

**2nd Meeting of Range States of the
Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivore Initiative (ACI2)**

Entebbe, Uganda, 1 – 4 May 2023

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ADMINISTRATION OF THE JOINT CITES-CMS AFRICAN CARNIVORES INITIATIVE

(Prepared by the CITES and CMS Secretariats)

Summary:

Based on recommendations and mandates emanating from the First Range State Meeting of the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative as well as CITES and CMS Meetings of the Conference of the Parties, this document sets out options of governance structures and fundraising mechanisms.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE JOINT CITES-CMS AFRICAN CARNIVORES INITIATIVE

Background

1. The Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative is a unique mechanism to deliver on the comprehensive conservation of the most emblematic African carnivore species across the African continent. It originates from CITES Range State discussions on the transferral of *Panthera leo* from CITES Appendix II to Appendix I and considerations of Range States under CMS to list *Panthera leo* on Appendix II of CMS. In their joint meeting in 2016, Range States recognized through the [Entebbe Communiqué](#) that a broader conservation approach for Lion was needed, given the multiple threats to the species. They also welcomed the complementary role of CITES and CMS in supporting the conservation and management of Lions in Africa and called upon CITES, CMS and [the International Union for Conservation of Nature] (IUCN) to actively support conservation activities through the provision of scientific information to support resolutions and the appropriate listing of species, the establishment of a mechanism to develop and implement joint Lion conservation plans and strategies, capacity- building in Lion conservation and management, public awareness raising and education programmes and the establishment of a fund for specific emergency projects for lion conservation.
2. Following these discussions, the 17th meeting of the Conference of Parties to CITES (COP17, Johannesburg, 2016) adopted a set of Decisions related to the broader conservation of African Lions, while CMS COP12 in 2017 listed *Panthera leo* and *P. pardus* on Appendix II of the Convention and replicated the set of CITES decisions on Lion in CMS. CMS COP12 also instructed the Secretariat to establish the African Carnivores Initiative (ACI), and work with the CITES Secretariat to jointly support Parties to CMS and CITES in implementing conservation measures in CMS Resolutions and Decisions pertaining to African Carnivores.
3. Based on this mandate and the Conventions' Joint Work Programme, the two Secretariats organized the First Meeting of Range States to the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI1, Bonn, Germany) in 2018, covering African Wild Dog, Cheetah, Leopard and Lion, all of which except for the Wild Dog were by then listed under both Conventions. The Meeting issued a [Communiqué](#), acknowledging that habitat degradation and fragmentation; conversion of habitat into agricultural land and livestock pastures; prey depletion through poaching and livestock rearing and human-carnivore conflict, including poisoning and illegal killing; are major threats to large African carnivores today and inviting the Conferences of Parties to CITES at its 18th Meeting and that of CMS at its 13th Meeting, to instruct the development of a Joint Programme of Work for the Initiative, including a list of priority measures and activities.
4. CITES COP18 in 2019 and CMS COP13 in 2020 followed the invitation of Range States and instructed the two Secretariats to develop, in close cooperation with IUCN, a draft Joint Programme of Work (POW) for the African Carnivores Initiative, taking into account the decisions adopted by CMS COP13 on the African Wild Dog, Cheetah, Leopard and Lion, the outcomes of CITES COP18, as well as the recommendations emanating from the First Meeting of Range States to the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI1) and taking into consideration all threats to African carnivores that threaten their survival. CMS COP13 also adopted [Resolution 13.4 Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative](#), which sets out the long-term objectives, role and focus of the Initiative.
5. As instructed, the two Secretariats developed, in close cooperation with IUCN, a draft [POW for the ACI](#), which was consulted through electronic means with Range States prior to being approved by the Standing Committees of both Conventions in September 2021.

Recommendations and mandates for governance and funding of the ACI

6. Already at their first meeting in 2018, Range States discussed (see [Communiqué](#)) potential governance structures, such as regular Range State meetings, a network of national and regional coordinators and a Joint CITES-CMS Programme Officer. They also emphasized the importance of a sustainable funding mechanism to support Range States in implementing conservation actions under the Initiative and welcomed the support and expertise of IUCN in this regard.
7. CMS [Resolution 13.4 Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative](#) took up some of the recommendations from the Range States. Operational paragraphs 4-6 set out a basic governance framework providing the focus of the ACI, its implementation through a Programme of Work and the review of the implementation through regular Range State meetings:
- 4. Agrees that the Initiative should focus on:*
- a) developing and implementing conservation strategies for each of the four African carnivore species, which address all threats to their survival;*
 - b) taking measures that allow and secure connectivity between populations of the four African carnivores;*
 - c) promoting the coexistence of local communities and the four carnivores in landscapes where they occur;*
 - d) promoting innovative approaches that deliver sustainable benefits to the local communities that pay the costs of living alongside the four species;*
 - e) developing the capacity of Range States to conserve and manage, as well as monitor, populations of the four African carnivore species;*
 - f) improving education and awareness on the plight of African carnivores; and*
 - g) enhancing and facilitating communication and information sharing between the African Range States of the four carnivores;*
 - h) taking steps to eliminate the poisoning of African carnivores;*
- 5. Agrees that the Initiative should be implemented through a Programme of Work that will provide concrete, coordinated and synergistic conservation activities for all four species across their range, and be amended or adapted, as required;*
- 6. Requests the Secretariat to convene regular Range State meetings in cooperation with the Secretariat of CITES to assess the implementation of the Programme of Work, revise the Programme of Work as necessary, and monitor the functionality of the Initiative;*
8. Lastly, the [Programme of Work of the ACI](#), as approved by the CITES and CMS Standing Committees, dedicates Objective 1 to *International cooperation, coordination and strategic conservation planning*, with a focus on governance structures and the establishment of a funding mechanism set out in Results 1. 1 – 1.3 and associated activities:
- Result 1.1. The POW for the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative for the period 2021-2025 is developed, approved and implemented under appropriate organisational structures.*
- Result 1.2. Funding for the implementation of the ACI POW and priority activities is secured.*
- Result 1.3. Organizational structures promoting a broad international partnership and synergistic cooperation between ACI Range State Parties and other relevant institutions and stakeholders engaged in the conservation of African large carnivores are established or supported.*

Lessons learned from the Central Asian Mammals Initiative

9. In 2014, CMS COP11 (Quito, Ecuador) adopted [Resolution 11.24](#) establishing the Central Asian Mammals Initiative (CAMI). CAMI was established to strengthen the conservation of Central Asian migratory mammals, through a common framework to coordinate conservation activities in the region and to coherently address major threats to migratory species. Annexed to Resolution 11.24, which established the Initiative, is a comprehensive Programme of Work (POW) set out for a period of six years, which addresses the main threats faced by individual species covered by the Initiative and establishes overarching conservation measures required by all species. Similar to the ACI POW, apart from determining conservation actions, the CAMI POW also calls for the provision of implementation support in the form of outreach and awareness raising activities, funding, synergies and stakeholder involvement and coordination, data sharing and review processes.
10. In terms of governance structures and associated funding mechanisms within CAMI, Range States have nominated species and country focal points to provide their expertise and ensure liaison with the Range States; and the Second CAMI Range State Meeting also established the roles of Chair and Vice-Chair for the Initiative. Hence, governance structures have been established that provide a targeted support to the implementation of the POW. Compared to governance structures that exist for Memoranda of Understanding or legally binding agreements concluded under CMS, the CAMI structures are quite light, incurring only limited overhead costs.
11. While Governments are the mandated decision-makers within CAMI, the Initiative greatly benefits from its cooperation with a range of scientific institutions and non-governmental conservation organizations. This makes CAMI a lively platform, in which different stakeholders take on responsibilities to implement the CAMI POW in accordance with their expertise and capacities.
12. The implementation of the CAMI POW also profits greatly from a long-term partnership agreement with the German Government, which provides resources for annual, targeted workshops and studies on specific themes. Also set up is the cooperation with the IUCN Save our Species Initiative (IUCN SOS), which provides financial resources for projects, implemented by different stakeholders in the CAMI region.

Discussion and analysis

13. In line with the mandates from CMS Resolution 13.4 and the Results and Activities set out in the ACI POW, as well as based on the experience from CAMI and against the backdrop of limited funding being available, governance structures of the ACI would currently have to be kept light. At the same time, Range States might want to take more ownership of the Initiative and foster implementation of its Programme of Work. To that end, Range States could consider nominating species focal points as well as a representative from each sub-region to form a Coordination Committee on an honorary basis, whose main responsibilities would be the provision of species-specific knowledge and the promotion of the ACI at the policy level within CMS and CITES as well as in other relevant fora, respectively. The Committee could also engage with the Secretariats of CMS and CITES in reaching out to potential partners and donors. At the level of coordinating the implementation of the Programme of Work and subject to the availability of external resources, four sub-regional coordinator positions could be established, based on the example of the Range Wide Conservation Program for Cheetah and African Wild Dogs. These would be experts in carnivore conservation, who could promote implementation activities within their subregions, promote transboundary cooperation among range states and support capacity building activities at the national level.

14. Resource mobilization and the formation of partnerships are key objectives of the Initiative without which the Programme of Work cannot be implemented. This meeting therefore provides Range States and partner organizations with a chance to showcase their ongoing activities and existing partnerships to implement the Programme of Work related to different thematic areas, ranging from scientific research and data collection, strategic conservation planning, measures addressing human wildlife conflict and coexistence, to awareness raising and transboundary cooperation with a view to highlight opportunities for future cooperation.

Recommended actions

15. Range States are invited to discuss governance options as proposed above that are aligned with the current funding situation of the ACI.
16. Range States are invited to discuss partnership needs and options.