

other crops. These programs give direct assistance to farmers and allow market prices to be set by supply and demand. Farmers receive help but not at the expense of workers and consumers.

The sugar program is different. The sugar program helps producers by hurting other people. That is not right and we ought to be able to find another way to help sugar farmers.

The sugar program keeps our market prices higher than world prices. Domestic sugar prices are about 21 cents a pound compared to world prices of about 9 cents a pound. That is now beginning to cost us jobs.

In my community, Brach's Candy Company has announced that it is closing its plant and moving to Argentina so that it can get sugar more cheaply. It is time for us to retain and keep businesses in our country, and one way to do it is to make sure that sugar prices are fair and equal.

□ 1415

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WHITFIELD) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 8, 2001.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on June 8, 2001 at 12:32 p.m. and said to contain a message from the President whereby he submits pursuant to provisions of the Trade Act of 1974 a Proclamation and a Trade Agreement with Vietnam.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAHL,
Clerk of the House.

AGREEMENT BETWEEN UNITED STATES AND VIETNAM ON TRADE RELATIONS—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 107-85)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Ways and Means and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 407 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2434) (the "Trade Act"), I am transmitting a copy of a proclamation that extends nondiscriminatory tariff treatment to the products of Vietnam. As an annex to the proclamation, I also enclose the text of the "Agreement Between the United States of America

and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on Trade Relations," which was signed on July 13, 2000, including related annexes and exchanges of letters.

Implementation of this Agreement will strengthen political relations between the United States and Vietnam and produce economic benefits for both countries. It will also help to reinforce political and economic reform in Vietnam.

I believe that the Agreement is consistent with both the letter and spirit of the Trade Act. The Agreement provides for mutual extension of non-discriminatory tariff treatment, while seeking to ensure overall reciprocity of economic benefits. The Agreement includes safeguard arrangements designed to ensure that imports from Vietnam will not disrupt the U.S. market.

The Agreement also facilitates and expands the rights that U.S. businesses will have in conducting commercial transactions both within Vietnam and with Vietnamese nationals and business entities, and includes provisions dealing with settlement of commercial disputes, investment, financial transactions, and the establishment of government commercial offices. Vietnam also agrees to adopt standards for intellectual property protection that match the standards set forth in the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights.

On June 1, 2001, I waived application of subsections 402 (a) and (b) of the Trade Act with respect to Vietnam. I urge that Congress act as soon as possible to approve, by a joint resolution referred to in section 151 (b) (3) of the Trade Act, the extension of non-discriminatory treatment to the products of Vietnam as provided for in the Agreement.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, June 8, 2001.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

AFRICAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2001

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 643) to reauthorize the African Elephant Conservation Act, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 643

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "African Elephant Conservation Reauthorization Act of 2001".

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF AFRICAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION ACT.

Section 2306 of the African Elephant Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4245) is amended by striking "1997" and all that follows through "2002" and inserting "2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007".

SEC. 3. ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.

Section 2306 of the African Elephant Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4245) is further amended—

(1) by striking "There are authorized" and inserting "(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(b) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Of amounts available each fiscal year to carry out this Act, the Secretary may expend not more than 3 percent or \$80,000, whichever is greater, to pay the administrative expenses necessary to carry out this Act.".

SEC. 4. COOPERATION.

Part I of the African Elephant Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4211 et seq.) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

SEC. 2104. ADVISORY GROUP.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—To assist in carrying out this Act, the Secretary may convene an advisory group consisting of individuals representing public and private organizations actively involved in the conservation of African elephants.

"(b) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—

"(1) MEETINGS.—The Advisory Group shall—

"(A) ensure that each meeting of the advisory group is open to the public; and

"(B) provide, at each meeting, an opportunity for interested persons to present oral or written statements concerning items on the agenda.

"(2) NOTICE.—The Secretary shall provide to the public timely notice of each meeting of the advisory group.

"(3) MINUTES.—Minutes of each meeting of the advisory group shall be kept by the Secretary and shall be made available to the public.

"(c) EXEMPTION FROM FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the advisory group.".

SEC. 5. PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY.

Section 2101 of the African Elephant Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4211) is amended by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (f), and by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

"(e) PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY.—To the maximum extent practical, in determining whether to approve project proposals under this section, the Secretary shall give consideration to projects that will enhance sustainable conservation programs to ensure effective long-term conservation of African elephants.".

SEC. 6. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) CONFORMING AND CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The African Elephant Conservation Act is amended as follows:

(1) Section 2101(a) (16 U.S.C. 4211(a)) is amended by striking "African Elephant Conservation".

(2) Section 2102 (16 U.S.C. 4212) is amended by striking the section heading and all that follows through "(d) ACCEPTANCE AND USE OF DONATIONS—" and inserting the following:

SEC. 2102. ACCEPTANCE AND USE OF DONATIONS.

(3) Section 2304 (16 U.S.C. 4243) is repealed.

(4) Section 2305(4) (16 U.S.C. 4244(4)) is amended by striking "the African Elephant Conservation Fund established by section 2102" and inserting "the account established by division A, section 101(e), title I of Public Law 105-277 under the heading 'MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION FUND'".

(b) TECHNICAL CORRECTION.—Title I of section 101(e) of division A of Public Law 105-277 (112 Stat. 2681-237) is amended under the heading “MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION FUND”, by striking “Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act, subchapter I” and inserting “Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994, part I”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST) and the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST).

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the bill H.R. 643, as amended in committee, is a bipartisan, non-controversial bill that will reauthorize one of the most successful wildlife conservation laws ever enacted by the Congress.

Since 1988, the African Elephant Conservation Act has stopped the slaughter of this flagship species, and it has kindled hope that African elephants can be saved from extinction in the wild.

With only a limited appropriation of \$11 million, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has generated an additional \$51.7 million in private funds. These resources have funded 115 conservation projects in 22 range states throughout Africa. These projects are making a real difference in the world, according to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The service says this is not a hand-out policy, it is a helping-hands policy, which does significant progress toward encouraging the local people to develop an economy that will be based on tourism to see these magnificent creatures.

At the subcommittee hearings on this legislation, every witness testified in strong support of extending this essential conservation program. I was particularly impressed by the comments of Jim Rapp of Salisbury, Maryland, who is the manager of the Salisbury Zoo. In his statement on behalf of the American Zoo and Aquarium Association, Jim noted that without ongoing funding, we are likely to face something that he called an “empty forest syndrome.” I found that phrase to be a deep, hollow loneliness, wrapped in despair. But this legislation goes a long way in preventing that type of lonely-forest syndrome.

In summary, H.R. 643 will extend the act at existing authorization levels for 5 years, will allow the Secretary of the Interior to establish an advisory panel to assist in this program, will cap administrative expenses at 3 percent, or \$80,000 per year, and will emphasize the issuance of grants for long-term sustainable elephant conservation.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to strongly condemn what is occurring within the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In their quest to obtain a highly priced mineral, colombo tantalite, which is used in cell phones and computers, rebel miners are killing thousands of highly endangered eastern

lowland gorillas and elephants. In one park alone, 7,000 elephants out of a population of 12,000 have been slaughtered for the illegal bushmeat trade. This tragic killing of these keystone species must be stopped.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to end with this quote from an author, Thomas Berry: “Extinction is a difficult concept to grasp. It is an eternal concept. It is an absolute and final act, for which there is no remedy.”

Because of that statement and the efforts of many thousands of people across this country and the world, on behalf of the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) and the staff, I would urge an aye vote on this legislation, to prevent the silent forest syndrome from happening.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD an article entitled, “Coltan Boom, Gorilla Bust.”

COLTAN BOOM, GORILLA BUST

The Impact of Coltan Mining on Gorillas and other Wildlife in Eastern DR Congo—A Report for the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund Europe and the Born Free Foundation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The lucrative trade in coltan, a formerly obscure mineral, has recently become headline news. Organizations ranging from the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund Europe to the United Nations Security Council are talking about the need for a boycott of something most people have never heard of. This report explores the link between rising sales of mobile ‘phones and PlayStations and falling numbers of gorillas in an African war zone.

It must be made clear from the outset, however, that there are two controversies relating to coltan from Central Africa. First, there is the broad question of whether or not it is legal to trade with rebel-held territories. This is the subject of a report by a ‘panel of experts’, commissioned by UN Security Council to examine the exploitation of natural resources in war-torn DRC (extracts in Annex A). It is not within the remit of this study to discuss this wider issue. Instead, this report focuses on the second controversy—the exploitation of natural resources, especially coltan, in legally protected areas such as Kahuzi-Biega National Park (KBNP). This park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and was, before this crisis, home to 8,000 or so Grauer’s gorillas (also known as Eastern Lowland Gorillas, Gorilla beringei graueri) along with thousands of other species (Steinhauer-Burkart et al, 1995). The KBNP population of Grauer’s gorilla was contiguous with those in the adjacent Kasese forests, and together they represented 86 per cent of the world total for this sub-species (found only in DRC, Hall et al, 1998, see map below).

This report is based on a nine-day visit to Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Kenya, during which discussions were held with conservationists, coltan traders, NGOs and government ministers and officials.

It is clear from the information gathered that only immediate action at the highest level will halt the destruction of this beautiful area, and offer a chance of the recovery of its unique biodiversity. It remains to be seen how many—or how few—of Kahuzi-Biega’s 3,600 elephants and 8,000 gorillas have survived the massacre in the lowland area, but it is hoped that relict populations could have retreated to, or survived in, the most inaccessible parts, furthest from the mining areas. The only accurate data is from the

highland area, which has lost all of its 350 elephants and half of its 258 gorillas (ICCN census funded last year by WCS and DFGFI).

From the new indirect evidence, it appears that the KBNP and Kasese population of Grauer’s Gorilla may have been reduced to under 1,000. The other nine populations listed by Hall et al (1998) numbered in the tens or hundreds a decade ago and are also likely to have declined or been exterminated. The population Maiko National Park is thought to have escaped the heavy poaching, but if our worst fears prove founded, the sub-species may have been reduced from about 17,000 to only 2,000–3,000, an 80–90 per cent crash in only three years.

Moreover, the indications are that the biodiversity of the Kahuzi-Biega region has been seriously, if not irreparably, damaged. If action is taken immediately, however, recovery in the long term may be possible even now. But if further procrastination and bureaucratic delays prevent effective and co-ordinated action, the word from the conservationists on the ground is that it will be too late.

If this happens despite their well-publicised warnings, the world will have stood by and watched the systematic destruction of one more natural wonder. And the magnificent Grauer’s gorilla will become the first great ape to be driven to extinction—a victim of war, human greed and high technology.

On reading the first draft of this report, Chief Warden Kasereka Bishikwabo made this comment, “I hope you shall plead for an improved organization of the exploitation of natural resources in the DRC. As long as the exploitation of natural resources is disorganized, protected areas will bear the burden. Any excuse to pursue non-organized mineral exploitation in any of the countries of the African Great Lakes countries will lead to destruction of protected areas in the whole region.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

The simple message from all the conservationists on the ground is that immediate action is required to save KBNP. If the political will to stop the mining, and if resources for ICCN are not forthcoming now, then the chances of Grauer’s gorillas surviving and the park recovering are virtually nil. The medium- and long-term plans are, therefore, dependent on the successful implementation of the short-term acts.

Note.—These recommendations are complementary to those by A. Kanyunyi Basabose and Juichi Yamagawa, included in a new report by BRD, available at www.bergorilla.de/kahuzie.pdf.

URGENT—Short-term priorities

(i) Immediate, high-level international political pressure on the presidents of RCD-Goma, Rwanda and Uganda to order action to halt the destruction in DRC’s national parks and reserves, especially KBNP.

(ii) Immediate release of the funds promised by UNESCO more than two years ago.

(iii) Increase NGO support to ICCN.

(iv) Co-ordinate with humanitarian agencies if people leaving KBNP are in need of assistance.

(v) Identify the chemical signature of coltan from KBNP and ensure trade in it ceases.

Medium-term actions

(i) Establishment of a Commission with representation by all stakeholders (UNESCO, ICCN, local Government, NGOs and community leaders) to settle once and for all the disputed boundaries of KBNP.

(ii) Locate funds to enable ICCN to increase manpower and extend the excellent

monitoring and protection currently afforded to the mountainous sector to the lowland sector of KBNP. A census of large mammals is a high priority to assess the potential for recovery of the park's ecosystems.

(iii) Implement DFGFE proposal to establish an endowment to finance a micro-credit scheme similar to the successful one pioneered by DFGFE in Goma, providing the means for local people to set up small businesses and thereby reducing their dependence on illegally acquired resources in KBNP.

(iv) Identify the best location for a sanctuary to care for orphaned primates, thereby enabling ICCN to confiscate them (modelled on the Uganda Wildlife Authority's Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary).

(v) Assist local NGOs such as the PolePole Foundation, to source funds for conservation education, reforestation and improved farming practices around the park boundary.

Long-term objectives

When peace returns to the region, the successful gorilla tourism of the 1970s and 1980s should resume, financing the conservation work and bringing benefits to the surrounding communities. Revenue sharing schemes such as those already operating in South-west Uganda should be introduced and Kahuzi-Biega National Park will have been saved.

BACKGROUND

Coltan and its uses

Coltan is an abbreviation of columbo-tantalite, an ore containing a mixture of two very similar heavy metals, namely Niobium (Atomic No. 41, Atomic Weight 92.91, melting point 2,500 degrees C) and Tantalum (Atomic No. 73, Atomic Weight 180.95, melting point 2,850 degrees C).

Columbite is the name for ore containing more of the element Niobium (formerly known as Columbium) than of Tantalum.

Tantalite is the name for ore containing more of the element Tantalum, a metal with many useful properties, used in things from electronic components to surgical implants. In nature it is found only as Tantalum Oxide Ta 205. Columbo-tantalite (and hence the term coltan) is peculiar to Central Africa.

According to the Tantalum-Niobium International study Centre in Brussels, only 15 per cent of the world's tantalum supply comes from Africa, but demand is high due largely to its use in electronic components, mainly tantalum capacitors (devices which store electrical charge and release it quickly to buffer fluctuations in power). Of the 525 tons of tantalum used in the USA in 1998, 60 per cent was used for this purpose, with a predicted growth rate of 14 per cent per annum (from Uganda Gold Mining Ltd web site).

Other uses include various alloys, which benefit from tantalum's high melting point and corrosion resistance, and are used in aerospace components, jet engines and gas turbine parts.

Price of coltan

Fluctuations in the world market have a significant effect on the level of activity in Africa. Poor deposits may become economical to work if the price is high enough, but will then be abandoned if the price falls again. At its highest last year, the price reached \$800 per kilo, but it is now around \$100 per kilo (still significantly higher than the 1998 price of around \$40 per kilo). This price reflects what the final dealers receive, not what is paid to the peasant miners, which is currently around \$12 per kilo.

Prices paid for the ore by dealers are also related to the percentage of tantalum present, which is determined by spectrographic analysis in one of the trading centres (e.g. Bukavu, Goma or Kigali).

COLTAN MINING AND TRADE IN RWANDA

Minerals found in Rwanda include cassiterite (a tin ore), gold and wolfram (tungsten) as well as coltan. Before the civil war, minerals—primarily cassiterite—were Rwanda's only significant export other than coffee and tea. As with agriculture, most mining is undertaken by peasant farmers, who dig relatively small quantities by hand. They take bags of ore to local centres to be weighed and bought. Dealers then drive around the centres buying the accumulated larger volumes. Preliminary purification of the ore takes place at a factory at Gatumba, on the border between the Prefectures of Gisenyi and Gitarama. There it is ground up and passed over magnets to remove any iron before export to factories elsewhere for separating the different metals.

Rwandan law regards ownership of land to stop at the level of the topsoil. In other words, any mineral wealth belongs to the state, not the individual (although he or she can profit from mining it). There is now a legally constituted formula for calculating compensation should crops, buildings or trees be damaged by mining. Deposits are found in 34 Communes of nine Prefectures across the country, from Cyangugu in the south-west to Umutara and Kibungo in the east (see map and list in Annex G), with most mines being in the Prefectures of Gitarama and Kigali-rural (see map on page 7a, below).

Pits and mines are very dangerous, especially after heavy rain, and accidents are common. So many people have been killed recently by rock-falls and landslides that the Ministry of Mines has ordered a halt to mining until the safety issue has been addressed. On the ground, however, mining continues because there is no enforcement of the temporary ban, and people with few other resources are unlikely to stop doing something that brings in an income.

There is little, if any, coltan mining in forested parts of Rwanda. In Nyungwe Forest, soon to be declared Rwanda's third National Park, there is a history of illegal gold mining, which also destroys habitat and pollutes streams, but no coltan. Fortunately for the mountain gorillas, there are no valuable mineral deposits in the Volcanoes National Park (or the contiguous gorilla habitat in DR Congo and Uganda).

Much of my information on the Rwandan mining industry came through meetings with Viateur Nsengimana, Administrator for EXCOM (Exploitation and Commercialisation of Minerals) and President of TWISUNGANE, a co-operative of peasant miners working three coltan mines around Kamonyi, in the Province of Gitarama. This kind co-operation culminated in him driving me to a number of mining sites on Sunday 6th May (see map below). As we drove past Mt Kigali, he pointed out that it has cassiterite deposits but they are not currently being mined. At Mugina he spoke of heavy coltan deposits at the top of a hill, leading the mining co-operative to install a pump to get water up to the mine. Near Taba there are many coltan deposits around the big Protestant church and hospital at Remera. At Shyorongi the mines produce cassiterite, coltan and wolfram. Rutongo has the only cassiterite refining factory in the country. At Kayenzi, the coltan ore has up to 61 percent tantalum (usually 40-60%).

Historically, the Belgian mining companies Minetin and Somuki were replaced after independence by SOMIRWA—the sole mineral trading company until the war. It has now been replaced by Redemi (part state owned, part private) and COPIMAR (made up of many small miners' co-operatives). After

the war, mining became a free-for-all because crops had been left to rot and hungry people mined wherever they could find minerals they could sell for food. Things are improving now, but it is still not properly regulated or controlled, which is why accidents are so common. I asked about the ecological damage which mining leaves behind, and was told that the new mining law requires licensed miners to restore topsoil after the valuable minerals have been extracted, but this has not yet happened because it has just been introduced.

Unfortunately, torrential rain prevented close inspection of all but one mine near Mwaka, but the deluge certainly illustrated the danger from rock-falls and land-slips whilst digging in such soft rock. The mine consisted simply of the partially exposed flanks of several small hills. I learned that people have been mining here for more than 40 years, and it took only a few moments conversation for people to run off and fetch a couple of specimens of coltan which I purchased. These were pebble-sized lumps—different from the Kahuzi-Biega grit I saw—one weighed about 40gms and the other about 240gms. Around Mwaka, mines are worked by a small co-operative called CEMAC, a member of COPIMAR.

After the visit, I discussed the call for a boycott of coltan from Central Africa with Mr. Nsengimana and Francois Nkinzikiwi, President of a local NGO called The Dian Fossey Challenge. Whilst understanding the need to halt the destruction of the two World Heritage Sites in DR Congo, they were concerned that any regional boycott would hit thousands of poor Rwandan families very hard. After a decade of civil war, genocide and social disruption, it would be singularly cruel to impose further hardship on people who were simply carrying out a legal occupation that has been going on for decades. Mr. Nkinzikiwi put it succinctly, saying, "To ban the coltan trade in Gitarama would be like banning potatoes in Ruhengeri!"

COLTAN MINING AND TRADE IN KIVU PROVINCE, DRC

The terrain to the west of Lake Kivu might be summarised as rolling hills, many of them deforested long ago for cultivation and cattle ranches with only a few patches of forest here and there. There are very few cattle today though, because tens of thousands were appropriated and butchered to feed the refugee camps, allegedly with the help of the relief agencies, during the Rwandan refugee crisis in the mid-90s. One formerly wealthy landowner, Kasuku wa Ngeyo is pursuing his as yet unresolved grievance over this matter. Gorillas and chimpanzees lived in some of the forest patches on his land near Masisi and Walikale in the 1980s, but he doubts very much if any survive now.

Deposits of coltan here are concentrated in South Kivu Province, but not all are in PNKB. Many are in undesignated forest or on agricultural land, and mining is simply an optional change in land-use for the landowner. Indeed, finding that you have coltan beneath your soil might be seen as the Kivu equivalent of striking oil—with the advantage that little equipment beyond a shovel is required to start mining. The law in Congo requires, however, that even on our own land, you need to pay for a license from the relevant government authority to extract minerals. During the two recent civil wars, however, such laws have been widely ignored and mining rights have been claimed by whichever militia holds sway over a particular area at the time.

As in Rwanda, the history of mining in this area goes back to the colonial period when a Belgian company MGL established permanent settlements to mine mainly gold and

tin. After independence the mining was carried out by the SOMINKI, and included one centre at Kabunga which was a base for prospecting in the area now included in the Kahuzi-Biega National Park.

A long-standing controversy

The extension to the park was designated in 1977, but without a detailed study of the consequences. The boundary as drawn included mines and permanent stone-built houses belonging to SOMINKI. The park authorities at the time asked for a Commission to study the boundary issue and resolve disputes with local community leaders, but this never happened. M. Anicent Mburanumwe Chiri, the Regional Head of ICCN in Eastern DRC, proposes that, as soon as the crisis is over, this long overdue commission should be established. The commission should be composed of representatives from UNESCO, ICCN, NGOs (local and international), local government and community leaders. Its task would be to define once and for all the limits of this World Heritage Site and—if agreement is reached by all parties—to establish zones within the boundary where controlled exploitation is permitted. "Modern conservation opinion would never condone the creation of a vast national park that no-one knows the exact boundaries of, and which does not take into account the needs or opinions of local communities?"

Pygmy communities in the PNKB

During the Belgian colonial period, the authorities' attitude to forest-dwelling pygmies living a traditional way of life was to regard them as a part of the forest eco-system that the parks were created to protect. This was at once an enlightened and racist attitude—enlightened because seeing humans as a part of nature than separate from it is a recent trend, but deeply racist because it carried with it the condescending implication that pygmy people were little more than animals. The future of their culture looks bleak in this region, but the fortunate few who find an education can do well; I was told that some had joined the army and that one had reached the rank of captain.

Pygmy people have not had much involvement with mining of any minerals because their traditional way of life centered around hunting animals. These soon disappear from around permanent settlements such as mines, through hunting or disturbance by miners, and so there is little incentive for hunter gatherer communities to stay.

Mining techniques

The coltan is found in fairly soft rock, streambeds and alluvial deposits. Miners (in French "creuseurs" or "boulonneurs" from boulot-job, or "njengeneur") dig with shovels, sometimes with picks and crowbars to loosen the substrate. The loose mix is sieved through mesh of approx. 5mm squares. The grit is then washed in a bowl, box or piece of curved bark until only the heavy coltan particles remain. The need for water to separate out the coltan means, of course, that mining tends to be concentrated along streams and rivers. This exacerbates the erosion of soils and the risk of landslides during heavy rain, and tends to silt up pools downstream.

The coltan grit is bagged in small nylon bags sewn from larger food sacks. There are two rough measures—a desert spoon and a "le gosse" (a small tin, originally a condensed milk brand, which has come to mean the tin itself; it contains 78gms of sweetened milk concentrate when sold, but holds about 200gms of coltan grit). When the bags are full they may weigh from 15kg to 50kg according to the strength of the carrier, and a spring balance is usually present at the site to weight them. The bags are sewn shut and transported on the back in a "makako"—a

sort of basket-rucksack made from forest lianas (another significant impact on the eco-system when one considers the thousands of people involved).

The northern park boundary is along the River Luka, and pirogues (dug-out canoes) are used to cross to Isangi, which sits on a hill between the confluence of the Luka and the River Ilawimbi. The journey to Itebero is by foot and canoe, and from there it is transported by road to Walikale airstrip.

Summary of environmental damage from coltan mining in DRC forests

Forest clearance and use of timber and poles to build camps to accommodate workers;

Forest clearance to expose substrate for mining;

Pollution of streams by silt from washing process;

Erosion of unprotected earth during rains leading to land-slips;

Cutting of firewood for warmth and cooking in camps;

Hunting of animals for bushmeat to feed miners and camp followers;

Animals maimed or dying after escaping from snares;

De-barking trees to make panning trays for washing coltan;

Cutting of lianas to make carrying baskets for coltan;

Disturbance of animals due to large number of people resident in and moving through forest;

Silting up of streams likely to kill invertebrates and reduce photosynthesis in aquatic plants;

Reduced productivity of fish stocks in lakes and rivers affected by silt pollution;

Ecological changes due to loss of keystone species such as elephants and apes;

Long-term changes in watershed due to rapid run-off in deforested areas.

SECURITY SITUATION IN KAHUZI-BIEGA NATIONAL PARK

For the past two years, only part of the highland area of the park has been accessible to wardens and rangers. The area monitored has varied from five to 10 per cent of the total 6,000 square kilometres. The other 90–95 per cent has been under the control of various armed factions, including branches of the Mai-Mai and the Interahamwe (as detailed in the ICCN/GTZ newsletter 'Le Gorille', last year's Digit News by DFGFE, Wildlife Times by BFF and Gorilla Journal by BRD).

In the three weeks prior to my visit, there were two incidents in which ICCN gorilla monitoring teams encountered Interahamwe within a few kilometres of the park HQ at Tshivanga. They reported well equipped, uniformed patrols of ten men, each with an AK47 and two magazines. They had radios, and even mobile phones—not the image of ragged gangs living in the bush. But if they control some of the coltan trade, they would certainly have the money to purchase such things. The reports beg the question of where the radios are being charged. On each occasion, a tracker was kidnapped by the patrol, was held for three days and escaped. This led the warden to reduce the area of regular patrolling to the bare minimum to monitor the habituated gorillas, and prevents any visitors from seeing the gorillas (in the monthly meeting I learned that least month, five brave tourists went gorilla tracking!).

Little has been known of what was going on in the vast lowland sector, except that bushmeat, ivory, timber and other products were reported to be being exploited at an alarming rate. It was not until March this year, however, that an accurate picture emerged, and the extent of the shocking damage was revealed.

THE "INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT'S" REPORT AND INTERVIEW

By far the most impressive source of information was the report by an independent Congolese consultant. In the words of M. Bedy Makhuba Mbele, Chef du Département de l'Agriculture et du Développement Rural in the RCD-Goma government on hearing of his work, "He is a hero!" He deserves some kind of official recognition." Unfortunately, such recognition would likely lead to his untimely demise, so he is referred to only as 'IC' in this report, and his name and signature have been masked in the copy of his report attached as Annex B.

Most digging sites are around old SOMINKI camps (in Belgian times, called MGL Mines des Grands Lacs) where cassiterite was mined. At that time, MGL was also mining gold in Kamituga, south of the park, which meant that miners were active in the whole region. When MGL closed down after independence, local people continued to dig for gold, and noticed other minerals but the low price of coltan did not justify mining it. When the price of tantalum rose, it became a desirable commodity and led to the current boom, but it is important to see this in the context of the history of mineral exploitation in this area.

The link between Mai-Mai presence, coltan and military deployment: My notes on this subject are as follows: RPA/RCD presence between Tshivanga and Hombo. 4km North of Hombo, the Mai-Mai have their own road-block at Tchambusha. Presence of road-blocks does not deter vendors taking goods to mines, but taxes have to be paid to Mai-Mai (organised, not just personal bribes).

In far west of PNKB is a sub-division of Mai-Mai called Manyowa-Manyowa. The term Mai-Mai, I was told, is from Maji-Maji (water) which was a password used by them. There are about 12 sub-groups within the general term Mai-Mai, which have been likened by US military analysts to 'warlords'.

Porters are paid a tin of coltan (then worth \$30) to carry 20 kilos for two days (plus food) to Itebero.

The weekly fee to work in the forest is 2 spoons of coltan (then about \$7.50)—one to the military and one to the 'chef de colline' (chef of hill). This is paid in coltan so its value changes. Multiply this by the 10,000–15,000 or more workers estimated to be in PNKB and the monthly income to those controlling the mining area was of the order of \$600,000 to more than \$1 million for the month of March.

Transportation between Kavumu and mining sites: More than 13 flights per day from Kavumu to the four airstrips in Shabunda region: Salambila, Kampene, Namoyo and Lulingu, plus Walikale. Laden planes then flew east, presumably to Kigali.

Sample for analysis: I asked IC if he could buy a sample of coltan from KBNP. The following morning he met me with about 850gms of heavy, dark-grey grit and small stones (particle size from sand to 8mm) which he had been told was from Kakelo, a site near Camp Vuma (see map in IC's report). The sample cost \$25, and on return to Kigali I had it analysed with the following results:

% Ta205=6.359
% Nb205=7.457
% Sn02=51.347
% Ti02=17.969
% W=–0.0096
Ta=Tantalite
Nb=Niobium
Sn=Tin
Ti=Titan
W=Wolfram

Therefore your sample had 6% tantalite and 51% tin.

THE "NEGOTIATOR"

One of the most useful sources of information was a dealer in Bukavu who described himself as a "negociateur". Whilst under the impression that I was interested in buying a considerable quantity of coltan while the price is low, he provided much information, from current price lists and locations and bad quality coltan mines to anecdotes about the trade. For example

He explained that there are two systems of trading. One can either buy a license for \$40,000 per year and pay an export tax of \$4 per kilo of coltan as an official "comptoir". Or one can export without these expensive details as, for example, he had just done with six tonnes of coltan he has just taken to Kigali. He mentioned buying from miners at \$12 per kilo and showed me a recent price list from a buyer in Kigali, with prices paid in US dollars per pound weight, varying according to the percentage of Tantalum thus:

10% Tantalum=\$20 per lb (\$44 per kilo)
16% "=\$50 per lb (\$110 per kilo)
18% "=\$60 per lb (\$132 per kilo)
20% "=\$75 per lb (\$165 per kilo)

Best quality coltan, with 40 or 45% tantalum is found around Numbi (30km from the main road, halfway between Goma and Bukavu on the west shore of Lake Kivu), but this, he said, is "private". It is alleged to be under the control of RPA officers, and is the site at which Rwandan prisoners were reported to have been used as forced labour (see UN Report). He warned against buying coltan from Nkumwa, which was very low quality. The cost of analysis by spectrometer was \$5-\$10, and there are machines in Bukavu as well as Kigali. To explain the process of analysis, he produced two small samples, which had been ground to a fine powder, and showed me the resulting prints out showing about 16 per cent tantalum.

After taking so much of his time, I thanked him for his advice and left without buying any coltan.

THE POSITION OF ICCN

The Institut Congolais pour le Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) has proved extraordinarily capable of adapting to the problems imposed by two civil wars. Despite being responsible for national parks in areas controlled by three political authorities—two rebel groups and the government in Kinshasa—an agreement has been reached which allows it to function (see Annex D). This is despite it having been starved of resources for many years.

When the pillage of Kahuzi-Biega was first brought to the attention of the international community during the 1994 Rwandan refugee exodus, little was done because the humanitarian crisis made conservation seem a low priority in comparison. When things got worse during the first Congo civil war in 1996, little was done to help the hard pressed warden and rangers. If it were not for the continued, if scaled down, GTZ project, and the courage of the GTZ and ICCN staff in keeping a sense of normality through the most difficult and dangerous times, it is unlikely that that the park would have remained functioning. Great strides were made in the optimistic, but brief, period between the wars. When the second civil war destroyed much of the new infrastructure, it destroyed much of the morale of the park staff too. But there were much cheered by the announcement that UNESCO had come up with an ambitious scheme, largely funded by the UN Foundation, to save the five World Heritage Sites in DRC. Roughly speaking, it provided just over \$4 million over four years to the five sites—i.e., about \$200,000 per site per year. Much of this was to be spent on salaries, giving the rangers

something like \$20 per month. Not a fortune, but to those who have not been paid for years, it was significant news. Headline news, in fact, as articles in local and international press attest. Hopes were raised. Things were looking up. Unfortunately, up to this point, only one advance payment of \$20,000 per site has been made (and spent) and as the months pass, frustrations mount.

In late 1999, prompted by Dr Jo Thompson, the Ape Alliance also began working to raise funds to help ICCN, setting up and an ad hoc DRC Parks Emergency Relief Mission with the Belgian NGO Nouvelles Approaches. The idea took off quickly, and starting with a \$25,000 grant from IFAW, within days various groups had pledged amounts to a total of \$70,000. More has since been raised, but as soon as it comes in, it is spent on equipment ranging from boots to bicycles. More is still being raised, and because Kahuzi-Biega is relatively easy to reach, it has had most of its emergency needs met. For example, with money raised by the Rachel Hunter Gorilla Appeal, the Born Free Foundation last year provided a Landover 101, a one-tonne 4x4 (see above) and made a commitment to fund its fuel and parts, as well as new uniforms and guard housing for the next three years. The German NGO Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe sent medical supplies and with IPPL, covered the cost of publishing "Le Gorille"—an influential local newsletter. This raised morale, but apart from small payments from the GTZ budget, the question of salaries has yet to be resolved. Some ICCN staff have not been paid for 70 months! At the moment, any mention of UNESCO is currently met with a negative response. Chief Warden Kasereka explained that although the \$4 million scheme was designed to solve ICCN's problems, it has actually created a greater problem: disillusionment. Explaining to staff every month for more than two years that the UNESCO money will be there soon has not been easy when, month after month, it fails to materialise. GTZ Project manager Carlos Schuler-Deschryver summed it up, "It is as if UNESCO heard there was a crisis in Congo, and set off immediately to help, but they decided to walk instead of taking the plane, and they only set off when they had finished their cup of coffee! By the time they get here, there will be nothing left to save!"

Despite the lack of resources, however, and the danger the men face when on patrol in a war zone, the conservation work being done in the limited areas is first rate. On 2nd May 2001, I happened to arrive at Tshivanga (the park HQ) in time to sit through what seemed like a cross between a scientific seminar and a management workshop. After each warden had presented a summary of his or her work for the month of April, using hand-drawn maps and charts on rolls of brown paper, I asked if this was a typical month. Yes, came the answer. It would have been impressive in any park in any country of the world. But in a war zone? With few resources, and little or no pay? I told them that the quality and quantity of work was almost incredible. And it gave me hope that if the world does wake up and provide some substantive assistance, this well managed, well motivated and courageous team would be the one to do the job.

One of the innovative acts that the warden implemented last year was to take on about 20 new members of staff—all of them known poachers. They were trained, and provided with uniforms, but as yet they have not been paid what they were promised because the UNESCO money for salaries has not arrived. Kasereka told me, "They are losing faith. If we don't pay them soon, we will lose them and they'll return to poaching."

THE POSITION OF RCD-GOMA

The RCD-Goma is not just a group of armed rebels, it is a political body described

in UN parlance as a "non-state entity with aspirations of statehood". The President, M. Adolphe Onusumba, is a known to Vital Katembo, DFGFE's Mount Tshiaberimu Project Manager, but was in Lusaka for peace talks and so could not be seen during my stay. Instead, I had a very positive meeting with M. Francis Bedy Makhubu Mabele, Chief du Department de l'Agriculture et du Development Rural (equivalent to the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development) and his aide, M. Gaby Djanga Lombe. The RCD-Goma is supportive of ICCN, and signed the agreement (Annex D) to permit conservation to continue despite the political and military divisions in the country. M. Bedy Makhubu pointed out that the attack last September, in which ten of his countrymen died whilst working on the boundary of the corridor linking the eastern and western sectors of Kahuzi-Biega, indicates what risks conservationists take (see Redmond, 2000). He preferred the term 'bandits' rather than terms such as Interahamwe or Mai-Mai for what the UN Security Council report terms 'negative forces'. He described how armed gangs of these 'bandits' rob and murder people, and how the RCD is unable to prevent it through lack of resources.

If the international community would provide the means, he felt sure that the situation could be turned around given the obvious dedication of ICCN staff.

THE RWANDAN GOVERNMENT'S POSITION

Rwanda has long been extremely supportive of great ape conservation. Since the death of Digit on the last day of 1977, and the rallying of support of mountain gorillas through the work of Dian Fossey, Rwanda has largely been held up as a shining example to other developing countries. Since 1979, the government has been an active partner in first the mountain Gorilla Project and then the International Gorilla conservation Programme (both consortia with FFI, AWF and WWF). Throughout the civil war and genocide, except in the most extreme circumstances the Rwanda parks authority, ORTPN, has continued to protect the Parc des Volcans with its own rangers, and co-operate with the anti-poaching patrols of the Karisoke Research Centre, funded by the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International.

It is strange, then, to read of Rwanda being accused of involvement with the demise of Grauer's gorillas in eastern DRC. I put this to the Minister of the Interior, M. Jean de Dieu Ntiruhungwa, and he was firm in his reply, "The Rwandan Government considers gorilla conservation to be very important, and this applies both in Rwanda and in neighbouring Congo." The same point was made by H.E. Mrs Rosemary Museminali, the Rwandan Ambassador in London. How, then, do the allegations stand up to scrutiny?

The area of KBNP in which coltan mining is destroying wildlife and habitat is not in the hands of Rwanda's army or their allies the RCD-Goma. It is occupied by Mai-Mai and Interahamwe—Rwanda's enemies. It is also difficult terrain in which to fight a guerrilla war, and would require a major military campaign if it were to be taken by force—with the consequent further destruction (human and wildlife) that this would entail. Is Rwanda exonerated then?

As detailed in the controversial UN Security Council report (see www.un.org/News and extracts in Annex A) there is a debate over whether Rwanda and Uganda should trade at all with eastern DRC while it is in the hands of rebels hostile to the Kinshasa government. Rwanda points out that eastern DRC is closer to the ports of Mombasa, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, than to Kinshasa, and that trade has always flowed eastwards from the region (which is why Swahili is the

first language of many in eastern Congo). The latest reports of the UN Security Council debate on this issue can be found at www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2001/sc7057.doc.htm.

Whatever the outcome of this wider trade debate, however, the fact remains that there are calls for a specific boycott of coltan from the region in an attempt to protect Congo's bio-diversity. But as we have seen, this would cause intense hardship to Rwanda's legal miners. What is required is for the scientific community to pinpoint the chemical signatures of coltan samples known to originate in KBNP (and other protected areas such as the Okapi Wildlife Reserve and Maiko National Park), and for international buyers to agree to avoid shipments that match them. This is not as far-fetched as it may seem to the distant observer.

Geological collections and published data are likely to hold some of the results, and as ICCN has shown—the area can be infiltrated by an undercover agent. The international community should respond by making the expertise and resources available to the relevant authorities—whatever their politics—for the sake of saving these areas of outstanding bio-diversity now. Conservation cannot wait for the outcome of political wrangling. And as the tripartite agreement between the three regions of ICCN has shown (Annex D), it can be done.

BUSHMEAT, ORPHANED APES AND IVORY

The trade in bushmeat is widely acknowledged to pose the most serious threat to Africa's great apes and many other endangered species. Even though apes form only a small percentage of species traded, the impact on species with slow reproduction rates is enormous. In some areas, apes may be killed for food, in others, they may be killed or maimed by snares set for other species. Either way, populations of gorillas, chimpanzees and bonobos are reported or thought to be declining in most areas, leading to predictions of extinction over most of the range within 10 to 20 years (Ape Alliance campaign details available at www.4apes.com).

The rise of the commercial bushmeat trade in West and Central Africa prompted the Ape Alliance in 1996 to commission a review by Cambridge zoologist Evan Bowen-Jones (Ape Alliance, 1998). At that time, a survey of Grauer's gorilla populations gave an estimate of 8,660–25,499 gorillas (mean 16,902) in 11 populations (Hall et al. 1998). Of these, 86 percent were found in the Kahuzi-Biega lowland forests, and those which extend beyond the park boundary westwards to Kasese (see map, page 4). An oft repeated estimate for the number of gorillas in KBNP itself is +/- 8,000. This was a higher estimate than earlier surveys indicated, and there was some optimism that this sub-species might be relatively safe. Sadly, the optimism was short lived.

When the first reports of the exploitation of Kahuzi-Biega mentioned bushmeat, it was thought that the meat was probably destined for local markets. The independent consultant (IC) confirmed that this was the case when hunting first increased in 1998. Reports of ivory, timber and gold coming out of the park left the impression that anything of value was being looted by these armed 'bandits'. It is only now that the picture since 1999 has emerged. Most of the miners in the park were eating large mammal meat for a year or more, including elephants, gorillas, chimpanzees, buffaloes and antelopes. By the time the IC did his undercover work this March, people were eating tortoises, birds, small antelope and monkeys. He reported that hunters used to go out daily from the mining camps and return with large mammals. Now they go out for up to a week, and

even then sometimes return empty handed. No elephant meat was seen during his four weeks of fieldwork, nor were tracks observed. Putting that in the context of the map above, with its scattering of dots representing mining camps and settlements, it seems likely that elephants may be all but extinct and other large mammals have declined dramatically and are heading for local extinction. If these reports are verified, the world population of Grauer's gorilla may have declined by 80–90 per cent, with perhaps as few as 2,000–3,000 survivors in scattered pockets of a few hundred each. The IC report (Annex B) mentions an estimated 200 men setting snares to feed the mining camps. In a park of 6,000 km², this gives an average hunting ground of only 5km x 6km per hunter (although in reality the distribution would not be even). Clearly, sustained trapping at this intensity will exterminate every terrestrial animal capable of triggering the snares. In addition, the IC mentions poachers and ex-military using fire-arms—these will ensure the arboreal species, such as monkeys and larger birds, do not escape the carnage.

In the mining camps in KBNP, money is seldom used because coltan has become the currency. Most of the bushmeat is not, therefore, being exported to towns for sale, but is being exchanged directly for coltan to feed the miners. But I did hear a story of a large piece of elephant meat being flown out in a military aircraft for consumption by officers.

Ivory

There were also rumors of nearly two tonnes of ivory in a store in Bukavu. In the latest issue of the ICCN PKNB-GTZ Newsletter 'Le Gorille, 4' Chantal Shalukoma writes that 'about 1,340 kg of ivory exist in the commune Ibanda and about 500 kg at the home of a businessman in Bukavu, who acts as an intermediary between the poachers and foreign buyers. These caches are thought to have come from the massacre of 46 elephants in the mountainous region of KBNP.' Hard evidence, however, is harder to come by, although the quantity of ivory on sale in Rwanda is an indication of the increase in illegal trade in that commodity (see Annex E).

Orphaned apes

The IC mentioned that he had seen a live baby gorilla being carried out of the forest on someone's back in a baby wrap. It was not a very small one (maybe 1–2 years) and seemed in good health. This was shortly before an expatriate soldier was offered a baby gorilla for sale in Gisenyi, Rwanda on 10th April 2001, and could well have been the same one. Unfortunately, the well-meaning soldier lectured the vendors on the error of their ways, and so was not taken to see the orphan and its whereabouts now is not known. Sadly, the whereabouts is known of many orphan chimpanzees, who seem better able to survive the traumas of capture and ill-treatment.

At the quarterly meeting of ICCN Conservators on 22nd and 23rd November 2000, the subject of illegally held protected species was on the agenda. It was estimated that there may be as many as 50 orphan chimpanzees in the region—Vince Smith spoke of at least 20 in Bukavu and up to 10 in Goma alone. One of the action points for that meeting was to organize a census of such captives, most of which are not receiving adequate care. The problem is then what to do about them. Without a sanctuary to keep them in, the authorities are unable to confiscate them, and so there is an urgent need for an animal welfare NGO to step in to help here.

The lesson of Uganda's Ngamba Island sanctuary should be considered, however. Built to cope with just one or two

confiscations per year, the war in DRC has led to a sharp increase in chimp orphans being smuggled or brought home by soldiers as pets, and the sanctuary is now full. Resources are now being sought for a second island sanctuary to cope with the anticipated rush of new confiscations by the Uganda Wildlife Authority.

If a similar ICCN approved sanctuary is built near Lake Kivu, it must also become an education centre designed to deter people from killing chimpanzees, and so help to cure the problem of which these sad orphans are a symptom.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE COLTAN BOOM

The destructive nature of the coltan-rush is not just to be measured in its environmental impact. Instead of being a rare opportunity for bringing benefits to hard-pressed communities, Coltan has brought out the world attributes of human nature—decadence, immorality, drug abuse and crime.

Thousands of families have been deserted by their main wage-earner in the desire to 'get-rich-quick'.

Agricultural production is therefore down as many fields remain un-tilled.

Prostitution has increased; the IC reported that in the camps, sex was available for a spoonful of coltan.

As a consequence, an increase in sexually transmitted diseases has been reported, especially AIDS.

Drug abuse and crime has reportedly risen as more "fast money" has been circulating.

Education has been badly affected; in Le Gorille 4, Bakongo Mudahama reports that school attendance has dropped by 30 per cent as students have deserted their studies for "la chasse du Coltan".

Many lives have been lost in mining accidents; Bakongo (*ibid*) reports 90 miners killed in collapsed coltan mines in Mumba and Luwowo.

Almost all of the major profits of this valuable resource accrue to foreigners, not to local people.

It is a double tragedy that the sudden increase in coltan prices has led to social and ecological destruction, rather than providing an opportunity to bring lasting benefits to the people of this region by careful exploitation of legally mined deposits. It is the responsibility of those in the developed world, whose demand has created this chaos, to step in with the skills and resources to turn the situation around.

Coltan mining, with safe mines and environmentally responsible practice, could yet turn out to be a boom to the region. But only a responsible attitude on the part of the buyers will achieve this in a region where guns rule and might is perceived as right. The concept of 'Certified Coltan' needs to be introduced immediately to the world market, and mineral dealers must act quickly if they are not to be tainted with the decadence of the DRC Coltan Boom.

CONCLUSION

The future of Kahuzi-Biega National Park hangs in the balance. It is up to the international community to decide which way that balance will tip.

Although no census has been possible in the occupied lowland section, the warden is now estimating that gorilla numbers in KBNP may have dropped below 1,000, of which 130 live in the better protected mountain sector.

The habituated groups are in this sector, and may end up as the only survivors in the short term. But 130 is considered by geneticists as too small for a founder population of a genetically heterogeneous species, and the danger of in-breeding may threaten their long term survival even with protection from

bushmeat hunters. There is a slim possibility that a few of the other scattered, isolated populations of Grauer's gorilla have survived, but if so, numbers are likely to be small and declining and they may face the same fate as those in KBNP.

Given that the forests in and adjacent to KBNP were estimated to contain 86 per cent of the world's Grauer's gorillas, and that the other 14 per cent is also likely to have been hit by poaching, the evidence indicates a possible 80-90 per cent reduction in only three years.

If this park and its magnificent gorillas are to be given one last chance, it must be with both parts of the park, and the corridor of land that links them, intact. Now is the time of action!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The information in this report could not have been gathered without the kind, and often courageous, assistance of many people. I am grateful to all those who gave freely of their time, including (in approximate order of meeting them):

In Kigali: Vince Smith, Jean de Dieu Ntiruhungwa, Francois Nkinziwike; Viateur Nsengimana;

In Goma: Vital Katembo, Tuver-Wundi, Dieudonne Ntambabazi, Claude Sikubwabo, Henry Girhuza, Kasuku wa Neyo; Stanislas Bakinahe, Anicet Mburanumwe-Chiri and the staff of ICCN;

In Bukavu: Remy Mitima, Kasereka Bishikwabo, Carlos and Christine Schuler-Deschryver, John Kahekwa, Mbilizi Wenga and the staff of GTZ and ICCN.

For security reasons, some cannot be named here, but named and anonymous, they should know that the world is indebted to them for their continued commitment to conservation in the face of threats to their personal safety.

In England, I am grateful to Greg Cummings, Jillian Miller, Judith Egerton and Celia Davis of DFGFE, to Ben Dykes and David Pledger of BFF for help in the rapid production of this report, and to Stanley Johnson and Cindy Milburn of the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) for their support and advice.

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Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in support of H.R. 643, legislation which would reauthorize the African Elephant Conservation Act. I would certainly like to compliment and commend the chairman of the Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife, and Oceans, the

gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST), who also happens to be the author of this piece of legislation, a dear friend and a colleague, and certainly also would like to commend the chairman of our Committee on Resources, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN), and our ranking Democrat, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL), for their support in bringing this legislation to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, it was not too long ago when the annihilation of the African elephant population was predicted, if not expected, to occur by the close of the 20th century. Such was the devastation, that by the end of the 1980s the population of African elephants, which once had ranged over virtually the entire Sub-Saharan region of the African continent, was reduced to small remnant populations suffering from widespread poaching and other conflicts with the needs of the growing human population.

In response to this conservation crisis, the Congress of the United States passed the African Elephant Conservation Act in 1988, and the fate of this flagship species has been improving ever since.

Grants initiated under the African Elephant Act have been responsive, effective, and successful in supporting conservation activities throughout Africa. As a result, many range states today have taken great strides in reducing poaching, which was at one time approaching epidemic proportions. Grants have also supported activities to confront and fight the illegal trade in wildlife and to build conservation capabilities to the village level, where there is still much more that needs to be done.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 643 is a straightforward reauthorization of this act. The administration fully supports this legislation, and I commend the staff of the Fish and Wildlife Service for their cooperation in working with us to improve this legislation. As a result, the few refinements that were adopted during consideration by the Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans should stimulate greater public involvement, help create new partnerships and ensure fair and equitable support for local conservation activities.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, great progress has been made in recovering African elephants from the precipice of disaster. That is an achievement for which we can all be proud. Yet future progress is contingent on the United States maintaining its strong leadership and support for this very successful and effective international wildlife conservation effort.

Again, I commend my good friend from Maryland for sponsorship of this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 643, legislation which would re-authorize the African Elephant Conservation Act. I am pleased that today we are also considering H.R. 700 to reauthorize the Asia Elephant

Conservation Act. These bills are vital to insuring the survival of one of the earth's "flagship" species.

Less than two decades ago, the African Elephant population teetered on the brink of extinction. Rampant poaching fueled by the black market trade of ivory and the encroachment of human development had reduced the once abundant population to a small trace of its former prosperity.

The African Elephant Conservation Act was enacted in 1988 in response to this crisis. The grants initiated under the act have dramatically reduced poaching by working with local communities to eliminate the illegal trade in endangered wildlife and to foster sustainable conservation practices.

At a time when we are confronting the loss of many species, every effort must be made in Congress to preserve species of plants, animals and their habitats throughout the world. We must continue to strengthen endangered species laws and to support the strongest possible measures to ensure the survival of the world's elephants and other wildlife populations.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 643, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

ASIAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2001

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 700) to reauthorize the Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 700

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Asian Elephant Conservation Reauthorization Act of 2001".

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF ASIAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION ACT OF 1997.

Section 7 of the Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997 (16 U.S.C. 4266) is amended by striking "1998" and all that follows through "2002" and inserting "2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007".