

PASA's 2019 Strategic Development Conference

Building the capacity of primate protection organizations across Africa

Introduction

The Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA) will build the capacity of primate protection organizations across Africa through a Strategic Development Conference on November 11 to 14, 2019. Four Paws, a global animal protection organization headquartered in Vienna, will host the conference at their Lionsrock sanctuary in South Africa.

The objectives of the conference are to:

- Empower African wildlife centers to become stronger leaders in conservation in their countries
- Train directors of PASA member organizations in government relations, including negotiating, building relationships, and writing effective agreements (many have MOUs with their governments that are unfavorable or need to be renewed)
- Enable wildlife centers to more effectively train and cultivate their staff, including African nationals and other management staff
- Strengthen wildlife centers' strategic planning, such as succession planning and building, managing, and motivating their Boards of Directors
- Teach primate protection organizations to professionalize their public communications, particularly using social media, photos, and video



Four Paws: the host organization

Four Paws is a global animal protection organization with offices in more than ten countries, working in fields such as advocacy and promoting public awareness. The organization conducts animal rescue and rehabilitation for diverse species, including orangutans. Four Paws South Africa is enthusiastic about collaboration with wildlife protection organizations throughout Africa, especially PASA's alliance. They have participated in and provided funding for previous PASA conferences and workshops.

Four Paws offered to host the Strategic Development Conference as a means to become involved with PASA's alliance in more meaningful ways. Four Paws staff from around the world, including their orangutan rehabilitation and release projects, will give talks and participate in panel discussions at the 2019 conference. Their expertise will be very valuable to directors of primate centers. Additionally, collaboration with Four Paws supports PASA's strategic direction, a component of which is to form partnerships with organizations beyond African wildlife centers.

Goals of the conference

The primary goals of the Strategic Development Conference are that primate rescue and rehabilitation centers across Africa will be more sustainable and will be more effective leaders in conservation. We will achieve this through training sessions by specialists in key topics, focused group discussions, and opportunities for networking. Furthermore, the community of primate protection organizations across Africa will become stronger, more collaborative, and more capable of conserving great apes and their habitat. Forging a closer partnership with Four Paws will enhance these goals.

Methods

At the beginning of the conference, the director of each African organization will give a short presentation about their challenges and future plans. Since this has been invaluable for sparking important conversations and collaboration among our members in previous conferences, this year we will dedicate more time to it.



The conference will be immediately preceded by a Community Engagement Workshop for managers of PASA members' community-based programs and conservation education programs. The first day of the conference will overlap with the last day of the Community Engagement Workshop, enabling the participants of both meetings to discuss the goals, strategy, and evaluations of community-based programs in person. These discussions will focus on how to produce and measure behavior change rather than merely teaching information.

Measurable, long-term outcomes are paramount in all of the Alliance's programs. Therefore, conference sessions will have a practical orientation, so participants can readily implement new skills and knowledge.

To evaluate the impact of the Strategic Development Conference, PASA will ensure the participants complete a detailed survey at the end of the meeting. Additionally, PASA will conduct interviews by phone and Skype with select participants to obtain more detailed feedback.

As with all of PASA's conferences and workshops, we will raise funds to cover the costs of one person from each member organization to attend. Because many wildlife centers do not have budgets for international travel, the conference would not be possible without this investment.

The budget for the conference is US\$55,909.48, which will enable 46 leaders in African wildlife protection to attend. Additionally, Four Paws personnel will attend at the expense of Four Paws. Detailed information is in the attached budget spreadsheet.

Expected outcome: leaders in conservation

A primary outcome of the Strategic Development Conference is that the directors and managers of primate protection organizations in Africa will be empowered to become stronger leaders in conservation in their countries.

The conference agenda will include a session about forming strategic partnerships with large conservation organizations and government agencies. Wildlife center directors and others who have demonstrated success in fighting trafficking, conducting nationwide awareness programs, and establishing protected areas will share their insights in panel discussions



and presentations. They will discuss how to make the transition from focusing primarily on animal care and local issues to becoming conservation leaders that are respected by larger and more influential organizations and agencies. They will also talk about how to approach funders of large conservation programs and how to communicate with and develop relationships with conservation partners.

Expected outcome: government relations

As a result of training sessions at the Strategic Development Conference, directors of African wildlife centers will be more skilled in government relations, such as negotiating, building relationships, and writing effective agreements.

Collaborating with government agencies that are responsible for stopping wildlife trafficking and conserving protected areas is critical for primate rescue and rehabilitation centers Africa to be effective agents of conservation. Furthermore, PASA member organizations generally have written agreements with government agencies that define their relationships, the centers' use of government land, and the decision-making process for transferring confiscated wildlife to their facilities. Many wildlife

centers' MOUs are unfavorable, for example they state that a government agency can compel the center to accept any animal, and some agreements are due for renewal.

At the conference, people with experience negotiating with African government agencies, cultivating collaborative relationships with government officials, and drafting legal documents will speak about their experiences, including their successes and challenges.

Expected outcome: strategic planning

We expect that directors of Alliance member organizations will be more capable of leading their organizations in strategic planning, such as succession planning and building, managing, and motivating their Boards of Directors.

Meg Gammage-Tucker is a faculty member of the Indiana University School of Philanthropy who has more than 25 years of fundraising experience. At PASA's 2018 Strategic Development Conference, Meg gave presentations about diverse fundraising channels and led a discussion about strategic planning. The participants spoke very highly of her and several asked that she become more engaged with the PASA family.



During PASA's conferences in 2017 and 2018, several sessions were dedicated to strategic planning, in order to empower wildlife center directors to conduct strategic planning processes as well as to make changes necessary to ensure the sustainability of their organizations. In 2019, we will build on this by arranging 45-minute one-on-one meetings between Meg Gammage-Tucker and directors of PASA member organizations during evenings throughout the

conference. In these meetings, Meg will give customized guidance in topics that range from succession planning to communication with funding organizations and conservation partners.

In advance of the conference, each wildlife center director will work with Meg and PASA staff to determine what types of individualized assistance will have the greatest value to their organizations. This will help the one-on-one meetings with Meg to be as focused as possible.

Additionally, Meg will lead a session about building, managing, and motivating an effective Board of Directors.

Expected outcome: public communications

Wildlife centers in Africa will have increased capabilities to communicate publicly to their audiences worldwide, particularly by using social media, photos, and video.

PASA will continue our ongoing effort to enable wildlife centers in Africa to professionalize their public communications and effectively reach out to their audiences, especially by using internet-based communication channels that make it possible to reach large audiences in donor countries at low costs. Kyle Salazar, who directed a feature-length documentary about primate protection in Africa and has produced quantum improvements in the Vervet Monkey Foundation's social media, will give a presentation followed by a discussion about common misconceptions about social media, types of social media content that generate maximum engagement, and effective use of video for online marketing and fundraising. Belinda Davis, Fundraising and Communications Manager of Soi Dog Foundation, will share strategies for donor communications and growing from an online audience of thousands to millions.

PASA's capacity to conduct the program

The Pan African Sanctuary Alliance has held dozens of conferences and workshops in diverse countries for African wildlife centers over the past 18 years. The subjects have included management, veterinary healthcare, community-based conservation and education, and great ape reintroductions. The experience and connections of PASA's Board of Directors, Executive Director, and other collaborators will ensure the agenda topics and presenters will make the largest possible impact on African primate protection organizations.

Furthermore, for 18 years, PASA has been building the capacity of great ape protection organizations and improving their animal care practices and organizational sustainability. Our close, collaborative relationship with 23 organizations in 13 countries across Africa ideally positions us to identify their challenges and needs, and to organize conferences and workshops that develop their abilities in government relations, staff management, strategic planning, public communications, and other areas that are critical for their sustainability and effectiveness.

