

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

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**MINUTES OF THE 7<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE MIKE SUB-REGIONAL STEERING  
COMMITTEE FOR EASTERN AFRICA**

**6-7 May 2013**

**Addis Ababa-Ethiopia**



## **1. Welcome and opening meeting**

The Acting Director of Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA), Mr. Kumar Wakjira opened the meeting. He noted that the meeting was being held at a time where all range States were facing challenges in protecting and conserving elephants and other species. He thanked MIKE for facilitating participation of Ethiopia in MIKE programme and for range States in choosing Ethiopia to host the meeting.

## **2. Attendance**

With the exception of Eritrea, all MIKE participating ranger States in Eastern Africa Sub-region (ET, KE, RW, TZ and UG) were represented at the meeting. South Sudan, being a key range State in the Sub-region but not yet a participating range State, was invited as an observer Party. Eritrea sent an apology as they could not travel to Ethiopia.

Technical representatives were from the MIKE Programme (Mr. J. Blanc, the MIKE Coordinator; Mr. T. Chimuti, the MIKE Sub-regional Support Officer; and Ms. Claire Mogambi, Programme Assistant) and the ETIS Programme (Mr. T. Milliken, the Director). The MIKE Technical Advisory Group member (Dr. Iain Douglas-Hamilton) representing Eastern Africa sent an apology as he had other commitments that could not make it possible for him to attend despite having earlier confirmed his participation.

The full participant list is detailed in Annex 1

## **3. Approval of agenda**

Some minor changes were made to the agenda as highlighted below:

- Since the TAG member was not present, the item ‘update on TAG activities’ was removed from the agenda. It was proposed that should any issues arise out of the country presentations that required the attention of the TAG, these would be noted accordingly.
- Rwanda suggested adding a sub-item ‘elephant conservation’ under agenda item ‘African Elephant Action Plan/African Elephant Fund’

With these minor changes, the agenda was approved as presented in Annex II.

#### **4. Approval of previous Minutes**

Some amendments were made to the minutes as indicated below:

- The last sentence on Section 1 (Opening of meeting); ‘The meeting was opened by a prayer led by delegate from Sudan’ must be the opening sentence in the section opening of meeting.
- The second sentence in the first paragraph of Section 5.2 (Ethiopia) must read: ‘he reported that fourteen (14) elephants in Babile Elephant Sanctuary had died due to human-elephant conflict and poaching between 2011-2012’.
- Tanzania must be referred to as ‘United Republic of Tanzania’ throughout the minutes.

With these changes, the minutes were approved as a correct record of what transpired at the previous meeting of 25 April 2012.

#### **5. Matters arising from previous meeting**

##### **5.1. Appointment of assistant MIKE Site officers by all range States**

At its meeting of April 2012, the Committee agreed that participating range States must appoint assistant MIKE Officer(s) as was previously agreed at the 5th meeting (2011). Each range state reported progress as presented below:

- Ethiopia had yet to appoint assistant Site officers.
- Rwanda – had not yet appointed but indicated that they will bring the need to appoint assistant Site officer to the attention of African Parks Network (APN). Akagera is now under joint management with African Parks Network (APN) and Rwanda Development Board (RDB). The former site officer left and a new one was recently appointed. It was recently agreed with APN that MIST implementation would continue at Akagera MIKE site.
- Kenya – was unsure of future of MIKE so did not appoint assistant officers. The institutional arrangement at site level, however, ensures that there is analytical capacity and support of MIKE routines at all sites.
- United Republic of Tanzania- had already appointed as at the previous meeting of April 2012.
- Uganda – 2 Officers were appointed for 2 MIKE sites i.e. Queen Elizabeth National Park and Murchison Falls National Park, though no formal communication has been made in this regard. The MIKE SSO needs to send a reminder for the communication.

Range states were reminded that the newly amended Resolution Conference 10.10 (Rev. CoP 16) requires that range States advise the CITES Secretariat of changes in MIKE Officers.

### **5.2. DNA elephant population survey of Mt Elgon**

This was not done. Kenya submitted a proposal for funding of the survey to MIKE CCU. Range States were advised that elephant population surveys were not being catered for in MIKE 3.0 Phase as the new funding is at a considerably reduced level compared to the funding that MIKE received in Phase II. This resulted in the decision to limit support to Law Enforcement Monitoring activities including other measures like reducing MIKE personnel. Kenya was advised to approach other organizations e.g. Bio systems Africa for funding and expert assistance.

### **5.3. Studying elephant movements in Eritrea**

Since Eritrea was not present to provide update on status of the project, the SSO was tasked to request status on radio collars from Eritrea and circulate to the meeting.

### **5.4. Progress on implementing priorities set out for May-December 2012. (Agenda item 7)**

Each range state provided progress on implementation of priority activities set out at April 2012 meeting:

#### **5.4.1 Ethiopia**

- Three aerial survey observers were trained in September 2012.
- Training in RBDC and Introduction to MIST was conducted with participants drawn from national and Site (two Sites) levels.
- Received 3 computers (with MIST software) and 11 GPS units for Sites and national HQ

#### **5.4.2. Rwanda**

- A formal ground and aerial census are planned for end of September to beginning of October 2013.
- Received 2 computers and 4 GPS units.

### **5.4.3. Kenya**

- Three aerial survey observers were trained in September 2012.
- Received \$20 000 from MIKE for survey of Laikipia/Samburu and the survey was conducted in November 2012.
- Received 20 GPS units.
- Have not agreed yet on whether to put Mara as a site. Consultations to be held with Tanzania on conducting a trans-boundary survey for the Mara-Serengeti ecosystem.
- MIKE is now integrated into MIST.
- MIST is fully functional at all Sites and will be migrating to SMART.
- Have Scientists on Sites that can analyse data.

### **5.4.4. United Republic of Tanzania**

- Three aerial survey observers were trained in September 2012.
- Received 10 GPS units;
- Regarding integration of MIST into curricular of MWEKA and PASIANSI, a presentation was given at management level on MIST — but no syllabus has yet been produced or provision of training at the two institutions. MIKE needs to develop a syllabus and train trainers.

### **5.4.5. Uganda**

- Three aerial survey observers were trained in September 2012.
- Benefited from MIKE and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in developing analytical skills of MIKE officers; however there is need for continuous capacity building due to high staff turnover.
- Received funding support for aerial survey of Murchison Falls and Queen Elizabeth MIKE site and surveys were done in July and August 2012 respectively.
- Received 10 GPS units

### **5.5. Activities that the 6th meeting of SSC proposed to be prioritized in MIKE 3.0 (agenda item 8)**

- i) On the proposal that South Sudan and Somalia submit their proposals for the new MIKE Sites, the meeting was briefed that South Sudan had not yet submitted the proposal as it was informed that they needed to ratify membership to the CITES convention first. It was also noted that the limited funding in MIKE 3.0 makes it difficult to increase MIKE sites unless if the addition has no resource implications for MIKE.
- ii) On supporting elephant surveys and capacity building related to surveys, as noted above, the meeting was informed that there was no budget for supporting surveys in MIKE 3.0.
- iii) Rwanda reported that it is considering putting collars to monitor whether elephants in Akagera were moving to Tanzania.
- iv) Capacity building in data analysis was generally done in all the range states but staff turnover remains a challenge that requires a sustainable solution.

## **6. Technical presentations**

### **6.1 MIKE 3.0 update (Julian Blanc-MIKE Central Coordination Unit)**

A power point presentation was made. The presentation was introduced by outlining lessons that were learnt from MIKE Phase II with respect to implementing Ranger Based Monitoring (RBM) systems and later outlined the institutional arrangements under MIKE 3.0, its objectives and expected outputs. Following the presentation, there were some discussions as presented below.

- i) Kenya raised the concern on lack of support to aerial elephant population surveys. As presented earlier in sections 5.2 and 5.5 above, the MIKE Coordinator explained that the level of funding in MIKE 3.0 was far less than MIKE Phase II. Aerial surveys were very expensive and thus the reason why support had also limited even in the larger MIKE II project. It was later resolved that desperately needed support in conducting aerial surveys can be supported from the national and site support costs instead of supporting activities related to law enforcement monitoring.
- ii) Kenya also raised a question on whether range States were involved in preparing MIKE 3.0 project proposal. The response from MIKE CCU was that a presentation of the proposal was made to the range States at the 4th African Elephant Meeting (Gigiri, April

- 2012). This had been an opportunity for countries to input into the proposal, and any received were incorporated into the proposal.
- iii) Some members felt that there was need to build capacity at local level to analyse MIKE data. Members were advised that building capacity to analyse MIKE data (and other monitoring data) for site and national level use was one of the activities under MIKE 3.0.
  - iv) United Republic of Tanzania raised a concern that promoting use of different tools for monitoring may create problems of coping with changes and of sharing information. The response was that development of SMART was initiated from the realization that MIST was no longer being developed to address problems that were being encountered by users and to meet the changing needs of technology and conservation. To address the issue of sharing data, the development of SMART took into account ensuring use of common data standards to ensure that data could be shared between different platforms.

## **6.2. Report on ETIS (Mr. T. Milliken, Director of ETIS Programme)**

Mr. Milliken made a power point presentation that covered the history of ETIS; outlined how the new software for reporting seizures functions, levels and trends in illegal trade in elephant ivory at global and Eastern African Sub-region levels; and outlined some of the initiatives being done to address the problems of escalation in levels of illegal trade. During open discussion committee members raised some questions or sought clarifications as presented below.

Rwanda asked about the basis for naming a particular country as origin of seized ivory in ETIS reports, given that in most cases DNA analyses were not conducted after seizures. The response was that it is not always possible to distinguish between country of origin and country of export, but that there was now a provision in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP 16) that makes mandatory to conduct forensic analysis for any seizure of 500 kg and above.

Rwanda also raised a question as to whether most seized ivory is accompanied by permits. The answer was that this was mainly ivory smuggled out of consumer states to consumer countries.

Uganda wanted to know MIKE programme can reduce poaching and whether it can determine the number of elephants illegally killed or poached. The answer was that MIKE is not a law

enforcement project but is designed to assist range State in monitoring threats to their biodiversity (including poaching of elephants) and effectiveness of law enforcement effectiveness. The monitoring information can be used to improve efficiency in law enforcement activities and to catalyse action and support for law enforcement. The global analysis of MIKE carcass data predicts or estimates the number of elephants killed.

There were some discussions on dowsing devices used to detect ivory in baggage at airports and in containers; clarifications on allegations of elephant poaching by military personnel in Uganda; development of awareness materials on smuggling of ivory (e.g. done in Mz Tz and Zw) and the possibility of adapting materials in some countries (ETIS was encouraged to develop materials in printable format).

### 6.3. Priority activities for MIKE 3.0 in Eastern Africa Sub-region (T. Chimuti, MIKE SSO)

The SSO presented an outline of activities planned for 2013 under each of the four outputs of MIKE 3.0. as presented below:

Main Activity	Country priority activities
<b>Output 1: Management oriented ranger-based biodiversity and threat monitoring systems are adopted and implemented</b>	
1.1. Develop and implement improved ranger-based monitoring tools and systems based on CA management needs and constraints, lessons learnt and best practice	Conduct status and needs assessment of RBM systems at all sites Conduct RBDC training at site in Eritrea (Gash- Setit). Most sites have received basic and Advanced MIST training (Refresher training for some sites in 2014)
1.2. Provide technical, material and capacity support for the adoption and implementation of RBM systems	Conduct site visits to Akagera and 3 sites in Tz to assess RBM implementation and address identified problems. Provide material support (GPS units, Computers) based on site needs assessment and budget limitations.
1.3. Develop and support the establishment of systems for improving the relevance of RBM to adaptive management.	Carry out training in the preparation and use of appropriate management reports in adaptive management for officials from one site in Kenya and another in Uganda.
<b>Output 2: Capacity for provision of training in field-based biodiversity monitoring,</b>	



Main Activity	Country priority activities
<b>analysis and application is developed in appropriate African training institutions</b>	
2.1. Carry out a feasibility assessment of appropriate institutions for providing short and longer-term RBM training courses, accessible to park warden level.	Conduct visits to national and regional training institutions Develop MOUs with selected institutions to establish RBM training courses (CCU)
2.2. Design and implement specialized sub-regional training courses on the operation of biodiversity monitoring information systems, involving trainers from sub-regional	Develop sub-regional training course programme (CCU with SMART development partners) Organize sub-regional level training course involving appropriate trainers from target institutions, wildlife department key staff, CA wardens (CCU and SMART development partners).
<b>Output 3: CA and biodiversity monitoring systems are relevant to and integrated with national and regional policies, systems and structures</b>	
3.1. Increase understanding and gain commitment at the national level to the value and functions of field-based biodiversity monitoring systems	Make presentations highlighting the benefits and successes of RBM in achieving biodiversity conservation in Africa at appropriate forums (e.g. East African Community meetings)
3.2. Establish a foundation for developing long-term biodiversity monitoring and coordination mechanisms in appropriate regional institutions, based on existing MIKE governance structure.	Hold sub-regional steering committee meetings, including agenda items on potential future role of sub-regional institutions in MIKE Programme implementation, and involving sub-regional institution participation Hold exploratory discussions with sub-regional institutions about potential future collaboration in MIKE Programme activities.
<b>Output 4: Information generated by RS is effectively analysed and applied to inform and influence international biodiversity conservation mechanisms and policies</b>	
4.1. Further develop methodologies for analyzing field-based biodiversity monitoring data, designed to ensure the production of reliable, cost effective and user-friendly synthesis information that fulfills CITES decision making requirements	Collect site-based PIKE data from participating sites annually or sub-annually as appropriate Routinely collect RBM Benchmarks information for participating sites and report annually or more frequently as appropriate

Only Uganda raised a question on impact of focusing training on one site with regards to training in the use of monitoring data in adaptive management (activity 3.1(i)). The response was that by focusing on one site would increase chances of developing best practice models that can be applied to other sites or non-MIKE sites. The lessons learnt will also be included in the training curricula that will be housed within national and regional institutions.

## **7. Country presentations**

Presentations were based on a structured questionnaire/template that solicited information on status of implementation at each site. Kenya did not follow the template but its presentation covered most of the issues in the template. Key observations made from all presentations are summarized in sections 7.1 to 7.3 below.

### **7.1. Observations on status of field data collection systems at sites**

- The reported frequency of use of patrol forms and GPS units on patrols was generally high and so was the level of patrol deployments.
- Number of trained field staff in RBDC and Basic MIST was reported to be high at most sites with exception of some sites in Tanzania where staff numbers are relatively huge compared with other sites. Movement of trained and experienced staff is a problem at most sites. (Range States were urged to minimize staff transfers especially Site Officers).
- On-site technical support to field rangers was limited at some sites and this could be due to limited expertise among some field officers who supervise field rangers. Kenya's system of having area management committees facilitates provision of support and sharing of information among staff.

### **7.2. Observations on status of data management at site and national level**

- Frequency of data capturing was reported to be generally high at all sites;
- Downloading of location data was reported to be always done at most sites despite reported limited expertise in database management at some sites;
- Quality control of patrol data needs to be enhanced at most sites;
- Doing electronic back-ups needs to be improved at some sites

- Replication of site databases at HQ seem to be a problem in most countries
- Transmission of elephant and monitoring data from site to higher levels is done frequently and in most cases via email and radios (Carcass daily for Kenya).

### **7.3. Observations on use of monitoring data**

- Generation of customized reports seem to be done at most sites;
- Reported approaches/strategies to use monitoring information vary from country to country and there is evidence that monitoring data is used to inform management decisions.

## **8. Other issues: CITES and elephants**

### **8.1. Outcome of CoP 16 related to elephants.**

The MIKE Coordinator presented an outline of the key Decisions and Resolutions on elephants that were adopted at CoP 16. He outlined relevant paragraphs from Resolution Conference 10.10 (Rev. CoP 16) on ‘Trade in elephant specimens’ and also relevant provisions from Decisions 14.78-16.83 on ‘Monitoring illegal trade in ivory and other specimens’ and of Decision 16.55 on ‘Decision making mechanism for a process of trade in ivory’.

Discussions were mainly focused on feasibility of meeting the deadline set out in preparing ivory action plans for countries identified as of serious concern as directed in Decision 16.78. The MIKE Coordinator and ETIS Director emphasized that it was important for concerned countries to be as practical and realistic as possible in developing the action plans. For instance, it was pointed out that for most countries on the list, they could easily make a difference by focusing on actions that improve legislation to ensure that stiffer penalties are imposed on wildlife crimes and this does not require huge financial resources but mainly commitment of the individual country. For actions requiring financial resources, it was pointed out that countries must include timelines when proposals seeking financial support will be submitted.

### **8.2. African Elephant Plan and African Elephant Fund**

Members of the committee who attended CoP 16 meeting pointed out the following regarding the implementation of African Elephant plan and status of African elephant fund:

- Range states were encouraged to submit proposals for funding and the deadline for submitting proposals was June 2013;
- The ceiling for funding on each project was pegged at USD 10 000 (ten thousand united states dollars);
- UNEP appointed a contact person who is fluent in English and French to ensure effective communication with all range States;
- Range states discussed fund raising activities as the current amount in the Fund account was only USD 500 000 compared to the estimated 100 million needed to fund the African Elephant Plan

Plenary discussions on elephant funding and support also noted several high level initiatives that are being pursued following highlighting of the escalation in elephant poaching and ivory trade.

The initiatives highlighted included:

- IUCN Congress Decision (Jeju 2012): IUCN is raising funds following a decision to raise awareness of threats to elephants to Heads of States and government in Africa.
- Elephant 50:50 by India: The initiative being spearheaded by India seeks to come up with a 50-year vision for elephants. The initiative is however, not focusing so much on elephant poaching.
- Prince of Wales initiative:
- UNEP initiative: Aims to hold awareness meeting for African Heads of States and Government to raise awareness on poaching of elephants, great apes and rhinos.
- National level initiative by Tanzania-will hold high-level awareness meetings on elephant poaching.

### **8.3. Presentation of SMART (Julian Blanc, MIKE CCU)**

The MIKE coordinator made a demonstration of the latest version of SMART software.

Following a demonstration of capabilities of the latest version of SMART software, the ensuing discussions highlighted the following:

- Database replication has not been done but sharing of data can be done easily through exporting to excel.

- Importing data from MIST still needed work, thus for Sites where MIST is functional, they can continue with MIST rather migrate to SMART until the importing issue has been resolved.
- It is strongly recommended that sites that are starting to set up Ranger Based Monitoring systems can start with SMART as their back-end data management system.
- Creating queries has been made much easier in SMART compared to MIST;
- The planning tool that enables one to use information from monitoring to plan follow-up actions is one improvement in SMART.

## **9. AOB**

Ethiopia asked for assistance from the meeting on the best mechanisms for managing ivory stockpiles. Their stockpiles keep increasing as ivory seizures are made at the Bole International Airport. Their main problem was regular thefts of the ivory from their central store by employees. Because of this problem, they were considering the option of regularly destroying the stocks. Tom Milliken suggested that if they opt to destroy, it is advisable to invite independent reputable organizations to conduct an audit of the stock first and to take samples for forensic analysis

Some members suggested that it was better to invest in good ivory stock management as they will continue to accumulate ivory. It was finally resolved that Tom Milliken will have a meeting, outside the SSC meeting, with officials from Ethiopia Wildlife Conservation Authority to discuss pros and cons of all options.

## **10. Date and venue of next meeting:**

The date of the next meeting could not be set as only one SSC meeting was planned for each sub-region during MIKE 3.0 phase. If the next phase materializes, the meeting will likely to be held in 2015. Uganda will be the next host country, but if by then South Sudan's CITES membership and its participation in MIKE programme are sorted out, South Sudan will be the host country.

**Annex 1. Participant list**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Telephone Contact</b>	<b>Email</b>
Kamara Wanjira-Chair	Ethiopia		<a href="mailto:matikume@yahoo.com">matikume@yahoo.com</a>
Cherrie.E. Beyene	Ethiopia	+251 911 673 737	<a href="mailto:cherieenawgaw@gmail.com">cherieenawgaw@gmail.com</a>
Z. Tigale	Ethiopia		
Fetene Hailu Buta	Ethiopia		<a href="mailto:fetenehailu@gmail.com">fetenehailu@gmail.com</a>
Michael Limo Kipkeu	Kenya	+254 722 648 972	<a href="mailto:kipkeu@kws.go.ke">kipkeu@kws.go.ke</a>
Shadrack Ngene	Kenya	+254 722 885 724	<a href="mailto:Sngene@kws.go.ke">Sngene@kws.go.ke</a>
Antoine Mudakikwa	Rwanda	+250 788 552 826	<a href="mailto:Antoine.mudakikwa@rdb.rw">Antoine.mudakikwa@rdb.rw</a>
Eugene Mutangana	Rwanda	+250 788 623 113	<a href="mailto:eugenem@african-parks.org">eugenem@african-parks.org</a>
Malik Doka Marjarn	South Sudan	+211 955 765 475	<a href="mailto:Malik.dika@gmail.com">Malik.dika@gmail.com</a>
Alexander N. Songorwa	Tanzania	+255 754 877 019	<a href="mailto:bhugoji@yahoo.com">bhugoji@yahoo.com</a> or <a href="mailto:dw@mnrt.go.tz">dw@mnrt.go.tz</a>
Margaret N. Naiposha	Tanzania	+255 787 029 998	<a href="mailto:mnaiposha@yahoo.com">mnaiposha@yahoo.com</a>
James Lutalo	Uganda	+256 772 587 807	<a href="mailto:jlutalo@tourism.go.ug">jlutalo@tourism.go.ug</a> <a href="mailto:lutaloj57@gmail.com">lutaloj57@gmail.com</a>
Charles Tumwesigye	Uganda	+256 772 461 908	<a href="mailto:charles.tumwesigye@ugandawildlife.org">charles.tumwesigye@ugandawildlife.org</a>
Claire Mogambi	MIKE CCU		<a href="mailto:Claire.mogambi@unep.org">Claire.mogambi@unep.org</a>
Julian Blanc	MIKE CCU	+254 722 885 724	<a href="mailto:Julian.blanc@cites.org">Julian.blanc@cites.org</a>
Tom Milliken	TRAFFIC- ETIS	+263 4 252 532	<a href="mailto:Tom.milliken@traffic.org">Tom.milliken@traffic.org</a>
Tapera Chimuti	MIKE SSU	+27 73 858 5386	<a href="mailto:taperachimuti@citesmike.org">taperachimuti@citesmike.org</a>

**Annex 2. Agenda of the meeting**

**MEETING OF THE MIKE SUB-REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE FOR EASTERN  
AFRICA  
6-7 MAY 2013  
ADDIS ABBABA, ETHIOPIA**

**PROVISIONAL AGENDA (10/04/2013)**

<b>Date &amp; Time</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>		<b>Facilitator</b>
<b>Day 1. 06 May 2013</b>			
08.30-09.00	Registration, opening and welcome, introductions attendance and house keeping		Ethiopia (Chair) & MIKE SSO
09.00-10.30	Approval of the agenda		Chair
	Approval of the previous minutes		Chair
	Matters arising from the previous meeting		Chair
<b>10.30.10.45</b>	<b>Tea/Coffee Break</b>		
10.45-11.15	MIKE 3.0 phase-update on objectives and arrangements		MIKE CCU
11.15-11.45	Report on ETIS from TRAFFIC		T. Milliken
11.45-12.15	Priority activity areas for MIKE 3.0 in Eastern Africa		MIKE SSO
12.15-12.45	Review of MIKE TAG activities		TAG Member
12.45-14.00	<b>Lunch Break</b>		
14.00-15.10	Country reports on status on MIKE implementation		Country representative
	14.00-14.20	Ethiopia	‘
	14.20-14.40	Kenya	‘
	14.40-15.00	Rwanda	‘
15.00-15.10	<b>Tea/Coffee Break</b>		
15.20-16.10	15.10-15.30	Uganda	‘
	15.30-15.50	United Republic of Tanzania	‘
	15.50-16.10	South Sudan	
16.00-17.00	Emerging issues from country reports		All
17.00	End of Day 1		
<b>Day 2. 07 May 2013</b>			
08.30-10.30	Summary of issues identified and major actions agreed		MIKE SSO/CCU
10.15-10.30	<b>Tea/Coffee Break</b>		
10.30-12.30	Other issues relevant to CITES and elephant conservation		
	10.30-11.00	Relevant outcomes from CoP 16	MIKE CCU/TRAFFIC
	11.00-11.30	African Elephant Plan and progress on implementing agreed actions at the fourth African Elephant meeting	Steering committee members/MIKE CCU
	11.30-12.00	Update on African Elephant Fund-Fund raising and projects supported to date	Steering committee members
	12.00-12.30	Update on SMART	Chair
12.30-13.00	AOB		Chair
	Determination on next hosting country and date of next meeting		
	Closing remarks		