



**GREAT APES SURVIVAL  
PARTNERSHIP**



## **GRASP 6<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee Meeting**

**Bergen, 28-29 November 2011**

### **Minutes**

#### **Secretariat / Technical Support Team / Scientific Commission**

Doug Cress	Secretariat (UNEP)
Johannes Refisch	Secretariat (UNEP)
David Jay	Technical Support Teams (BFF)
Ian Redmond	GRASP Envoy (BFF)
Liz Williamson	Scientific Commission (IUCN)

#### **Members of Executive Committee**

Neville Ash	UNEP
Noéline Raondry-Rakotoarisoa	UNESCO
Aggrey Rwetsiba	East African Range State representative (Uganda)
Aboubacar Oulare	West African Range State representative (Guinea)
Melanie Virtue	MEA representative (CMS)
Matthew Hatchwell	NGO representative (WCS)
Ashley Leiman	NGO representative (OF-UK)

#### **Observers**

Stephen Cobb	Presentation of GRASP strategic review
David Greer (day 1)	Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF)
Liz Macfie (day 1)	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)

#### **Apologies**

Marine Baudet	Non-range State Representative (France)
Anne-Sophie Cerisola	Non-range State Representative (France)
Mark Baxter	Non-range State Representative (UK)
Novianto Bambang	Asia Range State representative (Indonesia)
Leonard Muamba Kanda	Central African Range State representative (DRC)

## **DAY 1**

### **1. Welcoming remarks from UNEP**

Neville Ash of UNEP noted that GRASP is needed more than ever, and that this is an important meeting to take GRASP forwards at a time of growing interest in the conservation of great apes, and yet there is much to be done to reinvigorate the Partnership. Thanks to (former acting GRASP coordinator) Johannes Refisch for his excellent job; thanks to (former GRASP coordinator) Melanie Virtue for her on-going support; thanks to (GRASP coordinator) Doug Cress for taking up the challenge of moving GRASP forwards. Reiterated the strong support from UNEP to GRASP going forwards.

### **2. Selection of the Chair**

UNEP nominated Aggrey Rwetsiba of Uganda to serve as chairman of the meeting; the GRASP Executive Committee approved.

### **3. Adoption of Agenda / Admission of Observers**

The agenda was approved and the executive committee agreed to let observers attend the first day of the meeting. Each delegate to the executive committee meeting also introduced themselves, and expressed their goals and objectives for the meeting.

### **4. Report of the Secretariat**

GRASP manager Johannes Refisch presented a report detailing the projects, budgets, and issues covering the last two years (2010-2011) for GRASP Secretariat operations. Among the highlights:

- Updates on conservation projects underway in Congo, DR Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon and Indonesia
- Detailed budgets analysis for 2010-11, including revenues, expenditures, and budget sources / allocations
- The need for an accurate reporting and monitoring tool to gauge the efficacy of GRASP's work
- Development of GRASP internet / social media projects
- GRASP orangutan report update from Indonesia - launch of *Orangutans and the Economics of Sustainable Forest Management in Sumatra*
- Update on GRASP / PUMA "Play for Life" contract, the first private funding opportunity to be utilized by GRASP
- GRASP print / publicity materials
- GRASP missions to Africa, Asia & Europe
- GRASP communications strategy

- Problems presented by delays in recruiting the GRASP coordinator

Delegates discussed several issues relating to the GRASP secretariat report, including the challenge of securing operational funding; donor-driven contributions that may alter the workplan or priorities; the scale and scope of GRASP's work; transparency of GRASP Secretariat decision-making process and the challenges of reporting against both the Programme of Action (PoA) and the set of "big ideas" that emerged from the GRASP Executive Committee in 2007.

#### **5. Report of the GRASP Technical Support Team (TST)**

TST delegate David Jay of the Born Free Foundation presented an update on activities up to February 2011, when funding for the TST agreement expired. Highlights included:

- Preparation of contracts and project documents for GRASP activities in Congo, DR Congo and Indonesia
- Facilitated the attendance by GRASP representatives at important meetings in Tanzania and Kenya.

Delegates discussed the difficulty of renewing the TST agreement with the Born Free Foundation given current UN limitations, and limited availability of funds. Ian Redmond encouraged GRASP to build closer ties with the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and other multilateral organizations.

#### **6. Report of the GRASP Envoy**

GRASP Envoy Ian Redmond presented a review of his activities on behalf of GRASP, which had been funded through February 2011 by the GRASP Technical Support Team. He also emphasized the inability to continue serving in this capacity as a volunteer, noting that no further funds had been allocated to the role of envoy. Among the highlights:

- Attendance at conservation / biodiversity meetings in Congo, United Kingdom, Qatar, Rwanda & Japan.
- High-level meetings with government officials in Congo and Rwanda
- Prominent presentations on behalf of GRASP in the United Kingdom and Belgium

#### **7. Report of the GRASP Scientific Commission**

GRASP Scientific Commission member Liz Williamson presented a report on the activities of the body in 2010-11, which included:

- Review / comment on the GRASP reports, *Orangutans and the Economics of Sustainable Forest Management in Sumatra* and *Last Stand of the Gorilla*.

- Attendance by GRASP Scientific Commission members at meetings, conferences and hearings in Tanzania, the United Kingdom, DR Congo, Rwanda, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya and the United States.
- Formal letters of concern / advocacy on behalf of conservation issues in Guinea, Indonesia and Egypt.

The GRASP Scientific Commission expressed concern that its input had not been systematically sought by the executive committee and secretariat, and proposed a closer working relationship. The Commission expressed a desire to continue to provide scientifically-informed and evidence-based input not only on applications for funding, but also on reports submitted to the secretariat by projects that have been executed by partners who have received GRASP funding.

Delegates discussed the Apes Mapper, the A.P.E.S. database and issues surrounding accessibility and ultimate hosting of the tools. Oulare Aboubacar expressed frustration that GRASP projects and scientific work in his country and / or region were not coordinated through his office, and data were not shared or made available.

Delegates also discussed the possibility of altering the membership of the GRASP Scientific Commission, to diversify the disciplinary balance to the commission, for example through adding members with expertise in climate change, forestry, or social sciences, among others.

## **8. Report from UNESCO**

UNESCO representative Noeline Raondry-Rakotoarisoa presented an informal update of UNESCO activities in 2010-11 that pertained to GRASP. Among the highlights:

- Following the success in Gabon and Cameroon of the education kit “Malle pédagogique » produced by UNESCO in collaboration with MNHN, Paris and targeting schools, ECOFAC V / RAPAC financed the replication of the kit and its implementation in DR Congo. The Minister of Environment of DR Congo strongly supported this initiative.
- Publication in 2009 of the French-language version of *l'Atlas Mondial des Grands Singes et la Conservation de leurs Habitats*.
- A publication on the results of the UNESCO-GRASP award programme from 2006-2009 is in preparation.

UNESCO recognised that its support for GRASP had been limited in recent years, but reiterated its intention to strengthen support for GRASP in the future

## **9. West African Regional Presentation**

Guinea focal point Oulare Aboubacar gave a presentation on a West African regional workshop staged in 2009, to promote cooperation and communication among GRASP regional representatives. Among the highlights:

- Updates from conservation activity in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Benin, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Guinea Bissau, and Senegal.
- A call for similar sub-regional workshops in other parts of Africa and Asia
- Concern over a lack of communication with GRASP Secretariat.
- Concern over a lack of update or implementation with National Great Ape Action Plans (NGASPs); call to include action plans in the plan of the West African Economic Union.

Delegates discussed the possibility of reviving National Great Ape Survival Plans (NGASPs), and mentioned that some countries have already other plans in place being either the IUCN action plans or in case of Uganda, the Virunga Trans-boundary Plan. It was agreed that there is no value in replicating existing planning processes.

**AP: All reports were adopted by the GRASP Executive Committee**

### **10. GRASP Going Forward**

GRASP Coordinator Doug Cress presented an overview of GRASP's current status within the great apes conservation community, and outlined some proposed goals and objectives designed to help rebuild GRASP and move it to the forefront of great ape conservation. Among the highlights:

- A desire to ensure GRASP is active in promoting all major great ape conservation programmes in a variety of disciplines within five years, involving all major stakeholders in the process.
- An assessment of GRASP's current status: Equivalent in stature to a minor NGO in terms of funding and impact
- Emphasis on a closer association with the leverage and profile of the UN
- Emphasis on rebuilding the partnership
- Emphasis on public awareness
- Emphasis on fund-raising and portfolio diversification
- Projects designed to raise GRASP's public profile through coordinated campaigns the produce easily measured results
- Change of official name (to UN-GRASP) and logo
- Need to re-store GRASP's presence in Southeast Asia
- Growth of GRASP membership to include zoo associations and zoo conservation programmes active in promoting the conservation of great apes in the wild
- Possibility of adding gibbons to the GRASP mandate in order to engage more range states, tap new funding sources, and grow Southeast Asian influence

Delegates expressed gratitude at the energy and enthusiasm of the presentation, but some were concerned about the high level of ambition, that the ideas lacked specific plans for African range states, or perhaps needed more long-term sustainable considerations.

## 11. GRASP Strategic Review

Stephen Cobb of The Environment Development Group in the U.K. is leading the strategic review of GRASP, which includes a GRASP survey distributed to over 150 professionals, and an annex compiled by the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology on the status of great apes and habitats. Cobb gave a presentation indicating his early findings and impressions from the GRASP strategic review process. Among the highlights:

- The opportunities and challenges presented by the GRASP Secretariat being housed in UNEP
- Is GRASP's structure able to achieve key objectives?
- The effectiveness of the various elements of GRASP – focal points, TST, envoy, patrons, etc.
- What is the true condition of the GRASP partnership?
- Initial GRASP survey results
- The overly ambitious nature of the GRASP Programme of Action (2006-2011)
- The financial constraints in relation to an expensive GRASP Council meeting every two years and other aspects of the constitution
- GRASP short-term and medium-term objectives

Stephen Cobb made the case that the biggest threats to great apes come from forest conversion, whether in the context of logging, conversion into agro-industrial plantations or mining. GRASP needs to be better positioned to tackle these issues more upstream, and to do so might review whether it has the right partners, and whether the scientific commission in its current configuration can provide appropriate disciplinary advice on these topics. The GRASP objectives were considered too ambitious, activities are not capable of meeting these objectives, partners are not actively engaged and host institutions are loosely connected.

Cobb added that the lack of council meetings seems to be a “stumbling block”, as it is supposed to meet every two years and to elect the executive committee members. Organising a council meeting is a major fundraising burden for the GRASP Secretariat, and it was proposed that the council should meet less often, perhaps linked to other meetings, and that more authority could be delegated to the GRASP Executive Committee to allow decisions to be made between GRASP Council meetings. While UNEP seems to be the right body for housing GRASP because of its political importance, convening power and trusted brand, the lack of flexibility, cumbersome administrative systems and slow procurement and recruitment systems challenges. The role of UNESCO within the secretariat needs to be clarified.

Delegates discussed a number of issues raised in Stephen Cobb's presentation, including how to make changes and increase effectiveness without staging a GRASP Council meeting. Mathew Hatchwell stated that change was necessary within GRASP, perhaps “very substantive change” needed to be discussed. But he doubted the executive committee could make major decisions, particularly if they represented a great shift in types of strategies or deviation from the PoA. He concluded that the inclusion of gibbons in the GRASP mandate, for

instance, would need the approval of the council. Ashley Leiman stated that a focus on rehabilitation and sanctuaries would represent a shift from the current mandate and would need council approval. Several delegates expressed concern over bringing about dramatic changes within GRASP too quickly without Council approval.

Neville Ash stated that some consensus would need to be reached during the GRASP Executive Committee meeting in order for the GRASP Secretariat to be able to move forwards in advance of – and to prepare for - a likely GRASP Council meeting later in 2012.

The delegates agreed to five themes that could organize talking points over the remainder of the GRASP Executive Committee meeting, each of which would also feed into the 2012 workplan for the GRASP Secretariat:

- a) Thematic Priorities
- b) Partnership Engagement
- c) Communications
- d) Fundraising
- e) Structures and Procedures

The chairman counselled that GRASP's mandate had not changed, meetings should be held at their scheduled times, but some flexibility needs to enter the operations. Some issues cannot wait until a 2012 GRASP Council meeting, for instance. Matthew Hatchwell expressed concern with the proposal to reduce the scope of Council and concluded that the Council is the only platform where all GRASP partners meet and should be maintained in this form.

David Jay commented that the GRASP Secretariat is ambitious, and GRASP's focus needs to be doing something for the great apes that the partners can't do by themselves, not just in terms of how projects might benefit the partners.

Delegates agreed that climate change is growing in relevance to great ape conservation. Other key issues include poaching, mining, law enforcement, government engagement, deforestation, peace-building, community engagement. Stephen Cobb stressed the need to focus on the forest, and thereby saving the apes within.

The UK was not able to attend the meeting but Mark Baxter of Defra provided written comments on Stephen Cobb's first draft of the review findings. These comments were printed and handed out to the GRASP Executive Committee members.

## **DAY 2**

### **12. Day 1 Review**

GRASP manager Johannes Refisch reviewed the actions and talking points of Day 1, and emphasized the themes for discussion. Among the highlights:

- Changes are necessary, substantive changes in some cases, but there is much the GRASP Executive Committee cannot do without GRASP Council approval.
- GRASP needs to become more involved in the underlying threats to great ape conservation in the wild – including issues of climate change, poverty reduction, deforestation etc.
- Does GRASP have recourses to exert influence on governments?
- The importance of law enforcement
- Focus on forest loss, poaching and diseases
- The importance of considering the individual circumstances and priorities of range states, and subspecies
- The importance of GRASP reaching out to extractive industries
- UNESCO's role in the partnership needs to be strengthened

Neville Ash stated that the details of all discussions need to be captured accurately, and emphasized that the day's debate needs to address the strategic review, the workplan, and key issues of GRASP going forward over the next 12 months in preparation for the Council meeting. David Jay said he recognized the call for change, but sensed some resistance within the GRASP Executive Committee was resistant. He said the committee needed to play an active role in approving and encouraging dynamic leadership.

Melanie Virtue complimented the new GRASP website, but noted several documents that were missing and need to be uploaded.

**AP: Minutes of the GRASP Executive Committee 2008 and 2009 to be uploaded on webpage**

**13. GRASP strategic review part II**

**a.) Thematic priorities**

Doug Cress stated that trying to define GRASP's future direction is difficult, given that each member of the GRASP Executive Committee – and many partners too – has a different perception of GRASP's current condition. Each sees what they want in GRASP, yet most come away feeling frustrated. GRASP's failure to define itself clearly from the start was a recipe for failure. The reality is that the GRASP Secretariat is a very small entity with a very small budget. Most of the funding comes from donor governments, and it is heavily earmarked for field projects. Doug Cress reiterated that GRASP's mandate must be updated dramatically and soon, and the partnership needs to begin producing results that no one has seen before.

As for the partnership, of the 23 range states, 11 have no active focal point and are not engaged. GRASP has almost no presence or engagement from the range states in Asia. Beyond range states, other partners in GRASP have also disengaged.

Cress reflected that the use of GRASP partners to speak for the GRASP Secretariat hadn't been successful. Within the GRASP Secretariat, the coordinator is the only permanent funded position. Other staff members are on 6-month contracts, and the secretariat can't afford to lose staffing capacity with the expected future workplan. The encouraging thing is that the UN still has great leverage and GRASP still captures attention, and has great potential to add value to the ongoing work of partners for the conservation of great apes and their habitats.

Melanie Virtue commented that she worried constantly since leaving the GRASP coordinator position in 2009 that GRASP might not survive. She said that UNEP had held the lifeline through difficult times for the secretariat, but there had been some considerable risk.

Neville Ash reiterated that GRASP now has full support in UNEP, which sees considerable potential for the partnership moving forwards.

## **b.) Partnership**

Ian Redmond commented that GRASP is seen in some corners as irrelevant. He asked what can be done to strengthen the partnership, and what can people bring to the group?

Oulare Aboubacar commented that Doug Cress' comments should have been stated from the start of the meeting. GRASP needs to strengthen its partnership, and that means identifying partners that can fund key activities. In some cases, governments can mobilize resources.

Noéline Raondry-Rakotaorisoa reiterated UNESCO commitment to the GRASP. Through its biosphere reserves network, Man and Biosphere (MAB), UNESCO is operating in 18 of the 23 great ape range states and it is worth mainstreaming GRASP objectives in this network and improving its visibility among various national and local stakeholders. The biosphere reserve concept goes beyond protected areas and strict conservation concerns; by including development issues, it can accommodate the views of various stakeholders, especially government and private sector counterparts and is a relevant framework of dialogue and negotiation. To date, GRASP has primarily targeted WHC and MAB programmes within UNESCO; however, it is important to note that there are other international or intergovernmental scientific programmes in UNESCO (hydrology, geosciences, social transformation, etc.) that might be relevant to GRASP. However, the GRASP Executive Committee should give an indication on what it thinks UNESCO should be involved in, given its resources and mandate.

David Jay suggested that GRASP look at other existing mechanisms and processes through which it might engage African and Asian range state focal points, in order to empower those focal points and position GRASP more centrally within national conservation planning activities.

Doug Cress expressed desire to have GRASP return to its original design – an active partnership among range states, conservation organizations, UN agencies, and donors. Members agreed that partnership engagement – or re-engagement, in most cases – is crucial, and emphasized the need to identify new focal points in many countries. Liz Williamson

wondered whether GRASP could have an influence on the selection of focal points by the range states. Furthermore, partnership engagement should include all GRASP categories.

Ian Redmond emphasized that GRASP should aspire to be a key contact point on great ape conservation for range states. GRASP has grown considerably biased towards an NGO consortium, with little leadership or activity among governments.

Johannes Refisch stated that reporting and monitoring and national monitoring workshops are an important element of revitalising the partnership. He mentioned that there are several ways in which partners can get more engaged. Partners could second staff to the secretariat, or take on some of its responsibilities for specific technical areas. Matthew Hatchwell said it won't be possible for WCS to second staff, but Liz Macfie, in her role as the WCS Gorilla Coordinator, is happy to provide support to GRASP.

Stephen Cobb complimented the enthusiasm for rebuilding the partnership, but cautioned that some partners would not be back, and the GRASP Executive Committee should be relaxed about that. It's more important to build trust among a dedicated group first. He pointed out that the website only shows logos of NGOs as partners but does not show the logos of government partners such as protected area authorities. Many delegates suggested that re-engaging range states would be a priority moving forwards.

### **c.) Fund-Raising**

GRASP is predominantly funded by national governments, many of which are facing steep financial obstacles ahead. It was agreed that GRASP needs to diversify its funding portfolio and engage private and corporate funders, or face uncertain times. GRASP also needs to present economic arguments that make good business sense.

Matthew Hatchwell warned that GRASP should never compete with its partners for funding or benefits. The secretariat should target sources of funding both inside and outside the UN that other GRASP partners cannot traditionally access. He also expressed concern that private funders engaged by the secretariat do not compromise GRASP principles. Others agreed with this concern. He also suggested that the secretariat should work closely with the GRASP Scientific Commission to monitor sponsorship arrangements.

Doug Cress indicated that the secretariat cannot engage with any funder unless it is first cleared by UNEP, which has an extremely discriminating screening process. The Puma "Play for Life" campaign is already more than 12 months into the approval process. Johannes Refisch confirmed that the Puma contract negotiations have been a good learning experience for the secretariat.

GRASP Executive Committee members also discussed whether the secretariat should primarily seek implementing partners among those who signed the Kinshasa Declaration. However, in the past GRASP worked with a number of organisations that are not members of the partnership and did not sign the Kinshasa Declaration. The process for taking on new partners

was also discussed. Rules for the admission of new partners are elaborated in the Rules of the Partnership, which were agreed at the first GRASP Council meeting in Kinshasa in 2005. Requests are screened by the secretariat and, when found eligible, are forwarded to the GRASP Executive Committee for approval. This process does not need to wait until the committee meets physically, and it was proposed that an e-mail circular or phone conference would be sufficient to admit new partners.

Neville Ash warned that existing funders need to be re-engaged too, so they do not become lost. He also emphasized that not all opportunities are fundraising opportunities – some create awareness or raise profile that might later lead to funding opportunities.

Stephen Cobb suggested that environmental crises facing Africa in the coming years are the same that have already hit Asia – primarily the loss of forests to agriculture. The challenge for GRASP is to use the Asian experience and not allow the same mistakes to be made in Africa. The opportunity is there to create a problem-solving dialogue. He suggested large-scale funding and implementation opportunities through International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and the Congo Basin Forest Fund (CBFF). He emphasized that either could be approached without compromising or competing with GRASP partners.

The delegates discussed whether the secretariat could apply directly to the Congo Basin Forest Fund (CBFF) for support. It was suggested that a third-party – such as UNESCO – might be able to assist in case UNEP cannot apply because UNEP is a CBFF council member. Matthew Hatchwell stated that this was a good example of the benefits of the partnership. UNESCO noted that GRASP projects could be developed and implemented jointly by UNEP and UNESCO in the spirit of the One UN delivery as one, in countries like Rwanda which is a One UN pilot country.

#### **d.) Communication**

The delegates agreed that greater communication was needed between the GRASP Secretariat and its partners. Melanie Virtue reminded the group that the GRASP rules state that no more than three months should lapse between executive committee telephone conferences or e-mail chats. Doug Cress added that a suggestion from Stephen Cobb – that the monthly secretariat updates might be less informative, and more engaging – would be adopted.

Doug Cress also addressed the communication strategy going forward. To get people to buy in to GRASP, it needs to have a good story to tell, based on the substantive work being done by the partnership. GRASP communications have not been effective to date, and the partnership struggled to get the word out about its own work. The secretariat has to communicate better and one aspect of that is a new logo. A proposed new GRASP logo was presented and discussed by the executive committee.

Strong support was expressed for the logo, and the group agreed that the partnership would be informed first before it is publicly launched. It was agreed that a French-language version would also be produced, along with rules for use of the logo.

## **AP: New GRASP logo adopted by the GRASP Executive Committee**

Ian Redmond mentioned an upcoming film project with which GRASP has an opportunity to partner, summarizing it as “Avatar with fur,” a 3-dimensional movie about apes, and said he is very excited by the project. Ashley Leiman asked for more information, such as storyboards or scripts.

Doug Cress emphasized there are two types of communication strategies: one internal, between the partners, and the other external, to new supporters and funders. The committee agreed that GRASP needs to carefully review projects in terms of message, audience, possible outcomes and benefits, with the GRASP secretariat as the hub of all communication. Doug Cress also said that the “Act Now for Orangutans” campaign with Carles Puyol was unavoidably rushed, and that future campaigns would involve a more consultative process involving the Executive Committee.

It was also discussed whether the GRASP Executive Committee operates somehow with an “interim” mandate, because the members are supposed to be re-elected every two years at the council meeting and the current committee has sat since 2005. “Interim” is perhaps the wrong term, because an “interim” executive committee existed prior to the Kinshasa meeting, but it is worth acknowledging that the Executive Committee mandate needs to be renewed. Melanie Virtue also suggested to nominate Aggrey Rwetsiba as chair until the council meeting, this proposal was accepted by the members.

### **e) Structure**

The GRASP Executive Committee discussed the current make-up the group, and agreed that this represented the partnership sufficiently to govern until the next GRASP Council meeting.

The chairman approved, and said the GRASP Executive Committee is the best thing to “get things moving.” He urged the secretariat to restore all of its partnerships – governments, NGOs, scientists, etc. – and then wait for the final GRASP strategic review document before considering any structural changes. The chairman also reminded the delegates that they do not have the authority to alter GRASP’s structure or governance.

Several delegates suggested that the format for reporting recently adopted by the CMS Gorilla Agreement might be adapted for use by GRASP. It was also mentioned that the GRASP Secretariat might ultimately host the CMS Gorilla Agreement Secretariat, although Neville Ash emphasized that could be three years away and requires careful consideration of the opportunity, including the implications and risks for GRASP and the GRASP Secretariat, along with UNEP.

It was proposed that UNESCO’s current reporting format – which has a fair response rate – might be used to improve communication between GRASP partners.

Doug Cress stated that the secretariat intends to hold a GRASP Council meeting in November 2012, possibly in Southeast Asia. That meeting would be preceded by a meeting of the GRASP Executive Committee no later than June 2012, in addition to executive committee tele-conference meetings in March and September. He also stated that a task force would need to be assembled to help plan aspects of the GRASP Council, and would certainly include some members of the GRASP Executive Committee.

It was suggested that the GRASP 2012 Council meeting might be streamlined in terms of delegates, in order to be more economical and efficient.

Delegates agreed that the upcoming GRASP Council would not include a high level segment (intergovernmental meeting) as in Kinshasa in 2005. Key activities will include a review of the rules for the organization of management of GRASP.

Melanie Virtue warned that high travel costs, and acquiring visas for more than 20 African delegates to Southeast Asia, might prove difficult, and suggested that a fall-back option such as Paris or Nairobi might be a good idea. Johannes Refisch said he would investigate the possibilities of Southeast Asian venues for the GRASP Council meeting when he attends workshops in Malaysia and Indonesia in January.

Although some delegates questioned what might happen if a GRASP Council meeting was not held, Neville Ash identified it as a clear priority for fundraising and for the Secretariat workplan in 2012. Doug Cress stated that the regular executive committee meetings would keep members well-advised if the planning and fund-raising for a GRASP Council meeting was on track.

The uncertain role of the Technical Support Team (TST) was discussed. Unfunded by the secretariat since February 2011, it is no longer able to provide GRASP with the logistical and technical support it had for the previous decade. This places an increased administrative burden on the secretariat, yet there does not appear to be an easy way to revive this program with current funding constraints and recent updates to UN rules on procurement.

The role of the GRASP Envoy was also discussed. Ian Redmond sought clarity as to whether he could speak for GRASP, but the issue of conflicting “hats” – a GRASP official that represents other organizations than GRASP, particularly as regards public perception – was raised. GRASP’s inability to define its own “voice” over the years is partly due to this issue, some felt, and emphasized the need to develop GRASP’s message and voice more clearly. Johannes Refisch urged greater communication and coordination between those who represent GRASP.

Since currently the secretariat does not have the funds to support the TST, it was discussed whether partners could raise additional funds for the TST. The secretariat welcomed this option, but noted that the TST is part of GRASP and the TST workplan would need Executive Committee approval after preparation by the Secretariat.

#### **f.) 2012 Workplan**

Attention was turned to the 2012 workplan, which will be drafted over the ensuing six weeks and circulated to the GRASP executive committee members for input and review. Priority would be given to raising funds to achieve objectives identified in the workplan, including the GRASP Council and GRASP Executive Committee meetings.

Liz Williamson suggested that emerging infectious diseases were not a priority for the immediate future, and should not be an emphasis of the workplan. Errors were also identified in the conservation status analysis annex of the draft version of the GRASP Strategic Review, but it was made clear the annex was envisioned as an overview. It was recommended that the GRASP Scientific Commission review the report before its release.

Doug Cress proposed the creation of a hub on law enforcement in issues involving great apes at the secretariat in Nairobi. But Melanie Virtue, representing the MEAs that include CITES, felt that GRASP should not create a new hub but instead should work more closely with ICCWC, the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (CITES, INTERPOL, UN Drugs and Crime, World Customs Organisation, World Bank).

The chairman noted that the group had learned a lot in two days, and the biggest challenge was simply in understanding GRASP. He said the current need is to refocus on what the group wanted GRASP to be. With that, the chairman closed the meeting.

#### **AP: Road map towards the 2012 GRASP Council**

- **Minutes of the meeting will be circulated to GRASP Executive Committee members for approval as quickly as possible**
- **GRASP Secretariat to prepare interim workplan by mid-January 2012. Secretariat to liaise closely with Stephen Cobb to ensure that workplan will be informed by the recommendations of the GRASP strategic review**
- **Stephen Cobb to present GRASP strategic review report by 2<sup>nd</sup> week of January 2012.**
- **Secretariat to organize GRASP Executive Committee conference calls in March and September, and physical meeting in June 2012**
- **Secretariat to establish Task Force to help organize the GRASP Council**
- **GRASP Council meeting to be held in November 2012.**