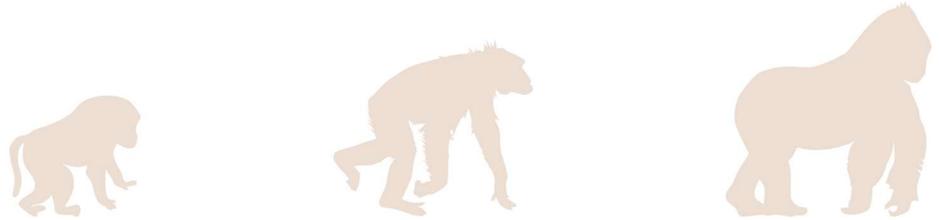




Pan African Sanctuary Alliance



PASA Member Organizations

Cameroon

- Ape Action Africa
- Limbe Wildlife Centre
- Sanaga-Yong Chimpanzee Rescue

Congo

- HELP Congo
- Projet Protection des Gorilles-Congo
- Tchimpounga Chimpanzee Rehabilitation Centre

D. R. Congo

- J.A.C.K. (Jeunes Animaux Confisques au Katanga)
- Lola ya Bonobo
- Lwiro Primate Rehabilitation Centre

Gabon

- Fernan-Vaz Gorilla Project
- Parc de la Lékédi
- Projet Protection des Gorilles-Gabon

Gambia

- Chimpanzee Rehabilitation Project

Guinea

- Chimpanzee Conservation Center (CCC)

Kenya

- Colobus Conservation
- Sweetwaters Chimpanzee Sanctuary

Malawi

- Lilongwe Wildlife Centre

Nigeria

- Drill Ranch

Sierra Leone

- Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary

South Africa

- Chimp Eden
- Vervet Monkey Foundation

Uganda

- Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary

Zambia

- Chimfunshi Wildlife Orphanage

Action for Chimpanzees

Reducing Trafficking in West Africa through International Collaboration

The Pan African Sanctuary Alliance and partner organizations are launching a new initiative to fight the rapidly escalating illegal trade in chimpanzees in West Africa.

Introduction

Illegal wildlife trade (IWT) continues to expand and has become one of the greatest threats to conservation, although more than US\$350 million is estimated to have been spent to address this crisis in recent years (Biggs et al., 2017). Today, there is growing recognition that to sustainably reduce IWT, it is critical to engage communities that are at risk of participating in trafficking, local and international NGOs, and government agencies as collaborators.

Thus, the Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA), the largest association of wildlife centers in Africa, and our partners are starting **Action for Chimpanzees, a multifaceted, region-wide collaboration to sustainably reduce the trade in critically endangered western chimpanzees.** The first component is a conference on 4 – 5 November 2019 in Conakry, Guinea, which will provide a crucial foundation for a long-term, cross-border initiative against IWT in the region.

Chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*), which were formerly found over large areas of West and Central Africa, are among the most iconic victims of the IWT crisis. Because of a number of factors including inadequate law enforcement and high prices for chimpanzees (particularly compared to typical incomes in rural Africa), the illegal trade in great apes is a low-risk and lucrative business. Thousands of chimpanzees are taken from the wild each year to fill the demand for pets, tourist attractions, bushmeat, and body parts, which generates up to US\$6.4 million annually for those involved in the illicit supply chain (Clough & May, 2018).

Buyers of live chimpanzees are primarily based in China, the Middle East, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and various locales in Africa (Clough & May, 2018). While the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is intended to prohibit the international commercial trade in chimpanzees, traffickers





continue to evade law enforcement. Today, chimpanzees frequent the live animal market with poachers killing up to ten adults for every baby captured (Hughes et al., 2011). High rates of habitat and population loss coupled with low birth rates and long time to maturity, make the plight of chimpanzees increasingly critical.

The population decline is most alarming with the West African subspecies (*P. t. verus*), now classified as critically endangered (Humble et al., 2016), with their population decreasing six percent per year and experiencing a **total decline of 80 percent from 1990 to present** (Clough & May, 2018).

Goal

The goal of Action for Chimpanzees is to curtail the illicit trade of western chimpanzees and prevent their impending extinction by forging collaboration among key stakeholders in West Africa and worldwide and implementing a multifaceted program that is coordinated throughout the region.

Methods and Objectives

Action for Chimpanzees was conceived by PASA and partner organizations, including the Chimpanzee Conservation Center (CCC) in Guinea, Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary in Sierra Leone, Liberia Chimpanzee Rescue and Protection, and Akatia in Côte d'Ivoire.

For the first component of the program, we will bring together government agencies, sanctuaries, and other NGOs of Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone, international organizations and agencies, private sector businesses, and other stakeholders at a **Conference on Western Chimpanzee Trafficking on 4 – 5 November 2019 in Conakry, Guinea**. PASA's partners based in the region have the local knowledge and contacts needed to ensure the relevant government agencies and organizations participate in the conference. Stakeholders in governmental and nongovernmental sectors, both in the region and worldwide, have expressed enthusiasm about the conference.

Conference participants will define challenges, solutions, and action plans that will reduce the space in which this illegal industry operates and that can stop the threats to western chimpanzees' survival. The conference will focus on cultivating collaboration among participants as well as developing practical projects that produce measurable results.

At the conference, we intend to achieve the following objectives:

- Confront the severity of IWT in West Africa, particularly the risk of extinction of western chimpanzees.



- Identify key contact people in relevant government agencies and engage them as partners in fighting wildlife trafficking.
- Collectively develop a multiple-year, cross-border action plan consisting of initiatives that will sustainably reduce illegal chimpanzee trafficking.

The conference will establish a foundation for the projects that comprise the action plan, as well as the partnerships needed to conduct those projects on a region-wide scale. These projects are expected to include the following:

An **investigation** into illegal wildlife trade activities will enable us to produce a comprehensive report on the hunting and capture of wild chimps, trafficking routes, and ports and border crossings commonly used for trafficking in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. We will identify gaps in enforcement and public awareness, and prioritize communities and protected areas to target with other projects.

Based on the results of the investigation, we intend to develop and implement a practical plan for **strengthening law enforcement** by collaborating with enforcement agencies and organizations such as the EAGLE Network and INTERPOL. This is anticipated to include providing training to enforcement officials, particularly in under-resourced areas that are exploited by poachers and traffickers, such as land border crossings and sea ports where enforcement is currently lacking.

This will be complemented by **a region-wide public awareness program** that will increase community involvement and effect behavior change to reduce the wildlife trade. We will strategically place billboards in areas vulnerable to trafficking; use radio, television, and newspapers to reach people in rural West Africa; and use social media advertisements to engage individuals susceptible to participation in IWT.

Timeline

The conference will occur on 4 to 5 November 2019. We will launch the subsequent projects, which are anticipated to include investigation, strengthening law enforcement, and public awareness, after completion of the conference.

How to Help

Financial support is needed to make it possible to conduct the conference, as well as the subsequent projects.

Additionally, PASA and its partners are seeking collaborators who can help maximize the program's impact, for example by helping to develop objectives, create the conference agenda, and plan subsequent projects.