



African Elephant Fund

Ensuring a secure future for African Elephants and their habitats



7TH AFRICAN ELEPHANT FUND STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

22-23 JUNE 2016

LIBREVILLE, GABON

PRESENT:

Regional representatives from East Africa:

1. Patrick Omondi- *Kenya (Chair)*
2. Dawud Mume Ali- *Ethiopia- (Vice-Chair)*

Regional representatives from West Africa:

3. Benoit Doamba- *Burkina Faso*
4. Kofi Nana Adu-Nsiah- *Ghana*

Regional representatives from Central Africa:

5. Roger Albert Mbeté- *Congo*
6. Flore Koumba Pambo- *Gabon*

Regional representatives from Southern Africa:

7. Cyril Taolo- *Botswana*
8. Abednico Macheme- *Botswana*
9. Thea Carroll- *South Africa*

Donors:

10. Marcel Van Nijnatten- *Netherlands*
11. Frank Barsch- *Germany*
12. Miet Van Looy- *Belgium*

CITES Secretariat:

13. Julian Blanc

AEF Secretariat:

14. Mamadou Kane
15. Barbara Matu

AGENDA ITEMS	STATEMENTS AND DECISIONS
Intro:	<p>The 7th Meeting of the Steering Committee of the African Elephant Fund was held at the Akouango Village in Libreville, Gabon from 22nd-23rd June 2016. Members of the SC met to discuss matters of implementation of the Fund among other agenda items not limited to the review of proposed projects from range states for funding, discussions on visibility events at the upcoming CoP17, welcoming of pledges from donors and strategize on fundraising options for 2016, review currently funded projects on their implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP), discuss the way forward to implementing partners of the AEAP such as Elephant Protection Initiative, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Elephant Crisis Fund among other partners on working together, and discuss the possibility of an enhanced role of UNEP vis- á-vis the African Elephant Fund.</p>
1. Opening	<p>The meeting was opened at 9.00am on Wednesday, 22 June 2016, by Mr. Dawud Mume Ali Director General of the Ethiopia Wildlife Conservation Authority and Vice Chair of the African Elephant Fund.</p> <p>Dawud Mume welcomed participants and thanked Gabon for hosting the meeting as well as for assisting in visa arrangements and accommodation for the Steering Committee (SC) members. He expressed gratitude to donors of the AEF for their continued support to the objectives of the AEF in implementing the AEAP.</p> <p>Lee White(Gabon) thanked the members for making it to Gabon and welcomed members to tours after the close of the meeting to <i>Pongara National Park</i>. He expressed his gratitude to Elephant Protection Initiative(EPI) and Stop Ivory (SI) for supporting Gabon financially to enable them host the 7th AEFSC meeting.</p> <p>Mamadou Kane (AEF Secretariat) thanked members for their participation and Gabon government for</p>



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		<p>hosting the meeting. He reiterated his commitment as the Secretariat to support range stated in conservation efforts for the African Elephant, support to SC members on travel arrangements for subsequent meetings for the AEF.</p> <p>Franck Barsch (Germany) thanked Gabon for hosting the meeting as well as the Secretariat for organization and preparations. He noted that despite the progress of the Funds progress since 2011, there are shared concerns from the donors on the visibility and efficiency of the Fund as it aims in furthering efforts for conservation of the elephant. Nevertheless, he extended his governments commitment for future funding to the Fund of €500,000 contingent on approval of projects by the SC.</p>
2.	Quorum	All members of the AEF Steering Committee were present and a quorum was established.
3.	Adoption of the Agenda	Members of the SC went through the agenda of the previous (6 th AEFSC) meeting and as there were no objections it was adopted.
4.	Matters arising from 6th AEFSC Meeting	<p>Mamadou Kane discussed the pending issues relating to Mali and Ivory Coast projects which were approved during the 6th AEFSC meeting.</p> <p>He noted to the SC that the project for Mali is pending payment due to the current problem posed by the competing implementing partner arrangements for the AEF funds; Mali government on the one hand has agreed to receive the funds and implement the project while on the other hand an NGO (The Mali Elephant Project of the WILD Foundation and the International Conservation Fund of Canada) wants the funds released to them in the United States as they implement the project. After deliberations with <i>MIKE Coordinator</i> Julian Blanc on the possibility of a common legal instrument for funding from AEF and MIKE as there are shared activities, it become difficult due to the current conflicting arrangement to undertake a joint agreement and release funds. Moreover, pending consultation from the SC on the way forward, payment to the Mali project shall remain unpaid.</p> <p>Recommendations: Following deliberations with the SC and MIKE it was agreed that a formal letter from the Director of the Ministry in Mali should present a letter in support of the Mali Elephant Project of the WILD Foundation reinstating them as the custodians of the funds as they implement the project. An attestation arrangement should be in place and thereafter funds should be released from the AEF.</p> <p>The Ivory Coast project remains pending as there is a shortfall in funding contributions to the AEF to fund activities under the AEAP.</p> <p>Recommendations: Following recommitment and receipt of contributions from the donors, the Fund shall commence disbursement of funds to Ivory Coast.</p>
5.	Project Progress Reports	<p>Progress report on ongoing projects in the regions:</p> <p>Central Africa by Lee White:</p> <p>1) Gabon's National Agency for National Parks (ANPN) in collaboration with Duke University- Developing A Quadcopter And Infrared Camera System To Monitor And Track The African Forest Elephant- After receiving research clearance from the government/science ministry in January 2016, Duke has begun their flying of drones over radio collared elephants to investigate how much information can be</p>



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retrieved from the air. Duke has encountered some issues; elephants running from the drones, the frequency created from the drones trigger them to run away. There are still in their begin stages from the AEF grant but it seems to be progressing well and Duke hopes to provide an interim report in the coming months.

2) Gabon ANPN project-**Genetic Traceability Of Ivory For Law Enforcement In Gabon-** The project has been developing fingerprinting of elephants to possibly utilize DNA for elephant surveys instead of dump counts. Signing of agreements were done in March and funds were not received until April- May so currently they are in the process of procuring the necessary equipment to begin working on the observational and reporting of the project.

3) Congo- **-Renforcement Des Capacités Opérationnelles Dans La Lutte Contre Le Trafic Illégal Des Produits Et Sous Produits De L'éléphant. /Reinforcement of Operational Capacities in the Fight Against the Illegal Trafficking of Elephant Products and Sub- Products (\$120,000)** - Commencement of the project was delayed as system upgrade of the financial management (UMOJA) system within UNEP caused initial administrative setback in processing and disbursement of funds. Following after, the grant was disbursed and the proponent did receive the funds but reporting has not been made available to the Secretariat on the progress of the project.

West Africa by Benoit Doamba and Kofi Nana Adu-Nsiah:

1) Burkina Faso/Benin/Niger-**Awareness Project for the Fight Against Elephants' Poaching in the Cross-Border Biosphere of the W Reserve (PSLAB/RBTW)** - Project had not commenced although the initial signing of agreements in 2013 as change of management within the ministry created challenges for tracking of funds and possible disbursement of funds. Moreover, in 2016 after becoming aware of the fund location within the appropriate accounts the process of releasing the funds for the implementation of the project has been difficult between the banks and the ministry. Nevertheless, funds were recently in the present month (June) received and Burkina Faso as the custodians are in the making the arrangements to disburse the agreed portioned payments to Benin and Niger.

2) Burkina Faso- Reinforcement of the Human- Elephant Conflict Management Capabilities in Burkina Faso- Similar situation to the **Awareness Project for the Fight Against Elephants' Poaching in the Cross-Border Biosphere of the W Reserve (PSLAB/RBTW)** in which funds are only recently being transferred to the engage those involved in implementing the project.

3) Ghana **-Elephant Conservation Through Law Enforcement And Stakeholder Engagement In Mole National Park And Its Corridor-** After agreement signing in March, funds were received in May and therefore proponent has only started in procuring of the equipment for undertaking the project and managed to begin only a few steps in engagement and identification of project needs; for the rangers involved in the project, the project supervisors have identified their training needs and they are in the process of engaging the trainers to train the park rangers, additionally stakeholders for the intended engagement for networking and knowledge of informants have been identified, an incentive program has been developed to entice informants around the parks to work closely with enforcement to capture wildlife criminals and lastly, patrolling has also begun to provide rations to rangers in the field.

South Africa by Abednico Machehe:



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		<p>1) Mozambique- Elephant Ivory Stockpile Management And Conservation In Mozambique- Information available currently notes only the beginning stages of the project as legal instrument and funds released during the Jan-March period. More information is expected during the next SC meeting.</p> <p>2) Malawi- Extension of an electric fence to reduce HEC-Interim progress reports have been submitted and reports demonstrate that 12km of solar powered electrical fence have been constructed to reduce human elephant conflict in the Thuma Forest reserve and have successfully reported zero elephants leaving the reserve, zero crop damage in the four months since the construction of the fence, and zero reports of HEC incidents. Moreover, the fence construction has reduced the number of poaching incidents as well as deforestation in the area.</p> <p>East Africa by Dawud Mume:</p> <p>1) Ethiopia- Improving Field Intelligence And Investigation Capacity For Ivory And Other Wildlife Crimes In Ethiopia- Despite funds being released in early April banks in Ethiopia have not reported sighting funds due to system issues. Implementation is expected to commence immediately funds are retrieved.</p> <p>2) Ethiopia- Combating the Illegal Killing of Elephants and Regional Trade of Ivory in Southwest Ethiopia and 3) Law Enforcement Operation, Workshop and Capacity Building in Southern Ethiopia- Trainings have been conducted in the management of parks in the highest risk areas have been conducted, workshops have been held to engage various prosecutors, police, justice office and law enforcement agencies in local and regional levels, changes have been enacted for recent prosecuted poachers to minimum sentences of 6 months and maximum of 18 years.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Recommendations: All progress and final reports on ongoing range states projects should be presented by regional representatives during the SC meeting to share the impacts of the projects so as to enhance the knowledge information and gains from results, successes and challenges faced in the implementation of the AEAP.</p>
6.	Review of Project Proposals	<p>Review and evaluation of projects were on ten (10) submitted project proposals.</p> <p>Proposals were presented by regional reps with queries/comments and inputs for improvements/other recommendations:</p> <p>1. From the Central African region five proposals were presented:</p> <p>a) Cameroon - Capacity Building of Stakeholders on the Conservation of Elephants and CITES (\$48,254.38).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cameroon proposal was not approved. <p>The proposal was no approved as the S.C agreed that they would like further clarification from the proponent on the content of their training initiative. The proponent should develop their proposal to</p>



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indicate who shall be trained, who shall be doing the training and clarify further on specifics of the training intended. It was agreed on by the S.C that Gabon shall work with the partner on the proposal for reconsideration during the next SC meeting.

b) **Central African Republic- Contribution to the Protection of Elephant Populations Victims of Political and Military Crisis In Central African Republic (\$46,935.00).**

- **Central African Republic proposal was approved.**

There was general support for the project by the S.C. However, the SC had reservations in regards to the amount of funding that should be awarded as they would like further clarification on the allocations of funds that are being offered by AEF as well as the other partners involved so as not to have duplication of funding for activities proposed. It is suggested that for the precise grant amount, the SC shall await verification from Germany who shall advise on other implementing partners' involvement and contributions.

c) **Congo (1)- Conservation of Forest Elephant In the Forest Area of Batekes Plateaux Congo-Gabon (\$106,264.00).**

- **Congo (1) proposal was not approved.**

The SC agrees that Gabon and Congo should collaborate in the project and as the project does intend to establish and strengthen bilateral and multilateral support for the management of sites and corridors across borders, there was general agreement is enhancing the proposal to reflect the collaboration. However, as Congo currently has an ongoing project entitled “**Renforcement Des Capacités Opérationnelles Dans La Lutte Contre Le Trafic Illégal Des Produits Et Sous Produits De L’éléphant. /Reinforcement of Operational Capacities in the Fight Against the Illegal Trafficking of Elephant Products and Sub-Products**” and no reporting has been made available, the SC agreed that Congo should provide some information on the current status of implementation of projects in the country before subsequent funds are released to develop further projects.

d) **Congo-Establishing a Mechanism to Combat Elephant Poaching in the Cross-Border Mayumba-Conkouati Park and its Buffer Zones (\$100,000.00).**

- **Congo (2) proposal was not approved.**

The proposal intends to work in the Congo-Gabon border area with parks in both areas training rangers in information gathering to handle poaching in the area. SC believes it would be a good project working to initiate activities that if implemented effectively should serve to combat poaching and enhance the capacity of law enforcement to investigate, detect and thwart wildlife criminal networks. Moreover, the proposal does require reworking to clarify elements within the budget (*budget note required*) and activities intended, so it is recommended that they work with Gabon to enhance the proposal and resubmit during the next SC meeting. Additionally, similarly to the first proposal submitted for Congo entitled “**Conservation of Forest Elephant In the Forest Area of Batekes Plateaux Congo-Gabon**”, the SC agreed that information on the current status of implementation of projects in the country should be provided before subsequent funds are released to develop further projects. Moreover, SC suggested that the project impact



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could be enhanced if collaboration efforts are joined with Gabon, Gabon shall therefore approach Congo to possibly develop a joint project.

e) **Chad- Emergency Project for Reducing the Human Elephant Conflict in Parts of the Chari Baguirmi and Mayo-Kebbi Est Region (\$160,200.00).**

- **Chad proposal was not approved.**

Despite the emergency response requested by Chad to mitigate the increased HEC incidences caused by the recent outbreak of civil violence, the SC felt that an improved budget and project proposal should be developed. The AEF Chair has committed to work closely with Chad to develop a new proposal for consideration during the next SC meeting.

f) **Gabon- Military Training for Gabon’s Park Rangers (\$151,900.00).**

- **Gabon proposal was approved.**

The SC supports the project to enhance the military for strengthening the capacity to combatting poaching and illegal trade in ivory and other wildlife products as well as how to deal with arrests and crimes scenes among others. Moreover, the SC supports to fund the food cost, transport costs and equipment costs requested but they would like the Gabon government to supplement with resources. It was recommended to reduce the grant by \$43,200 and the new total funding that shall be supported shall be \$108,700.

2. From the East African region **one** proposal was presented:

Tanzania –Fostering Cooperative Enforcement Towards Curtailing Illegal Killings of Elephants in Ruaha Ecosystems in Tanzania (\$20,000.00).

- **Tanzania was not approved for funding.**

The SC was hesitant to approve the proposal as it seemed to propose an ineffective program. The proposal intends to hold a 4 day training session that is very ambitious in the techniques they intend to train on and the SC felt that with the limited time it would be unlikely to hold detailed training on all the issues intended and therefore felt that more time would be needed to focus on the issues. Therefore the proposal would need to develop a more achievable program with realistic timeframes. Moreover, the SC felt that the proposal needed to be rewritten in consultation with LATF to demonstrate its collaboration with LATF and to clarify the intended training.

3. From the West African region **one** proposal was presented:

Ghana–Reducing HEC Through Improved Monitoring, Stakeholder Engagement and Law Enforcement (\$156,786.00).

- **Ghana was approved for funding.**

There was general support for the project. The SC noted that HEC is a major concern in Ghana and that crop raiding is a key issue for the population. It was agreed that the project proposal was thoroughly



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		<p>developed, comprehensive and activities proposed were well strategized. However, the S.C did suggest that Ghana and other range states implementing HEC interventions should utilize the IUCN HEC toolkit. Additionally, the SC suggested the Ghana should consider changing the current time frame for the project because as it stands, the time frame for implementing the project is 9 months and may be too short to effectively mitigate HEC and a proposal to 12 months would be better suited.</p> <p>4. From the Southern Africa region two proposals were presented:</p> <p>Zambia (1) -Enhancing Effectiveness of Law Enforcement Monitoring and Analysis systems in Zambia’s Elephant Range Areas (\$60,000.00).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zambia was approved for funding. <p>The S.C suggested that they enhance their project by ensuring technical expertise in utilizing SMART. It was agreed that SMART training alone does not result in much data for monitoring without enhancing capabilities for utilizing SMART at optimal levels and patrolling. Furthermore, the SC agreed that clarification is needed on their SMART technical expertise as their proposed technique may not be used to its full extent. Additionally, the SC suggested that Zambia should probably seek partnership with MIKE to improve their capabilities in utilizing SMART in implementation of the project, because it is the process of monitoring and not necessary the tools that could enhance monitoring of populations.</p> <p>Zambia (2)-Strengthening Implementation for HEC Response Strategy in Zambia (\$100,000.00).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zambia (2) proposal was not approved. <p>S.C agreed that since the project proposal is a continuation of the current project approved by the SC entitled “Human-Elephant Conflicts Vulnerability Assessment And Mitigation Tools In Zambia” the proponent should submit final reports on the project before a refunding is offered to support the project. If final reports are proved before the next SC then the proponent should resubmit proposal for consideration.</p>
7.	Final Results	Of the ten (10) proposals resubmitted only four (4) which were from Central African Republic, Gabon, Ghana and Zambia were approved for funding. The total amount of funds approved was \$372,421.
8.	Reporting, Funds and Strategies	<p>1) It was recommended that in order to enhance the budget proposals submitted by range states, the current AEF budget template shall require a budget note so support proposals.</p> <p>2) In regards to reporting, it was noted that for all new projects approved henceforth, reporting templates both project and financial reports should be included during the signing of legal contract to ensure that they uphold to requirements of UNEP. All necessary requirements in terms of reporting must be disclosed to proponents to ensure smooth operational management of projects from implementation to close.</p> <p>Recommendation: Financial reports shall be activity based report and included in the initial signing of the legal agreements to ensure that proponents are aware of the requirements of all reports; interim and final</p>



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reports for financial and project reports.

3) Subsequent SC meeting shall require regional representatives to give updated progress reports on all projects ongoing in their region.

4) In regards to scoring of proposals, it has been suggested that the scoring of 0,3,5 might be too rigid and may not fully capture the true strength or lack thereof on particular criteria in judging proposals and therefore a move toward scoring the whole range from 0,1,2,3,4,5 may be better suited. The SC agreed that subsequent SC meetings shall enact the changes in scoring to the whole range from 1-5. 2). Scoring of the projects shall be undertaken on a scale from 0-5. *Tentatively (0= -, 1= very poor, 2= poor, 3= satisfactory, 4= good, 5= very good).*

5) Upon request from the SC members for assistance in creating an account for managing travel costs for SC, donors have agreed to fund travels only for SC members who are in need of the assistance to attend AEFSC meetings. The assistance from donors shall enable a quorum and limit difficulties for SC members to participate in deliberations. Netherlands committed to a one meeting per year funded for the SC members to hold the AEFSC meetings. Nevertheless, members of the SC are to look within their institutions to support the AEFSC meetings and offer resources to facilitate participation of members.

6) Visibility of the Fund beginning with the official AEF website should continue to be up-to-date, strategies for enhancing awareness of the Fund should reach a diverse demographic and should be enhanced in all possible UNEP engagements. For future SC meeting an additional half day session is suggested to have presentations from range states on the ongoing projects funded by AEF. Moreover with the upcoming CoP17 UNEP should engage with organizers to make available an exhibition booth and a side-event to publicize the Fund and AEAP. The side event should have range states that have been funded to showcase the project implementation of their project/s.

Recommendation:

The Secretariat shall create:

- a) a working group to brainstorm on upcoming side event content, media engagement, and presence of the AEF at the Africa Pavilion at CoP17, group shall be comprised of South Africa- Thea, Gabon- Aurele Flore, Kenya, Burkina Faso and the Secretariat;
- b) create a working group to brainstorm on options for UNEP's future engagement with AEAP with AEF, group shall be comprised of Kenya, Botswana, Netherlands and the Secretariat;
- c) liaise with future host of the 9th AEFSC meeting in 2017 and agree on the way forward; and
- d) engage with South Africa as the next host of the CoP17 on the AEF side event and booth;
- e) new strategies for resource mobilization should be developed as more donors could be engaged to offer support for the AEF.

7) The joint AEF and CITES proposal on the project entitled **“Supporting CITES Implementation for Tree Species and the Implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP) through the AEF”** requesting for a grant of €8,000,000.00, in which AEF is requesting for €1,000,000.00 is still moving forward positively and funding does look forthcoming. However, confirmation is still pending on whether the funds shall be on an annual basis for the €1M for up to 3 years or if the €1,000,000.00 shall be spread across 3 years.

8) There was a brief on the Elephant Protection Initiative (EPI) meeting that took place from June 20th-21st



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		<p>2016 and AEF SC members agreed that shared strategies and cooperation with implementing partners of the AEAP with range states have tremendous potential for impacting the conservation efforts for the African elephants, however duplication of efforts should be limited to ensure supporting the development of the AEAP. Worth noting is that in attendance during the EPI meeting were representatives from African non-range states and range states who are members of the EPI initiative such as Botswana, Chad, Ethiopia, Gabon, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, representatives of non- governmental organizations such as Chris Thouless of Elephant Crisis Fund and Holly Dublin of IUCN, as well as representatives in the private sector such as Peter Middlebrook of Geopolicity Inc. among others who shared their experiences on the National Elephant Action Plan (NEAP) development process, NEAP Standards and Guidelines, and NEAP implementation. During the meeting, AEF Secretariat (Mamadou Kane) made a presentation on AEF successes and challenges faced in implementing the African Elephant Action Plan; discussing successes of AEF over the past years since its inception in 2010 and commence of operations in 2011 and the challenges faced on implementation of the AEAP nationally faced by range states and thereafter concluded with those faced by the Secretariat.</p> <p>9) There was a suggestion that emerged on a possible update on the AEAP, however the consensus was that the objectives and priorities are still relevant and that no update is needed since during the Burkina Faso meeting (2013) there was an increase in the timeline for implementing the AEAP.</p> <p>10) There was a note from the Secretariat on UNEA-22 that took place in May 2016 in which Resolution on Illegal Trade in Wildlife and Wildlife Products was once again agreed on for UNEP to take a proactive role in the administration of the AEF, the Secretariat and its working group shall develop a plan to engage the new Executive Director of UNEP to enhance UNEP's role and his involvement.</p>
9.	A.O.B	<p>The next SC meeting shall take place during the margins of the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP17) from 24th September to 5th October 2016.</p> <p>The 9th AEFSC meeting was proposed to take place in the South African region and possibly hosted by Botswana in 2017. Exact dates shall be confirmed during the CITES CoP17 meeting.</p> <p>There being no other business, the chair declared the meeting closed at 2.08pm June 23rd 2016.</p>