

**[CITES Standing Committee]
'MIKE' Sub-group Meeting
26 November 2003**

In attendance:

Dr Pieter Botha (Chair – South Africa) , Mr Frank Jacobs (EC), Dr Jim Armstrong (Secretariat), Mr Tom Milliken (TRAFFIC/ETIS), Mr Nigel Hunter (Director).

Missing : Mr Stephen Ebai Takeng (Cameroon), Mr Emmanuel Severre/Mr Matthew Maige (Tanzania), Dr Meng Xianlin/Mr Wan Ziming (China), Mr Abd Rashid Samsudin (Malaysia), Dr Karl Stroymayer (USFWS) and Ms Nina Marshall (CEPF).

As with the last teleconference, attendance was low. The Chairman nevertheless suggested that the meeting should go ahead, as the minutes would serve as a useful progress report to the other members.

Agenda:

The agenda as sent out by the Secretariat was agreed with the addition of “update on ETIS”.

Minutes of the last teleconference:

The minutes of the 1st August 2002 meeting were approved as an accurate record, subject to no written comments being received from the missing members within 14 days of the minutes of this meeting being provided to them.

Matters Arising:

1. Teleconference format

Liaison with the Chair and the Secretariat had occurred. It was felt that streamlining the teleconference to include the 6 members (South Africa, Cameroon, Tanzania, China, Malaysia and USA), the 3 donors (EC, USFWS and CEPF), the Secretariat and the Director would make the logistics easier. The Secretariat suggested we should continue trying the teleconference format, as it had been very successful in the past and we should try and ascertain the actual problems being currently faced. The experience of this latest teleconference revealed the following:

1. Some contact numbers had changed but the request to provide an update in the notice of the meeting, faxed to all participants, had not been responded to.
2. Some contact numbers are general numbers and answered by persons with no knowledge of the MIKE meeting and speaking in languages not understood by the Swiss operator, e.g. Swahili and Chinese. There was therefore a need to get direct numbers.
3. The Secretariat was handicapped on this occasion by having administrative support on leave.
4. Swiss operator should be asked to keep linked to the teleconference, in order to reconnect anyone disconnected as fast as possible.

It was agreed that another effort should be made to try the teleconference format, but the problems highlighted with this teleconference should be included in the notice of the next meeting.

Progress Report (Technical):

The Director provided a progress report as of November, following the format of the last meeting.

1. Establishment of MIKE CCU

The Director reported that the one remaining CCU position of Data Co-ordinator had been advertised and 3 candidates had been short listed and interviewed. 1 candidate was significantly better than the other 2 and had been offered the post. Unfortunately, after careful consideration the candidate has turned down the position, primarily because she learnt after the interview that she had become pregnant. The candidate felt that this would reduce her effectiveness in the job, despite the Director's efforts to persuade her to change her mind.

It was agreed by the interview panel that if the second placed candidate came into the reckoning a more detailed analysis of this persons technical skills would be required, before the candidate

could be offered the post. In the event that these technical skills are judged inadequate, the post will have to be re-advertised.

2. *Setting up in Range States*

Asia – The Director was able to report that the implementation meeting (New Delhi, Feb 2003) for South Asia confirmed the commitment of all 5 range states (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka) to implement the MIKE programme, though in Bhutan and Sri Lanka's case this commitment was subject to letters of confirmation. These have been provided. The Sub-region adopted the same institutional arrangements that are in place in the Africa Sub-regions. Similarly the implementation meeting (Bangkok, March 2003) confirmed the commitment of all 8 range states (Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam) to implement the MIKE programme, again using the same institutional arrangements.

Africa – The Director confirmed that MIKE was set up in all 29 countries involved in Africa. However the plan to bring Sierra Leone on board has not yet come about because of continuing civil strife. But Sierra Leone, together with Ethiopia, Malawi, and Angola were planned for inclusion in the main EC programme support phase.

3. *Establishment of Sub-regional Support Officers*

The Director was pleased to be able to report that the South Asia Sub-regional Support Officer (SSO) had been appointed in August 2003 and was up and running in an office located in New Delhi. Given that the previous arrangement for an SSO in South East Asia had fallen through, it had taken 6 months or so to find a suitable replacement. However the chosen candidate had just confirmed that he would sign the contract and be available from 2nd January 2004. The Office will be located in Bangkok in the Thailand Management Authority, but the Director was seeking IUCN ARO agreement to facilitate the contracting of the SSO to get foreign mission status.

4. *Establishment of MIKE in Range States*

Africa – The Director reported that all 29 countries, including Nigeria were now active, other than in those countries where civil strife has caused MIKE activities to be suspended.

Asia – For South Asia, the first law enforcement monitoring (LEM) workshop has been delivered (Delhi, October 2003). The MIKE forms are being adapted to fit South Asia conditions (i.e. different patrol system), but this has no impact on the data being collected. The GPSs will be delivered during December. Site training on GPS and use of the forms will then be undertaken during January/ February. The computers re targeted to be delivered by the end of February. This should facilitate the database training to be undertaken in April. For South East Asia, the delay in replacing the SSO has resulted in no progress in establishing MIKE activities in South East Asia. However activities and some momentum should pick up in January.

5. *Establishment of Protocols and Analysis Systems*

The Director reported that the patrol and carcass forms are consolidated on the basis of good feedback from the field helping their simplification and understanding. They are currently being adapted to A5 size as there is still some reluctance to taking A4 size into the field.

In response to requests from the majority of range states in Africa and Asia, and in line with MIKE objectives 1 and 3 as set out in Res 10.10 (RevCoP12), a new Human/Elephant Conflict form has been drafted and will be reviewed by the TAG next month.

The data analytical strategy has now evolved to a sufficient degree that the December TAG meeting will consider it for adoption. Linked to the strategy, a detailed list of the questions being attempted to being answered at the site level has been developed and will also be considered at the TAG meeting. If approved the next step will be to detail the extra questions that need addressing at national, sub-regional and regional levels.

The development of the MIKE database in the computer has reached the stage that there is a working version 1 installed in each computer. Data can now be entered at each site into the database and monthly and annual reports generated reasonably easily. Version 2 which is

currently being developed will add linkages to the GIS so that maps can be easily generated. This version is aimed at being ready by January 2004.

The Director then concluded this section by reporting that an information and data handling, access and release policy and protocols has been fully agreed by all African and Asian range states. The Deputy Secretary General (DSG) underlined the importance of having the policy and protocols in place, but wondered why monthly reports were still being sent to the Secretariat. The Director was able to provide the reassurance that this was not at the expense of reports going to the SSOs and the CCU, and therefore should be seen as an extra copy being provided to the Secretariat.

6. *Capacity Building*

Africa – The Director confirmed that training on LEM and population surveys has been provided. However the use of GPs and the LEM forms, particularly patrol forms and monthly reports were still of mixed quality. Currently there was a major drive by the SSOs to reinforce the need to get this as routine as possible. With the successful provision of computers to all sites, and funding assistance of USFWS, A data management training unit delivered training on using the database to all Sub-regions during June/July this year. A further round of training will be provided in January 2004, when the site officers will bring their own data. A major issue has been that of virus management and this will be reinforced in the January training sessions.

However the context and motivation for making best use of this training is still not being provided by some countries. The message does not come down loud and clear from the Governments to their field staff that MIKE is a Government programme, decided by their Government for building the capacity of Government staff and that delivering MIKE information is part of their responsibilities as Government staff and that the expectancy of external sources for paying bonuses to motivate does not lead to capacity building, since these external sources are not sustained. The Director emphasized that the MIKE secretariat can not sing this song on its own, and therefore has used the occasion of recent Sub-regional Steering Committees meetings to get support and commitment for delivering this message.

Subsequent discussion of this issue by the Sub-group emphasized the importance of having the Governments fully commit to the capacity building initiatives of MIKE and to having Standing Committee support in addressing such problems, including consideration of specific Standing Committee action. The meeting therefore requested the Director to prepare a report for the next Standing Committee meeting (March 2004). This report should where necessary highlight any country still considered to be not fully committed to overcoming capacity building problems. Where that situation prevails, the report should go on to highlight the efforts made so far and identify what is still required.

Asia – The Director was not able to provide any feedback as yet, as the capacity building is just starting.

7. *Population Surveys*

Africa – Of the savanna sites, The Director reported that Comoe, Babah Rafi, Yankari, Sambissa, Sengba, Cabora Baso, Caprivi, and possibly Waza need an updated survey. Of these Comoe in Cote D'Ivoire remains problematical, because of civil strife. The others are planned for 2004, but lack of budget is becoming a constraint. Of the forest sites, Sapo, Kahuzi Biega and Elgon need updates, but Sapo and Kahuzi-Biega have security problems. Elgon is planned for 2004.

Asia - The Director highlighted the fact that Asia has predominately forest sites. Having visited the Asian countries and held discussions with Asian specialists, it became apparent that at least 4 different approaches to Dung Survey methods were evolving, and there was no consensus that the rainfall method currently used in Africa was the right way forward. The Director therefore commissioned a Dung Count Task Force of the worlds leading experts (Washington, October 2003) and they are now recommending an unified way forward. Hopefully this will be adopted by the TAG at the December 2003 meeting. However the same group are concerned that the method is not appropriate with very low numbers or

densities, that are found in a number of the S.E. Asia sites. Methods here may have to look more to new approaches such as the Faecal/DNA method. The Director concluded by expressing his gratitude to USFWS for providing the venue for the task force meeting.

8. *Information*

Africa – In spite of the training, the provision of equipment, the site visits by SSOs, etc. getting LEM data collected and flowing on a routine systematic basis is still a huge headache. In order to try and get on top of this, the MIKE Secretariat have developed a site log monitoring tool, of which an example was provided and explained to the meeting. The Director reported that this was proving very useful in revealing where the bottlenecks and constraints were. The reasons for the above situation included poor communication between National Officers and Site Officers, on-site tensions between staff and NGOs, lack of realization that undertaking no patrols and/or finding no carcasses was still a data point and should trigger a monthly report, patrols striking when bonuses, paid under a project, finish, dealing with great variance in the human resources involved in MIKE, high turnover in Site officers, etc. The problems cut across all Sub-regions. To overcome this current problem, The MIKE secretariat have held Sub-regional Steering Committees and flagged these issues with the Directors. The SSOs are revisiting the sites in order to unlock individual site problems. It is thought that having access to computers and carrying out site analysis will help to demonstrate the usefulness of the information. It is intended to use the training in January 2004 to reinforce the message. Some progress is discernable. For example in CA, since July, the number of patrol reports has grown from 15 to 51, carcass reports from 4 to 78, monthly reports from 9 to 26. The situation and progress made would be reviewed at an SSO meeting scheduled for February 2004.

Asia – The Director stated that it was too early to report on, but there does appear to be good mortality data already existing for South Asia.

In discussing the data flow issue, the meeting welcomed the development of the site logs as a very useful monitoring tool. In response to whether it was possible to estimate what percentage of the forms were estimated to be in the data base, the Director responded by indicating that it was difficult as yet to have any feel for such an estimation. The Director did inform the meeting that he would be routinely sending log updates to the DSG.

9. *Implementation monitoring*

Africa – Mention had already been made by the Director in regard to the Site Logs. In addition, he reconfirmed that Sub-regional Steering Committee meetings were held in Central Africa and West Africa in August, East Africa in November and Southern Africa is scheduled for January. Minutes will be put on the web shortly.

Progress Report (Financial):

The Director provided a progress report, as of November 2003, in regard to current and future MIKE funding

1. *EC current project (Africa)*

The current EC project for Africa had been granted a no cost extension until the end of April 2004, so MIKE was able to continue until then.

2. *EC main phase project (Africa)*

The prospective EC main phase project had received a commitment of Euro 10 million under the 9th Intra ACP EDF budget line. The director was helping the EC in moving the project through EC procedures. A concept note had been prepared in conjunction with a Global Commitment Authorisation Decision (DAG) form and an Identification Fiche (IS) that are currently being circulated within the EC. The letters of support, particularly from the 3 African regional organisations had been helpful in getting the above process started. The next step was to have a feasibility study, which would employ consultants to prepare the draft project documentation, which would then go through the various EC approval procedures. Given this procedure, it was unlikely that funds would come on line until early 2005. There was a need therefore for bridging funds.

3. *Bridging Funds: Netherlands*
At the invitation of the Netherlands Government, a project proposal had been submitted to help the bridging period. The proposal has applied for US\$500,000 for Africa and US\$200,000 for Asia. The proposal is under consideration but the Director was not certain as to when the final decision would be taken by the Netherlands Government.
4. *Bridging Funds: Norway – Submitting proposal this week, approx \$550,000*
The Director had recently been invited to submit a proposal to the Norwegian Government to also help with the bridging period. This proposal was just receiving its finishing touches and would be forwarded to the Norwegian Government within a week of the teleconference. The amount being requested was US\$550,000.
5. *Belgium and Finland*
The Director was pursuing enquiries with the Belgian and Finnish Governments to see if they would also be willing to help MIKE through the bridging period. He would keep the DSG informed of any progress in this regard.
6. *USFWS (Africa – forest surveys and data training)*
The USFWS African Elephant Conservation Fund continued to support the Central African Forest Surveys and the Database training with further grants from the 2002/2003 budget. This support ensures the forest surveys will be completed in terms of field work. It also ensures that the data base training will be completed, as envisaged under the current phase in January/February 2004.
7. *CBFP (Central Africa)*
The Director has just met the USAID Co-ordinator for the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP). At his request, the Director has prepared a draft brief on the advantages of collaboration between MIKE and CBFP. The USAID Co-ordinator will present this brief to a December 2003 meeting of the partners for formal endorsement. One advantage of such collaboration would be the support CBFP could provide to MIKE field work in Central Africa.
8. *CEPF (West Africa)*
Conservation International's CEPF Africa Manager agreed to extend the CEPF grant by a further year in order to get the programme completed. A further small extension is likely to be requested to complete the forest surveys in West Africa.
9. *USFWS (S. Asia)*
The USFWS Asian Conservation Fund has provided a grant from their 2002/2003 budget to assist the start up of MIKE in South Asia. It is hoped that USFWS will be able to make a further contribution from the 2003/2004 budget..
10. *Japan Govt (Asia)*
The Japanese Government has also contributed funds to the South Asia start up programme, which has been made available to MIKE under a CITES Secretariat MoU with the MIKE CCU. The CITES Secretariat is currently discussing with the Japanese Government further possible contributions for Asia.
11. *USFWS (S.E Asia)*
The USFWS Asian Conservation Fund continued to support the MIKE work in South East Asia with a further grant from their 2002/2003 budget. The lack of an SSO has delayed implementation but momentum should pick up in 2004.
12. *CEPF (S.E. Asia – Sumatra)*
Conservation International's CEPF Asia Manager gave the go ahead to submit a project proposal for supporting MIKE activities in Sumatra. The proposal is currently being considered by CEPF and the Director is hoping to hear from CEPF shortly. More critical ecosystems are being analysed by CEPF in Asia and it is possible that 3 of these will identify elephants as an area of support.

13. *Japan Traders*

The Japan Traders Association have provided a grant with no strings attached for assisting the start of MIKE in Asia

14. *ASEAN – With SSO in place, will work with JA on attracting funds.*

With the South East Asia SSO in place, it will now be possible to work with the SSO and the DSG to request funding support from ASEAN. The range states have indicated that they would support such a request.

ETIS update

Tom Milliken reported that there were now 8510 cases in the ETIS database, which was a 1000 more than those considered in the CoP 12 analysis. In addition there were 351 cases pending entry. These included 156 from China, which needed the ivory involved in these cases to be better described. ETIS was experiencing a significant increase in the number of countries now providing information., including some important cases from Australia.

The next step was to send out some 178 letters for soliciting further data to be provided in preparation for CoP 13. However Mr Milliken did signal the difficulties currently being faced in Zimbabwe with postal strikes and asked if the Secretariat would be able to assist with the mailing from Geneva. The DSG responded by agreeing that such help would be forthcoming if needed.

Tom Milliken then went on to set out the proposed schedule of events leading up to the CoP 13 ETIS report. In December, Bob Burn would be visiting Harare to primarily deal with database issues, including improving functionality. The 4th series of country reports was scheduled for early 2004. For this purpose, the database would be closed in February and the reports sent out in April/May. It was hoped that some analysis might be possible in the country reports for the first time. Following this exercise, the database would be re-opened and efforts made to have an intensive data entry in readiness for CoP 13. The database would then be closed by June, an analysis undertaken in July and the report sent to the Secretariat in August. The DSG confirmed that the end of August would be the time for the final issue of documents, but the earlier in August the ETIS report was received the better.

Mr Milliken then turned to funding and reported that the United Kingdom was the current main source of funding. However this would shortly run out. He recognised that the MIKE application included a component for ETIS, but there would be a need to cover a bridging period. He therefore needed to collaborate on this with the Secretariat, to which the DSG agreed.

MIKE/ETIS TAG

Following the decision at CoP12 that ETIS, as well as MIKE, should have technical oversight by a TAG, the following recommendations were being submitted for the MIKE/ETIS Sub-group approval:

1. That MIKE and ETIS should have one TAG, but the normal modus operandi will be to have a Sub- TAG for MIKE and a Sub-TAG for ETIS. This does not preclude having a full TAG meeting for MIKE and ETIS, when required.
2. That the current TAG be expanded by 4 persons to accommodate ETIS needs and to accommodate better Asian representation, and that these 4 persons fall under the globally recognized category.
3. That Professor Anil Gore, Dr Liz Bennett and Dr Esmond Martin be appointed to the TAG (CVs attached) to fill 3 of these vacancies.
4. That the current TAG members appointments be approved for a further 2 years (all have signalled their willingness to continue)
5. That the ETIS Sub-group shall consist of Dr Holly Dublin, Dr Hugo Jachmann, Prof. Anil Gore, Dr Liz Bennett, Dr Esmond Martin and one other person to be appointed. That Dr Bob Burn attend as a co-opted member with Nigel Hunter and Tom Milliken attending ex officio.

6. That the MIKE Sub-group shall consist of the current 10 members plus Prof. Anil Gore and Dr Liz Bennett. That Dr Bob Burn and Rene Beyers attend as co-opted members with Nigel Hunter and Tom Milliken attending ex officio.
7. That these recommendations take effect from 1st January 2004.

In addition, it was agreed, at the DSG's suggestion, that the *modus operandi*, set out in the terms of reference for the MIKE TAG (Notification No. 2000/025) would apply to the ETIS TAG Sub-group.

The meeting adopted these recommendations subject to the members, who were not present in the meeting, concurring within 14 days of the minutes being provided to them. No response from any such members would be recognised as concurrence.

Any other business

1 MIKE baseline update

At the request of the DSG, the Director was asked to provide the Sub-group an overview of where MIKE was in implementing the baseline as defined at the last Standing Committee. In response the Director stated that for Africa, given that much of the population surveys had been undertaken and that the 12 months data appeared to be more a problem of getting it into the database and flowing to National Officers and SSOs, he felt that it was still possible to have the baseline achieved during 2004. He also felt, given that the programme had started in South Asia and that there was already good mortality data, that this Sub-region was probably on a similar time scale as Africa. However, given the delay in appointing a SSO in South East Asia, the Director felt that this Sub-region may not achieve baseline implementation until 2005.

The meeting then requested the Director to provide the next Standing Committee with an up to date assessment of where MIKE was in relation to achieving the baseline requirements. It was agreed in that context that the Director would provide the assessment, but in the interests of maintaining MIKE neutrality, no recommendations regarding the baseline would be incorporated into the assessment.

Conclusion:

The Chairman concluded the meeting by thanking participants for their useful and helpful contributions.