



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

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Agenda Item 9.d

SAHELO-SAHARAN ANTELOPES PROGRESS

1. The CMS/FFEM (Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial) project is a major ungulate conservation initiative to support implementation of the Sahelo-Saharan Antelope Action Plan, which was developed for French Government financing, and has been administered through CMS Secretariat. The FFEM funding of €1,385,000 was approved in April 2002, and the financing agreement between the CMS and the "Agence Française de Développement" was signed in the margins of the Agadir Workshop of May 2003.

2. The CMS/FFEM project is well under way, focusing on Mali, Niger and Tunisia as pilot projects with cross-cutting activities in a further four countries. Since its start at the end of 2003, several activities have been carried out in the different concerned countries with a focus on activities in Tunisia, Niger and Chad, since the preliminary surveys proved existence of residual populations of Sahelo-Saharan antelope in the wild in these countries.

3. The document CMS/StC28/12-E discussed under Agenda Item 7.0 of the 28th Session of the CMS's Standing Committee describes more closely the launch and the progress made for the CMS/FFEM Project. The present document is a follow up on progress made since then in the key range states for broad antelope rehabilitation.

CMS/FFEM Project in Mauritania, Morocco and Senegal:

4. These three countries are concerned with cross-cutting activities of the CMS/FFEM project with budgets respectively of €60,250, €30,250 and €15,250. As of 17 September 2007, the only recorded expenditure for these countries, relates to the regional training of February 2007, which took place in Tunisia, and for which officials from Morocco and Senegal were offered training led by the IRSNB.

5. However, during this period, technical support from the Project team was proposed to Mauritania and Morocco but this has not materialised yet. Contacts are still ongoing with Senegal to follow up on oryx reintroduction previously achieved.

CMS/FFEM Project in Mali:

6. The CMS/FFEM project in Mali was designed to be a large programme with an overall budget of €239,550 of which only €10,000 has been used for an inventory and study carried out in

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early 2005 by “l’Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage” (ONFCS). This inventory was about determining the status of conservation of *Gazalla Dama* in South Tamesna, Mali. Outcomes of the survey undertaken have proved the necessity to reallocate resources to remaining activities in key areas such as the Termit in Niger and the cross-border area with Chad. This was decided in cooperation with FFEM.

CMS/FFEM Project in Tunisia:

7. The CMS Secretariat signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the “Direction Générale des Forêts” in February 2005 for an amount of €465,500 aiming at the implementation of the CMS/FFEM Project in Tunisia.

8. As of 17 September 2007, 44% of the total budget of the MoU had already been committed to cover several clusters of activities that had been carried out so far. These activities include:

- (i) inventories (*Gazelle Leptoceros* phase I in April 2006 and phase II in September 2007, in Djebil, Senghar and Sidi Toui National Parks),
- (ii) ungulate re-introduction studies (The translocation feasibility study of Dr. Bertrand Chardonnet of November 2004 and other studies carried out by the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) in Djebil, Senghar and in Sidi Toui National Parks in January-July 2006 and in September-November 2007),
- (iii) the acquisition of two off-road vehicles for the CMS/FFEM project in Tunisia,
- (iv) translocation of 20 addax and 10 oryx antelopes with the technical support of “La Fondation Internationale pour la Sauvegarde de la Faune” (IGF), and
- (v) regional training sessions led by “l’Institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles de Belgique” (IRSNB) to officials from Range States’ Governments during the activities that took place during the successful February 2007 translocation of antelopes which takes on an essential symbolic benefit for Tunisia and international community for the conservation of nature.

9. In conformity with the Tunisian Strategy established in 2004 at the Douz meeting, this operation will allow the constitution of a meta-population of oryx and addax in Tunisia. It is seen as a first step to a full addax reintroduction in the wild from Djebil and Senghar national parks both of them open to the Tunisian desert area.

CMS/FFEM Project in Niger:

10. The CMS Secretariat signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the “Ministère de l’Hydraulique, de l’Environnement et de la Lutte Contre la Désertification” in August 2005 for an amount of €365,450 aiming at the implementation of the CMS/FFEM activities in Niger.

11. As of 17 September 2007, 98.9% of the total budget of the MoU had already been committed to cover almost all activities of the CMS/FFEM project in Niger. The Niger Programme was mainly about:

- (i) inventories (in Termit in 2004 and in Termit/Tin Touma in 2006-2007),

- (ii) a start-up workshop which was held in Termit in May 2006 which was a good opportunity for the project partners in Niger to meet each other and also to meet the local communities to have them involved in the SSA conservation process,
- (iii) a project of classification and management of the protected area Termit/Tin Touma led by the Sahara Conservation Fund (SCF),
- (iv) the acquisition of an off-road vehicle for the Niger National Coordination Unit,
- (v) a surveillance programme which will help Niger exert a dissuasive presence in and a surveillance of the protected area Termit/Tin Touma with the support of the pastoral communities.

This programme should effectively contribute to:

- (a) The total prohibition of hunting in the area,
- (b) The limitation of poaching in this region,
- (vi) a programme of follow-up of SSA activities in Niger, and
- (vii) the appointment of a volunteer from “l’Association Française des Volontaires du Progrès” (AFVP) to assist/support the Niger National Coordination Unit in its work on the CMS/FFEM project.

Follow up mission on “abusive hunting” in Niger

12. As per the request of the 31st Meeting of the CMS’s Standing Committee concerning “*Hunting of endangered antelope species in Tesker/Niger*”, the CMS organized two field missions to Niger to report and to witness devastation after the presumed abusive hunting reported in September 2006 to the Standing Committee. The first mission was made up of the CMS Scientific Council’s Chair, Mr. John Mshelbwala as well as Mr. Oteng-Yeboah the CMS Appointed Councillor (African fauna). The second mission was made up of partners to the CMS/FFEM Project (SCF, DFPP and others) as well as the CMS Ambassador, renowned author and journalist for the British newspaper “*The Independent*”, Mr. Stanley Johnson. The synoptic mission report is set as document CMS/StC32/Inf.3.

13. The main outcomes of the missions highlighted, on one hand the efforts made by the wildlife services of Niger to tackle illegal issues of antelopes and provide the best services for the conservation, at the extent possible. On the other hand, it was clear that the high political echelons of the country should also meet their obligations towards the conservation, particularly by ending any special authorizations to foreigner hunters from the African and Gulf regions. It also appeared necessary to re-enforce the capacity of the institutional wildlife bodies in the Ministry of Environment to allow a close surveillance and antelope protection.

14. As an urgent measure to establish a sustainable hunting regime for Niger, terms of reference for a study have been established by the Secretariat and discussed with the SSA WG representative on the CMS Scientific Council and the board of Directors of the Saharan Conservation Fund (SCF) and the International Council for Hunting (CIC) as partners. During the held meeting in June 2007, it was agreed to

- (i) finalise the TOR;
- (ii) elaborate a practical project in view of enforcing the wildlife service’s capacities in Niger and testing an efficient organization of hunting concessions in the eastern part of Niger; and
- (iii) in parallel continue the conservation process in the Termit area and the cross-border

region with Chad.

CMS/FFEM Project in Chad:

15. The CMS/FFEM project planned to have cross-cutting activities for Chad with a total budget of €50,000 which was fully used for the project “Prospecting of conservation priority zones for SSA and identification of conservation-development programmes in Chad” led by IRSNB.

16. The aerial survey demonstrated existence of addax populations in low numbers in Chad, which was a good incentive to make progress on a new cross-border project between Niger and Chad that has been accepted in early 2007 and funded by the European Commission.

New project to extend Sahelo-Saharan Antelopes protection and conservation:

17. A new project on the conservation of SSA in the Niger-Chad Cross border region was introduced by CMS to the European Commission and for which a Financing Agreement was signed between the European Commission/Office of Cooperation Aid (EC/AIDCO) and the CMS Secretariat. The total budget of the project amounts to €2,375,000 of which €1,900,000 (80%) is funded by the European Commission, €300,000 (12.63%) by the CMS/FFEM project, and other €175,000 (7.37%) will be covered by in-kind/in-cash contributions from CMS and from progressive fundraising activities to be led by CMS.

18. To relieve the growing burden of work on the CMS Secretariat, and considering the size and complexity of this new project, the CMS requested UNEP to establish a four-year Associate Programme Management Officer’s post at the L2 level; after short-listing and evaluation of applications, the selection was finalized and the newly appointed officer entered on duty in September 2007.

Action requested

The Standing Committee is requested:

- (a) As regards the initial SSA-CMS/FFEM Project, to acknowledge the progress made on this complex project and encourage range states to support its initiatives;
- (b) As regards the mission on abusive hunting in Niger, to endorse the conclusions and recommendations set in CMS/StC32/Inf.3;
- (c) Regarding the future steps towards eradicating illegal hunting, encourage the Secretariat to pursue the test under consideration for Niger; and
- (d) Concerning the new SSA-CMS/EC Project, to assist the Secretariat by encouraging donor Parties and other partners and stakeholders, with additional financial resources to implement the project as soon as possible.