

DECLARATION OF THE "SUB-REGIONAL WORKSHOP TO COMBAT WILDLIFE TRADE AND DISMANTLE TRANSNATIONAL CRIMINAL NETWORKS"

The participants in the Central African sub-regional workshop to combat wildlife illegal trade and dismantle transnational criminal networks

- Recognizing that poaching and illegal trade of wildlife species have become serious threats at national, sub-regional, regional, and international levels because of their economic, social and security-related impacts,
- Recognizing that national initiatives to fight against poaching and illegal trade in wildlife species have so far yielded unsatisfactory results,
- Recognizing that a sub-regional approach, leveraged through international cooperation, requires efficient strategies to fight against wildlife trafficking and to dismantle cross-border criminal networks, and
- Supporting the goals and objectives embedded in the COMIFAC Action Plan aiming at strengthening the enforcement of national wildlife-related legislations in order to:
 - Strengthen cooperation and collaboration between monitoring authorities and judiciary personnel involved in the enforcement of domestic wildlife legislations, as well as between countries within the COMIFAC area,
 - Increase checks, especially, at specific points of transit or borders, in local markets and in cross-border areas,
 - Implement efficient dissuasion measures to fight against poaching and illegal trade of wildlife species, ensure that legal proceedings are conducted in full compliance with applicable provisions and that the outcomes of monitoring and legal proceedings are followed-up, published and widely-publicized,
 - Increase awareness about issues on wildlife illegal trade.

Recommend to Central African countries to:

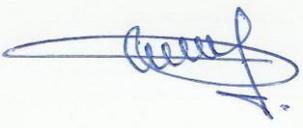
1. Identify all national coordination units and fully operate them in order to improve on communication and information sharing in relation to poaching and wildlife species trafficking between affected countries; this should occur before the establishment of an official network for wildlife law enforcement;
2. Set up a coordination and communication network for law enforcement (in relation to the fight against poaching, and illegal trade of wildlife species, etc.);
3. Identify agencies and ministries in charge of law enforcement in each country of the sub-region to support the establishment, before the end of June 2012, of a Sub-Working Group on Wildlife and Protected Areas;
4. Collaborate with other governments, non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental partners that can assist in the creation and operation of the network;

5. Develop and/or implement, with partners' support, sub-regional strategies and mechanisms that would contribute to the fight of illegal trade of wildlife species and the dismantling of transnational illegal networks;
6. Harmonize sub-regional legislations by punishing poaching-related violations¹;
7. Strengthen cross-border cooperation in compliance with international conventions, including the United Nations conventions against transnational organized crime and against corruption, as well as the UN Convention International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in order to dismantle corruption networks that favor fund flows and illegal markets wherein illegal entrepreneurs and facilitators meet and influence supply and demand on the markets of products of poaching and illegal trade of wildlife species;
8. Establish, among other criteria, the number of jail terms as a marker for the efficiency of the established network; and
9. Fight efficiently against favoritism and any type of corruption related to the illegal trade of wildlife species by collaborating, for example, with special government agencies.

Done at Libreville, on April 5, 2012

For the Participants

Nathalie NYARE ESSIMA



**Reporting
Secretary**

¹ Rewording proposal by DRC: "Harmonize sub-regional legislation by applying deterring sanctions for infringements on poaching and illegal trade of wildlife species".