



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



**GRASP Executive Committee Meeting**  
**26-27 November 2008**

**Item 3: Update from the Secretariat**

**New Initiatives**

**1. Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD)**

- The GRASP team has devoted considerable time recently to developing a Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD) programme for UNEP and for great apes. While it is not strictly GRASP partnership work, it does appear that this is from where a significant chunk of new funding for forest conservation will come.
- This has given us an exceptional opportunity to influence UN agencies, the World Bank and governments to prioritize biodiversity (including ape) benefits from REDD, and we do see the potential for increased funding and systematic change, not specifically for great apes, but for the forests of Congo Basin and SE Asia in general.
- On 30 October 2008, UNEP's senior management approved a four-year, four-country REDD++ GRASP initiative to be implemented in Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia and a fourth, yet-to-be-decided country in Central Africa. This followed consultations with the GRASP Scientific Commission and a number of internal and external partners, in particular regarding site selection criteria for great ape priority populations.
- The total budget for the project is USD 2.9m, of which approximately USD 800,000 has been secured to date from the Swedish Postcode Lottery Foundation (USD 600,000) and the Government of Norway (USD 200,000). Further fundraising is required to build on year-one activities, which will occur in Cameroon and Indonesia only.

**2. Environment Peace-building, with focus on DR Congo**

- At the height of the 2007 crisis in the Virunga National Park, the DR Congo Minister for Environment asked UNEP for support. With GRASP heavily involved, UNEP developed a DR Congo programme with several components:
  - legal support to the Ministry for Environment for the development of an Environmental Framework Law,
  - post-conflict environmental assessments,
  - support to Protected Area Authorities and
  - technical support to emerging issues such as the firewood/charcoal problem in many regions, especially where there is a high influx of Internally Displaced People.

- GRASP is facilitating and formalizing a dialogue among different stakeholder groups in the Virungas (humanitarian, development and conservation partners) and is exploring how UNEP/GRASP could support the implementation of the 10 years Transboundary Strategic Plan.
- A second transboundary project in Mayombe, an area shared by the two Congos and Angola, will be a second transboundary site under the UNEP DR Congo programme and under GRASP's responsibility.

### **3. Gorilla Agreement and the Year of the Gorilla**

- The GRASP secretariat has been working closely with Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) on the implementation of the Gorilla Agreement since the Paris meeting in October 2007. (See CMS report). The first meeting of the Parties will take place on 29 November.
- 2009 has been designated the UN Year of the Gorilla (YOG) by CMS and GRASP. GRASP is planning a number activities in support of the Year, and encourages its partners to do likewise. We welcome ideas for projects requiring funding, as well as activities planned using partner funds.
- As part of the YOG activities, the GRASP secretariat in collaboration with National Football Federations of Nigeria and Cameroon are organizing an anti-bushmeat soccer match between the Indomitable Lions of Cameroon and Nigeria's Super Eagles. Bushmeat trade is a highly complex issue and it's commercialization, coupled with unsustainable harvesting, poses a significant threat to biodiversity and ecosystem integrity. We hope that the good example of national football heroes from both countries will encourage illegal poachers, traders and consumers of gorillas and other endangered species to limit their business to legal and sustainably harvested species. This is also a timely activity in support of efforts to increase eco-tourism based on gorilla watching in both countries. The match is planned to take place in Cameroon on 12 August 2009.

### **Other field activities**

- GRASP and the RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands Secretariat have produced a bilingual documentary film on Petit Loango National Park in Gabon. The film investigates the impacts of an oil company's exploratory activities within this pristine ecosystem, which is both a wetland of international importance and an important gorilla habitat. The site was chosen after extensive consultation with GRASP partners, and we're pleased to report that even the making of the documentary influenced the company to modify its practices. It was launched during the Ramsar COP on 1 November, 2008. Copies of the DVD are available and a version will shortly be placed on Youtube.
- GRASP is continuing discussions with Liberia and Ivory Coast on a possible long-term transboundary conservation and peace-building initiative. This will utilize lessons from the Virungas transboundary experience. Consultations with all partners on the ground are already underway. Guinea may be involved later.

We hope to eventually expand this into a small number of transboundary great ape cooperation programmes that showcase the benefits that great ape conservation can bring to peace and stability. One small but interesting component of this work will be an attempt to link up elephant and chimpanzee surveys and monitoring to cut costs and share data – GRASP the CITES

programme on monitoring the illegal killing of elephants (MIKE), submitted a joint proposal to the US Fish and Wildlife Service in this regard.

- GRASP and the Great Ape World Heritage Species Project (GAWHSP) are implementing a project assessing High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) to:
  - identify the remaining landscape-level forests critical for conserving ecosystem, habitat, species and genetic diversity in Sumatra and Borneo
  - facilitate multi-stakeholder support for allocating these HCVF landscapes for uses that do not compromise their conservation function, and other lands for oil palm plantation development
  - create partnerships among conservation, industry and government agencies to monitor and manage long-term land use solutions for each of these landscapes, and
  - engage the palm oil industry and local governments in *a priori* designation of HCVF to comply with Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) Principles and Criteria.
- The GRASP European Commission project 'Preservation of forest resources and improved livelihoods of forest peoples through conservation of great apes as flagship species' is now in its third year. Tangible outputs include:
  - a draft HCVF assessment and mapping methodology (high conservation value forest) for Borneo and Kalimantan,
  - a conservation learning centre constructed in Belantikan, Indonesia,
  - a micro-business project in Tshiaberimu, DR Congo,
  - 22 village development plans developed and micro-business projects implemented in the Dja peripheral communities, Cameroon,
  - biomonitoring programs for 4 Ivorian national parks developed and implementedReports for both the first and second year are available on-line at:  
[http://www.unep.org/grasp/Activities\\_and\\_Projects/pf\\_EC.asp](http://www.unep.org/grasp/Activities_and_Projects/pf_EC.asp)
- *'Indigenous People's Participation in Mapping of Traditional Forest Resources for Sustainable livelihoods and Great Ape Conservation'*  
This project, conceived by GRASP and another UNEP division, and implemented jointly by World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Forest Peoples' Programme (FPP) in Cameroon has just been completed. It worked with Baka hunter-gatherers located near Boumba Bek NP, assisting them to map their traditional territories, which overlap with high concentrations of western gorillas and chimpanzees, to help secure their rights as well as protecting both ape species.
- Two earlier GRASP funded projects were also recently completed: (1) a conservation enterprise and micro-financing programme in DRC implemented by the Bonobo Conservation Initiative, and (2) an ecotourism development project in the Cyamudongo forest in Rwanda, implemented by the Wildlife Conservation Society.
- GRASP was asked for its opinion regarding the proposal to open a second ape sanctuary in Kenya. The secretariat discussed with Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA) and Convention on International Trade on Endangered Species (CITES) and provided its technical opinion.

## **Meetings and Missions**

- GRASP/CITES Mission - A technical mission to Malaysia took place in November 2007 to investigate the illegal trade in orangutans, as part of the implementation of the resolution on the conservation of and trade in great apes, adopted by CITES in October 2004 (CITES Res. Conf. 13.4). The complete mission report is available online at:  
[http://www.unep.org/grasp/Meetings/other\\_related\\_meetings.asp](http://www.unep.org/grasp/Meetings/other_related_meetings.asp)
- GRASP attended the International Chimpanzee Workshop, convened in honour of the Ngamba Island Sanctuary 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary held from 3 – 4 July 2008 in Kampala, Uganda. The two GRASP patrons in attendance, Jane Goodall and Richard Wrangham were very interested in GRASP's recent work on biofuels and REDD.

## **Support to Range State authorities**

- Mr. Joseph Toah, Liberia Focal point and Abdul-Abib Conteh, Sierra Leone Focal point, received IT equipment including a laptop, scanner, digital camera, flash-drive, and a printer as part of the on-going GRASP European Commission project. This is a component of the EC project is administered through the Born Free Foundation.

## **Fundraising**

In just the past 6 months, the GRASP secretariat has secured project funding from different donors as follows:

<b>Donor</b>	<b>Amount in USD</b>	<b>To be used for...</b>
Norway	1,000,000	Mayombe Forest- DRC, Congo Brazaville and Angola
Spain	286,188	Kahuzi-Biega & Garamba National Park - DRC
Swedish Postcode Lottery Foundation	281,402	REDD- Indonesia and Cameroon
Norway	200,000	REDD (as above)
France	134,771	For gorilla related activities, possibly Nigeria- Cameroon soccer match
UNEP	80,000	DR Congo Programme, Virunga activities
United Nations Association, Sweden	18,598	General activities
UK Defra	18,416	General activities
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>1,819,375</b>	