



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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SECOND MEETING OF THE SIGNATORIES TO THE
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING CONCERNING
CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR THE WEST AFRICAN
POPULATIONS OF THE AFRICAN ELEPHANT (*Loxodonta africana*)
Niamey, Niger, 20-21 June 2011
Agenda Item 5.0

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

(Prepared by the CMS Secretariat)

Membership of the MoU

1. The CMS Secretariat acts as the Secretariat for the *Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the West African Populations of the African Elephant* (the “MoU”) pursuant to paragraph 15 of the MoU. It also acts as the MoU’s depositary pursuant to paragraph 14.
2. As reported at the First Meeting of the Signatories, the MoU has been signed by all the West African Range States eligible to sign, pursuant to MoU paragraph 13. The Species Survival Commission of the IUCN and the CMS Secretariat have also signed the MoU as co-operating organizations.

Meetings

3. Paragraph 5 of the MoU entrusts the CMS Secretariat with convening meetings involving all the authorities concerned to access the implementation of the MoU (including the associated Strategy) in collaboration with the IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group.
4. Following the practise established in 2009, the CMS and CITES-MIKE Secretariats agreed to take advantage of the presence of the respective focal points in Niamey at the same time and have decided to organise a joint meeting with kind assistance from the Government of Niger, which accepted to host the meeting.

Action requested:

- The Signatory States are invited to recommend how frequently Signatories’ meetings should occur and whether the practice of convening joint meetings should be maintained.

Collaboration with CITES

5. In its preamble, the MoU states that the implementation of the CITES programmes, Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) and the Elephant Trade Information System

(ETIS), could provide valuable information to support the conservation and management of West Africa's elephants if effectively implemented.

6. In order to enhance the synergies between the two organizations, the Standing Committees of CITES and CMS reviewed in 2008 their joint work programme, which earmarked joint actions for the conservation and sustainable use of shared species as well as administrative and fundraising cooperation. This joint programme was agreed in the end of 2010 and will be updated for the next triennium (2011-2014) during the Standing Committee Meetings of CITES in August and of CMS in November 2011.

7. The African elephant is one of the species listed in the appendices of both, CITES and CMS. In June 2008, the CMS Secretariat participated in an African elephant meeting convened by the CITES Secretariat in Mombasa, Kenya. Following that meeting, the CMS and CITES Secretariats agreed on convening a joint meeting with a view to coordinating efforts and joining forces to identify and promote the implementation of trans-boundary conservation measures. To that end, this second meeting of Signatories, like the first one, is being held back-to-back with the CITES-MIKE meeting in order to facilitate the further enhancement of this collaboration.

Action requested:

- The meeting is invited to consider and recommend how the collaboration between CMS, CITES and other relevant organizations may be enhanced.

Coordination of the Implementation of the MoU

8. As outlined in Document UNEP/CMS/Doc.7, in 2006, a Letter of Agreement (LoA) between CMS and IUCN established coordination arrangements for the implementation of the MoU for a period of two years. However, in 2008 when the agreement between the CMS and IUCN expired, it was not renewed due to the departure of key personnel at AfESG. Since that time there has been no specific coordination measure in place for the West African Elephant MoU.

9. Document UNEP/CMS/WAE2/Doc.7 proposes a new coordination mechanism and invites the Signatory States to consider the proposed offer from CITES/MIKE to provide coordination services for the MoU.

Development of Transboundary Projects

10. The first meeting of Signatories recognized the need to develop and implement, through targeted fundraising, 12 trans-boundary projects. During the 15th Conference of the Parties to CITES, which took place in Doha in 2010, a side event on the progress of this work was organised. Since then, MIKE and CMS national focal points have worked closely together to develop these projects further.

Action requested:

- The Signatory States are invited to further develop and finalize these transboundary project proposals.

Potential for Instrument for Central African Elephants

11. As reported to the last meeting, the Convention on Migratory Species held its 9th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP9) in Rome in December 2008. COP9 Resolution

9.2(5)(j)(i) requests that preparatory work on the development or extension of an appropriate instrument on the conservation of elephants in Central Africa be undertaken in accordance with Recommendation 9.5. In turn, Recommendation 9.5 requests the Secretariat “to include in its programme of work the development of an appropriate instrument on the conservation of elephants in Central Africa, and to engage in relevant consultations with Range States (COMIFAC).”

12. The 37th Meeting of the Standing Committee, in its discussion on the Progress in the Development of new Agreements (CMS/StC37/4/Rev.1), decided that preparatory work such as the development of a gap analysis and options paper to analyze the value of a Central African elephant instrument should continue, but that the development of new instruments should be suspended until the completion of the Future Shape process at COP10 in November 2011.

13. The Secretariat has therefore commissioned a study to survey existing initiatives and conservation activities for elephants in Central Africa in order to analyze how these instruments and projects address threats to elephants in this region and to undertake a gap analysis identifying threats that are not being addressed. The analysis should identify ways to progress elephant conservation in Central Africa, as well as specify information needed to assess these options when developing a potential new instrument for the conservation of Central African elephants under the aegis of the Convention.

14. The results are expected to identify potential solutions, including strengthening and/or expanding existing instruments, enhancing cooperation and synergy between these initiatives as well as guidelines for the potential development of an additional instrument for elephants under CMS.

15. In the context of this meeting concerning West African Elephants, these developments raise the question as to whether the Signatories to the existing West African Elephant MoU would consider it appropriate to extend the existing MoU to also cover Central African Elephants; and, if not what type of collaboration is envisaged if a separate instrument on Central African Elephants were developed.

Action requested:

- The meeting is invited to provide input on the way forward for the conservation of Central African Elephants and, in particular, the Signatory States are invited to consider whether it would be appropriate to extend the existing West African Elephants MoU to cover Central African Elephants.

List of Designated Focal Points

16. MoU paragraph 6 invites Signatories to designate a competent authority as a contact point for all matters relating to the MoU’s implementation and to communicate the name and address of the authority and a person to the Secretariat.

17. The list of Designated National Contact Points will be updated on a periodic basis by the Secretariat. A list compiled on the basis of the information received by the Secretariat is submitted to the meeting as document UNEP/CMS/WAE2/Inf.3 for reference, confirmation and possible updates.

Action requested:

The Signatory States are requested to:

- Take note of the provisional list of designated Competent Authorities and Focal Points.
- Provide updated contact information at the meeting, in writing, if it has not been already forwarded to the Secretariat.

National Reports

18. Paragraph 7 of the MoU invites Signatory States to provide the Secretariat with national reports at least every two years and asks the Secretariat to distribute the reports received and compile an overview report. A draft report format has been prepared to provide national reports for this meeting based on that draft format. The draft format will be discussed under item 7 of the provisional agenda in order to establish a final format.

19. Considering the very short preparation time for the meeting, the CMS Secretariat has decided not to solicit national reports from the Signatories, but to provide an opportunity for oral interventions at the Meeting to report on country's activities.

Fundraising

20. Voluntary financial contributions towards the organization of this meeting have been provided by the governments of Germany and Switzerland, to which the Secretariat wishes to express its gratitude.

21. Furthermore, the capacity of the Secretariat to service the Western African Elephants MOU will be strengthened through the arrival of a Finnish funded Junior Professional Officer (JPO) in August 2011, who will support CMS instruments in the African region.

Action requested:

- The meeting is invited to take note of the contributions received.