

## Minutes of the GRASP IEC Meeting

**8-9 December, 2004**  
**At UNESCO, Paris, France**

### **Attendance:**

#### **Members:**

Matthew Hatchwell	Acting Chair and NGO representative (WCS)
Ashley Leiman	NGO representative (OFI)
Leonard Muamba	Range State representative (DRC)
Rob Bowman	Donor country representative (UK)
Natajaran Ishwaran	Secretariat (UNESCO)
Mark Collins	Secretariat (UNEP)

#### **Observers:**

Sarah Jones	UK Defra
Vickie Whitehead	UK Defra
Rob Hepworth	CMS (representing MEAs)
Ian Redmond	GRASP technical support team
Christophe Boesch	Acting Co-chair, Interim Scientific Commission
Mark Leighton	Acting Co-chair, Interim Scientific Commission
Melanie Virtue	Secretariat (UNEP)
Samy Mankoto	Secretariat (UNESCO)
Lucilla Spini	Secretariat (UNESCO)
Naoto Shibui	Secretariat (UNESCO)
Tom Shamrell	Secretariat (UNESCO)
Jane Robertson	Secretariat (UNESCO)
Gifty Dlouhy	Secretariat (UNESCO)
Stephanie Latour	Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle
Sabrina Krief	Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle

#### **Apologies:**

Justus Tindigarukayo	Chair and Range State representative (Uganda)
Widodo Ramona	Range State representative (Indonesia)
John Sellar	MEA representative (CITES)

### **1. Adoption of the Agenda**

The annotated provisional agenda was adopted without comment.

### **2. General Discussion on GRASP:**

The group discussed the need for a common vision of GRASP. Many people within and outside the GRASP partnership have different ideas about what GRASP is, what it has achieved, and hopes to achieve.

It was decided that previously adopted statements of GRASP's vision, mission and objectives do reflect a common view of GRASP and therefore do not need changing. However, to avoid confusion, everyone should be more disciplined about using the correct versions of these statements. No particular version of the vision, mission and objectives was specifically adopted during the meeting but it was suggested that the GRASP Strategy document was the closest there was to an official statement since it was adopted by the participants at the PrepCom meeting in November 2003. However, the specific activities GRASP pursues require further deliberation to determine which activities will best achieve GRASP's goals and objectives.

It was generally felt that there is a problem of communication as many interested parties are not aware of GRASP's achievements to date. The chair concluded that we need to communicate better the added value of GRASP and be more disciplined in talking about what GRASP is and is not. It was agreed that GRASP's unique attributes lie 1) in its ability and mandate to play a coordinating role in great ape conservation efforts and 2) in the international level of discourse it can achieve and the access to governments, for example through the frameworks of NEPAD and the MEAs. This gives it a much higher profile and impact than individual parties can achieve on their own.

It was discussed that a revised workplan for 2005 might include some new activities aiming to capitalize on this potential opportunity for GRASP to contribute to great ape conservation on a governmental level. More broadly, it was suggested that the workplan adopted at the PrepCom in 2003 should be reviewed by the Executive Committee on an annual basis. In the context of this meeting, discussion on specific activities for the 2005 workplan was deferred until later in the meeting.

### **3. Preparations for the Intergovernmental Meeting, and 4. The GRASP Council**

Mr Muamba, of the DRC, confirmed his government's offer to host the meeting in Kinshasa, in the first half of 2005, before national elections are scheduled. A national committee has been established to organise the event. Modular style conference facilities, which can sit up to 1,000 people in a single group, or combinations of smaller groups, are available, along with high quality hotel rooms at around USD 100 per night. The government will provide the conference rooms and interpretation at no charge, as well as put USD 5,000 into the budget. All arrangements will be confirmed in the detailed plan to be compiled jointly by the Secretariat and DRC by the end of January 2005 (see below).

The committee, while expressing gratitude for the offer, agreed that the proposed dates are too soon to organise a successful meeting. The week of 5-9 September, 2005 emerged as a suitable date, which does not clash with either UNEP or UNESCO governing body meetings, or with any known date on the international environmental calendar.

The committee requested DRC to check on the suitability of this date and to prepare, in conjunction with the Secretariat, a detailed budget for the meeting, and details of all facilities, logistical and security arrangements. The committee also requested the Secretariat to look into the availability of conference facilities at UNEP, Nairobi as a back-up venue for the same date, in the event that it is required.

It was agreed that there is a need for a very clear plan of action to prepare successfully for this meeting. The Secretariat was asked to present a workplan to the IEC in January, for discussion at the next meeting of the committee (by teleconference on February 17).

The Secretariat brought up the issue of the formal structure of the meeting, pointing out that at normal UN meeting, countries are members while NGOs have the status of observers. However, in the GRASP partnership countries and NGOs are all members. While the Secretariat will look into this matter further, it was tentatively agreed that the best scenario would be a GRASP Council meeting followed by a half- or full-day inter-governmental meeting and then a second, reconvened Council meeting.

On the declaration, it was agreed that getting a single page, inspirational declaration adopted at the IGM would be an important first step in a possibly longer process. Additional steps, to be decided at or after the IGM, might include getting heads of state endorsement of the declaration, or even translating it into a binding treaty of some sort. Although there was interest by some committee members in moving towards some sort of binding agreement, it was pointed out that such a move would complicate the IGM process on a political level and, potentially, overlap with the mandates of existing international conventions.

It was mentioned that there will be a meeting of the COMIFAC Heads of State in Brazzaville in February 2005. According to M. Muamba, the meeting is being organized by the French government and will also be attended by French President Jacques Chirac. The agenda has not yet been finalized and so that opportunity exists to lobby for a discussion of GRASP to be included. UNESCO agreed to explore that possibility in coordination with M. Muamba.

**Action:**

- I. DRC to confirm suitability of date from a national perspective
- II. DRC and UNESCO to present budget and logistics, by 31 January, 2005.
- III. Secretariat to prepare detailed IGM workplan to be sent to IEC by 31 January, 2005.
- IV. UNESCO to coordinate with M. Muamba on including GRASP on agenda of February 2005 COMIFAC meeting.

## 5. Interim Scientific Commission

The committee expressed pleasure that the ISC has been established and warmly welcomed Christophe Boesch and Mark Leighton as acting co-chairs of newly formed ISC. It will provide independent scientific advice to the GRASP, in particular to the Technical Support Team(s) and the secretariat. Tasks that were discussed for inclusion in the 2005 workplan were as follows:

- i. **Monitoring:** Prepare a detailed proposal for measures to monitor and evaluate the status of great ape populations in the wild and the effectiveness of GRASP's efforts to protect them. It was suggested that these measures should be compatible with those being adopted in the context of the CBD goal of achieving a significant reduction in the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010.
- ii. **Portfolio:** Conduct a rigorous review of the draft portfolio of projects which the Secretariat solicited from partners as an element of future GRASP fund-raising efforts.
- iii. **TSTs:** Review and improve the prioritisation process and criteria developed by the TST.
- iv. Participate in the development of the TSTs' workplan
- v. **Secretariat:** Make recommendations on the GRASP secretariat workplan.

- vi. **Draft Rules:** In collaboration with TSTs and UNEP, propose additional language for the draft rules to define the relationship between the ISC and the TSTs.
- vii. **IGM:** Participate in the preparations for the IGM.
- viii. Make recommendations to the Secretariat regarding any other activities it plans to undertake, such as compilation of a database and/or fundraising for its own programmes.

The committee agreed in principle that the Secretariat should provide interim funding in the amount of \$4,000 to the ISC to enable it to start addressing the above issues. Furthermore, Mark Leighton is hoping to convene a first meeting of the ISC in March 2005, coincident with a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Section on Great Apes (SGA) of the Primate Specialist Group.

**Action:**

- I. Secretariat to send initial items to the ISC for review.
- II. Secretariat to provide USD 4,000 to the ISC as a contribution towards initial tasks
- III. ISC to work with Secretariat on incorporating above activities into the 2005 workplan.

## 6. Technical Support Teams

The second report of the TST was presented, summarising the TST activities since November 2003, which was co-financed by UNEP and the Born Free Foundation.

It was agreed that in future the ISC will play a major role in guiding and overseeing the work of the TSTs. When it comes to compiling and implementing the annual GRASP workplan, there should be a three-way dialogue and relationship between the Secretariat, the TSTs and the ISC. In particular, all parties must agree on the formulations that they use to describe and define what GRASP is and what its goals are. Wherever written formulations exist in the draft rules or elsewhere (for example, regarding the role of the TSTs) they should be respected.

**Action:**

- I. Secretariat, TSTs and ISC to coordinate on compilation of 2005 TSTs workplan. See also actions for ISC under agenda item #5 above.

## 7. The Secretariat

UNEP presented statements on the financial and other resource contributions made to run its part of the secretariat. UNESCO presented a brief outline of the contributions it has made and committed to providing a written statement after the 2004 accounts are closed in February 2005. All agreed that the financial basis is not strong. After a general discussion, it was agreed that in a partnership, all partners should be contributing something. The Secretariat was asked to see if it is possible to determine how much other partners are contributing to GRASP-related activities, and also whether it would be feasible to ask partners to pay an annual fee or make some form of in-kind commitment.

Following a discussion of the fragmented nature of the GRASP Secretariat (divided between Paris and Nairobi, with no full-time Director operating at the high political level where GRASP can bring added value to great ape conservation efforts), the idea was suggested of

hiring an Executive Director or similarly titled person to run GRASP activities at a high level. It became clear that, at least in the short term, the funding for such a position could not come from the UN, but that if NGOs felt strongly and were able to find funding, then it might be a useful addition to reinforce GRASP's effectiveness at government and intergovernmental level. Alternatively, the chair of the IEC or the President of the GRASP Council might fulfil such a role.

The principle was agreed that GRASP partners should engage as actively as possible in supporting the activities of GRASP generally and of the Secretariat in particular.

Regarding fundraising, there was general agreement that GRASP partners should play to their strengths, rather than all trying to take on every activity. Thus, apart from initiatives already under development, UNEP should concentrate more on its area of relative strength, including governments and intergovernmental organisations. The important distinction was drawn between 'project financing' (where funds are sought for specific budgeted projects) and the much more difficult 'fund-raising' (where funds raised can be applied to priority activities, a decision-making process which would now involve the ISC).

**Action:**

- I. The Secretariat agreed to circulate its new fundraising strategy to the IEC as soon as it is completed.

## **8. GRASP and the Biodiversity related MEAs**

UNEP presented the idea of developing closer ties with the major biodiversity-related Conventions, in particular of negotiating a formal agreement with each MEA regarding great ape conservation in the context of that particular convention.

This would play to the strengths of the UN agencies in GRASP, perhaps leaving space for other partners to undertake other aspects of GRASP's work. A focus on the MEAs and interlinkages between them would position GRASP much more strongly for funding from UNEP's traditional donors.

While losing the GRASP identity did not appeal, there was strong support for the idea to attempt to integrate more closely with the MEAs. It was felt that anything which strengthens our overall objective to get great apes onto the global agenda and to ensure their conservation is worth pursuing. Some concern was expressed about CBD as it does not have protecting species' diversity as one of its specific goals. The importance of regional as well as global agreements was also stressed.

The Secretariat was instructed to pursue the idea, initially by sending letters to all the MEA secretariats, inviting them to engage in a multilateral and coherent approach to great ape conservation.

**Action:**

- I. Secretariat to approach MEAs to pursue idea further.

## 9. Admission of New Partners

- PanEco - as the Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Project is a part of PanEco but is not a registered NGO in its own right, it was decided to admit PanEco to category E as the parent body. In the list of partners, it would read: PanEco (SOCP)
- Budongo Forest Project - admitted to category E
- Volcanoes Safaris – admitted to category H
- Filmmakers for Conservation – admitted to category H

There was a discussion on the eligibility criteria and whether GRASP is weakened by having too broad a focus of members. The committee reconfirmed its commitment to the conservation of great apes in the wild as the overall goal of GRASP and agreed that new applications for membership should be considered in that light. It was agreed that great ape reintroduction and sanctuary programmes can make important contributions to the conservation of wild populations and so no changes to existing membership criteria were necessary.

The committee wished to ensure that GRASP attracts active and committed prospective partners, and is not simply viewed as a source of funding. It was recommended to state clearly on the GRASP website the partnership criteria and responsibilities. It was also suggested that the Secretariat survey all NGO partners periodically to confirm that they still meet the criteria.

Use of the GRASP logo was brought up and it was determined that the Secretariat must develop clear guidelines which are conveyed to all partners.

### Actions:

- I. Secretariat to inform new partners of their admission.
- II. Secretariat to include admission criteria on the website.
- III. Secretariat to survey partners periodically to ensure they meet the criteria.
- IV. Secretariat to develop guidelines for use of the logo

## 10. Next Meeting

The next teleconference will be held on 17 February 2005. Another face-to-face meeting will be required in the lead-up to the IGM. The date and place will be determined during the teleconference.

It was agreed that the Interim Scientific Commission and the Technical Support Team would be official observers to the Interim Executive Committee.

## 11. Any Other Business

- GRASP workplan for 2005.

It had been envisioned to revisit many of the concrete decisions made during the IEC meeting in a final discussion about the GRASP workplan for 2005. In the end, time constraints meant that this discussion did not take place. It was therefore reiterated that, as indicated above, the Secretariat would compile a workplan for 2005 that will be circulated to the IEC and discussed at the teleconference on February 17<sup>th</sup>.

- World Atlas on Great Apes

The committee noted that there have been improvements with regard to involving scientists in the review of the information and content of the Atlas. It was noted that considerable investments have been made into the production of the Atlas and called upon the ISC, TSTs and others to co-operate to enable the production of an Atlas of good scientific quality. The IEC requested the Secretariat to provide an update on the status of the Atlas by January 2005.

- At Bristol Exhibition

Matthew Hatchwell informed the committee that, according to a discussion he had with Harriet Nimmo of WildScreen, @ Bristol have raised an additional GBP 300,000 for the great apes exhibition. UNEP and UNESCO agreed to check why MOUs have not been finalised and the \$25,000 they have each committed to give to @ Bristol have not been transferred. The value of this exhibition over other potential uses of the \$50,000 in funding from UNEP and UNESCO was questioned. Ian Redmond was asked to ensure that @ Bristol is in contact with others, such as the Cité des Sciences in Paris.

**Actions:**

- I. Secretariat workplan to be ready for discussion at teleconference in February
- II. Secretariat to provide status report on the World Atlas on Great Apes by early January
- III. UNEP and UNESCO to check on status of MOUs with @Bristol, and finalise ASAP.
- IV. Ian Redmond to ensure @Bristol is in contact with other centres developing exhibitions on great apes.

The meeting ended at 12.30 so that all participants could take part in the press conference at the exhibition on great apes, showing at the Cité des Sciences. Bullet points for the press conference were agreed by the IEC and are attached for information.

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