

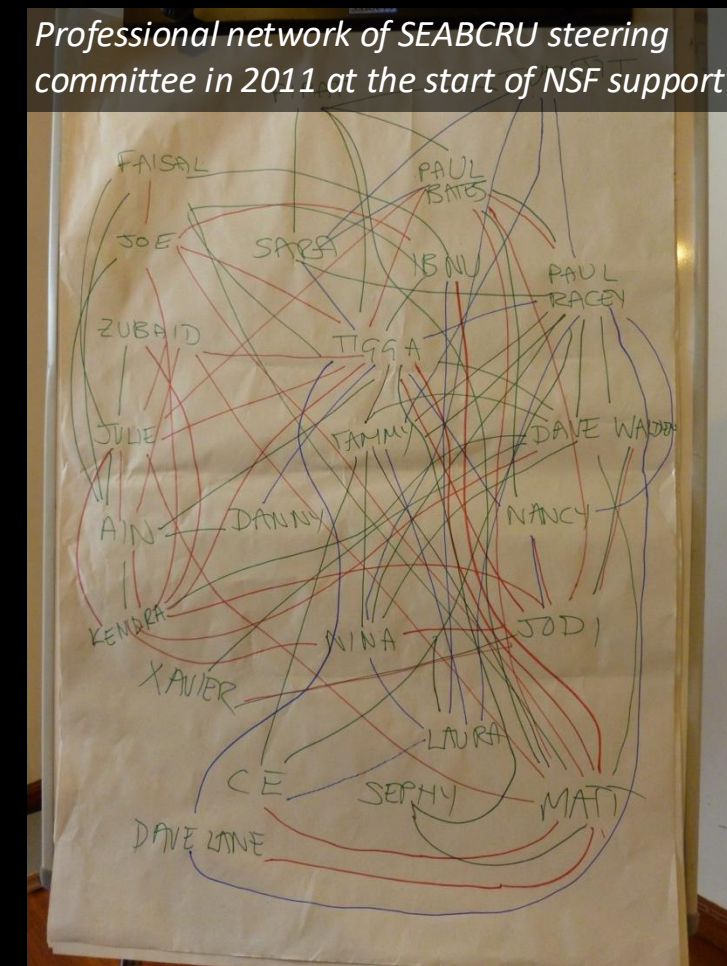
What is the SEABCRU?



SEABCRU is led by a steering committee of ~30 people drawn from 8 countries organized around research priorities and country representation

A network of researchers committed to the conservation of SE Asia's diverse but threatened bat fauna through research, capacity building and outreach. Founded in 2007 and received NSF (USA) support 2011-2019.

Sustainable networks are founded by well-connected actors. SEABCRU network structure (1) promotes cooperation and collaboration, (2) Accelerates knowledge transfer, (3) Fills capacity gaps, (4) Enables prioritization of effort.



What are SEABCRU priorities?



Flying fox conservation



Cave- and forest-dependent bat conservation



Research Priorities 2007-2015



Taxonomy and systematics

Cross-Cutting Research Priorities 2015 --



Environmental change and monitoring



Ecosystem services



Human-bat interactions

What do we do?

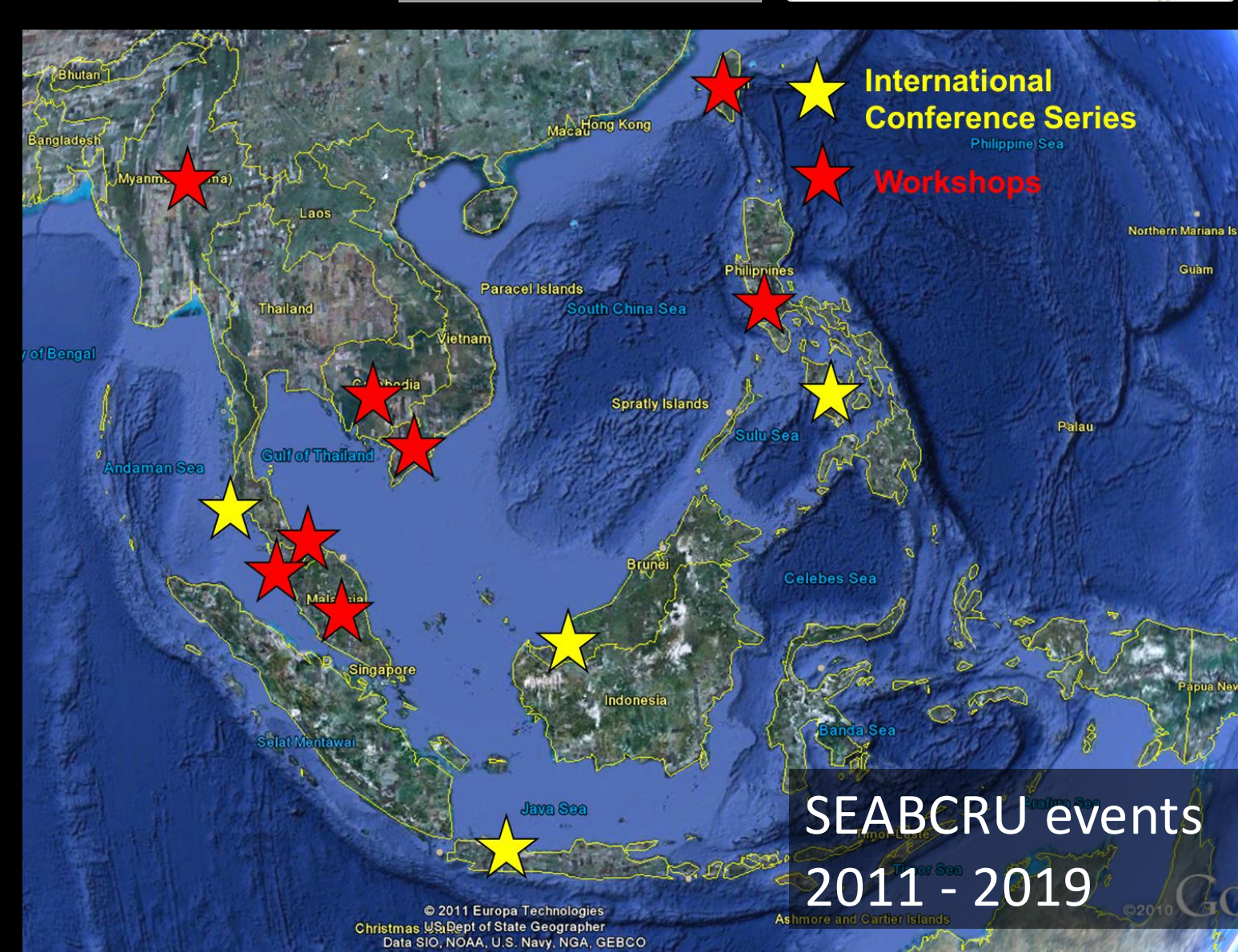
- Build research capacity through training workshops, share findings and network through international conference series



2014 Workshop in Vietnam – fieldwork ends with a song



- Develop and disseminate research protocols (e.g., flying fox monitoring, cave surveys, PPE for bat work).
- Develop and populate a database of bat occurrence data in DarwinCore format holding ~40,000 records



SEABCRU events 2011 - 2019

- Develop and disseminate outreach materials



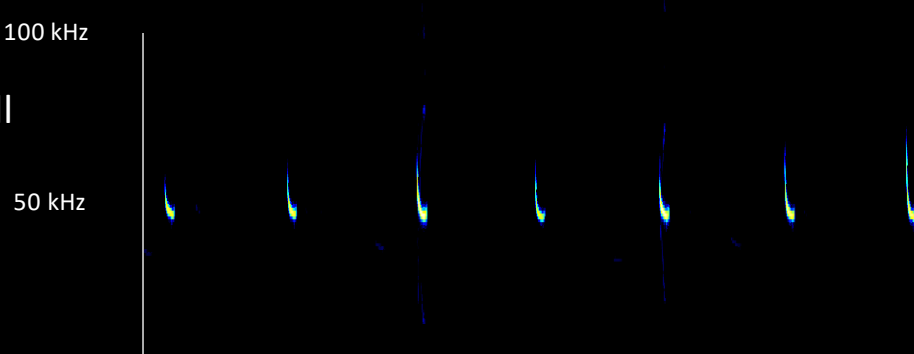
- Lever network to secure funding for multinational research in SEABCRU priority areas



"Implementation of acoustics to fill the gaps of bat biodiversity information for Southeast Asia" funded by GBIF 2019 – 2020



"Identifying and addressing factors contributing to flying fox trafficking in Southeast Asia" funded by USFWS 2017 – 2019.



Why is it needed?

Southeast Asia is a bat diversity hotspot - home to ~400 bat species--~30% of the world's bat fauna. Bats play critical ecological and economic roles as pollinators, seed dispersers and agents of pest suppression.



Cave nectar bat taking nectar from a durian flower. Bats are the only effective pollinators of durian - a USD 17 billion dollar global market. Photo: CC Merlijn Tuttle



Insectivorous bats eat tons of plant-hopper rice pests (below). Bats are critical for food security in the "rice bowl" of SE Asia. Photo: Hafiz M aka Jebat Jr



But extensive land-use change, widespread hunting and destruction of roosts threaten ~ 24% of species and the conservation status and population trends for many species are unknown.

Networking scientists accelerates regional bat conservation research: The Southeast Asian Bat Conservation Research Union (SEABCRU)

Tigga Kingston & The SEABCRU Steering Committee*

What is our impact?

- Over the last 15 years, more than 500 people have participated in SEABCRU events – four international conferences and eight workshops across seven countries.
- Doubling of bat research publications to > 60 per year
- Accelerated species discovery in SE Asia with > 40 species described in the last 15 years
- In-region scientists transitioned from junior to leadership roles in SEABCRU
- SE Asia now has a vibrant self-sustaining network of bat researchers

Acknowledgements



Dr. Tigga Kingston
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Co-Chair, IUCN SSC Bat Specialist Group
Founder of SEABCRU



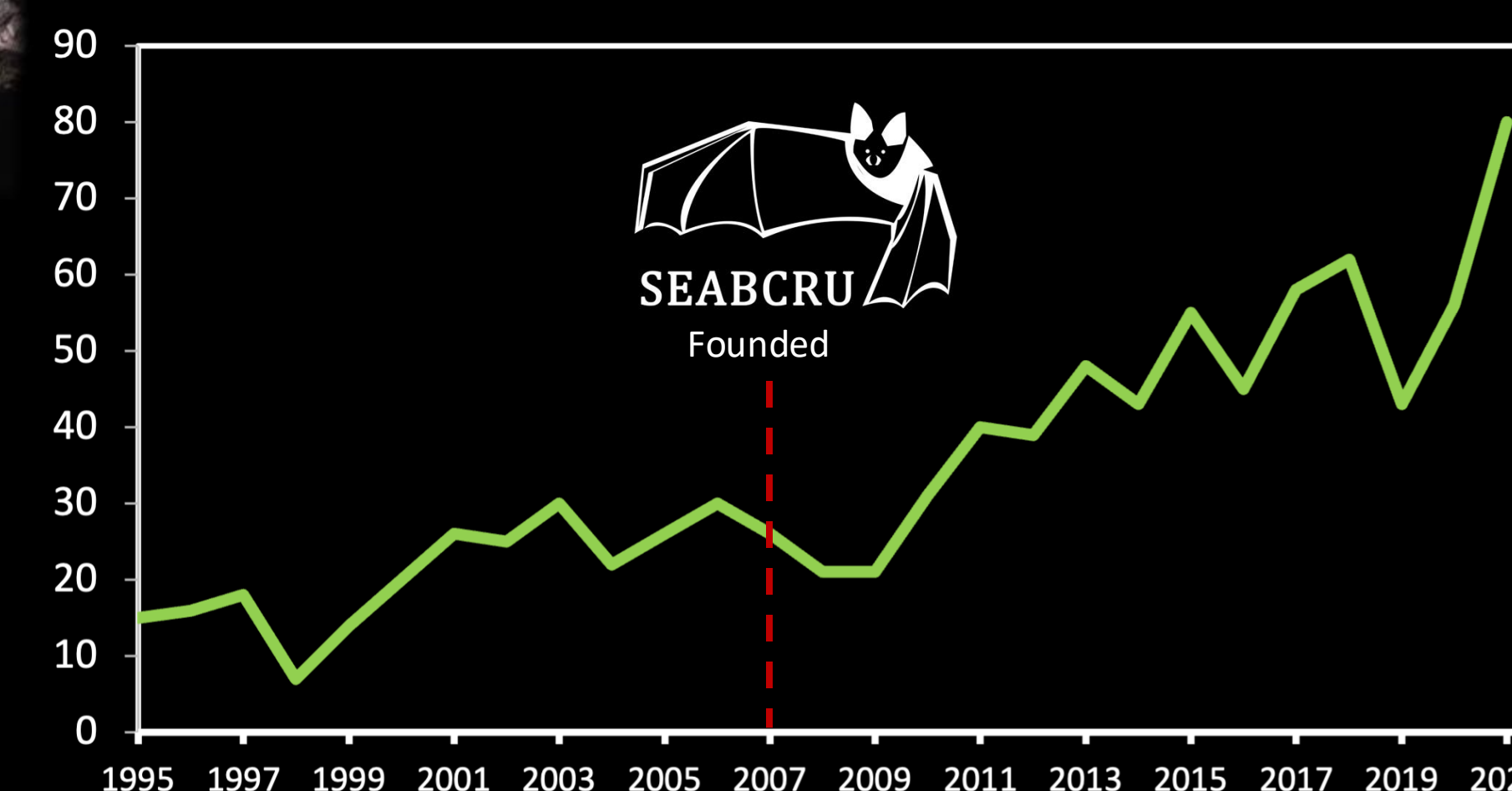
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4 of the 40+ new species of bats (L to R) *Eudiscoderma thongareae*, *Rhinolophus francisi*, *Murina balaensis*, *Hipposideros* (Photos – P. Soisook, T. Kingston)



Increase in number of publications on bats per year from 1995 – 2021