T.N.C. Vidya
8.20-8.40	A review of different genetic techniques for population monitoring using Asian elephant faecal samples in Cambodia	Rachel Crouthers
8.40-9.00	Status of elephant corridors and strategies for their conservation in India	Sandeep Kr Tiwari
9.00-9.20	Optimizing the use of resources for elephants and humans in the Central Sumatra Landscape	Wishnu Sukmantoro
9.20-9.40	Developing Technology to monitor difficult populations	Shermin de Silva
9.40-10.00	Threats of skin trade and challenges of protecting elephants in the wild in Myanmar	A Christy Williams
10.00-10.20	Displacement pattern and rehabilitation of rescued Asian elephant calves in Assam, India: Challenges and lessons learnt	Bhaskar Choudhury
10.30-11.00	TEA	Foyer Ballroom 2 & 3
	Parallel Session I: Emerging Challenges for Asian Elephant Conservation (Members presentation) (Open Session)	Chair: P.S. Easa Co-Chair: Zaw Oo Min
11.00-11.20	Human-elephant conflict mitigation: A threat to elephants?	Prithviraj Fernando & Jennifer Pastorini
11.20-11.40	Electrocution to Extinction – Assam’s Elephants	Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar
11.40-12.00	Mobile-mediated technological intervention for elephant conservation and conflict mitigation in a contested landscape of southern India	M. Ananda Kumar
12.00-12.20	Early warning system +: An innovative approach to reduce human-elephant conflict in Kuiburi National Park, Thailand	Arnold Sitompul
12.20-12.40	Determinants of Asian Elephant (<i>Elephas maximus</i>) Spatial Abundance and their Damage to Cultivated Crops in Sambalpur Elephant Reserve, East-Central India	Nagarajan Baskaran
12.40-13.00	Jaw Bombs: Emerging Anthropogenic Threat on Free Ranging Elephants in Sri Lanka	B. Vijitha Perera
13.00 -14.00	LUNCH	Tanjung Room

	Emerging Challenges for Asian Elephant Conservation (Open Session)	Chair: Belinda Stewart –Cox Co-Chair: Inn Visatha
14.00-14.20	Asian Elephant-Human relationship through the eyes of historians, case studies from Vietnam, Cambodia and Malaysia	Lim Teck Wyn
14.20-14.50	Fund raising from Government and Charities: key considerations	Cory Brown US Fish & Wildlife Service
14.50-15.20	Improving the effectiveness of protection for Asian elephants using the SMART approach	Antony J. Lynam SMART Partnership/WCS
15.20-15.40	Asian Elephant Transport Working Group: ToR and plan	Rob Ament Montana State University
16.00-17.00	Tea and off time before Closing Ceremony	Foyer Ballroom 2 & 3
9.00-15.00	Parallel Session II: Partners Roundtable and presentation of select projects for funding by range states (Closed: Range states and Donor Partners only)	Facilitated by Vivek Menon Kinabalu-2
09.00-9.10	Introductory remarks on Third Partners meet and expectations	Vivek Menon
09.10-10.30	Brief introduction of Partner Organizations and their Conservation priorities	By each partner
10.30-13.00	Presentation by countries having NECAP	
13.00-14.00	Lunch	
14.00-16.00	Discussion on Funding priorities	
16.00-17.00	Tea and off time before Closing Ceremony	Foyer Ballroom 2 & 3
09.00 -16.00	Parallel Session III: Young Professionals workshop (Open Session)	Facilitated by Surendra Varma and Nurzhafarina Othman (Kinabalu-3)
09.00-9.30	Opening remarks and Brief outline on conservation and research priorities and gaps	Surendra Varma and Nurzhafarina Othman (Mentors and Coordinators of Workshop)
9.30-10.00	Stress, reproductive states, and sociality in free-ranging Asian elephants in the Western Ghats, southern India	Sreedhar Vijayakrishnan, <i>Nature Conservation Foundation, Mysore, India</i>
10.00-10.30	High Conservation Value (HCV) assessment of Rare, Threatened and Endangered mammals of Sabah: a case study of Bornean elephant	Hong Ye Lim, <i>Sabah Malaysia</i>
10.30-11.00	TEA	

11.00-11.30	Evidence-based policy and protocols for Human-elephant conflicts (HEC): lesson learnt from the world's largest producer of Certified Sustainable Palm Oil (CSPO).	Nur Aida Ab Ghani, <i>Management and Ecology of Malaysian Elephant (MEME), University of Nottingham Malaysia</i>
11.30-12.00	Preliminary Result of Bornean Elephant (<i>Elephas Maximus Borneensis</i>) Feeding Ecology in an Oil Palm Plantation. A Case Study in Kinabatangan, Sabah	Syasya Najjihah J.R., <i>Institute for Tropical Biology and Conservation, Universiti Malaysia Sabah</i>
12.00-12.30	Challenges, solutions, and wild elephant protection in Myanmar	Paing Soe, <i>Wildlife Programme Manager, WWF-Myanmar</i>
12.30-13.00	An Assessment of wild Asian elephant population status in Peninsular Malaysia	Or Oi Ching, <i>Management and Ecology of Malaysian Elephant (MEME), University of Nottingham Malaysia</i>
13.00-14.00	<i>Lunch</i>	
	Capacity building and training for Young Professionals (Open Session)	Chair: Khyne U Mar
14.00-14.30	New SMART conservation tools for monitoring Asian elephants	Antony J. Lynam SMART Partnership/WCS
14.30-15.00	Principles of effective HEC management	Alex Zimmerman
15.00-15.30	Proposal writing: key aspects	Cory Brown US Fish & Wildlife Service
15.30-16.00	Best presentation award and concluding remarks	Vivek Menon
16.00-17.00	Tea and off time before Closing Ceremony	Foyer Ballroom 2 & 3
17.00-18.00	Concluding session (Open)	Ballroom 2 & 3
17.00-17.15	Concluding remarks by Chair, AsESG	Vivek Menon
17.15-17.30	Comments from select AsESG members	
17.30-17.45	Concluding remarks	William Baya Permanent Secretary Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Environment
17.45-18.00	Vote of Thanks and Housekeeping for excursion	Sandeep Kr Tiwari & Sen Nathan
18.00-18.30	Free time	
18.30-21.00	Dinner (Outside Hotel at (Kg Nelayan Bukit Padang))	Organizers will arrange for travel