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Conservationists Release Manual on Protecting Great Apes in Forest Logging Concessions;

Report suggests logging companies can become key partners in conservation of apes

Chicago (May 21, 2013)—A new report from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) highlights the plight of great apes in the forest concessions of Central Africa and recommends actions to improve protection for gorillas and chimpanzees in these mixed-used landscapes, according to authors from IUCN, Lincoln Park Zoo, Washington University, Wildlife Conservation Society and World Wide Fund for Nature.



Photo courtesy of Ian Nichols

While most conservation efforts are focused on protecting great apes and other species in Central Africa's protected areas, a significant area of the region's rainforest used by gorillas and chimpanzees lies outside of these protected areas in lands designated for some form of extractive use. Extractive activities such as logging and mining and the accompanying road construction and poaching represent significant threats to great apes in the region.

The report—titled [*Great Apes and FSC: Implementing 'Ape Friendly' Practices in Central Africa's Logging Concessions*](#)—is now available through the IUCN website. The authors include: David Morgan of Lincoln Park Zoo and the Wildlife Conservation Society; Crickette Sanz of Washington University in Saint Louis and Lincoln Park Zoo; David Greer of the World Wide Fund for Nature; Tim Rayden and Fiona Maisels of the Wildlife Conservation Society; and Elizabeth Williamson of the Great Ape section of the IUCN/SSC Primate Specialist Group.

“Many of the forests of Central Africa remain outside existing protected areas,” said David Morgan, the lead author of the study. “The survival of gorillas and chimpanzees in these unprotected landscapes depends on balancing the activities of logging and other forms of development with conservation.”

The new report provides logging companies working in Central Africa with a framework for collaboration between forestry and conservation practitioners to establish “ape friendly” practices in forest concessions and mixed-used landscapes. In particular, the report recommends improvements to principles of the Forest Stewardship Council certification system relating to environmental values and impacts, management, monitoring, and protection of high conservation value areas (HCVs). The document serves as a guide for engaging logging companies and their concessions as key partners in the conservation of great apes.

Among the recommendations provided by the authors are: minimize the risk of ape-human disease transmission through educational campaigns and the implementation of forest concession worker health programs and protocols; strengthen law enforcement within forest concessions; designate strictly controlled hunting zones for non-protected species (not including great apes); recommend additional measures to protect tree species important to great apes and other wildlife in forests identified as high conservation value areas; and ensure long-term monitoring of great apes in forest concessions.

“It is critical that logging companies work with wildlife scientists and protected area managers to ensure that great apes are protected and their abundance and distribution monitored throughout timber concessions as well as in the parks and reserves,” said WCS conservation scientist Fiona Maisels. “By incorporating effective stewardship measures into logging practices, we can ensure a future for gorillas and chimpanzees in the forests of Central Africa.”

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About Chicago’s Lincoln Park Zoo

Lincoln Park Zoo, a historic Chicago landmark founded in 1868, is dedicated to connecting people with nature by providing a free, family-oriented wildlife experience. A leader in conservation science both globally and locally, the zoo exemplifies the highest quality animal care and educational outreach. The not-for-profit zoo, managed by The Lincoln Park Zoological Society, is a member-supported organization and one of the nation’s only free, privately managed zoos. For more information, call 312 -742-2000 or visit www.lpzoo.org.