

Deadly Delicacies



Photo: David Wilkie

Jane Goodall's Crusade to End the Global Bushmeat Trade

By Adam M. Roberts and Liz Clancy Lyons

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Dr. Jane Goodall, fighting the debilitating effects of malaria, addressed a Congressional briefing on Capitol Hill, May 18, 2000, warning of the hazardous impact of the growing slaughter of wild animals for food in central and west Africa — the sale and consumption of "bushmeat."

"It's catastrophic because it's not sustainable," Dr. Goodall declared. "It seems fairly obvious that within the next fifteen to twenty years, most of these creatures from these forests will be gone. The chimpanzees whom I've spent forty years studying, whom I know to be more like us than any other living creature, who share our many intellectual abilities that we used to think unique to ourselves, and who have emotions like

happiness, sadness, fear and despair — these chimpanzees will be gone from the central part of their range and there will be very few left anywhere else."

And so begins her twenty-first century crusade.

Jane Goodall single-handedly popularized the noble cause of chimpanzee protection when she began showing the world what it was like to live among chimpanzees in Gombe Stream National Park in Tanzania in 1960. Four decades later she still claims that her "favorite day is spent following a [chimpanzee] mother and her family until evening."

But her work among the chimpanzees has evolved over the years from scientific researcher to indefatigable activist for the well being of these magnificent creatures. She has

become an advocate and a celebrity who is especially admired by youth the world over. Dr. Goodall notes that she tries to answer all the letters she receives, "especially the children's." Throughout her career, one way that she has managed to educate and inspire humans of all ages is through her writings. She has composed volumes for children such as *The Jane Goodall Chimpanzee Family Book*, *With Love*, and *Dr. White*. For older readers she has written *My Life With the Chimpanzees*, *Visions of Caliban: On Chimpanzees and People*, *Brutal Kinship*, and most recently, *Africa In My Blood*.

She uses her words not only to enlighten interested readers, but also to persuade Members of the United States Congress. The same morning that Dr. Goodall spoke at the briefing

on the bushmeat trade, she also testified before a Congressional subcommittee on the need to pass legislation to establish sanctuaries to which chimpanzees can be retired peacefully when their days in research are over. Dr. Goodall passionately suggested that “in good conscience the least we could do is afford the chimpanzees we have already used, a peaceable life... This legislation [H.R. 3514/S.2725, The Chimpanzee Health Improvement, Management and Protection Act] is the only humane hope for chimpanzees that will never be used in research again.”

As she continues to work for the humane treatment of chimpanzees languishing in research laboratories, she has become increasingly involved in the global effort to protect animals from commercial slaughter for their

around \$200 U.S. dollars, which was roughly four times the value of the elephant’s ivory tusks. One of his investigations found that elephant meat was taken by bicycle from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) across the border to the Central African Republic (CAR).

Although the bushmeat trade is most prevalent in western and central Africa, including the countries of Gabon, Cameroon, DRC, and CAR, it also impacts wildlife in South and Central America and Asia. A May 1998 article in *New Scientist* observes, “It is in Asia that the opening up of forests is most advanced. In the Malaysian state of Sarawak, for instance, both primates and ungulates [hooved mammals] are being hunted at around ten times their sustainable levels.”

A common denominator in the

expansion of bushmeat butchery is the menacing intrusion of logging companies into these animals’ forest habitats. European and Asian logging companies infiltrate the forests and build roads to transport raw timber for export. This cuts enormous tracts into the animals’ environment, which leaves wildlife vulnerable where they once were protected in their forest havens. With logging roads opened and threatened wildlife exposed, people easily hunt the animals and transport their carcasses on the logging trucks for sale in urban markets or export to western countries. The *New Scientist* article contends that the logging companies “supply their workers with guns and cartridges and increase the local demand for bushmeat by not providing them with enough food.” A report by the

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flesh. In an April 8, 2000 editorial in *The Washington Post*, Dr. Goodall noted, “The bushmeat crisis now poses the gravest threat to the long-term survival of a number of species... I find this crisis shocking.”

The trade in bushmeat affects numerous wild species, many of them endangered or threatened with extinction, including: chimpanzees, gorillas, monkeys, duikers, leopards, buffalo, hogs, and elephants. The World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) notes in its new report, *Bushmeat, Africa’s Conservation Crisis*, that “The slaughter of elephants for bushmeat has surpassed the numbers killed for ivory in parts of Africa.” Karl Ammann, who helped first expose the bushmeat trade, discerns that in some instances, the meat from one elephant carcass would have fetched



Photo: John Sidle

Above: Logging company vehicle being used to transport hunters and their catch of duikers. **Previous page:** Sale of primates and duikers in northern Congo.

Wildlife Conservation Society found that hunting of wild game was “three to six times higher in communities adjacent to logging roads than in roadless areas.” What was for centuries a locally and proportionally consumed food source has become a completely unsustainable commercial trade.

Recognizing that the bushmeat trade has expanded rapidly into a global enterprise, the subject was considered for the first time at the April 2000 meeting in Nairobi, Kenya of members of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). CITES, a United Nations Convention to which there are 151 signatory nations, governs the inter-

The touch – an exquisite moment for Goodall – came when Jon Jon, a full-grown male chimpanzee, reached his hand out to her in greeting. He had been caged alone for years in a zoo. A social animal, he was desperate for contact with other living beings.



Photo: Michael Nichols

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national trade in species that are threatened with extinction and which are or may be affected by trade, and those species that may become threatened with extinction if the trade in their parts and products made from them are not carefully regulated and monitored.

At the recent meeting, a discussion document was introduced by the United Kingdom that outlined the growing problem of this dangerous wildlife trafficking. The paper recommended a “three-pronged attack” to stop the over-exploitation of wildlife for their flesh: manage the trade in a structured and equitable way, reduce the external factors driving the trade such as the unregulated, uncontrolled logging industry, and address the need for alternative sources of protein for humans living in these fragile areas.

In Dr. Goodall’s *Washington Post* editorial she advocated “a simple, straightforward step” of forming “an official working group that would be charged with the development of ways to control the illegal trade in bushmeat.” By the time the CITES meeting closed, the working group was established.

The working group will necessarily have to come up with creative ways to persuade the logging companies to cease facilitating the bushmeat business. There will also have to be a serious effort at developing alternative sources of protein and educating indigenous peoples about the need to resist participating in this unsustainable killing. In a story in *The New York Times Magazine*, an African hunter describes his participation in gorilla slaughter: “I shot the big male as it charged me. The baby was on the mother’s back, and when she

turned around to look at me the baby did, too... I shot her in the face, and the bullet went through it, too—bouf! One bullet, two gorillas! Why do you want to protect gorillas? They’re just animals.” Clearly, education is vital.

There also must be the active involvement of the governments where the hunters and logging companies are wreaking havoc. Some governments in question are unwilling to help, and others are complicit in the murderous activities. First world countries such as the United States and international lending institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund should reassess their financial commitments to countries that show an unwillingness to prevent over-exploitation of threatened and endangered wildlife.

For nations whose governments are willing to exert appropriate energy

in fighting this trade but lack the financial resources to do so, American aid is vital (the killing and sale of these animals are already illegal in many of the countries in question). The United States Congress has already begun a process to make this assistance possible. Legislation has been introduced in both the Senate and House of Representatives "to assist in the conservation of great apes by supporting and providing financial resources for the conservation programs of countries within the range of great apes and projects of persons with demonstrated expertise in the conservation of great apes." Although focused on great apes, The Great Ape Conservation Act correctly concludes that conservation of great apes will benefit other wildlife

environmental crises...the task ahead is daunting, but the ecological consequences of not acting are far more tragic if it means that great apes will cease to exist in the wild."

The Great Ape Conservation Act is modeled on successfully enacted bills that established conservation funds to help African and Asian elephants, rhinos, and tigers. Hopefully with the involvement of Jane Goodall and the Jane Goodall Institute, the United States Congress will promptly pass the Jeffords/Miller bills and the CITES bushmeat working group will establish successful recommendations and strategies to address the international trade in bushmeat.

In Dr. Goodall's words, "We are not asking for charity to help save

wildlife... we are asking for a collective investment in the future and in a legacy that we can be proud of." One thing is certain—for all Dr. Goodall's inspirational words and work throughout her lifetime, we are eternally proud of the positive future she has helped make possible for chimpanzees and countless other wild species.

About the Authors: Adam M. Roberts is Senior Research Associate at the Animal Welfare Institute in Washington, D.C. and attended the April 2000 CITES meeting in Kenya where the bushmeat working group was established. Liz Clancy Lyons is Director of Special Projects for the Doris Day Animal League, where she works on a number of issues, including the bushmeat trade and the plight of chimpanzees no longer needed for research.

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and endangered species by creating an infrastructure with which to combat the bushmeat trade.

The Great Ape Conservation Act was introduced in the Senate by James Jeffords (R-VT) and in the House by George Miller (D-CA). It would authorize up to five million dollars to go into a Great Ape Conservation Fund each year from 2000 through 2004 to support conservation programs benefiting chimpanzees, gorillas, bonobos and orangutans. The Senate bill, S. 1007, is pending in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The House bill, H.R. 4320, was passed June 26.

Congressman Miller, who attended the CITES meeting in Kenya, said "The loss of the great apes will cause significant and irrevocable damage to forests in Africa, which would lead to other significant

You can help protect threatened and endangered species from the bushmeat trade by visiting The Jane Goodall Institute's website and signing their bushmeat petition which reads, in part: "We, the undersigned, call for an end to the illegal hunting of threatened and endangered species, including chimpanzees and other primates, in the Congo Basin in Africa...We endorse solutions to end the bushmeat crisis that will not only protect animals, but also respond to the people in greatest need in the region."

Go to <http://www.janegoodall.org/chimps/bushmeat.htm> or contact:

Bushmeat Petition Drive
The Jane Goodall Institute
P.O. Box 14890
Silver Spring, MD 20911-4890

Also, write your senators and urge them to co-sponsor the Great Ape Conservation Act (S. 1007).

Senators may be addressed:

The Honorable _____
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

For further information on the bushmeat crisis, contact Liz Clancy Lyons at liz@ddal.org or 202-546-1761 x 30.