



The Biodiversity Research Group

Dr. Salit Kark

Email: [salit@hebrew.edu](mailto:salit@hebrew.edu)

Web page: <http://biodiversity-group.huji.ac.il/>

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## **Planning an Israeli Platform for Science-based Biodiversity Conservation - Final Report of Outputs**

**The initiative, which began in October 2009, is built of several main steps:**

- ✓ In October-November 2009, **we built the core team for the activity, which includes representatives selected from all the major conservation organizations in Israel (add link to participants webpage on site)** and from academic institutions. In October 2009, six people from the core team participated in the **DIVERSITAS** Open Science Conference entitled: “Biodiversity and society: understanding connections, adapting to change” in Cape Town. At the meeting, we met and recruited two additional members to the core team, who joined our activity. The conference enabled the core team to better learn the topic and its state at the international arena. Representatives of the delegation attended the meeting of representatives of DIVERSITAS National Committees. We presented at the meeting the current work on biodiversity conservation planning in the Mediterranean Basin (presented by Dr. Salit Kark).
  
- ✓ **Outreach:** Members of the core team discussed the conference and the lessons learned from DIVERSITAS with members **within and outside their organizations** in Israel and raised the topic of science-based conservation and its links to policy with multiple groups in Israel, including scientists, decision makers and the environmental community. We issued a summary from the meeting and distributed it among various organizations via the core team members (see web page for summary of DIVERSITAS conference). We also interviewed and discussed the topics with dozens of scientists, policy makers and practitioners in the field. As part of this phase

and the learning phase, we held **many personal meetings with major actors in Israel.**

- ✓ **Core team meetings were held** in December 2009, January 2010, February 2010 and April 2010, and an additional meeting will take place in October 2010. We issued summaries of all meetings of the core team. We also distributed questionnaires among the core team members about the science-policy-practice links in their organizations.
- ✓ **An international expert workshop** entitled “What is science-based conservation and how is it done best?” was held between 7-11<sup>th</sup> March 2010 in Ramat Hanadiv. We invited **nine leading international experts** (from the US, Europe, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand) that currently work in the field, and the full workshop was attended by the core team and a wider group of Israeli scientists, practitioners and policy makers (in total ~30 people were invited to the full workshop). **We also held an open conference day** entitled: Science-based conservation: Achievements, gaps and challenges, which was attended by ~140 people from various organizations and academic institutions in Israel. The workshop included a brochure, detailed program and web page.

**Workshop web page** with names and affiliations of participants and presentations:

<http://biodiversity-group.huji.ac.il/SalitKark/sciencebasedconservationworkshop.html>

Videos from keynote talks are available at:

[http://www.youtube.com/view\\_play\\_list?p=F4B7D36E3779A45D](http://www.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=F4B7D36E3779A45D)

**The videos** have been downloaded by ~1,800 viewers from around the world (Sep 2010) and generated much interest and many positive responses (summary of response emails are available).

**A Detailed workshop summary** has been written based on input from the invited participants and the Israeli core team and will be available on the website by the end of 2010 (see web page) . The core team held a meeting to summarize the workshop in April 2010.

**A summary brochure of the workshop and interim summary of activity** has been produced and was distributed to all attendants at the ISEES conference in June 2010 (to view the brochure online see web page).

Prior to the workshop, we invited for a 6-week **working visit two postdoctoral** fellows from The University of Queensland (Dr. Liana Joseph and Dr. James Watson), who worked with us to prepare the workshop, sent a summary, and worked on a model project of science-based conservation and linking scientists, practitioners and policy makers. This focused on a **Project Prioritization Protocol** for Ramat Hanadiv Park, based on their experience with such models in New Zealand, Australia, Galapagos and other places.

- ✓ A website containing information regarding the initiative's efforts and achievements, related publications and products, presentations and videos of talks from the workshop held in March 2010, and information about the state of biodiversity and conservation in Israel and elsewhere in the world is set to go online by the end of 2010 ([www.ScienceBasedConservation.co.il](http://www.ScienceBasedConservation.co.il)).
- ✓ Following his participation in the March 2010 workshop, Prof. Hugh Possingham of Australia published an article in the journal "Decision Point" in April 2010 (LINK). The article discusses the similarities and differences in the challenges facing conservationists in Israel and elsewhere, and in the approaches taken to solving these issues. A Hebrew translation of the article will be published in the Israeli journal "Ecology and Environment" in October 2010 (LINK).
- ✓ **Planning the platform and building a business/working plan.** This final stage of the first phase will include building an evidence-based proposal and detailed plan for a **science-based conservation initiative and platform in Israel**. This will include building an evidence-based proposal for the actions required for the actual makeup, content and structure of the platform in Israel. We are currently working on this phase and the report will be completed by the end of 2010.