

4th Sub regional Steering Committee Meeting for MIKE Eastern Africa,

25-26 September 2008

Hotel Des Mille Collines, KIGALI RWANDA.



**Minutes of the 4th meeting of the Sub-regional Steering Committee for
MIKE East Africa**

**25-26 September 2008
Hotel Des Mille Collines, Kigali, RWANDA**

1. Welcome speech by the Chairman [Rwanda]

2. Adoption of the agenda [Rwanda]

Dr. Antoine Mudakikwa, Chairman of the meeting, called the meeting to order at 8.30am and welcomed everybody to the “city of peace”, Kigali. The agenda was adopted with minor amendments. The Chairman proposed to start the meeting with an introduction by each participant. Mr. Tom De Meulenaer, the MIKE Coordinator, echoed the sentiments of the Chairman and took the opportunity to recognize two special participants at the meeting, the delegates from Ethiopia and Sudan who were joining this forum for the first time. Mr. Edison Nuwamanya, the MIKE Sub-regional Support Officer for MIKE East Africa, gave apologies on behalf of Eritrea as delegates could not make it due to other government commitments.

3. Terms of Reference for Sub-regional Steering Committee (SSC) meetings [MIKE Coordinator]

The MIKE Coordinator provided an overview of the Terms of Reference for Sub-regional Steering Committee meetings having incorporated all the feedback from Sub-regional Steering Committees of Central, East and West Africa, and South Asia.

The SSC took note of the Terms of Reference for Sub-regional Steering Committee meetings.

4. Update on MIKE East Africa and overview on progress on needs and issues agreed at previous SSC [Sub-regional Support Officer]

The Sub-regional Support Officer for MIKE East Africa discussed the implementation of the MIKE programme in East Africa. The presentation reflected on the issues brought up at previous Steering Committee meetings and discussed details on what the programme had done in order to address the needs and issues brought up at the previous meeting. These had been broadly categorized as:

- Capacity building and Human Resource issues
- Logistical and Technical issues
- Sustainability and political will issues

The SSC appreciated the report by the Sub-regional Support Officer. Its general conclusions were valued.

The SSO further reported that the TAG had recommended adoption of Management Information System (MIST) as the model for collecting Law Enforcement Monitoring (LEM) data and Kenya was in the process of rolling out the programme which will eventually be used across all range states, replacing the old MIKE forms (and database). The SSO highlighted some of the important activities in for the coming year which included:

- Conducting priority surveys based on TAG priority guidelines
- Working with Range States to secure additional funds from potential donors and partners for surveys
- Conducting training on aerial survey techniques
- Procuring and gradually replacing site and national equipment (computers and GPS, software)
- Enhancing technology-based data transfer
- Continue to support MIKE officers
- Providing support to Ethiopia and Sudan
- Working with Range States to ensure data for CoP15 analysis is collected and collated in time
- Participating in the MIKE analysis and distribution of findings
- Comprehensive training in MIST and other areas
- Maintaining linkages/communications with ETIS, AfESG and other stakeholders

On the issue of whether the current office location in Kigali would affect the future recruitment of an SSO, the SSC was reassured that the practical arrangements between Uganda and MIKE about the hosting of the MIKE Sub-regional Support Unit for East Africa (SSU EA) were subject of a formal agreement. Uganda confirmed that changes in the SSU in terms of staffing would not affect this agreement or the current operations.

It was noted that sub-regional training in forest elephant populating survey techniques would have to be considered by the SSU EA in the course of 2008/2009 in addition to savanna surveys.

5. Country reports

Each country gave a presentation on the progress of implementation of the MIKE programme for each of its sites; the status of staff and resources at the site level; elephant population surveys; training needs; and challenges faced in implementing MIKE.

a. Kenya

Kenya's country presentation was provided by Mr. Moses Litoroh, the MIKE National Officer. Kenya reported an apparent upsurge in elephant poaching in recent past.

Kenya's presentation was noted.

The MIKE programme committed to support an elephant population survey in 2008 for the Samburu / Laikipia MIKE site, possibly in combination with regional training in aerial surveys in November-December 2008.

The SSC agreed that the survey for the Mount Elgon MIKE site was a high priority.

Kenya confirmed its commitment in deploying MIST with the support of the MIKE programme.

b. Tanzania

Mr. Theotimos Rwegasira presented Tanzania's country report, which the SSC noted. The report highlighted staff turnover as one of Tanzania's major challenges of implementing MIKE, which was echoed by other participants. The SSC recognized the need for range States in curbing staff turnover as this was a very important condition for keeping the MIKE momentum going. Furthermore, the SSC welcomed Tanzania's interest in incorporating MIKE in the national wildlife training curricula for rangers and park guards.

Tanzania committed to deploy MIKE in the Mkomazi MIKE site and to collaborate with Tsavo (Kenya) in MIKE training and elephant population surveys.

c. Uganda

Uganda's country presentation was provided by Mr. Tom Okello Obong, the Conservation Area manager for Queen Elizabeth MIKE site. In his presentation, he highlighted a questionable increase in elephant numbers in this MIKE site, which was mainly attributed to the situation in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, causing an influx of elephants from across the DRC.

The SSC agreed that Uganda should attempt to conduct a total count of the elephant populations of the Queen Elizabeth National Park.

Uganda agreed to invite the SSO to attend its next wardens' cross-border meetings with DRC.

The MIKE programme was encouraged by the SSC to seek close collaboration with WCS about the deployment of MIST and in conducting elephant population surveys in East Africa, similar to previous agreements between MIKE and WCS in Central Africa.

The SSC encouraged range States other than Uganda to use satellite equipment for monitoring cross-border elephant populations in MIKE sites, and requested the MIKE programme to consider including this in future equipment for relevant MIKE sites. MIKE would bring this issue also to the attention of the MIKE Technical Advisory Group (MIKE TAG).

d. Ethiopia

Mr. Cherie Enawgaw, Ethiopia's delegate, gave an overview of the elephant situation in Ethiopia. During the presentation, Ethiopia's two potential MIKE sites were described.

The SSC took note of Ethiopia's intention to initially propose Babile Elephant Sanctuary and Kefla Shiraro National Park as the country's MIKE sites, and encouraged the country to submit the relevant information to the MIKE CCU as soon as possible.

Ethiopia committed to collaborate with SSU East Africa and the MIKE CCU to ensure incorporation of the two sites in the MIKE programme.

The SSC expressed its appreciation for the efforts that Ethiopia displayed for joining MIKE programme.

e. Sudan

Sudan was represented by Mr. Ahmed Mohammed Bringi Ali. Due to logistical challenges, Sudan apologized for not having prepared a formal presentation. The two suggested MIKE sites for Sudan were suggested to be Dinder and Rodom National Parks.

Sudan promised to provide the SSC with details on the status of its elephant populations by the next SSC meeting. In the meantime, Sudan would consider collating information for a formal proposal to the MIKE CCU concerning one or more MIKE sites.

f. Rwanda

Rwanda's report was delivered by Mr. Rogers Gakwerere on behalf of the MIKE National Officer who was chairing of the meeting. Rwanda explained that it had collected MIKE data from 2004 up to 2008, but had resorted to using MIST since May 2008.

In addition, the SSU EA confirmed that MIST and MIKE forms and reporting practices are compatible.

The SSU EA committed to provide technical support for the next elephant population survey that would be conducted in Akagera National Park.

The SSC was informed that Rwanda was planning the translocation of elephants from Akagera to Nyungwe National Park and that all support would be welcome.

6. New approaches to data collection, handling and analysis (MIST) [Sub-regional Support Officer]

The Sub-regional support officer gave a detailed overview of how Uganda's Management Information System (MIST) works as a tool for collecting relevant information and guiding decision-making in protected area management.

A detailed explanation of the database infrastructure, interface and working environment was presented. The SSO also informed members that deployment of MIST in MIKE sites had been and subject to the approval of the MIKE Technical Advisory Group at its sixth meeting in March 2008.

The SSC recognized the many interesting aspects of the MIST programme, while remaining cognizant of challenges in training, procuring sufficient GPS units and motivating rangers in the use of the technology.

7. MIKE priorities for Africa in 2008/2009 [MIKE Coordinator]

The MIKE Coordinator presented the priorities for MIKE in Africa in general and East Africa in particular for 2008-09, which were noted. The MIKE CCU and SSU East Africa agreed to put timelines on the implementation of certain activities, particularly procurement of hard- and software, and communicate these to the SSC.

The SSC further requested to be informed at its next meeting about the results of the MIKE site mapping that is being undertaken. Kenya suggested that site delineation be based on an “ecosystem approach” as had been agreed for the Kenyan sites at the initial implementation meeting in Dar Es Salaam 2001

The MIKE Coordinator highlighted some of the important priorities such as:

- Population surveys in key MIKE sites;
- Elephant meat study;
- Training and capacity building

The MIKE Coordinator explained that the population survey priorities had been reached after consultation with the Technical Advisory Group and for East Africa in particular, the priorities were indicated as shown below:

Country	MIKE Site	Priority Score
KE	Mount. Elgon (Kenya)	1
UG	Murchison Falls National Park	1
UG	Queen Elizabeth National Park	2
KE	Meru	2
KE	Samburu Laikipia	2
ER	Gash Setit	2
TZ	Selous Mikumi	2
TZ	Ruaha Rungwa	2
TZ	Katavi Rukwa	2
TZ	Tarangire Manyara	3
RW	Akagera	4
KE	Tsavo	5
UG	Mount Elgon (Uganda)	10

The SSU East Africa also agreed to assist Ethiopia and Sudan in seeking financial support for the new MIKE sites in these two range States.

8. Other elephant and CITES issues [MIKE Coordinator]

The MIKE Coordinator presented an overview of other elephant and CITES issues that were of relevance to the Sub regional Steering Committee meeting. Important upcoming events and deadlines included the following:

- 58th meeting of Standing Committee (SC58), Geneva, 6-10 July 2009
- 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP15), Doha, Qatar 16-28 January 2010

- 7th May 2009: deadline for submission of documents for SC58
- 19 August 2009: Deadline for submission to the CITES Secretariat of (1) draft resolutions and other documents and (2) normal proposals to amend Appendix I or II [i.e. other than those in Resolution Conf. 8.21 or Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP14)]

The meeting took note of the report.

9. Next chair of the Steering Committee for MIKE Eastern Africa and next venue [Rwanda]

The SSC unanimously supported Tanzania as the next chair of the SSC. The next meeting of the SSC shall be hosted in Tanzania in the course of 2009.

10. Closing remarks

The MIKE Coordinator extended his gratitude to the SSC and appreciated the participatory nature of the meeting.

The Chairman thanked members for the fruitful deliberations during the two days and wished everybody a safe journey home.

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