

## **Final Progress Report – Aerial Survey of Elephants in the Northwest of Namibia Project**

### **1. Identification:**

Partners Name: Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Republic of Namibia

Budget line: BAC

POW 2014-2015 Sub-programme:

Expected Accomplishment(s): Aerial survey report outlining the density and distribution of elephants in the north west of Namibia in relations to other wild animals and domestic livestock.

Output(s): The Project resulted in the following outputs:

- a) Baseline information of the density and distribution of elephants in the northwestern region of Namibia. Last survey undertaken at the scale of the survey being reported was conducted in 1998,
- b) Updating of the national elephant population estimates for Namibia – information on elephant numbers in northwestern Namibia was lacking and as a result, the elephant population estimates for Namibia was not reflecting the true status of elephants in Namibia.
- c) Appropriate and informed conservation management planning for elephants – the information generated through the survey project will be used in developing the elephant management strategy in 2017/2018. Two key elephant management challenges, human-elephant conflict and risk of poaching will be addressed in the management plan.
- d) Contributing to the MIKE Programme of CITES – data was collected on elephant carcasses found during the aerial survey, and this has contributed to the MIKE Programme activities.
- e) Contribution to the IUCN Elephant Database – The results of the aerial survey was shared with the IUCN Elephant Database for updating of existing data, as well as for the development of African elephant status reports.

Title of the approved PRC project: Aerial Survey of Elephants in the Northwest of Namibia

SSFA starting date: 22 March 2016

Completion date: 22 April 2017

### **2. Summary of Status:**

The key objective of the Project was to conduct an aerial survey in the northwestern areas of Namibia covering parts of Erongo, Kunene and Omusati regions to estimate the density and distribution of elephants. The survey was conducted from 16 September to 8 October 2016 and covered an area of 63,431 km<sup>2</sup>. A sample count using a fixed wing aircraft combined with total count of ephemeral rivers, and sample counts at various intensities using a helicopter was conducted.

The survey was successfully completed without any major challenges. 1716 elephants was estimated to occur in the area surveyed.

We have learned that it is important to plan properly and have all logistics and resources in place when undertaking activities such as aerial surveys in rugged terrain that is limited by seasonality and environmental parameters. Another important lesson we learned is to keep equipment such as aircrafts maintained in good condition all the time to avoid losing time because of breakdowns. We further learned that it is important to have a dedicated team of people who are committed to the exercise at hand, however challenging, or lengthy it may be. And for aerial surveys, such as the one we did for the elephants, it is always important to use experienced crew to enhance reliability and consistency of the data collected.

### 3. Activity delivery status

Activity	Description of work undertaken during reporting period	Deliverables	Delivery date	Status of Activity (completed or not completed)	If activity not completed, please describe the reason why and indicate mitigation actions that were taken.
Activity 1 – Conduct aerial survey, analyze data and produce a survey report.	Flying of the aerial survey using a helicopter and fixed wing in northwestern Namibia, data analysis and production of a survey report.	Report on the aerial survey of elephants and other animals in north west of Namibia	October 2016	Completed	

### 4. List of attached documents

The report on the aerial survey of elephants and other animals in North West of Namibia is herewith attached.

Signature: 

Date: 17 February 2017

Name and title of signing officer: Kenneth H /Uiseb, Mr