

Conservationists release manual on protecting great apes in forest concessions

May 21 2013



This is a chimpanzee in the Republic of Congo. A new report from the International Union for Conservation of Nature 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 the Wildlife Conservation Society and other groups. Credit: Ian Nichols

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 the Wildlife Conservation Society, WWF, IUCN, Lincoln Park Zoo and Washington University.

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](#)."

Provided by Wildlife Conservation Society

Citation: Conservationists release manual on protecting great apes in forest concessions (2013, May 21) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2013-05-conservationists-manual-great-apes-forest.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.