



**United Nations  
Environment Programme**

**United Nations Educational,  
Scientific  
and Cultural Organization**

Distr.: General

UNEP/UNESCO/GRASP/IGM.1/5  
23 June 2005

Original: English

**Intergovernmental Meeting on Great Apes and  
the Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP)**  
Kinshasa, 5–6 and 9 September 2005  
Item 6 of the provisional agenda \*

## Draft declaration on great apes

We, the representatives of the great ape range States, donor and other States, the academic and scientific communities, non-governmental organizations, industry and the private sector, meeting at Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, on [date],

*Aware* that there is a high risk of extinction for all great ape species either in the immediate future or, at best, within 50 years, due largely to threats from human activities, including increasing encroachments by human populations on their habitat; civil disturbances and wars; poaching for meat or the live animal trade; diseases such as Ebola which can decimate ape populations; and the destruction of forests and other habitat,

*Recognizing* that great apes are key indicator species for forest and woodland areas within range States and thus for endangered ecosystems,

*Also recognizing* that great apes play a key role in maintaining the health and diversity of tropical forests, as well as having their own intrinsic value, and that their decline and potential extinction may precede the decline of other species which may themselves be culturally, economically or ecologically important,

*Noting* that great ape populations and their habitats can provide direct and indirect benefits to local communities and help alleviate poverty through the sustainable development of tourism and other non-destructive enterprises and through the environmental services that forests provide,

*Recalling* the World Charter for Nature, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly by its resolution 37/7 of 28 October 1982, which underscores the importance of not compromising the genetic viability on the earth,

*Also recalling* the Millennium Development Goals which, among other things, aim to reverse the loss of environmental resources by 2015,

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\* UNEP/UNESCO/GRASP/IGM.1/1.

*Further recalling* the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which included the agreement to achieve a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010,

*Believing* that global partnership, collective action and the acceptance of shared responsibility can help to halt and reverse the decline of great ape populations,

*Also believing* that peoples and States are, and should be, the best protectors of their own fauna and flora,

*Recognizing* that donor States, international institutions and non-governmental organizations have already allocated substantial funds towards great ape conservation, but that further resources must be raised urgently so as to allow essential conservation work to be undertaken to secure the future of those species and their ecosystems,

*Welcoming* the present and future role of the Great Apes Survival Project Partnership as an exemplary cooperative enterprise that harnesses the skills, resources and commitment of range States, donor States, environmental agreements and other international bodies, non-governmental and commercial organizations,

*Expressing gratitude* to the President, Government and people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for their generosity and far-sightedness in hosting the present intergovernmental meeting,

*Convinced* of the urgent need to take appropriate measures,

1. *Reaffirm* our commitment to the Global Strategy for the Survival of Great Apes;<sup>1</sup>
2. *Affirm* our commitment to implement, as a matter of urgency, effective measures to counter the threats facing great apes;
3. *Emphasize* the need to enhance cooperation among range States and their neighbours to ensure the coordination of efforts to halt activities that have a detrimental effect upon the populations of great apes;
4. *Also emphasize* the important role of appropriate national and international legal measures in providing a framework for the conservation of great apes;
5. *Urge* the development and implementation of national great apes survival plans and other appropriate actions by range States, other interested States and other partners, in order to conserve great apes and their habitats and to halt and reverse the decline of great ape populations;
6. *Encourage* the provision of direct and indirect economic benefits to local communities, for example, through the introduction or extension of sustainable ecotourism enterprises in areas of great ape habitat, or the creation of long-term research projects operating in or near these areas;
7. *Call upon* all relevant international institutions, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the regional development banks, the United Nations Development Programme, the Global Environment Facility, the European Commission, and national aid and development agencies of all countries, to develop and implement policies which prevent actions and activities that are detrimental to the survival of great ape populations;
8. *Reaffirm* our commitment to work together to ensure that the Great Apes Survival Project Partnership realizes its full potential as a key component of the international effort to save great apes by:

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by experts at the preparatory meeting for an intergovernmental meeting on great apes and the Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP), held in Paris from 26 to 28 November 2003 (UNEP/UNESCO/GRASP/Prep.Com.1/2/Rev.2).

(a) Encouraging all 23 great ape range States to become full partners of the Great Apes Survival Project Partnership;

(b) Also encouraging States that are not great ape range States but which support or participate to a significant extent in programmes for the conservation of great apes and their habitat to become full partners of the Great Apes Survival Project Partnership;

(c) Encouraging other international organizations, in addition to the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the biodiversity-related conventions, to become or remain active partners of the Great Apes Survival Project Partnership;

(d) Encouraging non-governmental organizations that historically have played an important role in efforts to conserve the great apes, whether at the national or international level, to redouble their efforts in that regard and to become or remain partners of the Great Apes Survival Project Partnership;

(e) Working closely with the academic and business communities, industry and the private sector;

9. *Resolve* to set ourselves and all concerned the target, by the year 2010, of securing the future of all species and subspecies of great apes by:

(a) Designating for special protected or multiple-use status those areas supporting the key 100 or more wild populations that would conserve the genetic and ecological diversity of all great apes for all time;

(b) Protecting those sites from further loss of habitat and guaranteeing that any human use of habitats is consistent with maintaining healthy, viable great ape populations;

(c) Stabilizing population size at each site or taking measures to increase those populations at risk; and

(d) Improving the protection of individual great apes and their habitats everywhere by demonstrably improving the enforcement of relevant laws;

10. *Pledge* to generate new and additional funds for the survival of great apes and their habitats and ensure that the international community in the widest sense, including donor States, international institutions, non-governmental organizations and private industry, provides effective and coherent support to assist efforts made by the great ape range States.