



Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and their Habitats

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Agenda Item 7.0

REPORT OF THE INTERIM SECRETARIAT

(Prepared by the Interim Secretariat)

I HOSTING OF THE AGREEMENT

1. Following a decision of the First Meeting of the Parties to the Gorilla Agreement, the CMS Secretariat is acting as the Interim Secretariat (referred to simply as *the Secretariat* below) to the Gorilla Agreement. As no additional funds had been secured by either the CMS COP or the Gorilla Agreement MOP, coordination of the Agreement continues to be done by existing CMS staff in addition to their regular duties.

2. In addition to the time spent by the Executive Secretary, the Deputy Executive Secretary and the Agreements Officer, a consultant provided assistance between March 2010 and October 2011, funded by Monaco and Germany. The German government agreed to fund a position in the CMS Secretariat from late 2011 until 2014. The officer will spend part of their time supporting the implementation of the Gorilla Agreement.

II MEETINGS OF THE AGREEMENT

First Meeting of the Parties (MOP1)

3. The First Meeting of the Parties took place in Rome, Italy, in the margins of the CMS Conference of the Parties, in December 2008. MOP1 designated the CMS Secretariat as the Secretariat of the Gorilla Agreement and established the Technical Committee. It adopted four Action Plans for the conservation of the different gorilla species, and adopted a resolution on a monitoring and reporting system for the Agreement. The full report of the meeting can be found at [UNEP/GA/MOP2/Inf.9](http://www.unep.org/ga/mop2/inf9).

***Ad hoc* meeting in Frankfurt am Main, Germany**

4. In June 2009, in the margins of the Frankfurt Gorilla Symposium, an *ad hoc* meeting of Agreement stakeholders, including representatives of several Range States and major NGOs took place. The main outcome was an agreement that the CMS Scientific Council Working Group on Terrestrial Mammals would act as the interim Technical Committee until the formation of the Gorilla Agreement Technical Committee was complete.

First Meeting of the Technical Committee

5. The First Technical Committee Meeting took place in Kigali, Rwanda, on March 29-30, 2011, at the kind invitation of the Rwandan Minister of Environment and Lands, H.E. Mr. Stanislas Kamanzi. Besides reports by the Range States and the Secretariat, the main issues discussed were: wildlife law enforcement; reporting on the implementation of the Agreement's Action Plans; and the appointment of three additional experts to the Technical Committee. The report of the meeting is available at [UNEP/GA/MOP2/Doc.9](#).

6. The following action points arose from the meeting:

6.1 National Reports:

The Interim Secretariat to draft a format for national reports, to which Parties then provide their feedback. The format will be considered by the Second Meeting of the Parties.

6.2 Identification of Experts for the Technical Committee (TC):

Party and non-Party TC members to propose suitably qualified experts in the areas of Forest management and conservation; environmental law; and wild animal health. Proposed candidates will be considered and nominations made at the Second Meeting of the Parties.

6.3 Wildlife Law Enforcement:

The Secretariat was to contact several wildlife law enforcement bodies, including the International Consortium Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), the CITES MIKE (Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants) programme and the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC), to discuss possibilities of aligning work plans, sharing information and synergizing activities.

III ACTION PLANS

7. Under the provisions of Article VIII of the Agreement, the CMS Secretariat, together with the Range States and international experts, developed Action Plans for all four gorilla subspecies, based on existing IUCN great ape action plans. These were then adopted, subject to amendments, by the First Meeting of the Parties Rome in 2008. The final versions are available as [UNEP/GA/MOP2/Inf.7.1](#) - 7.4.

8. While aspects of the Action Plans have been addressed through the projects and activities mentioned in this report, a lack of funding for the Agreement has made it difficult for the Secretariat to drive further implementation. However, it is expected that Range States and NGOs operating within their borders will have undertaken a number of the actions listed here.

IV ACTIVITIES

Year of the Gorilla Campaign

9. The CMS Secretariat designated 2009 as the "Year of the Gorilla" in order to promote the Gorilla Agreement and increase visibility for gorilla conservation.

10. The Secretariat allied with the UNEP-led Great Ape Survival Partnership (GRASP) and the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) for the campaign. These partners were key in reaching out to governments, the NGO community and the general public. The campaign catalyzed over 100 related activities, undertaken by the Interim Secretariat, Parties and partners.

11. The dedicated website www.yog2009.org was one of the campaign's main information tools, along with a blog, bilingual posters, leaflets, a desk diary, stickers and pins. In all, over 70,000 items were printed by CMS, reaching an estimated audience of 300,000. An additional 50,000 promotional products, carrying the YOG logo, were produced by affiliated zoos and other organizations, reaching an additional 50,000 people. The campaign prompted 120 press articles in English in 2009 alone, in addition to over 75 articles in French, German and Spanish.

12. Campaign partners also created key reference materials, including the GRASP Rapid Response Assessment report "*The Last Stand of the Gorilla: Environmental Crime and Conflict in the Congo Basin*", financed by France and UNEP, and the WAZA education manual entitled "*All About Gorillas*".

13. Mr. Ian Redmond proved to be a very active campaign Ambassador, undertaking a *State of the Gorilla Journey* through seven of the ten Range States in late 2009, writing a blog about the journey, as well as undertaking a lecture tour of the United States of America, and numerous other appearances and media interviews.

14. A major scientific symposium on gorillas was organized by the German Government in June 2009, resulting in the "Frankfurt Declaration" (see [UNEP/GA/MOP2/Inf.6](#)), which outlined the main threats faced by gorillas and suggested ways to address them. In addition to the support of the 160 stakeholders present at the symposium, the Declaration has been subsequently endorsed by FAO, CBD and UNESCO.

15. More details on activities undertaken during the campaign can be found in [UNEP/GA/MOP2/Inf.4](#).

16. During the Year of the Gorilla, €100,000 was raised for selected field projects, including:

- a) Fuel-efficient stoves: a Gorilla Organisation project supported with funds raised during a US lecture tour by Mr. Ian Redmond for the YoG (~ €14,000). The project supplied stoves which use up to 70 percent less fuel to local communities around the Virunga National Park, thereby helping mitigate deforestation. The funds were sufficient to cover project expenses for one year.
- b) PALF (Project to Apply the Law on Fauna): Wildlife Law Enforcement project in the Republic of Congo, received funds raised during the YoG (€5,340) as well as a voluntary contribution from Monaco (€5,000) and a contribution from a WAZA partner zoo (€3,900).
- c) A WCS Project aimed at promoting community involvement in Cross River Gorilla conservation (€13,000 raised by WAZA).
- d) A German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ) project aimed at improving surveillance and monitoring of Eastern Lowland Gorillas (voluntary contribution of €50,000 by Germany plus €6,000 raised by a WAZA zoo).

17. In addition, there were a number of small fundraising initiatives by individuals.

18. An independent evaluation of the YoG and other CMS species campaigns was commissioned by the CMS Secretariat. In addition to the results reported above, it concluded that the campaign was very effective at raising awareness on gorillas and the threats they face, and that the success of the campaign was especially pronounced when measured against the limited resources available. However, it noted that most activities focussed more on audiences in the western world, and that the goal of generating significant funds for field projects within a one-year time frame, with limited staff, was unrealistic. Nevertheless, the focus on a few “priority projects” was deemed useful for awareness raising and sparking media interest. The full evaluation report is available at [UNEP/GA/MOP2/Inf.5](#).

V FINANCES

19. As agreed at the First Meeting of the Parties, each Party is expected to pay an annual subscription of €3,000. To date only one Party has complied: the Government of Rwanda, has paid for both 2009 and 2010. Invoices were sent to Parties in March and July 2010. As a result of the non-payment by most Parties, the Agreement activities have, to date, been funded entirely from contributions from donors.

20. The CMS Standing Committee, at its 37th Meeting in November 2010, expressed concern at the apparent lack of commitment shown by the Gorilla Agreement Parties, as evidenced by the non-payment of overdue contributions. They noted that this situation could be very discouraging to potential donors asked to contribute funds to an initiative to which the Range States themselves had yet to demonstrate a firm commitment. The Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee sent a letter to all Range States that same month, urging Parties to pay their contributions, and urging non-Parties to accede to the Agreement.

21. The Agreement has received grants from Monaco and Germany, both for meetings and for field activities. In late 2010 and early 2011, a German grant of €23,400 enabled the Agreement to support another wildlife law enforcement project, this time in Gabon. The project *Conservation Justice* is conducted according to the same principles as the PALF project supported during the Year of the Gorilla. The Secretariat, on behalf of the Parties to the Gorilla Agreement, thanks these donors and specifically looks to governments and organizations to sponsor and promote activities aimed at implementing the Agreement’s Action Plans further.

22. The Secretariat urges Parties to pay their contributions as soon as possible. Full details of the financial situation are outlined in the Financial Report and Budget.

VI RECRUITMENT OF NEW PARTIES

23. Following the First Meeting of the Technical Committee Meeting, Uganda and several other non-Party Range States expressed an interest in learning more about the accession process. Assistance has been provided to all accession efforts. On the occasion of the African pre-COP workshop, which took place from 26-28 October 2011 in Entebbe, Uganda, the Minister of State for Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage, H.E. Mr. Agnes Akiror, was personally briefed on the accession to the Agreement by the Executive Secretary, Ms. Elizabeth Mrema.