

The African Primatological Society (APS)

SECOND CONGRESS OF THE AFRICAN PRIMATOLOGICAL SOCIETY



ABSTRACT OF THE PROJECT

A recent assessment of the current status of African primates recognized many more critical species as threatened and/or endangered; this has further emphasized the need for stakeholders to increase their level of involvement and commitment, particularly, native Africans who should be at the forefront of conserving the continent's biodiversity. Since 2012, efforts have been made to establish a group that will coordinate the efforts of African primatologists, enhance their experience/influence in their various project areas and strengthen the impact of their conservation actions. These efforts culminated in the formation of the African Primatological Society (APS) in April 2016 with the objective of creating a platform for networking, coordination of research information and improving conservation efforts through training and capacity building. To accomplish these objectives, the APS held the inaugural meeting in Bingerville, Côte d'Ivoire in July 2017, to lay a solid foundation for the group and position its members/executive officials to carry out its duties and undertake the activities needed to realize its mission. The second APS meeting will be held in Uganda in September 2019. This proposal with funding endorsed by APS, will be organized by Conservation Through Public Health (CTPH) and partner conservation NGOs and government agencies based in Uganda, with support from the APS executive committee, Conservation International and the *Centre Suisse de Recherches Scientifiques*, Côte d'Ivoire.

INTRODUCTION

At the IUCN/SSC Primate Specialist Group African Primate Red List Assessment Workshop held in Rome, Italy from the 18th – 23rd of April 2016, experts assessed the conservation status of African primates wherein 100 out of 179 taxa were classified as threatened with 35 endangered and 15 critically endangered species. More than ever before, these assessments revealed the dire situation facing African primates and drew attention to the potential for imminent and catastrophic loss of the continent's rich primate biodiversity if concrete steps are not taken urgently to reverse the current trend (Imong et al. 2016). Thus, it became evident that there should be greater commitment from all

stakeholders, national governments, international organizations, donor agencies, research institutions, local communities, groups and individuals must reassess their levels of commitment and intervention strategies, and reposition themselves to be more effective in their efforts to save Africa's primate diversity. In particular, Africans must be better positioned to lead efforts if long term, effective conservation of African primates is to be realized.

As a result, the African attendees at this workshop held a series of meetings to discuss progress towards the formation of an African primate group/society. The meetings in Rome, Italy built on that of the former African Primate Working Group (APWG) held in Cape Town, South Africa in July 2015. The APWG itself was formed after several discussions which have taken place since 2012 at the International Primatological Society (IPS) congresses in Cancun, Mexico and in Hanoi, Vietnam in 2014.

The decision to transition from a Working Group to a Society came at an opportune time with many more researchers and conservationists working on African primates increasingly more interested in being part of a home-grown network. A steering committee was immediately constituted in Rome to deliver on the mandate of first Congress inaugurating this new society, and undertaking associated activities to facilitate the affairs of the group. Two members of the APS received support by Conservation International to promote the APS during the IPS meeting in August 2016 and the announcement of the inaugural congress of the APS received enthusiastic support.

The African Primatological Society (APS) was formally established during an inaugural Congress in Bingerville, Côte d'Ivoire, July 24-27, 2017. The congress brought together 150 primatologists from 22 countries in Africa and a few dozen from other countries across the globe. All regions of Africa (North, West, Central, East, Southern Africa and Madagascar) were represented. There were a series of consultative events including a general assembly of APS members during the course of the 4 days of meetings. Amongst these were 10 plenary lectures, 61 oral presentations, 40 poster presentations, 2 panel sessions, 1 red colobus action planning workshop, 1 field trip and 2 practical training sessions in scientific writing and field methodologies, respectively. The congress event benefitted from the avid support of varied stakeholders in the Academia, Non-Governmental Organizations, Civil-Society Groups, National and Local governments, Funding Agencies, public and industry scientists, local, national and international media.

This proposal outlines the important activities necessary for the society to organize its second congress scheduled for September 2019 in Kampala or Entebbe, Uganda. The Congress will gather together approximately 200 African Primatologists, non-African researchers and conservationists working on African primates as well as other stakeholders. The second general assembly of APS members will also take place, as well as keynote addresses during plenaries from renown primatologists, poster sessions, round table discussions and training sessions.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Overall goal

The overall goal of the congress is to hold the second African Primatological Society conference and strengthen the group's position to serve as a platform for knowledge and experience sharing amongst researchers, conservationists, education practitioners, donors and decision makers across the African continent towards the effective conservation of African primates.

Specific objectives

1. To improve knowledge of the advances, constraints, and future perspectives of Primatology in the different regions of Africa (Western Africa, Eastern Africa, Northern Africa, Southern Africa, Central Africa, and Madagascar);
2. To share results of selected projects dealing with various aspects of African Primatology including but not limited to ecology, ethology, systematics, taxonomy, distribution, epidemiology, anthropology, human-primate interactions, conflicts, education, conservation, disease, One Health, tourism;
3. Consolidate enabling factors for the efficient running of the society (action plan).

ACTIVITIES

Pre-congress activities

- Preparation of logistics by organizing committee
 - o Congress venue
 - o Transportation
 - o Accommodation
- Selection of oral and poster communication by scientific committee
- Data collection on the state of primatology in Africa by proposed delegates
 - o One or two persons will be selected from each region to collect information about the state of primatology in their respective region before the date of the congress, and document it with the inputs of the maximum of stakeholders with expert knowledge of the regions. Proposed names are East Africa (Moses Chemurot); West Africa (Karim Ouattara), Central Africa (Ekogwe Enang Abwe), South Africa (Riashna Sithaldeen), North Africa (Sian Waters), Madagascar (Rainer Dolch, Association Mitsinjo and/or Josia Razafindramanana). The results of these investigations will be submitted for publication in a special issue of African Primates.
- Selection of participants to training sessions
- Communication

Congress activities

Day 1

Opening Session

- a. A welcome speech by the Chair of the Organizing Committee, Dr. Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka with aims of the conference.
- b. An opening presentation given by Dr. Inza Koné, the APS Chair to give a background of APS.
- c. A video speech by APS Patron, Dr. Russ Mittermeier

- d. The Mayor of Entebbe, Mr. Vincent will give welcome remarks
- e. Dr. Jane Goodall, who will be asked to give remarks on her 50 year journey as a pioneer and inspirational primatologist working with chimpanzees in Africa since the 1960s, if she is not able to attend in person then a video speech will be projected
- f. Hon. Ephraim Kamuntu, Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities will give opening remarks on the importance of primates to sustainable development in Uganda and introduced the Guest of Honor
- g. The proposed Guest of Honor is The Prime Minister of Uganda, Hon Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda, who will open the workshop officially
- h. Group photo will be taken

Tea break

- i. The first keynote speech will be made by an eminent primatologist, Prof. Vernon Reynolds, emeritus Professor at Oxford University, who established the Budongo Forest Project in 1990, on the topic: ***“Nurturing African leadership in Primatology”***

Afternoon session

This session will be opened by a key note speech from Prof. Liz Williamson and Dr William Olupot from IUCN Primate Specialist Group on the topic ***“African Great Apes and other primates red listing process: updates and lessons.”***

This will be followed by a plenary session on the state of Primatology in each of the six regions of Africa.

The afternoon session will end with a keynote speech by an international guest, Dr. Fabian Leendertz from the Robert Koch Institute on ***“Epidemiological issues in primate research and conservation projects”***

Day 2

Day 2 of the conference will focus on sharing results of selected projects dealing with various aspects of African Primatology.

A call for abstracts will be launched prior to conference dates and the Scientific Committee will select up to 50 abstracts for oral communications and up to 20 posters.

During **Day 2** of the Congress, selected candidates will give their oral presentations during several parallel sessions with simultaneous English-French translation. These talks will be preceded by a keynote speech from an international guest, Dr. Daisuke Mizoguchi, on the topic: ***“Building capacity for primatology through south to south (Japanese and African) collaborations”***

A poster session will be organized and visitors will be invited to evaluate the quality of competing posters and their presentation on specific sheets in order for a jury to select the winner of the award of the best poster.

Day 3

Day 3 of the Congress will start with

- a.** 1st key note speech from an African Primatologist, Prof. Jonah Ratsimbazafy from Madagascar on **“The potential for African Leadership in primatology to shape national and regional conservation policy”**
- b.** A round table will be organized on the topic **“Primate Ecotourism: Opportunities and Challenges for Conservation and Sustainable Development: The Uganda Experience”** Panelists include African primatologists: Lily Ajarova (UTB), Sam Mwandha (UWA), Anna Behm (International Gorilla Conservation Programme), Praveen Morman (Volcanoes Safaris) and Arcus Foundation representing the donor community (Helga Rainer). The session will be facilitated by Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka (CTPH).
- c.** **Award ceremony** for best student presentations and prominent primatologists in Africa will be held
- d.** **Conference recommendations and resolutions** will be read by APS President, Inza Koné
- e.** The Closing session will include remarks by UWA ED, NFA ED and Ian Redmond or Johannes Refisch representing GRASP.
- f.** The constitution of the APS and chairs of the different governance bodies were elected at the inaugural congress and the next election is scheduled to be held after four years at the 3rd APS conference. A 2nd annual general meeting will be held in the afternoon of day 3.

Days 4-6: Field Trips

The 4th, 5th and 6th days will be dedicated to optional excursions, pre congress training and post congress study tours in primate field sites including Ngamba Chimpanzee Island, Mabira Forest, Budongo Forest, Kibale Forest and Bwindi Impenetrable Forest led by local collaborators (UWA, Chimpanzee Trust Uganda, Nature and Livelihoods, Budongo Conservation Field Station).

Additionally there will be a 3 day pre-congress training to be led by Dr. Rainer Dolch in Budongo Forest, where he is fundraising separately for this workshop.

PROJECT’S RELEVANCE TO PRIMATE CONSERVATION GOALS

The African Primatological Society is convinced that our proposed congress is relevant to the interest of protecting critically endangered primates and of preserving primate diversity in their natural habitat. In the first instance, the objective of APS is to promote primate research and improve the conservation of African primates by encouraging greater involvement and leadership of African primatologists. Currently, 56% of the 179 primates assessed for mainland Africa and 87 % of the 103 primate taxa assessed for Madagascar are threatened. Thus, many African primate species are facing extinction despite all current multifaceted conservation efforts. This suggests a need for greater commitment from all stakeholders, especially Africans themselves. Yet the critical mass of skilled African primatologists required to stimulate debates and influence policies does not exist. Many existing African primatologists play only secondary roles in research and conservation projects if they actually stay in the field of primatology. The few outstanding African primatologists are unknown to

one another and thus do not have the ideal forum to share experiences that will enhance their efforts. We believe that without much greater involvement and leadership from Africans, primate conservation efforts will continue to be jeopardized. Thus, the establishment and strengthening of this group will enhance conservation efforts and promote information sharing and leadership within the African continent making primate conservation more effective at local, national and regional levels.

PROJECT LOCATION (CONGRESS VENUE):

The Congress will take place in Entebbe, Uganda. The country is known as the primate capital of the world and is relatively easy to access by plane from most regions of Africa and Europe with direct flights. The Congress will be hosted by APS organizing committee chaired by the Vice President, who is founder and CEO of CTPH working with mountain gorillas and other primates in Uganda, working closely with CSWCT, UWEC, Makerere University, UWA, UTB, BCFS, JGI, Nature and Livelihoods, and other local partners.

TIME FRAME OF THE PROJECT

a) Preparatory work: starting in January 2019

Month	Activity
Jan - Feb 2019	Update the database of African Primatologists and other primate researchers and stakeholders active in Africa
Feb 2019	Start committee meetings
March 2019	Launch the call for the conference and abstracts
April to May 2019	Select abstracts
June 2019	Produce the book of abstracts
February to September 2019	Organize travel logistics for participants, mobilization of volunteers and other preparatory activities

b) Congress’ running: September 2019

- Logistics
- Media coverage

c) Post-congress activities: until December 2019

Publication of the outcomes of the Congress.

The Scientific Council of the Congress will publish the outcomes of the Congress that will be available as a PDF document and printed in 1000 copies. Also, results from the presented projects will be published in a special issue of African Primates. We are building a critical mass of African primatologists with expertise in research and conservation, who will implement ideas in the field of conservation with a local perspective. The people who need to change will be more receptive of ideas presented by Africans.

The work will be sustained through capacity building and awareness of the importance of primates through publication of the conference outcomes in

scientific and popular literature. The Scientific Council of the Congress will publish the outcomes of the Congress that will be available as a PDF document and printed in 1000 copies. Also, results from the presented projects will be published in a special issue of African Primates. This conference is building a critical mass of African primatologists with expertise in research and conservation, who will implement ideas in the field of primate conservation with a local perspective leading to desirable change amongst local communities, and decision and policy makers.

EXPECTED PROJECT OUTPUTS

1. A structure for the society is strengthened as a springboard for networking, collaborations and capacity building.
2. Information on advances, constraints and future perspectives are exchanged to enhance the research and conservation efforts of participants in primate conservation.
3. A platform is enhanced for interaction amongst early career, mid-career and higher level career primatologists.

Possible Project Impact (s):

Short term

- Network of African primatologists fully established and strengthened
- Opportunities created to enhance the knowledge and skills of African Primatologists

Medium term

- More commitment and leadership from African Primatologists in primate research and conservation

Long term

- Conservation policies and practices influenced and threats to primates significantly reduced in most range countries in Africa.

PROJECT PERSONNEL, COLLABORATORS AND INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION

Executive Committee of the APS

Dr. Inza Kone, President, APS, (Centre Suisse de Recherches Scientifiques, Côte d'Ivoire)

Dr. Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka, Vice President, APS (CTPH)

Dr. Ekwoke Enang Abwe, Secretary General

Dr. Riashna Sithaldeen, Communications Secretary (University of Cape Town, South Africa,)

Conference Committee

Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka, Conservation Through Public Health (Chair of Committee)

Scientific Committee led by Moses Chemurot (APC), other members include Ekwoke Enang Abwe. Other members include Jessica Rothman (Hunter College), Nicole Simmons (Minnesota University), Lawrence Mugisha (Makerere University),

Publicity Committee led by Eric Ntalo (CSWCT). Other members include Riashna (UCT), Richard Bagyenyi (CTPH), Bashir Hangi (UWA) and a representative from UTB

Fundraising Committee led by Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka. Other members include Inza Kone, James Musinguzi

Operations/Logistics Committee led by Innocent Djossou (CTPH). Other members include William Olupot (Nature and Livelihoods), Wako Ronald (UWEC), Joshua Rukundo (CSWCT),

The following resource persons will be called upon to assist in the conference

Inaoyom Imong, Wildlife Conservation Society, Nigeria

Denis N'deloh, RCESD, Cameroon

Rachel Ikemeh, SW/Niger Delta Forest Project, Nigeria

Sian Waters, Barbary Macaque Awareness & Conservation (BMAC)/ Tetouan, Morocco

Edward Wiafe, Presbyterian University of Accra, Ghana

Tharcisse Ukizintambara, Study Abroad Coordinator, Centre ValBio, Madagascar

Andrea Dempsey, West African Primate Conservation Action, Accra, Ghana

Drew T. Cronin, Drexel University, USA / Bioko Biodiversity Protection Program

Mariano Hounbedji, Organisation pour le Développement Durable et la Biodiversité

Anthony Rylands, IUCN/SSC Primatologist Specialist Group

Steve Shapiro, Former IPS Treasurer

Fabian Leendertz, Robert Koch Institute

Roman Wittig, Tai Chimpanzee Project

International Collaborators

Johannes Refisch, GRASP/UNEP, Nairobi, Kenya

Jessica Rothman, Hunter College, New York, USA

Nicole Simmons, Kyambura Gorge Chimpanzee researcher/University of Minnesota

Chloe Cipolleta, National Geographic Africa Office

JICA Uganda

Local Collaborators

James Musinguzi, Uganda Wildlife Education Centre

Joshua Rukundo, Chimpanzee Trust Uganda

Deborah Baranga, Makerere University

William Olupot, Nature and Livelihoods

Collaborating government institutions in the project country

Lily Ajarova, ED, Uganda Tourism Board

Sam Mwandha, ED, Uganda Wildlife Authority

Tom Okello, ED, National Forest Authority

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

1. Imong I., Ikemeh R., Kone I. and Ndeloh, D. (2016). The Birth of the African Primatological Society for the future of African Primates. *African Primates* 11(1): 49-50.
2. Proceedings of the inaugural APS conference (2017).

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

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Secretary General,

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Former Vice President for Conservation, International Primatological Society

Vice Chair, Africa Section of IUCN SSC Primate Specialist Group

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