

SUMMARY

During the reporting period the State Party sustained the anti-poaching efforts despite poaching intensification, especially of Elephants and Rhino in the African continent. The poaching level remained comparable to long-term (10-year) trends with animal numbers remaining stable or increasing. A recent census testifies this as it indicates a sharp rise in elephant population by 98% from 3,068 in 2009 to 6,087 in 2014. Taken together, these anti-poaching efforts and results are consistent with last reporting and indicate that ongoing anti-poaching efforts are indeed paying dividends. With regard to conducting a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for “Comprehensive Transport and Trade System Development Master Plan” in relation to infrastructure development within or around Serengeti National Park, initial work has been accomplished involving a wide-range of stakeholders and the First SEA draft is currently under review. Generally, there does not seem to be immediate plans (at least by year 2030) for major infrastructure development within Serengeti National Park. The 2nd SEA draft will be submitted to the WHC when ready for review and comments.

In line with the Committee’s proposal to explore alternative routes to the Northern Serengeti Road, the German Government has supported a feasibility study for two alternative routes south of Serengeti. Additional support is needed for a detailed feasibility and road construction. The State Party has so far not been able to engage a consultant for detailed evaluations/EIA of surfacing options for the 115km Golini-Ndabaka road section through Serengeti National Park for lack of funding. Nevertheless, additional factual information has been gathered on the road physical condition and management challenges to form the basis of consultancy once funding becomes available. The State party has also continued to collaborate with the State party of Kenya in a joint management of the trans-boundary water resources of the Mara river Basin in a sustainable manner. To this effect, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two States Parties was signed in October 2015 outlining concrete steps forward. With regard to annexation of Speke Gulf to Serengeti National Park, a Draft Cabinet paper has been submitted to the government for approval since September 2015 to pave way for subsequent steps. The proposed 1.2km gravel type Mugumu Airport Project, situated in Mugumu town about 40km from border with Serengeti National Park is about expansion of the existing airstrip to serve for both local and international flights. The EIA for this project has been reverted back to the EIA study Team for rectifications and resubmission for further considerations and will be submitted to the WHC once available. Overall, despite a number of management challenges that are being dealt with, the State of Conservation of Serengeti National Park is considered fairly stable.

94. Serengeti National Park (United Republic of Tanzania) (N 156) Decision: 38 COM 7B.94 (Doha, June 2014)

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC-14/38.COM/7B,*
2. *Recalling Decision 36 COM 7B.6, adopted at its 36th session (Saint-Petersburg, 2012),*
3. *Welcomes the efforts of the State Party to address the escalating threat of poaching particularly affecting elephant and rhino populations, and calls upon the international community, and in particular destination countries, to take all necessary measures to curb the illicit trade in wildlife products in line with their commitments under the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES);*

Response:

Significant efforts in the anti-poaching activities were reported in detail for this site during the last State of Conservation report. During the current reporting period the State Party continued to sustain or strengthen these efforts despite that the especially elephant poaching wave that continued to rage the African continent. As much as possible, additional resources were deployed in terms of Ranger Force recruitment and training and provision of equipment. Over the two years of 2014 and 2015 anti-poaching patrols increased by about 0.5% from 45,180 patrol man-days in 2014 to 45,400 in 2015. Training was also extended to novel areas of intelligence gathering and prosecution of cases. These efforts led to a confiscation of a total of 28 firearms and 207,479 'other weapons' of which wire snares formed the largest fraction (98.5%). In addition, a total of 1,748 poachers were arrested together with the seizure of some 4,835 carcasses (or 2,418 carcasses per year). Livestock incursions were also intercepted with some 13,845 herds impounded of which 98.5% were cattle. The number of elephants killed over the two years was 32 (i.e. an average of 16 per year) and no rhino was killed. Nevertheless, a recent census conducted in May 2014 (by Tanzania Wildlife research Institute) indicated that in sharp contrast to some ecosystems in southern Tanzania, there was a phenomenal increase (by 98%; from 3,068 in 2009 to 6,087 in 2014) of elephant population within Serengeti National Park. Taken together, these anti-poaching efforts and results are consistent with last reporting and indicate a fair sustenance of anti-poaching efforts over the recent years.

4. *Also welcomes the information that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is underway for the “Comprehensive Transport and Trade System Development Master Plan” and urges the State Party to ensure an open, transparent and participatory process taking into account scientific advice as well as the guidance provided in the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment, especially in relation to the proposed road network in and around the property and submit the SEA to the Committee for its consideration, before a final decision on possible developments is taken;*

Response:

The first draft of this Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the “Comprehensive Transport and Trade System Development Master Plan” developed by Inter-Consult Ltd under the auspices of the Ministry of Transport, United Republic of Tanzania was released in September 2013. The Master Plan was developed with technical expertise from Nippon Koei Co Ltd (Japan) and funding from Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA). Preparation of this document was in full compliance to the National Environmental Management Act (2004) and its SEA regulations (2008) and with other National and International legal frameworks. Stakeholder consultation has been robust, both locally, regionally and nationally involving individuals of a wide range of authorities from 8 Administrative regions, 10 Ministries (including Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism), 10 local governments, 27 government agencies (Including Tanzania National Parks which manages Serengeti National Park), 11 Transport users and providers, and 6 NGO’s and Civil societies. In its current status the Master Plan has not proposed extensive national or regional level development of transport network through the Serengeti. However, further stakeholder consultation is ongoing prior to preparation of the second Draft Report that will be shared to the World Heritage Centre prior to preparation of the final version and approval.

5. *Notes that the State Party re-confirms that the construction of a proposed North road traversing the park has been abandoned and reiterates its call to the international community to support the development of an alternative alignment, passing to the south of the property;*

Response:

The Germany government has so far spearheaded and an initiative to explore alternative (southern) routes. Two such routes have been identified

and preliminary feasibility studies completed with fund support from the Government of Germany. It remains unclear whether or not the German government or any other external support is ready to consider funding the full detailed engineering studies/EIA on the identified alternatives and subsequently support project implementation if deemed feasible. It is noteworthy, however, that the Germany government through its KfW bank is also already supporting a 5 year project (2013-2017) project worth 20.5million Euro within and around Serengeti National Park by the name 'Serengeti ecosystem development and Conservation Project', which among others it aims at providing alternative livelihood means and other benefits to local communities around the park as a result of the missed opportunities due to abandonment of the northern road construction.

6. *Also notes the efforts made in evaluating road-surfacing options for the heavily used main road through the property and requests the State Party to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in cooperation with Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority, to assess the impacts of the different options and to submit it to the World Heritage Centre for review prior to a decision on stabilizing this road being made;*

Response:

So far the State Party has not been able to engage a consultant for detailed evaluations/EIA of surfacing options for the road section through Serengeti National Park for lack of funding. Nevertheless, additional gathering of factual information on the road condition and current management complications including travel discomfort, vehicle operating costs, road maintenance costs, availability of adequate and suitable aggregates for surfacing, traffic volume, human accidents and wildlife kills due to collisions with vehicles, and dust pollution has been accomplished. Information in visitor books indicating the free opinions of both local commuters and tourist entering the Park with regard to the condition of the road has also been summarized and a report prepared. This report will further orient on the consultancy work as soon as funding becomes available. Nevertheless, some consultancy work has been initiated on the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) section of the road (Lodoare Gate-Golini; 83km) which includes Feasibility Study, Environmental and Social Impact Assessment and Detailed Engineering Design has been accomplished. The Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Scoping Report is currently under review. Technical and operational details on the NCA road section currently in preparation will form a useful input into the Serengeti road section as well once the consultancy begins. Detailed consultancy reports on this aspect will be shared with the World Heritage Centre prior to commencing of upgrading work.

7. *Also requests the States Parties of Kenya and Tanzania to further strengthen efforts towards the sustainable management of the Mara River Basin and preparation of a joint management plan for the basin and to sustain and strengthen management programs, including collaboration with other stakeholders across the wider Serengeti Ecosystem through the “Serengeti Ecosystem Forum”;*

Response:

The State party has all along continued to collaborate with the State party of Kenya in a joint management of the trans-boundary water resources of the Mara river Basin in a sustainable manner. These are long-term efforts that have culminated into several joint projects and frameworks allowing an on-the ground implementation of a range of activities - as reported in detail in previous reports. Despite such initiatives, it has been increasingly deemed important to have a legal basis of such co-operation. Such a need has recently led to the preparation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two States Parties and its signing in October 2015 to facilitate a more binding shared responsibility for a sustainable management of Mara River Basin. Briefly, the MoU covers issues such as equitable resources utilization, capacity building, scheduled fora for consultative discussions, research, water resources monitoring, impact assessments, control of exotics, and information sharing. The MoU also advocates on the formulation and implementation of joint programs that will facilitate proper land use within the Basin. On a long-term basis it also provides for the two States Parties to jointly negotiate on a cooperative framework for sustainable management of the Basin. Since this initiative is under the auspices of the Lake Victoria Commission of East African Community, it is under the umbrella of a wider regional cooperation. This is expected to attract support at least to kick-start its implementation. Once the implementation of MoU begins, any challenges and successes will be shared by a wider stakeholder profile, including the ‘Serengeti Ecosystem Forum’.

8. *Encourages the State Party to submit a request for International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for a hydrological survey of the property and related determination of the water use carrying capacity, feeding in to the planned revision of the management plan, which should include a strategy for future tourism development within the limits of the carrying capacity;*

Response:

Funding request for a hydrological survey was withheld following a matching opportunity for provision of water within the property through the German funded 'Serengeti Ecosystem Development and Conservation Project'- as described in item 5 above. This project has a specific component of improving the availability of water for staff use within Serengeti National Park. At this point, it is considered that much of the requests targeted to the World Heritage Centre fall within the scope of the project, which is already funded. The project will be implemented with due consideration to the revised General Management Plan (GMP) for the Property.

9. *Further requests the State Party to provide an electronic and three printed copies of the draft revised management plan for review by the World Heritage Centre and IUCN;*

Response:

The Revised GMP Final Draft was completed in February 2014 but has not been approved to-date for administrative reasons (following the expiration of the office term of the Board of Trustees). The GMP copy will be shared by the World Heritage Centre as requested once signed (approved).

10. *Recognizes the progress made in negotiations over the possible future extension of the park to incorporate critical lake-shore habitats around the Speke Gulf and also encourages the State Party to conclude this process in close consultation with all stakeholders at the earliest opportunity;*

Response:

The negotiations for the re-location of the local communities in the three villages within the area earmarked for annexation to Serengeti National Park has progressed well since the last reporting. However, this process has been tedious and extremely complicated given the nature of the issue at hand, expectations of the local communities and especially the political influence, which has all along been against relocation of people. Nevertheless, the extensive consultations and support from the regional and district authorities has slowly led to acceptance of the idea by the

communities and work has commenced towards finalization of the process. Currently, a Draft Cabinet paper has been submitted to the government for approval since September 2015 before being tabled to the Parliament. The slow pace for government approval appears to have coincided with the countries' general elections which were held in October 2015. Once approved by the parliament, compensation, relocation and other administrative procedures will be effected to pave way for annexation.

11. *Requests furthermore the State Party to provide detailed information about reported plans for an airport development at Mugumu, including a copy of the EIA of this project for review, in conformity with IUCN's World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment and before a decision is made on the project;*

Response:

The proposed Mugumu Airport Project is about *expansion of the existing airstrip* to serve for local flights as well as to provide for entry and exit services (immigration and custom services) to international travelers arriving directly from outside Tanzania. It is designed to be of 1.2 km runway (Seronera Airstrip at the heart of Serengeti National Park is 2.2 km runway) gravel type to cater for light aircraft initially. The Airstrip is situated within Mugumu Township, about 40km from the border with Serengeti National Park. It is projected that up to 30 aircrafts (of 13 passenger capacity) per day will use the facility thus, bringing about 390 Passengers and taking away the same during peaks, most of which will be tourists from Serengeti National Parks and the surrounding Wildlife Management Areas. However, project development provides allowance for future upgrading to other levels depending on the need and resources availability. The airport is expected to operate twelve hours on a daily basis and will be closed off during the night. The preliminary EIA for this project was recently reviewed by the National Environmental Management Council (NEMC) and found to contain significant irregularities, including factual errors. It was thus reverted to the EIA study Team for rectifications and resubmission for further considerations. A copy of this EIA (after initial clearance by NEMC) by will be made available to the World Heritage Centre in due time.

12. *Requests moreover the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2015, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016.*