



Kinshasa Declaration on Great Apes

We, the representatives of the great ape range States, donor and other States, international and intergovernmental organizations, academic and scientific communities, non-governmental organizations, industry and the private sector, meeting at Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, on 9 September 2005,

Aware that there is a high risk of extinction in the wild for all great ape species, due largely to the destruction of forests and other habitat; threats from human activities, including increasing encroachments by human populations on their habitat; civil disturbances and wars; poaching for bushmeat and for the live animal trade; and diseases such as ebola which can decimate ape populations,

Recognizing that great apes are flagship species for tropical forests and woodland areas and play a key role in maintaining the health and diversity of their ecosystems, and that their decline and potential extinction may precipitate the decline of other culturally, economically or ecologically important species,

Also recognizing the intrinsic value of great apes as part of the world's natural heritage, which we have a moral duty to conserve and share with future generations,

Recognizing further that great ape populations and their habitats can provide direct and indirect benefits to local communities and other stakeholders, and contribute to poverty alleviation through the development of carefully regulated ecologically sustainable ecotourism and other non-destructive enterprises and through the environmental services that forests provide,

Recognizing moreover that all species of great apes are afforded the highest level of legal protection under relevant wildlife law in their respective range States,

Recalling the World Charter for Nature, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly by its resolution 37/7 of 28 October 1982, which underscores the importance of not compromising the genetic viability on the earth,

Also recalling the Millennium Development Goals which, among other things, aim to ensure environmental sustainability and to halve by 2015 the proportion of people who live in extreme poverty,

Further recalling the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which included the agreement to achieve a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010,



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Recognizing the sovereignty of the great ape range States and the role of these States and their citizens in the implementation of conservation strategies for these species and their habitats,

Also believing that global partnership, collective action and the acceptance of common but differentiated responsibility can help to halt and reverse the decline of great ape populations,

Acknowledging that the provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species and the World Heritage Convention, together with decisions

taken by their Parties, are directly relevant to the survival of great apes, particularly in the fields of conserving forest diversity, extending and effectively managing protected areas, eliminating illegal trade, developing national and regional legal frameworks, and protecting key sites and habitats,

Recognizing that range States, donor States, international institutions, non-governmental organizations and industry and the private sector have already allocated substantial funds towards great ape conservation, but that further resources must be raised urgently so as to allow essential conservation work to be undertaken to secure the future of those species and their ecosystems,

Recognizing also that securing further funding from donor States and international institutions is more likely if, where appropriate, great-ape conservation projects are proposed and formulated as part of a wider poverty-reduction strategy, such as a durable rural-development project which recognizes that the sustainable development of rural communities depends in large part on the sustainable use of their environmental resources, including great-ape habitats,

Welcoming the present and future role of the Great Apes Survival Project Partnership as a cooperative, global enterprise that harnesses the skills, resources and commitment of range States, donor States, multilateral environmental agreements and other international bodies, non-governmental organizations, industry and the private sector, and academic and scientific communities,

Expressing gratitude to the President, Government and people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for their generosity and far-sightedness in hosting the present intergovernmental meeting,

Convinced of the urgent need to take appropriate measures,



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1. *Affirm* our commitment to the Global Strategy for the Survival of Great Apes;
2. *Affirm also* our commitment, as a matter of urgency, to support and, for the range States, to implement effective measures to counter the threats facing great apes;
3. *Emphasize* the need to stimulate and enhance cooperation among range States and their neighbours to ensure the effective enforcement of legislation protecting great apes and the coordination of efforts to halt activities that have a detrimental effect upon the populations of great apes;
4. *Also emphasize* the important role of appropriate national and international measures, and participation in regional initiatives such as the Lusaka Agreement Task Force, and encourage ratification and compliance with international treaties such as the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species and the World Heritage Convention which provide a framework for the conservation of great apes;
5. *Urge* the development and implementation of national great apes survival plans and other appropriate actions by range States, as part of their overall sustainable-development strategies, in order to conserve great apes and their habitats and to halt and reverse the decline of great ape populations, while ensuring the participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular local communities;
6. *Further urge* partners to the Global Strategy for the Survival of Great Apes and other interested parties to support range States in the implementation of their great apes survival plans and any other appropriate actions;
7. *Encourage* the provision of long-term ecologically sustainable direct and indirect economic benefits to local communities, for example, through the introduction or extension of carefully regulated sustainable ecotourism enterprises in areas of great ape habitat, and the creation of long-term research projects operating in or near these areas;
8. *Invite* all relevant international institutions and aid and development agencies to make it a priority to develop and implement policies which promote ecologically sustainable livelihoods for local and indigenous communities and which prevent actions and activities that are detrimental to the survival of great ape populations;
9. *Reaffirm* our commitment to work together to ensure that the Great Apes Survival Project Partnership has the capacity to realize its full potential as a key component of the international effort to save great apes by:



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- (a) Urging all 23 great ape range States to become or remain active partners of the Great Apes Survival Project Partnership;
- (b) Also encouraging other States which either already support or participate to a significant extent in programmes for the conservation of great apes and their habitat, or could contribute to such an effort in such a way as to become full partners of the Great Apes Survival Project Partnership;
- (c) Encouraging other international organizations, in addition to the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the biodiversity-related conventions, to become or remain active partners of the Great Apes Survival Project Partnership;
- (d) Encouraging non-governmental organizations that have historically either played an important role in efforts to conserve the great apes, or could contribute to such an effort in such a way, whether at the national or international level, to redouble their efforts in that regard and to become or remain partners of the Great Apes Survival Project Partnership;
- (e) Encouraging the academic and business communities, industry and the private sector, which either already support or participate to a significant extent in programmes for the conservation of great apes and their habitat, or could contribute to such an effort in such a way as to become full partners of the Great Apes Survival Project Partnership;
- (f) Forming strategic active partnerships with private sector ecotourism organizations to create sustainable economic development that enhances livelihoods for local communities in the range States;

10. *Resolve* to set ourselves and all concerned the target, by the year 2010, of securing a constant and significant reduction in the current rate of loss of great ape populations and their habitats; and, by 2015, securing the future of all species and subspecies of great apes in the wild, by:

- (a) Ensuring the integrity of those sites supporting the key wild populations that would conserve the genetic, ecological and cultural diversity of all great apes for all time;
- (b) Protecting those sites from further degradation and loss of habitat and working with local and indigenous communities to ensure that any human use of habitats is ecologically sustainable and consistent with maintaining healthy, viable great ape populations;



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(c) Working to ensure interconnectivity of protected areas, where relevant, in order to avoid isolation of protected great ape populations, for example by establishing corridors where necessary;

(d) Developing ecologically sustainable local poverty-reduction strategies which recognize and integrate the needs of local communities sharing great ape habitats, while securing the lasting health of the environmental resources upon which they depend;

(e) Improving the protection of individual great apes and their habitats everywhere by demonstrably improving where necessary the quality and the enforcement of relevant laws, as well as the capacity of law-enforcement agencies;

11. *Invite* the international community in the widest sense, including donor States, international institutions, non-governmental organizations, industry, the private sector, and academic and scientific communities, to provide effective and coherent support, including funding, to assist efforts made by the great ape range States.

In respect of the above intentions, aspirations and actions set out in this Kinshasa Declaration, we, the signatories, pledge to do everything in our power to ensure the long-term future for all great-ape species and to encourage the citizens of the world, in whatever capacity, to assist and support this initiative.

Adopted at Kinshasa, on 9 September 2005.



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Signatories to the Kinshasa Declaration on Great Apes*

Range States

Angola**
Burundi
Cameroon**
Central African Republic**
Côte d'Ivoire
Democratic Republic of the Congo**
Ghana**
Guinea
Guinea-Bissau**
Indonesia
Mali
Nigeria
Republic of the Congo**
Senegal
Uganda**
United Republic of Tanzania**

Donor countries

Belgium
France
Italy
Sweden
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**
United States of America

Intergovernmental organizations

European Commission
Commission of Forestry in Central Africa

United Nations Environment Programme

Dr. Klaus Töpfer

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Dr. Walter Erdelen

* Signatories as at 9 September 2005

** Signed by a Minister



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GRASP Scientific Commission

Dr. Marc Ancrenaz

Dr. Mark Leighton

GRASP patrons

Prof. Toshisada Nishida

Prof. Richard Wrangham

Multilateral environment agreements

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

GRASP non-governmental organization partners

African Wildlife Foundation

Ape Alliance

Bonobo Conservation Initiative

Born Free Foundation

Bristol Zoo Gardens

Care for the Wild

Conservation International

Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund Europe

Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International

Fauna and Flora International

GRASP Japan

Great Ape World Heritage Species Project

Hutan

International Fund for Animal Welfare

International Gorilla Conservation Programme

Last Great Ape Organization

Orangutan Foundation

PanEco Foundation for Sustainable Development and Intercultural Exchange (Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Programme)

Pole Pole Foundation

Rural Environment and Development Organization

Tayna Centre for Conservation Biology

Wild Chimpanzee Foundation

Wildlife Conservation Society

World Society for the Protection of Animals

World Wide Fund for Nature



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GRASP supporting partners

Volcanoes Safaris

International Ranger Federation

Other non-governmental organizations

Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation

Fondation Vie Rurale

Groupe Nkema

Help Congo

John Aspinall Foundation

Lukuru Wildlife Research Project

World Conservation Union – Cameroon

Zoological Society of Milwaukee

Other organizations and individuals

Action Communautaire pour la Protection des Primates du Kasai

BOSF – WFFT, Thailand

Centre d'Accueil des Enfants Abandonnés

Earth Negotiations Bulletin

Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature

Institut des Jardins Zoologiques et Botaniques du Congo

Journal Officiel / RDC

Lola Ya Bonobo

Organisation Concertée des Ecologistes et Amis de la Nature