GRASP Executive Committee Teleconference

Agenda

GRASP Executive Committee Meeting
Telephone conference
30 November 2016

GRASP Executive Committee meeting

Adoption of the agenda

GRASP Reports

- GRASP Secretariat Summary

GRASP Project Updates

- 3rd GRASP Council (14-18 November / Jakarta, Indonesia)
- GRASP Regional Meeting – West Africa (document)
- Apes Seizure Database (document)
- GRASP & Sustainable Palm Oil (document)
- GRASP Strategic Retreat (document)
- 11th GRASP Executive Committee (date / venue)
- Gibbons in GRASP analysis (document)

GRASP Partner Application

- Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA)
- Great Ape Project
- Canadian Ape Alliance

GRASP Staff Updates

- Christopher Wade (intern)
• Nichola Ciera (intern)
• Deborah Fanin (intern)

A.O.B
GRASP Secretariat Summary

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Introduction

The Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) Secretariat organizes its activities as per the six priorities mandated by the 2nd GRASP Council. Highlights of these activities are listed below:

Political Advocacy

- GRASP Ambassadors Jane Goodall, Richard Leakey, Richard Wrangham, Russell Mittermeier and Nadya Hutagalung submitted a joint letter on 30 January to the Government of Nigeria, asking that a proposed development project that would include a road through the habitat of critically endangered Cross River gorillas be halted. Mme. Amina Mohammed, Nigeria’s Minister of the Environment, responded shortly thereafter and called for a review of the project, and asked GRASP to attend.

- GRASP Ambassadors Jane Goodall, Richard Wrangham, Russell Mittermeier, Richard Leakey and Nadya Hutagalung, GRASP partners and GRASP Secretariat staff all took part in the World Wildlife Day celebrations on 3 March, posing for on-line advocacy photos that promoted the theme, “The Future of Wildlife is in Our Hands.” GRASP also amended the theme to include a graphic stating “The Future of Great Apes is in Our Hands.” GRASP’s total on-line reach for the day was approximately 400,000 people across all social media channels, with 62,000 direct post engagements – which is 33 percent higher than average.

- GRASP contributed to the African Union’s 2016 Common Strategy workplan as part of its commitment to the World Great Apes Day petition and the battle against illegal trade at a workshop in Addis Ababa from 22-23 March, following meetings between the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the African Union and the Government of Sweden.
GRASP joined with other conservation organizations on 17 February to protest the use of live chimpanzee actors in a television advertisement from the Geico insurance agency. One month later Geico announced it would withdraw the ads and cease all use of live great ape “actors” in the future.

Green Economy

- GRASP joined with experts from leading financial, industrial, development and conservation institutions at a stakeholder meeting to plan *State of the Apes III: Infrastructure Development and Apes Conservation* from 22-23 February in Cambridge, England. The meeting was held to plan the third book in the State of the Apes series that is produced by the Arcus Foundation and Cambridge University Press.

- GRASP attended a three-day retreat organization by the UNEP-Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE) on the 10 YFP global framework of action and Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) from 26-29 February at UN headquarters in Nairobi. GRASP specifically focused on building support for projects that promote ecotourism and certified sustainable palm oil.

- GRASP attended the 5th International Conference on Oil Palm and Environment (*ICOPE*), which was held 16-18 in Bali, Indonesia, and gave a presentation entitled, “The Future of the Bornean Orangutan: Impacts of Change in Land Cover and Climate.” GRASP also held meetings with key stakeholders in sustainable development and certified sustainable palm oil.

Law Enforcement and Judiciary

- GRASP attended the 66th CITES Standing Committee meeting that was held 11-15 January in Geneva. GRASP met with partners, worked out logistics related to the Apes Seizure Database, reviewed plans for the great apes submission to the CITES annual report, met with the Working Group on Special Reporting Requirements, and updated delegates on GRASP activities and the ongoing illegal trade in great apes.

- GRASP worked with CITES and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to analyze international illegal trade data in live great apes from 1999-2015. Preliminary results indicate that over 200 great apes were officially confiscated as a result of illegal trade during that period, with orangutans comprising 73 percent of that number.

- GRASP finalized an agreement with the UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) to create the Apes Seizure Database, following the signing of a contract on 29 December 2015. The database – which is supported by an 11-person Technical Advisory Group (TAG) – will be completed in July 2016.
Habitat Protection and Enhancement

- GRASP joined UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner and Canadian High Commissioner to Kenya David Angell, on a fact-finding mission to the Virunga National Park in DR Congo from 11-13 February. The trip specifically highlighted community engagement programmes designed to improve local economies and livelihoods and reduce development pressure on the Virunga National Park.

Disease Monitoring

- GRASP worked with the UNEP Division on Early Warning Assessment (DEWA) to finalize a report on emerging infectious diseases for the UNEP Year in Review report that will be launched at the 2nd UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) in May 2016. GRASP also agreed to host a moderated panel session on zoonotic diseases during the UNEA Science & Policy Forum that will be held prior to the UNEA meeting on 20 May.

Other Topics

3rd GRASP Council

- GRASP worked with UNEP and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) to draft a Host Country Agreement that was sent to Indonesia on 26 February, seeking confirmation for the 3rd GRASP Council to be held 14-18 November in Jakarta. The GRASP Council – which will also include the 3rd Meeting of the Parties (MoP) of the CMS Gorilla Agreement – will focus on issues such as climate change, illegal trade, and sustainable palm oil, and will vote on new GRASP priorities, new GRASP Executive Committee delegates in addition to the proposal to expand the GRASP mandate to include gibbons.

GRASP Regional Meeting – West Africa

- GRASP worked with Liberia’s Forest Development Authority (FDA) to settle details ahead of the GRASP Regional Meeting – West Africa, which will be held 12-13 April in Monrovia. The meeting is the fourth of GRASP’s regional workshop in between Council meetings, and will focus on issues such as zoonotic disease, extractive industries, sustainable palm oil, and illegal trade. The GRASP meeting will be followed on 14 April by an IUCN planning meeting, and on 15 April by a Liberian government conservation planning meeting.
GRASP 15th Anniversary

- GRASP marked its 15th anniversary with a special logo that will be used throughout 2016 on all publications, outreach materials and merchandise. GRASP was founded in 2001 as a Type II partnership at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

GRASP Webcasts

- GRASP continued its monthly webcasts, “GRASP Webcast: The Experts Speak,” in 2016 with a session devoted to the ongoing controversy surrounding the former biomedical laboratory chimpanzees in Liberia and international efforts to both support the chimpanzees and establish a permanent solution. Guests included Kathleen Conlee (Humane Society of the United States), Peter Fundi (Institute of Primate Research) and chimpanzee experts James and Jenny Desmond. The GRASP webcast will be staged in March and will focus on sustainable palm oil.

Gibbon Consultancy

- As directed by the 10th GRASP Executive Committee, the consultancy to analyze the pros and cons of adding gibbons to GRASP as the “fifth” ape was concluded with the receipt of the final report submitted by Dr. Kevin Barrett on 7 March 2016. The report will be forwarded on to the GRASP Executive Committee for review shortly.

Partnership Applications

GRASP received three partnership applications. They are:

- Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)
- Great Ape Project
- Canadian Ape Alliance

Information regarding this application can be found at:

- Password: apesoftheworld
The Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) made steady progress on the creation of the Apes Seizure Database in the first quarter of 2016.

The U.N. Environment programme (UNEP) signed a contract on behalf of GRASP with the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) on 29 December, 2015, to produce a database by July, 2016. The contract called for payments totalling $85,000 USD for the work, which will require close collaboration between GRASP and WCMC, including several rounds of testing between GRASP partners and WCMC.

GRASP also convened the first meeting of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) of the Apes Seizure Database on 11 February, 2016, the group that will provide advice and expertise during the creation of the database. The TAG met via teleconference to outline priorities and identify key areas going forward, including working groups on issues such as technical specifications, user experience, and data sharing. The TAG is comprised of delegates from the GRASP Executive Committee, the GRASP Scientific Commission, the EAGLE network, the OFFTAKE bushmeat database, the IUCN Specialist Group on Great Apes, the Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA), the Government of Uganda, the Lusaka Agreement Task Force, CITES, TRAFFIC, and Forina.

These partners, as a part of the TAG, bring to the Apes Seizure Database scientific and technical expertise in data collection and analysis, as well as field experience in the seizure of live apes and the possible challenges faced when meeting reporting requirements.

The TAG discussed key topics of concern going forward in the creation of the Apes Seizure Database, and strategized on how best to address those topics based on individual members’ expertise and experience. Representatives from WCMC participated on the call as well, and outlined the timeline of the next few months as the database is being created.

TAG members agreed that small working groups are easiest to coordinate, and the GRASP Secretariat was tasked with ensuring that all topics are adequately addressed in a timely manner within the timeframe of database creation.
Zoonotic disease, sustainable palm oil, extractive industries, illegal trade, and transboundary collaboration are among the important issues to be discussed at the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) Regional Meeting – West Africa, which will be held 12-13 April 2016 in Monrovia, Liberia.

The meeting will be hosted by GRASP and the Forest Development Authority (FDA) of Liberia.

The GRASP Regional Meeting – West Africa will bring together delegates from nine West African range states, along with experts from conservation organizations, United Nations agencies, funders and private companies working in the region.

GRASP’s West African region is comprised of Senegal, Nigeria, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Cote d’Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali and Ghana.

GRASP stages regional meetings in Africa and Asia in order to promote collaboration and coordination among its partners. GRASP previously held regional meetings in Central Africa (2012), East Africa (2014), and Southeast Asia (2015).

Additionally, GRASP will launch a carbon and great ape population / habitat online mapping tool that was developed in collaboration with the U.N. Environment Programme (UNEP) – Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) programme. The mapping tool overlays information on carbon stocks with information on great ape distribution, with special emphasis given to potential corridors areas that a) could link fragmented and endangered great ape populations and b) have the potential for reforestation.
The Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) staged a two-day retreat for staff working at the Secretariat headquarters in Nairobi, in order to promote harmony and collaboration among the team and strategize effectively for the year ahead.

Eight members of the GRASP staff took part in the retreat, which was held 25-26 January at Elsamere Lodge in Lake Naivasha, Kenya.

The retreat was facilitated by Ms. Lee-Anne Ragan, co-founder of the Rock. Paper. Scissors. corporate training programme in Canada, who also resides in Kenya. The training was divided between team-building activities and strategic planning sessions, which were a particular priority given the heavy workload and high-profile events on GRASP’s 2016 calendar, including the 3rd GRASP Council.

The retreat, which was the first ever held by GRASP, helped team members develop better lines of communication, craft a shared vision, identify GRASP’s added value in a crowded marketplace, and boost overall confidence.

The costs of the retreat were met by the GRASP team. Follow-up sessions with Ms. Ragan will be held periodically throughout 2016 in order to ensure maximum benefit from the treat.

For more information on Rock. Paper. Scissors. please visit http://rpsinc.ca.
The Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) is finalising a report on the links between palm oil and the recently adopted UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Indicators for each of the 17 SDG global goals are being negotiated and several show the potential of focusing on palm oil to meet SDG targets. The report will also underpin a GRASP palm oil strategy that will be created in mid-2016.

The GRASP South-South project on palm oil was completed in December 2015. The Liverpool John Moores University and the consultants who prepared the report sent a final draft version of the document, which is being edited and will be submitted to UNEP’s publication committee for approval in March. One of the essential recommendations from this report is a call for responsible palm oil companies to take a more active role in ape conservation by encouraging them to plant in areas that respect certification and High Conservation Value (HCV) assessments.

In Cameroon, GRASP partnered with the WorldWide Fund for Nature (WWF) to support the preparation of a national HCV assessment. A workshop was held in November 2015 that was attended by GRASP and key stakeholders from the government, civil society and private sector, WWF submitted a revised methodology and indicators for the HCV assessment. The document is currently undergoing an online public consultation on the HCV resource network website. www.hcvnetwork.org/news-and-events/blog.2016-01-05.7800098016.

The consultation is open to anyone, including the international community, to ensure that a robust methodology is adopted by Cameroon. The HCV assessment is an important step to ensure that certification criteria are met and adapted to the specificities of Cameroon. The approach at national level is innovative in the sense that it also provides the Government of Cameroon a land planning tool to support considerations on new development projects, and in support of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) / SEAs.