

Toward a Global Crane Action Plan

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A global Crane Action Plan (CAP) is currently being developed under the auspices of the Species Survival Commission of the World Conservation Union (IUCN). The CAP will be published by the IUCN as the latest in a series of biodiversity conservation action plans for different taxonomic groups. The action plans are developed by the different specialist groups of the Species Survival Commission. The Crane Specialist Group is currently headed by Dr. George Archibald of the International Crane Foundation in Baraboo, Wisconsin, USA. Under Dr. Archibald's direction, and with the active participation and input of crane and crane habitat specialists from around the world, development of the CAP is now underway. The information, findings, and recommendations of this meeting of the European Crane Working Group will be vitally important as the CAP takes shape.

The CAP, as currently envisioned, will incorporate the following elements: a brief overview of the evolutionary history, distribution, ecology, conservation status, and conservation biology of the crane family; a review of the factors threatening cranes around the world; a description of the components of a comprehensive crane conservation program; an overview of the current captive breeding programs for cranes; species accounts (including current information on the conservation status, distribution, population, threats, conservation measures, captive breeding, and general conservation needs) for each of the world's 15 crane species; and priority conservation needs and specific recommendations at the national and international level.

The CAP will summarize current information on the status of cranes and their habitats, and communicate crane conservation needs to a broad audience of crane specialists, ornithologists, wetland ecologists and conservationists, agency officials, funding organizations, and the general public. By identifying specific conservation needs, the recommendations of the CAP will provide a blueprint for crane conservation activities around the world over the next decade. As such, the CAP will need to draw heavily on the information provided by European crane experts. This information will be coordinated with that provided by other crane working groups from around the world in assembling the global CAP. It is anticipated that the CAP will be in draft form by mid-1994, with publication following soon thereafter.