

**OPENING REMARKS BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
UGANDA WILDLIFE AUTHORITY AT THE WORKSHOP TO
DESIGN MONITORING PROTOCOLS FOR THE GVTC
LANDSCAPE**

The Executive Secretary GVTC,

Representative of Dutch Embassy in Kampala

**Country Delegations from the DRC, the Republic of Rwanda
and the Republic of Uganda**

Experts from the three Countries

Invited Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. First let me welcome all of you to this workshop and in a special way welcome our visitors from our sister countries, Rwanda and the DRC. You are welcome and please feel at home and enjoy the good climate, good food and our hospitable people.
2. I would like to thank all of you for setting aside your busy schedule and coming to this technical session that is meant to design data protocols for measure of success of conservation of Greater Virunga Landscape, a landscape that is dear to all of us in conservation given that it is one of the World's highly diverse regions, harbouring the world's only population of the threatened Mountain Gorillas, several endemics, endangered, rare, high species diversity explained

by the exceptionally diverse mosaic of different habitats that include glaciers, montane vegetation, lakes both fresh water and saline, rivers, wetlands, open savannas, wood lands, forests (tropical high rain fall forests, mid altitude, deciduous, semi deciduous etc).

3. Let me take this opportunity to congratulate the GVTC Secretariat for having successfully facilitated the processes that culminated into the final signing of the GVTC treaty by all the three Countries. We all take pride in this major achievement for the Landscape.

4. Colleagues, you may wish to know that in addition to the recently signed GVTC Treaty, the Transboundary Collaboration is further buttressed by the following legally binding instruments signed and ratified by the respective states:
 - The Convention on Biological Diversity
 - The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna
 - The Convention on the conservation of Migratory Species
 - The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
 - The Pact on Security, Stability & Development in the Great Lakes Region

- The Agreement Establishing a Permanent Joint Cooperation Commission between Uganda and Rwanda
- The Ngurdoto Agreement on cooperation between Uganda and Democratic Republic of Congo
- The Agreement Establishing a Permanent Joint cooperation commission between Uganda and Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo).

These instruments oblige the state parties to take steps including Policy, legislation and cooperation aimed at ensuring compliance and implementation of the instruments.

5. At UWA we fully support the efforts of the Secretariat to come up with initiatives like what we will be deliberating over the next two days to further foster better conservation approaches within the region. This initiative is also in line with the 30 year vision of the GVTC of ensuring the PA network together with the surrounding landscape conserved sustainably.
6. Uganda's National Development Plan recognises the need to develop national, regional and international partnerships and networks to enhance trans-boundary environmental management. In this regard therefore, the deliberations of this 2-day workshop are in line with Uganda's overall development agenda.

7. UWA therefore takes every collaboration effort seriously given the sensitive nature of the tourism industry and the knowledge that without strategic collaboration, it may be more expensive for individual nations to conserve their natural resources and develop their tourism.
8. Though each of the collaborating countries is a sovereign state, the biodiversity we manage does not recognize the political boundaries that separate us as States and therefore efforts towards its conservation require collaboration
9. Ladies and Gentlemen, we are here today to discuss data protocols. We do not want to do business as usual; we want to assess ourselves for every step we take so that we are sure we are headed in the right direction. We therefore need to come up with indicators that we are headed in the right direction, the direction that will help us achieve our Vision.
10. For this to happen we need data across the region, data that is relevant and coherent and data that can be meaningfully analysed to make sense to the consumers but most importantly data that will help in decision making and guiding policy direction for the GVTC.

11. Ladies and Gentlemen, you are the experts carefully chosen by the organizers of this workshop basing on your background knowledge, experiences and expertise in this field. I have no doubt in mind therefore that at the end of the two days, you will be able to deliver a baby that will be further natured by the secretariat into a well grown up child. I therefore urge you to take this meeting seriously.
12. UWA wishes to pledge all the support to ensure that we continue to promote prudent management of our natural heritage in order to work towards the socio-economic transformation and the livelihoods of our people across our political borders.
13. I acknowledge the efforts of all those who have worked tirelessly in the past to foster collaboration mechanisms and efforts that have brought us this far.
14. I thank the organisers of this workshop and those who have prepared papers that will be used as a basis for the deliberations.
15. I acknowledge and thank all the development partners that have financially supported the transboundary collaboration efforts both in the past and today.

16. I wish you good and participative deliberations and it is now my humble pleasure to declare this workshop on designing data protocols for Measure of Success of Conservation of Greater Virunga Landscape officially open.

Conserving for Generations