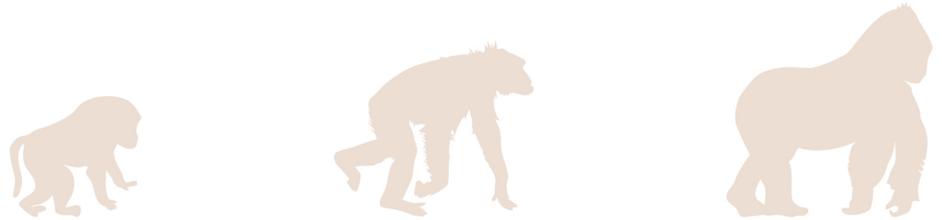




Pan African Sanctuary Alliance



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

Countering Trafficking in West Africa through International Collaboration

The Pan African Sanctuary Alliance and partner organizations have launched 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 its partners started **Action for Chimpanzees, a multifaceted, region-wide collaboration to sustainably reduce the trade in critically endangered western chimpanzees.** The first component was a conference on 30 – 31 January 2020 in Conakry, Guinea, which provided 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 combines policy with direct action, coordinated throughout the region.

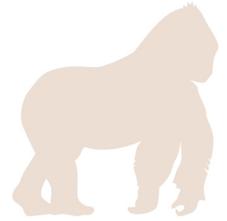
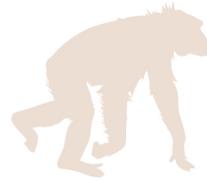
Methods and Objectives

Action for Chimpanzees is a project of PASA and partner organizations, including Akatia in Côte d'Ivoire, the Chimpanzee Conservation Center (CCC) in Guinea, Fondation Brigitte Bardot, Humane Society International, the Jane Goodall Institute, Liberia Chimpanzee Rescue and Protection, Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary in Sierra Leone, WA BiCC (West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change), and WARA in Guinea.

For the first component of the program, PASA brought together government agencies, sanctuaries, and other NGOs of Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone, international organizations and agencies, and other stakeholders at a **Conference on Western Chimpanzee Trafficking on 30 – 31 January 2020 in Conakry, Guinea**. PASA's partners based in the region used their local knowledge and contacts to ensure the relevant government agencies and organizations participated in the conference. Stakeholders in governmental and nongovernmental sectors, both in the region and worldwide, participated in the conference.

Conference participants defined 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 focused on cultivating collaboration among participants as well as developing practical projects that produce measurable results.

At the conference, PASA and its partners achieved the following objectives:



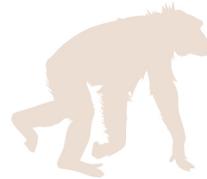
- With West African government officials, established that chimpanzee trafficking is an important issue in the region and their commitment is essential to fight it.
- Provide examples of successful models of fighting wildlife trafficking from around the world that can be applied in West Africa.
- Persuaded government officials and NGO representatives of the essential roles of sanctuaries in chimpanzee conservation, especially in combating trafficking.
- Established a steering committee which includes representatives of all five participating countries as well as PASA, which will take the lead on developing a work plan and other tasks.
- Increased communication and collaboration between agencies that can fight chimpanzee trafficking, both within the same country and in different countries.
- Educated participants about chimpanzee trafficking, conveyed the importance of it and showed that this affects all participating countries.

The conference established 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 will be determined by the steering committee and are expected to include the following:

An **investigation** into illegal wildlife trade activities will make it possible to produce a comprehensive report on hotspots of the poaching of wild chimps, trafficking routes, and ports and border crossings commonly used for trafficking in the region. This will enable the identification of gaps in enforcement and public awareness, as well as the prioritization of communities and protected areas where projects will make the greatest impact.

Based on the results of the investigation, a practical plan for **strengthening law enforcement** will be developed and implemented by collaborating with enforcement agencies and organizations such as the EAGLE Network and INTERPOL. Raising awareness among enforcement officials throughout the region will quickly enhance their ability to identify trafficked chimpanzees and take appropriate actions. This will particularly target under-resourced areas that are exploited by poachers and traffickers, such as land border crossings and sea ports where enforcement is 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. Implementing partner organizations and agencies 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 occurred on 30 to 31 January 2020. The steering committee is expected to finalize an action plan detailing subsequent projects in Spring 2020. These projects are anticipated to include investigation, strengthening law enforcement, and public awareness, will be launched after completion of the conference.

You can collaborate to defend western chimpanzees

PASA and its partners are seeking collaborators to maximize the program's impact. This includes implementing the projects that will follow the conference.

Additionally, financial support is needed to make the subsequent projects possible.

Please contact Gregg Tully at gregg@pasa.org to discuss how you can become a partner.