



# Conservation of and Trade in Great Apes (SC53 Doc. 18)

53<sup>RD</sup> MEETING OF THE CITES STANDING COMMITTEE  
27<sup>TH</sup> JUNE – 1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2005  
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

## Background

At CITES CoP13, Parties adopted Resolution Conf. 13.4 on Conservation and Trade in Great Apes. Resolution Conf. 13.4 appropriately recognizes the global threats facing all great apes (gorillas (*Gorilla spp.*), chimpanzees (*Pan spp.*) and the orangutan (*Pongo spp.*). Among the notable threats are trade in live animals for public display and entertainment as well as use as pets, poaching for bushmeat, and habitat destruction due to logging and land use conversion. All great apes are listed on CITES Appendix I, are subjected to international trade, and are threatened with extinction.

Many of the important recommendations for action contained within Resolution Conf. 13.4 involve cooperative action with the Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP), a project of the United Nations Environment Programme and United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (<http://www.unep.org/grasp/>). According to UNEP, “GRASP is a dynamic alliance of many of the world's leading great ape research and conservation organisations. Close governmental links allow us to promote the GRASP message at the highest political levels. As such, GRASP is uniquely placed to mobilise and pool resources, ensure maximum efficiency and provide a communication platform in order to bring the dramatic decline of great ape populations to a halt.”

GRASP is a World Summit on Sustainable Development Type II Partnership, involving range States, donor states, international organisations and conventions, and nongovernmental organizations. The Secretariat is provided by UNEP and UNESCO, overseen by an Executive Committee, advised by a Scientific Commission and assisted by Technical Support Teams. Activities range from awareness raising to funding on-the-ground projects, with an emphasis on national level planning and policy activities. In September 2005 GRASP will hold a high level Inter-Governmental Meeting (IGM) on great apes in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo.

Working together, GRASP and CITES can make a significant contribution to the long-term conservation of all great apes and demonstrably reduce the illegal global trade in great apes.

## SC53 Doc. 18

The Secretariat has prepared a useful document for consideration at the 53<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the CITES Standing Committee. As noted, Resolution Conf. 13.4 directs the CITES Standing Committee to review the Resolution's implementation, consider technical and political missions to great ape range states, and report progress to the Conference of the Parties. The Species Survival Network (SSN) agrees with the Secretariat that there is a significant and highly-organized trade in orangutans for use in public entertainment. Immediate and substantial action is warranted.

However, problems also persist regarding the illegal trade in great apes in Africa and they, too, must be addressed. There is a specific ongoing problem involving smuggling of great apes from Central Africa. CITES Parties face difficulties related to prevention of illegal capture and trade of chimpanzees and gorillas, enforcement issues surrounding confiscation of live animals, and placement of rescued animals. These enforcement and placement burdens are significant.

### **SPECIES SURVIVAL NETWORK**

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\*CITES is the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora



SC53 Doc. 18 suggests that the Standing Committee explore ways to have CITES and GRASP work together on the conservation of great apes. The SSN supports a collaborative approach and urges the Standing Committee to agree on specific, measurable actions to take this work forward.

### **The CITES Animals Committee**

A Working Group was established at the recently concluded 21<sup>st</sup> meeting of the CITES Animals Committee, which developed a number of practical recommendations on this subject. SSN considers it imperative for the Standing Committee to endorse these recommendations and build on this work.

The Animals Committee endorsed the concept of technical missions to great ape range States in Southeast Asia and Central Africa and urged donor Parties to contribute to these missions, following the laudable lead of the Government of the United Kingdom. The Animals Committee further recommended the establishment of a Great Ape Enforcement Task Force, as provided in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP13) on Compliance and Enforcement.

### **Recommendations**

SSN urges the CITES Standing Committee to:

- Establish terms of reference and a reasonable timetable for the completion of technical missions to Southeast Asia and Central Africa prior to CoP14;
- Establish terms of reference for an *ad hoc* Great Ape Enforcement Task Force;
- Endorse the additional recommendations in AC21WG7 Doc. 1 Conservation of and Trade in Great Apes; and
- Encourage both great ape range States and donor States to participate fully in the GRASP IGM (Kinshasa, 5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> September 2005) in order to enhance the long term survival prospects of the great apes.