



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

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Agenda Item 8

REPORT OF THE INTERIM SECRETARIAT (2012-2019) *(Prepared by the Interim Secretariat)*

Introduction

1. The present note is submitted by the Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), which serves as the Interim Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and Their Habitats (Gorilla Agreement) for consideration at the Third Meeting of the Parties (MOP3). It provides information on the secretariat services provided by the Interim Secretariat since MOP2 held in Bergen in November 2011.
2. At MOP2, Parties to the Agreement adopted [Resolution 2.2](#) on Financial Matters. The budget included indicative activities. This document reports on those programmatic activities as well as on the implementation of the Resolutions adopted at MOP2.

Progress in the implementation of the Programme of Work

Second Meeting of the Technical Committee

3. The Second Meeting of the Technical Committee was not organized during the intersessional period due to the lack of financial and human resources as detailed in document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.18.

Third Meeting of the Parties

4. In 2016, arrangements were made between the Interim Secretariat and the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) to convene MOP3 back-to-back with the third GRASP Council in November 2016 and a Notification to Parties was sent out to that effect ([Notification 2015/30](#)). On 22 September 2016, however, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) informed the GRASP Partners that “UNEP, which physically hosts the GRASP Secretariat, is currently revising its biodiversity commitments and it was felt the process could impact the GRASP Council agenda.” Parties to the Gorilla Agreement were subsequently notified ([Notification 2016/25](#)) that CMS would have to follow UNEP’s decision and postpone MOP3.

5. In March 2019, the Government of Luxembourg confirmed its generous contribution towards the organization of MOP3. Upon confirmation by the Government of Uganda to host the meeting, the Parties were invited to the meeting.

Information Materials

6. The Interim Secretariat maintained the website for the Gorilla Agreement (<https://www.cms.int/gorilla/>). Due to the lack of financial and human resources during the intersessional period, no flyers, posters and publications were developed.

Projects

My Gorilla My Community radio drama programme

7. A small-scale funding agreement was concluded with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Cameroon and Nigeria on 1 August 2015 for a project to positively influence the knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding conservation of Cross River Gorillas in Nigeria and Cameroon through a weekly radio drama and magazine show. The project successfully produced Season 3 (26 episodes) of the My Gorilla My Community radio drama. By the financial closure of the project on 3 May 2017, more than half of the episodes had been successfully broadcast, helping to improve knowledge in areas where it was previously low, and influencing change in attitudes and behaviours towards Cross River Gorillas and their habitat in Nigeria and Cameroon.

Establishment of a Transboundary Biosphere Reserve between Cameroon and Nigeria

8. The German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety has confirmed funding for a GRASP project to conserve the critically endangered and fragmented Cross River Gorilla populations in Nigeria and Cameroon as well as the Nigeria-Cameroon Chimpanzee. The project will be implemented by GRASP with support of the CMS Secretariat, as soon as the security situation will allow.

Progress in the implementation of the Resolutions adopted at MOP2

Resolution 2.1: Cooperation and Information Sharing for Improved Wildlife Law Enforcement

9. The Interim Secretariat supported the accession to the Agreement by the Government of Uganda as detailed in document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.9.
10. In 2016, the Interim Secretariat engaged in a dialogue with the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) to explore possibilities of supporting law enforcement activities against Gorilla poaching. ICWC informed the Interim Secretariat of their efforts to undertake activities against wildlife crime in general but advised that there was no possibility of addressing Gorilla poaching separately. They further informed the Interim Secretariat about the publishing of the Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit, which can be accessed [online](#).
11. The Interim Secretariat engaged with and supported the Working Group on Great Apes established by the 69th Standing Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 2017. The Working Group was mandated to prepare a report on the status of Great Apes and the relative impact of illegal trade and other pressures on their status pursuant to [Decision 17.232](#). The Interim Secretariat contributed to the Working Group by providing technical inputs to the report.

12. Through its membership in the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management, the Interim Secretariat has worked with its partners on addressing bushmeat trade.

Resolution 2.2: Financial Matters

13. The Interim Secretariat has encouraged the Parties to pay their annual contributions and has made efforts to collect arrears as detailed in document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.18. At CMS COP12 (Manila, 2017), the Interim Secretariat invited Parties as well as other donors to contribute to the organization of MOP3. The Government of Luxembourg provided generous funding for the organization of this meeting.

Resolution 2.3: Institutional Arrangements for the Agreement

14. The CMS Secretariat continued to serve as the Interim Secretariat during the intersessional period. As requested by the Parties, the Interim Secretariat analysed future options for the administrative arrangements for the Agreement Secretariat and a formal proposal as contained in document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.17 is presented to MOP3.

Resolution 2.4: Elements of Information Management for Gorilla Conservation

15. The Interim Secretariat has monitored the revision of Action Plans during the intersessional period and a summary is presented in meeting document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.14.
16. As instructed by the Parties, the Interim Secretariat worked closely with GRASP. The CMS Secretariat continues serving on the GRASP Executive Committee. France, which is also a member, recommended at the 7th Meeting of the Executive Committee that a process be formalized whereby consideration be given to the links between the Gorilla Agreement and GRASP, recognizing the challenges of securing resources for the implementation and support to the Agreement. The CMS Secretariat confirmed its willingness to work with GRASP on this, when it attended the 8th Meeting and developed in close collaboration with the GRASP Secretariat, a proposal for cooperation with GRASP.
17. The proposal for cooperation with GRASP was circulated to all Parties of the Gorilla Agreement and CMS Parties on 16 December 2015 by [Notification 2015/30](#) and comments were invited until 31 January 2016. No substantive comments were received on the proposal and the Secretariat proceeded planning the MOP3 as suggested. The proposal was also introduced at the informal meeting of GRASP Partners, held on 23 May 2017 in London, where it received great interest. The proposal has been posted on the [CMS website](#) and it is submitted to the Meeting as meeting document UNEP/GA/MOP3/Doc.15.