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SPECIAL EDITION

Tim Halliday: Amphibian Ambassador

Rediscovering Hope for the Longnose
Harlequin Frog

Why We Need More Amphibian-Focused
Protected Areas

Pseudophilautus hallidayi. Photo: Nayana Wijayathilaka.

... and so much more!

ASG Brazil Restructuring Process and Current Activities

By Luis Fernando Marin da Fonte^{1,2}, Cybele Sabino Lisboa^{1,3}, Iberê Farina Machado^{1,4}, Lucas Ferrante^{1,5} & Débora Leite Silvano^{1,6}



Art: Luis Fernando Marin da Fonte.

Brazil has the greatest amphibian species richness on earth, currently comprising 1,080 species (1). The regional branch of the IUCN SSC Amphibian Specialist Group for Brazil (ASG Brazil) was officially established in 2006, and its first official meeting was held in July 2007, during the 3rd Brazilian Congress of Herpetology (BCH) held in Belém, Brazil. In August 2008, during the 6th World Congress of Herpetology held in Manaus, Brazil, the Group took part in the Amphibian Conservation symposium, presenting its achievements up until that moment. The following meeting was held only in July 2013, during the 6th BCH held in Salvador, Brazil. Over the course of these years, ASG Brazil contributed to developing the Brazilian Amphibian Conservation Action Plan (BACAP) (2), helped with the national conservation status assessment of Brazilian amphibian species (3), and organized the symposiums *Regional experiences of amphibian conservation in Brazil and the role of ASG Brazil (IUCN) in the conservation of amphibians: actions in progress and new directions* during the 7th and 8th BCH, held in Gramado and Campo Grande, in September 2015, and August 2017, respectively.

From 2014 onwards new members joined the ASG Brazil team, and a restructuring process was undertaken at the beginning of 2016. The ASG Brazil regional secretariat now consists of two Regional Co-Chairs and three Regional Programme Officers. Since May 2016, regular online meetings are held to discuss important issues, and to decide the next steps towards the development of the Group and its future activities.

In order to lead the execution of BACAP we believe that it is very important to identify the stakeholders involved in amphibian conservation in Brazil. Considering the continental dimensions of the country, this is not as simple a task as it may seem. With the objective of contacting researchers and people interested in amphibian conservation, the first result of our restructuring process was the development and launch of the official ASG Brazil [website](#), [e-mail](#) and [fan page](#). Since our target audience is the Brazilian community,

the main language of communication is Portuguese.

The next step in expanding our activities was to undertake a massive review of the conservation actions involving amphibians that are currently being conducted in Brazil (*i.e.*, research, population monitoring, extinction risk assessment, environmental education, etc.). To this end we developed an online questionnaire to find out *Who, Where, How* and *With Which Species* these activities are being carried out. The survey was launched in December 2016 and collected responses until March 2017.

From the analysis of this review (still in progress), we were able to identify almost 400 people who, in one way or another, are involved in the conservation of amphibians in Brazil. We now have a better understanding of the activities performed and identified the gaps in knowledge and action. Based on this, our next step is to hold an event with the goal of bringing these people together.

The *Amphibians in Focus* (ANFoCO) will be a space for connection and presentation of the main researches, actions and programs of amphibian conservation in Brazil. We intend it to be an open space for the presentation of successful experiences that can be replicated and, above all, an opportunity for the discussion and proposition of new ideas. We believe that working together is the best way to accomplish difficult tasks, and we hope that this event will be an important step to unite those involved with amphibian conservation in Brazil.

References

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Symposium *Regional Experiences of Amphibian Conservation in Brazil* (2015). Photo: CBH Archive.

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