

Conservation Needs Assessments for the threatened and endemic amphibians of Argentina

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Eleven years after the first Amphibian Conservation Needs Assessment Workshop was held in Argentina in 2010, a second workshop was held from August 2-6 this year, using a virtual format. This workshop focused on endangered and/or endemic amphibian species in Argentina.

Participants in the workshop included experts from all over the country, whose experience and knowledge contributed greatly to the assessment questions, objectively and consistently identifying priority species and immediate conservation needs for both *in situ* and *ex situ* actions. There are ten conservation actions which are not mutually exclusive, that can be attributed to each species: Rescue, *In Situ* Conservation, *In Situ* Research, Husbandry Research, Applied *Ex Situ* Research, Mass Production in Captivity, Conservation Education, Supplementation, Biobanking or No Action Required. These categories are generated from the information in each assessment, which includes the current conservation status, threats, presence in protected habit, previous *ex situ* management experience, potential population recovery capacity, and authorization to collect founder animals, if required.

During the workshop, fifty-four species were assessed by thirty-eight specialists, representing universities, non-government organizations and independent researchers. The assessments have now all been reviewed and approved for publication, with the conservation actions shown in Table 1 being recommended.

Some of the priority species being considered for *ex situ* programs include Darwin's blackish toad (*Melanophryniscus nigricans*), El Rincon Stream frog (*Pleurodema somuncurense*), Patagonia frog (*Atelognathus patagonicus*), *Alsodes neuquensis*, Rivera redbelly toad (*Melanophryniscus devincenzii*), *Melanophryniscus estebani* and Pehuenche spiny-chest frog (*Alsodes pehuenche*). It is worth mentioning that the first three species are already being managed in *ex situ* conservation breeding programs in Argentina, with all of them supported by the Amphibian Ark.



The Patagonia frog (*Atelognathus patagonicus*) is a high priority species for conservation action in Argentina, and is currently in a conservation breeding program. Photo: Federico Kacoliris.

Over the coming months, the conservation actions identified for each species will be compiled into a planning document, in order to have a summary and a template for developing an action plan and a research-needs guide for each of the evaluated species.

The Conservation Needs Assessments for Argentina, along with more information about the process itself is available on the assessment web site at www.conservationneeds.org.

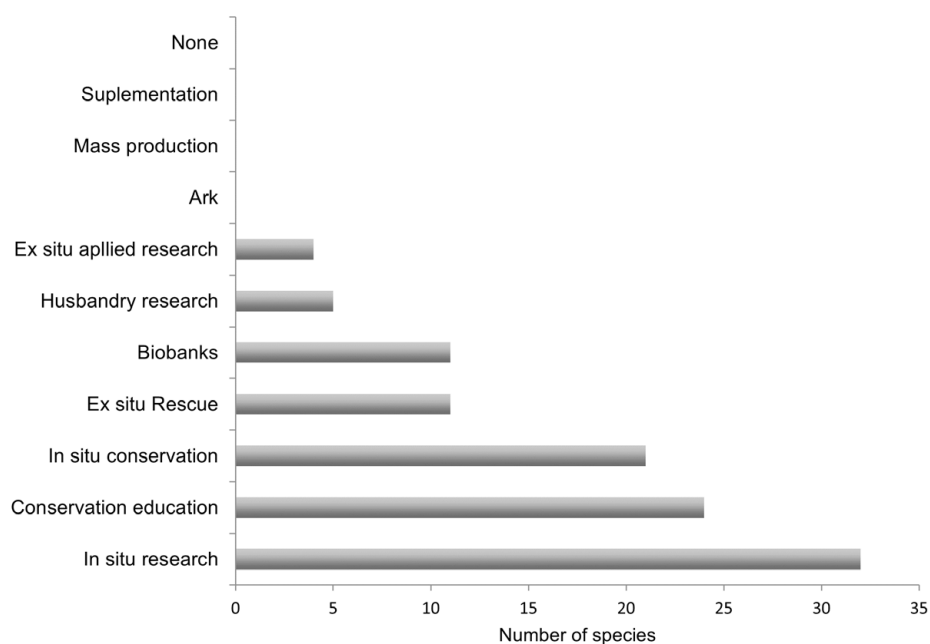


Table 1. Recommended conservation actions for endangered or endemic amphibians in Argentina.