

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF DEFENSE,
SECURITY, AND PROTECTED AREAS
ON THE FIGHT AGAINST POACHING AND OTHER CROSS-
BORDER CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES

N'Djamena, 23-25 January 2019

On the initiative of the Facilitation of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership headed by the Kingdom of Belgium, in close collaboration with the Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC) and the government of the Republic of Chad, and the technical and financial support of the German Cooperation and the European Union, the Experts' meeting was held ahead of the Conference of Ministers of Defense, Security and Protected areas on the fight against poaching and other cross-border criminal activities in Ndjama from 23 to 24 January 2019 in the conference room of the Hilton Hotel. The conference was entitled : **"Threats posed by armed groups moving between the Sahel, Sudan and north of Equatorial Africa to its natural protected areas and local communities"**:

The meeting's key objective was to develop operational strategies to address issues relating to security and the fight against poaching associated with the circulation of armed groups, as well as uncontrolled and armed transhumance between the Sahel and Equatorial Africa.

Delegates at the meeting included:

1. Experts from the following countries: Cameroon, Chad, DRC, CAR, Niger, South Sudan, Sudan and the Governors of regions in Chad that are most severely affected by the phenomenon;
2. representatives of sub-regional, regional and international organizations, as well as Civil Society Organizations.

1. OPENING CEREMONY

The opening ceremony was chaired by Mr SIDICK ABDELKÉRIM HAGGAR, Minister of Environment, Water and Fisheries of the Republic of Chad.

The ceremony was marked by:

1. A speech by the Facilitator of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, His Excellency FRANCOIS-XAVIER DE DONNEA, Minister of State of the Kingdom of Belgium;
2. A speech by the Permanent Secretary of the Organization for Wildlife Conservation in Africa (OCFSA), Dr IBRAHIM LINJOUOM;
3. A speech by the representative of the Secretary General of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Dr HONORE TABUNA;
4. A speech by the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Central African Forest Commission; (COMIFAC), GERVAIS LUDOVIC ITSOUA MADZOUS, and finally,
5. The opening speech by His Excellency, the Minister of Environment, Water and Fisheries of Chad.

After the opening ceremony, the Bureau of the technical segment was set up, comprising the following:

- **Chairperson:** Dr Dolmia Malachie, from the Republic of Chad;
- **1st Vice-Chair:** Dr Aldo Gwake Lazarus, from the Republic of South Sudan,
- **2nd Vice-Chair:** Pastor Dr. Cosma Wilungula, from the Democratic Republic of the Congo;
- **1st Rapporteur:** Mr. Lekealem Joseph, from the Republic of Cameroon;
- **2nd Rapporteur:** Mr. Patrice Passe Sanand from the Central African Republic.

The technical secretariat was run jointly by the CBFP Facilitation and COMIFAC.

The meetings were chaired successively by the CBFP, ECCAS and the EUROPEAN UNION.

2. CONDUCT OF PROCEEDINGS AND OUTCOMES

The meeting was conducted in two main sessions: Thematic presentations followed by debates in plenary and working groups.

Topics discussed included the following:

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1. The issue of transhumance and armed groups circulating between the Sahel and north of Equatorial Africa;

2. Operational strategies to fight organized poaching by armed groups;
3. Cross-border agreements on the fight against poaching: inventory, in-depth review, identification of emerging geographical blocks, extension of agreements, challenges and prospects;
4. Financing and coordination of technical partners for the implementation of the Ndjamená roadmap.

The ensuing presentations and debates entailed sharing of information, knowledge, experience and best practice case studies to help highlight appropriate solutions to the respective challenges identified.

Following the plenary discussions, three working groups were formed around the following geographical blocks:

Group 1: North-eastern block including Chad, CAR, Sudan, and South Sudan.

Group 2: North-western block centered around Lake Chad and made up of Cameroon, Niger, Chad and Nigeria, and lastly,

Group 3: Central block comprising Chad, CAR, DRC and South Sudan.

The three groups were tasked with proposing concrete measures and recommendations.

At the end of the proceedings, the experts submitted the following recommendations:

1. To the States:

- Help establish and operate multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral platforms at the regional, national and local levels to ensure concerted management of issues relating to transhumance, protected areas and cross-border crime;
- Establish and secure national and cross-border transhumance corridors;
- Promote management styles that ensure protection and added value of protected areas, notably through Public/Private Partnerships;
- Establish and operationalize bilateral and tripartite agreements on anti-poaching and concerted management of protected areas and cross-border corridors (Sudan-Chad-CAR);

- Establish and operationalize an observatory of cross-border transhumance movements;
- Exchange real-time information using appropriate communication tools such as AFRICA-TWIX;
- With the support of partners, develop income-generating and sustainable natural resources management projects; integrated environmental and health education programs for the benefit of local communities living around protected areas and for transhumant pastoralists;
- take account of biodiversity conservation issues in protected areas, in addition to the recommended monitoring of cross-border transhumance;
- develop and/or activate framework agreements on the fight against cross-border poaching and conduct concerted diplomatic advocacy and sensitization efforts in the poachers' countries of origin, and transit and consumer countries of illegal wildlife products.
- with the help of their Technical and Financial Partners, organize a consultation process to evaluate the existing conservation services of the States Parties to the Agreements that are involved in Anti-Poaching (LAB) efforts, in order to take steps to address their operational gaps, particularly in the area of intelligence and responses by special anti-poaching units capable of setting up emergency operational tactics on short notice to address security issues and poaching activities associated with transhumance;
- Develop an appropriate legal framework to ensure better governance and efficient management of transhumance and,
- Promote better understanding, supported by figures, of the economic, social, political and security dynamics related to transhumance

2. To ECCAS,

-Within the framework of the fight against cross-border poaching and for eco-security purposes, organize a meeting of authorities in charge of protected areas, security and defense, with the purpose of understanding and implementing the "Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light

Weapons";

3. To COMIFAC

- Organize a high-level meeting to review the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of agreements on the creation of cross-border protected area complexes in Central Africa;

4. To COMIFAC and OCFSA: assist the countries in implementing cross-border anti-poaching agreements;

5. To UNESCO: within the framework of the Man and Biosphere Program (MAB), help establish and operate a consultation framework on transhumance that would allow analysis of key issues relating to cross-border transhumance and help devise appropriate solutions;

6. To the LCBC, ECCAS and COMIFAC: facilitate the construction of water points, fodder production and pasture management in order to restore ecosystem function in the Lake Chad Basin area;

Following fruitful exchanges, all the donors expressed their willingness to support the countries in the region in their efforts to preserve their rich biological diversity as a world heritage.

They reiterated their commitment to extend and continue providing financial and technical support to the countries of the region on these matters. They expressed the wish that the funding would be met with: top-level political commitment of State authorities of countries in the region: these wishes were echoed by the countries themselves; these outcomes were consistent with shared expectations.

They hope the Regional Economic Communities and the Sub-regional Organizations concerned will cooperate seamlessly in supporting the implementation of regional initiatives that have already been developed such as the cross-border agreements for environmental conservation.

The donors encouraged the countries of the region to consider innovative sources/structures for sustainable financing of the fight against environmental crime which could be housed, for instance, within a regional project financing agency.

A Draft N'Djamena Declaration, annexed to this report, was prepared at the end of the proceedings and will be submitted for review during the closed-door meeting of Ministers.

The experts thank the Chadian government and people for their warm welcome and legendary hospitality. They equally extend gratitude to the CBFP Facilitation, COMIFAC and all the Technical and Financial Partners, notably the German Cooperation (BMZ-GIZ) and the European Union for helping organize the conference.

**Done in N'Djamena on 24 January
2019**

The participants