

# Amphibian Conservation Needs Assessment Workshop for the Caribbean Region

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In March 2011, Amphibian Ark staff facilitated two Amphibian Conservation Needs Assessment workshops in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. The first workshop, which also included the updating of many Red List Assessments, focused on species from Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Jamaica. The second workshop assessed amphibians from Puerto Rico and Cuba, plus a few species from the Lesser Antilles.

During the nine days, 16 field experts and observers worked with staff from the AArk, IUCN Amphibian Specialist Group, and Conservation International, with various sub-groups being formed as necessary to tackle multiple assessments at the same time.

Participants assessed 178 amphibian species for their conservation needs. Of these, 54 species occur in Haiti, 44 in the Dominican Republic, 24 in Jamaica, 62 in Cuba, 22 in Puerto Rico, and 6 in the Lesser Antilles. The assessment process resulted in the following recommendations (Table 1): 25 species are in need of *ex situ* rescue programs; 112 species could still be saved in the wild with *in situ* conservation action; 41 species require further *in situ* research to determine more about the species population status and/or the threats they face; 78 species are currently undergoing or are proposed for specific *ex situ* research that contributes to the conservation of the species or a related species; 90 species are suitable for either *in situ* or *ex situ* conservation education programs; and 26 species were recommended for cryopreservation. Only 12 species were not recommended for any conservation action. More detailed conservation action reports are available on Amphibian Ark's data portal ([www.amphibianark.org/assessmentresults.htm](http://www.amphibianark.org/assessmentresults.htm)). Additional field experts are needed to complete assessments for the



RAFAEL JOGLAR

The second Amphibian Conservation Needs Assessment workshop included participants with expertise in species from Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Lesser Antilles. Left to right: Sixto Incháustegui, Luis Díaz, Richard Gibson, Rafael Joglar, Kevin Johnson, Ariel Rodríguez Gómez, Alberto R. Estrada, and Craig Berg.

Lesser Antilles and Trinidad & Tobago. Data sheets will be updated as additional assessments are made.

Participants then discussed options for implementing the various conservation actions identified during the workshop. Volunteers were identified in each country to be the focal point for continued actions, assessment updates, and to encourage amphibian conservation activities. These persons are Susan Koenig and Iris Holmes for Jamaica, Rafael Joglar for Puerto Rico, Sixto Incháustegui for the Dominican Republic, Luis Díaz and Ariel Rodríguez for Cuba, Joel Timyan for Haiti, and Craig Berg and Richard Gibson for the Lesser Antilles (Grenada and Dominica, respectively).

The last day of the workshop was devoted to discussions of *ex situ* amphibian husbandry issues, with many examples of both simple and sophisticated facilities shown and discussed. Participants found this particularly helpful, and they gained many good ideas to put into practice at their own facilities.

### Acknowledgements

Adrell Núñez from the Parque Zoológico Nacional (ZooDom) and Miguel Landestoy provided an opportunity to experience a little of the local flora and fauna during the workshop. Several species of frogs, lizards, and snakes were observed during a nocturnal walk around ZooDom, a field trip to a wonderful cloud forest in the 23-km<sup>2</sup> protected area Reserva Científica de Ébano Verde, and a night-time trip to the Santo Domingo Botanical Garden. The Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund provided support for this workshop.



LUIS DIAZ

Participants at the joint Amphibian Red List and Conservation Needs Assessment workshop covering species from Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Jamaica. Standing left to right: Sixto Incháustegui, Craig Berg, Marcos Rodríguez, Luis Díaz, Joel Timyan, Cristian Marte, Richard Gibson, Iris Holmes, Eveling Gabot, Miguel Landestoy, and James Lewis; kneeling: Ariadne Angulo and Kevin Johnson.



MIGUEL A. LANDESTOY

The Jarabacoa Burrowing Frog (*Eleutherodactylus bothroboans*) from the Dominican Republic was until recently considered a subspecies of *E. ruthae*, which is Red-Listed as Endangered. Recommended actions include *in situ* conservation, *ex situ* research into breeding requirements, and conservation education.



MIGUEL A. LANDESTOY

The recommended action for the endangered Hispaniolan Wheeping Frog (*Eleutherodactylus minutus*) from the Dominican Republic is *in situ* conservation.



**Table 1.** Recommended conservation actions for Caribbean frogs.

<b>Haiti</b>	
Rescue	10 species
<i>In situ</i> conservation	41 species
<i>In situ</i> research	17 species
<i>Ex situ</i> research	20 species
Conservation education	20 species
Cryopreservation	10 species
No conservation action required	2 species
<b>Dominican Republic</b>	
Rescue	4 species
<i>In situ</i> conservation	29 species
<i>In situ</i> research	8 species
<i>Ex situ</i> research	17 species
Conservation education	20 species
Cryopreservation	4 species
No conservation action required	1 species
<b>Jamaica</b>	
Rescue	1 species
<i>In situ</i> conservation	4 species
<i>In situ</i> research	10 species
<i>Ex situ</i> research	6 species
Conservation education	6 species
Cryopreservation	1 species
No conservation action required	8 species
<b>Cuba</b>	
Rescue	3 species
<i>In situ</i> conservation	45 species
<i>In situ</i> research	8 species
<i>Ex situ</i> research	41 species
Conservation education	34 species
Cryopreservation	3 species
No conservation action required	1 species
<b>Puerto Rico</b>	
Rescue	7 species
<i>In situ</i> conservation	6 species
<i>In situ</i> research	1 species
<i>Ex situ</i> research	8 species
Conservation education	22 species
Cryopreservation	7 species
<b>Lesser Antilles (only 6 species assessed)</b>	
Rescue	1 species
<i>In situ</i> conservation	4 species
<i>Ex situ</i> research	2 species
Conservation education	5 species
Cryopreservation	1 species



RAFAEL JOGLEAR

The Puerto Rican Frog (*Eleutherodactylus coqui*) is of Least Concern on the IUCN Red List. Recommended actions include *ex situ* research (as this species is a good husbandry analog for other direct-developing species) and conservation education.



RAFAEL JOGLEAR

Recommended actions for the critically endangered Puerto Rican Bronze Frog (*Eleutherodactylus richmondi*) include rescue, *ex situ* research, conservation education, and cryopreservation.





JOHN BURNS

Male Ricord's Iguanas (*Cyclura ricordii*) can reach 485 mm SVL and 4.2 kg. The distinctive whorls around the tail easily distinguish these iguanas from sympatric Rhinoceros Iguanas (*C. cornuta*), even at a distance.