

Required and Recommended Supporting Information for IUCN Red List Assessments

An IUCN Red List assessment includes the Red List Category and Criteria, and a range of supporting information (documentation). The purpose of providing supporting information with the assessment is:

1. To support and justify adequately each Red List assessment.
2. To allow basic analysis of the Red List status across species, including calculating the Red List Index.
3. To allow the Red List website (www.iucnredlist.org) to function properly (i.e., to allow users to search and find information on the website).

The more relevant supporting information is attached to an assessment, the more useful the assessment will be for all three of the above purposes. Within the Species Information Service (SIS) there are many data fields available to record a whole suite of information. Some of these data fields are essential to support the Red List assessment, and some are there to capture additional information for analyses and communication purposes.

IUCN has developed the following three tiers to identify the appropriate level of supporting information to include in a Red List assessment.

1. Required Supporting Information

Supporting information required for **ALL** Red List assessments before they can be accepted for publication on the IUCN Red List. There are two subsets of information for required supporting information:

- Required supporting information under all conditions; see [Table 1](#).
- Required supporting information under specific conditions; see [Table 2](#).

2. Recommended Supporting information

Recommended supporting information is not essential for a Red List assessment to be accepted for publication on the IUCN Red List but is strongly encouraged for all assessments for taxa prioritized in the IUCN Red List Strategic Plan 2012-2020 and IUCN Species Strategic Plan 2013-2016. See [Table 3](#). IUCN Global Species Programme and Red List Partner-led assessments always strive to achieve assessments according to the Recommended level.

3. Discretionary (Optional) Supporting Information

Supporting information that is not essential for a Red List assessment to be accepted for publication on the IUCN Red List, but specific projects or Assessors may wish to record this for their own information or analysis purposes. Assessment project managers should clearly identify which of these additional fields to include in assessments and inform Assessors contributing to the project of this at the start of the project.

All other fields in SIS that are not mentioned in Tables 1, 2 or 3 are considered discretionary (i.e., optional) fields.

Table 1: Required supporting information for all assessments submitted to the IUCN Red List (in all conditions). Any assessments that do not include all of the information listed in this table will be returned to Assessors.

Required Information	Purpose	Guidance Notes
1. Scientific name ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify which taxon is being assessed To support Red List website functionality 	If the taxon is already in SIS, this information requires no additional effort from the Assessors. If the taxon is not yet recorded in SIS, Assessors must provide this information to the Red List Unit.
2. Higher taxonomy details (Kingdom, Phylum, Class, Order, Family)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify which taxon is being assessed To support Red List website functionality 	If the taxon is already in SIS, this requires no additional effort from the Assessors. If the taxon is not yet recorded in SIS, Assessors must provide this information to the Red List Unit.
3. Taxonomic authorities for all specific and infra-specific names used, following the appropriate nomenclatural rules ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify which taxon is being assessed 	If the taxon is already in SIS, this information requires no additional effort from the Assessors. If the taxon is not yet recorded in SIS, Assessors must provide this information to the Red List Unit.
4. IUCN Red List Category and Criteria (including sub-criteria) met at the highest category of threat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify the current status of the taxon To support Red List website functionality To allow basic analyses 	The Red List Category and Criteria represent the most fundamental elements of a Red List assessment. Application of the categories and criteria must be in accordance with the <i>IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria, Version 3.1</i> and the current version of the <i>Guidelines for Using the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria</i> .
5. A rationale for the Red List assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To justify the Red List Category and Criteria selected 	Include any inferences or uncertainty that relate to the interpretation of the data and information in relation to the criteria and their thresholds.

¹ Note that all taxa assessed must be validly published in accordance with the appropriate international nomenclatural codes and should be currently accepted names. Standard taxonomic checklists should be used wherever possible for names. The standard lists adopted by IUCN are periodically reviewed and listed on the Red List website: http://www.iucnredlist.org/info/info_sources_quality.html. For many groups no standards are available, or there may be a valid reason for adopting another treatment. In such cases, the taxonomic treatment followed should be indicated and if not one of the standards followed by IUCN, the reference should be cited in full and a reason for the deviation given

² This should include the date of publication, except in the case of plant names. The abbreviations used for author names of plants should follow Brummitt and Powell (1992) and subsequent updates on the International Plant Names Index website (<http://www.ipni.org/index.html>)

Required Information	Purpose	Guidance Notes
6. Data for parameters triggering the Red List Criteria met at the highest Category level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To underpin and justify the Red List Category and Criteria used 	<p>Enter these data either into the relevant coded/numerical fields or in the relevant narrative (text) fields in SIS.</p> <p>If data are entered into the data fields, this allows the Red List Criteria calculator to be used in SIS, which automatically checks for errors, omissions and inconsistencies, reducing the burden of manual checking by Assessors, RLA Coordinators and project coordinators.</p> <p>If data are included within the narrative (text) fields, the text must clearly indicate <i>all</i> of the relevant subcriteria parameters and qualifiers (observed, estimated, inferred, projected or suspected) used.</p>
7. Countries of occurrence (for native and reintroduced taxa), including Presence and Origin coding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support Red List website functionality (especially country searches) To allow basic analyses 	<p>SIS automatically records Presence = Extant and Origin = Native by default as countries are selected.</p> <p>A tool will be made available to determine countries of occurrence automatically from GIS maps.</p> <p>Countries of occurrence are not strictly required for vagrant and introduced ranges.</p>

Required Information	Purpose	Guidance Notes
8. Geo-referenced distribution data for all taxa with a known distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support Red List website functionality • To allow basic analyses • Spatial distribution data are essential for supporting assessments under criteria B and D2 (and arguably also for demonstrating that these thresholds are not met) 	<p>Spatial distribution data are not required for taxa of unknown provenance (e.g. taxa assessed as Data Deficient because their range is not known).</p> <p>Spatial data may be geo-referenced polygons or point localities, and may be provided in any format, including as a paper map, text file of coordinates, pdf, graphics file or GIS shapefile.</p> <p>A GIS shapefile is preferred (but is not strictly required), given their value for conducting spatial analyses, visual displays on the Red List website, and future functionality on the Red List website that will allow spatial searches.</p> <p>Although additional distributional documentation is desirable for taxa qualifying under criterion B (e.g., 2x2 km grids showing occupancy), this is not Required.</p> <p>Note that any distributional data can be coded as sensitive to avoid this being distributed or displayed on the Red List website (see Annex 5).</p>
9. Direction of current population trend (stable, increasing, decreasing, unknown)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support Red List website functionality • To allow basic analyses 	
10. Coding for occurrence in freshwater (= inland waters), terrestrial, and marine ecosystems (i.e., "System" in SIS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support Red List website functionality • To allow basic analyses 	
11. Suitable habitats utilized (coded to lowest level in Habitats Classification Scheme)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support the assessment • To support Red List website functionality • To allow basic analyses 	<p>To speed up entering such coding in SIS, habitat importance is set to 'suitable' by default for any habitat selected.</p>
12. Bibliography (cited in full; including unpublished data sources but not personal communications)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To underpin the assessment and provide all sources of data and information used to support the Red List assessment 	<p>In SIS, references are recorded in the Reference Manager.</p>

Required Information	Purpose	Guidance Notes
13. Names and contact details of the Assessor(s) and at least one Reviewer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To demonstrate that the appropriate assessment and review process has been undertaken • To acknowledge those involved in the assessment. • To allow Assessors and Reviewers to be contacted easily in the case of the assessment content being questioned 	<p>Note that Contributor(s), Compiler(s), and Facilitator(s) may also be recorded but are not strictly required. However, recording them in the assessment does allow these people to be acknowledged on the Red List website. All contact details are stored within SIS; only names (e.g., surname and initials) are displayed on the Red List website.</p> <p>More than one Reviewer is encouraged for threatened species, commercially significant species or those species for which assessments may be contentious.</p>

Table 2: Required supporting information for Red List assessments under specific conditions. The list of required supporting information (under specific conditions) is essential for all assessments that meet the conditions outlined below. Any assessments for taxa meeting these conditions that do not include all of the information listed below will be returned to Assessors.

Required Information (under specific conditions)	Specific Condition	Purpose	Guidance Notes
1. Name of subpopulation	For subpopulation level assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify what is being assessed below the species level 	
2. Major Synonyms	For taxa with commonly used synonyms or that have been treated taxonomically differently in the past on the Red List	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support Red List website functionality To identify which taxon is being assessed 	
3. Plant growth forms	For plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support Red List website functionality. To allow basic analyses 	
4. Information on the reason for change in Red List Category of the taxon	For taxa being reassessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To distinguish up- or down-listings resulting from genuine improvement or deterioration, from those resulting from revised taxonomy, improved knowledge, etc 	This should be coded regardless of whether a species qualifies in the same or for a different Red List Category
5. Date last recorded (in the wild, if taxon survives in captivity) and details of surveys which have been conducted to search for the taxon	For Extinct and Extinct in the Wild taxa, and for Critically Endangered taxa tagged as Possibly Extinct or Possibly Extinct in the Wild,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To justify use of the Extinct or Extinct in the Wild Category (to underpin assessments in which extinction is confirmed or thought highly likely) To allow basic analyses 	
6. Possibly Extinct or Possibly Extinct in the Wild tag	For Critically Endangered taxa that are considered highly likely to be Extinct or Extinct in the Wild but for which confirmation is required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To underpin assessments in which extinction is thought highly likely but which requires confirmation. To allow basic analyses To support Red List website functionality. 	See section 11.2 in the current version of the <i>Guidelines for Using the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria</i> for further information on this.

Required Information (under specific conditions)	Specific Condition	Purpose	Guidance Notes
7. Documentation of available data, sources of uncertainty and justification for why the criteria cannot be applied; including, where appropriate, one or both of the Data Deficient tags <i>Unknown provenance</i> and <i>Uncertain taxonomic status</i> explains lack of data	For Data Deficient taxa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To justify use of the Data Deficient Category 	
8. Coding as Severely Fragmented, or the number of locations	Taxa listed as threatened using criteria B1a or B2a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To justify the Red List Category and Criteria used 	For definitions of severely fragmented and locations refer to the current version of the <i>Guidelines for Using the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria</i> .
9. Generation length	For taxa listed as threatened under criteria A and C1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To justify the Red List Category and Criteria used 	For definition of generation length refer to the current version of the <i>Guidelines for Using the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria</i> .
10. Time period over which 3-generation decline is measured around the present	For taxa listed as threatened under criterion A4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To justify the Red List Category and Criteria used 	Record this in SIS as the start year for the 3-generation time period.
11. The data, assumptions, structural equations, and Population Viability Analysis model if used	For taxa listed under Criterion E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To justify the Red List Category and Criteria used 	
12. Coding and justification of the criteria that are nearly met or the reasons for the classification (e.g., dependence on ongoing conservation measures)	For taxa listed as Near Threatened	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To justify the Red List Category and Criteria used 	

Required Information (under specific conditions)	Specific Condition	Purpose	Guidance Notes
13. Taxonomic notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For taxa previously treated as a different taxonomic concept (e.g., “split” or “lumped”) on the IUCN Red List • For taxa for which there is widespread taxonomic ambiguity or uncertainty in the literature • For species that may represent a species complex • For taxa assessed as Data Deficient because of Taxonomic uncertainty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify which taxon is being assessed • To allow comparison of taxa previously assessed on the Red List • To justify use of the Data Deficient Category 	
14. Major threats to the taxon (coded to lowest level in Threats Classification Scheme)	For taxa listed as Extinct, Extinct in the Wild, Critically Endangered, Endangered, Vulnerable, and Near Threatened	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To justify the Red List Category and Criteria used • To support Red List website functionality • To allow basic analyses 	<p>Only major threats to the species are required. Coding of timing and stresses not strictly required for the Red List assessment, but are recommended. Coding of scope and severity are discretionary (i.e., optional).</p> <p>If Assessors decide to also record minor threats, then Scope and Severity must be recorded for all threat records for the taxon (to allow major and minor threats to be clearly identified).</p> <p>Major threats are not required for Least Concern or Data Deficient taxa, but may be recorded if relevant (but with appropriate Timing, Scope and Severity codes)</p>

Required Information (under specific conditions)	Specific Condition	Purpose	Guidance Notes
15. Narrative text about the geographic range, population, habitat and ecology, and threats	For taxa listed as Extinct, Extinct in the Wild, Critically Endangered, Endangered, Vulnerable, Near Threatened, and Data Deficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To justify the Red List Category and Criteria used 	<p>Required for supporting the assessment with contextual and explanatory information covering, among other things, the relevant data sources, uncertainties, subtleties and interpretations of data made by Assessors.</p> <p>Although general text would also be helpful for Least Concern taxa, this is not required.</p>
16. Additional supporting information as detailed in section 2.6 of the <i>Documentation Standards and Consistency Checks for IUCN Red List Assessments and Species Accounts</i>	If the RAMAS® Red List software is used for an assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To justify the Red List Category and Criteria assigned using RAMAS 	

Table 3: Recommended Supporting Information. While the list of recommended supporting information is desirable, and strongly encouraged for all assessments for taxa prioritized in the IUCN Red List Strategic Plan 2012-2020 and IUCN Species Strategic Plan 2013-2016, it is not essential for other assessments being submitted to the IUCN Red List. Assessments that do not include any of the information listed below are still acceptable for submission to the Red List.

Recommended Supporting Information	Specific Condition	Purpose	Guidance Notes
1. GIS distribution map using IUCN's <i>Standard Polygon</i> and/or <i>Point Attributes</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useful to reduce the burden on the IUCN Red List Unit to create a GIS map Facilitates spatial analyses Allows visualization on the Red List website (and possible spatial queries) 	Although provision of spatial distribution data is required in any form (see #8 in Table 1), a GIS map is recommended if possible.
2. Qualifiers (estimated, suspected, etc.) for direction of current population trend		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useful for documenting uncertainty over the population trend code selected 	
3. Occurrence in specified sub-country units for large countries and islands far from mainland countries		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useful for searching by sub-country on the Red List website 	If a GIS map has been prepared, a list can be pre-populated by GIS overlay.
4. Occurrence in terrestrial and freshwater biogeographic realms	For terrestrial and freshwater taxa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useful for searching on the Red List website, and for analyses 	A GIS tool will soon be available to facilitate automatic coding of this from distribution maps. Note that currently there is no widely accepted equivalent system for the marine realm.
5. Elevation or depth limits		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useful for supporting Assessments, describing the distribution, and particularly for considering impacts of climate change 	
6. Coding of Stresses and Timing for Threats		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useful for demonstrating the means by which threats impact taxa, and for distinguishing past, present and future threats 	These are added to each threat after the relevant threats have been selected. Timing, Scope and Severity are drop down lists where only one option can be selected whereas for Stresses multiple options can be selected.

Recommended Supporting Information	Specific Condition	Purpose	Guidance Notes
7. Narrative text about the important conservation measures in place and needed	For taxa listed as Extinct in the Wild, Critically Endangered, Vulnerable, Near Threatened, and where appropriate, Data Deficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useful to support and provide explanation and context for coding of conservation actions 	
8. Coding of important conservation actions in place and needed	For taxa listed as Extinct in the Wild, Critically Endangered, Vulnerable, Near threatened, and where appropriate, Data Deficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useful for providing a high-level indication of the most important actions in place and likely to be required, both for individual species and in multi-species analyses 	These codes complement rather than pre-empt or replace more detailed Action Planning or Systematic Conservation Planning. Coding up conservation actions is not Required for Data Deficient taxa, but if possible these taxa should be coded where appropriate.
9. Narrative text on the utilization of the taxon	For utilized taxa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useful to support and provide explanation and context for coding of utilization 	
10. Coding of the end use (purpose) and scale of utilization of the taxon	For utilized taxa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useful for providing a high-level indication of the most important ways in which species are utilized, both for individual species and in multi-species analyses 	