

Holistic approach for conservation of chimpanzees in Kibale National Park, Uganda

Emily Otali^{1,2,3}, Jessica Hartel^{1,3,4}, Zarin Machanda^{1,5,6}, Richard Wrangham^{1,3,5,6}, Elizabeth Ross^{2,5}

1. Kibale Chimpanzee Project, Fort Portal, Kabarole, Uganda
2. Kibale Forest Schools Program, Fort Portal, Kabarole, Uganda
3. Kibale Snare Removal Program, Fort Portal, Kabarole, Uganda
4. Project Chimps Sanctuary, Morganton, Georgia, USA
5. Kasiisi Project, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA
6. Department of Human Evolutionary Biology, Harvard University, Cambridge, USA

Corresponding author: Emily Otali, Kanyawara, Kibale National Park, Uganda

eotali@yahoo.co.uk

Keywords: chimpanzees, snares, conservation, education

Uganda's Kibale National Park contains a particularly diverse primate population, including about 1400 chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*). It is threatened by poaching and illegal deforestation, both of which are promoted by the extreme poverty, exponential population growth, and low educational achievements of local people. This poster describes a multifaceted approach to conservation taken by the Kibale Chimpanzee Project. We highlight its within-forest organization (Kibale Snare Removal Project, KSRP) and its partner NGO working with 10,000 children in the surrounding communities (The Kasiisi Project). Within the Park, KSRP rangers interact closely with the Ugandan Wildlife Authority to monitor illegal activity. In 2013 KSRP rangers reported over 1400 incidents of illegal activity in the forest and removed over 700 snares. Outside the Park, the Kasiisi Project focuses on changing attitudes and behavior through combining conservation education, community development, and higher standards in 14 primary schools. The Kasiisi Project's philosophy is to meet people's needs (better education, less reliance on forest resources) while providing the information, skills and motivation to reduce environmental degradation. KSRP rangers link within-forest and community activities by participating in school conservation education. Since we began, students in Kasiisi-partnered schools have achieved exceptionally high National Exam scores and show increased positive feelings towards chimpanzees and the Park. Our results suggest that because the rising human population threatens all Ugandan forests, within-forest and community activity should be combined wherever possible in order to maximize the effectiveness of conservation efforts.