

MONITORING THE ILLEGAL KILLING OF ELEPHANTS

Minutes of the East Africa Sub-regional Meeting of the Steering Committee
CITES MIKE Programme

Nairobi (Kenya), 7 November 2003

1. Welcome and Opening

The meeting was opened by the Chair of the MIKE Sub-regional Steering Committee (SSC) for East Africa, Mr. Emmanuel Severre, who welcomed the wildlife directors and country representatives to the meeting the purpose of which was to hear the progress report by the MIKE Sub-regional Support Officer (SSO), as well as the planned population survey cycles and the future of MIKE funding.

The Chair recalled the principle decisions taken at the first SSC meeting in Dar-es-Salaam (March 2001) where a consensus was reached on the list of priority and supplementary sites where donor funding permits, and the reinforcement of capacities in the wildlife departments as a major objective in East Africa. After this meeting, the range States took on the responsibilities of appointing their MIKE national and site officers which permitted the MIKE SSO to commencing training in data collection on law enforcement monitoring and database management.

The range States met again in September 2002 in Nairobi for the MIKE regional meeting for Africa and Asia, where they were appraised of the progress report presented at the 12th Conference of the Parties to CITES held in Santiago, Chile. The Chair noted the importance of this meeting which takes place a year after the September meeting in Nairobi and CoP12 which would enable the range States to review where they stand regarding the implementation of MIKE and to discuss in a friendly and constructive manner how to unlock the bottlenecks and constraints.

The MIKE Director added his welcome to all and extended an absence of apology on behalf of the representatives from Eritrea. He noted that the emphasis that MIKE has tried to place throughout 2003 has been on the steady flow of good quality data. To ensure that MIKE implementation continues smoothly, he urged the SSC members to put their influence on the relevant authorities to avoid as much as possible the transfer of staff trained by MIKE. The MIKE training programme is expensive and it would not be possible to repeat the entire training programme when new officers are appointed. The frequent transfer of MIKE officers would have a negative impact on the quality of information which the range States need to build a better policy in managing their elephant populations.

Thus the main purpose of the SSO's progress report would be to share the various problems and constraints to allow them to be solved as soon as possible. This is critical because the range State have voted for the MIKE programme at the CoP and MIKE data is being demanded by the governments. The programme is therefore part of the range State's expectations in regards to their staff duties and responsibilities. The Director requested assistance from the SSC members to reinforce this understanding where required. There have been situations where despite training and support, a few MIKE officers still do not have a clear understanding of the nature of the programme. While some officers have not been adequately empowered to provide the raw data.

The Director also noted that it is a reality that elephant information cannot be kept from the outside world. Sooner or later, reports on elephant deaths reach international NGOs, journalists, etc. who are all eager to make this information public and widespread. It would be a better policy if range States are armed with such information first-hand to avoid the potential criticisms that may result from such information coming to light from external sources. The MIKE Central Coordinating Unit (CCU) and Sub-regional Support Units (SSUs) as the Secretariat for the range States are there to assist with the collection and analysis of raw data. However, it could not shield the under- or over- recording of known carcasses, for instance. To do so would jeopardize the objectivity and integrity of the programme, which the range States have all committed to uphold. However, the Director conceded that this is not such an issue for the East Africa sub-region as much as it is in one or two other sub-regions. Nevertheless, not everything is progressing well in East Africa and he urged the committee members to listen to the progress report and to use this forum to work out how the problems could be overcome.

New MIKE National Officer

The meeting welcomed the appointment of Mr. Matthew Maige, who replaces Mr. Julius Kibebe as the new MIKE National Officer for Tanzania.

2. SSO Progress Report

The MIKE SSO, Mr. Edison Nuwamanya then took the floor to present the progress report for East Africa. The progress report, among others included the following:

- The appointment of National and Site officers in place following the agreement at the SSC meeting held in Dar, in March 2001.
- Delivery of training on:
 - i. Law Enforcement Monitoring (LEM) using approved MIKE data collection protocols
 - ii. The use of GPS technology to assist in geo referencing of LEM data
 - iii. Basic Computer training
 - iv. Data Quality control
 - v. Managing the MIKE database in MS Access, anti-virus management and CD burning and data back up procedures
 - vi. Forest Survey methodologies for UWA and KWS
- Development of MIKE Field Training Manual for site staff
- Distribution of 60 GPS units and 19 computer systems across East Africa sites
- Population Survey work conducted across East Africa sites
- Status of data flow giving site by site details
- Staffing issues

A chart depicting the status of data flow for the range State is attached hereto in Annex I.

The SSO explained the categories of data where "0" signified that data is not expected from sites which are for example, non-patrol sites or which have suffered severe flooding etc or where no patrolling staff are available, e.g. Eritrea. "X" signified that data is expected from the site but no explanation has been given why the data has not been provided to the national officers and the MIKE SSU. "S" signified that data is expected and available at site, pending the transmission to the national officers and the SSU. The SSO went on to explain that the number of Patrol reports available reflects the patrolling design cycles adopted by the individual wildlife authorities which may range from 1 day to 15 days.

The SSO highlighted the following obstacles on data flow :

- The biggest challenge has been the constant transfer of wildlife staff after being trained in the various MIKE aspects.
- The sites in Tsavos, Samburu, Meru have had their site officers change more than twice since 2002.
- The sites in Murchison Falls, Queen Elisabeth, and Gash Setit had their site officers changed once in the last two years.
- This constant change of staff affects continuity of MIKE and it is very expensive to retrain new staff over and over again.
- The lack of interest and morale by some site officers

Other constraints highlighted were :

- IT problems such as computer viruses and worms which affect MIKE computer systems.
- The onward transmission of data which takes too long to move from site to the SSU via the national officer which could lead to a situation where the national officer realizes some of the site based problems too late.

After the presentation, a questions and answers session followed and the following issues were discussed.

2.1 Performance of the Subregions

The Director was requested to give his perception on how the East Africa subregion has performed vis-à-vis the other subregions. Mr Hunter pointed out that this subregion stands out with the advantage of having a longer tradition of elephant monitoring than the West or Central African subregions which suffer from a poorer base of fewer staff and partnership with NGOs. He pointed out that bonus payments have been used by projects in certain Central African sites for patrolling which have proven unsustainable when the project came to an end.

There were more instances of 'X' in the flow of Monthly report from sites in West and Central Africa when compared with East Africa. However, the respective SSC members have been requested to create an understanding among their MIKE national and site officers that Monthly reports are an important element of data flow. This is particularly so where no Patrol reports are available for any reason. It is important for MIKE officers to understand that the Monthly reports should still be submitted even if no Patrol reports are available and to recognize that zero data ('0') is still valid data for analysis.

It is also vital that Carcass reports be distributed and used to report elephant deaths outside of MIKE sites for such elephant mortality data could be fed into the MIKE database which could then provide early warning indicators to the range States on illegal killings.

2.2 Baseline Data for Analysis

The Director reported that at the 49th meeting of the Standing Committee in Geneva on April 2003, a definition of the MIKE baseline was agreed. The baseline would include at least one population survey from each reporting site, a minimum of 12-months' (Africa) / 6-months' (Asia) data obtained from patrol forms and carcass forms and summarized in monthly reports, a descriptive report on the patterns of influencing factors and an assessment of the effort made in providing the illegal killing information.

It was noted that while a preliminary analysis is being planned for CoP 13, the analytical strategy is currently being worked out with the Technical Advisory Group members (TAG). This strategy

would continue to evolve as data becomes available and allows the analytical strategy to be tested.

It was agreed that the analytical strategy would be presented to the range States as soon as it is ready.

2.3 Data Flow / Frequency of Data Transmission

Regarding the flow of data from sites, the SSO gave a site by site report. One of the major problems he identified was the constant transfer of personnel after being trained in MIKE implementation.

The country representatives, through the Chair, gave their assurance that they would take on board the issue of staff turnover to ensure that this does not affect the continuity and sustainability of the MIKE programme.

Uganda raised a question on the frequency of data transfer by the national offices to the SSU. The national officer for Kenya reported that his office had not as yet carried out data transmission to the SSU pending the delay in the dissemination of the MIKE Data Policy and Protocol. This was to have been finalized by a working group at the regional meeting in Nairobi on September 2002.

The Director explained the reason for the delay in disseminating the finalized Data Policy and Protocol to the range States was because he was having it seen and agreed by the Asian sub regions so that it is an acceptable protocol to both Africa and Asia. He confirmed that the Data Policy has now been confirmed by both South Asia and Southeast Asia subregions and the final Data Policy would be disseminated to the range States through their respective SSUs.

Regarding frequency of submission of raw data, in accordance with the Data Policy, this should happen at least on a **quarterly basis** from national office to SSU. However, the MIKE SSO strongly recommended that the flow of raw data from sites to national offices should be encouraged to happen on a **monthly basis**. A monthly process would enable national officers to despatch monthly updates of virus definitions to the site computers as part of a comprehensive anti-virus management programme for MIKE computers.

2.4 Range States Meetings

The Director affirmed that as a continuing consultative process between the range States and the MIKE CCU, the CCU would continue to hold a Regional meeting to review the MIKE progress report a few weeks prior to the CoP 13. Discussions centered on how this regional meeting could be held in conjunction with a further consultative meeting to be attended by all the African and Asian Elephant Range States which could contribute to the proper preparation and consideration of the trading proposals that are tabled at the CoP. It was noted that the practical issue of funding the sponsored participants to this consultative meeting would need to be considered as any proposed consultative meeting of the African and Asian Elephant Range States was not likely to be funded by the CITES Secretariat in addition to a probable Sixth Dialogue Meeting of the African Elephant Range States which would normally be held immediately prior to the CoP.

It was recommended by the SSC members that the CITES Secretariat be invited to look into the funding options of a consultative meeting of the African and Asian Elephant Range States to be held back-to-back with the MIKE regional meeting. The Director was requested to submit the recommendation to the CITES Secretariat on behalf of the SSC and to propose that MIKE be available as a possible resource to aid in the funding of the proposed consultative meeting.

The Chair noted that such a consultative process would ensure that range States have sufficient time and preparation to consider the ivory trading proposals in light of conservation and management issues highlighted by MIKE outputs.

2.5 MIKE Training

On training, Uganda assured that the issue of staff transfers may not be a bad thing per se as it would distribute trained staff in non MIKE site areas where recording of non-site carcasses is now being carried out. It was emphasized that training should therefore focus on the whole wildlife organization rather than on individuals as individuals are always prone to transfers, death, loss of jobs, promotion etc.

Kenya reported that their strategy in dealing with the issue of high staff turnover and its impact on continuity of training. Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) has moved towards having scientists take the lead on data flow for they are more permanent and are adept at the use of the MIKE database. Mr Omondi also suggested the possibility of training **specialized MIKE teams** in the sites to ensure that the transfer of one individual does not affect the flow of data. He recommended that the MIKE training curriculum be included in the curriculums of the wildlife training centers such as the Manyani Training Center for KWS or the Mweka College in Tanzania.

The MIKE Director welcomed the proposal and confirmed that the long term objective of MIKE would be to incorporate the MIKE training curriculum into the standard curriculum for wildlife training. The development of a MIKE Training Manual is the initial step towards achieving this objective. However, he explained that MIKE has had to first target the training on national and site officers as the nucleus and foundation of the LEM training. This would eventually be expanded to other staff through integration into the framework of national training centers.

Kenya brought up their need to harmonise the MIKE and KWS data collection processes. KWS has existing parallel data collection systems. The change or overhaul of the existing systems to accommodate the MIKE database would be difficult. As such there are two systems running in parallel and the filtering of data for input into the MIKE database takes time. The Director recommended that a dialogue be initiated between Mr Omondi and the SSO to look into the possibility of commissioning a programme similar in line with the integration of MIKE and MIST (Uganda) database systems.

Tanzania also flagged the issue of harmonization of data collection citing the GTZ project in Katavi. It was agreed that the SSO should continue with existing dialogue underway to have the two systems harmonized.

2.6 Maintenance of Equipment/New Technology

The KWS Director raised two main queries, firstly as to what was being done for the maintenance and sustainability of MIKE equipment in the fields. Secondly, whether any new technology is being used to ensure good data capture.

The Director and the SSO affirmed the importance in which the programme places on the use of new technologies in good data capture. For instance, Global Positioning Systems (GPS) are being used to geo-reference Law Enforcement Monitoring data. However, they cautioned that the use of new technologies should not undermine traditional methods of data collection as often new technologies could fail or are at times expensive to maintain. Some of the new technologies are not robust enough to cope with tough field conditions and the Cybertracker project used by WWF in Cameroon for data collection was cited as an example. Besides, traditional methods of data collection act as a back up when problems arise from usage of new technologies.

Uganda raised a concern that given the basic training in computers, the knowledge was not enough to cope with current IT problems related to internet viruses and worms etc. The SSO informed that the maintenance and sustainability of computer systems are being addressed continuously by the MIKE training curriculum which include data backup, virus updates and prevention, etc.

2.7 MIKE Forms

The Director informed that the MIKE field forms were being reduced to A5 size for convenience in the field. Human Elephant Conflict (HEC) forms were also being developed to help gather information related to conflict cases. They would not be used during patrol but should be used anytime and anywhere to report on an HEC occurrence.

It was reported that the Module 5 training would commence in January 2004. This is a follow-up to the Module 3 training which has been concluded across the Africa subregions in July 2003. National officers were requested to bring their MIKE database with raw data incorporated for Module 5 training.

3. The future of MIKE: EC funding

The Director reported that EC funds for the ongoing phase of the MIKE Programme had ended since April 2003. However, the EC had accepted a no-cost extension of the current phase of the programme for one year until April 2004. This measure was to help bridge the waiting period for an expected 10 million Euros funding for the five years ahead.

The Director explained that the first step towards the funding process was to solicit letters of support for the MIKE programme from the range State governments to the General Secretariat of the African Caribbean Pacific Group of States (ACP). However, the funding process may bypass the ACP if regional letters of support could be sent to the EC. In the context of the East Africa, these regional letters would come from the COMESA, SADC and IGAD. The move to send these regional letters of support has already been initiated.

The next step would then be for the EC to conduct a feasibility study. In the meantime, the Director reported that the Dutch, Belgium, Japanese, Norwegian and Finnish governments have been approached for bridging funds to cover the period when the current EC no-cost extension expires in April 2004.

It was suggested that the Director should also follow up with the EC on their flexibility in providing 15% of the approved funding under the current project as a contribution to the bridging period.

4. Sustainability of Population Survey cycles:

The Director informed that population surveys so far have been conducted under short term project funding and emphasized the importance that such surveys must be sustainable on a two to three year cycle. Considering the nature of such population surveys and their high costs, the Director suggested that one option was for the range States to take it upon themselves to assign the task to a self-sustaining population survey team in the sub region. This option would lower the cost on any one country and reduce the need for donor funding for this expensive exercise.

Members agreed that such a regional team would focus on the coordination between the range States and where possible, this should be tabled at subregional forums such as the EAC and IGAD to achieve the regional support and funding from donors to ensure the sustainability efforts of population survey cycles.

Discussion took place on the status of elephant population surveys so far undertaken across the sites in East Africa. The SSO noted that no survey has been planned for the Gash Setit site in Eritrea as the elephants were physically sighted by the National officer.

On the Mount Elgon forest site, it was agreed that both Kenya and Uganda would commence dialogue on a joint survey. It was noted that 4 staff from the Uganda Wildlife Authority have been trained in Ghana on forest survey methodologies. Kenya is also in the process of having a meeting on forest survey methodologies with Dr Richard Barnes on 27 November 2003.

On the status of surveys in Tanzania, it was agreed that the National officer would provide the SSO with an update on what were the latest population figures available for Tarangire/Manyara site.

5. Workings of the Steering Committee :

The workings of the SSC were discussed at length and the Director noted that the tenure of the Chair had not been decided at the 2001 Dar meeting. It was suggested that the tenure of the Chairman should be rotational and should follow the cycle of the CoP.

In this regard, it was agreed that the re-election of the Chair shall take place at the first meeting of the SSC after every CoP.

On the terms of reference for the SSC, the Director noted that this would include among others:

- Empowering range States to implement MIKE
- Review progress reports by the SSO
- Review and approve draft analyses and MIKE progress reports to the CoP

The Director was requested to provide clarification on the composition, work scope, frequency of meetings of the SSC.

On the issue of composition, the Director noted that the Directors of the Wildlife Departments were frequently nominated by range States to act as the SSC member, but this is not always the case for example in the case of Uganda, a member from the Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry was nominated as the SSC member.

The National officers, who would normally deal with day-to-day issues on MIKE implementation would attend the SSC meetings as resource persons. However, only the SSC members would be allowed to vote during the meetings.

Having discussed the above, the following actions were also agreed:

- That SSC members should receive minutes of the SSC meetings
- Meeting materials and agenda should be disseminated to SSC members and national officers prior to the SSC meeting to allow time for advance preparation
- That progress reports from MIKE should be prepared in advance and as much as possible include government counterpart contributions

6. Any other business:

The Director reported that Ethiopia has agreed to MIKE implementation and that the SSO would soon be making a visit to commence training on LEM.

It was suggested that Ethiopia should be invited to attend future SSC meetings to allow it to become familiar with the implementation issues and problems without waiting for long term funding to become available.

It was also suggested that Sudan could also come on board of MIKE programme if the current peace process could be finalized.

6. Closing remarks:

The Chair expressed his appreciation to learn more about the progress and issues of MIKE implementation. He urged the members to take into account the concerns raised by the SSO at this meeting and to address the issues raised in his progress report to ensure that implementation of MIKE is well received by field staff.

The meeting was closed with thanks the Chair and the participants for their contributions in the entire duration of the deliberations.

Abbreviations:

ACP	African Caribbean Pacific Group of States
CCU	MIKE Central Coordinating Unit
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CoP	Conference of the Parties to CITES
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
EAC	East African Community
EC	European Community
HEC	Human Elephant Conflicts
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
LEM	Law enforcement monitoring
MIKE	Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants Programme
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SSC	MIKE Subregional Steering Committee for East Africa
SSO	MIKE Subregional Support Officer for East Africa
SSU	MIKE Subregional Support Unit for East Africa

List of Participants

Kenya

Evans Arthur MUKOLWE
Steering Committee Member
Wildlife Director
Kenya Wildlife Service
PO Box 40241
NAIROBI, KENYA

Tel : +254 20 600800
Fax : +254 20 603792
Mobile : +254 (0)734 810423
Email : kws@kws.org

Patrick OMONDI
MIKE National Officer
KWS Elephant Programme Coordinator
MIKE National Officer
Kenya Wildlife Service
PO Box 40241
NAIROBI, KENYA

Tel : +254 20 608072
Fax : +254 20 603792
E-mail : Pomondi@kws.org

Rwanda

Antoine MUDAKIKWA
Senior Vet Officer
ORTPN
Rwanda Office of Tourism & National Parks
B. P. 905
Kigali RWANDA
Tel : 250 576715
Fax : 250 576714
Mobile : 250 0830 6918
Email : ortpn@rwanda1.com
Email : tomudak@hotmail.com

Patrick Buda KUKIYE
Planning, Research and Monitoring Warden
ORTPN / Akagera National Park
B. P. 905
Kigali RWANDA
Tel : 250 576715
Fax : 250 576714
Mobile : 250 08490013
Email : ortpn@rwanda1.com
Email : bkukiye@yahoo.fr

Tanzania

Emmanuel L. M. SEVERRE
Chair, Steering Committee
Wildlife Director
Wildlife Division - Tanzania
P. O. Box 1994
Dar es Salaam TANZANIA
Tel : +255 22 2866408
Fax : +255 22 2865836
Email : director@wildlife.go.tz

Matthew K. S. MAIGE
MIKE National officer
Wildlife Division - Tanzania
P. O. Box 1994
Dar es Salaam TANZANIA
Tel : +255 22 2866408
Fax : +255 22 2865836
Email : director@wildlife.go.tz

Frank E. MREMI
Officer i/c Tourist Hunting & CITES
Wildlife Division - Tanzania
P. O. Box 1541
Arusha TANZANIA
Tel : +255 27 2548750
Fax : +255 27 2548750
Mobile : 02744 490438
Email : frankmremi@yahoo.com

Uganda

Justus TINDIGARUKAYO
Steering Committee Member
Assistant Commissioner Wildlife
Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry
P. O. Box 4241
Kampala
UGANDA
Tel : 256 41 343947
Fax : 256 41 341247
E-mail : mintrade@starcom.co.ug

Moses MAPESA
Deputy Director/Field Operations
Uganda Wildlife Authority
PO Box 3530
KAMPALA, UGANDA.
Tel : +256 (41) 346287/8
Fax : +256 (41) 346291
E-mail : moses.mapesa@uwa.or.ug

MIKE CCU/SSU

Nigel HUNTER
Director
CITES MIKE Programme
P. O. Box 68200
Nairobi
KENYA
Tel : +254 2 570522
Fax : +254 2 570385
Email : nigelhunter@citesmike.org

Yacob YOHANNES
MIKE National Officer
Wildlife Conservation Division
Ministry of Agriculture
P. O. Box 1048
Asmara, ERITREA

Tel : +291 (1) 181 044
Fax : +291 (1) 181 415; 181 274
E-mail : esbein@eol.com.er

Edison NUWAMANYA
Sub-regional Support Officer (East Africa)
CITES MIKE Programme
P. O. Box 68200
Nairobi
KENYA
Tel : +254 2 570522
Fax : +254 2 570385
Email : edisonnuwamanya@citesmike.org

Linda YEO
Programme Support Officer
CITES MIKE Programme
P. O. Box 68200
Nairobi
KENYA
Tel : +254 2 570522
Fax : +254 2 570385
Email : lindayeo@citesmike.org

Absent with Apologies

Eritrea

Hagos YOHANNES
Steering Committee Member
Wildlife Conservation Division
Ministry of Agriculture
P. O. Box 1048
Asmara, ERITREA

Tel : +291 (1) 181 044
Fax : +291 (1) 181 415; 181 274
E-mail : esbein@eol.com.er

