



manifesto for Apes and nature

Tropical forests are disappearing at an accelerating pace and with them go the last populations of great apes. Knowledgeable specialists working with great apes and/or nature conservation are unanimous in their thinking: if we do nothing, gorillas, chimpanzees and bonobos will have disappeared by the middle of the 21st century. For orang-utans, the situation is even more dramatic: in twenty years time, they may exist only in zoos.

Today, urgent action is needed in order to stop this Ecocide! To save the great apes we must save the tropical forests, ecosystems which are essential to our planet. The wide-spread disappearance of these forests is the result of excessive and unmonitored exploitation, which endangers not only the survival of the ecosystem but also the associated biodiversity as well as the indigenous populations depending on it, creating enormous environmental problems: deforestation is one of the major causes of greenhouse gas emissions and therefore of global warming. The disappearance of the tropical forests endangers the very survival of *Homo sapiens sapiens*: modern humanity. It is time to act and to react, before it is too late!

We, citizens of the Earth, ask our governments and international authorities to accept as their supreme duty to save and to protect non-human primates and to do the utmost in order to:

1. Enforce programs of sustainable management which will in return be respectful of the tropical forest environment, the habitats of the great apes (and other non-human primates as well as other valuable wildlife)
2. Ban the import of tropical wood which is not recognized as sustainable commerce and therefore not respectful towards the environment. All exportable woods must meet the criteria established by FSC certification
3. Contribute to the enforcement of regulations for mineral resource exploitation (to include petroleum, diamonds, coltan, iron, etc.) that is respectful of the environment and of local populations
4. Stop the poaching of great apes, the associated trading of "bush meat" and the sale of young individuals as "companion animals"
5. Implement strict controls on companies working in tropical regions, especially those whose headquarters are in industrialized countries, in order to verify whether or not they adhere to points 1, 2, 3 and 4 of this manifesto
6. Invest crucial financial support to enforce clauses 1 through 5 and in particular, to use said support to develop sustainable management projects with local people.

Neuchâtel (Switzerland), 4th April 2008