

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



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ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY GRASP
UNDER RESOLUTION CONF. 13.4 (REV. COP16)

This information document has been submitted by the Secretariat on behalf of GRASP in relation to agenda item 55 on *Great apes (Hominidae spp.)*.*

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*



GRASP

The Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) is a unique alliance of 105 partners, including national governments, conservation organizations, research institutions, United Nations agencies and private companies, committed to the long-term survival of great apes and their habitat in Africa and Asia. The partnership celebrated its 15th anniversary in 2016.

UN Environment and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) serve as co-hosts of the GRASP Secretariat.

Background

This information document is developed in response to *CITES Resolution Conf. 13.4 (Rev. CoP16) on Conservation of and trade in great apes* to highlight some of the activities carried out by GRASP under paragraph 7 of this Resolution, which calls upon intergovernmental organisations to support the conservation of great apes by taking action on the following points:

- a) The provision of funding;
- b) Assistance with enforcement, training, capacity building and education;
- c) Population monitoring, and the gathering and exchange of scientific, technical and legal information and expertise;
- d) Habitat management and restoration;
- e) Mitigation of conflict between humans and apes;
- f) The development of projects which deliver tangible benefits to local communities such as alternative sources of protein;

The GRASP Secretariat serves as a platform for partners to confer and collaborate on important initiatives. The GRASP partnership has driven many noteworthy projects, some of which are listed below, categorized under the particular action point that they address.

Action Point (a): The provision of funding

- GRASP raised funds for projects relevant for the conservation of great apes, which are listed below under the respective technical deliveries.

Action Point (b): Assistance with enforcement, training, capacity building and education;

- Apes Seizure Database: GRASP received a clear mandate from the 2nd GRASP Council in 2012 to focus on the illegal trade in great apes, within and across national borders. As a result, GRASP partnered with the World Conservation Monitoring Center (UNEP-WCMC) to create the Apes Seizure Database, the first online reporting tool to gauge the scale and scope of poaching and illegal trade in great apes. The database is designed to assist national authorities, civil society, and businesses to monitor and act on illegal trade in live animals, body parts and bushmeat. During the development process, GRASP consulted widely with existing databases, such as MIKE, the Rhino Horn Database, and the Wildlife Enforcement Monitoring System (WEMS), to ensure that efforts are not duplicated and that best

practices are taken forward. GRASP will also collaborate with CITES, WCO and INTERPOL going forward on aspects that involve a transboundary component. Field-based GRASP partners, such as great ape sanctuaries and protected area authorities, play a crucial role in providing relevant and case-specific information. Users will be asked to input a number of variables that will allow the analysis of patterns, the tracking of individual incidents, and the creation of a credible data source. The database was initially launched at the 17th Conference of Parties of CITES in October 2016, where it received a strongly positive response from both participants. The database is currently undergoing a rigorous process of systematic data validation.

Action Point (c): population monitoring, and the gathering and exchange of scientific, technical and legal information and expertise

- GRASP and UNEP-REDD developed, in collaboration with the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, the GRASP-REDD+ Mapping project, a carbon-mapping tool overlaying information on above-ground carbon stocks together with information on great ape densities. The Liberian government announced that it will use this tool for its national REDD+ prioritization work. A planning workshop is scheduled for 2018.
- Major reports were published on key issues, including *The last stand of the gorilla* (2010), *Orangutans and the Economics of Sustainable Forest management in Sumatra* (2011), *Stolen Apes: The Illicit Traffic in Chimpanzees, Gorillas, Bonobos and Orangutans* (2013), *The Future of the Bornean Orangutan: Impacts of Change in Land Cover and Climate* (2015), *Palm Oil Paradox: Sustainable Solutions to Save the Great Apes* (2016), and *Ebola & Great Apes* (2016). Reports were published in a variety of languages, including English, French, Chinese, and Bahasa.
- CITES Decisions 17.232 and 17.233, which were adopted at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP17) mandate the CITES secretariat to collaborate with the IUCN Primate Specialist Group's Section on Great Apes, the GRASP Secretariat and other experts, to produce a report on the status of great apes and the relative impact of illegal trade and other threats on great apes. The GRASP Secretariat is collaborating with the CITES Secretariat and the IUCN Primate Specialist Group/Section on Great Apes on the Status Report. Data on great ape population numbers and changes over time are derived from the Ape Populations, Environments and Surveys (A.P.E.S.) Database, which is managed by the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology. This information will be complemented with the illegal trade data from the Apes Seizure Database, given that the data validation process is completed on time.

Action Point (d): Habitat management and restoration

- Sustainable palm oil: In 2016, GRASP published a 'lessons learnt' paper on palm oil, based on experiences in Southeast Asia (*Palm Oil Paradox: Sustainable Solutions to Save the Great Apes*). Results from this report will inform discussions in Africa on how to make the growing palm oil sector more sustainable. GRASP also supported the government of Cameroon to develop a national sustainable palm oil strategy, by conducting national high conservation value forest assessments. GRASP has been asked to serve on the Steering Committee of the newly created IUCN Palm Oil Task Force, and intends to develop its own sustainable palm oil strategy in Africa.
- Transboundary collaboration: In 2009, GRASP created and has since facilitated the Tai-Sapo Transboundary Initiative between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. The objective of this project is to create national and transboundary wildlife corridors. As an important milestone, the House of Senate of the Liberian Legislature has passed a law establishing the Grebo-Krahn National Park. In collaboration with IUCN, GRASP also facilitated the Mayombe Transboundary Initiative between Angola, Congo, DR Congo and Gabon, and led the development of a transboundary management plan.

Action Point (e): Mitigation of conflict between humans and apes

- Extractive industries: Senegal requested GRASP to facilitate a land use and chimpanzee conservation action planning process, and to develop a governance mechanism for the conservation of critically endangered chimpanzees in Senegal, through full inclusion of the national and local government, local communities, gold mining companies and research projects. GRASP is also supporting an IUCN Task Force on “Extractive Industries and great apes”.
- In DR Congo, GRASP developed a conflict resolution strategy for Kahuzi-Biega national park, a World Heritage site in great danger. The implementation of this strategy led to the voluntary move of illegal settlers residing inside the park to villages in the neighborhood, and the rehabilitation of a degraded ecological corridor. GRASP is working with the park authorities, technical partners, the peacekeeping mission and the Office of the Special Envoy to the Great Lakes to tackle the issue of illegal and artisanal mining inside the park.

Action Point (f): The development of projects which deliver tangible benefits to local communities such as alternative sources of protein

- Sustainable tourism: GRASP encourages partner range states to implement ecotourism and community-managed great ape programmes, as good models for the confluence of biodiversity conservation and economic development. GRASP also helped create the first high-end tourism project in Central Africa, in the Lossi Interzone in Congo, where the local community benefits from gorilla tourism income and is involved in the management of the Interzone.

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