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| **Muths, Erin L <muthse@usgs.gov>** |

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Dear Colleague,

In January, at the World Congress of Herpetology in New Zealand, we hosted a symposium and workshop, “Amphibian Conservation in the Anthropocene”, with the aim of identifying barriers and key uncertainties to conservation success and setting the stage for the identification of research priorities for amphibian conservation. The efforts by participants at the symposium were similar to the exercise that some of you participated in several years ago as part of a USGS Powell Center initiative identifying priority research for amphibian conservation.

We are preparing for the next step in this process – the scoring and ranking of proposed research questions. However, in organizing the submitted questions and writing instructions for ranking, we came to the realization that there was significant variation in phrasing among questions, enough variation that we are worried that scoring and ranking may depend on the format of the question, rather than the content of the question. To avoid this potential bias, we are asking you to take another look at the questions you proposed, and to revise them to a more standardized format.

Your question should take the form of:

[What/Where/How/When] + [Topic/Knowledge gap], at/in [Geographic scale], for [Species/Community], over [timescale]?

Your question does not need to exactly follow this format but should include these components; the elements in the brackets (e.g., what/where/how/when) are what you fill in.

For example:

Where should forest canopy closure be reduced to increase opportunities for basking to improve opportunities for clearing Bd infection, in the northeastern United States, for eastern red-spotted newts, over the next 3 years?

To reduce the number of questions that will need to be ranked, please send only your top two questions back. If you send more than that, we will keep only the first two you send.

Original Questions:

Question One

What is China's capacity for biobanking amphibians?

Please return your revised questions by 30 June 2020. We welcome your participation not only in the ranking process but also in authorship on the paper. To be included as an author, these criteria must be met: a person must 1) have contributed to the list of questions via the Powell Center or WCH, 2) participate in the ranking process by the due date (to be determined, likely fall 2020) and 3) read and comment on the forthcoming manuscript. All of these steps must be completed to ensure co-authorship.

With best wishes,

Evan Grant, Erin Muths, Staci Amburgey, and Brian Gratwicke