



Society for Conservation Biology

Social Science Working Group

ANNUAL REPORT

2009

SSWG: strengthening conservation social science and its application to conservation practice...

www.conservationbiology.org/SSWG

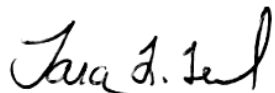
In **2009**, the Society for Conservation Biology's Social Science Working Group (SCB SSWG) completed its strategic planning process, which culminated in the release of the final 2009-2014 Strategic Plan. Resulting from a thorough review of the SSWG's contributions to date, the plan builds on past accomplishments and integrates new areas of emphasis to chart a course for the next five years.

Coinciding with the completion of the strategic planning process, the SSWG Board decided to initiate a leadership transition in the spring, at which time I (Tara) took on the role as President of the working group. I'm truly honored to accept this charge and plan to build upon my prior experiences on the Board and the efforts of my predecessors to continue to strengthen the SSWG's role as a global leader in the application of social science to conservation practice.

In addition to our strategic planning efforts, the SSWG had several other noteworthy achievements in 2009. We collaborated with SCB's North America Section and other partners to host the workshop *Development of a Canadian Network of Conservation Professionals* and to launch projects in the U.S. and Canada to determine top priorities for conservation research in North America. These projects stem from a broader exercise led by the University of Cambridge to identify *100 Questions of Importance to the Conservation of Global Biological Diversity*, an initiative that the SSWG contributed to and that led to an article with the same title in *Conservation Biology* (top downloaded article in the journal in 2009).

This year, we also launched new networking opportunities on Facebook and Twitter and experienced significant growth in membership on our SSWG discussion list. In addition, we coordinated social science content at the SCB annual meeting; organized a one-day social science short course; sponsored a workshop on the social aspects of human-wildlife conflict and a symposium entitled *Common Property, Biodiversity Conservation, and Climate Change*; released our first paper in the SSWG Working Paper series and added content to the Conservation Social Science Syllabi; expanded the social science Expert Directory and SSWG Ambassadors program; developed an online glossary of social science terms in conservation; and partnered with makers of the film *Milking the Rhino* to develop a film guide for educators and practitioners.

Overall, 2009 proved to be a very productive year for the SSWG. Thank you for all your help in continuing to advance our mission, and we look forward to your support and involvement in the coming year as we pursue the activities outlined in our new Strategic Plan. For more information, including ways to get involved, visit our website at www.conservationbiology.org/SSWG.



Tara L. Teel, Ph.D.
President
SCB Social Science Working Group



Mission

The mission of the Social Science Working Group (SSWG) is to strengthen conservation social science and its application to conservation practice.

Vision

By 2014, we seek to:

- Resolve key scientific debates in conservation policy;
- Establish a vibrant global community of conservation social scientists; and
- Catalyze development of the next generation of leaders in conservation social science.

Goals

We seek to realize this vision through continuous progress toward five goals:

1. *Science.* Advance scientific understanding of conservation as a social process.
2. *Policy.* Inform conservation decision-making through scientific dialogue and stakeholder engagement.
3. *Capacity-building.* Enhance the ability of scholars and practitioners to understand and address the social dimensions of biodiversity conservation.
4. *Membership.* Expand, diversify, and engage the SSWG membership.
5. *Organizational development.* Increase the capacity of the SSWG to achieve its mission.

GOALS 1 & 2: Science & Policy. Advance scientific understanding of conservation as a social process; and inform conservation decision-making through scientific dialogue and stakeholder engagement.

2009 Accomplishments

SCB Conference Activities

- Assisted Local Organizing Committee and SCB's Executive Office with preparations for 2009 SCB annual meeting.
- Coordinated social science components of SCB 2009:
 - 4 short courses
 - 10 symposia
 - 4 workshops
 - Dozens of contributed presentations and posters
- Began planning for SCB 2010 with Local Organizing Committee and SCB's Executive Office; provided assistance with reviews of abstracts and session proposals.
- Partnered with SCB's Science & Publication Committee to develop package of session proposals for SCB 2010.

Identifying Policy-Relevant Networks & Research Priorities

- Hosted workshop *Development of a Canadian Network of Conservation Professionals* with SCB North America Section and SCB 2010 Local Organizing Committee (Ottawa, April 2009). Over 50 attendees from universities, government, and NGOs worked to develop a multi-disciplinary, policy-oriented network to address biodiversity conservation challenges in Canada.
- Partnered with SCB North America Section and Yellowstone to Yukon Initiative to launch project *Conservation Social Science in*

Canada: Assessing and Prioritizing Research Directions for an Emerging Discipline (\$51,000 awarded, SSHRC Canada; first meeting of collaborators in Toronto, June 2009). Purpose is to develop Canadian version of the global "100 Questions" exercise to identify top priorities for conservation research.

- Collaborated with SCB North America Section on proposal *Determining Priorities for Conservation Science and Policy in the Face of Climate Change* (\$176,073 awarded, Kresge Foundation). Purpose is to develop "100 Questions" exercise for the U.S. – "America's Top 40."

Journals & Publications

- Co-authored article "One Hundred Questions of Importance to the Conservation of Global Biological Diversity," *Conservation Biology* 23(3) – the top downloaded paper in CB in 2009.
- SSWG recognized in "Online First" edition of *Policy Sciences* (November 2009) for its support of research appraising the U.S. Marine Mammal Commission.
- Assisted *Conservation Biology's* editorial team to increase amount and quality of social science contributions to the journal.
- Worked on proposal to include *Conservation Biology* in the Social Science Citation Index.

GOAL 3: Capacity building. Enhance the ability of scholars and practitioners to understand and address the social dimensions of biodiversity conservation.

2009 Accomplishments

Trainings & Special Sessions

- Co-sponsored and led 1-day short course *The Role of the Social Sciences in Conservation Planning* at SCB 2009, training 15 conservation scientists and practitioners in basic concepts and applied tools from the social sciences.
- Co-sponsored 1-day workshop *Human-Wildlife Conflict: Beyond Biology* at SCB 2009. Over 30 participants from different world-regions identified social science information needs to address in future capacity-building initiatives to improve practitioner response to human-wildlife conflict.
- Co-sponsored symposium *Common Property, Biodiversity Conservation, and Climate Change* with the International Association of the Commons at SCB 2009.
- Co-sponsored half-day workshop *The Human Dimensions of Sustainability in Conservation* at 10th Biennial Conference of Research on the Colorado Plateau (Flagstaff, October 2009).
- Partnered with Colorado State University and Wildlife Institute of India on proposals for social science capacity building in India: 1) *Indian Forest Service Mid-Career Training: Enhancing Protected Area Management Effectiveness and Response to Human-Wildlife Conflict in and around Protected Areas* (\$190,700 awarded, ICFRE); and 2) *Understanding the Impacts of Conservation-Induced Displacement: A Proposal for Capacity Building to Enhance Protected*

Area Management Effectiveness and Wildlife Conservation in India (\$45,256 awarded, USFWS; \$42,316 in matching funds, WII).

Resources

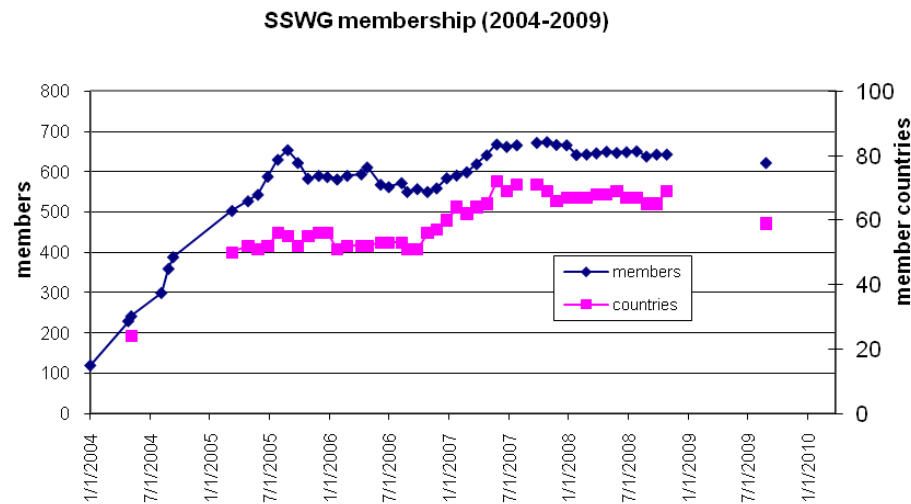
- Released first paper in the SSWG Working Paper series, *Putting People on the Map: An Approach to Integrating Social Data into Conservation Planning* (S. Stephanson & M. Mascia).
- Continued to maintain conservation social science Expert Directory (n=161 registrants, 14% increase from 2008).
- Added content to Conservation Social Science Syllabi, increasing the total number to 45 syllabi available online.
- Developed wiki-based lexicon, providing a glossary of social science terms in conservation: www.csslexiconproject.com.
- Released list of songs (277 songs, 185 artists) online related to climate change and human impact on the environment. The list resulted from a survey of SSWG members and subscribers to two other listserves.
- Partnered with makers of the film *Milking the Rhino*, a production about community-based conservation in Africa, to extend their audience and develop a film guide for educators and practitioners: <http://milkingtherhino.org/film.php>.

GOAL 4: Membership. Expand, diversify, and engage the SSWG membership.

2009 Accomplishments

Membership Trends¹

- Experienced 2.5% decline in overall membership (n=623).
- Country representation declined by 9% (n=59).

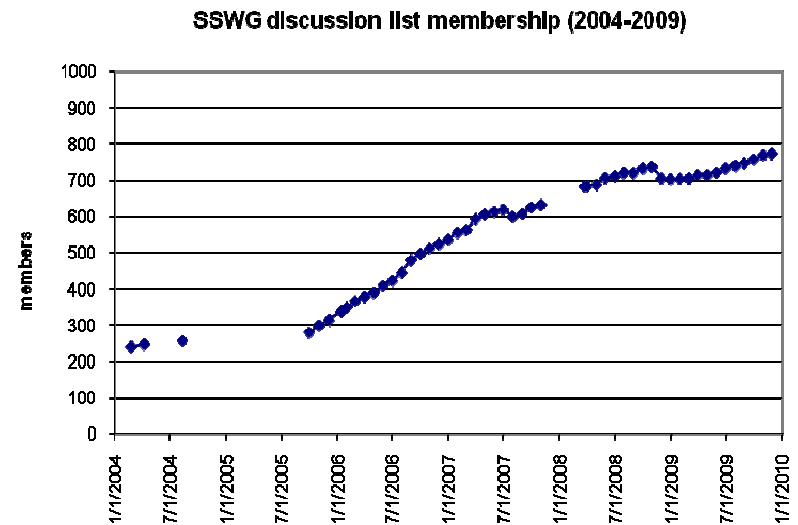


¹Note: detailed reporting was not available throughout 2009 due to the transition in the SCB membership system.

- Expanded SSWG Ambassadors program to include 6 new ambassadors (n=25); members were added from India, Mali, Niger, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the United States.
- Organized SSWG’s annual business meeting and co-sponsored networking event with Asia Section at SCB 2009.
- Developed new “factsheet” to distribute at conferences and other venues to raise awareness and promote SSWG activities.

Activities

- Continued to maintain an active discussion list, with a 10% increase in membership (n=774).
- Launched new networking opportunities on Facebook (n=143 fans) and Twitter (n=49 followers), allowing members to keep up-to-date with conservation social science news, SSWG activities, and conference events.



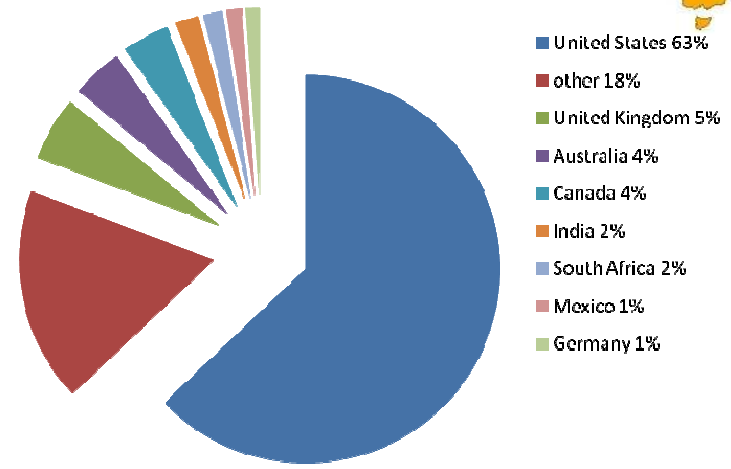
SSWG Membership 2009

Countries Represented

Argentina	Madagascar
Australia	Mexico
Bangladesh	Mongolia
Benin	Morocco
Bolivia	Namibia
Botswana	Nepal
Brazil	Netherlands
Canada	New Zealand
Chile	Nigeria
China	Norway
Colombia	Pakistan
Costa Rica	Peru
Croatia	Phillippines
Denmark	Portugal
Dominica	Romania
Ecuador	Rwanda
Falkland Islands	Sri Lanka
Finland	South Africa
France	Sweden
Germany	Switzerland
Ghana	Taiwan
Greece	Tanzania
Hungary	Thailand
India	Tunisia
Ireland	Turkey
Italy	Uganda
Japan	United Kingdom
Kenya	United States
Lao People's Democratic Rep.	Virgin Islands
	Zimbabwe



December 2009



Total Membership = 623
Total Countries Represented = 59

SSWG Ambassadors 2009

Africa

Martin Adeimile (Tanzania)
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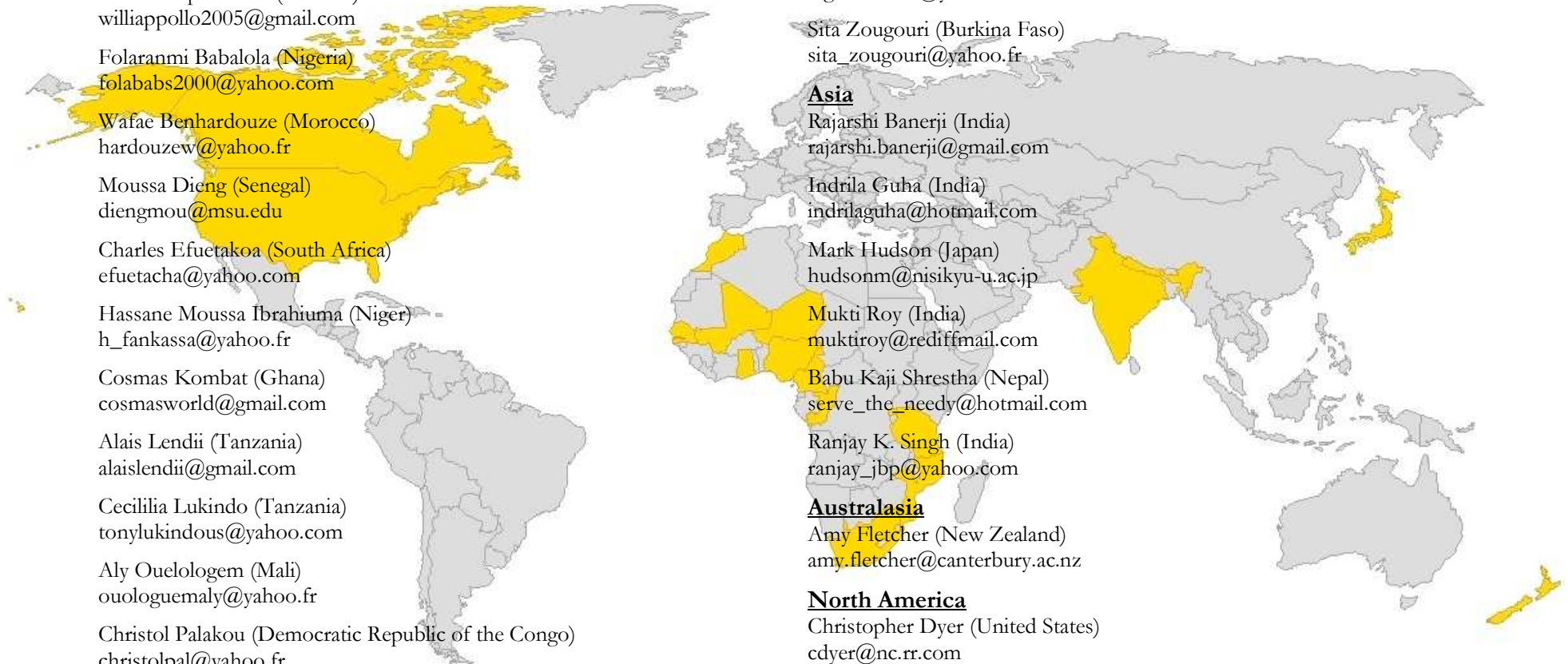
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North America

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Joleen Timko (Canada)
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GOAL 5: Organizational development. Increase the capacity of the SSWG to achieve its mission.

2009 Accomplishments

Planning

- Completed SSWG's strategic planning process, which culminated in the release of the final 2009-2014 Strategic Plan.
- Initiated leadership transition to coincide with completion of strategic planning process.
- Developed and released 2009 workplan, outlining key priorities and activities for the year.

Other Organizational Development Activities

- Held elections for five board seats: representatives of anthropology, geography, psychology, and two at-large positions.
- Reached out to potential funders, including The Christensen Fund, to explore opportunities for support of SSWG activities in 2010 and beyond.
- Identified working group budget priorities for SCB's Executive Office to consider as part of its 2010-2011 fund-raising package.



Residents of Kenya watching the film *Milking the Rhino*. Photo courtesy of Connor Cimowsky.

Financial Report

In 2009, the SSWG began the year with a balance of \$798.31.

Opening balance	\$798.31
<i>Income</i>	\$0.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$0.00
<i>Expenses</i>	
Support to help launch SSWG strategic plan ¹	\$798.31
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$798.31
NET INCOME	-\$0.00
CLOSING BALANCE	\$0.00

¹Funds provided partial support for SSWG President to attend the 2nd European Congress of Conservation Biology in Prague in the Fall of 2009.

The SSWG account is managed in a sub-account by the Society for Conservation Biology and disbursed as instructed by the SSWG. The SSWG Audit Chair, in consultation with the SSWG President and the SSWG Chief Financial Officer, has conducted an analysis of the spending from this account, and has confirmed that the monies in the account, as of December 31st, 2009, were as follows: \$0. This is consistent with the report from the SCB Executive Office.

Michael Mascia, Ph.D.
SSWG Chief Financial Officer



Great Wall of China, Beijing. Photo courtesy of Tara Teel.

Contributions

The SSWG is immensely grateful to the individuals and organizations that provided direct support to the SSWG, as well as in-kind contributions that supported SSWG activities in 2009.

Direct SSWG Support (Carry-Forward from 2008):

Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation

In-Kind Support:

Organizations

SCB - Executive Office

World Wildlife Fund

Colorado State University

Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences

Individuals

Danielle Ross (Colorado State University)

Tammy Lewis (Former SSWG Board Member, Muhlenberg College)

William Forbes (Former SSWG Board Member, Stephen F. Austin University)

Angelika Wilhem-Rechmann (Former SSWG Board Member, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University)



People viewing wildlife in Corbett National Park, India. Photo courtesy of Tara Teel.

Committees

The SSWG accomplishes its work through volunteer Committees.

Audit Committee

Solange Bandiaky, Chair, Rights and Resources Initiative
Beth Caniglia, Oklahoma State University
Christie Manning, Hamline University
Mac Parish, Stanford University

Communication Committee

Daniel Miller, Chair, University of Michigan
Nejem Rahem, Vice Chair, Emerson College
Rodolfo Tello, SSWG Web Developer, American University
Nathalie Walker, SSWG Discussion List Moderator, Consultant, UK
Mac Parish, Stanford University
Danielle Mota, SCB, Brazil

Conservation Committee

Murray Rudd, Chair, University of York
Diane Russell, Vice Chair, US Agency for International Development
Shannon Earle, Conservation International
Rodolfo Tello, American University
Michael Sorice, Texas A&M University

Education Committee

David Hoffman, Chair, Mississippi State University
Verna DeLauer, Clark University
Monica Ogra, Gettysburg College
Nicole Smith, University of Colorado at Boulder

Membership Committee

Robin Roth, Chair, York University
Solange Bandiaky, Rights and Resources Initiative
Sita Zougouri, SSWG Ambassador Program Coordinator, Burkina Faso
David Bray, Florida International University
Mike Skuja, Center for Rural People and the Environment

Nominations Committee

Michael Mascia, Chair, World Wildlife Fund
William Forbes, Stephen F. Austin University
Katrina Brandon, Conservation International, Argentina
Nejem Raheem, Emerson College
Peter Wilshusen, Bucknell University

Policy Committee

Ashwini Chhatre, Chair, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Peter Wilshusen, Bucknell University
Fred Nelson, Maliasili Initiatives Ltd, Tanzania
Krithi Karanth, Center for Wildlife Studies, India
Catherine Benson, University of Michigan

Program Committee

Richard Wallace, Chair, Ursinus College
David Cherney, University of Colorado at Boulder
Ashley Schafer, Ursinus College
Kathryn Semmens, Pew Environment Group

Student Affairs Committee

Annie Claus, Chair, Yale University
Annie MacFayden, University of Georgia
Radhika Govindrajana, Yale University
Oliver Pergams, University of Illinois at Chicago
Rebecca Witter, University of Georgia

The Social Science Working Group Board

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Daniel Miller, Secretary, Communications Committee Chair, Political Science Representative
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Michael Mascia, Chief Financial Officer, Nominations Committee Chair, SCB Board Social Science Representative
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Ashwini Chhatre, Policy Committee Chair, At-Large Representative
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Annie Claus, Student Affairs Committee Chair, At-Large Representative (Student Representative)
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SCB 2009 conference participants enjoying the SSWG-Asia Section networking social. Photo courtesy of Dan Miller.