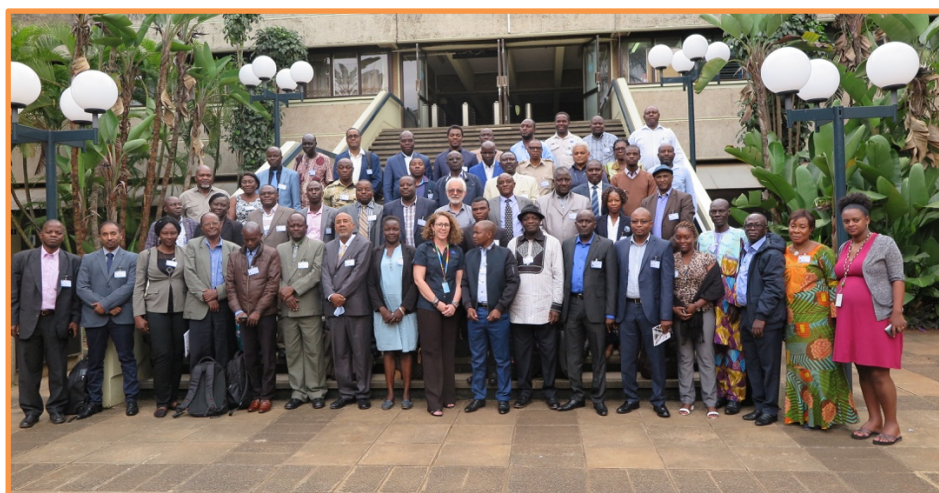


CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN
ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



CITES MIKE Regional Meeting
Gigiri, 26 – 27 November 2019

SUMMARY REPORT



1. This report has been prepared by the CITES MIKE Central Coordination Unit (MIKE CCU). The CITES MIKE CCU convened the MIKE Regional meeting in Gigiri, Kenya from 26 to 27 November 2019. The meeting was made possible due to the financial support provided by the European Union under the MIKES project (Minimizing the illegal killing of elephants and other endangered species) and was attended by 50 representatives from 26 African elephant range States¹, three MIKE-ETIS Technical Advisory Group Sub-regional representatives (Central Africa, East Africa and West Africa), a representative from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), four Sub-regional Support Officers (IUCN), the co-chairs of the IUCN African Elephant Specialist Group (AfESG) and the ETIS Director (TRAFFIC).
2. The objectives of the meeting were:
 - a. To provide a report to the African elephant range States on the implementation of the MIKES project that is coming to an end in December 2019, and to share progress made with the implementation of the Cross-Regional Wildlife Conservation Project (CRWCP), initiated in 2017 and implemented in collaboration with UNODC and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) in Eastern and Southern Africa.
 - b. To discuss review processes currently under way: MIKE site network review and the review of the PIKE trend analysis methodology.
 - c. To demonstrate the new CITES MIKE online database.
 - d. To share information with African elephant range States relating to new training material being developed and improved access to information.
 - e. To discuss the next phase of the MIKE Programme (MIKES+).

MIKES and CRWCP

¹ 38 range States were invited. Angola, Equatorial Guinea, eSwatini, Namibia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and South Africa could not attend; Burkina Faso, Congo and Zambia confirmed, but unfortunately cancelled shortly before the meeting; and the Democratic Republic of Congo and Gabon also confirmed but did not travel to the meeting.

3. The CITES MIKE CCU and relevant key partners shared highlights and lessons learnt from the implementation of the EU funded project entitled “*Minimising the Illegal Killing of Elephants and other Endangered Species*” (MIKES) that started in 2014 and is coming to an end on 27 December 2019. Implementation over the five years focused on supporting the MIKE mandate in terms of elephant mortality monitoring and analysis of levels and trends in illegal killing, as well as additional support to focal sites in each of the sub-regions. The MIKES project also supported partners, i.e. IUCN AfESG and TRAFFIC, to maintain the African Elephant Database and the Elephant Trade Information System, respectively and to report to the CITES Standing Committee as required in terms of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP18), while the UNODC supported national level activities in specific countries, including the development of a bench book for judges, the operationalization of units under the container control programme and providing crime scene management training.
4. The MIKE CCU furthermore shared information relating to progress made with the implementation of a new project, also funded by the EU, entitled “*Cross-Regional Wildlife Conservation in Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean*”, that was initiated in 2017 and will be implemented over the next three years in collaboration with UNODC and CMS. Some delays in receiving the funds resulted in implementation starting in late 2018. Where possible, focal sites supported under MIKES will continue to be supported under this project. Additional sites linked to the existing sites, or previously prioritized under MIKES, may be included where feasible. As under the MIKES project, support for each site is identified through a participatory planning process at the site, which is then further developed into a full sub-project document. To date, agreements for focal site support have been signed for Tsavo West National Park (Kenya), Queen Elizabeth National Park (Uganda), Niassa National Reserve (Mozambique), and are under government review for Lower Zambezi National Park (Zambia). Project development is advanced in Mana Pools, Sapi and Chewore (Zimbabwe), Selous Game Reserve (Tanzania), and the Kwando Wildlife Dispersal Area (Angola, Namibia and Zambia). In order to improve regional representation and include the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) region, initial discussions have taken place with Ethiopia and Eritrea. Further discussions are needed to ascertain whether it will be possible to provide support, and if so, what form any support should take.
5. The African elephant range States requested clarification relating to the processes to be followed to access support, including the implementation of the ICCWC Toolkit and support from the UNODC’s Container Control Programme. It was recommended that countries interested in the implementation of the ICCWC Toolkit should submit a written request addressed to the Secretary-General of the CITES Secretariat; and countries interested in the requesting support from the UNODC Container Control Programme should submit written requests to Javier Montaña, the UNODC Regional Coordinator Container Control Programme, at javier.montano@un.org.
6. TRAFFIC (ETIS) was requested to provide the African elephant range States with more information relating to the countries that have not submitted seizure information for 2018 and 2019. The ETIS Director provided the MIKE CCU with the following documents that were distributed to the African elephant range States with the report:
 - a. Number of seizures by country by year (2008 – 2019)
 - b. Notification to the Parties No. 2019/041 ([Monitoring the illegal trade in ivory](#)) – reminder to report every seizure of illegal ivory made within their territories
 - c. The ivory and elephant product seizure data collection form and explanatory notes
7. African elephant range States with MIKE sites that received additional support for law enforcement activities under the MIKES project raised concerns about the lack of information sharing with the relevant authorities at the national level. The MIKE CCU acknowledged that this should be addressed and committed to share narrative reports received from implementing partners with the relevant national authorities and indicated furthermore that annual planning meetings will take place in the future for sites that receive additional support and that the relevant national authorities will be invited to participate in these.

MIKE site network review

8. The MIKE CCU presented information to the African elephant range States relating to the review of the MIKE site network that was initiated in 2019. Issues to be considered in terms of the review included among others representativeness, reporting, site attributes, law enforcement capacity, existing systems to monitor and the presence of partners at the site. The sub-regions discussed the MIKE site network review during the sub-regional session.

9. During the sub-regional engagement sessions, described in more detail below, the following criteria/attributes for adding or changing the site composition of the MIKE network were identified by range States:
 - a. Ideally, there should be a minimum of at least one MIKE site in each elephant range State to ensure representativeness
 - b. The number of MIKE sites included from each range State and subregion should be in proportion to overall continental elephant population and range
 - c. The range State needs to make a commitment to monitor the site and to submit the required data
 - d. The 10+ carcass requirement should be reconsidered / reviewed (this is too high, considering the sizes of some elephant populations)
 - e. Transboundary areas (including Protected Area complexes) and ecological corridors between MIKE sites are also important due to shared nature of many elephant populations
 - f. If possible, more community managed areas, including community forest areas and conservation areas, should be included
 - g. The proposed sites should be able to report on patrol effort and coverage and should have staff that can undertake patrols (this could include community scouts)
 - h. Ideally, the site nominated to be included should have a management plan

MIKE sub-regional engagement session

10. The sub-regional engagement session also discussed, in addition to the MIKE site network review, means to increase the effectiveness of the Sub-regional Steering Committee meetings and the prioritisation of training and support to the MIKE sites. The outcomes of the sub-regional session will be used to inform the processes to finalise the MIKE Site Network Review; will assist in enhancing the value of the Sub-regional Steering Committee meetings and will provide guidance to the MIKE CCU relating to training and support to the range States and MIKE sites.
11. The following recommendations were made by the sub-regions:
 - a. Central Africa
 - i. MIKE site network review – possible sites to be added to the MIKE site network and proposed changes to the MIKE site network:
 - Cameroon*
 - Expand the existing site (Waza) to include the Protected Area Complex: Waza-Kalamaloue-Kalfou
 - Additional new sites: Bouba Ndjidda as well as Mbam and Djerem
 - Central Africa Republic*
 - Change in site: Bangassou to be replaced with Chinko
 - Chad*
 - Redefinition of the Zakouma MIKE site boundaries
 - Other issues discussed:*
 - The MIKE CCU to contact Democratic Republic of Congo regarding the lack of MIKE data reporting for the Kahuzi Beiga MIKE site and to request clarification about the participation in MIKE.
 - The MIKE CCU to contact Equatorial Guinea regarding overall participation in MIKE.
 - ii. Sub-regional Steering Committee meetings
 - Discuss MIKE site additions or removal of sites (evaluation of proposals, criteria and opportunities)
 - Support to countries for the efficient collection of MIKE data
 - MIKE-ETIS TAG member (sub-regional representative) to present on work done by the TAG and new elephant management strategies, analysis results, biases, etc.
 - Prepare a report on the status of implementation of recommendations from previous sessions
 - Provide MIKE country reports on time and well in advance of the MIKE Sub-regional Steering Committee meeting to enable discussion

- Preliminary discussions among MIKE Sub-regional Steering Committee on salient points on the agenda
- iii. Training and support
- Training on the use of the new online MIKE database;
 - Regular training in collecting and analyzing data from site stakeholders;
 - Training of a pool of trainers by country on the collection and analysis of data
 - Support for sites – provision of equipment to collect data and computer equipment
 - Support for data collection missions within MIKE sites to enhance coverage
- b. Eastern Africa
- i. MIKE site network review – possible sites to be considered to be added to the MIKE network:
- Uganda*
- Kidepo Valley National Park
 - Karenga Wildlife Community area
 - Remove: Mount Elgon
- South Sudan*
- Sudd Ecosystem,
 - Kidepo Game Reserve
 - Boma National Park
- Ethiopia*
- Gambela National Park
- Sudan*
- Dindir National Park
- Somalia*
- Lagabadane National Park
- Kenya*
- Masai Mara
 - Review current boundaries for Samburu Laikipia and Tsavo.
- ii. Sub-regional Steering Committee meetings
- Most important aspect: Details on how the sites report mortalities.
 - Need comprehensive in-country preparation before the SCC training and support
 - Reporting on MIKES and MIKE+ where appropriate
 - Allow time for national and site focal points to meet
- iii. Training priorities
- Consider having sub-regional support officers at each sub-region.
 - Training for rangers and other officers and tools/equipment to support data capture
 - More training support for the site focal point and their assistants.
 - A higher level manual on data processing and harmonization
 - Feedback to rangers on how the data they are collecting is being used.
- c. Southern Africa
- i. MIKE site network review: Sub-region is under represented; therefore sites should be added in the sub-region. The following has been proposed:
- Botswana:*
- Moremi Game Reserve – largest elephant population after Chobe;
 - Community areas: Mababe Community Trust; Sankoyo Community Trust
- Zimbabwe:*
- Hwange National Park – Paperwork for site nomination is complete
 - Save Valley – Idea is good, but requires discussion with landowners
 - Gonarezhou – could also consider corridor/dispersal area in Mozambique
 - Another communal area to complement Nyami Nyami.
- Malawi*
- Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve
- Mozambique*
- Quirimbas National Park
- ii. Sub-regional Steering Committee meetings
- The agenda should include:
- Review of any proposed new sites or proposed changes to MIKE network in the region

- Resource allocation – SSC input to identify areas in greatest need of resources (prioritization of support)
- Discussion of data quality reports – how to improve based on results outlined in the reports rather than just distribute and not discuss
- Discussion of any anomalies between MIKE data and other monitoring systems/ population census information.

Potential improvements:

- Ideally regional meetings should happen more frequently – even if held virtually or linked to other meetings
- Share data quality reports in advance to enable optimal use of time at meeting to focus on improvements and actions, identifying support needs etc.
- Include presentations from other relevant organizations e.g. African Elephant Specialist Group, AEF updates or potential projects to be submitted.

iii. Training priorities:

- Use of data collection equipment (e.g. GPS or cyber-trackers)
- Awareness of specific information required on elephant carcasses
- Capacity for data management (e.g. SMART has benefits but requires training)
- Awareness of data collection, management and submission procedures
- Other relevant training (e.g. scenes of crime, forensics, intelligence)
- Exchange of lessons learnt between range States implementing MIKE
- Facilitating collaboration in aerial surveys between range States, as appropriate

d. West Africa

i. MIKE site network review

Liberia

- Liberia indicated that the following site could be considered to be included in the network (it's a transboundary area and is linked to Sierra Leone): Gola Forest National Park.
- No other range State in the sub-region proposed additional sites at this point in time, but it was acknowledged that each range State has the right to nominate possible sites.
- An inspection of sites in the region should be undertaken to assess the reasons and rationale for difficulty in reporting.

ii. Sub-regional Steering Committee meetings

- In addition to the MIKE ETIS Sub-regional TAG representative participating in the meeting, it was proposed that the range States in the sub-region should be invited, prior to the meeting, to propose additional items to be included in the agenda for discussion during the meeting.
- Planning for the next year (the period between Sub-regional Steering Committee meetings), should be discussed.

iii. Training and support

- Adjustment should be made in terms of training, based on the needs of the countries and taking into consideration emerging issues
- The Law Enforcement Capacity Assessment (LECA) completed by the range States should be considered to guide training interventions (training needs may overlap between range States and training in these areas could be prioritized).
- All staff and stakeholders involved in MIKE Programme should be trained, not just the rangers or field staff
- MIKE Programme materials should be integrated into training provided by national institutions
- New technology to support rangers carrying out their duties should be investigated

Review of PIKE trend analysis methodology

12. The MIKE CCU with support from the MIKE-ETIS TAG statistician, Dr Carl Schwarz, provided the African elephant range States with information relating to the progress made with the review of the PIKE trend analysis methodology. A new model was proposed by the statisticians on the MIKE-ETIS TAG but is still being considered by the other members of the MIKE-ETIS TAG.

13. In Doc. 3 and its Annex, details relating to the proposed model are provided and the graphs in the document reflect the following PIKE trends:

- a. PIKE trend based on the model used for the report to CITES CoP17 (LSmeans);

- b. The unweighted marginal mean PIKE (new model – simple average of the PIKE in a year over all sites); and
 - c. The weighted marginal mean PIKE (new model that includes weight based on the estimated population size of the elephants at MIKE sites).
14. The United Republic of Tanzania and Ghana requested information relating to the manner in which different levels of detection of carcasses at the MIKE sites are addressed in the analysis. In some sites carcasses are difficult to detect and therefore there may be a number of carcasses that are not detected. The MIKE CCU informed the African elephant range States that, as indicated in reports submitted to CITES, there are a number of biases in PIKE and the MIKE-ETIS TAG is discussing the possible means to address these. Detection probability is one of the biases that may be difficult to address because of the different situations at the MIKE sites across Africa.
 15. It was suggested by Chad that when MIKE CCU requests elephant mortality data from range States, data on elephant deaths from outside MIKE sites and their surroundings should also be provided to the MIKE CCU. Chad indicated that carcasses are found outside of the area monitored under the MIKE Programme and that they can provide this information to the MIKE CCU. The MIKE CCU welcomed the proposal and indicated that such information could be provided by range States as it would give a better idea of the overall level of poaching in the country even if not included in the MIKE analysis. The possibility of integrating such information from beyond the actual MIKE sites themselves into the MIKE database will be investigated further by the MIKE CCU.
 16. Benin highlighted the important role the range States play in improving the quality of the data and that good quality data will result in improved data analysis and results. It is therefore important for range States to address the data collection processes to enhance the quality of the data.
 17. Kenya asked for clarification relating to the motivation for the proposed change in the model / methodology used and whether the TAG has advised on the preferred option (weighted or unweighted marginal mean PIKE). The MIKE CCU indicated that during the review of the current methodology it was realized that it is not able to account for the binomial nature of the data and that there are some statistical validation concerns. A recommendation relating to the preferred option, i.e weighted or unweighted marginal mean PIKE, has not been made by the MIKE ETIS TAG. The MIKE CCU will share further progress with the range States prior to the 73rd meeting of the CITES Standing Committee. Kenya highlighted that any changes to the methods that will be used to report information on trends in the illegal killing of elephants formally to CITES should be well researched, documented and discussed with range States so that the rationale and reasons behind any changes are understood. Kenya further stated that the preferred model should not overestimate the PIKE for East African Range States.

Improvements relating to MIKE data management (online database)

18. The MIKE CCU presented the MIKE online database that has been developed in collaboration with the Science Division of the United Nations Environment Programme. An online demonstration was done and that provided range States with an overview of the process involved in capturing a carcass record as part of the demonstration. An overview of the results of data entry was provided through a review of the database dashboard. The dashboards provide summary information on elephant deaths on a map and graphs allowing users to see trends and other changes over time. Information is password protected with user permissions, therefore only allowing access to information at the site or national level, as appropriate.
19. It was suggested that a bulk uploading function would be appreciated to allow for data from sites with large amounts of data or review processes (e.g. Kenya). Further discussions with Kenya indicated that they would like to have the possibility of expanding the database to cover the entire country should be investigated. The MIKE Programme will follow up with the UNEP Science Division to investigate the possibility of a uploading function for countries with high carcass numbers and the feasibility to expand beyond MIKE sites.

Updated MIKE training materials

20. The MIKE CCU presented the progress made relating to the development of training material in collaboration with the Southern African Wildlife College, including the development of a training video clip in collaboration with the Kenya Wildlife Services. The training materials are being specifically developed to address some of the issues raised during the sub-regional sessions, such as the awareness of the specific information required by MIKE on elephant carcasses and the high incidence of reporting 'unknown' as a cause of death. All materials will be made available through the CITES MIKE website. The

MIKE CCU also requested for any photos of forest elephants to be made available if possible as they are currently under represented in the training materials at present.

21. Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia requested that preventative measures to mitigate disease transmission and enhance containment should be considered as part of the training materials when dealing with animal carcasses. In particular the risk of transmission disease between humans and animals should be made clear, and precautionary measures that should be undertaken should be highlighted to avoid unnecessary risks being taken by patrol staff.
22. In response to comments from the floor, the MIKE CCU highlighted that the training materials will be available for all involved in training, including Trainer of Trainers, and not just rangers. Videos and all training will also eventually be freely available on the CITES MIKE website in English and French.
23. The MIKE CCU clarified that evaluations that will take place as part of the training will take place at the start of any exercise in order to assess the current state of participant knowledge and not as a performance measure. The evaluation at the end of the training exercise is designed to measure participant retention of the information and to provide feedback to the trainers to enable any adjustments needed in future trainings.
24. The MIKE CCU also clarified that trainings will take place at multiple levels (site, national and regional) that will be agreed through engagements with the range States concerned to determine what is most suitable for the particular country. For example, in countries with multiple sites training exercises may be more efficiently organized at the national level or through training of trainers, whereas in countries with only one site trainings may be more effective if they take place in the actual MIKE site itself.

The next phase of the MIKE programme (MIKES+)

25. The MIKE CCU presented an overview of the next phase of the MIKE Programme that is currently in the final stage of consideration by the European Union. The new phase builds on the key pillars of the current MIKES project that is due to finish at the end of this year. These include: enhancing the capacity of elephant range States to collect management and make use of elephant mortality provided to the MIKE Programme; building law enforcement and management capacity at key 'focal sites', with a particular focus on maintaining support in Central and West Africa (as Southern and Eastern MIKE sites have received additional support under the Cross-Regional Project); the final result area focuses on supporting capacity building in wildlife management agencies at the national level in law enforcement and the implementation of key CITES provisions.
26. In response to requests from the range States, the MIKE CCU clarified that consultations on project development took place at various Sub-regional Steering Committee meetings. In addition, when defining the actual activities to be implemented under Result 3 consideration can also be given to alignment with the African Elephant Action Plan wherever possible. This will be particularly relevant for national level activities that could be supported under the next phase of the MIKE Programme. The Subregional Steering Committee meetings will find an opportunity to review this, alongside national priorities.
27. Questions were raised regarding the inclusion of funding under the new phase for aerial surveys and to support mechanisms to mitigate human-elephant conflict (HEC), with a particular focus on elephants. Unfortunately, aerial surveys are prohibitively expensive for inclusion in the project, but the MIKE Programme has been working to update the MIKE Aerial Survey Standards as a small contribution to this area of work. Measures to address HEC are also not included in the project due to both budget constraints and it being beyond the mandate given to MIKE by the CITES Parties. However, the MIKE online database does include a provision for recording when an incident of elephant deaths is related to HEC, which, if completed diligently, will provide site, national and regional information on this issue to support decision making and follow up activities by relevant organisations.
28. The range States representatives highlighted that under the MIKES project an in-depth process was followed to identify the priority areas to support as a MIKE Focal Site and that the results of this process should continue to inform the identification of focal sites under the next phase. The MIKE CCU clarified that this is indeed the case, but as with the process under the CRWP project consideration may need to be given to other sites where the situation has changed over the last five years, or to consider other issues raised, such as regional representation or threatened populations.

Access to MIKE information

29. The MIKE CCU presented the key components of the MIKE Programme website that is currently under development and when finalized will be available in English and French. The existing MIKE Programme page on the CITES website has been restructured to focus on information that is more relevant to CITES Parties and that is more linked to CITES processes. In contrast, the MIKE Programme has been developed to target the information needs of range States and MIKE sites and aims to provide information and resources that will enhance participation in the process. This includes training materials, access to the MIKE analysis results and online database, and news updates etc. The site is being developed to be easily accessible on low bandwidth connections.

Closing remarks

30. The MIKE Coordinator, prior to closing the meeting, reminded range States that MIKE data for 2019 must be submitted directly to the MIKE CCU in January 2020 and not to the Sub-regional Support Units. The MIKE CCU will write to the national focal points to remind them to submit the MIKE data to the MIKE CCU and that it can be done either through the MIKE online database or by making use of the MIKE Workbook (excel spreadsheet).
31. The MIKE Coordinator closed the meeting by thanking participants for their active engagement throughout the meeting despite a packed and demanding agenda.