

# The Amphibian Conservation Action Plan (ACAP): A roadmap to support amphibian conservation globally

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IUCN SSC Amphibian Specialist Group  
(ASG)



# Amphibian Specialist Group (ASG)

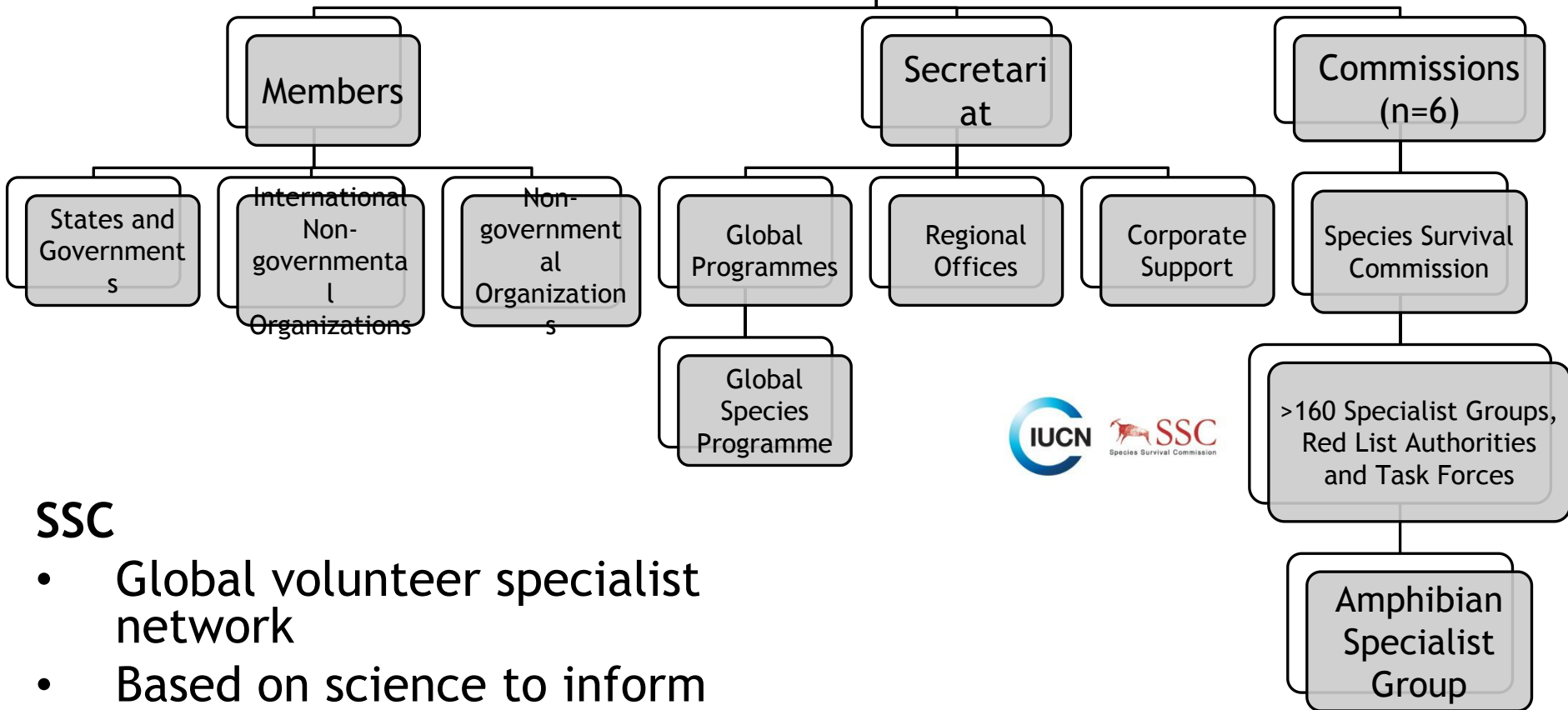


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**What is the ASG?**  
**What does it do?**  
**How does it work?**



- International Union for the Conservation of Nature
- Founded in 1948 in France
- Membership Union composed of government and civil society organizations
- 1,400 member organizations
- 18,000 experts
- Active in 160+ countries



## SSC

- Global volunteer specialist network
- Based on science to inform conservation
- SGs are divided into taxonomic, taxonomic-geographic and thematic groups
- Reconstituted every four years

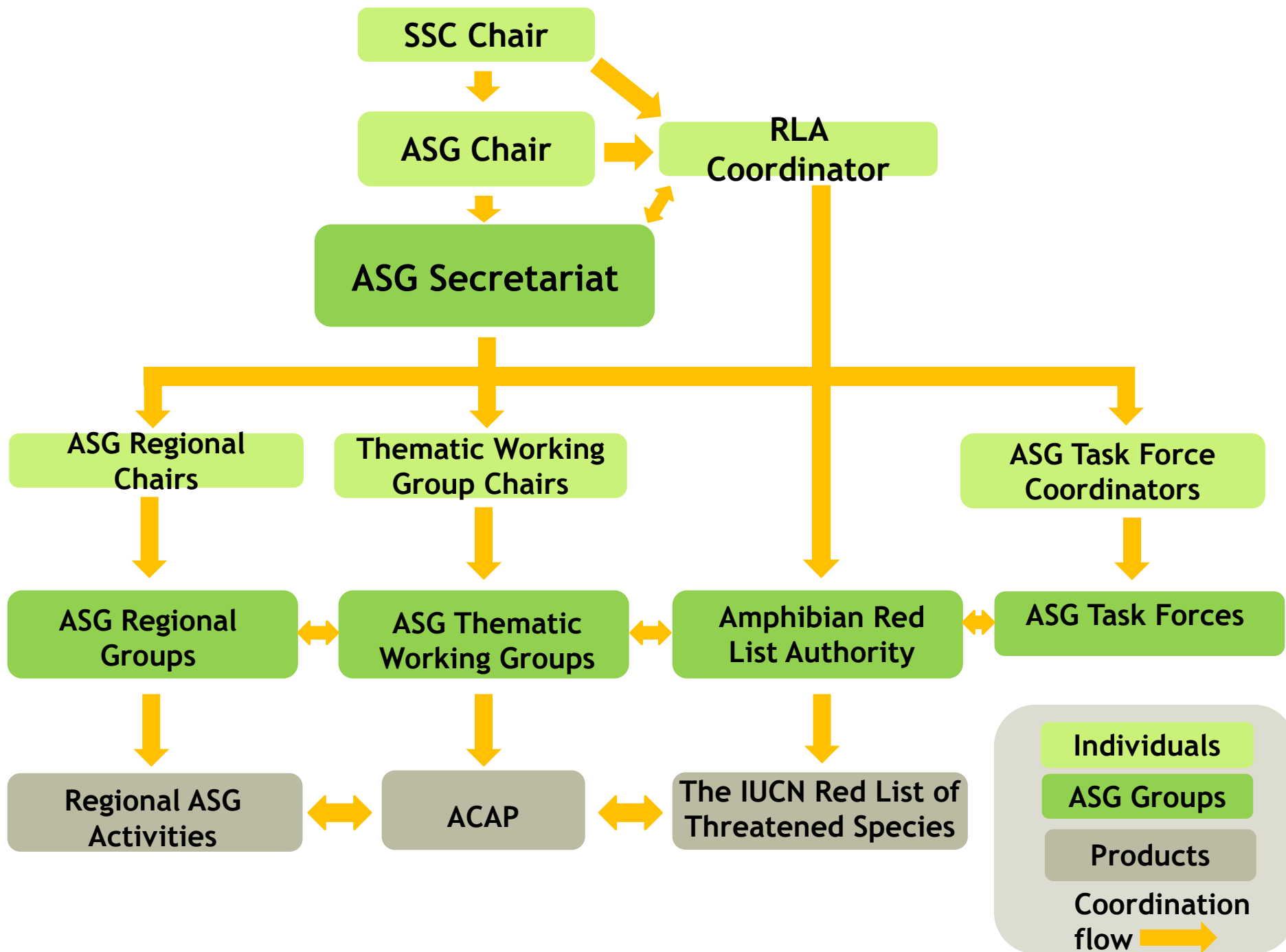


# What is the ASG?

- Created in 2005
- Mission: *The Amphibian Specialist Group provides the scientific foundation to inform effective amphibian conservation action around the world*
- Global network of volunteer specialists generating science, capacity and education on amphibian conservation
- [www.iucn-amphibians.org](http://www.iucn-amphibians.org)
- Currently:
  - Over 8400 species
  - +250 members worldwide
  - 43 regions



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# ASG Secretariat



Sally Wren



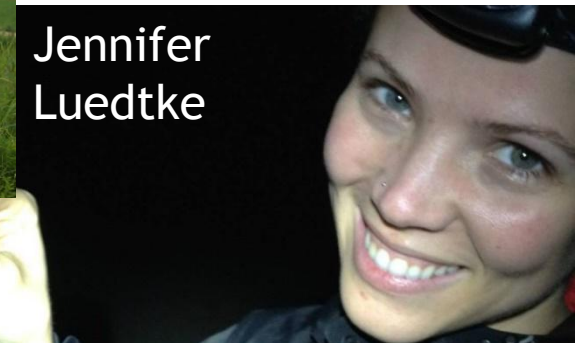
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# What does the ASG do?

Multi-pronged approach to identify research and conservation priorities and to develop like-minded sub-groups with similar interests:

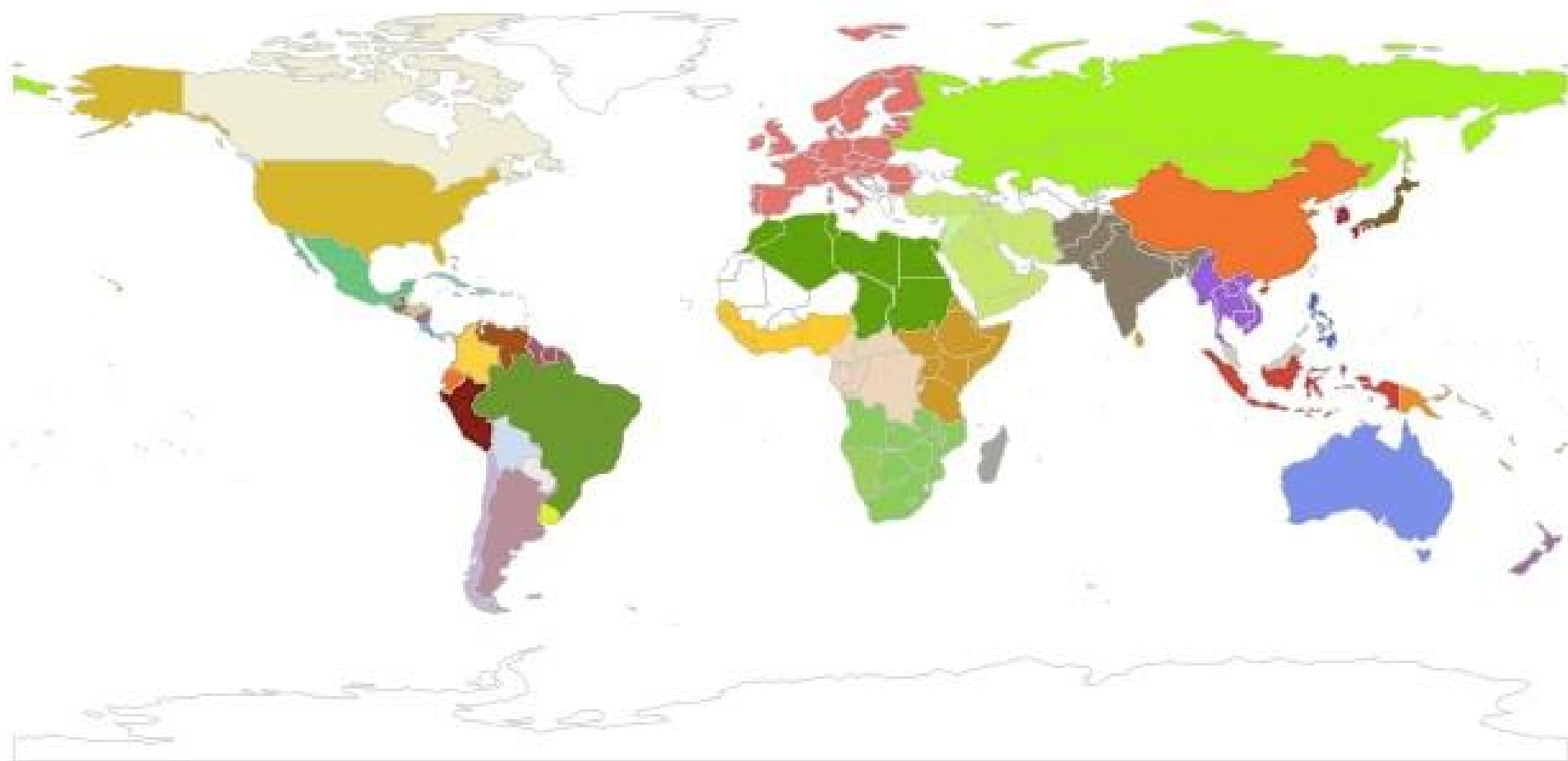




# ASG Regional Groups

- Currently 43 geographical units:
  - 14 regions
  - 29 countries
- Each region led by 1-2 Chair/Co-chairs
- Regional groups very diverse, with different strengths and challenges
- Identify priorities for individual regions and organize respective groups around these





# Amphibian Red List Authority

- Part of the ASG
  - Responsible for the update and maintenance of the amphibian database on the IUCN Red List
  - Small core team with volunteer ASG regional assessment coordinators around the globe
  - Working on the Global Amphibian Assessment
- 2



THE IUCN RED LIST  
OF THREATENED SPECIES™

# Amphibian Conservation Action Plan (ACAP)

- Original ACAP published in 2007
- New ACAP published April 2015 as a living, web-based document ([www.iucn-amphibians.org/working-groups/](http://www.iucn-amphibians.org/working-groups/))
- Envisioned to act as a unified global strategy to protect amphibians
- Science-based and providing guidance for conservation



# ASG ACAP Thematic Working Groups

12 thematic working groups, covering threats and approaches to amphibian conservation

## *Threats*

- Climate change
- Ecotoxicology
- Habitat loss, protection and management
- Infectious diseases

## *Species Management*

- Assisted reproductive technologies and biobanking
- Conservation breeding
- Genomics
- Translocations

## *Informing Decision-making*

- Communications and education
- Conservation planning
- Surveys and monitoring of amphibians



# ASG Task Forces

- Groups of ASG members that have a specific taxonomic or thematic focus ( $\neq$  ACAP-focused Working Groups)
- Aim to consolidate efforts and build knowledge on their respective study groups or themes
- TFs are led by one or more Coordinators
- Currently one TF (*Atelopus* TF)



# Atelopus Task Force

- Provides technical and scientific advice to the Atelopus Survival Initiative (ASI), a collaborative effort to bring harlequin toads (*Atelopus*) back from the brink of extinction
- Facilitates and catalyzes the implementation of the Harlequin Toad (*Atelopus*) Conservation Action Plan (HarleCAP), and with the ASI Coordinator act as the ASI's primary decision-making body



HARLEQUIN TOAD (*ATELOPUS*) CONSERVATION ACTION PLAN  
2021 — 2041







## ASA

*Conserves amphibians and their habitats through dynamic partnerships worldwide*

**Leads on coordination, partnerships, outreach (including communication and education), and funding**

# AMPHIBIANS THRIVING IN NATURE

## ASG

*Provides the scientific foundation to inform effective global amphibian conservation*

**Leads on providing the science to guide action**

## AArk

*Ensures the survival and diversity of amphibian species, focusing on those that cannot currently be safeguarded in their natural environment*

**Leads on *ex situ* rescue, Conservation Needs Assessments, integrated planning, and capacity-building**



**amphibian ark**  
Keeping threatened amphibian species afloat

# Why update ACAP?

- Status of amphibians globally has not improved
- Threats are getting worse
- Translates into loss of more populations and species
- Relevant advances in our knowledge, influencing conservation decision-making
- Need for coordinated and integrated action
- Involve a broad set of stakeholders
- Help guide priorities and catalyze actions
- Encourage collaborations



# What is different about this ACAP?

- Informed by survey of conservationists and implementers (2019)
- N= 153 respondents
- Zoo/aquaria, academic institutions, museums, national/local NGOs, international NGOs, governmental agencies, private entities and individuals





Thinking about the most recent 2015 version (online), how would ACAP need to change to be more useful to you/your conservation organisation?

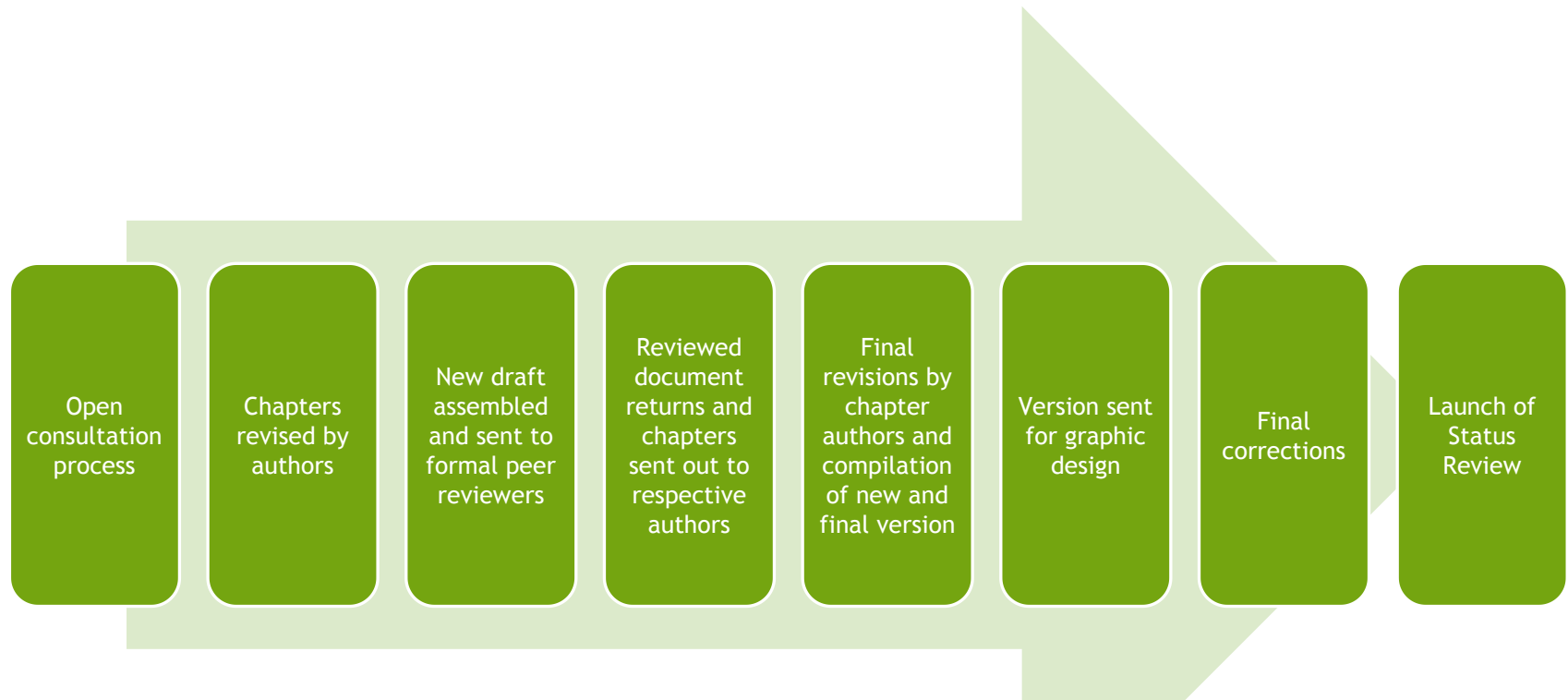


# What is different about this ACAP?

- Diversity in authorship (ASG and external)
- Participative! Open consultation process
- Engagement with diverse stakeholders
- Two companion pieces, a status review and an implementer document



# Next steps - Status Review



# Next steps - Implementer document

1. Once status review is launched, we will start developing the companion piece/implementer document
2. 28-30 pages, pdf format, free to download
3. Distills the key priorities for each chapter
4. User-friendly language
5. Very graphic
6. Four languages
7. Help monitoring & evaluation



# Goals

ACAP provides a unique opportunity towards our vision of “amphibians thriving in nature”. It does this by aiming to:

- **Goal 1:** Act as a hub underpinning amphibian conservation, behind which we can rally for broad support
- **Goal 2:** Secure the financial resources necessary to achieve our objectives
- **Goal 3:** Provide us with a practical tool to measure the impact of conservation action




# Goal 1

**Acting as a hub underpinning amphibian conservation, behind which we can rally for broad support**

- Synthesis enables us to see a “big picture”, allowing us to get on the same page
- Having a broad consensus document means priorities and gaps are understood and shared
- These priorities are in turn adopted by different stakeholders

# Goal 1

**Acting as a hub underpinning amphibian conservation, behind which we can rally for broad support**

- Widespread adoption of ACAP  diversity of experiences, resources and network
- Scale up amphibian conservation by increasing the amount and nature of work, efficiencies
- Adoption of priorities by specific organizations allows us to develop integrated regional or thematic networks

## Goal 2

**Securing the financial resources necessary to achieve our objectives**

- ACAP implementation can only happen if there is buy-in and support
- Two prongs: Higher level coordination and on-the-ground work
- Approach amphibian conservation implementers and potential donors to assess interest and investment in ACAP
- Leveraging support for amphibian conservation

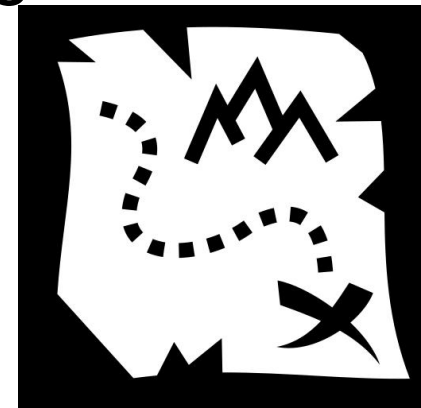
## Goal 3

**Providing us with a practical tool to measure the impact of conservation action**

- Tracking what is being implemented is fundamental to identifying what has been done and where
- Global monitoring and evaluation is difficult, but ACAP provides an initial framework
- Publishing actions and results will be important to track action
- FrogLog offers a good medium for this

# Some additional thoughts

- Not all chapters are equally relevant to all regions  
- regions encouraged to assess what is relevant to their context
- Regions can develop a regional version catering to their specific needs
- ACAP is the product of a joint, collective effort - over 100 authors from many different regions!

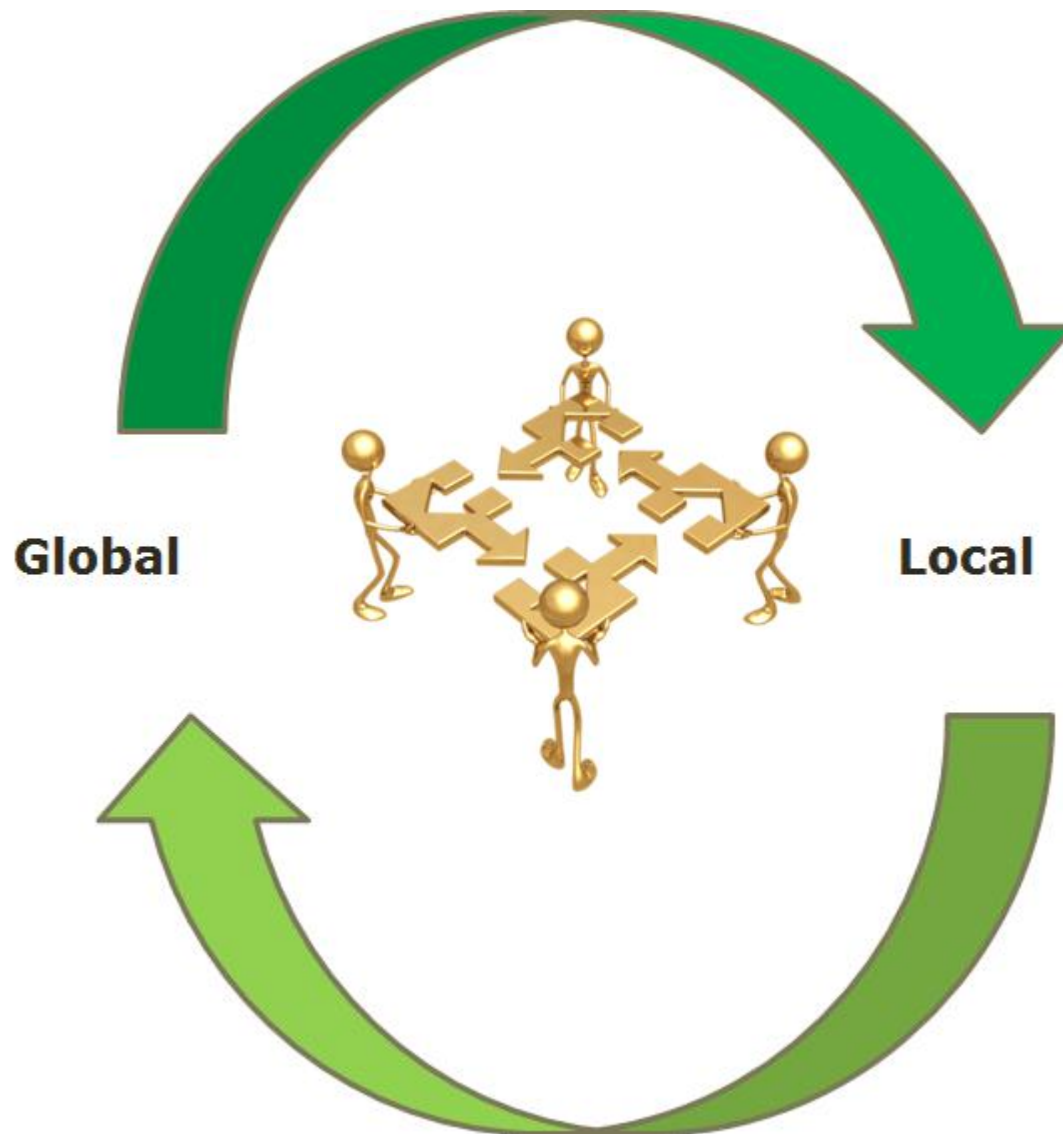




# Some additional thoughts

- Any plan's effectiveness depends on consensus and the **collective commitment** to implement it
- A plan is no good if it just sits on a shelf - it is developed to be implemented
- Participation and commitment are key!





# How can you participate?

- Help ACAP be the best it can be! Provide feedback into the open consultation process when it is launched
- Help spread the word about the open consultation so that others can also provide input
- Talk to your institution or organization to see if there are parts of ACAP that they can adopt and pledge to
- Let us know if there are organizations or institutions that you think might be interested

[asg@amphibians.org](mailto:asg@amphibians.org)

# Open consultation

[www.iucn-amphibians.org/resources/acap/](http://www.iucn-amphibians.org/resources/acap/)



# Thank you!



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