



## Australasian Regional Resource Centre

### Development of an Online Training Course in Wildlife Disease Risk Analysis (DRA)

**This is an invitation to contribute to the development of an online training course in risk analysis for wildlife-associated disease. If you have relevant expertise and experience and would like to be involved please get in touch with me at [richard@cpsgaustralasia.org](mailto:richard@cpsgaustralasia.org)**

#### Background

In 1991 the IUCN Species Survival Commission's (SSC) Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (now the Conservation Planning Specialist Group, CPSG) organised the first of several workshops to pool global wildlife health expertise in an effort to respond to growing awareness that disease can pose a direct or indirect threat to wildlife. In 2002, these workshops culminated in the publication of a Workbook entitled *Animal Movement and Disease Risk* that made this combined expertise available in one volume. Since then there has been an exponential rise in the number of publications focused on disease risks associated with wildlife - either as a threat to biodiversity or to the health of people or domestic animals. In 2010, the CPSG combined its efforts with those of three other IUCN-SSC Specialist Groups (Wildlife Health, Reintroduction and Invasive Species) and partnered with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) to refine and expand the original Workbook to incorporate advances in wildlife Disease Risk Analysis (DRA). This included a structured framework and descriptions of tools and processes to assist the analysis. Given the complexity of the systems in which wildlife disease manifests and the many data gaps, a particular emphasis was placed on multi-stakeholder collaboration.

In 2014, this work resulted in the joint OIE/IUCN-SSC publication of two volumes: *Guidelines for Wildlife Disease Risk Analysis* and a *Manual of Procedures for Wildlife Disease Risk Analysis*. These were both distributed globally as PDFs via free download and are increasingly cited in the literature as a valued resource. The *Guidelines* were developed to provide decision makers with a broad understanding of the DRA process and its range of applications. The *Manual* provides greater detail on the DRA framework including processes and tools to assist with its implementation.

A 2010 global needs assessment survey, conducted through the SSC's Specialist Groups, elicited responses from 290 people in 40 countries. Respondents represented 26 different occupation categories with an interest in wildlife disease, demonstrating the wide range of interests and expertise for which DRA has become relevant. In descending order, the main areas of disease risk concern were identified as human-wildlife interactions, domestic animal-wildlife interactions, management of wildlife *in situ*, wildlife translocations and management of wildlife *ex situ*. The range of wildlife health topics published over the years since this survey suggests that interest continues to grow and these areas of concern are of continuing relevance.

CPSG has found wildlife DRA provides another powerful tool for conservation planning and wildlife management. Our work in facilitating DRA planning and training workshops since 2014 indicates there is a level of demand for training in DRA that exceeds current trainer capacity and, given advances in communications technology, we believe an online approach is one feasible and effective way to meet that demand.

CPSG, in partnership with The Nature Conservancy (TNC), is already delivering online training in the facilitation of multi-stakeholder conservation planning workshops. We are currently exploring the possibility of building this DRA online course on TNC's excellent web-based platform.

### **Curriculum**

Accompanying this invitation is an outline of the draft curriculum. As with the development of the DRA *Guidelines* and *Manual* the quality and value of this course will be maximised through a collaborative approach. Our aim is to ensure that the content reflects current knowledge and best practice.

### **Opportunities for Input**

If you would like to be involved, this is your opportunity! There will be (at least) three ways for you to engage:

1. Development of one or more of the course content workstreams listed below
2. Participation in a 2.5-day workshop in Auckland (see below)
3. Reviewing draft course content.

If you would like to suggest other ways of contributing please let me know – I'd love to hear from you!

### **Work Streams**

A. Curriculum topic content contributions.

These could be in the form of:

1. One or more powerpoint slides
2. Provision of case studies to illustrate one or more of the curriculum topics.
3. Development of a list of key reading resources on the topic of wildlife DRA.
4. Filmed lecture presentations on one or more of the curriculum topics.
5. Hosting of a webinar or discussion forum (also to be filmed for students that miss the live session)
6. Peer review of any or all of the content.

B. Curriculum delivery design.

1. Sharing experience in online training methods
2. Testing and evaluating pilot components of the online course
3. Designing components of the online course.

### **DRA Training Development Workshop**

A 2.5-day facilitated workshop will be held in Auckland from 28-30 August, 2019. This will enable in-depth face-to-face discussion of the curriculum content and its delivery. If possible we'll also take the opportunity to capture on film some of the discussion and short lectures that could be used as part of the training material. A detailed agenda will be circulated soon. Auckland Zoo has generously offered to provide lunches and morning and afternoon teas for this even and use of its meeting venue at its New Zealand Centre for Conservation (NZCCM). However, at this stage, no funds are available to cover costs for travel, accommodation or evening meals.

Please follow this link to a very short survey (1-2 minutes) to express your interests and potential for participation in this project. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GT6CRDP>

### **Acknowledgments**

As with the *Guidelines, Manual*, the development of this course will be through the goodwill of collaborators. However, voluntary contributions of you and your organisations will be acknowledged on the hosting website and any course advertising material.

### **Timeframe**

As indicated in the attached course outline we would like to be able to offer this course by early 2020. I believe this is a realistic timeframe given we have quite a head-start on content from the *Guidelines* and *Manual* together with previous workshop-based training materials. Through a generous grant to Auckland Zoo by the Chisholm Whitney Family Charitable Trust I'm now able to work on CPSG projects 3 days per week. I therefore have the time (and motivation!) to coordinate your input and see this through to completion.

Ngā mihi nui (Best wishes)



Richard Jakob-Hoff

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