



**Great Apes Survival Project
Projet pour la survie des grands singes
GRASP**



August 2006 update from the GRASP Secretariat

Missions

Joint technical mission

The first Joint technical mission to great ape range and consumer states of Africa and Southeast Asia was undertaken to Indonesia on 8–12 May 2006 by the UNEP-GRASP and a member of the CITES secretariat to investigate illegal trade in orang-utans. This is part of the planned joint missions as part of the implementation of the resolution on the conservation of and trade in great apes, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to CITES at its thirteenth meeting, held in Bangkok in October 2004 (CITES Res. Conf. 13.4)

Other joint missions to Malaysia, Thailand and Cambodia are planned.

Japan

A mission to Japan was undertaken on 22 May 2006 by UNESCO to meet Mr. Toshisada Nishida, GRASP patron and head of the GRASP Japan Committee and Mr. Noriaki Sakaguchi, Ministry of Environment of Japan. Discussions focused on taxon-specific workshops and further involvement of the Japanese Government and private sector in the GRASP Partnership following the successful fundraising activities with the GRASP secretariat as outlined below.

Workshops and other meetings

UNESCO 60th anniversary medal for Jane Goodall

UNESCO facilitated a UNESCO 60th anniversary ceremony for GRASP patron, Ms. Jane Goodall, at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris on 17 January 2006. UNESCO Director-General, Mr. Koichiro Matsuura presented the anniversary medal to the iconic personality from the global nature conservation arena. UNESCO also discussed some possibilities about further joint activities with the recently established French office of the Jane Goodall Institute for Wildlife Research, Education and Conservation.

Great ape priority populations and habitats scientific workshop

The workshop was held on 17–20 April 2006 at UNESCO headquarters. It reviewed the scientific criteria used in determining the preliminary priority populations and sites presented at the Kinshasa meeting in September 2005.

Executive Committee meeting

The second executive committee meeting was held from 20-21 July at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. The meeting discussed the implementation of the GRASP Programme of Action 2006-2007 among other items. Minutes of the meeting will be available soon.

Species as humanity's common heritage

UNESCO and the National Museum of Natural History of Paris held a one day seminar addressing the question "Can species be humanity's common heritage?" on 21 April 2006 at the National Museum.



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Congo Basin Forest Partnership meeting

The meeting was held on 21–23 June 2006 in Paris. UNESCO representatives and the GRASP Chief Consultant were invited by the French Government facilitators of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership to present an update on GRASP activities and discuss synergies between the two World Summit on Sustainable Development type II partnerships.

Other meetings

UNEP met with the regional director for Africa of the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) on 19 April 2006. WSPA is interested in identifying gaps in great ape conservation activities in francophone Africa and supporting necessary interventions, especially in the area of animal welfare.

UNEP met with representatives of the Government of south Sudan (GoSS) on 9 May 2006 to discuss the political and environmental situation in the south, priority needs of the Juba administration and UNEP Post-Conflict Branch support for a wildlife inventory. The meeting identified some of the priorities as;

- Wildlife survey/inventory of the south
- Awareness-raising among local authorities and people in areas where chimpanzee hunting occurs, including the border regions with DRC, CAR & Uganda.
- Capacity building for GoSS officials.
- Awareness-raising among non-wildlife enforcement officials as well as support to increase the cooperation of police and other enforcement agencies with wildlife officers.

An appeal for assistance for educational and awareness raising materials was made. Partners in a position to assist in any way are encouraged to contact Mr. Alfred Akwoch, the Under-Secretary, Ministry of Environment Wildlife Conservation and Tourism, GoSS at akwochomoli@yahoo.com

GRASP side events

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN)

A GRASP side event, organized by Ian Redmond and Dr Dieudonne Ankara, the Congo Focal Point, was held during the eleventh regular session of AMCEN in Brazzaville on 25 May. The event was attended by the then UNEP acting Executive Director, Mr. Shafqat Kakakhel, UNEP Director of Regional Cooperation, Ms. Cristina Boelcke, and the acting Director of the UNEP Global Environment Facility Division, Mr. Olivier Deleuze. Speakers included Mr. Robert Hepworth, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Migratory Species, and Mr. Samy Mankoto from UNESCO. The event helped in consolidating support for GRASP.

International Primatological Society (IPS)

The event dubbed "How can GRASP better support Great Ape Conservation?" was held at the (IPS) congress in Entebbe, Uganda, on 29 June 2006.

Richard Wrangham, GRASP Patron and President of the IPS, stressed the importance of GRASP and the significance of the Kinshasa Declaration in his closing speech. He also stressed that all scientists and conservationists use the Declaration as a tool to engage the great ape range states. Four of the five GRASP Patrons, Jane Goodall, Richard Wrangham, Russ Mittermeier and Toshisada Nishida were



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also present at the IPS meeting and spoke positively of GRASP's achievements and its potential. Mr. Moses Mapesa, Executive Director of the Uganda Wildlife Authority, and Chair of the GRASP Executive Committee, reiterated the importance of GRASP to the great ape range states.

A great apes exhibition, organized by the by the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, France, was held at the Kampala museum during the IPS congress.

Kinshasa Declaration

21 of the 23 great ape range states have now signed the declaration. Sierra Leone and Sudan signed the Declaration at the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Conference on Biological Diversity in Brazil, while Rwanda and Gabon signed the Declaration during the AMCEN meeting in Brazzaville. Equatorial Guinea signed at the Congo Basin Forest Partnership meeting, held in Paris in June 2006. Nine additional non-governmental organizations have signed the Declaration since its initial adoption, bringing the total number of non-governmental organization signatories to 52.

For those who have not yet signed the Declaration and wish to do, please visit http://www.unep.org/grasp/Information_Material/declaration.asp

New Partners

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands was admitted into the Partnership during Executive Committee meeting of July 20-21. In his application for admission to the Partnership, The Ramsar Secretary General, Peter Bridgewater, identified potential areas of collaboration as joint field activities that conserve wetland ecosystems of importance to great apes, studies that assess the economic value of the services provided by these ecosystems, initiatives empowering indigenous peoples to become more involved in wetland protected area management and sustainable development and awareness raising projects with an international focus.

Funding

The Government of the United Kingdom (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) has confirmed that it will make an annual contribution of £50,000 to the GRASP team at UNEP. The secretariat is preparing a list of mutually agreed activities for the use of this funding.

In April, the Japanese Government announced its financial contribution of \$2.25 million to the GRASP Japan Committee. Government representatives visited the GRASP secretariat at UNESCO to thank the joint secretariat for its efforts to invite them and representatives of the GRASP Japan Committee to the GRASP exhibition at the 2005 World Exposition, held in Aichi, Japan in August 2005 and to the first session of the GRASP Intergovernmental Meeting in Kinshasa in September 2005.

Publicity and awareness

An interactive touring exhibition, entitled "Great Apes – How Great Are You?", created by @Bristol in conjunction with GRASP, was launched in Bristol, United Kingdom, on 8 December 2005 where it was run until 23 April 2006. The exhibition was a great educational tool to the public on the threats facing the great apes. The exhibition is now showing at the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh until August.



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A GRASP exhibition, organized by UNEP's Regional Office for North America was held at the Woodley Park Zoo in Washington DC on 17 April 2006, during the Earth Day celebrations to promote great ape conservation and the efforts of the GRASP Partnership. The exhibition was visited by a large number of people, who were briefed on the activities of GRASP and the various ways in which they can help in saving the great apes from extinction. Over 450 GRASP brochures and posters were distributed.

A GRASP publicity event, organized by the Regional Office for North America at UNEP, took place in San Francisco on 10 June 2006 at a charity event named "Walk the Talk", held to celebrate the World Environment Day.

The GRASP website is currently being upgraded to reflect all aspect of the partnership. For suggestions on what you might want to see on the site, please write to Daniel Malonza at daniel.malonza@unep.org

Technical Support Team

GRASP Chief consultant, Ian Redmond, has been appointed Order of the British Empire (OBE) by the Queen for his services to conservation. Congratulations to Ian.

Staff news

New staff member, Mr. Johannes Refisch, joined UNEP from 1 August as the Project Manager for the European Commission funded grant on the preservation of forest resources and improved livelihoods of forest peoples through conservation of great apes as flagship species. His duties will incorporate managing this grant, as well as writing proposals and securing additional funding for GRASP.

For Your Information

The Tropical Biology Association (TBA) has launched a funding database to assist African conservation biologists to find scholarships, fund their research projects or finance training opportunities. For more information, visit <http://www.tropical-biology.org/alumni/database/main.php>