



# Newsletter

Special Gala Dinner Edition

Issue Number 3, May 2004

## GRASP – The Fundraising Challenge

The meeting of Partners in Paris at the end of 2003 was a breakthrough for GRASP, above all in integrating most of the range states into our maturing partnership. One of the outcomes was the establishment of a joint UNESCO-UNEP Secretariat for GRASP. I am delighted that Mireille Jardin, my counterpart at UNESCO who contributed so much to the success of the Paris meeting, makes her debut as a contributor to this edition of the Newsletter by explaining the full impact of the “Prepcom”.

Paris also surpassed expectations by generating enormous worldwide publicity for great apes and the underlying problems of forest degradation and poverty. The breadth of the coverage showed that this issue touches an altruistic nerve in public opinion, in both developed and developing countries. For if we cannot save our closest living relatives, what *can* we save? Our unique technological achievements as humans must now be allied with our spiritual and ethical duty to safeguard not only the great apes but also other primates, including gibbons, which face severe threats in the wild.

However, making GRASP an operational success and any hopes of expanding its scope, depend on raising more resources. The unique agreement confirmed in Paris between two UN bodies, governments, global wildlife conventions and over 20 NGOs, gives us a platform on which to appeal for resources, especially from business and the charitable sector. In the past, some potential donors to great ape conservation have drawn back, expressing concern about the fragmentation of efforts and lack of a clear strategy to save the species. GRASP has answered that concern through the creation of a united, global partnership with an agreed programme and priorities. Now we look to the business community in the UK to give a lead. We are “bringing GRASP to business” through our concerted campaign in the first half of 2004, culminating in the gala dinner on 24 May 2004, co-hosted by Ministers of the UK Government, which is already a key donor to

GRASP. Once again, we have achieved superb media coverage in early May inspired by our Patron, Richard Leakey. We look forward to joining GRASP supporters, new and old, at the dinner and to reaching our first goal of raising \$25million for the partnership.

*Robert Hepworth, UNEP*

## UK Government Support to GRASP

As the largest donor to GRASP, with 375,000 pounds Sterling, equivalent to US\$600,000 out of the US\$1.9 million raised so far, and a commitment to a further £100,000, the UK Government has demonstrated its commitment to helping GRASP reach its target to raise sufficient money to fund 100 field projects by 2010.

In 3 years GRASP has achieved much, but to build on its successes it is clear that it has to attract more support and much greater resources. It is therefore a privilege for the UK Government to host the first Gala Charity Dinner to be held in support of GRASP on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2004 at the Zoological Society of London. The occasion is designed to inspire other governments and, we hope, major corporations based in the UK to support this important initiative to conserve great apes. Dr Richard Leakey, the leading conservationist, will give the main address.



*Elliot Morley,  
UK Environment  
Minister*

Alongside these efforts, the UK continues to encourage further action, particularly amongst governments in the EU and rest of the developed world to support GRASP and its efforts. Governments need to acknowledge the threats to great apes and sign up to action that aim to halt unsustainable actions. To this end the UK, together with other member states of the European Union, is pleased to propose a resolution on great apes to the CITES 13<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties. The proposed resolution aims to encourage the 165 CITES parties to adopt and implement comprehensive legislation to protect great apes, including adequate deterrent penalties and strengthened enforcement controls. The proposed resolution will also call upon all stakeholders to provide, as a matter of urgency, funds and other assistance to support the conservation of great apes.

GRASP has the UK's demonstrable support and encouragement in its endeavours and we hope others will join in a partnership that will grow and flourish.

*Elliot Morley, UK Environment Minister*

## GRASP & the UN Mission in DRC

Following a meeting between IFAW and the GRASP team in Nairobi, the GRASP Partnership is working closely with the UN Mission in DRC (MONUC) and other UN field-based agencies to raise awareness of the illegal trade in great ape bushmeat and live animals. With the involvement of GRASP Partners PASA, IFAW, WCS, BCTF and CITES, this cooperation is an excellent example where the GRASP Partnership can add value to great ape conservation efforts.

## Opportunities for Conservation through Sustainable Development in South Kivu, DRC

The threats to eastern lowland gorilla caused by illegal artisanal mining in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) were addressed at the second Durban Process meeting, held at Tarangere National Park, Tanzania, from 14-16 April 2004. In the past five years coltan mining in Kahuzi-Biega National Park (KPNB) has caused widespread environmental damage, including the loss of many thousands of eastern lowland gorillas. The Durban Process aims to provide economic alternatives to some of the 8,000 or more people believed to have been working illegally within the park. With more than 30 committed delegates - including for the first time DRC's Environment Minister the Hon Anselme Enerunga, UNEP's Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP has given \$25,000 to the project), IUCN (the World Conservation Union) and UNESCO/UNF (the Turner Foundation) - the meeting in Tanzania was a resounding success.

Delegates reported good progress on the four recommendations of the first Durban Process meeting, held in June 2003, which were:

- To disseminate the new mining code, so that miners are aware of the law and know where they stand.
- To re-enforce the capacity of the Wildlife Authority at KPNB so they can effectively monitor and prevent illegal activity within the park.
- To set-up a model, artisanal mine, outside the park boundary, that can guarantee the quality standards of its output.
- To set-up a micro-credit project to help people generate income, through small business or agriculture, as an alternative to working in the mines.

The presence of two representatives from H. C. Starck, the main European coltan processors, who stopped buying DRC coltan in 2002 when ethical standards could no longer be assured, underlined the company's continuing commitment to the Durban Process. Working groups addressed the need for lobbying, the cost of exporting coltan, and a timetable for the next twelve months for each of the four recommendations. The necessity to find a

sustainable funding mechanism for the Durban Process itself was also addressed.

Worldwide more than 6 million people are employed in artisanal mining, an unregulated industry where both labour conditions and environmental protection are largely ignored. But many agencies, including the World Bank and Britain's DFID, are belatedly coming to realise the contribution the artisanal mining sector can make to the alleviation of poverty.

The Durban process aims to bring the advantages of artisanal mining in alleviating poverty together with environmental protection for the benefit of both the people and the environment - including at KPNB the eastern lowland gorilla sub-species. The Durban Process is unique in this sense, and is gaining widespread international recognition for its all-inclusive approach. The meeting concluded on a positive note, with wide agreement from the delegates and a firm commitment on the part of the DRC Government and industry players.

*Jillian Miller, The Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund, Europe*



*Participants reviewing key documents during the workshop*

H. Maire, participant

## UNEP – UNESCO

### Preparatory Experts' Meeting for an Intergovernmental Meeting on Great Apes and GRASP

This meeting was convened by UNEP and UNESCO and took place at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, on 26-28 November 2003. Its specific objectives were to prepare and discuss a global strategy for the conservation of great apes, as well as the constitution and work plan for the GRASP project, to be presented at the intergovernmental meeting next year. It also aimed to increase visibility for GRASP, especially through the press, and to engage the involvement of the range states.

The meeting was a huge success in terms of media coverage. More than 250 newspaper and journal articles appeared in at least 28 countries and 35 radio and television interviews were broadcast. The meeting was subject of an editorial in Nature.

Here for the first time ever, representatives from 17 of the 23 great ape range states (including several suffering from the effects of civil war), 7 donor governments, 7 UN agencies and intergovernmental bodies, the EC, international NGOs and other GRASP partners met to discuss the way forward to ensuring the survival of the great apes. The meeting resulted in the increased commitment and involvement of the range states.

Several presentations allowed NGOs, range states and donor states to present activities and view points. A general discussion among participants followed the presentations dealing inter alia with issues such as:

- The use of existing protected areas for great ape conservation and the urgency of GRASP partners to help the countries concerned to improve their management effectiveness.
- A parallel priority was to protect great apes living outside protected areas, for example in transition areas following the biosphere reserve approach.

- The engagement of local communities as stakeholders in GRASP work, promoting action to harness their self interest which would also benefit conservation.
- The need to address transborder issues related to conservation (migration) and illegal trade.
- The health question, notably in relation to Ebola – UNEP had made an agreement with WHO to address Ebola and other diseases shared by apes and human beings, aimed at mobilising the necessary expertise and financial aid.

The meeting discussed, amended and agreed on a Global Great Apes Conservation Strategy and on a GRASP Workplan. These documents will be formally adopted by the Intergovernmental meeting to be held early 2005. Principles for the Rules of GRASP were also discussed and approved. They will be formalized and officially adopted by the Intergovernmental meeting next year.

In the meantime, an Interim Executive Committee was set up, composed of:

- Three great ape range state GRASP Focal Points: Uganda (Chair), DRC and Indonesia
- One representative of a donor country: UK
- Two NGOs: Wildlife Conservation Society and Orangutan Foundation
- One representative of the MEAs: CITES
- Secretariat: UNEP/UNESCO

The Paris meeting can be considered as a real success, in terms of publicity for GRASP, thanks to the exceptional press coverage, and in terms of the participation of almost all the range states.

*Mireille Jardin, UNESCO*

## The 2005 IGM on Great Apes and GRASP

Following the preparatory meeting of experts held at UNESCO headquarters in November 2003 to prepare for an intergovernmental meeting (IGM) on great apes/GRASP early in 2005, the GRASP secretariat has now received concrete offers from both Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to host the IGM. The GRASP interim executive committee was charged by the preparatory meeting with taking a decision on this matter. It is hoped that definite arrangements regarding the holding of next year's IGM on great apes/GRASP will be announced by the end of June 2004.

## Promoting and Preserving Congolese Heritage: Linking Biological and Cultural Diversity

In September, UNESCO will host the first international event in support of the cultural and biological diversity of the Democratic Republic of Congo. An exhibition, designed by the Royal Museum for Central Africa (Belgium), the world's leading museum and research institute on Congolese heritage, will open on 9 September at UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

An international donor's conference for the five natural World Heritage sites in the DRC will be held from 16 to 17 September with the support of the United Nations Foundation, Belgium and Japan. The conference will evaluate a four-year project in support of these sites, currently all inscribed on UNESCO's List of World Heritage in Danger, and mobilize additional resources to continue the project in 2005 and beyond.

We are planning to hold a GRASP event in the margins of this conference. Information will be available on the GRASP website. For more details on the conference, contact: [DRCongo@unesco.org](mailto:DRCongo@unesco.org)

## Loss of Mr. Matthew Maige, Tanzanian GRASP Focal Point

GRASP is saddened to hear of the sudden death of Mr Matthew Maige, Rhino Coordinator for the Wildlife Department of Tanzania and GRASP Focal Point. Matthew, who attended the November 2003 Paris meeting, was tragically killed two weeks later in a shooting in Dar es Salaam. We mourn the loss of Matthew as a valuable colleague and send our condolences to his family.



Ian Redmond

## GRASP Update since the November 2003 Edition

### Activities in the Field

- The GRASP Technical Support Team (TST) attended GRASP partner orangutan Population and Habitat Viability Assessment (PHVA) workshop in Jakarta and met with Indonesian GRASP Focal Point and relevant authorities, 15-21 January.
- Indonesia was visited again as well as Malaysia to discuss nomination of Focal Point, 15-27 February and the TST continued on to Japan to meet with newly established GRASP Japan Committee members and Toyota Foundation officials.
- In early March, GRASP attended the World Bank CEO Working Group on Africa timber industry workshop in Douala, Cameroon and furthered key contacts with the Congo Basin Forest Partnership.
- GRASP participated in the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund (Europe)'s "Durban Process" workshop in Tarangere, Tanzania to address the issue of artisanal coltan mining in DRC, 14-16 April.
- Future missions are planned for Burundi, Tanzania and Central African Republic, and GRASP is exploring options to have National Great Ape Survival Plans (NGASPs) endorsed by governments in West and Central African range states.

### Institutional

- Uganda was elected Chair of the GRASP Interim Executive Committee during its first teleconference held to discuss substantive issues and priority activities, 12 March.
- A UNEP-UNESCO meeting was held in Paris 17-18 March to discuss arrangements for the coordination of the joint GRASP Secretariat, agreeing on a Terms of Reference and workplan.
- GRASP visited UNEP-WCMC to review progress on the World Atlas on Great Apes.
- GRASP welcomes UNV staff member Daniel Malonza to the Nairobi team and thanks departing intern Naoto Shibui for his late nights spent working for the Partnership.

### Awareness Raising

- Toshisada Nishida, GRASP Patron and primate expert who recently retired from Kyoto University, established a GRASP Japan Committee to assist GRASP with fundraising and political support in Japan.
- The GRASP Australia Committee has been active developing educational tools for youth as well as funding field projects.
- GRASP is planning a charity soccer match between the national teams Cameroon and Nigeria to raise awareness of the great apes and benefit local communities.
- GRASP is coordinating with the United Nations Mission in Congo (MONUC) and NGO partners in the field and with UNICEF in southern Sudan to raise awareness of the illegal trade in great ape bushmeat and live animals.
- GRASP publicity material has been made available for use by Partners through UNEP's distributor SMI in UK. Contact [grasp@unep.org](mailto:grasp@unep.org) if you would like to receive posters or brochures

### Fundraising

- GRASP held a fundraising side event at the CBD CoP7 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia coordinated by UNESCO on 17 February.
- GRASP has submitted a project proposal with European-based partners to the European Commission. GRASP and partners are also developing a project on the Ebola virus and apes with the Global Environment Facility.
- Desktop computers supplied by Born Free Foundation were shipped free-of-charge by DHL to GRASP Focal Points in Mali, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Congo (Brazzaville) and Guinea.
- GRASP secured modest funding from the Irish and German governments. Belgium has expressed an interest in supporting GRASP.
- GRASP entered into talks with consulting firm Transfrontier on industry support for GRASP.
- Following the extensive media coverage of the 26-28 November 2003 GRASP Paris meeting, unsolicited donations from private individuals to GRASP, in large part through the Born Free Foundation, have exceeded US\$10,000. More than 30 individuals have similarly offered to volunteer their time to the GRASP Partnership.

## Orangutan Population and Habitat Viability Assessment Workshop



Ian Redmond

Wild populations of orangutans are found only in the tropical forests on the islands of Borneo and Sumatra, and all populations are under severe threat. New data on the rate of deforestation has confirmed the prediction that, unless action is taken to reverse the decline, Sumatran orangutans are likely to be the first great ape to become extinct in the wild.

The main threats to orangutans are habitat loss, forest degradation, fires, and poaching. Habitat loss is primarily due to clear cutting of the forest for agricultural plantations - mostly palm oil. Illegal logging is rapidly degrading remaining primary forest. Refugee orangutans are forced into small, isolated patches of forest, most of which are too small to ensure their long-term survival. Only a few biologically viable populations of orangutans remain. Currently almost none of these populations are sufficiently well managed and adequately protected.

From January 15-18, 2004, the world's top experts in orangutan conservation, ecology, and behaviour gathered in Jakarta, Indonesia to assess the status of Asia's only great apes. The meeting was a PHVA - a Population and Habitat Viability Assessment - workshop, organized by the IUCN SSC Conservation Breeding Specialist Group, funded by the Gibbon Foundation and BOS (Borneo Orangutan Survival) Foundation and held at The Schmutzer Primate Centre, Jakarta. For the first time, a concerted effort had been

made before the PHVA to survey all orangutan populations across the entire orangutan range. The new surveys were funded by Orangutan Foundation (UK).

The meeting adopted the new taxonomy for orangutans, recognizing the three described subspecies of Bornean orangutan *Pongo pygmaeus*, and the Sumatran orangutan as a separate species, *Pongo abelii*. New survey data and computer modelling techniques revealed a bleak outlook for this charismatic primate. For the Bornean species, it was estimated from the loss of habitat that there are at least one third fewer than there were a decade ago.

The experts made urgent recommendations to halt the decline, including:

- Orangutan Scientific Commission formed and seed funding secured for two coordinators, one Malaysian and one Indonesian, to maintain the momentum of the workshop, and assist in developing the National Great Ape Survival Plans called for by GRASP.
- Key populations *must* be better protected and law enforcement improved in and outside of existing protected areas.
- New protected areas should be created to save newly identified viable populations of orangutans.
- The proposed Ladia Galaska road scheme should *not* go through Gunung Leuser National Park because, in addition to existing threats, computer models show it would hasten extinction of the Sumatran orangutan.
- Canals cut into peat swamps to float out illegal logs in Sebangau Kalimantan, are draining and killing huge areas of orangutan habitat and must be filled in urgently.

Devastating forest fires, such as those in Indonesia and Malaysia during 1997 and 1998, still remain a serious potential threat and poaching for the illegal pet trade continues. At this moment, nearly 1,000 orphan orangutans live in rescue and rehabilitation centers. Most are infants and juveniles. It is estimated that at least 5 individuals die for every orphan that reaches these centers. For more information please contact Ashley Leiman ([ashley@orangutan.org.uk](mailto:ashley@orangutan.org.uk)).

Ashley Leiman, Orangutan Foundation (UK)

## Apes in the News

### **Grauer's Gorillas get US\$3 million**

Conservation International is investing almost \$3 million in community conservation projects coordinated by the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International in eastern DR Congo. Although data is still sketchy, it is feared that the population of this endemic subspecies, also known as the Eastern Lowland Gorilla, may have declined by 70 per cent or more during Congo's six years of civil war. Losses are mainly due to bushmeat hunting to feed illegal miners digging for coltan in the Kahuzi-Biega National Park, a World Heritage Site. Surveys of the lowland sector are about to begin, organised by ICCN, the Congo parks department, and the Wildlife Conservation Society.

### **Taiping Four Flown to South Africa**

Controversy continues to surround the four young wild-born gorillas, shipped from Nigeria to Malaysia, via South Africa on false captive-bred CITES permits two years ago. The scam was exposed by the International Primate Protection League and Nigeria set up a Presidential Inquiry, which concluded they were probably captured in Cameroon. Malaysia confiscated the animals and after much deliberation, sent them to the Pretoria zoo. Cameroon - which has three sanctuaries for such confiscated primates - continues to request their return.

### **Mountain Gorilla Numbers Rise**

The first complete census of the Virunga Volcanoes since 1989 revealed that numbers have risen to around 380, a 17 per cent increase. Coupled with the 320 Bwindi gorillas (which some regard as a distinct sub-species) this puts the total mountain gorilla



A. Friend

population at around 700 - an extraordinary success given the troubles in the region, and perhaps the only great ape population known to be rising.

### **Running for Apes**

At least three gorillas were spotted among the 32,000 runners in this year's London marathon. Several GRASP Partners had runners; Ian Redmond ran the 42km carrying a "SAVE THE APES" placard, spurred on by a crowd chanting the same, and raised more than \$12,000 in sponsorship. Sophie Pritchard ran the annual Singapore marathon on 7 December 2003 for GRASP. She had never run a marathon before, but managed to finish the 21km half in 2 hours, 40 minutes, raising more than \$600 for GRASP. Full marathon next year Sophie?

Sophie Pritchard at the 2003 Singapore Marathon

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