



Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and their Habitats of the Convention on Migratory Species

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FOURTH MEETING OF THE PARTIES
Paris, France, 11-15 December 2023
Agenda Item 32

EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF MOP4

(Prepared by the Interim Secretariat)

Introduction

1. The present note is submitted by the Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), which serves as the Interim Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and Their Habitats (Gorilla Agreement) for consideration at the Fourth Meeting of the Parties (MOP4).
2. As per the instruction to the Interim Secretariat through [Resolution 3.4](#), MOP4 is being organized in conjunction with the Third Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) Council Meeting. This will be the first such jointly organized meeting, therefore the Interim Secretariat provides through this document information on the *modus operandi* and expected outcomes of MOP4.

Modus operandi of MOP4

3. In order to cater to the specific requirements of the Gorilla Agreement, while taking advantage of the substantive discussions planned for the GRASP Council, the following structure will be followed for the meeting: MOP4 will be opened in the early morning of 11 December to undertake two hours of formal business of the Gorilla Agreement after which all delegates of both meetings will attend the joint sessions of MOP4 and GRASP Council — from the Council's opening on the same day to its closing on 14 December 2023. On 15 December, Parties to the Gorilla Agreement will reconvene for a final day of discussion, adoption of resolutions, and closure of MOP4.

Expected outcomes of MOP4

Action Plans

4. MOP4 is expected to discuss the implementation of the Action Plans adopted by MOP3¹ for the Eastern Lowland Gorilla (*Gorilla beringei graueri*), Cross River Gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla diehli*) and Western Lowland Gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla gorilla*) and decide on their involvement in the review and updating of the expired Action Plans.

¹ Action Plans adopted by MOP3:

a) Regional Action Plans for the Conservation of Western Lowland Gorillas and Central Chimpanzees 2015-2025
b) Revised Regional Action Plan for the Conservation of the Cross River Gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla diehli*) 2014–2019
c) Grauer's Gorillas and Chimpanzees in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Conservation Action Plan 2012-2022 as revised in 2015

5. Furthermore, MOP4 will be expected to discuss the development of an Action Plan for the Mountain Gorilla (*Gorilla beringei beringei*) and decide on Parties' involvement in its development.
6. Parties will be expected to decide on whether any updated or newly developed Action Plans in the upcoming intersessional period for the species covered by the Agreement would be automatically adopted by the Gorilla Agreement.

Institutional arrangements

7. MOP4 will be expected to review the submission of a proposal from the Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration (GVTC) Secretariat for the permanent hosting of the Gorilla Agreement Secretariat found in the Annex to UNEP/GA/MOP4/Doc.3 and decide on whether to accept the proposal or request Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) to remain the Interim Secretariat of the Gorilla Agreement.

Budget and Programme of Work (2024-2026) of the Gorilla Agreement

8. MOP4 will be expected to develop a programme of work and a budget for the implementation of the Gorilla Agreement for the period 2024 to 2026.

Recommended actions

9. Parties are invited to:
 - a. Consider the proposal of the GVTC Secretariat to host the Gorilla Agreement Secretariat;
 - b. Decide on an institutional arrangement in the best way forward for the conservation of Gorillas; and
 - c. Adopt the draft Resolution in the Annex to this document.

ANNEX**Draft Resolution 4.X**

Deeply concerned by the vulnerability of gorilla populations and the high risk of extinction they face;

Recalling of Resolution 3.1 which instructed the Interim Secretariat to monitor the revision process of the Action Plans for the four sub-species;

Further recalling that the Meeting to negotiate the Gorilla Agreement in October 2007, requested the CMS Standing Committee to mandate the CMS Secretariat to provide interim secretariat services to the Agreement in close cooperation with the UNEP Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) Secretariat and other institutions of GRASP;

Appreciating the decision of CMS COP13 that the CMS Secretariat continue to provide interim secretariat services to the Gorilla Agreement for the next triennium;

Noting with concern that the Gorilla Agreement is unique among the CMS Agreements, in that it does not have its own independent secretariat, and is not able to fund one from Party contributions alone; and

Realizing that this situation puts the Gorilla Agreement in a vulnerable position, where any reduction in funding to the CMS Secretariat, or increases in mandate, from new agreements, for example, could mean a reduction in resources available to be allocated to the Gorilla Agreement;

*The Meeting of the Parties to the
Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and their Habitats*

Conservation status of gorillas and their habitat

1. *Requests* Parties to submit their data to the Ape Populations, Environments and Surveys (A.P.E.S.) database, initiated by the Section on Great Apes of the IUCN Species Survival Commission Primate Specialist Group with the long-term goal to:
 - archive all existing gorilla population survey data in a secure repository;
 - make them available to the ape conservation and research community; and
 - provide up-to-date information on the status and threats of gorillas;
2. *Requests* Parties to establish protected areas in areas with a high-density or abundance of gorillas as identified by the A.P.E.S platform and ensure that protected areas with gorillas are well connected in order to maintain high levels of population variability of gorilla populations and thereby improve the conditions for their long-term survival;
3. *Requests* Parties to partake in the CMS National Legislation Programme to ensure that their legislation is harmonized with that of other gorilla Range States to adequately protect the species across its range;

4. *Requests* Parties to increase their efforts on raising the awareness of consumers of gorilla derivatives, local communities, law enforcement agents and the judiciary about the inherent value of gorillas and their vital role for ecosystems with the aim of stopping the intentional killing of gorillas;

Gorilla Action Plans

5. *Encourages* Parties to continue conservation efforts as outlined in the IUCN Action Plans adopted at the First Meeting of the Parties (Mountain Gorilla (*Gorilla beringei berengei*)) and Third Meeting of the Parties (Regional Action Plan for the Conservation of Western Lowland Gorillas and Central Chimpanzees 2015 – 2025, Revised Regional Action Plan for the Conservation of the Cross River Gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla diehli*) 2014 – 2019, and Conservation Action Plan 2012 - 2022 for the Grauer's Gorillas and Chimpanzees in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo);
6. *Encourages* Parties to participate actively in the review of existing IUCN Gorilla Action Plans and the development of new ones, where applicable;
7. *Agrees* to implement the IUCN Action Plans on any of the four sub-species, once developed and formally endorsed by all Range States through the IUCN action planning process;
8. *Instructs* the Interim Secretariat to monitor the review process, revision and implementation of the IUCN Action Plans and keep Parties, Range States and other interested stakeholders informed;

Gorillas and health

9. *Requests* Parties to ensure that all rangers, scientists, tourists or other persons intentionally approaching gorillas adhere to the standards and best practice guidelines as set by IUCN such as the Best Practice Guidelines for Great Ape Tourism to reduce the risk of disease spillover between people and gorillas;

Illegal trade

10. *Urges* Parties and invites conservation partners to take photographs of gorillas hands and feet using rulers designed to allow them to be searched against a designated database in partnership with GRASP¹;
11. *Urges* Parties and invites conservation partners to collect non-invasive samples (hair and faeces) and submit them to the Comparative Genomics Lab of Pompeu Fabra University, for inclusion in their database in partnership with GRASP²;

1 Please contact Mark Moseley from the Forensic Imaging Team, Metropolitan Police Forensic Science (mark.moseley@met.police.uk) for information about these rulers and how to obtain the ridge detail from the gorillas using a mobile phone.

Although the database has not yet been created any data (ridge detail) will be downloaded when established so that any gorilla remains and infants can be identified.

2 Please contact Tomas Marques from the University Pompeu Fabra (tomas.marques@upf.edu) for information about how to collect and send the samples.

Large scale development and great apes

12. *Urges* Parties to require private companies operating in gorilla habitat work with the ARRC (avoid, reduce, restore and conserve) Task Force of the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Species Survival Commission Section on Great Apes to avoid and minimize negative impacts on gorillas and their habitat, from energy, extractive, and associated infrastructure projects;
13. *Encourages* Parties to participate in the Primate WATCH program of the ARRC Task Force with the aim of strengthening the capacity of their primatologists to advise and interact with the private sector for improving the mitigation of its impacts on gorillas;

Sustainable Finance

14. *Requests* the Secretariat to support the Parties in finding and/or developing sustainable finance solutions for the implementation of gorilla conservation activities;

Institutional arrangements

15. *Requests* the Secretariat of [the Convention on Migratory Species/ Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration] to [become/remain] the [Interim] Secretariat of the Agreement; [and]
16. [*Instructs* the Interim Secretariat to submit this request for secretariat services for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species at its 14th meeting.]