



Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and their Habitats of the Convention on Migratory Species

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THIRD MEETING OF THE PARTIES
Entebbe, Uganda, 18-21 June 2019

REPORT OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE PARTIES

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1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The Third Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to the Gorilla Agreement was opened on 18 June 2019 at 9:20 am. The Parties represented at the meeting were: the Central African Republic (CAR), Congo (Brazzaville), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Gabon, Nigeria, and Uganda. Cameroon, a non-Party Range State, also attended the meeting. The List of Participants is attached as an annex to the present report.
2. Ms. Clara Nobbe (Interim Secretariat) delivered opening remarks on behalf of the Acting Executive Secretary of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), Ms. Amy Fraenkel. Ms. Nobbe recalled that gorillas had been on the CMS Appendices since 1979 when CMS Parties listed Eastern Gorillas on Appendix I, the same year the Convention was signed. Following the listing of the Western Gorilla in 2005, the Gorilla Agreement was concluded in 2007. She further recalled that the fundamental principle of the Agreement was to take co-ordinated measures to maintain gorilla populations in or to restore them to a favourable conservation status. The importance of cooperation for gorilla conservation was seen in the example of the increase in the Mountain Gorilla population in the Virunga Massif. She stressed that without the joint efforts of the Governments of the DRC, Rwanda and Uganda, this success would not have been possible. Referring to the preparatory process for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, she invited Parties, Range States and other stakeholders to reflect on the progress over the past decade and to strategize on future actions to further improve conservation actions on gorillas.
3. H.E. Prof. Ephraim Kamuntu, Senior Minister for Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, Government of Uganda delivered his opening remarks welcoming delegates to the meeting. He recalled that the Constitution of Uganda obliged the State to protect, preserve and conserve wildlife for present and future generations. He highlighted socio-economic benefits that conservation activities could bring to society, stressing that wildlife tourism alone accounted for nine per cent of total GDP in Uganda. In this regard, it was a moral, constitutional, cultural and economic imperative to conserve gorillas. Highlighting the increase of Mountain Gorillas in Virunga massif, he stressed the importance of regional cooperation between the DRC, Rwanda and Uganda. He reiterated commitments to CMS and the Agreements including the Gorilla Agreement and the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA). In concluding, he thanked the Parties, the Interim Secretariat and the Government of Luxembourg, which had provided financial support to the meeting.

2. ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

4. The Interim Secretariat referred to document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.2 and introduced the proposed amendments to Rules 6, 7 and 21. These changes were proposed so that the MOP would have an intersessional representative body. The Interim Secretariat then invited the meeting to consider the adoption of the Rules of Procedure for this and future meetings.
5. The Meeting adopted the Rules of Procedure as contained in document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.2 without any additional changes. The revised Rules of Procedure are contained as an annex to this meeting report.

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

6. The Meeting elected Dr. Akankwasah Barirega (Uganda) as Chairperson and Ms. Aimee Mekui Allogo (Gabon), as Vice-Chairperson.

4. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. The Chairperson introduced documents UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.4.1: *Provisional Agenda* and UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.4.2: *Provisional Annotated Agenda and Meeting Schedule*.
8. The Meeting adopted the Agenda by consensus and took note of the Annotated Agenda and Meeting Schedule as the guiding document for the organization of the meeting.

5. REPORT ON CREDENTIALS

9. The Chairperson recalled that Rule 3 of the Rules of Procedure provided for the establishment of a Credentials Committee of no more than five members.
10. The following Parties were elected to serve on the Credentials Committee: the CAR, the DRC and Nigeria.
11. On the first day, the Credentials Committee made its interim report to the Meeting and stated that three credentials had been received from the CAR, Congo and Nigeria and they were found to be in order. The Committee encouraged Parties that had not done so to submit their credentials at their earliest convenience.
12. At the invitation of the Chairperson, the Credentials Committee made its final report to the Meeting on the third day of the meeting. The Committee reported that four credentials had been received from the CAR, Congo, Nigeria and Uganda. All four credentials were found to be in order. As per Rule 9.2, the meeting had attained a quorum.

6. ADMISSION OF OBSERVERS

13. The Chairperson referred to document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.6: *Admission of Observers* and invited Parties to express any objections.
14. In accordance with Rule 2 of the Rules of Procedure, all observers registered for the meeting were admitted.

7. REPORTS AND STATEMENTS FROM PARTIES AND RANGE STATES

15. The Chairperson invited Parties, followed by non-Party Range States to present opening statements. He reminded the meeting that Parties would have another opportunity to report on the implementation of the Action Plans under Agenda Item 13 and requested them to keep interventions concise.
16. The representative of Gabon noted that the previous national focal point for the Gorilla Agreement had been appointed as the Minister of Water and Forestry and the Government was going through the process of handing over the work related to the Gorilla Agreement to a new national focal point. The Government had been reviewing the national legislation to reflect the Gorilla Agreement in national legislation along with other international instruments. Recalling that the Minister of Uganda had referred to economic benefits through gorilla tourism, she noted the need for income generation from tourism in Gabon. Gabon stated that human-wildlife conflicts with gorillas and elephants continued to be a challenge in the country.

17. The representative of the CAR informed the meeting that Mr. Nestor Waliwa would be the new national focal point. The previous year, the Government had ratified CMS, the Gorilla Agreement and AEWA. The gorillas were found in the Sangha trinational transboundary area between the CAR, Cameroon and Congo. The Government had been working on the conservation of their habitats under the programme for protecting primates. This conservation programme had been important for eco-tourism. He noted that poaching continued to be a challenge.
18. The representative of Congo informed the meeting that Mr. Freddy Elion Mpan would be the new national focal point for the Gorilla Agreement. He described work on a gorilla sanctuary, which was to receive orphaned gorillas. The Government had set up a patrol mission to monitor poaching activities. The Government had also worked with communities to establish a monitoring programme. Poaching, however, remained to be a major issue.
19. The representative of the DRC stated that the country had two gorilla sub-species: Mountain Gorillas and Eastern Gorillas. Despite the successful conservation outcomes in Virunga, threats still existed for the species. He noted that communities living near Virunga suffered from poverty and the park remained to be the only resource available for them. He stated that gorillas had created problems for agricultural activities, along with other species such as elephants and buffalos. An electronic enclosure had been placed to reduce human-wildlife conflicts. It had become compulsory to carry surgical masks to prevent the transmission of diseases from humans to gorillas. Recently, a commission for Ebola had been established and the Government had been working with the Gorilla Doctors. Regarding financing, the DRC had been allocating one per cent of its national budget for conservation. In concluding, he stated that the lack of information over several places inhabited by gorillas was a challenge for the conservation.
20. The representative of Nigeria thanked the Government of Uganda and the Interim Secretariat for convening the meeting. As detailed in the National Report, Nigeria was home to Cross-River Gorillas, which was the most threatened gorilla sub-species. The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) had done a great deal of work to preserve gorillas. The revised regional action plan drafted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) had been developed to stabilize the gorilla populations. The Government had been working with communities on activities such as awareness-raising. Nigeria had been working with Cameroon on transboundary cooperation for the conservation of Cross River Gorillas. The rangers from Cameroon and Nigeria had been working together to address insecurity. Since 2015, there had not been any case of gorilla killings. He noted that it would be important to ensure funding for the conservation of Cross-River Gorillas.
21. The representative of Uganda stated that it translated the Gorilla Agreement into actions through its management plans. For the Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Area, the General Management Plan (2014-2024), which outlined six programmes, implemented the Gorilla Agreement: resource conservation and management; research and monitoring; community conservation; tourism; park operations and administration; and regional collaboration. By law, 20 per cent of tourism revenue had to be shared with the communities. He noted that conservation without tangible benefits to people would be irrelevant. As a challenge to the conservation of gorillas, he referred to infrastructure development.

22. The representative of Cameroon stated that Mr. Joseph Lekealem had been appointed as the national focal point and it was hoped to actively engage in the Gorilla Agreement. The Government had made considerable efforts together with Nigeria for the conservation of Cross River Gorillas. Cameroon was in the process of signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Nigeria for the management of the transboundary area. He further stated that three sanctuaries had been gazetted. The loss of habitat was a crucial issue although poaching continued to be a threat to gorillas. Referring to human-wildlife conflicts, he stated it would be necessary to develop income-generating activities for the community to protect gorillas. He concluded the statement by reconfirming the commitment to work with the Gorilla Agreement Parties and the Interim Secretariat.

8. REPORT OF THE INTERIM SECRETARIAT

23. The Interim Secretariat introduced document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.8: *Report of the Interim Secretariat*, presenting the work conducted during the intersessional period. Key elements included the following:
- i. Progress in the implementation of the Programme of Work:
 - The Second Meeting of the Technical Committee did not take place due to the lack of financial and human resources;
 - The Third Meeting of the Parties had been postponed until 2019 due to the lack of financial and human resources;
 - The Interim Secretariat maintained the Gorilla Agreement website as an in-kind contribution from the CMS Secretariat;
 - Small-scale projects were supported by voluntary contributions to support the implementation of the Agreement.
 - The contribution from the Government of Monaco amounting to € 15,000 was still available for project activity.
 - ii. Progress in the Implementation of the Resolutions adopted at MOP2
 - Resolution 2.1: The Interim Secretariat supported Uganda to accede to the Agreement. In 2014, Uganda became the 7th Party. The Interim Secretariat engaged in a dialogue with the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) and the Working Group on Great Apes established by the 69th Standing Committee meeting of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).
 - Resolution 2.2: The Interim Secretariat made efforts to collect arrears as detailed in document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.18. The Interim Secretariat issued invoices in 2014 and 2016. At CMS COP12, CMS Parties were invited to provide contributions to the Gorilla Agreement and the Government of Luxembourg generously contributed to the organization of MOP3.
 - Resolution 2.3: The CMS Secretariat continued serving as the Interim Secretariat during the intersessional period. Document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.17 presents future options as requested by the Resolution.
 - Resolution 2.4: The Interim Secretariat issued notifications on the development of Action Plans. The Interim Secretariat worked with the GRASP Secretariat to enhance cooperation. A proposal for strengthening cooperation was circulated to the Gorilla Agreement Parties in 2015.

24. The Chairperson thanked the Interim Secretariat for providing the secretariat services to the Agreement despite financial challenges and thanked the CMS Parties for providing in-kind contributions to the Gorilla Agreement.

9. REPORT OF THE DEPOSITARY

25. The Interim Secretariat introduced document UNEP/GA/MOP2/Doc.9: *Report of the Depositary*. It was recalled that the CMS Secretariat was the legal depositary for the Gorilla Agreement, and it was currently also acting as the Interim Secretariat. Uganda had acceded to the Agreement in 2014 and as of 1 April 2019, seven Parties had joined the Agreement: the CAR, Congo (Brazzaville), the DRC, Gabon, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Uganda. The Interim Secretariat would provide support to non-Party Range States for their accession processes.

10. REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

26. The Chairperson reminded the Meeting that due to the lack of financial and human resources, the Second Technical Committee meeting had not been held and consequently, no report from the Technical Committee had been submitted to the Meeting. The Report of the First Meeting of the Technical Committee held in 2011 had been submitted as information document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Inf.12.
27. The representative of Congo stated that the issue of the Technical Committee remained to be discussed. He stated that it was the Parties' responsibility to ensure the functioning of the Technical Committee. Invited by the Chairperson, the Interim Secretariat clarified that the issue would be discussed under Agenda Item 15 as the Interim Secretariat had made a proposal as part of enhanced cooperation with the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP).
28. The Chairperson further clarified that the Technical Committee was still in place in line with the Gorilla Agreement Article VI, but no meetings had been convened during the intersessional period.

11. REPORTS FROM OBSERVERS

29. The Chairperson invited representatives of international organizations and observers from non-governmental organizations to give brief opening statements and reports on their activities relevant to the Gorilla Agreement.
30. The secretariat of the Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration (GVTC) stated that the Virunga Landscape had a transboundary nature and it had been established through the cooperation among the DRC, Rwanda and Uganda. He further informed the meeting that a presentation on its activities would be made in the margins of the meeting.
31. The United Nations Environment Programme / GRASP thanked the Chairperson and informed that further details of its activities would be presented to the meeting under Agenda Item 15.
32. The Mbarara University of Science and Technology stated that the university had been working on training especially in the Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Area. The university had been conducting a census of the gorilla population in Bwindi.

33. The representative of Conservation Through Public Health (CTPH) stated that its main programme was in Bwindi. She then posed a question to the delegates from Nigeria and Cameroon regarding the possibility of tourism to better conserve Cross River Gorillas. In concluding, she invited delegates and observers to attend the Second Congress of the African Primatological Society. The Congress aimed to support African primatologists and the call for papers for the conference would start in September 2019.
34. The Gorilla Doctors said that the organization had started its work in 1998 as often gorillas were affected by snares which were put out to trap antelopes and monkeys. The Gorilla Doctors had adopted the policy to intervene only when the issues were human-induced. However, this policy had changed over the years and now the organization was also interfering when there was a health issue which was threatening the population but not human-induced.
35. The Gorilla Organization stated that it worked in Uganda, Rwanda and Congo. It focused on food security and awareness-raising activities on conservation. Seven projects had been implemented to improve food production with communities. Another project was being implemented to promote sustainable consumption, focusing on awareness-raising and education. The organization also worked on the conservation of elephants, for example preventing human-wildlife conflicts using beehives.
36. The representative of the International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP) said that it aimed to secure the future of Mountain Gorillas in Uganda, Rwanda and the DRC. Since its inception, IGCP had been working to improve the livelihoods of neighbouring communities as well as to increase the population of gorillas. IGCP developed and implemented in collaboration with partners the ranger-based monitoring programme for cross border monitoring of gorillas. The organization also worked on community conservation projects to mitigate human-wildlife conflict. It also had a project to use mobile technology to report human-wildlife conflicts to the park authorities. He concluded by stating that IGCP was committed to work on gorilla conservation and work harmoniously with relevant partners.
37. The representative of the IUCN explained that the IUCN Primate Specialist Group's Section on Great Apes included 144 leading great ape scientists and conservationists from around the world, represented by an executive committee and two Vice-Chairs. Even though gorillas were not migratory species under the strict definition, the Specialist Group had acknowledged the good intentions behind the original inclusion of the gorilla within CMS in 1979. He stressed that as funding was limited, resources would have to be effectively used for conservation purposes. To this end, IUCN would support the adoption of the IUCN Action Plans under the Gorilla Agreement, which had already been endorsed by Range States. IUCN further suggested that the Parties consider an evaluation of the Gorilla Agreement to better understand its impact. IUCN could provide technical support for such an evaluation. The result of the evaluation would need to be provided before the gorilla agreement would potentially be expanded to other species.
38. The representative of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology stated that it was a research institution advancing knowledge in anthropology, but the Institute was also engaged in conservation work. The research area included gorilla behaviour, animal culture and population dynamics. The Institute had research projects in Uganda and Gabon and the team at the Institute also collaborated with other Gorilla Range States.

39. The representative of the WCS supported the intervention by IUCN on the adoption of IUCN Action Plans under the Gorilla Agreement and the proposal for an independent evaluation of the Gorilla Agreement before any additional species were to be included in the Agreement.

12. OVERVIEW OF THE CONSERVATION STATUS OF GORILLAS AND THEIR HABITATS ACROSS THEIR RANGE

40. Ms. Martha Robbins (Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology) gave an overview of the distribution, population, key threats and conservation measures for the four sub-species of gorillas: Cross River (*Gorilla gorilla diehli*), Western Lowland (*Gorilla gorilla gorilla*), Eastern Lowland (*Gorilla beringei graueri*) and Mountain Gorilla (*Gorilla beringei beringei*).
41. Cross River Gorillas: It was estimated that there were 300 Cross River Gorillas in 14 subpopulations across a very large landscape. The species had been listed as Critically Endangered. The habitat size was estimated to be around 600 km². Threats to the sub-species included forest loss and hunting. She noted that the current security situation in Western Cameroon limited conservation activities in the country although there had been a lot of efforts for enhanced law enforcement and cooperation between Nigeria and Cameroon.
42. Western Lowland Gorillas: The estimated population size was 361,000. This number included estimates for areas that had not been surveyed. Eighty per cent of the gorillas were reported to be living outside of protected areas. The high rate of decline (3 per cent per year) had led to the status of the subspecies being classified as Critically Endangered. Major threats included illegal killing for bushmeat, habitat destruction, human-wildlife conflicts and diseases. The Ebola outbreak had previously wiped out 90 per cent of gorillas in some locations.
43. Eastern Lowland Gorillas: There had been some surveys to estimate the total population and the studies had shown a dramatic decline. In two decades, almost 80 per cent had disappeared. The major threat had been political instability, habitat loss and bushmeat hunting related to artisanal mining. Increased law enforcement and support for alternative livelihoods were needed to improve the status of the sub-species.
44. Mountain Gorillas: The population recorded stood at 1,000 gorillas, found in two populations across 800 km². Mountain Gorillas had been down-listed from Critically Endangered to Endangered. This was a success story, but the gorillas still faced threats such as diseases. Nearly 50,000 tourists came to see Mountain Gorillas per year, so disease control was a major concern. Primate bush meat was not consumed by the communities living around their habitats. Tourism had been supporting conservation and there had been a high level of law enforcement, monitoring and research on Mountain Gorillas.
45. In summary, three out of four gorilla sub-species were listed as Critically Endangered. The major threats included illegal killing, habitat destruction and diseases. The scale of threats varied between locations. Law enforcement, engagement with the private sector to reduce habitat destruction, monitoring and research, and community engagement would be priority actions for the conservation of gorillas.

46. The Chairperson opened the floor for comments. The GRASP Secretariat informed the meeting that it had submitted a Great Apes Status Report to the CITES Animals Committee. The report also provided information on the gorilla sub-species and their habitats.

13. REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLANS

47. The Chairperson invited Parties to provide a brief overview of their progress in the implementation of the Action Plans adopted under the Gorilla Agreement.
48. The representative of the CAR reported that Western Lowland Gorillas occurred in the Dzanga-Sangha Protected Areas. The gorillas were a protected species under national legislation and eco-guards enforced the law for the conservation of gorillas. At least ten guards had been trained. The lack of funding, however, hindered the continuation of the training for eco-guards. The application of national legislation had been a challenge due to the corruption of the judiciary, but it had been possible to arrest some poachers and take them to court. Although there was a patrol unit, the lack of personnel had posed a challenge given the large area that was covered by protected areas. Regarding diseases, a partnership had been established with the Robert Koch Institute in Germany to test blood samples. Regarding funding, WWF helped the conservation of habitat. Other donors such as Germany provided support. The cross-border effort with Cameroon on monitoring was working quite well. Tourism had been developed and now 200 tourists per year visited two families of gorillas in the Dzanga-Sangha area. Part of the tourism revenue went to nearby communities. Education and awareness-raising had been conducted and the communities living near the protected areas started becoming aware of the importance of conservation.
49. The representative of Congo stated that the highest concentration of gorillas was found in protected areas including the two transboundary areas: the Sangha trinational park (TNS) and the Tri-National Dja-Odzala-Minkébé (TRIDOM) which brought together Cameroon, Congo and Gabon. A new protected area had also been created. There were surveillance and anti-poaching activities by the rangers. Efforts were made to raise awareness despite scarce funding. Thanks to the awareness-raising activities, the communities had asked the Government to gazette an area as a protected area. There had not been any court cases related to the illegal killing of gorillas. The Government had also taken initiatives to prepare national and sub-regional plans for the conservation of gorillas. Due to the lack of funding, however, there were areas that were yet to be protected despite having a high density of gorillas. Referring to the south-western area, Congo reiterated that there had not been any study to estimate the population size of gorillas and invited funding to support research on the population.
50. The DRC stated that the country protected all gorilla sub-species under national legislation. However, Eastern Lowland Gorillas continued to be threatened. The areas where Eastern Lowland Gorillas inhabited had not been well monitored. As they were found in community reserves, there had been information gaps. He emphasized that the country faced a difficult security situation. The Government had deployed 600 rangers that were recruited and trained for the Virunga National Park. These rangers would help to protect the Park, but the DRC continued facing many challenges. The country had been losing national park rangers that protected forests due to the security situation. This had affected tourism, which provided income for the community and conservation. The security situation would need to be improved to revitalize tourism. To address Ebola, the Government had been working with the Gorilla Doctors to monitor the health of all security staff and to reduce risks of transmission. To enable long-term conservation efforts, the DRC had been working on the establishment of a Trust Fund. It was hoped that the Fund would help the DRC to address issues, especially for Eastern Lowland Gorillas.

51. Gabon said that the Gorilla Agreement had been implemented on the ground. The Government had been reviewing the forest law to implement the Gorilla Agreement, and one of the innovations was that the penalties were made heavier. As governments in the region decided to harmonize policies through the Central African Forest Commission, Gabon made sentences longer under the new law. Gorillas were found across the country but unfortunately, only 40 per cent of forests in which gorilla lived were protected. The Government thus aimed to put 70 per cent of the forests under protection by establishing protected areas. In Gabon, armed forces had been deployed in TRIDOM between Cameroon, Congo and Gabon. The trafficking of ivory and of humans posed a security threat to the country. Many rangers had been trained to address illegal killing of gorillas. Gabon also had “Green Magistrates” in the judiciary system, who were trained on environmental and wildlife law and policy. The Government had been working on other projects and it hoped to report on the results at MOP4.
52. The Meeting observed a moment of silence for Ms. Elizabeth Ehi-Ebewele, former Nigerian Gorilla Agreement Focal Point, who had passed away earlier this year.
53. Nigeria stated that Cross River Gorillas were found in Nigeria and Cameroon, with three known sites in Nigeria. Since the Regional Action Plan had been implemented, conservation measures had been improved, and the population size was now estimated to be around 100. In the Action Plan, 45 activities were listed for 2014-2019 and 22 activities had been completed. About 78 per cent of activities were completed or partially completed. The proposed construction of a highway had been a potential threat. If the highway was to be constructed, corridors would be lost. The expansion of cocoa farms and the loss of corridors through deforestation were also threats to gorillas as habitat was destroyed. Poor funding of national park services had also been a challenge. Lack of political will of the State Governments to address illegal farming would need to be addressed. As indicated by CTPH, Cross River Gorillas could provide great potential for tourism development. The current security situation near the border areas with Cameroon had made it difficult for the patrol team to operate. There had been slow progress in signing the MOU between Nigeria and Cameroon and this had to be addressed. Despite challenges, there had not been any cases of gorilla poaching in Nigeria since 2012. Nevertheless, deforestation had been increasing. It was urgently needed to strengthen law enforcement, particularly for prosecution. Additional funding was required for protected area management.

54. Uganda reported that the national report covered policies and legislation, monitoring and research, community development, awareness-raising and long-term funding. Regarding the patrols to prevent poaching, the Government was undertaking a review of the existing law of wildlife protection in the country. On the species and habitat protection, the Government had made efforts so that protected areas were not encroached. The Government had signed an MOU with local communities on boundary management in Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Area. Approximately 554 rangers had been recruited to better manage the protected areas. In some areas, buffer zones have been established. The last census of gorilla populations would end in December 2019 and it was expected that the population had increased. The Government had also made efforts to raise awareness by holding meetings with communities. The annual stakeholder meetings had been critical for the exchange of information and sharing views, and the engagement of stakeholders had strengthened the management of the conservation area. Benefit sharing of tourism revenue with communities had been crucial, with gorilla tourism contributing over 50 per cent of the Uganda Wildlife Authority's budget. Finally, Uganda shared the following lessons learnt: 1. The Gorilla Agreement needed to be reflected in national legislation to implement it; 2. Communities embraced conservation interventions when these brought them benefits; and 3. Stakeholder collaboration was important.
55. The Chairperson opened the floor for discussion. The CMS Ambassador commented that for any plans to be successful, political will was necessary. Without political will, it was difficult to implement any Agreements or Action Plans.

14. DISCUSSION ON UPDATING THE ACTION PLANS

56. The Interim Secretariat introduced document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.14: *Discussion on Updating the Action Plans* and briefed the Meeting on the following points:
- i. Article VIII of the Gorilla Agreement required Action Plans to be developed to support Parties implement the Agreement. The Action Plans needed to be reviewed at each MOP pursuant to Article VIII;
 - ii. MOP1 had adopted four Action Plans drafted by the Royal Belgian Institute for Natural Sciences, based on existing IUCN/SSC Primate Specialist Group Regional Action Plans;
 - iii. At MOP2, it had been suggested to consider the adoption of newly developed Action Plans at MOP3;
 - iv. MOP2 through Resolution 2.4 had requested the Interim Secretariat to monitor the revision process of the Action Plans for the four sub-species and to circulate them to all Parties, other Range States and interested stakeholders, once finalized;
 - v. During the intersessional period, IUCN had developed the following Action Plans:
 - *G. g. gorilla*: Regional Action Plan for the Conservation of Western Lowland Gorillas and Central Chimpanzees 2015-2025
 - *G. g. diehli*: Revised Regional Action Plan for the Conservation of the Cross River Gorilla 2014–2019;
 - *G. b. graueri*: Grauer's Gorillas and Chimpanzees in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Conservation Action Plan 2012-2022;
 - *G. b. beringei*: No new Action Plan was developed.
 - vi. Parties and other Range States had participated in the development of the Action Plans;
 - vii. The Interim Secretariat suggested that Parties adopt three new Action Plans as developed by IUCN while continue implementing the Action Plan on the Mountain Gorilla (*Gorilla beringei beringei*) as contained in document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Inf.6;

57. Mr. Dirck Byler (IUCN) provided additional information on the IUCN Action Plans. He explained that each plan was developed through multi-stakeholder processes, including the Range States. The Action Plans had been developed based on the most up-to-date information on the sub-species. As the timeframe of the Revised Regional Action Plan for the Conservation of the Cross River Gorilla would expire in 2019, an update of the Action Plan had been discussed. For Mountain Gorillas, it had been agreed that an Action Plan should be developed for the sub-species. In addition, SGA would be pursuing a review of the existing Action Plans. He concluded by reiterating the need for political will for the implementation of the Action Plans.
58. Congo requested clarification as to how to use the Action Plans as some Action Plans included Chimpanzees. Invited by the Chairperson, the IUCN explained that many conservation actions applied to both species.
59. The Chairperson further clarified that the Meeting could decide to limit the application of the Action Plans as far as they were relevant to gorillas.
60. The GRASP Secretariat stated that the revision of the “Grauer’s Gorillas and Chimpanzees in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Conservation Action Plan 2012-2022” had been made in 2015.
61. Uganda questioned whether the Action Plan developed for the Gorilla Agreement in 2008 on the Mountain Gorillas was still valid.
62. The Gorilla Organization questioned whether it would be possible to extend the Gorilla Agreement to a Great Apes Agreement.
63. The Chairperson clarified that the decisions that were taken at the IUCN process were not legally binding. The adoption of the IUCN Action Plans under the Gorilla Agreement would be, on the other hand, legally binding and enforceable.
64. The Interim Secretariat clarified that if both gorillas and chimpanzees were affected by the same issue, it would make sense to have a joint Action Plan. Regarding the Action Plan on Mountain Gorillas adopted at MOP1, it was clarified that the Action Plan was still being implemented under the Gorilla Agreement. To streamline the discussion, it was suggested that the meeting discuss the issues related to the Action Plans first before going into the topic on Chimpanzees, which would be discussed under Agenda Item 16.
65. The Chairperson suggested clarifying the language of the resolution by including a wording which would limit the application of the Action Plans under the Gorilla Agreement to gorillas.
66. The WCS informed the meeting that the revised regional action plan on Cross River Gorillas would need to be updated soon. He further stated that it was expensive to develop species Action Plans under IUCN and it would be difficult to prepare an Action Plan for all gorillas and chimpanzee sub-species.
67. The Interim Secretariat reaffirmed that developing Action Plans was costly. The 2008 Action Plans adopted at MOP1 were considered to be outdated and it had been suggested that new Action Plans be adopted at MOP3 to avoid duplication of Action Plans on the same species by different organizations.
68. The Chairperson invited Parties to make their inputs to the draft resolution. After discussion, the Meeting prepared a revised text.

16. DISCUSSION ON SYNERGETIC ACTIONS ON CHIMPANZEES (*Pan troglodytes*)

69. The Interim Secretariat introduced document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.16: *Discussion on Synergetic Actions on Chimpanzees* and briefed the Meeting on the following points:
- i. CMS COP12 in 2017 listed the Chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*) on Appendices I and II. CMS Parties were required to fulfil the obligations set out by the Convention.
 - ii. All 10 Gorilla Range States were also Chimpanzee Range States and many Gorilla populations shared habitats with the Chimpanzees. Conservation efforts on Gorillas and their Habitats were, therefore, beneficial for the Chimpanzees.
 - iii. The CMS Secretariat prepared four possible actions on the Chimpanzees as described in the listing proposal UNEP/CMS/COP12/Doc.25.1.1: i) Develop a Chimpanzee Agreement; ii) Expand the scope of the Gorilla Agreement; iii) Formulate Concerted Actions; and iv) Adopt Regional Action Plans under CMS. The Interim Secretariat noted that the adoption of Action Plans could be done together with other proposed options.
 - iv. The Interim Secretariat recommended Parties to consider the possible expansion of the Gorilla Agreement and discuss the draft resolution as contained in document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.16.
70. Nigeria asked how to name a new agreement if it encompassed both gorillas and chimpanzees. The Chairperson explained that once the Parties decided to include chimpanzees in the Gorilla Agreement, they would decide on an appropriate name.
71. The GRASP Secretariat recommended examining the pros and cons of the expansion of the Gorilla Agreement before making decisions to include chimpanzees.
72. The GVTC Secretariat suggested focusing on gorillas. From the discussion, it had been clear that there was already a significant amount of work to be done for gorillas. He stated that if the Range States needed to enhance the conservation of chimpanzees, a separate process would be required.
73. The Chairperson invited the Parties to review the draft resolution as contained in the annex of document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.16. He emphasized that Concerted Actions focused more on conservation actions while an agreement would be at a higher political level, which would require time and resources. He further noted that the general feeling under CMS was that the proliferation of agreements might have had contributed to reduced effectiveness of each agreement. He emphasized that conservation actions on the ground needed to be emphasized.
74. The CMS Ambassador stated that the proposal to list chimpanzees on the CMS Appendices was made by Congo and the United Republic of Tanzania. He noted that further discussion would need to be held at the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to CMS with the presence of other Chimpanzee Range States.
75. Congo stated that the Parties would need to examine the issue and would need to consult with political leaders in their countries.
76. The Chairperson thanked the Parties for their contributions to the discussion and suggested that they continue consultations before the Resolution would be submitted for adoption.

17. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE AGREEMENT

77. The Interim Secretariat introduced document UNEP/GA/MOP2/Doc.17: *Institutional Arrangements for the Agreement* and briefed the meeting on the following points:
- i. Originally, the Gorilla Agreement secretariat was foreseen to be contained within the CMS Secretariat;
 - ii. The meeting to negotiate the Gorilla Agreement in Paris, 22-24 October 2007, had, however, asked the CMS Secretariat to provide the Interim Secretariat for the Agreement in cooperation with GRASP;
 - iii. MOP1 had recommended to the COP that the CMS Secretariat continue to act as the Secretariat for the Agreement;
 - iv. MOP2 had further recommended that the CMS Secretariat continue acting as the Secretariat and investigate future options for the administrative arrangements for the Gorilla Agreement secretariat through Resolution 2.3;
 - v. The options included the following:
 - a) a Party hosting the Permanent Secretariat;
 - b) another institution or organization such as UNEP or GRASP taking on the role;
 - c) the CMS Secretariat remaining as the Interim Secretariat, while seeking formal or informal arrangements with other institutions to provide support and secretariat services to the Agreement; and
 - d) the CMS Secretariat acting as the Permanent Secretariat, while looking for synergies with other institutions in the implementation of the Agreement's activities, for example, in holding joint meetings, or undertaking joint activities;
 - vi. The Interim Secretariat had not received any offers from Parties or organizations to host the Gorilla Agreement secretariat.
78. The Chairperson invited the GRASP Secretariat to provide comments, recalling that the previous resolution repeatedly referred to GRASP. The GRASP Secretariat responded that the collaboration would need to be discussed before deciding on the hosting of the Agreement secretariat. The Chairperson clarified that the institutional arrangement of the Gorilla Agreement secretariat needed to be discussed first, as the collaboration could only be made with an existing entity.
79. The CMS Ambassador commented that the legal structure to conserve gorillas was a unique opportunity for the Gorilla Range States, which were only 10 countries in the world. He asked whether any donor countries had shown interest in providing further support.
80. The Chairperson commented that donor countries had had strong interests in supporting the Gorilla Agreement since its inception. Invited by the Chairperson, the Interim Secretariat commented that over the past decade, it had become hard to raise funds for meetings and secretariat services. The donors preferred to provide funding for direct conservation benefits.
81. The Chairperson reminded the Meeting that it could propose any new options that had not been included in document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.17.
82. The GRASP Secretariat stated that both GRASP and the Gorilla Agreement Secretariats had been struggling to raise funds for meetings. If the Parties wished GRASP to host the Agreement secretariat, the GRASP Secretariat would have to consult with the Executive Committee and the GRASP Council.

83. The GVTC Secretariat said that it would like to be part of the discussion on the institutional arrangements of the Gorilla Agreement. GVTC could be open to the proposal to host the Agreement secretariat within the GVTC Secretariat. If the Parties felt that the Agreement secretariat could be taken by GVTC, the request could be discussed at the Board.
84. Nigeria asked about the working relationship between the GRASP and CMS Secretariats.
85. Cameroon noted the difficulty in mobilizing funds for meetings and asked the Interim Secretariat to clarify whether it would be able to continue providing secretariat services if sufficient resources become available.
86. The CAR stated that CMS should continue as the Interim Secretariat while seeking cooperation with other organizations, given the experience of providing secretariat services to other instruments under the CMS. With some difficulties, the CMS Secretariat had done good work and the CMS Secretariat could become the Permanent Secretariat.
87. Congo stated that the CMS Secretariat which had experience as the Interim Secretariat should continue the work but, at the same time, send letters to Parties so that they could consider options to host the Secretariat.
88. The DRC stated that the continuity of the secretariat services had to be considered while exploring other opportunities. GRASP, which had been carrying out similar activities, could also be able to host the Agreement secretariat. Similarly, GVTC could also potentially host the secretariat.
89. The representative of Gabon said that it would wish to have the CMS Secretariat continue providing secretariat services. Referring to the financial difficulties, she stated that Parties had to pay contributions. If the Parties paid contributions to the Agreement, it would ease the financial problems. She urged for each Party to talk to their authorities and to respect commitments made to the Agreement.
90. The representative of GRASP Secretariat stated that it had been proposed to have the next GRASP Council meeting in conjunction with MOP4. Noting the difficulty in maintaining the secretariat services for GRASP, he stated that secretariat services would require funding regardless of the hosting organization. He suggested that a strategic analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of GRASP and CMS hosting the Gorilla Agreement be prepared and presented to the next MOP and GRASP Council meeting. This would provide a basis for a long-term solution for the institutional arrangements.
91. The CMS Ambassador commented that Parties might think of hosting the Agreement secretariat as an honour rather than a burden. He further suggested that a rotation of the Agreement secretariat could be considered among Parties.
92. The Chairperson stated that the resolution should not close options for different possibilities. He further stated that it might help to prepare a Terms of Reference for hosting the Agreement secretariat so that Parties could consider hosting the secretariat on a rotational basis.

93. The representative of Uganda said that the CMS had rightly taken up the Interim Secretariat given the experience with the secretariat services, but other options could be considered. He further noted that the Agreement secretariat should be ideally located within the region and that Uganda would be interested in having the prestige of hosting the secretariat, albeit not at the moment.
94. The IUCN suggested that an independent analysis of the Gorilla Agreement be considered. The analysis could inform potential cooperation with GRASP.
95. The GRASP Secretariat commented that the rotation of the leadership position rather than the physical location of the secretariat might work better to assure the continuity of programmatic work.

15. ENHANCED COOPERATION WITH THE GREAT APES SURVIVAL PARTNERSHIP (GRASP)

96. The GRASP Secretariat made a brief presentation on the history, governance and financial mechanisms of GRASP including the following points:
 - i. GRASP was a partnership of over 100 Partners including over 50 NGOs and 4 private businesses. All Partners were united through the GRASP Council, which took strategic decisions.
 - ii. Uganda, Congo and CMS were currently members of the GRASP Executive Committee. Depending on the nature of issues, the GRASP Scientific Commission provided guidance. GRASP Ambassadors supported outreach activities.
 - iii. GRASP had six priorities: law enforcement and judiciary; advocacy; habitat protection and enhancement; disease; conflict-sensitive conservation including facilitation of trans-boundary collaboration efforts; and green economy.
 - iv. Under Law enforcement and judiciary, the great apes seizures database had been developed to support national, regional and international law enforcement.
 - v. On Advocacy, GRASP presented its work to the G7 Environment Minister meeting to leverage political support:
 - vi. Under Habitat protection, there were two new projects: 1) The development of the full proposal under the German Climate Initiative (IKI) on the “Sustainable management of the Congo peatlands”; and 2) Vanishing treasures project focussing on climate change adaptation and flagship species including the Mountain Gorilla funded by the Government of Luxembourg.
 - vii. Under conflict-sensitive conservation, GRASP worked in transboundary conservation areas such as the Virungas, Mayombe, and Tai-sapo. Over the years, GRASP had been moderating the process for the establishment of cross-border corridors.
 - viii. Under Green Economy, GRASP worked on sustainable palm oil and supported REDD+ in Cameroon and the DRC.
 - ix. Other achievements included the formulation of the new mandate of the peacekeeping mission in the DRC to accompany park rangers when conducting patrols in conflict areas.
97. Congo stated that there were gorillas in the southwestern part of Congo, bordering Angola and the DRC, although chimpanzees were more visible. Funding had been lacking for the researchers to conduct a census on the population.

98. The Interim Secretariat introduced document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.15: *Enhanced Cooperation with GRASP* and gave the background to the proposal and the draft Resolution:
- i. In the Gorilla Agreement text, there were several references to GRASP, which asked the Agreement to work with GRASP. This formed the basis for the proposal to enhance cooperation.
 - ii. The GRAP Council met, subject to availability of funding every four years while the Gorilla Agreement MOP met every three years unless the MOP decided otherwise.
 - iii. The GRASP Scientific Commission, which consisted of experts, provided scientific advice to GRASP. Under the Gorilla Agreement, the Technical Committee provided scientific and technical advice.
 - iv. The objectives of the Gorilla Agreement and GRASP were similar although the Gorilla Agreement focused only on gorillas. The priorities of GRASP were similar to obligations set by the Gorilla Agreement.
 - v. The proposal for cooperation had been developed in 2015 and it was circulated to all Parties through Notification 2015/30.
 - vi. There was already a plan to hold MOP3 together with the 4th GRASP Council meeting. Because of funding issues, however, the GRASP Council meeting had not been held.
 - vii. The proposal for cooperation included the following aspects:
 - Joint Focal Points: The Range States could have the same Focal Points for the Gorilla Agreement and for GRASP to enhance consistency and complementarity of the two mechanisms;
 - Joint Meetings: The Gorilla Agreement MOP could be held in conjunction with the GRASP Council to maximize efficiency and cost-effectiveness. However, funds would need to be secured for the meeting. There were other examples such as the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions;
 - Joint Work Programme: The Gorilla Agreement MOP might adopt elements of the GRASP Programme of Work relevant to gorilla conservation to enhance complementarities between the two;
 - Joint Scientific Advice: The Gorilla Agreement might request scientific advice from the GRASP Scientific Committee while keeping the Technical Committee dormant until the MOP decided to reactivate its service.
 - Secretariat services - The Gorilla Agreement secretariat might support secretariat services of the GRASP Secretariat such as document management if MOP was organized in conjunction with a GRASP Council meeting.
 - Joint Outreach: The Gorilla Agreement and the GRASP Secretariats may work on joint outreach and communication activities to widen the reach of the audience;
 - Joint Fundraising: The Gorilla Agreement and the GRASP Secretariats could conduct joint fundraising for specific projects where appropriate.
99. The GRASP Secretariat commented that six members of the GRASP Scientific Commission were from IUCN/SGA. GRASP would not need to change its mandate to provide scientific advice to the Gorilla Agreement as it was already within the existing mandate.

18. PROGRAMME OF WORK AND BUDGET (2019-2021) OF THE GORILLA AGREEMENT

100. The Interim Secretariat introduced document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.18: *Programme of Work and Budget (2019-2021) of the Gorilla Agreement*. She first presented the budget implementation for the Period 2012-2018 and gave the background to the proposed Programme of Work, the budget scenarios and the draft Resolution:
- i. Since MOP2, Congo had contributed €8,962 in 2012 and the Democratic Republic of the Congo contributed €12,000 in 2013.
 - ii. The Interim Secretariat sent invoices to all Parties in 2014 and 2016 urging the payment of arrears. However, no Parties had made annual contributions or paid arrears since 2013, the total unpaid contributions which had been invoiced stood at €126,038.
 - iii. During the last budget period, voluntary contributions were made for specific projects to support the implementation of the Gorilla Agreement.
 - iv. No expenditure was made from the Parties' contributions during 2012 – 2014. From 2015 to 2018, the Interim Secretariat used the funds to enhance cooperation with the GRASP Secretariat and associated travel was funded by the Parties' contributions.
 - v. As of 1 April 2019, €25,985 remained as the Parties' contributions to the Agreement. A total of €15,000 remained as voluntary contributions to the Agreement.
101. Uganda commented that the Government had acceded to the Agreement in 2014 and since then MOP had not met. As a result, the arrears attributed to Uganda did not seem to have been properly assessed.
102. Nigeria stated that the Government was planning to settle all arrears.
103. The representative of the Congo stated that the Government had been aware of the arrears. However, it was for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to settle them. To ease the process, he suggested that the CMS Secretariat write to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the payment of the arrears.
104. The CAR stated that the Government had received the invoices from the Interim Secretariat. As no budget programming had been done, it had faced challenges with settling the arrears.
105. The DRC noted that the Government had contributed to the Agreement and recommended to have an official correspondence from the Interim Secretariat regarding the arrears since a new Government had taken on the administration.
106. Invited by the Chairperson, the Interim Secretariat clarified that the invoices were issued in 2016 and the Parties were aware of the financial situation.
107. The representative of Gabon said that the Ministry of Water and Forestry needed to request payment and the issue of arrears had been brought to the attention of the Minister. She recommended that each Party should be committed to the Agreement and encouraged all Parties to work with the relevant authorities to settle the amount in arrears.
108. Uganda recalled that Article IV of the Gorilla Agreement stated that the budget needed to be made by consensus and said that considering the Article, it had been difficult for Uganda to make contributions.

109. The Chairperson suggested to write off the arrears for Uganda since it had not been a Party to the Agreement at the time of MOP2. He further stated that one of the ways Parties could explore was to use diplomatic channels to remind their authorities of the payments.
110. After discussions, the MOP took note of the financial reports and agreed to write off the arrears of Uganda.
111. The Interim Secretariat presented the Programme of Work and proposed budget scenarios for (2019-2021). She presented the document highlighting the following points:
 - i. The basic operation of the Agreement secretariat cost approximately €65,000. The current Parties' annual contributions amounting to €21,000 were insufficient for the operation. The CMS Secretariat, therefore, had been providing in-kind contributions to keep the Interim Secretariat operating.
 - ii. Two budget scenarios were prepared for the triennium 2019-2021. These two scenarios showed the CMS Secretariat's budget proposals when Parties requested it to host the Agreement secretariat or continue as the Interim Secretariat.
 - iii. Under Scenario 1 (current contribution level), the Second Technical Committee meeting would not be held due to the lack of financial resources. It would be possible to budget the meeting when the Parties increased their contributions at €5,000 per year.
 - iv. Regarding the programme of work, the Interim Secretariat proposed focusing on project development to support Parties implement the Gorilla Agreement. The Interim Secretariat proposed that such project work focus on transboundary areas given the nature and comparative advantage of the Agreement.
 - v. In the future, Parties might decide to adopt elements of the GRASP Work Plan as the Gorilla Agreement Programme of Work.
112. The Interim Secretariat noted that for a fair partnership with GRASP, it would be appropriate to allocate some funding toward the organization of the Scientific Commission should Parties decide to request its services.
113. Nigeria said that it might be possible to raise the contribution level to €4,000 in the future.
114. The CAR stated that once Parties settled the arrears, Scenario 2 could be pursued.
115. The DRC recommended recovering the arrears first before increasing the level of contributions.
116. Uganda stated that it would like to keep the current contribution level at €3,000 and recommended focusing on efforts to recover the arrears from the previous periods.
117. The Chairperson recalled that MOP was the highest decision-making body under the Agreement and Parties had the power to make decisions on behalf of their governments.

118. The CMS Ambassador reminded the delegates of the importance of the Agreement indicating that it was the only legally binding instrument for the conservation of Gorillas under which 10 African Range States cooperated. He thus urged Parties to use the power of communication such as social media and innovative tools to encourage stakeholder engagement to make the Agreement more useful for the conservation of gorillas.
119. The Chairperson invited Parties to provide inputs to the draft resolution as contained in document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.18.
120. The CMS Ambassador asked whether the write off could be applied to other countries. The Chairperson explained that Uganda had not been a Party at the time of MOP2 and this was the reason for the proposed write-off.
121. The Chairperson invited delegates to decide on the scale of contributions.
122. Gabon commented that it would be better to clear the arrears first before increasing the scale of contributions. The CAR also said that it would like to maintain the contribution level at €3,000 until the arrears were cleared.
123. Congo stated that Parties could first clear the arrears and then examine the possibility of increasing the scale in the coming meetings.
124. The DRC stated that the increased annual contribution was not a problem, but it would like to keep the level at €3,000 and recover arrears first. At the next meeting, Parties might consider raising the scale of contributions.
125. After the discussion, Parties decided to retain the level of annual contributions at €3,000 and finalized the text of the resolution.

19. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

126. The Interim Secretariat informed the Meeting that the date and venue of the next meeting would be subject to the scheduling of the Fourth GRASP Council meeting since the Parties agreed to organize MOP4 in conjunction with the Third GRASP Council meeting. The Interim Secretariat then invited the GRASP Secretariat to explain the current planning of the Council meeting.
127. The GRASP Secretariat stated that as soon as funding was secured, the dates and venue of the GRASP Council meeting would be announced. It was agreed that the Interim Secretariat would communicate the date and venue, as soon as the details were confirmed.
128. The Chairperson invited interested Parties to provide offers to host the next MOP. Congo requested the Interim Secretariat to provide the minimum requirements for hosting the next MOP so that Parties could consider the possibilities.

20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

129. In the margins of the meeting, two presentations were made to the participants: 1) the Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration; and 2) conservation implications of animal culture and social complexity.

21. ADOPTION OF THE RESOLUTIONS AND ACTION POINTS

130. The following Resolutions were adopted and attached as Annexes to the present report:

Resolution 3.1: *Updating the Action Plans*

Resolution 3.2: *Possible Synergistic Action on Chimpanzees*

Resolution 3.3: *Institutional Arrangements for the Gorilla Agreement*

Resolution 3.4: *Strengthening Cooperation between the Gorilla Agreement and the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP)*

Resolution 3.5: *Budget and Programme of Work (2019-2021) of the Gorilla Agreement*

22. CLOSING STATEMENTS

131. Cameroon requested the Interim Secretariat to upload all the documents and presentations onto the meeting website.
132. The GRASP Secretariat stated that the GRASP/IUCN Great Apes Status Report, which was submitted to CITES, would be shared with the Interim Secretariat for circulation.
133. The CMS Ambassador drew attention to the fact that Western and Cross River Gorillas were being killed even during the Meeting. He urged participants to consider ways to change beliefs and make people understand the importance of gorillas as key-stone species. It was an emergency and yet Governments and the private sector were operating business as usual. He posed a question: "How could the Gorilla Agreement convey the importance of gorillas?" and called for a sense of urgency referring to the recent study showing that there would be more infrastructure development than it had ever been. This would greatly affect the gorillas. He further noted that Ebola might be the most pressing concern in Uganda as this could put gorillas at high risk.
134. The Gorilla Doctors said that an MOU had been made with Rwanda, Uganda and the DRC regarding Ebola preparedness. The Ebola virus was highly contagious, and wildlife was susceptible to it. He explained that vaccination was available and called for action by the Governments to prepare for Ebola.
135. Uganda stated that there had not been any Ebola within gorilla populations in Uganda. The Government had met the Gorilla Doctors to prepare for Ebola.
136. The DRC thanked the Gorilla Doctors and stated that Ebola was a threat to gorilla tourism. A vaccine was available and would be available for primates thanks to the Gorilla Doctors. In August, a meeting would be held between Uganda, Rwanda and the DRC to further discuss the Ebola outbreak and to integrate the issue in the country programmes. Transboundary movement of gorillas between the countries could be an issue in case of Ebola.
137. The Chairperson commented that the concept of 'one health' had been promoted in Uganda and it had established a national committee for one health, integrating human health, animal health and ecological health. He stressed the need for building capacity to prevent and manage Ebola.

23. REPORT OF THE MEETING

138. The Interim Secretariat presented the action points produced from the Meeting. The Interim Secretariat explained that it would be annexed to the meeting report. The Action Points were included as Annex to the report.
139. The Chairperson proposed that the meeting report be finalized after the meeting, due to the time and resource constraints. The report would be cleared by Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson and it would be circulated to the meeting participants as soon as possible after the meeting. As there were no objections, the meeting agreed on the proposed approach to finalize the meeting report. It was confirmed that the report would be circulated to all participants and would be available on the meeting website.

24. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

140. The Chairperson invited Ms. Nobbe to make a closing statement on behalf of the Interim Secretariat. She thanked the Government of Uganda for hosting the meeting. She further thanked Parties, other Range States, observers, interpreters and service providers as well as the Government of Luxembourg, which had generously funded the Meeting. She concluded by stating that the Interim Secretariat looked forward to working with Parties, Range States and other stakeholders during the intersessional period to implement the Agreement.
141. Uganda said that the Government was honoured to host the meeting and thanked the delegates for contributing to the advancement of the Gorilla Agreement. He emphasized that the adopted Resolutions would need to be translated into actions and encouraged Parties to look at the Resolutions as means to contribute to positive changes to the gorillas and their habitats. He concluded by stating that Uganda was fully committed to implementing the Agreement and to championing the implementation.
142. The Chairperson, commending the active engagement and the reconfirmation of commitments by all concerned to implement the Gorilla Agreement to conserve the gorillas, closed the Meeting at 12:20 pm on 20 June 2019.

ANNEXES

- Annex I: Rules of Procedure for the Meeting of Parties to the Gorilla Agreement
Annex II: Agenda of the Meeting
Annex III: Resolutions adopted by the Meeting of the Parties at its Third Meeting
Annex IV: Action Points from the Meeting of the Parties at its Third Meeting
Annex V: Opening Remarks by the Government of Uganda
Annex VI: Opening Remarks by the Acting Executive Secretary of the CMS Secretariat
Annex VII: List of Participants: