

ENHANCING THE IMPACT OF CONSERVATION SCIENCE

The Society for Conservation Biology

Strategic Plan 2016-2020

The Society for Conservation Biology (SCB) is a global membership community of thousands of professional conservation scientists and practitioners. Founded in 1985, SCB's membership and the breadth of its activities have grown with each decade. The journal *Conservation Biology* was founded in 1987; *Conservation Letters* launched in 2008. SCB's Executive Office was established in Washington, D.C. in 2001. Since 2003, the establishment of sections and topical working groups has fostered SCB's involvement with regional matters and enhanced SCB's visibility around the world. Global and section-level meetings reunite longtime members and attract numerous young conservation professionals to SCB, prompting the initiation of new chapters in many countries.

With this 2016-2020 strategic plan SCB provides a high-level view of our common vision for the organization, reflecting our past challenges and successes, and our ongoing development as a leading global conservation science institution. SCB's executive office, committees, sections, working groups, and chapters develop their workplans for implementing programs and activities focused on prioritized objectives aligned with the strategic areas and goals summarized in this brief outline document. These implementation workplans guide our global and regional development of programs and services valuable to our diverse body of conservation scientists and practitioners. Implementing our strategic priorities maximizes our conservation impact while enhancing our financial stability and organizational growth. We welcome member input to this open and transparent process.

The SCB Executive Office facilitates our strategic implementation of this plan through the coordinated work of our committees, sections, chapters, and working groups, leveraging the strengths of each of these organizational structures. SCB's fiscally responsible implementation approach is explicitly coordinated with our business plan. Achieving the goals identified in this SCB Strategic Plan through implementation of priority objectives will strengthen the application of conservation science, furthering our mission to advance both the science and the practice of conserving the Earth's biological diversity.

Board of Governors
Society for Conservation Biology
Approved 22 February 2016
Washington, DC, USA

Vision

The Society for Conservation Biology (SCB) envisions a world where people understand, value, and conserve the diversity of life on Earth. We envision SCB, a globally diverse, equitable, and inclusive community of conservation professionals, as a leading scientific voice for the study and conservation of Earth's biological diversity.

Mission

The Society for Conservation Biology advances the science and practice of conserving Earth's biological diversity.

Organizational Values

The Society for Conservation Biology holds these values:

1. There is intrinsic value in the natural diversity of organisms, the complexity of ecological systems, and the resilience created by evolutionary processes.
2. Human-caused extinctions and the destruction and loss of function of natural ecosystems are unacceptable.
3. Maintaining and restoring biological diversity are individual and collective responsibilities of humans.
4. The natural and social sciences are critical for understanding how the natural world operates and how human actions affect nature.
5. Collaboration among scientists, managers, and policy-makers is vital to incorporate high-quality science into policies and management decisions affecting conservation of biological diversity.
6. We recognize the importance of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community in addressing the worlds' global challenges to maintaining biological diversity.

The five strategic foci for SCB's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan are:

- I. Support and facilitate the creation and dissemination of conservation science
- II. Increase the application of science to management, policy, and education
- III. Strengthen SCB's sections to build international capacity
- IV. Serve the interests of members
- V. Build and maintain organizational capacity

Strategic Focus I. Support and facilitate the creation and dissemination of conservation science

Statement of Goals

The highest-quality scientific research and expertise needed to understand and conserve biological diversity is identified, supported and disseminated.

Rationale

For science to be effectively incorporated into the management and conservation of ecosystems at local, national, and global levels, it must be of high quality, well-funded, and disseminated. SCB advocates for financial support of scientific research. SCB facilitates scientific research and its dissemination through our support of professional networking activities and educational opportunities. We disseminate high-quality science through our global and regional meetings and our peer-reviewed journals and other publications.

Strategic Focus II. Increase the application of science to management, policy, and education

Statement of Goals

Management, policy, and education at local, national, regional, and global levels are directly informed with the highest quality science. The effectiveness of management actions is routinely and openly evaluated.

Rationale

SCB is a global community of natural and social scientists and practitioners who believe the application of science to management and policy is essential for effective conservation. Furthermore, SCB recognizes the necessity of conservation training and education on all levels. Thorough understanding of the links among science, management, and policy, and optimal knowledge exchange are necessary to conserve biological diversity. Conservation practitioners and policy-makers must participate in identifying issues that require new research and clear translation and dissemination. A culture of sharing data and of evaluation of management actions is necessary to build a common evidence base for future actions. Similarly, SCB encourages mutual respect for diverse knowledges with the understanding that better communication and collaboration will lead to stronger conservation practice.

Strategic Focus III. Strengthen SCB's sections to build local, national, and international capacity

Statement of Goals

SCB sections grow and develop to build local, national, and international capacity worldwide for conservation of biological diversity.

Rationale

The causes and consequences of losses of biological diversity, and the strategies and measures targeted at preventing continued biodiversity decline, are regional, local, and global. Therefore, to best further the work of our Society, SCB needs to encourage its sections to act independently to inform regional policy, governance and management. Strong sections will also promote higher membership, involvement of diverse voices and stakeholders, and facilitate members' involvement in SCB activities. SCB also recognizes and supports the significance of strong working groups, chapters, and committees to further our Society's aims.

Strategic Focus IV. Serve the interests of all members

Statement of Goals

The needs of current and potential SCB members are effectively served.

Rationale

As a professional Society, SCB can best contribute to civil society through an engaged membership whose needs are well-served so they may advance conservation in their communities and chosen work sites and locations. Our organization provides fellowship, fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive membership able to participate and influence conservation broadly, and enables both emerging and established conservation professionals to develop their professional skills and networks. A well-served, global community of professionals will collaborate and generate new ideas and strategies to achieve shared goals, support SCB's objectives and activities, and function as a credible, collective, authoritative voice on conservation issues that informs public policy and action. This is achieved through our strong and committed governing boards, sections, working groups, chapters, and committees.

Strategic Focus V. Build and maintain organizational capacity

Statement of Goals

SCB has the capacity necessary to implement and sustain the programmatic goals and objectives that advance our vision and mission.

Rationale

To achieve our programmatic goals, SCB must remain a viable organization. We must have clear direction, explicit identification of responsibilities and authority at all levels of the organization, professional and competent staff, organized and accessible records, an effective board of governors, a diversity of engaged and dedicated members, and funding that fully supports programs, including an operating reserve.