

ATELOPUS SURVIVAL INITIATIVE



STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2025





1. THE ATELOPUS SURVIVAL INITIATIVE

In response to the harlequin toad crisis and the concern expressed by stakeholders regarding the lack of coordination and poor communication to effectively develop collaborative participatory conservation efforts to bring the amphibian genus *Atelopus* back from the brink of extinction, people and organizations from different countries have joined forces to establish the [Atelopus Survival Initiative \(ASI\)](#).

2. ASI VISION

Harlequin toads, flagship amphibians and jewels of the Neotropics, are conserved through the collaborative participation of stakeholders that produce baseline knowledge, mitigate the threats that affect the genus, and promote the cultural and biological importance of *Atelopus*.

3. ASI MISSION

Unite and mobilize a broad range of national and international stakeholders to implement substantial, long-term, range-wide conservation measures under the [Harlequin Toad \(*Atelopus*\) Conservation Action Plan \(HarleCAP\)](#) to prevent the extinction of the genus.

4. ASI GOALS

To achieve its Vision, the ASI has five main goals:

4.1. Collaborate and Share. Ensure ASI members have the technical, logistical, and financial support, collaboration, and participation to ensure long-term *Atelopus* conservation.

4.2. Learn and Understand. Gather scientific knowledge and information to guide *Atelopus* conservation in the wild and in captivity.

4.3. Protect and Conserve. Implement strategies to ensure harlequin toads remain stable in the wild, which includes creating innovative ways to address emerging infectious diseases like chytridiomycosis.

4.4. Breed and Secure. Build the capacity of range countries to maintain sustainable captive populations of threatened *Atelopus* species and do reintroductions where needed.

4.5. Educate and Elevate. Raise awareness and promote harlequin toads as the jewels of the Neotropics, recognizing their biological and cultural importance in local communities.

5. ASI PRINCIPLES

ASI members and activities are underpinned by four core values:

5.1. Diversity, inclusion, and justice. The ASI acknowledges the diversity of threats and solutions to *Atelopus* and therefore convenes members from different countries (the majority from South and Central America, where harlequin toads naturally occur), backgrounds, cultures, career stages, and gender identity. The ASI commits to give voices to traditionally marginalized groups like women, Indigenous and local communities, and younger generations, and encourages the inclusion and representation of these groups in leadership and decision-making.





5.2. Collaboration. Effective conservation depends upon collaboration among a diverse range of stakeholders. The ASI and its members commit to foster an environment of positive collaboration, healthy discussion, and desire to agree to disagree. Rather than isolated stars, the ASI forms a constellation of champions working together to save harlequin toads.



5.3. Communication and Coordination. The ASI appreciates and values the importance of effective and open communication as a critical step to ensure coordination of conservation efforts. Rather than replicating the wheel, the ASI promotes the sharing of lessons and expertise.

5.4. Sound Science. The ASI's work is guided by the best available science through the support and guidance of the [IUCN SSC ASG Atelopus Task Force](#) and its members, which are global experts in amphibian conservation and research.

6. THE HARLECAP

Developed collectively by ASI members, the [HarleCAP](#), published in August 2021, outlines range-wide conservation priorities and identifies needs at the local, national, regional, and international levels that should be implemented over the next 20 years (2021-2041) to save harlequin toads from the brink of extinction. The HarleCAP proposes concrete strategies to address *Atelopus* conservation through the joint development and implementation of management strategies and conservation actions inside and outside the natural range of harlequin toads. The HarleCAP represents the road map that will guide the implementation of *Atelopus* conservation actions by ASI members.

7. ASI STRUCTURE

The ASI is a group of committed individuals and organizations working together towards the same vision, mission, and shared goals under the guidance of the HarleCAP.

7.1. ASI members. People and organizations interested in collaboratively working to advance *Atelopus* conservation. ASI members are encouraged to be part of the ASI Thematic Working Groups.

7.2. ASI Thematic Working Groups. Following HarleCAP's priorities, the ASI has five Working Groups: *In Situ Conservation*, *Ex Situ Conservation*, *Infectious Diseases*, *Communications*, and *Funding*. Working Groups' specific roles and responsibilities are:

7.2.1. Guide and facilitate the implementation of the HarleCAP;

7.2.2. Support the updating of the HarleCAP when needed;

*7.2.3. Identify new challenges and opportunities for *Atelopus* conservation and recommend and develop strategies to address these challenges.*

7.3. ASI Coordinator. Serves as a liaison between all ASI members and acts as the public face of the ASI, ensuring that the ASI is advancing the HarleCAP implementation. ASI Coordinator's specific roles and responsibilities are:

7.3.1. Maintain, grow, and manage the ASI network;

*7.3.2. Facilitate communication between the *Atelopus* Task Force and ASI members, and between the ASI and its partners, supporters, and donors;*



7.3.3. Support the implementation of ASI's range-wide initiatives under the HarleCAP;

7.3.4. Track the implementation of the HarleCAP and the ASI Strategic Plan;

7.3.5. Promote the ASI to external audiences;

7.3.6. Support fundraising;

7.3.7. Report on activities to donors, partners and members.

7.4. Atelopus Task Force. Serves as the ASI's advisory body. Task Force members are also part of the [Amphibian Specialist Group](#) (ASG) of the IUCN's Species Survival Commission (SSC). Task Force's specific roles and responsibilities are:



7.4.1. Provide technical and scientific advice to the ASI;

7.4.2. Advise and support the ASI Coordinator in decision-making;

7.4.3. Facilitate and catalyze the implementation of the HarleCAP;

7.4.4. Promote the HarleCAP and the ASI;

7.4.5. Support ASG's priorities around Atelopus;

7.4.6. Ensure ASI goals and HarleCAP implementation are nested within the Global Amphibian Conservation Action Plan (ACAP);

7.4.7. Ensure the ASI Strategic Plan is adopted and followed.

8. ASI GOVERNANCE

Following the ASI values, the ASI coordinator, the Atelopus Task Force Co-coordinators and the ASI Thematic Group Leaders will be appointed promoting diversity and inclusion to achieve gender and regional equality and representativeness over time.

8.1. ASI membership. Attained by filling the ASI [Membership Form](#) either as individuals or organizations. Applications are reviewed by the ASI Coordinator and approval is based on applicant's interest and commitment to advancing ASI mission and vision. By joining the ASI, members agree to abide to the ASI values. ASI membership is free of charge and is not time-limited, although members that present unprofessional or unethical behavior can be expelled from the ASI.

8.2. ASI Thematic Working Groups. Each Working Group is led by 2-3 Leaders that are democratically chosen by its members. Leader terms are 3 years long and can be renewed (by its members) or terminated (by the Task Force) if Leaders repeatedly and consistently do not fulfill their roles.

8.3. ASI Coordinator. Appointed by the Co-coordinators in consultation with other members of the Task Force. When funds are available, the ASI Coordinator is a hired and paid position. The ASI Coordinator can be reappointed or have its term terminated by the Task Force if (s)he repeatedly and consistently does not fulfill their roles.

8.4. Atelopus Task Force. Composed by the Working Group Leaders and the ASI Coordinator, the Task Force is led by 2 Co-coordinators that are appointed by its members. To ensure ASI success, Task Force members will maintain regular and open communication with the ASI Coordinator, responding in a timely manner to her/his messages and requests, and attending all ASI Task Force



meetings. If Task Force members fail to engage with the ASI Coordinator or miss too many meetings without prior informing him/her, they might be removed from their position. Task Force Co-coordinator terms are 3 years long and can be renewed or terminated by the Task Force if Co-coordinators repeatedly and consistently do not fulfill their roles.

9. COMMUNICATIONS

ASI communication channels are essential to increase and improve communication between people working with *Atelopus* conservation, and to raise the profile of harlequin toads among the general public. These include website (www.atelopus.org), institutional email (info@atelopus.org), newsletter, mailing list, social media and events (workshops, symposia, courses, etc.). The ASI communication strategy is devised and led by the ASI Communications Thematic Working Group with its implementation driven by the ASI Coordinator. ASI communication outputs should be published in multiple languages, when possible, aiming at covering both internal (countries where *Atelopus* occur) and external (international) audiences. The three main ASI focal languages are Spanish, Portuguese and English.

10. FUNDING

The ASI is not responsible for securing funding to its members or for deciding how potential funds collectively received should be used. Rather, the ASI gives credibility to its members by providing recommendation letters, helping to review applications before submission, and sharing information on potential funding sources. Similarly, the ASI Coordinator, the Atelopus Task Force Co-Coordinators, and the ASI Funding Thematic Working Group do not decide where and how funding should be used or which ASI members should receive it, but they instead guide and help potential donors make informed decisions on how they would like to invest their funds.



Funds donated directly to the ASI (e.g., via website or through other means) are managed by Re:wild, who administers the funds free of charge. Re:wild will work with the ASI Coordinator and the Co-Coordinators of the Atelopus Task Force to use the funds to cover ASI's core costs (e.g. ASI Coordinator salary and website), unless specified differently by the funding source. When funds secured through the ASI surpass the core needs, the ASI Coordinator and the Atelopus Task Force will work collaboratively to identify other regional joint needs.

11. TRACKING PROGRESS/IMPACT

ASI progress and impacts are evaluated through a simple and dynamic monitoring framework to update the ASI, track the HarleCAP implementation, and keep priorities and strategies relevant, updating objectives and actions as threats and conservation successes evolve across the region.