



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 6.0

MOU COORDINATION

(Note prepared by the CMS Secretariat)

I. Background

1. As outlined in the report to the First Meeting of the Signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the West African Populations of the African Elephants (UNEP/CMS/WAE1/REPORT Annex 5) the objective of the MoU and of the Strategy for the Conservation of West African Elephants (Strategy) is to:

“Take steps to conserve and, when and where appropriate, to strictly protect the African Elephant and to conserve and sustainably use the habitats essential for its survival.”

2. The Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the West African Populations of the African Elephant (the “MoU”) states in its paragraph 15 that:

“15. The CMS Secretariat will provide Secretariat functions as outlined in this Memorandum of Understanding. It may use the services of any reliable organization.”

3. Furthermore, in order to better ensure that the MoUs and their accompanying action plans are effectively implemented, the CMS Secretariat has been developing the practice of out-sourced “MoU coordinators” with many of the same collaborating partner organisations. This is in line with CMS Conference of the Parties Resolutions 7.7, 8.5 and 9.2 which encourage the Secretariat to continue exploring partnerships with interested organisations specialised in the conservation and management of migratory species for the provision of developmental support and coordination services for selected MoUs, including the West African Elephant MoU.

4. In 2006, a Letter of Agreement (LoA) between CMS and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) established coordination arrangements for the implementation of the MoU for a period of two years. Specifically, IUCN’s African Elephants Specialist Group (AfESG) provided technical advisory services to deliver the coordination activities outlined in the LoA. The activities included, but were not limited to - promoting the MoU, developing trans-boundary initiatives and supporting the development of national strategies for elephant

conservation. 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.

II. The need for MoU coordination

5. The Secretariat services normally provided by the CMS Secretariat to MoUs include the coordination of their implementation. However, as the number of MoUs has grown, the CMS Secretariat has increasingly sought to collaborate with partner organisations to support it in coordinating the implementation of MoUs.

6. Although the coordinator would take on coordination functions, the CMS Secretariat would remain the Range States' official contact and would remain ultimately responsible for the MoU's oversight. The coordinator would be tasked to work in a balanced way across the West African Elephants' migratory range to the extent possible and within the confines of available financial resources. Ultimate responsibility for implementing the MoU and associated strategy would remain with the MoU Signatories.

III. Possibilities for MoU coordination

7. The attributes that would make a collaborating organization potentially attractive to act as an MoU coordinator include inter alia: (1) a long term interest in the particular species; (2) a demonstrated commitment towards the MoU; (3) a regional presence or influence, including good relations with Range States and national level NGOs in the agreement area; (4) a demonstrated ability to fundraise and successfully implement projects; and (5) the ability to make financial or in-kind contributions towards the coordinator's position. The organization could be intergovernmental, governmental or non-governmental.

8. The Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) programme was established under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) by resolution 10.10 at its 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10). The CMS Secretariat has identified this organisation as a possible suitable partner to provide MoU coordination.

9. MIKE is a monitoring system operating across the entire territory of the African and Asian elephants to provide information needed for elephant range States to make appropriate management and enforcement decisions, and to build institutional capacity within the range States for the long-term management of their elephant populations. It is operational in 29 African Elephant Range states.

10. At the First meeting of CITES/MIKE, it was agreed that the IUCN Regional Office for West Africa in Ouagadougou should adopt the role of coordination at the sub-regional level. Thus, there is a high degree of synergy between the IUCN and CITES/MIKE regional offices, which would be beneficial to the CMS MoU coordination.

11. Bearing in mind the need for a CMS coordination arrangement for the West African Elephant MoU, and in light of MIKE's experience in the concerned region as well as the presence of the MIKE focal point for West Africa, it could be advantageous to utilize these resources for the MoU coordination to effectively conserve West African elephants. The CITES/MIKE programme has indicated its willingness to accept this role.

12. The terms of reference for the coordination of the MOU, adopted at the First meeting of the Signatories, (attached as Annex 1) would serve as guidance for this coordination function.

Action requested:

- The Signatory States are invited to consider the offer from CITES/MIKE to provide coordination services for the MoU.

Terms of reference for the Coordination of the CMS Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the West African Populations of the African Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*)

Functions expected to be carried out (depending on availability of resources)

1. SECRETARIAT SERVICES

- a) Assist the CMS Secretariat in providing the secretariat services assigned to it under the MoU, in particular:
- Convene and service meetings of the Signatory States;
 - Provide secretariat services to committees or working groups established under the MoU.

2. COORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES

I. Signatory States

Designation of National Contact Points

- a) Act as a focal point for all Range States in collaboration with the CMS Secretariat;
- b) Maintain an up-to-date list of contact points for the MoU and Strategy and liaise closely with them on matters relating to implementation;

Implementation and associated projects

- c) Draw the attention of the Signatory States to matters relating to implementation;
- d) Formulate and give effect to proposals to improve implementation of the MoU, as well as seeking support for national and international African Elephant conservation-related projects;
- e) Facilitate collaboration between Range States in developing initiatives for the transboundary management of elephants and help provide input to these initiatives;
- f) Identify new transboundary elephant areas and suggest actions to be taken;

Funding

- g) Identify and negotiate potential external funding from Governments, development aid agencies, foundations and other sources;
- h) Review project proposals and facilitate contact between relevant institutions and the donor community;

Support in the development and implementation of national strategies

- i) Help to develop national strategies in countries and to coordinate them with other countries' national strategies;
- j) Provide assistance, including helping strengthen capacity, to implement existing national elephant conservation strategies and action plans as and when requested and required;
- k) Make available tools and guidelines for conservation and management of elephants to help implement the Strategy (e.g., mitigating human elephant conflict, translocation, managing local overpopulation, etc.); and
- l) Improve actors' capacities in the mitigation of human-elephant conflicts through regional workshops.

II. Intergovernmental bodies and non-governmental organisations

- a) Exchange information, correspond and interact regularly with IGOs and NGOs working on issues related to the conservation of African elephants and the habitats on which they depend; and
- b) Catalyse and support the development by other organisations of project activities that serve to further the aims of the MoU.

3. REPORTING

- a) Prepare reports on the work of the secretariat for submission to the Meeting of the Signatory States; and
- b) Encourage Range States to provide regular national reports on progress regarding the implementation of the MoU and Strategy, synthesize the reports received into a summary report and distribute it.

4. PROMOTION OF THE MOU/STRATEGY AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

- a) Promote the MoU and the Strategy regionally and internationally;
- b) Represent the MoU at international, regional and national meetings in order to promote its objectives in wider fora;
- c) Facilitate the rapid exchange of scientific, technical and legal information necessary to coordinate elephant conservation measures;
- d) Undertake public awareness-raising through the media, both regionally and internationally;
- e) Provide content to the CMS webpage on the MoU/Strategy (summarizing important meetings or activities supporting the MoU's/Strategy's implementation, etc.);
- f) Oversee the development of a range of information materials suitable for distribution to a wider audience reflecting the aims and spirit of the MoU;

- g) Ensure the appropriate compilation and dissemination of information materials prepared by Governments and other organisations, in order to maximize the benefits of experience sharing; and
- h) Develop and consult on proposals for special international events aimed at promoting African Elephant conservation.