

Partners Gather to Discuss Collaborative Efforts for Conservation in Central Africa

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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and partners met last week in Washington, D.C., to discuss current and future conservation needs in Central Africa.

More than 40 conservation partners from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government agencies explored how the Service can best contribute to endangered species conservation in the region and continue to work effectively with conservation partners.

“By bringing together key partners working on conservation in Central Africa, we will gain important insights for further developing the Service’s activities in Africa and the Congo Basin,” said Acting Service Director Rowan Gould.

Through the Wildlife Without Borders (WWB) Regional and Species Programs, the Service works with natural resource managers, communities and institutions to implement wildlife conservation projects around the world. In Africa alone, the Service supports more than 150 active projects involving a range of government agencies, NGO partners and local organizations.

There are four species of great apes in the forests of Central Africa: bonobo, chimpanzee, eastern gorilla and western gorilla. All four of these great ape species are endangered or critically endangered. Their survival in the wild hinges on guaranteeing that widespread threats in the region such as habitat loss, environmental degradation, poaching, civil conflict and wildlife disease are diminished. It also serves to develop signature initiatives as cutting-edge tools to strengthen local capacity.

For more than 20 years, the Service has worked closely with government agencies, NGOs and civil society to strengthen wildlife management in Central Africa. Service support emphasizes direct action in the field while building the capacity of individuals and institutions to assist a new generation of African conservationists in gaining the skills and support they need. WWB awards grants for activities and applied research related to infectious diseases, strengthening law enforcement, conservation education, safeguarding habitat and capacity building.

Feedback from this meeting will provide critical insights that will guide strategic approaches to wildlife conservation in the Congo Basin.

For more information about the Service’s programs in Central Africa, visit: www.fws.gov/international/DIC/species/great_apes/great_apes.html

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our

scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.

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