



RECORD OF THE MEETING OF DIRECTORS OF WILDLIFE AUTHORITIES OF AFRICAN UNION MEMBER STATES IN EASTERN AFRICA ON PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO COMBAT WILDLIFE CRIME

16 – 17 May 2019

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



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1. ATTENDANCE

1.1 The following Eastern and Horn of Africa States and partners were in attendance at the Wildlife Directors Meeting held from 16th May 2019 held at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia:

States

- Djibouti
- Eritrea
- Ethiopia
- Kenya
- Somalia
- South Sudan
- Sudan
- Tanzania
- Uganda

Organizers/Partners

- African Union Commission
- Lusaka Agreement Task Force (LATF)
- ENACT-Enhancing Africa's Responses to Transnational Organised Crime /Institute for Security Studies (ISS)

Observers

- African Wildlife Foundation (AWF)
- Born Free Foundation
- European Union
- Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)
- INTERPOL-Regional Bureau for Eastern Africa
- TRAFFIC



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- United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime(UNODC) – Regional program for Eastern Africa
- US Embassy to Ethiopia
- Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration (GVTC)

2. AGENDA

2.1 The meeting considered and adopted the following agenda:

- Opening remarks
- Introduction of participants
- Introduction, objectives and desired outcomes of the meeting
- Election of Chair, Vice chair and Rapporteur
- Adoption of Agenda
- Presentations:
 - Extent of the problem: Illegal Wildlife Trade and trafficking in Africa
 - National efforts in combating transnational Wildlife Crime by each country
 - Brief on Regional Efforts in Combating Transnational Wildlife Crime by UNODC and INTERPOL
 - Discussion, questions and answers: Combating Transnational Wildlife Crime - Commitments and Actions
 - Bilateral and Regional co-operation among range states to address Transnational Wildlife Crime by Lusaka Agreement Task Force
- Policy and operational solutions (Action points)
- Consideration of report of the meeting and Way forward

3. OPENING REMARKS

3.1 At the opening session, representatives of the organizing partners namely AUC, ENACT and the LATF made remarks which reiterated the importance for closer collaboration at all levels of the fight against wildlife crime within the region. They also availed their continued support and readiness to work with all the states at both bilateral and multilateral levels to enhance their individual and collective efforts in preventing and combating wildlife crime in all its forms and manifestations.

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- 3.2 The statement of the Director of Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA), Mr. Kumara Wakjira, warmly welcomed all participants to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and particularly those coming from outside the country. He reiterated that the hosting of this important meeting evidently illustrated the commitment and resolve of the Government of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia to continuously contribute to the improvement of collaborative regional efforts in wildlife conservation.
- 3.3 He emphasized that together we can foster cooperation and strengthen capacity of our wildlife authorities and other relevant enforcement agencies to curtail illegal exploitation of our rich environmental resources, which are the mainstay of most economies in the region. He averred that Ethiopia was making positive steps to streamline its national law enforcement and the African Common Strategy on Combating Illegal Exploitation of Wild fauna and Flora being implemented by the African Union.
- 3.4 He stated that the wildlife crime problem is exacerbated by inadequate cooperation among states and agencies compounded by insufficient capacity to strengthen efforts in addressing this vice, which is rapidly soaring to alarming proportions in Africa.
- 3.5 He called for the strengthening and effective implementation of Convention on International Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Convention on Biological Diversity, the Nagoya and Cartagena Protocols and also to ratify and domesticate instruments such as the Lusaka Agreement and revised African Convention on the conservation of nature and natural resources (the Maputo Convention).
- 3.6 The Director commended the efforts made by Eastern Africa and Horn of Africa States represented at the meeting for a job well done in enhancing enforcement in their respective countries and the region at large. In the same vein, he thanked the European Union through the ENACT Project at the Institute for Security Studies for funding the meeting. He expressed the same sentiments to the African Union Commission and the Lusaka Agreement Task Force for the partnership in organizing this event which comprised a three-day capacity building workshop, the Wildlife Directors meeting and a sensitization meeting on the African Common Strategy in Combating Illegal Exploitation of Wild fauna and flora being spearheaded by the African Union. He also thanked UNODC, INTERPOL Regional Bureau for Eastern Africa and TRAFFIC for their technical support.
- 3.7 He reiterated the need to enhance regional and international cooperation as well as to put in place mechanisms to share information and intelligence on wildlife crimes amongst wildlife authorities



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through consultative fora such as this meeting. He added that fighting wildlife crime successfully requires us to pool our scarce financial, human and information resources together.

3.8 In conclusion, the Director envisioned that the meeting would come up with concrete action plans that will among other things bolster co-operation between the wildlife authorities and related agencies geared towards curtailing illegal offtake of our much treasured wild fauna and flora in the region. He urged the participants to make maximum use of the meeting to forge new partnerships and strengthen the already existing working relationships.

3.9 He further called upon the international community to increase financial, technical and moral support towards effectively fighting the wildlife crime scourge in the region.

3.10 Before declaring the meeting open, Mr. Wakjira urged the Directors to leave no stone unturned in their search for effective and appropriate strategies for combating wildlife crime in Eastern Africa and Horn of Africa. He then declared the meeting open and wished the participants fruitful deliberations.

4. OBJECTIVES AND DESIRED OUTCOMES OF THE MEETING

4.1 The Director of the Lusaka Agreement Task Force, Mr. Edward Phiri, provided the background to the meeting and outlined the key objectives and desired outcomes.

4.2 He stated that the overall goal of the meeting was to enhance networking among wildlife institutions to combat poaching and illegal trade in wild fauna and flora.

4.3 Mr. Phiri espoused the following specific objectives of the meeting:

- Foster dialogue and promote synergies among Eastern African states to jointly formulate workable strategies and action plans to combat transnational wildlife crime;
- Strengthen existing bilateral wildlife management mechanisms focusing on combating poaching and illegal wildlife trade especially in shared ecosystems;
- Forge a common front against poaching and illicit trans-national trade in wild fauna and flora within the sub-region;
- Using existing mechanism to explore partnership arrangement with Lusaka Agreement Task Force to promote international cooperation in the Eastern Africa region; and
- Enhance mutual trust among agencies as a catalyst for sharing of information and carrying out joint activities.



4.4 He outlined the following expected outcomes of the meeting:

- Enhanced awareness on the importance of bilateral, regional and international cooperation in addressing illegal wildlife trade challenges in Eastern Africa states to stem wildlife and forestry crime;
- Support bilateral mechanisms on cross-border wildlife law enforcement to enhance sustainable conservation of wildlife populations in the region;
- Develop better strategies for the protection and improvement of livelihoods initiatives in communities that depend on wildlife tourism;
- Create synergies and partnerships with existing African instruments in combating wildlife crime; and
- Enhance awareness among Eastern African states on the Lusaka Agreement and its role in cooperative law enforcement

5. ELECTION OF CHAIR, VICE CHAIR AND RAPPORTEUR OF THE MEETING

5.1 The following were elected members of the Bureau of the meeting:

Chair:	Ethiopia
Vice Chair:	Somalia
Rapporteur:	Kenya

6. PRESENTATIONS

6.1 Extent of the Wildlife Crime Problem - by LATF

The Director of LATF presented on the extent of the wildlife problem in Africa. He underscored the gravity of the problem and reiterated that illegal wildlife trade is increasingly becoming sophisticated. The following points were highlighted:

- According to the African Development Bank (AfDB), Globally, illicit trade in natural resources is estimated at US\$120 billion per annum (5% of Africa's GDP);



- Illegal wildlife trade excluding illegal timber trade and illegal fishing, is valued between US\$7.8 and US\$10 billion annually;
- The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) estimates the global illegal trade in wildlife to be worth between US\$7 billion to US\$23 billion annually;
- Illegal wildlife trade has caused an estimated loss of 24 million jobs;
- Illegal trade in the forest sector alone is estimated to be worth about US\$13 billion annually;
- Illegal timber logging is valued at US\$7 billion a year;
- The illegal fishing industry is one of the biggest criminal markets estimated to be worth between US\$10 and US\$ 23 billion a year;
- Illegal wildlife trade is therefore one of the most profitable illicit trafficking industries after the trafficking of drugs, guns, and humans.

6.2 Challenges and National efforts in combating transnational wildlife crime

6.2.1 In the national presentations and discussions that ensued, the following challenges were raised:

- Species most vulnerable to wildlife crime and illegal trade include elephants, rhinos, pangolins, Cheetahs Leopards, Porcupines, Shark fins and Sea turtles
- Increasing intensity and sophistication of wildlife crime
- Inadequate cooperation between agencies within countries and among States
- Corruption and money laundering
- Inadequate fora at national and regional levels to tackle wildlife crime
- Porous international borders
- Inadequate capacity in terms of funding, human resources (manpower and skills) and specialized enforcement equipment
- Lucrative markets for products of wild fauna and flora
- Proliferation of arms and weapons resulting from political instability in some countries;
- Proliferation of motorized off-road transportation (motor cycles popularly referred to as boda bodas) involved in wildlife crime
- Increased demand for wildlife products and derivatives
- Inadequate harmonization of country policies and laws on wildlife crime

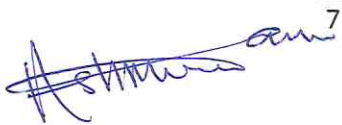



- Wildlife crime related cases protracted for long in courts of law
- Inadequate institutional and legal framework including legislations to effectively deter wildlife crime
- Inadequate communication and public awareness
- Lack of political will and prioritization of wildlife crime issues
- Encroachment into protected areas (Agriculture, mining, livestock and human settlements)
- Poverty which has attracted local communities into poaching;
- Political instability that is causing institutional instability
- Failure to apply best practices e.g. poor investigations/prosecutions including incapacity to undertake money/asset tracing
- Lack of coordination between law enforcement agencies, private sector, partners and NGOs
- Human wildlife conflict
- Most of the syndicates are masterminded by kingpins from Asia who use local networks in Africa
- Lack of specialized environmental units in some countries
- Climate change

6.2.2 Ongoing efforts and Achievements by the Eastern Africa and Horn of Africa States

In the presentations and discussions that followed, States highlighted the following as part of their ongoing efforts to stem wildlife crime in their respective countries:

- Multi agency approach which includes enhancement of synergies
- Adoption of modern technology in wildlife law enforcement e.g. canine units, use of forensic techniques, communication tracking tools , thermal imaging, aerial surveillance, camera traps and owning the night by the use of night vision goggles
- Increased collaboration between contraband source, transit and destination countries
- Establishment of special wildlife courts
- Establishment of national task forces and wildlife prosecution units
- Enhanced capacity building of law enforcement personnel and units – training and specialized equipment


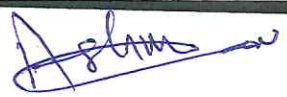
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- Increased monitoring and surveillance at ports of entry and exit as well as porous international boundaries
- Multilateral and bilateral mechanisms for information sharing and action
- Successful prosecution and convictions
- Awareness campaigns
- Establishment of HAWEN for IGAD member states
- Closure of in-country domestic wildlife product markets
- Joint cross border enforcement operations and establishment of coordinating mechanisms
- Review of wildlife legislations to include more stringent/punitive penalties to deter wildlife crime
- Participation in international law enforcement operations such as Operation COBRA
- Development of SOPs and Action plans/strategies towards combating wildlife crime
- Some countries have signed bilateral agreements with Asian countries and this has helped in reducing rhino and elephant poaching.
- Most of the countries have substantially implemented the African Common Strategy on Combating Illegal exploitation and trade in wild fauna and flora.

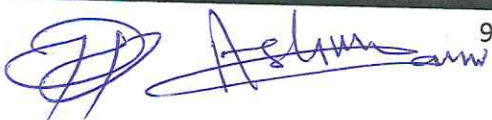
7. RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION POINTS

The following recommendations and action points were made at the meeting:

- Harmonization of environmental legislations among countries in the region;
- Countries should, where necessary, set up and/or strengthen wildlife crime databases and information sharing;
- A multi-agency approach, inclusive of all relevant agencies, should be adopted and implemented;
- Integrate communities in resource protection and promote community-based natural resource management;
- Promote and support research and analysis to understand the dynamics of wildlife crime including actors, market and other criminal factors that sustain the vice;
- Strengthen criminal justice responses to wildlife crime including both conviction and non-conviction based asset forfeiture in the prosecution of wildlife crime;

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- Enhance cooperation including entering into bilateral agreements between wildlife contraband source, transit and destination countries;
- Establishment of National Enforcement Task Forces for countries that have not done so;
- Enhance cross border collaboration and joint interstate as well as multinational law enforcement operations;
- Build capacity of wildlife enforcement agencies and judicial personnel including training and equipment;
- Effectively implement international, continental and regional instruments and regulations to combat illicit trade in wild fauna and flora such as CITES and the Lusaka Agreement;
- Align AU, LATF, IGAD/HAWEN and EAC wildlife enforcement strategies to create more synergy and forge a common front for stemming wildlife crime in the region;
- Accord increased attention to the protection of sharks, which have become a target by poachers and illegal fishing in the Horn of Africa;
- The fight against wildlife crime should not be limited to traditional fauna and flora, but should be inclusive of new poaching and trafficking targets such as the porcupine and tortoise;
- Formulate and implement fundraising strategies including mobilizing resources from international development partners such as GEF, WWF and the Civil Society as well as set up of wildlife enforcement trust funds;
- Develop and enhance MLAs among countries to accelerate repatriation, investigations and prosecutions;
- Create joint training programs among countries, share experiences, skills and building of trust;
- Enhancing joint Anti-corruption actions;
- Through the African union, initiate forums to enhance peace building to create an enabling environment for conservation;
- Ensure that forfeited assets/property or proceeds therefrom are channeled back to wildlife law enforcement agencies;
- Consider as a matter of priority accession to the Lusaka Agreement on Cooperative Enforcement Operations Directed at Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora, by Eastern Africa States that are not yet party to the treaty;
- African Union Commission to promote accession of Member States to the Lusaka Agreement on Cooperative Enforcement Operations Directed at Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora;

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- Enhance the practical implementation of the African Union Strategy on combating illicit exploitation of wild fauna and flora;
- Lusaka Agreement Task Force to play a role of convener and coordinator of transnational operations;
- Utilize the opportunities provided by HAWEN in fighting wildlife crime in the region;
- Enhance both informal and secure communication including information exchange and intelligence;
- Forge closer cooperation with INTERPOL in all criminal matters related to transnational wildlife crime including utilizing the INTERPOL policing capabilities such as I-24/7 and Notices;
- Encourage Member States to utilize UNODC's Container Control and Prevention of Corruption Programs as well as the Global Program for Combating Wildlife and Forest Crime;
- Encourage Member States to take advantage of the UNODC standardized tools, such as the Guide for Drafting Legislation and the Integrity Guide on Preventing Corruption for Wildlife Management Authorities, for drafting, revising, amending and updating of their legislations
- Take advantage of ENACT's capacity building and research programs to strengthen awareness and technical expertise in the prevention and combating of wildlife crime;
- Strengthen political goodwill among Member States towards influencing policy direction, intervention and support in promoting wildlife conservation across the region;
- Develop and ensure effective implementation of national strategies to combat wildlife crime and support implementation of MEAs;
- Ensure that Wildlife Agencies in the region budget for the convening of the Directors meeting annually and Lusaka Agreement Task Force to play the role of convener of the forum with the support of Partners.

8. WAY FORWARD AND CONCLUSION

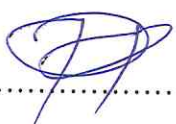
- 8.1 The Directors agreed to meet regularly or at least once a year to review the status of wildlife crime and implementation of these action points.
- 8.2 LATF and HAWEN to ensure that the action points arrived at this meeting are effectively implemented.



- 8.4 LATF to develop a structured Action Plan that will implement the above recommendations in the short, medium and long term and share it with the States within a week of this meeting.
- 8.5 Partners and observers present at this meeting encouraged to support implementation of these action points.
- 8.6 It was also agreed that similar workshops will be organized in other regions in Africa to promote continental, international cooperation and harmonize strategies and standards.

Adopted by the meeting and signed by the following officials of the Bureau:

Mr. Kumara Wakjira

Signature..........Date.....17/5/2019.....

Chairman

Director General, Ethiopia Wildlife Conservation Authority –Federal Republic of Ethiopia

Mr. Ahmed Mohamad Osman

Signature..........Date.....18/05/2019.....

Vice Chairman

Director of Wildlife, Republic of Somalia

Prof. Charles Musyoki Mutua, PhD, OGW

Signature..........Date.....17/5/19.....

Rapporteur

Representative of the Director General, Kenya Wildlife Service – Republic of Kenya