

Draft Report of the Terrestrial Working Group to the 5th Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council – ScC-SC5

Meetings: 1 July 2021, 14:00-16:30 CEST and 5 July 2021, 10:00-12:30 CEST

[Programme of Work for the Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council for the intersessional period between COP13 and COP14: ScC-SC5 Document 3](#)

The Terrestrial Working Group considered Document 3, Annex, Part C, namely the Programme of Work for the Scientific Council as relevant to terrestrial species and, in parallel to the relevant Programme of Work activities, Documents 6.3.1 to 6.3.3.

[Central Asian Mammals Initiative: Resolution 11.24 \(Rev.COP13\), paragraph 11](#)

Regarding paragraph 11 of Resolution 11.24 (Rev. COP13) Central Asian Mammals Initiative, the Group agreed that the activity proposed to implement the mandate from the COP was sufficient and no further details or amendments were necessary.

[Central Asian Mammals Initiative: Resolution 11.24 \(Rev.COP13\), Annex, Activity 8.1](#)

During the discussion of item Res.11.24 (Rev.COP13) CAMI, Activity 8.1, representatives of the IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group introduced Document ScC-SC5/Inf.8 *Conservation of the Cheetah (Acinonyx jubatus) in Asia and North-Eastern Africa*.

This document highlighted issues pertinent to the conservation of two subspecies of the Cheetah, namely the Asiatic Cheetah (*A. j. venaticus*) and North-East African Cheetah (*A. j. soemmeringii*), with the former being covered under CAMI. The document further suggested the development of a coordinated conservation strategy for Cheetah across the entire North-Eastern African and Western and South-Western Asian region.

The Group agreed that an intersessional Working Group be established with the mandate to consider options for the conservation of the Asiatic and North-East African Cheetah as set out in Document CRP 3/C/Annex, and to report to the Sessional Committee at its 6th meeting, followed by a report at COP14. The intersessional WG shall consist of the Range States concerned, African regional representatives of the Sessional Committee, experts from the IUCN, other interested members, and other experts as appropriate.

[Central Asian Mammals Initiative: Resolution 11.24 \(Rev.COP13\), Annex, Activity 29.12](#)

With reference to the CAMI Programme of Work Activity 29.12, the Group agreed that the CAMI Range States should nominate a mammal expert to support discussions at the Scientific Council. Hence no amendment to the document was necessary.

[Conservation and Management of the African Lion: Decision 13.89 and ScC-SC5 Document 6.3.1.1](#)

The Group also considered the Council's mandate on CMS Decision 13.89 *Conservation and Management of the African Lion (Panthera leo)*, which requests the Sessional Committee to review the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa*, and to formulate recommendations as appropriate for consideration by the African Lion Range States, IUCN and others, as needed.

Here, the Group followed the recent recommendations from the 31st Meeting of the CITES Animals Committee that the revision of the *Guidelines* should be delegated to the Range States, in the context of Meetings of the Range States of the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative.

The Terrestrial Working Group also agreed that in order to ensure a feedback loop from the African Carnivores Initiative to the Scientific Council, the Secretariat shall inform the Scientific Council regarding the activities and outputs of the African Carnivores Initiative Range State Meetings that relate to the Committee's mandate and request advice from the Scientific Council, as appropriate.

[Conservation and management of the Leopard: Decision 13.97 and ScC-SC5 Document 6.3.1.3](#)

The Group considered CMS Decision 13.97 *Conservation and Management of the Leopard (Panthera pardus) in Africa*, which requests the Sessional Committee to review the *Roadmap for the Conservation of Leopards in Africa*, and to formulate recommendations as appropriate for consideration by the African Leopard Range States, IUCN, and others, as needed.

In light of the *Roadmap* being a joint document between CITES and CMS and in line with the recommendations made for the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa*, the Terrestrial WG was in support of delegating the revision of the *Roadmap* to Leopard Range States at Range State Meetings of the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative where CMS and CITES Parties are joined and no further back-and-forth exchange between Convention bodies is required.

The Terrestrial Working Group also agreed that in order to ensure a feedback loop from the African Carnivores Initiative to the Scientific Council, the Secretariat shall inform the Scientific Council regarding the activities and outputs of African Carnivores Initiative Range State Meetings that relate to the Committee's mandate and request advice from the Scientific Council, as appropriate.

[Conservation and management of the Cheetah: Decision 13.94 and ScC-SC5 Document 6.3.1.2](#)

The Group considered CMS Decision 13.94 which requests the Scientific Council, after consultation with the respective Range States affected, to make recommendations to the COP concerning possible amendments to the list of Cheetah populations presently excluded from CMS Appendix I to reflect the current conservation status and inform a Decision at COP14.

To implement the direction of the COP, the Terrestrial WG agreed that an intersessional WG be established with the mandate to review the conservation status of Cheetah populations of Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe and to report to the Sessional Committee at its 6th meeting on its findings and to inform a decision at COP14. This intersessional Working Group shall consist of the Range States concerned, African regional representatives of the Sessional Committee,

experts from the IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group, and any other experts invited by the Secretariat. CRP 6.3.1.2 sets out the Terms of Reference for the intersessional Working Group.

[Listing of Jaguar on Appendices I and II](#)

The Group considered, under the mandate given to the Council through Convention Article VIII(5)(d) on making recommendations to the Conference of the Parties, as to specific conservation and management measures to be included in agreements on migratory species, conservation actions for the Jaguar. The Group concluded that activities should be synergized with CITES processes and the Jaguar 2030 Roadmap, with clear actions agreed for Jaguar conservation.

[Conservation of the African Elephant: ScC-Sc5 Document 6.3.3](#)

The Group discussed possible implications related to the implementation of CMS Resolution 12.19 as well as the African Elephant MOU, following the IUCN's recognition of the savanna Elephant *Loxodonta africana* and the forest Elephant *L. cyclotis* as two distinct species and their revised Red List assessments of Endangered and Critically Endangered, respectively, as set out in Document ScC-SC5 6.3.3.

The group did not propose specific actions but noted that while the CMS recognizes these two species, CITES does not. The group cautioned that the distinction should not be allowed to complicate conservation actions but should be used to encourage an increase in locally contextualized conservation action. Note was made of the ability for these species to hybridize and it was recommended that Range States of hybrid populations be considered Range States of both species.

Given the revised Red List assessment, it was recommended that the conservation needs and priorities for both forest and savanna African elephants inform the conservation actions taken under the African Elephant Action Plan.

[Sahelo Saharan Megafauna: Resolution 9.21 \(Rev.COP13\), Decision 13.101 and ScC-Sc5 Document 6.3.2](#)

The Group considered Decision 13.101 *Sahelo Saharan Megafauna* as the basis for the Scientific Council to examine the possibility of an extension of the area of the Concerted Action 13.4 for Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna to the deserts of the Horn of Africa and associated biomes, and to make recommendations in that regard to COP14.

The great importance of the Convention in general and the CMS Concerted Action process for the conservation of the listed Sahelo-Saharan Megafauna species was highlighted.

Several questions emerged relevant for taking a decision on an extension. These concerned the science and information available on species, but also the political context and availability of resources for actions by Range States. The importance of ensuring the buy-in of the Range States in the Horn of Africa was emphasized. Several Working Group members encouraged the possibility of adding the African Wild Ass, which is already listed on CMS Appendix I, to the Concerted Action. It was mentioned that there was already good cooperation with the Range States, and their support to include the African Wild Ass was anticipated.

The Working Group was not able to come to a conclusion to recommend any of the scenarios outlined in the document. It was recommended that the Secretariat would liaise with National

Focal Points of the concerned Range States as to the options set out in Document 6.3.2 and potential other scenarios regarding target species for the Concerted Action with a view to examine the possibility of the extension at the 6th meeting of the Sessional Committee, based on the information and views received from the Horn of Africa Range States.

Actions for Plenary:

Chair, the Plenary would need to consider the establishment of two Intersessional Working Groups, one on options for the conservation of the Asiatic and North-East African Cheetah and one on the conservation status of Cheetah populations of Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe.

Chair, with this recommendation, I have concluded my report on the deliberations of the Terrestrial Working Group.