



25<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING

**SSIG SAHEL & SAHARA  
INTEREST GROUP**

5 - 7 MAY 2026

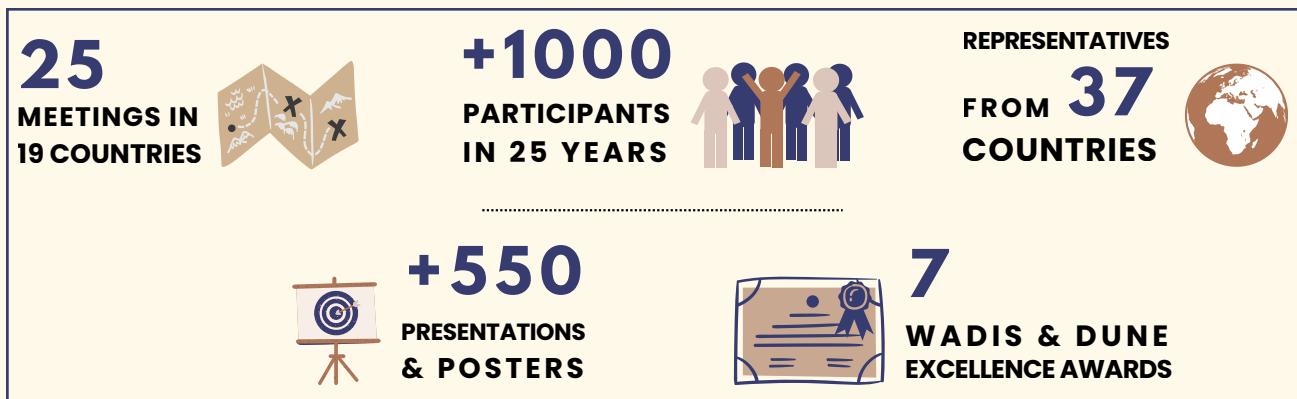
CAIRO, EGYPT



# The conference

The Sahel & Sahara Interest Group (SSIG) was established in 2000 following a meeting organized by the Convention on Migratory Species in Djerba, Tunisia. The workshop led to the creation of the SSIG as an informal action and information-sharing forum to guide and monitor conservation efforts across the region.

Over the past 25 years, it has become a key annual gathering for professionals working in environment, conservation, and sustainable development across North Africa, the Sahel, and the Middle East.



The SSIG over the years: 2000 – 2025

Facilitated by Sahara Conservation, the meeting fosters collaboration and shared solutions to improve outcomes for biodiversity and society across the Sahara and the Sahel, from grassroots conservation initiatives to influencing national and international policy and decision-making.

It also supports the next generation of change-makers by enabling emerging conservation researchers and practitioners to engage with established leaders. Participants include a diverse range of stakeholders, from universities and research institutions to NGOs, museums, zoological institutions, and statutory and intergovernmental agencies.

## CONFERENCE THEME

On the road to UNCCD COP 17, the 2026 SSIG conference will promote the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists.

Covering about half the world's land, rangelands are home to unique biodiversity and pastoral communities whose livelihoods depend on them.

The meeting will be structured around the following cross-cutting themes, focused on the Sahara and the Sahel:

- **Restoring species:** biology, management and recovery of threatened species.
- **Sustaining ecosystems:** sustainable management, restoration and conservation of protected areas, with a focus on desert and rangelands.
- **Human/wildlife interactions & ecosystems health:** complementary approaches for communities, wildlife and livestock in a desertification context.

# The objectives

## Assess progress and set priorities:

review ongoing initiatives, measure impact, and develop a shared roadmap for future actions.



## Strengthen regional cooperation:

foster collaboration and best practices among key actors in the fields of environment, conservation, and sustainable development.

## Advocate for sustainable policies:

raise awareness among decision-makers on biodiversity, desertification and climate resilience.

## Highlight local initiatives:

promote impactful community projects and strengthen local communities' capacities.

## Exchange knowledge and innovations:

share scientific advancements, technologies, and innovative solutions tailored for sustainable management.

# Sahara Conservation

Sahara Conservation is an international non-profit organization dedicated to conserving and preserving the unique ecosystems and landscapes of the Sahara and the Sahel. Since 2004, we have been implementing initiatives to protect the Sahara's natural and cultural heritage, including the protection and reintroduction of threatened species, habitat conservation, and the management of protected areas. Sahara Conservation is a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and is present in Chad, Niger, France, and the United States.

# Arab Network for Environment and Development

The Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED) is an international non-governmental organization established in 1990 and headquartered in Egypt. It is officially registered in the Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity since 2007. The organization operates throughout the Arab, Mediterranean and African regions, and focuses on environmental and sustainable development challenges, with emphasis on the Rio Conventions.

# The 2026 edition

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**This year's meeting is made possible thanks to the collaboration of the Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED), who will co-organize the event with Sahara Conservation.**

## CONFERENCE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- **Monday 4 May:** Arrival of participants
- **Tuesday 5 May:** Day 1 of the meeting
- **Wednesday 6 May:** Day 2 of the meeting - Gala dinner in the evening
- **Thursday 7 May: Day** 3 of the meeting - Optional visit to a cultural site

- Two full days of sessions (or two days and one morning)
- Two coffee breaks and one lunch per day
- A poster exhibition running throughout the conference
- Possibility for groups/projects to hold side meetings and closed sessions during the event

La conférence 2025

Pour sa 26<sup>e</sup> année, la réunion sera accueillie par la Direction Générale des Forêts de Tunisie (Ministère de l'Agriculture des Ressources Hydrauliques et de la Pêche Maritime) de Tunisie.

Pays engagé dans la protection de la biodiversité des milieux arides, la Tunisie fut le pays hôte par le passé à trois reprises : Souss en 2019,

## WADIS & DUNES EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Tout au long de l'événement, une exposition sera dédiée aux organisations et aux individus qui ont œuvré pour la biodiversité et le développement durable dans les zones arides et semi-arides. Les lauréats recevront des prix pour leurs contributions à la conservation, la restauration des écosystèmes et le développement durable dans les zones arides. Les trois organisations et quatre individus honorés pourront être cités pour leur engagement exceptionnel en matière de conservation de la biodiversité, de restauration des écosystèmes et de développement durable dans les zones arides.

Launched in 2025, the Wadis & Dunes Awards celebrate outstanding contributions to conservation, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable development in arid regions. Three organizations and four individuals were honored for their outstanding commitment to biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable development in arid regions.

The awards will continue to recognize visionary leaders, innovative organizations, and dedicated communities across the Sahel and Sahara.

In 2026, the Wadis & Dunes Excellence Awards will be presented during the gala dinner, creating a flagship moment to honour achievement, share inspiring stories, and highlight leadership in arid-land conservation.

# Costs and funding

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## Based on SSIG 2025 – 100 attendees

The overall cost of the event is estimated at USD 35,000 (see detailed chart below). Conference fees help cover about a third of these expenses.

To meet remaining costs, Sahara Conservation actively mobilizes sponsors and partners to support the organization of the meeting and help cover the participation of key individuals from Sahara and Sahel range states.

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ITEM	AMOUNT
Meeting rooms (auditorium / side meetings)	5,000 USD
Catering (5 coffee breaks / 3 lunches)	15,000 USD
Simultaneous interpretation	2,800 USD
Sound system	2,500 USD
Gala dinner (transportation / dinner)	4,000 USD
Communication & promotion	2,000 USD
Awards (handcraft artwork)	1,500 USD
Cultural visit (transportation / meals)	2,200 USD
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,000 USD</b>

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# Sponsoring packages

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As a sponsor or exhibitor, you will have the opportunity to feature your work and/or products to a vast audience of conservationists and researchers from diverse countries and organisations.

Your organisation will also have great exposure to the global marketing activities of the conference, such as website page and social media posts, providing you with a unique opportunity to reach a large international audience.

## Silver Sponsorship Package

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- Company logo featured on the event website
- Recognition in email communications sent to participants

**2,000 USD**

## Gold Sponsorship Package

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- Prominent display of the company's logo on the event website and across event signage
- Brand visibility in official email communications to participants

**5,000 USD**

## Platinum Sponsorship Package

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- Prominent display of the company's logo on the event website and across event signage
- Brand visibility in official email communications to participants
- Company logo featured on the awards presented to prize recipients, with on-stage acknowledgement during the gala evening
- Dedicated social media campaign before, during, and after the event

**7,000 USD**

# Contacts



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