



# CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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FIRST MEETING OF THE SIGNATORIES TO THE  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING CONCERNING  
CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR THE WEST AFRICAN  
POPULATIONS OF THE AFRICAN ELEPHANT (*Loxodonta africana*)  
Accra, Ghana, 30-31 March 2009

## REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

*(Prepared by the 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. One of the Secretariat’s functions as the depositary of the MoU is to keep track of the status of the MoU and to inform the Signatories. This section therefore provides a brief overview of the status of signatures to the MoU.
2. At the Eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, eleven countries signed the MoU, which permitted its entry into force on 23 November 2005 pursuant to paragraph 10 of the MoU. The Species Survival Commission of the IUCN and the CMS Secretariat both also signed the MoU at that time as co-operating organizations. The last two countries whose signature was pending, namely Ghana and Senegal, joined the MoU in 2007.
3. The MoU has therefore now been signed by all the West African Range States eligible to sign pursuant to MoU paragraph 13. Signature by other states or organizations would require amendments to the MoU.

### Action requested:

- The Signatory States will be invited to consider whether any additional States or co-operating organizations should be invited to join the MoU under point 10 of the provisional agenda.

### Meetings

4. Paragraph 5 of the MoU entrusts the CMS Secretariat with convening meetings involving all the authorities concerned to assess the implementation of the MoU (including the associated Strategy) in collaboration with the IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group.
5. After gathering the necessary funds in 2008, the CMS Secretariat accordingly organised

this meeting in collaboration with the IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group, and with kind assistance from the Government of Ghana, which accepted to host the meeting. This is the first meeting of the Signatories since the MoU entered into force in November 2005 and the Secretariat suggests that Signatories' meetings continue to occur about once every three years in the future.

**Action requested:**

The Signatory States are invited to recommend how frequently Signatories' meetings should occur .

**Collaboration with CITES**

6. 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.
7. In order to enhance the synergies between the two organizations, the Standing Committees of CITES and CMS adopted a joint work programme for the two conventions for 2008-2010 in July and December last year respectively, which earmarked joint actions for the conservation and sustainable use of shared species as well as administrative and fundraising cooperation.
8. The African elephant is one of the species listed in the appendices of both the CITES and CMS conventions. Until now, little joint work has occurred on African elephants. Decision 14.75 adopted by CITES at its COP14, which contemplates the development of an overall elephant action plan by elephant Range States, could provide the basis for synergies with the efforts undertaken through the CMS MoU. That decision by CITES was recently complemented by CMS's adoption of Recommendation 9.5 on cooperative action for the elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) in Central Africa at the CMS COP 9 held in December 2008 in Rome.
9. In June 2008, CMS participated in an African elephant meeting convened by CITES in Mombassa, Kenya. The report on that meeting is included in the documents for this meeting as document UNEP/CMS/WAE/1/Inf.6. 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 first Signatories meeting is being held back-to-back with a joint CMS-MoU/CITES-MIKE meeting and a sub-regional 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**

10. Paragraph 4 of the MoU states that the IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group (AfESG) shall be the technical advisor for work under the MoU. With a view to defining the terms of those services and making resources available to support their provision, the Secretariat concluded a Letter of Agreement (LoA) with the AfESG on 31 July 2006 to provide for coordination and technical advisory services for the implementation of the MoU and the associated Strategy. The associated project had a duration of two years and a budget of 25 000 \$US. It has been completed by the AfESG in July 2008. The main actions implemented by the AfESG under the LoA can be grouped into the following categories:

- The promotion of the MoU/strategy;
- Development of trans-boundary initiatives;
- Support to the development of national strategies for elephant conservation;
- Support to the implementation of the existing strategies;
- Promoting exchange of scientific, technical and legal information;
- Designation of focal points;
- Assistance with reporting;
- Assistance with the content of the MoU/strategy web page.

Further details on the actions undertaken within the LoA will be provided orally at the meeting.

### **Action requested:**

- The meeting is invited to consider and take note of the action taken thus far;
- The meeting is invited to consider and recommend what type of advisory services and coordinating functions would be desirable for the future with a view to supporting the further implementation of the MoU and the Strategy.

## **Relevant results from COP9**

11. 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:

- “1. 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);
2. Invites the Secretariat to establish a working group composed of representatives of Range States and CMS partner organizations on this issue. The Scientific Council will be an additional member of the working group;
3. Further requests the Secretariat to review the State of progress of work, both in the Scientific Council and the CMS Standing Committee during the intersessional period; and

4. Encourages the stakeholders to ensure a sound coordination amongst the CMS initiatives for this species in this region.”

Resolution 9.2 and Recommendation 9.5 are included in the documentation for this meeting as documents UNEP/CMS/WAE1/Inf.7 and UNEP/CMS/WAE1/Inf.8 respectively.

12. In the context of this meeting concerning West African Elephants, these resolutions and recommendations raise the question as to whether
  - a. 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
  - b. the type of collaboration envisaged if a separate instrument on Central African Elephants were developed.

**Action requested:**

- The meeting will be invited to take note and to consider Resolution 9.2 and Recommendation 9.5 adopted by COP9 concerning Central African Elephants under point 10 of the provisional agenda.
- The meeting is invited to provide input on the appropriate form of an instrument on 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 National Contact Points**

13. Paragraph 6 of the MoU invites the Signatory States to officially designate a competent authority to serve as a contact point for the other Signatories and to communicate their name and address to the Secretariat.
14. National Contact Points for the MoU have been designated by all the Signatory States. The List of Designated National Contact Points as it results from the Secretariat’s records is made available to this meeting as document UNEP/CMS/WAE1/Inf.3.

**Action requested:**

The Signatory States are requested to:

- Take note of the List of designated National Contact Points.
- Provide any update on contact information at the meeting, in writing, if it has not been already forwarded to the Secretariat.

**National reports and overview report**

15. 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 national report format has been prepared by the Secretariat (UNEP/CMS/WAE1/Doc.6). The Signatory States have been asked to provide national reports for this meeting based on that draft format. The draft format will be discussed under the item 6 of the provisional agenda in order to establish a final report format.

16. At the time this report is being finalized, five Signatory States have submitted their national report, namely Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Niger and Togo. These reports have been made available within the documentation for the meeting as documents UNEP/CMS/WAE1/Inf.4.1-5.
17. Considering the limited number of reports received by the requested deadline of 15 March 2009, it has been decided to postpone the compilation of the overview report to after the meeting, when hopefully more reports will have been submitted and additional information have been provided orally at the meeting.

**Action requested:**

- The meeting is invited to consider the national reports submitted and any indications they provide as to how mid-term work should be orientated.
- Signatory States that have not yet submitted a national report are encouraged to submit one by the end of April 2009.

**Fundraising**

18. Voluntary financial contributions towards the organization of this meeting and other activities concerning the African elephant have been provided by the governments of France and of the Principality of Monaco, to which the Secretariat wishes to express its gratitude.

**Action requested:**

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