

Term of Reference:
Regional workshop for the finalisation and validation of the COMIFAC Central African Wildlife Trade Law Enforcement Action Plan (CAWTLEAP)

Date: Thursday 10 – Friday 11 November 2011

Venue: Douala, Cameroon

Language: French

Background & justification

The COMIFAC Secretariat has prepared a **Central African Wildlife Trade Law Enforcement Action Plan 2012-2017** (working title: COMIFAC-CAWTLEAP) for finalisation and validation by the ten COMIFAC countries (Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda, Sao Tomé and Príncipe). Also prepared was a draft declaration of COMIFAC Heads of States, which would formally adopt COMIFAC-CAWTLEAP.

History of the COMIFAC-CAWTLEAP:

- 1) Six of the COMIFAC countries (Cameroon, CAR, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon) met during the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (known as the ‘Doha meeting’.) The notes from the Doha meeting, which have been endorsed by the participating governments, reiterate that « Participants underlined their interest in the development of the regional action plan to strengthen anti-poaching and control the illegal trade of wildlife”
- 2) CAWTLEAP and its respective Declaration were officially discussed at the 6th Session of COMIFAC’s Ministerial Council (8-11 November 2010, Kinshasa), where the Ministers gave a mandate to the COMIFAC Secretariat to finalize CAWTLEAP and the Declaration in a participatory manner (cf. Point 15.o of the *COMIFAC Communiqué final de la 6^{ème} Session Ordinaire du Conseil des Ministres*).
- 3) The COMIFAC Secretariat participated in the 1st Technical Committee meeting of the Parties to the Gorilla Agreement, agreed under the auspices of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). The meeting took place in Rwanda, 29 – 30 March 2011. The Executive Secretary of COMIFAC, Mr Raymond Mbitikon, presented the concept of CAWTLEAP and stated that COMIFAC is committed to lead the participatory process for CAWTLEAP’s adoption by the concerned countries. Six of the COMIFAC countries (Cameroon, CAR, Congo, DRC, Equatorial Guinea and Rwanda) were present at the meeting.
- 4) The recommendations driving from the Joint meeting of the CBD Liaison Group on Bushmeat and the CITES Central Africa Bushmeat Working Group of 7-10 May 2011 in Nairobi bear reference to the need for an enhance enforcement cooperation (see recommendation 12 under the following link: <http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/for/lgbushmeat-02/official/lgbushmeat-02-04-en.pdf>). Five COMIFAC member states of the six members of the CITES Central Africa Bushmeat Working Group (Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Equatorial Guinea) were present at the Nairobi meetings
- 5) The outcomes of the CITES Central African Bushmeat Working Group held on 10 May 2011 in Nairobi bear specific reference to the COMIFAC-CAWTLEAP (see paragraph 8f ii) in the Document provided by the CITES Secretariat viz: <http://www.cites.org/eng/com/sc/61/E61-42.pdf>. A meeting of the CITES Central Africa Bushmeat Working Group was held in Nairobi in June 2011, with the Working Group "expressing its full support to and intention to closely follow up" on CAWTLEAP. The Chair of the Central African Bushmeat Working Group also highlighted CAWTLEAP in its update to the 61st Meeting of the CITES Standing Committee.

6) In order to follow up on the “*Communiqué final de la 6^{ème} Session Ordinaire du Conseil des Ministres*”, the COMIFAC Secretariat circulated the draft COMIFAC-CAWTLEAP in September 2011 to COMIFAC countries for comments and input.

Objective of the workshop

The objective of this consultative workshop is to finalize and validate the COMIFAC-CAWTLEAP through mandated and relevant official government representatives from each of the ten COMIFAC countries, and through input by other key stakeholders/partners.

Summary of the Central African Wildlife Trade Law Enforcement Action Plan 2012-2017

Vision

“Threatened species are conserved in Central Africa and poaching and illegal wildlife trade are effectively combated.”

Goal

“National and sub-regional wildlife law enforcement effort is increased significantly, effective deterrents to wildlife poaching and trade are implemented, and poaching and illegal wildlife trade prosecution is increased and monitored throughout Central Africa by 2017”

Objectives:

1. Cooperation and collaboration among relevant wildlife law enforcement and prosecution authorities is strengthened at the national level and between member countries to curb illegal trade in wild fauna.
2. Investigations are increased, in particular at key border and transit points, domestic market places and transboundary areas.
3. Effective deterrents to wildlife poaching and illegal trade are put in place, prosecutions are conducted to the full extent possible under national laws, and enforcement and prosecution results are monitored.
4. Awareness of illegal wildlife trade issues is raised and the results of enforcement efforts are widely communicated

Expected outputs of the workshop

- The COMIFAC-CAWTLEAP is finalized and validated by COMIFAC countries and key stakeholders/partners
- An agreement is made at the meeting to submit the COMIFAC-CAWTLEAP for endorsement at Head of State level, and a process for Head of State level adoption is defined.

- A commitment to implement the COMIFAC-CAWTLEAP is made by governments present at the meeting, and the key stakeholders/partners at the meeting commit to supporting COMIFAC and the COMIFAC governments in the implementation of COMIFAC-CAWTLEAP.