



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

Secretariat provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Twelfth Meeting of the CMS Scientific Council

Glasgow, Scotland, United Kingdom, 31 March -3 April 2004

CMS/ScC12/Doc.21

Draft Proposal for the inclusion of the Western Lowland Gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla gorilla*) on the appendices of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

The draft listing proposal attached to this note was received by the CMS Secretariat from the Councillor for Congo, Dr. Dieudonné Ankara, in original French language. It is submitted to the 12th meeting of the CMS Scientific Council for its consideration.

*For reasons of economy, documents are printed in a limited number, and will not be distributed at the meeting.
Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copy to the meeting and not to request additional copies.*

PROPOSAL FOR INCLUSION OF THE WESTERN LOWLAND GORILLA (*GORILLA GORILLA GORILLA*) ON THE APPENDICES OF THE CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES OF WILD ANIMALS (CMS)

A. Proposal: Inclusion of the Western lowland gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla gorilla*) on CMS Appendices I and II

B. Proponent: Congo / Brazzaville

C. Supporting statement

1. Taxon

1.1. Classis	Mammals
1.2. Ordo	Primates
1.3. Familia	Pongidae
1.4. Genus/species	<i>Gorilla</i>
Three sub-species:	Western Lowland Gorilla (<i>Gorilla gorilla gorilla</i>) Mountain gorilla (<i>Gorilla gorilla beringei</i>) Eastern Lowland Gorilla (<i>Gorilla gorilla graueri</i>)
1.5. Common name	English: Western Lowland Gorilla; Mountain gorilla; Eastern Lowland gorilla Spanish: gorila de planicie occidental French: Gorille de plaines de l'ouest

2. Biological Data

Geographical distribution and global population status

The genus *Gorilla* is distributed within two mountain forests, geographically separated from each other by some 1,000 km. One is situated in the east of Central Africa, the other one in the west.

The west African forest hosts the western lowland gorillas, the largest subspecies with an estimated 50,000 to 100,000 animals, distributed over Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Congo and the Central African Republic.

One relict population of some 300 individuals subsisted in the southern region of Nigeria, between Cameroon and Nigeria. The east African forest hosts the two other subspecies. The remaining 12,000 East lowland gorillas are distributed in two isolated populations in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Their habitat varies from lowlands to the high forests of 3,300m altitude. Some 600 mountain gorillas live in the Bwindi forest in Uganda.

3. Threat data

The Western lowland gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla gorilla*) is internationally recognised as endangered species. Recognised threats are the reduction of habitat, the illegal hunting for its meat, traditional fetishism (skull, bones, hands), the catching of baby gorillas and the sale of live young. Additionally, they are threatened by diseases like the haemorrhagic fever of the Ebola virus and other pathologies. Since November 2000, in Congo and Gabon, the apparition of the Ebola virus has made several victims among the great apes. The gorilla species is the object of great mortality, which caused the decline of the subspecies of the Western lowland gorillas.

The international meeting on Ebola in Brazzaville in February 2003 recognised the decline of this subspecies in the central African region. At the meeting for the survival of great apes, the participants also recognised that the apes are the victims of several threats and that their population is in decline globally.

Several journals all over the world do speak about the decline of the great apes.

4. Conclusion

It is suggested that the Western lowland gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla gorilla*) should be included on the Appendices I and II of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of wild animals. Its numbers are constantly declining due to various threats, including illegal killing, repeated epidemics and the destruction of habitat.

5. Bibliography

Final report of the workshop for the development of a national plan for the survival of the great apes, 15 to 17 mars 2003, Brazzaville. 74 pages. (modalities of occupation and exploitation of the western lowlands around the clearances of Pokoné, National Park of Odzala-Kokoua, Congo).