

Preserve established for bonobos

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Congo has established a rain-forest preserve to protect the bonobo from deforestation and poachers, government officials said.

The Sankuru Nature Preserve -- about the size of Massachusetts -- is being created through a partnership between Congolese and U.S. conservation groups and government agencies, The New York Times reported.

Bonobos are closely related to both chimpanzees and humans and found only in the Congo basin south of the Congo River. The World Conservation Union lists bonobos as endangered.

"We are elated," Sally Jewell Coxe, president of the Bonobo Conservation Initiative, a private group in Washington that led the effort.

The group is working with Congo's Ministry of the Environment and local environmental groups through a \$50,000 grant from two American programs that protect great apes and the Congo basin's forests.

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