



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



April 2006 Update from the GRASP Secretariat

Dear GRASP Partners,

Welcome to the first 2006 GRASP Partnership update from the GRASP secretariat.

8th Conference of the Parties (CoP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity; 20-31 March 2006

A well-attended GRASP side event “Can the UN save the Great Apes and their Bio diverse habitats?” organized by the GRASP Technical Support Team (TST), was held on 30th March 2006 at the CoP. During the event, two great ape range states, Sierra Leone and Sudan, signed the Kinshasa Declaration on Great Apes.

Also at the event, Germany informed participants that their Government would consider signing the Declaration. The Government of Ireland, a major contributor to GRASP to date, expressed their readiness to assist with the implementation of National Great Ape Survival Plans (NGASPs) for selected great ape range states.

Representatives from Uganda, Cameroon and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) also spoke in support of the GRASP Partnership at the side event.

In addition, the following seven non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also signed the Kinshasa Declaration during the CoP:

- i. Conservation Society of Sierra Leone.
- ii. FOSCAL - Forêt au Service des Communautés Autochtones et Locales (Bukavu).
- iii. Global Canopy Programme.
- iv. King Leopold III Fund for Nature Exploration and Conservation.
- v. LINAPYCO - Ligue Nationale des Associations Autochtones Pygmées du Congo.
- vi. Nature Uganda.
- vii. REPALEAC - Resau des Populations Autochtones et Locales pour la Gestion Durable des Ecosystèmes Forestiers d'Afrique Centrale.

GRASP Executive Committee

The GRASP Executive Committee deliberated via email during the latter half of March 2006 in order to finalize a detailed GRASP Programme of Action for the 2006-2007 biennium, as mandated by the decision of the GRASP Council meeting held in Kinshasa in September 2005. The Programme of Action and related documents, along with a list of new GRASP Partners, will shortly be distributed to the entire Partnership.



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



GRASP Scientific Commission

Scientific Workshop on Great Ape Priority Populations and Habitats

The Scientific Commission and GRASP secretariat convened a Scientific Workshop on Great Ape Priority Populations and Habitats from 17- 20 April 2006 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris to review the scientific criteria used in determining the preliminary priority populations and sites presented at the Kinshasa meeting in September 2005. Details of the outcome of the workshop will be communicated soon to all Partners.

The Scientific Commission will be holding a debriefing session in Washington DC, in mid May for all USA- based Partners.

Bio-Carbon Sequestration & Conservation to Combat Climate Change

The GRASP Scientific Commission presented a case study of Sabah (Malaysian Borneo) forests, host to large populations of orangutans, and opportunities for carbon sequestration funding at the UNESCO "Bio-Carbon Sequestration & Conservation to Combat Climate Change" workshop, held from 14-15 March 2006 in Paris. The presentation generated interest in the possibility of funding orangutan conservation through bio-carbon sequestration and other sustainable conservation financing mechanisms.

Missions

The Scientific Commission, together with UNESCO/GRASP, undertook a mission to Malaysia from 9-16 February 2006. During the mission, Sabah Wildlife Department and Sabah Forestry Department officials expressed their willingness to work closely with the GRASP Partnership. The Forestry Department indicated their interest in presenting the Sabah model of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-certified Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) to the international community, as well as in hosting study tours for officials from other great ape range states to learn from this model.

The Scientific Commission also met with Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) representatives in Singapore in mid-February to discuss the development of great ape, habitat and people-friendly palm oil plantation conservation initiatives, with an initial focus on Indonesia.



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



GRASP Secretariat

Partners Debriefing Session

Following the Scientific Workshop on Great Ape Priority Populations and Habitats in Paris, a follow up debriefing event for all UK based Partners and interested parties was held in London on 24 April 2006.

Joint CITES-GRASP technical mission to Indonesia

The CITES and GRASP secretariats (both UNEP & UNESCO) are undertaking joint technical missions to look at orangutan smuggling and other related issues in South East Asia, starting with a visit to Indonesia from 8-12 May 2006. It is expected that this initial mission will be followed by subsequent visits to other orangutan-important countries in the region, including Malaysia, Thailand and Cambodia.

These missions are supported by generous earmarked funding from the Government of the United Kingdom, and are a step towards the implementation of CITES Resolution Conf. 13.4; Conservation of and trade in great apes.

Conservation Support

Through a grant from Development Cooperation Ireland for Africa, funding of USD 30,000 has been provided via the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International to GRASP Partner the Tayna Centre for Conservation Biology in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo to help increase the Centre's capacity to train future Congolese scientists and raise awareness of great ape and habitat conservation issues in the region.

The secretariat met in early April with humanitarian relief organizations working in south Sudan to brief them on the increase in the number of incidents of infant chimpanzees being offered for sale or adoption. A communication was also issued to the employees of UN agencies working in the same region, including an information poster with “do’s” and “don’ts”.

Regional Meeting for Capacity Building for Natural World Heritage

The GRASP secretariat took part in a Regional Meeting for Capacity Building for Natural World Heritage in Africa held on 9 March 2006 at UNEP Headquarters in Nairobi. The meeting was held to prioritize actions in and around World Heritage sites that integrate an ecosystem approach to sustainable development and conservation, including actions contributing to the sustainable livelihoods of local communities, which directly or indirectly assist site conservation.



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



GRASP Newsletter

The 5th edition of the GRASP Newsletter has been produced in English and French and hardcopies have been distributed to all great ape range states. Electronic copies can be downloaded from www.unep.org/grasp, and hardcopies are available upon request by contacting Jacqueline Nyanjui (jacqueline.nyanjui@unep.org).

GRASP Technical Support Team

The GRASP Technical Support Team (TST) in late February 2006 held discussions on great apes with the Malaysian Timber Council, who are very supportive of Malaysia signing the Kinshasa Declaration on Great Apes.

The TST met in March 2006 with Sustainable Forestry Management (SFM) official, a specialist in carbon trading in relation natural forests. SFM is pursuing carbon trading initiatives in Sabah and Sarawak in Malaysia with both government and private sector interests. SFM is also looking at the Congo Basin forests from a carbon trading perspective and will be discussing further with GRASP potential benefits for great ape populations and habitats.

GRASP Partner Ape Alliance, the TST and Friends of the Earth (UK) met with the United Kingdom Minister for Rural Affairs, Landscape and Biodiversity, His Excellency Mr. Jim Knight, who agreed to write to key UK companies to encourage them to join the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and ensure that their products do not contain palm oil from plantations detrimental to orangutans, their habitat and other wildlife. Minister Knight has also expressed his desire to bring the GRASP and great ape conservation message with him during his visit to Borneo in the middle of the year, and to raise the palm oil plantation issue with relevant governments, such as China and Indonesia.

Earth Day Week celebrations

A GRASP exhibition was held at the Woodley Park Zoo in Washington DC during the Earth Day Week celebrations on 17th April to promote great ape conservation and the efforts of the GRASP Partnership. Organized by UNEP's Regional Office for North America, a high number of North American constituents visited the booth where they 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 information materials were given away!

For Your Information

The Great Apes Film Initiative (GAFI), an initiative of Filmmakers for Conservation, a GRASP Partner, has been providing great ape films, under license from the BBC, to Cross River State Television, Nigeria, for awareness raising purposes. It is estimated that 1.5 million viewers have seen the films to date. Short term funding is being sought to make more copies of the



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



films available for distribution to other TV stations, NGO education projects and to other great ape range states. For more details write to Ian Redmond at ele@globalnet.co.uk

As some of you may be aware, BBC World and Newsweek, in association with Shell, have launched a “World Challenge” prize, where they seek to recognize individuals or groups, “from around the world, who have shown innovation at a grass roots level.” First prize is a grant of USD 20,000 and runners-up receive USD 10,000. We encourage GRASP Partners to submit their projects. If these have been funded in whole or in part by UNEP, the submission of the project to the selection committee could come via UNEP, improving the likelihood of success. The closing date for submissions is 4 June 2006. More information is available on the following website: www.theworldchallenge.co.uk