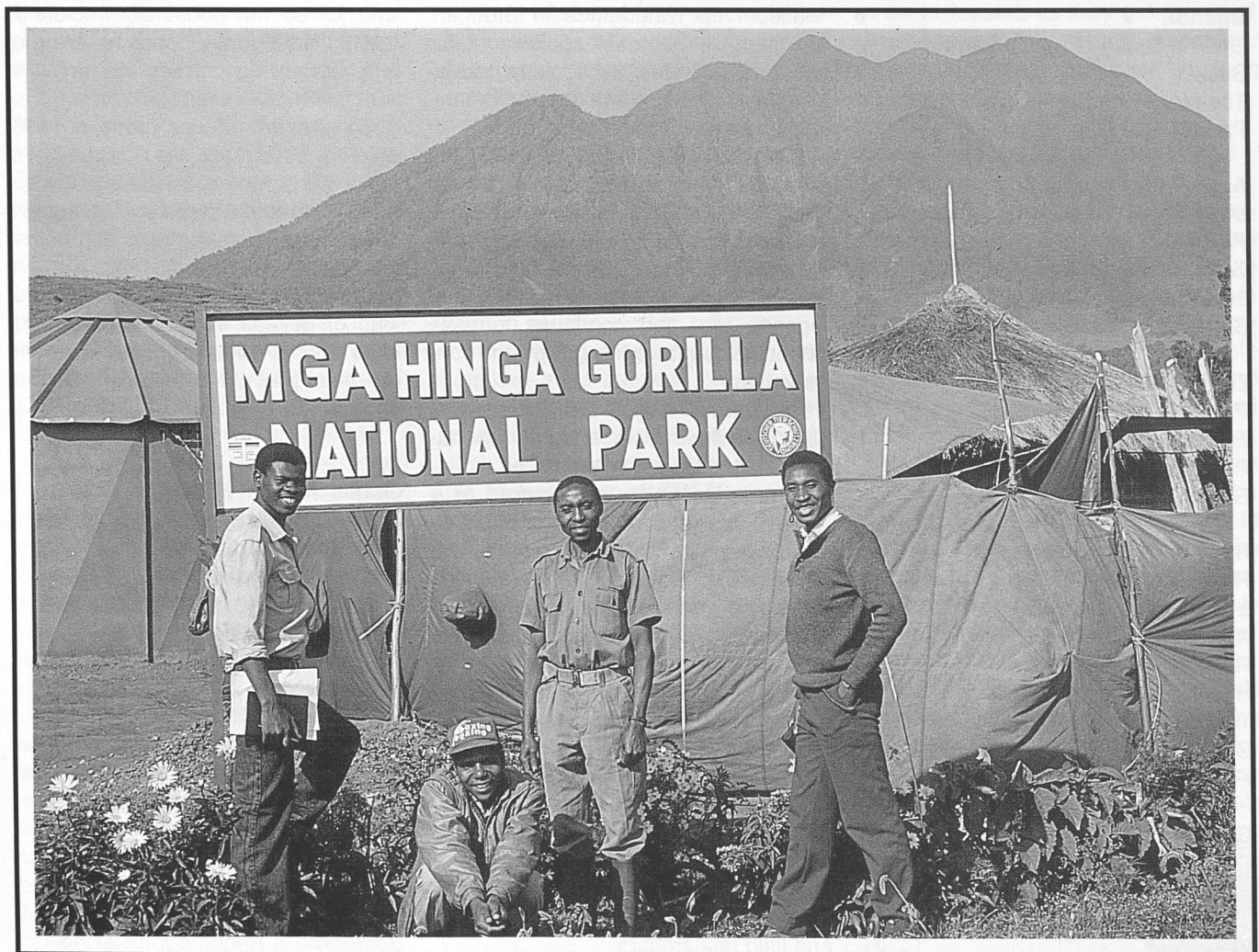


Gorilla Journal

Journal of Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe

No. 2/1994



**The Work and
Death of Klaus-
Jürgen Sucker in
Uganda**

**Appeal for Dona-
tions to Pay the
Rangers of
Mgahinga Gorilla
National Park**

**Rwanda's Disco-
very by Europe –
a Hundred Years
Ago**

**Present Situation
in Karisoke und in
the Volcano
Veterinary Center**



BERGGORILLA & REGENWALD DIREKTHILFE

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Dr. Alexander Harcourt, now at the Dept. of Anthropology, University of California, Davis, was born in Kenya, and began a lifetime of studying gorillas in Africa in 1971, in Rwanda and Zaire. He has studied them in Nigeria and Uganda too, and continues to write about their behaviour, ecology and conservation.

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CONSERVATION

The IUCN World Conservation Strategy

In both of the Ugandan national parks which we support, a new concept of conservation has been introduced: multiple-use. Some years ago the *International Union for the Conservation of Nature* (IUCN), together with the *United Nations Environmental Program* (UNEP) and *World Wildlife Fund* (WWF) published concrete guidelines in a handbook; these guidelines have since been adopted by nearly all conservation and developmental aid organizations. The problems in Mgahinga National Park have brought us face to face with this concept. For this reason, we are summarizing here the principles laid down in this handbook, giving particular emphasis to those guidelines concerned with protection of the rain forests. (IUCN, UNEP, WWF: *Caring for the Earth. A Strategy for Sustainable Living*. Gland, 1991.)

As early as 1980, IUCN had taken the view in its *World Conservation Strategy* that conservation does not conflict with development, indeed that conservation cannot be achieved without development. It called for "sustainable development" which stressed the interdependence of conservation and development. Three objectives were emphasized: the maintenance of essential ecological processes, the conservation of genetic diversity and the sustainable use of species and ecosystems. 11 years later, the more detailed work *Caring for the Earth* was published, directed at all governments, NGOs and individuals. It explains nine principles for a sustainable society.

Building a Sustainable Society

This requires harmony with other people and with nature. People must not take more from nature than it can replenish. Sustainability means that the impact of all activities on the future must be assessed; it must also be

determined whether these activities may prevent future generations from satisfying their needs. Mankind's quality of life should be improved within the carrying capacity of the earth.

Respecting and Caring for the Community of Life

We all must live according to the ethic for living sustainably – a set of consistent and morally-compelling principles to guide human conduct that is set out here. Each human being is a part of the community of life and has the same fundamental and equal rights; no individual, community or nation has the right to deprive another of its means of subsistence. All life forms must be respected, treated decently and protected from cruelty, independently of their worth to people.

In following these principles, conflicts can arise between human interests and nature. For example, the ban under CITES of trade in elephant products deprived people of the traditional use of resources. IUCN leaves open how these conflicts can be resolved.

Improving the Quality of Human Life

There is still a lot to be improved here: health care services, life expectancy, access to safe water, nutrition, education and reduction of poverty. Military expenditure should be reduced in favour of social and environmental programmes and economic development should benefit those who need it most.

In Third World countries, economic growth is needed (e.g. by the opening of markets). Important goals include increasing peoples' control over the management of local resources as well as their participation in other developmental decisions. Indigenous people should become more involved. In addition, the involvement of women has to be increased, as they are the ones who manage the natural resources. This is especially the case in poor countries.

Conserving the Earth's Vitality and Diversity

Conservation must maintain the capacity of ecosystems and the human communities that depend on them to adapt. One essential measure here is restoring and maintaining the integrity of the earth's ecosystems, for example forests. Criteria for their protection and for the size of the areas to be protected have to be developed. In any case, large areas of old-growth forests with the full range of its variation should be protected in reserves, especially in regions where less than 20% of the original forest remains. The forest reserves that are totally protected should be surrounded by large tracts of modified forest wherever this is practicable. These modified forests should be used sustainably. Local communities should be involved in forest policy and have the opportunity to earn sustainable livelihoods from the forest



Elephants in Kruger National Park, South Africa

Photo: Angela Meder



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without damaging old-growth forest that is totally protected.

By means of regulations and economic incentives, governments and forest management authorities should encourage the growth of industries based on multiple-use forestry in areas assigned for this purpose. The local population should benefit from economic returns. At the same time, attempts should be made to improve the protection of wild plants and animals and to increase the knowledge and understanding of the importance of species and ecosystems. In addition, IUCN also recommends, for example, the following (in an appendix on the problems concerning forest lands): the creation a market for products from sustainably-managed forests, more efficient utilization of wood and the competitive auctioning of logging concessions.

Keeping within the Earth's Carrying Capacity

Whereas a minority of people live in prosperity, the great majority has a standard of living ranging from the miserable to the barely tolerable. Therefore, the actions that have to be taken will vary greatly from nation to nation – and even among communities. Population growth rates are highest where poverty is most intense; therefore, the standard of living must first be improved in order to slow population growth. In contrast, upper-income countries have to reduce their energy consumption, for example through new technologies or taxes on energy and other resources.

Changing Personal Attitudes and Practices

There are many reasons why people live unsustainably: poverty, ignorance or lack of concern. Everybody has to be educated about the necessity of nature conservation and be encouraged to lead a sustainable life.



White rhinos in Mkhaya Game Reserve, Swaziland

Photo: Angela Meder

Enabling Communities to Care for their own Environments

Communities that are not able to care for their environment must be educated and guided to living sustainably in their own language. Afterwards, the people should receive access to land and other natural resources and have the opportunity to manage them.

The exchange of information has to be improved, the participation in conservation and development has to be enhanced and the care for the local environment has to be promoted. Indigenous peoples should have the option to modify their subsistence way of life, should they wish to do so, and in this way develop their society and economy. Politicians, developmental aid workers and nature conservationists should provide support to these peoples in achieving sustainability.

Providing a National Framework for Integrating Development and Conservation

Considering environmental issues and recognizing the importance of the en-

vironment as a source of life-support services and raw materials is vital to the economy. Governments should pursue an integrated approach in environmental policies with sustainability as the overall goal. The rules and standards should be established by special laws. Knowledge about environmental matters has to be increased, and information should be made more accessible.

The costs of products should include the environmental costs that are imposed on society through any damage to ecosystems and other resources as a result of degradation and pollution; economic incentives should be provided for conservation and sustainable use, and environmental costs should be included in economic measures.

Creating a Global Alliance

All nations are interdependent regarding development and environment. In order to increase the capacity of low-income countries to support themselves, their debts must be reduced and their terms of trade improved. There-



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by, the low-income countries can be enabled to develop sustainably and protect their environments. The existing international agreements to conserve life-support systems and biological diversity have to be more widely implemented and new ones have to be decided upon.

The guidelines summarized above have been criticized by various conservationists, for instance by John G. Robinson (WCS) who thinks that many points are too optimistic and not sufficiently concrete. You can obtain an extensive list of references on this topic from the following address:

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Foundation of the *Species Survival Network Europe*

In July 1994 a European association for the conservation of endangered species was founded – it is called *Species Survival Network Europe* or SSN Europe. The *Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe* has also become a member of SSN Europe. The reason for joining will be briefly outlined here.

Endangered species are becoming extinct at an alarming rate. An increasing number of animal and plant species are – despite national and international laws for their conservation – threatened by extinction. Only about 60 Java rhinos and approximately 150 Siberian tigers are left, and 77 parrot species are on the verge of extinction. An unknown number of animal and plant species disappear forever daily with every hectare of destroyed tropical rain forest.

Besides the destruction of the natural habitat, illegal international trade in rare species and products which are made from them continues and this is

the most important cause for their decline. Billions of Dollars are made yearly with this trade; this profit is only surpassed by illegal trading in arms and drugs. In many countries, there abounds a flourishing and totally uncontrollable illegal trade in endangered animals and plants, as well as parts of them. As in the case of the rhino, dealers are speculating that those animals will soon become extinct, so they can make a huge profit on the rhino horns they have been stockpiling.

With the elimination of the borders within the European Union (EU), the EU has become a major trading place for endangered species and products made from them. This happens despite the fact that this trade is clearly regulated by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which now includes members from 124 countries. For many species a complete ban on all trade exists (Appendix I of the Convention). For other species, controlled trade is permitted (they are listed in Appendix II).

The African elephant is a prime example of how ineffective these trade regulations are. Until 1989, this species was listed in Appendix II. In addition to the legal trade in ivory, a flourishing illegal trade brought on an unprecedented mass-killing of elephants: within 20 years the total population dwindled from 20 million individuals to 600,000. Only when a total ban on all trade was established in 1989, did the drastic decline of their number level off. The world market for ivory has since crashed and poaching has been drastically reduced.

Yet even imposing a total ban was not enough to deter illegal trade. Tiger bones, tiger penises, rhino horns, bear gall bladders and paws in addition to ivory are still illegally sold on the world market. Consequently, the threat of poaching placed on these animals in their natural habitat persists. Since many member states do not implement

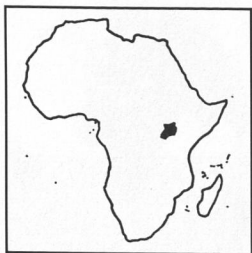
the CITES regulations, nor take action against violators, the illegal trade of animals listed in Appendices I and II of CITES continues.

The failure of the CITES regulations to halt illegal trade in endangered species led several conservation organizations – primarily in the USA – to establish the *Species Survival Network* (SSN) in 1993. To date 36 organizations have joined the network, thereby representing several million members. The aim of the SSN was and still is to strive for improved protection of endangered species and a more rigorous implementation of the existing CITES regulations.

The initiators of the SSN, the London-based *Environmental Investigation Agency* (EIA), soon realized that the potential of animal protection and nature conservation organizations in Europe was not being fully utilized, and consequently established a special European branch to improve this. In July 1994 the European *Species Survival Network* (SSN Europe) was founded in London. It aims to improve the implementation of laws for the conservation of endangered species within the European Union. The primary goal of SSN Europe will be to prevent the exploitation of wild animal and plant species as a result of international legal and illegal trade. Members of SSN Europe contend that a species, subspecies or population of animal or plant should only be traded if there is sufficient scientific proof that the number of individuals, as well as the natural habitat, is not jeopardized by this trade. If such scientific proof is lacking, measures should be undertaken to protect the species and prohibit any trade.

SSN Europe aims to curtail the increasing attempts to exploit plants and animals for commercial purposes and the incentive to protect species solely for the sake of commercial interests.

Ulrich Karlowski



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On The Death of Klaus-Jürgen Sucker

In the last issue of the Gorilla Journal, we already relayed the sad news of the death of Klaus-Jürgen Sucker, the leader of the Mgahinga Gorilla National Park Project and long-standing member of *Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkt-hilfe* (BRD). The following report gives an overview of Klaus-Jürgen Sucker's life and work, which he devoted to the mountain gorillas and their environment, and examines the facts so far known to us concerning his as yet unexplained death.

On 20 June 1994 Klaus-Jürgen Sucker was found strangled in his house in Kisoro by his housekeeper. The 37-year-old leader of the Mgahinga Gorilla National Park Project in Uganda, which was created by the BRD and the *Deutscher Tierschutzbund* (German Animal Protection Society), was dead. The authorities gave suicide as the cause of death.

However, there are many indications that Klaus-Jürgen Sucker was the victim of a crime. As a dedicated conservationist, he had many enemies, ranging from poachers and smugglers to the leaders of a developmental aid project who wanted to establish sustainable use projects in this small national park. With Klaus-Jürgen they were dealing with someone whose first priority was the protection and conservation of fauna and flora and who acted accordingly.

The Beginning

When Klaus-Jürgen Sucker arrived in Uganda 5 years ago in order to realize his lifelong dream, Mgahinga Forest Reserve, which had been gazetted as early as 1930, was in a pitiable state. Poaching, smuggling, illegal pit-sawing, illegal cattle grazing and illegal encroachment were common occurrences. The mountain gorillas and other rare animal species like golden and



Klaus-Jürgen Sucker 1993 in the afro-alpine zone on Muhavura

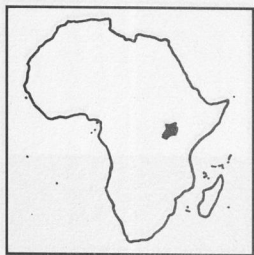
blue monkeys, elephants and giant forest hogs had retreated more and more to the high regions of the Muhavura, Sabinyo and Gahinga volcanoes. Only if protective measures were taken immediately could the area be saved. Klaus-Jürgen Sucker set to work, together with Thomas Butynski and Samson Werikhe, who had paved the way for this project.

He trained rangers, established regular patrols against poachers, pit-sawers and smugglers, and had cattle that grazed in the protected area confiscated. He had shelters put up for the rangers and carried out conservation education among the people living on the borders of the protected area. Work progressed well: poaching in the Mgahinga forest soon stopped, fewer and fewer cattle were driven into the forest for grazing, the pit-sawers did not return and the smugglers henceforth steered clear of the area. The conservation project, which then was still called the Gorilla Game Reserve Conservation Project (GGRCP), had come to life.

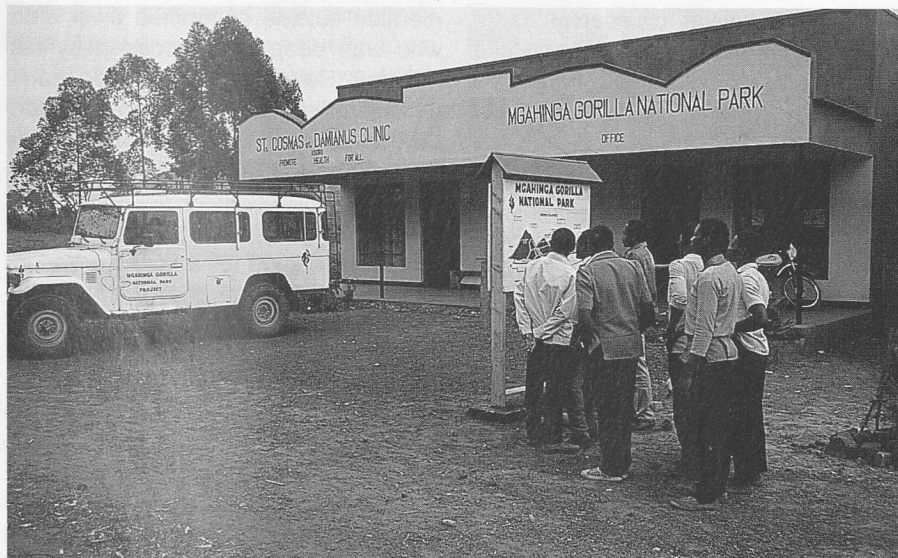
The Mgahinga Gorilla National Park Project: One of the Most Successful Conservation Projects in Africa

The Ugandan authorities soon realized that outstanding conservation work was being done in the Mgahinga forest. In May 1991 the area was gazetted as a National Park. Klaus-Jürgen Sucker became a National Park Warden. In not quite one and a half years, he and his rangers had succeeded in turning a basically unprotected area into one of the best functioning national parks in Africa. In the last year of the project, the Mgahinga Gorilla National Park had the highest density of rangers per km² of all Ugandan national parks.

In June 1992, it was possible to enlarge the area effectively protected: 1318 farmers, who had illegally been using the so-called Zone 2 of the national park, gave up agriculture and stock farming and left the area. This was done on a voluntary basis and after all the people concerned had held a democratic vote. The 273 families of farmers, who had until then been using Zone 2, received financial compensa-



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National Park Office in Kisoro, January 1992 Photo: Klaus-Jürgen Sucker

tion. This resettlement project, which addresses both the needs of people and of nature, has often been taken as an example for similar projects in other national parks. Plans were made to reforest Zone 2, a deforested area of 10 km². For the first time in the history of mountain gorilla conservation, it was possible to enlarge their habitat. This was cause for great hope.

The following facts give a rough idea of Klaus-Jürgen Sucker's achievements in his much too brief period of activity in the Mgahinga forest: almost 7000 animal traps were confiscated and destroyed; a stop was put to the destruction of forest, smuggling and the illegal grazing of cattle; many animal and plant species that had only survived in the forest could recolonize areas formerly inhabited by people; ecotourism and environmentally-friendly gorilla tourism were successfully established; and, finally, approximately 1500 jobs were created, jobs that were well paid compared to local rates, for example as rangers, gorilla trackers and porters, in the National Park Office or when the border of the national park was demarcated.

The Animals Take Back their Own

These conservation measures had an immediate impact on the animals in the area. The number of mountain gorillas that were observed in the Mgahinga forest increased from 25 to 45 and they stayed there more often. For the first time in more than 40 years, a group of gorillas spent the whole year in the Mgahinga forest. The number of other animals like buffalos and forest elephants also increased and they expanded their activities into areas where they had not been seen for years. Thus the risk of the mountain gorillas' extinction became somewhat smaller during these 5 years.

Nature Conservation with (Unforeseen) Consequences

Friends of the mountain gorillas live dangerously. At the end of 1985, Dian Fossey, the famous gorilla researcher, was found murdered at the Karisoke Research Station in the Virunga Volcanoes, Rwanda. The murderers were never apprehended. From the very beginning, Klaus-Jürgen Sucker was aware of the high degree of personal risk. However, he was ready to go his

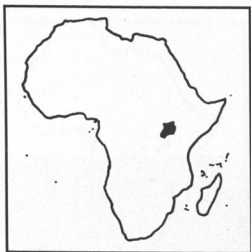
own way and to accept the risk, in order to secure the survival of the mountain gorillas. The most striking, if relatively harmless effect that a life dedicated to nature at such high stakes had was that the 1.96 m conservationist's blond hair turned silvery grey – just like in an adult mountain gorilla male, the "silverback".

Naturally he was unpopular with poachers and smugglers from the start. However, this threat was relatively harmless, compared to one from a completely different direction. As early as the first year of the project, the first temporary project station was attacked by a small unit of armed persons. However, Klaus-Jürgen Sucker could not be intimidated even by a cocked Kalashnikov being aimed at him. He only said: "You go ahead and shoot", instead of surrendering his papers, as he was ordered to. The shot was not fired.

Sustainable Users versus Nature Conservationists

In 1993 a new threat emerged from a direction nobody would have thought possible. CARE, a US developmental aid organisation, planned projects for the multiple-use of the Mgahinga forest. Developmental aid workers, who were under pressure to make a move after the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, wanted to prove that sustainable use projects were feasible. However, this means that collectors of honey and herbs, cutters of bamboo and other user groups would be allowed to enter the park without controls in order to pursue their allegedly traditional and non-destructive forest use.

Together with *Uganda National Parks* and international scientists, Klaus-Jürgen Sucker opposed these plans which would have resulted in a catastrophe for the fauna and flora. With only 35 km², of which 10 km² are severely degraded (Zone 2), this park is highly susceptible to disturbance. Any form of so-called sustainable use,



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except controlled ecotourism with a small number of visitors, could lead, for example, to the mountain gorillas' and other animals' retreating back to the mountains. The first of CARE's sustainable use trials had already had disastrous effects: when people cut bamboo roots in the Mgahinga forest, a group of mountain gorillas with a newborn was disturbed so thoroughly that they left the area and did not settle down for days. The conflict between the sustainable users and the conservationist had begun.

The conflict between the leaders of the CARE project DTC (Development Through Conservation), Philip Franks and Rob Wild, was carried out with unequal means: Klaus-Jürgen Sucker tried to convince them and used facts to substantiate his opposition to the risky experiments with new and untested concepts of sustainable use in one of the last reserves for mountain gorillas. CARE/DTC, however, tried to use the miracle weapon money to silence the critical voice of the conservationist.

During many meetings DTC promised the inhabitants of the park's surroundings that the DTC project would improve their conditions of living. But up to now nothing has changed. The first aim, which was to introduce agroforestry in the surroundings of the park, was not realized. The farmers only received some bamboo rhizomes from the core area of the park, which had been removed without any regard to the mountain gorillas.

The most important problem was that CARE was not willing to cooperate with the established conservation project. Instead of striving for fruitful cooperation, it became increasingly apparent that DTC was trying to take over the conservation project and become the sole organization working in Mgahinga Park. Klaus-Jürgen Sucker was convinced that humans must not use everything for their own purposes.

When the survival of species is at stake, the interests of people must take second place. He stood a chance against the cocked Kalashnikov, but not against the political and financial power of big organizations.

The End

For reasons unknown to date, *Uganda National Parks* transferred Klaus-Jürgen Sucker to another national park at short notice. He was to leave Mgahinga forest by August 1994. On 16 June, he returned from Kampala to his house in Kisoro, after he had tried in vain to find out the reasons for his transfer. During his enquiries in Kampala he received clear warnings that his life was in danger in southwestern Uganda, but he was not able to learn more about the concrete background to this threat.

After he arrived in Kisoro, he started packing his things and made preparations to hand the project over to the park warden. He was found dead on 20 June, with a noose around his neck and his feet on the floor. The other end of the bright red rope was attached to the window bars. On the table in front of him were the remains of his last meal, and packed boxes were everywhere in the house. Both the Ugandan and German authorities were quick to

mention suicide committed by a man who was deeply disappointed by his transfer. However, there are too many circumstances that hint to murder. Why were he and his partner shadowed during the last few weeks before his death?

Various groups, especially CARE, had been waiting for a suitable opportunity to get rid of the disagreeable conservationist forever. Klaus-Jürgen Sucker wanted to start a family last year; there is no farewell letter. As concerns his job, he had definite plans for his work in other Ugandan national parks. Many questions remain open, too many. Like the unsolved and mysterious death of Dian Fossey, the death of Klaus-Jürgen Sucker may never be solved either. In our next issue we will publish a detailed report on the strange activities of CARE/DTC in the conservation work of southwestern Uganda, and we will write about the involvement of the CARE project leaders Philip Franks and Rob Wild in the death of Klaus-Jürgen Sucker.

Fortunately, there are still people who are ready to risk their life for the survival of animal species. Klaus-Jürgen Sucker was one of them. We, his friends, and everybody who knew him, are shocked by his cruel death. Not only have we lost an old and good friend, but also a wonderful, selfless idealist who applied his whole strength and his charismatic personality to the protection and the survival of the "gentle giants". He was a rare example of a determined and courageous nature conservationist. His death leaves a gap which cannot be filled. Another devoted protector of the mountain gorillas has died.

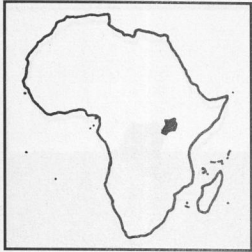
What Remains?

What remains is to carry on as Klaus-Jürgen Sucker would have done. The rangers have carried on with conservation work in the Mgahinga Gorilla National Park according to his ideas.



Bamboo stalks cut illegally

Photo: Ursula Karlowski



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They were convinced that somebody from Germany would eventually come and tell them how the project would be continued. The local peoples' attitude towards the park is altogether positive, and they readily accept the conservation project.

Although CARE has made many promises to the local population – e.g. takeover of the park, higher wages for the rangers, vehicles – nothing has happened; since the death of Klaus-Jürgen Sucker only one representative of CARE has visited the headquarters of the national park briefly.

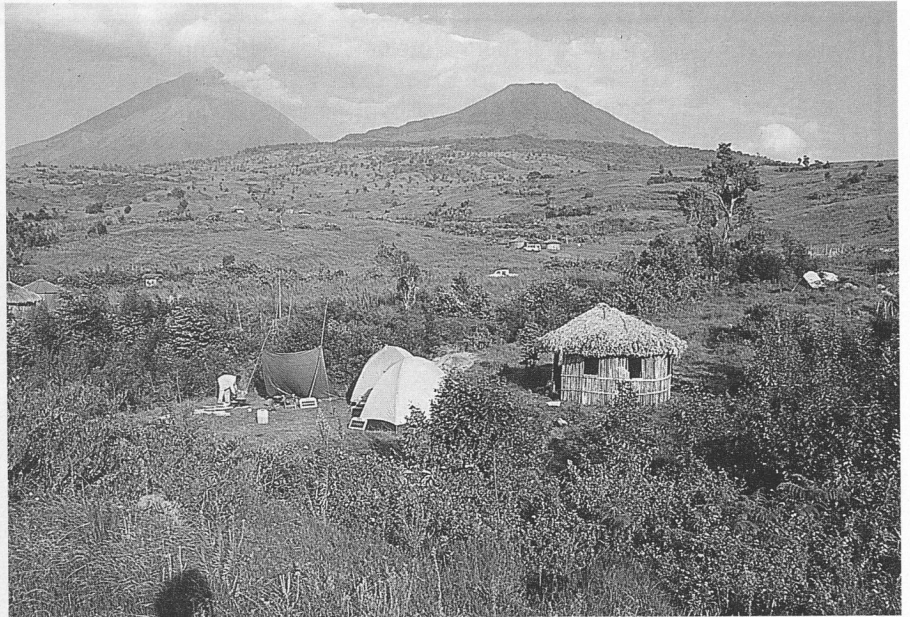
Had the rangers not been so well trained by Klaus-Jürgen Sucker and had they not trusted in further support from Germany, the conservation work in the park would have stopped completely. The local people feel deceived by the American aid organization. Therefore, they happily welcomed Karl-Heinz Kohnen and Ulrich Karlowski of the BRD board of directors when they visited the project in November 1994 and announced the further support of the park.

The two BRD-representatives also met Dr. Eric Edroma, the director of *Uganda National Parks*, in Kampala, as well as representatives of several organizations, to discuss the possibilities for a reestablishment of the Mgahinga Gorilla National Park Project.

Ulrich Karlowski

The Mgahinga Gorilla National Park Should Live on

We must not allow Klaus-Jürgen Sucker's highly successful conservation work made on behalf of the mountain gorillas and their forest to be in vain. The *Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe* wants to continue his legacy in the Mgahinga Gorilla National Park according to his concept. Our friend has died, but the ideals for which he lived and fought have not.



Camping ground for tourists, July 1993. In the background the rondavels of the National Park Station

Photo: Klaus-Jürgen Sucker

In November 1994 Karl-Heinz Kohnen and Ulrich Karlowski tried to assess the situation and to find out how the project might continue. In lengthy negotiations with the Ugandan authorities and in spite of the uncompromising resistance of CARE and their supporters, USAID, they agreed on the following points among others:

1. The multiple-use project laid down in the management plan for the Mgahinga Gorilla National Park will be studied by an acknowledged gorilla specialist as soon as possible, in order to determine the project's effects on the gorillas and their habitat. The recommendations in this report shall be included in the management plan.

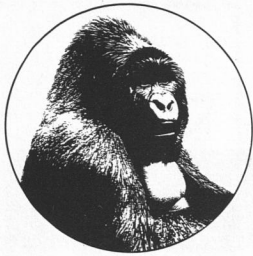
2. A gorilla specialist who will be chosen and supported by German conservation organizations will start as the new project leader in Mgahinga Gorilla National Park via the *Institute of Tropical Forest Conservation*. One result of the involvement of this institute is that the project will not be under the influence of CARE and USAID.

3. German conservation organizations are to take over the activities in the park that have been planned by CARE/DTC. This is an essential prerequisite for a continuation of the work that Klaus-Jürgen Sucker started: CARE/DTC must not influence the work in the park.

4. A reforestation project for the degraded Zone 2 that had been initiated by Klaus-Jürgen Sucker can be carried out as planned.

The results of the negotiations were accepted by all German conservation organizations involved. The responsible Ugandan authorities will discuss the project proposal and decide on it. By modifying the management plan, the legal prerequisites for the re-establishment of the project are to be established. It was emphasized that a large-scale support from Germany for the Mgahinga Gorilla National Park is only possible, if the above points are stipulated in the management plan.

*Ulrich Karlowski
and Karl-Heinz Kohnen*



APPEAL FOR DONATIONS



Urgent Appeal for Donations to Pay the Rangers of the Mgahinga Gorilla National Park – to Continue the Work Where Others Only Broke their Promises

The leaders of the CARE/DTC project had promised a lot to the rangers of the Mgahinga Gorilla National Park: better wages, vehicles, computers. However, the dubious attempt to take over the project failed. They could not keep any of their pompous promises. Suddenly, the national park and its rangers had to get along without any support. The conservation work was close to a breakdown.

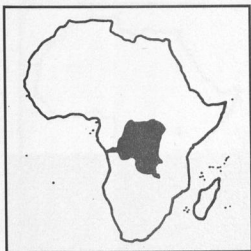
Karl-Heinz Kohnen and Ulrich Karlowski found out during their trip to Uganda in November 1994 that the rangers, who had been very well trained and highly motivated by Klaus-Jürgen Sucker, had continued their work as far as possible under extremely bad conditions, although they did not receive the topping ups to their wages and the necessary equipment. They hope with great confidence that the project will be re-established by German organizations. They feel betrayed and deceived by CARE.

Karl-Heinz Kohnen and Ulrich Karlowski informed the rangers that the topping ups to their wages for the second half of 1994 would be paid by the *Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe* before Christmas. These topping ups for the 32 rangers for 6 months total about \$ 5,000. The regular wages, which are paid by *Uganda National Parks*, are not enough to live on. Help us to do the work that others can not do or do not want to do.

Support our appeal for "Rangers in Mgahinga Gorilla National Park" with your donation!

Bank Account number: 353 344 315
 Stadtparkasse Muelheim, Germany; bank code number 362 500 00





ZAIRE

Progress Report: Survey of the Eastern Lowland Gorilla

The aims of this inventory were to estimate the population densities of various large mammals with special emphasis on the eastern lowland gorilla, to characterize the types of vegetation, to determine the most pertinent conservation issues and to suggest solutions to these problems. This was intended to be achieved in several phases. During the first phase, from January to August 1994, the methodology was outlined and the census initiated.

Our activities were concentrated on the extended portion of the Kahuzi-Biega National Park. The Nindja sector was expressly avoided due to conflicts between the local population and the national park. We chose Itebero (in the north-east) and Nzovu (in the south-west) as our study sites because of the possibilities to communicate with the outside and to evacuate members of the team in case of an accident.

From the three methods for estimating population densities (complete census, dividing the study site into squares, line-transects), we decided to use line-transects, as this was the only realistic means of obtaining estimates over the large areas involved. Two types of studies were carried out: one in the area where transects were cut and our base camps were stationed, and one in areas particularly difficult to work in. In the second study, vegetation types were determined and animal tracks counted, so that we could estimate population densities.

Results

We investigated three zones in the Itebero sector and one in the Nzovu sector. The four zones were studied in 80 km, 71 km, 74.5 km and 100 km long transects, respectively. In the Itebero sector, the gorilla population density was higher than expected. We also found human activities, especially poaching. In the Nzovu sector the gorilla density was lower than expected.

There was even more human activity there than in the Itebero sector.

Discussion and Tentative Conclusions

The extension of the Kahuzi-Biega National Park has a very diverse fauna. We found gorillas in all examined vegetation zones, yet their numbers were low. In contrast to our impressions at the beginning of the census, their distribution does not appear to be homogeneous. Intensive, widely distributed human activities were determined in Nzovu, where the gorilla population density was the lowest, and to the west of Utu, where human activity was much higher than in Itebero. Poaching was the primary human activity. In areas with former gold mining activity, the vegetation is less dense, and secondary forest predominates. The miners' activities are often combined with hunting.

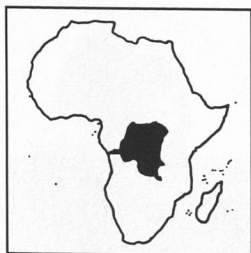
The negative impact of the human population at Nindja is evident. In the highly populated region close to the 3 km corridor connecting the old and the new part of the park, the local people clearly do not accept the park, and poaching is common. Some experts and members of the IZCN/GTZ project who are concerned with implementing developmental programs, and even some local people who support them, have been intimidated and even threatened with death. The human population density is very high; about 20,000 persons live in the Nindja community, and the refugees from Rwanda have drastically increased this number. We suspect that two gorilla groups have been isolated from the rest of the gorillas in the old part of the park. The influence of the habitat on the distribution of gorillas has so far not been assessed. It is dangerous, however, to extrapolate from one zone to another.

Tentative Recommendations

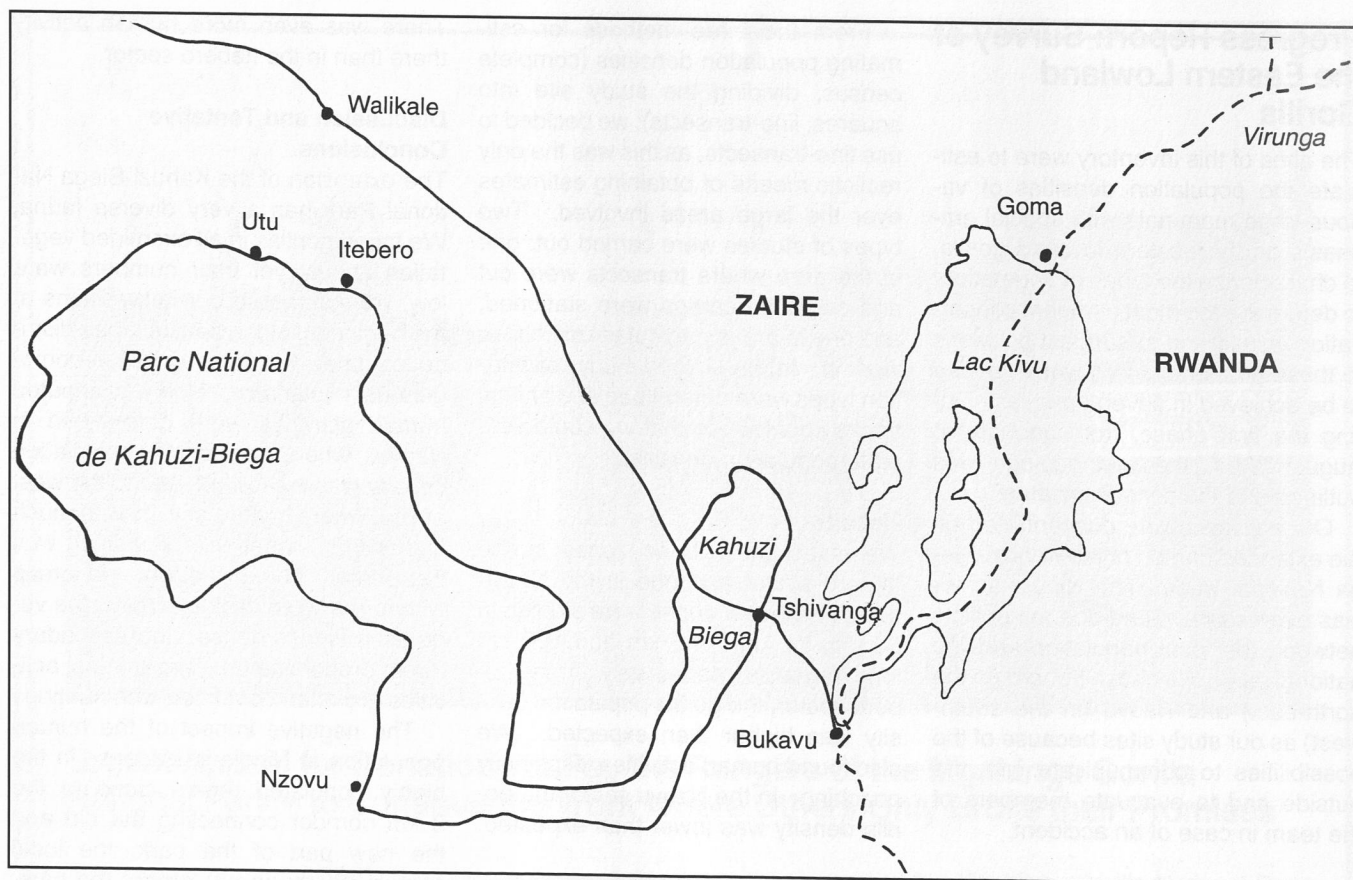
- Education of the local people in the Itebero-Kyasse and the Itebero-Isangi



Claude Sikubwabo Kiyengo (left) with guides of the Kahuzi-Biega National Park
Photo: Elizabeth Williamson



ZAIRE



stretches of the Itebero zone and in the Kigulube-Nzovu-Lulingo stretch of the Nzovu zone. We ask the IZCN/GTZ project to consider expanding its educational activities to these areas.

- Research programs addressing the impact of human activities on the animals should be initiated.
- More effort should be made to reduce poaching.

Summary of a report written by Omari Ilambu, Jefferson Hall, Inogwabini Bila Isia, Dumbo Bonny, Mankindu Ngombe Bisengo, Sikubwabo Kiyengo, Lee White and Elizabeth Williamson.

Refugees from Rwanda and the Gorillas

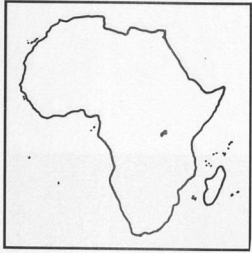
Rwandese refugees have found shelter in camps located in eastern Zaire,

some not far from the national parks where gorillas are living. There is a camp in Jomba, the village which used to be the starting point for guided tours to the mountain gorillas of the Virunga National Park. Considering the large number of refugees who require food and firewood, it is obvious that they have to use protected areas to collect these necessities and consequently damage the forest. Their presence also increases the risk that diseases are spread from humans to gorillas.

At the end of November, the IUCN reported that 300 km² of the Virunga National Park had already been deforested. It is cut by the up to 40,000 people who enter the park and take out between 410 and 770 tonnes of forest products every day. Among them are Rwandan and Zairean soldiers who sell the wood to refugees.

According to reports that have not been confirmed by the GTZ, another camp housing some 50,000 persons is situated at the corridor of the Kahuzi-Biega National Park. The natural vegetation in this area has already been substantially destroyed and if it disappears, the two gorilla populations in the park will be isolated from each other.

According to the GTZ, the number of rangers in Kahuzi-Biega Park was increased to 100 in an attempt to prevent the people from killing gorillas. Members of the GTZ project in Bukavu and the management of the national park are doing their best to ensure that any damage to the park is kept to a minimum. For example, the distribution of firewood to the refugees serves to minimize the number of trees cut down.



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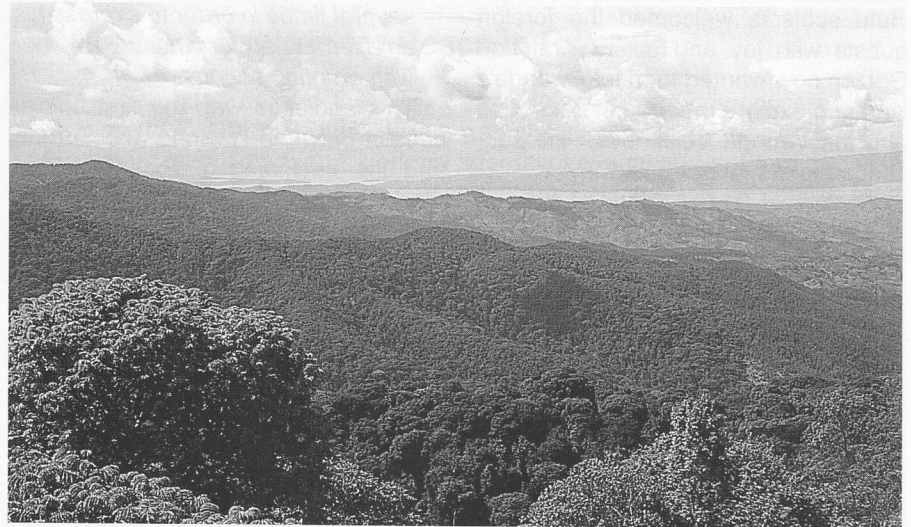
Rwanda's Discovery by Europe – a Hundred Years Ago

Rwanda was discovered very late; in fact, Africa became the continent which was unveiled last despite its proximity to Europe. The motive for travels to Africa by explorers such as Richard Burton, John Hanning Speke, Theodor Heuglin, Samuel White Baker, Henry Morton Stanley and Oskar Baumann was mainly the quest for the origin of the Nile river, which had already been tackled by the Romans. However, the Nile sources were only discovered in 1898 by the German doctor Richard Kandt. His book *Caput Nili – Eine empfindsame Reise zu den Quellen des Nils* (*Caput Nili – a sensitive journey to the sources of the Nile*), which was published in 1904, became a classic of German literature on Africa.

An Unexplored German Colony

From approximately 1880 onward, after the European powers Great Britain, France, Germany and Belgium had staked their respective areas of influence, Africa was slowly partitioned between them. In this process, the German Empire acquired some colonies as well. This was the period of the last years of Bismarck's Chancellorship, from 1884 onwards. In November of that year, Bismarck had convoked the so-called Congo Conference in Berlin, where the Congo was acknowledged as the possession of the Belgian King Leopold II and where German claims to the area that would later become German East Africa were asserted.

German and Belgian spheres of interest clashed in the still unexplored area of Rwanda or Eastern Congo. In 1890 the so-called Helgoland-Zanzibar treaty between Germany and England ruled that Rwanda should belong to Germany. However, the geographical knowledge of the northwestern corner of the new German protectorate was



View of Lake Kivu from the research station Uwinka in the Nyungwe Forest (2500 m high)

Photo: Fritz Dieterlen

very limited. That is where the legendary Rwanda was situated. The information was almost exclusively restricted to what Stanley had heard from travellers to Africa and published in 1878. A journey to Rwanda was therefore regarded as a dangerous undertaking.

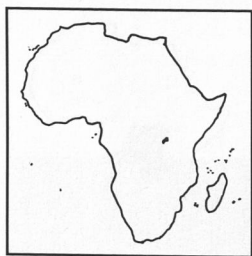
Oskar Baumann was the first one to go on an expedition to this country, if only for a relatively short period of time. However, the first person to make up his mind to explore Rwanda was the Prussian officer G. A. Graf von Götzen. This courageous but, at the same time, very circumspect man of 28 years equipped a big expedition from his own funds and without any commercial intentions. He wrote later in his travelog *Durch Afrika von Ost nach West* (*Through Africa from East to West*):

That is why the extreme northwest of our East African sphere of interest has always been the area which particularly drew my attention. Other travellers had reported that it was there that the powerful kingdom of Rwanda was situated, completely untouched by the outer world and successfully defending itself against

any strange intruders. The story goes on that there is a mountain in its northwestern part which belches out steam and fire while sounding like thunder and which spreads a red glow far into the distance... My first and for the time being only goal was Rwanda and the fire mountain.

The expedition, which consisted of more than 600 people, started from the east coast of Africa on 21 December 1893 and reached the catholic mission Maria Hilf southwest of Lake Victoria after 3 months. In April 1894 they continued in the direction of Rwanda. By then, the caravan had dwindled to 362 members, among others three Germans, six Somali soldiers, 37 askaris and 250 porters. In addition there was a herd of cattle, three mules and one dog. Graf von Götzen now had changed his plan; he wanted to try to proceed to the west in the direction of the river Congo. On this river he wanted to take a boat to the Atlantic Ocean.

On 2 May 1894, Graf von Götzen crossed the border to Rwanda at the southern tip of the country. When the expedition crossed the river Kagera in boats, both the ruling Tutsi and their



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Hutu subjects welcomed the foreign guests with joy and gifts. Graf von Götzen now wanted to meet Rwanda's king and explore the area of Lake Kivu and the Virunga Volcanoes. He succeeded in the latter on 24 May:

So far we had progressed through wonderfully cultivated land, over mountain slopes, which mostly could be scaled without difficulty, through seemingly endless, deeply dark banana groves, and then again over lush meadows. The density of the population, the well cultivated bean fields ... excited our admiration. Now all of a sudden we stood in front of massive mountain chains, whose tops were shrouded in clouds and whose slopes were coloured with deep black. It took only little imagination to arrive at the assumption that the highest tops, hidden in clouds, were covered by snow.

They were looking at the Virunga Mountains. In the evening the watchmen woke everybody by crying "The sky is burning!" Now they had no more doubts that the mountains were active volcanoes.

First Contacts

On 30 May 1894, Graf von Götzen succeeded in meeting the Rwandan King Kigeri IV (1853–1895). He described the meeting as follows:

Luabugiri and his close relatives certainly have to be counted among the greatest people under the sun. They would cause a sensation if they were taken to Europe... Luabugiri's features were of peculiar beauty. He was wearing a wreath of green leaves around his forehead... He moved clumsily, and it was obvious that he was not used to walking but to being carried usually. We waited calmly till Luabugiri, as was his custom, had started to suck pombe with a thin straw, then we began a ceremonial conversation which was interrupted by Luabugiri

several times in order to express his amazement at our white skin colour with grunting sounds.

This audience was the first official contact between Rwanda and Europe and the beginning of Rwandan-German relations. Impressed by the Tutsi king's personality and physical height, Graf von Götzen overestimated his actual power. He did not know that other rulers existed, Hutu kings among them, who questioned Luabugiri's claim to leadership.

After he had seen Lake Kivu, Graf von Götzen travelled to the Atlantic Ocean via the Congo river and finally back to Europe. In 1901, he became governor of German East Africa for 5 years.

More expeditions went to Rwanda, but they were guided by military personnel. Military posts were founded so that German power could be established even in the last corner of the colony. The Rwandan king became an ally against the Belgians who claimed part of the country for themselves. Border problems were solved by demarcating a natural border along Lake Kivu. Richard Kandt, who had discovered the source of the Nile, was appointed Imperial Resident for Rwanda in 1907, because he knew the country best, and kept this position until 1914.

Kandt tried to develop Rwanda economically and infrastructurally as carefully as possible, by keeping its traditional structures. Since 1908 the name of the Residence of Rwanda had been Kigali.

Continuing Development

Rwanda was transferred from German to Belgian administration during World War I, in 1916. Economical interests took precedence; cash crops like tea and coffee were introduced and mineral resources were surveyed. The colonial masters took advantage of the existing class system and strengthened it. With the help of the ruling Tutsi they oppressed the Hutu majority with violence, forced labour and taxation. This deepened the gulf between the peoples.

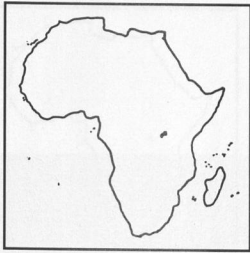
In 1956, the Belgians started to organise elections for consultative councils. Both Tutsi and Hutu rebelled against this plan. In 1961, the monarchy was abolished, King Kigeri V, who was not very popular with the Hutu, was finally deposed and the Hutu took power. They massacred many Tutsi. In essence, this triggered off the conflict that has lasted until today. Rwanda became independent on 7 July 1962.

Fritz Dieterlen



The Virunga Volcanoes, viewed from the southwest. From left to right: Sabinyo, Gahinga and Muhavura

Photo: Fritz Dieterlen



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News from Karisoke

Immediately after the Rwandan president was assassinated in April and the genocide began, Dr. Pascale Sicotte – who was then director of the Karisoke Research Center – was forced to evacuate all expatriate staff. She left money and supplies for the 30 anti-poaching rangers, who remained at Karisoke to continue tracking gorilla groups and cutting poachers' snares. By May the *Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund* was maintaining a supply line through Goma in Zaire to the rangers, who continued to track the gorillas daily. The men's reports remained positive. Even the two Rwandan researchers from Butare University had returned to work at Karisoke.

Pascale Sicotte flew to Zaire in July. She had only just begun setting up temporary operations in Goma when fighting in northwestern Rwanda forced a multitude of Rwandans to flee to Zaire. The Karisoke rangers feared the worst and joined the millions who crossed the border to Goma. Dr. Sicotte was able to set up a separate special camp for the men at Bukima.

By mid-August the *Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund's* executive director, Dieter Steklis, travelled to Rwanda with Ian Redmond to meet representatives of the new government, assess the condition of the gorillas and negotiate the safe return of the men. He was assured that the Fund could quickly return its rangers to Karisoke and resume working in Rwanda, and the government also categorically affirmed their commitment to protecting the mountain gorillas.

During their visit, Dieter Steklis and Ian Redmond found that Karisoke had been badly damaged by looters. However, the three study groups (Beetsme's, Pablo's and Shinda's) were in good form, and there had been four new births in 19 weeks. The *Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund* wants to rebuild Karisoke as soon as possible and to resume the full conservation programme.

When the Rwandan staff tried to return to Karisoke, they were attacked by an armed mob. Several of them were injured. In the meantime, 15 staff members have returned to Karisoke from their exile in Zaire and resumed daily gorilla protection patrols. Two new babies have been born since.

Summary of information provided by the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund, September and November 1994

The Mountain Gorilla Health Care Program of Morris Animal Foundation

Answering a plea from the late Dian Fossey, the *Morris Animal Foundation*

established the Volcano Veterinary Center (VVC) to provide health care management for the endangered mountain gorillas. The VVC is one of few programs in the world to monitor the health of an endangered species in its natural habitat.

Since establishing the center in 1986, the VVC is the veterinary laboratory, home of the director, and visitor center. The sporadic conflict turned catastrophic in April 1994 when fighting escalated between the Hutu and Tutsi. For the second time in 2 years, the VVC staff set up operations from temporary posts because of damage and looting to the facility.

The Coopers

John Cooper and his wife Margaret moved from their Tanzania home to

Results: A Petition for Peace in Rwanda

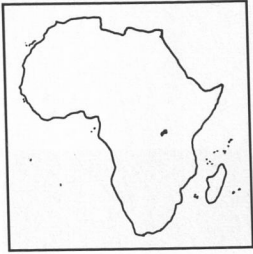
The Columbus Zoo and the *Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund* co-sponsored *A Petition for Peace in Rwanda*, which was also supported by the BRD. To facilitate distribution, we utilized the international network and format developed during earlier petition campaigns for Rwanda and its gorillas in 1991 and 1993.

On 3 May 1994, we faxed and mailed petitions to zoos, museums, universities, non-profit organizations and individuals. People of diverse backgrounds from around the world mounted petition drives in their communities. In only 8 weeks, we received signatures from citizens in 50 countries, including every state in the U.S. Petitions were distributed by 84 zoos and aquariums, 45 universities, 35 non-profit organizations, 80 businesses, 65 schools and individuals. People from the world community demonstrated that they were concerned about the people and wildlife in Rwanda and were willing to do something to help.

On 29 July 1994, the petitions were delivered to the U.S. Mission at the UN. Ambassador Madeleine K. Albright stated in a letter dated 11 August 1994 "... I wish to thank your colleagues for their strong commitment to the people of Rwanda and for bringing peace to the region".

During the three petition campaigns more than 250,000 people have signed petitions. This would not have been possible without the hard work of thousands of concerned citizens. We wish to thank everyone who distributed and collected petitions. Your efforts on behalf of the people and mountain gorillas of Rwanda are greatly appreciated. Our voices were heard...

Charlene Jendry



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administer the VVC and mountain gorilla health care program in October 1993. As a professor of veterinary medicine in Tanzania, Dr. Cooper was responsible for teaching avian medicine and preparing a wildlife syllabus. He assisted with wildlife cases, built links with a baboon research project and advised several animal farms. Dr. Cooper is a British veterinarian with broad interests and experience of wildlife and tropical diseases with post-graduate qualifications in pathology and avian medicine.

Margaret Cooper is a lawyer with a special interest in animal conservation law who has written a book and several papers on this subject. She assists Dr. Cooper at the VVC in a voluntary capacity.

The Coopers' work in Rwanda is primarily concerned with providing veterinary service to the national parks, with a specific focus on the endangered mountain gorilla. Destroyed during the war in 1993, the Coopers rebuilt and expanded the VVC to provide a high quality diagnostic service. It is deve-

loping academic links with veterinary and zoological institutions in Africa, the Middle East, Europe and North America. Much of the day-to-day activity of the VVC involves health monitoring and disease prevention for the mountain gorillas.

Gorilla Health Care

Veterinary work with the gorillas is essentially non-interventional; animals are only immobilized if they have a disease or injury that is life-threatening or human-induced. Gorilla health monitoring includes examination of fecal samples for parasites, and introducing and enforcing rules to minimize the risk of spread of disease from humans to animals.

Anti-poaching patrols, trackers and scientists share information about the mountain gorillas to insure that the health care needs are met and necessary injuries treated. The VVC's staff and Karisoke Research Center communicate regularly to share information and observations on the gorillas.

In times of peace, Dr. Cooper and his Rwandan staff make regular visits to each mountain gorilla group. Dr. Cooper shares some veterinary responsibilities with his Rwandan counterpart. Monthly veterinary visits to the groups include observing the animals, taking photographs and discussing observations with the Karisoke staff.

Every week two fecal samples are collected from each group. Samples from the dominant silverback and any one other animal are collected from research groups. Veterinarians also collect samples for bacteriology.

A common health concern is respiratory disease, some forms of which, if left untreated, can spread throughout an entire group causing fatalities. A common injury is caused by snares illegally set to trap antelope. Mountain gorillas foraging for food, or moving through the park, get caught in the snares. The wire or rope snares can wrap tightly around a finger, arm, leg or wrist. Mountain gorillas are unable to remove the snares that embed in their skin. If the snares are not removed, gangrene, or other serious infection, can lead to death.

Located in Ruhengeri at the base of the Parc National des Volcans, the VVC welcomes local people and visitors. The Coopers extend their hospitality to tourists and share information about Rwanda's conservation projects by giving education programs to local groups. The continuation of a wildlife conservation program depends on the support of the local people for such a program to exist.

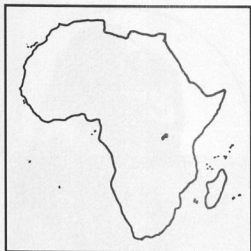
The Crisis

Rwanda is a small densely populated country. Prior to the war, an estimated 9 million people lived on approximately 10,000 km². The average family had a small plot of land to grow vegetables and beans for as many as nine children. With exhausting human resources, wildlife and environmental conser-

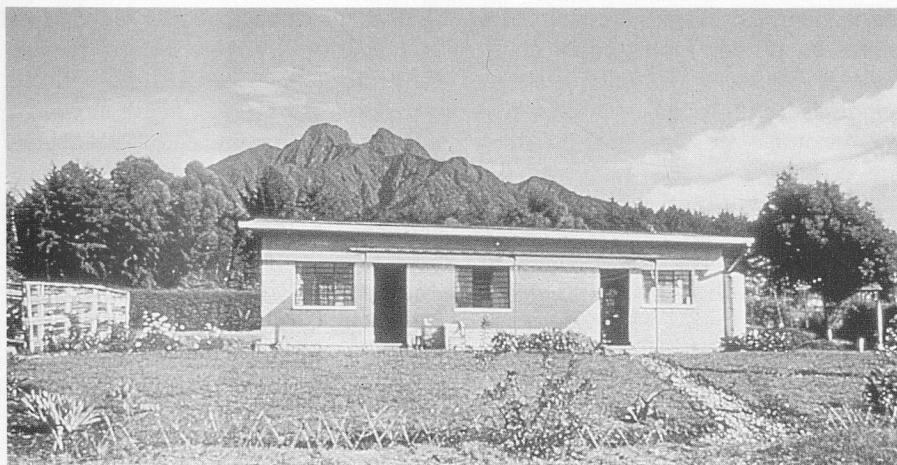


John and Margaret Cooper

Photo: Morris Animal Foundation



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The Volcano Veterinary Center before the looting

Photo: Morris Animal Foundation

vation programs face challenges from the increasing need for land, food, fuel and employment. Mountain gorilla tourism has been the third-leading source of income for the country.

Since the most recent political conflict between the Tutsi and Hutu, after the death of the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi, new challenges have been presented to Rwanda's people and wildlife conservation programs. In April 1994, Dr. Cooper wrote:

My wife and I left Rwanda, reluctantly, on 9 April. At the time we expected to return within a few days, believing that the fighting would be short-lived. We left the Center operational so that a limited amount of health monitoring could continue.

Instead, the Coopers faced evacuation to Britain via Zaire, Burundi and Kenya. Despite this experience that would change their lives forever, the Coopers remained committed to their responsibility on behalf of the VVC and to their Rwandan colleagues and friends.

Back to Work

During mid-June, Dr. Cooper returned to the town of Goma. He was hoping to make contact with his Rwandan coun-

terparts and learn of news relating to the VVC and mountain gorilla project. Dr. Cooper also administered veterinary care for refugees' animals and aided in the treatment of a mountain gorilla in Zaire. He reported:

I sit here in Goma, with Lake Kivu stretching out in front of me and a bird calling from a tree. It's peaceful and idyllic. But to my left, only a couple of miles away, are the hills and mountains of Rwanda and I can just make out Gisenyi, from which we were evacuated 2 months ago. Where horrible atrocities have been committed. It's difficult to believe the contrast.

The trip up to the forest today was great fun. The 7 mile track up the mountain would under normal circumstances be a satisfactory route for a four-wheel drive vehicle taking staff or tourists up to the point where they set off on foot for the gorillas. But the track is rapidly deteriorating since the Rwandan war. Tourists have stopped coming here and today it poured with rain and the ruts and potholes were a nightmare! The rain eased off for the climb on foot and this was lovely – like going up from Kinigi.

The silverback in the Zairian group Rafiki was suffering from bee stings. His face was swollen. This was a bad sign because Rafiki was already suffering from a bad wound caused by a buffalo. Dr. Cooper administered to Rafiki. Follow-up reports indicate he is healing satisfactorily.

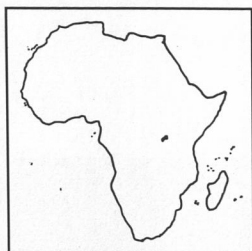
Communication with his Rwandan counterparts brought the news of the death of Effie, one of the oldest known mountain gorillas. Effie is believed to have died of natural causes at the estimated age of at least 40. Effie was a member of Dian Fossey's study Group 5 until 1993 and stayed with Pablo until her death on 16 April 1994. When Effie was first identified by Fossey in 1967, she was estimated to be 13 years old and had already given birth to at least one infant. Effie had seven known offspring, all females. In January and February 1994, it was noted that Effie was lagging behind her group.

There is no evidence of injury or death to the mountain gorillas resulting from the war. In fact, there have been several births. Dr. Cooper suggests that the greatest impact on the health of the mountain gorillas will be the increase in human presence in their territory.

Returning to Rwanda

Presently, Dr. Cooper has moved the temporary operations of the VVC to Nairobi. Being one of the first expatriots to re-enter Rwanda, he has made several trips to assess the situation, to inspect the VVC and obtain up-to-date information on the national park, its wildlife and surrounding areas.

His visits have not proven easy. During the first return to Kinigi near the edge of the park, the site of the VVC since 1986, Cooper was apprehended by heavily armed RPF soldiers. It took much discussion in English, French and Swahili before he was permitted to proceed on foot to inspect the VVC and



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ORTPN (the Rwandan National Parks Authority) Office in Kinigi. He found both facilities damaged and looted with their contents strewn around outside.

Some Rwandans stayed or returned to the area including children of one of the VVC staff who recognized and greeted the resident veterinarian – Dr. Cooper. This proved helpful on the way to Ruhengeri when, again, he was interrogated.

Dr. Cooper has been able to establish important relationships with Rwanda's new ORTPN Director, Mr. Nkundiyarenye. Permission was granted to resume mountain gorilla conservation and health care programs under the new government. Mr. Nkundiyarenye also requested veterinary advice for other parks in Rwanda.

The mountain gorillas continue to exist peacefully in their rain forest home. Ironically, the high risk of military mines located at the park's perimeter may be deterring refugees and military from traveling through the park, creating a refuge for the mountain goril-

las amidst the human turmoil. The mines have been making it difficult to enter the park. Mr. Nkundiyarenye suggested that access to the park will become available when the mines are cleared and ORTPN guides and guards are appointed.

The threat of extinction continues for the mountain gorillas. Rwandans are encroaching on the park, cutting wood for shelters and fires. There is heightened risk of the transmission of human disease from refugee activity in and around the park. The potential is increased for snare injuries because of possible increases in illegal hunting in the park.

In order to meet the set-backs and turbulent political strife in Rwanda, *Morris Animal Foundation* is making arrangements to establish a mobile veterinary unit. Mobility will allow Dr. Cooper to visit the mountain gorillas from the safest and most convenient entry point into the park, and provide veterinary care where it is needed in the country.

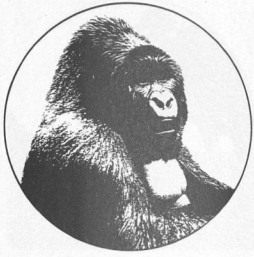
The catastrophic Rwandan war has launched the Coopers into a role well beyond their initial arrangement to monitor the health care of mountain gorillas and wildlife, and manage the VVC's staff and laboratory. They have witnessed the destruction of their Rwandan home, personal belongings and years of veterinary research materials. They have mourned the hardships and losses of friends and associates. They have witnessed human atrocities and slept in blood-stained hotel rooms. Yet, when many others would have given up, the Coopers continue hoping for a sustainable wildlife conservation program in Rwanda.

Morris Animal Foundation is a nonprofit organization that was founded in 1948 by the veterinarian Mark L. Morris to sponsor health studies for cats, dogs, horses and wildlife. Since then it has sponsored 600 studies that have been instrumental in advancing veterinary medicine for many animal health problems.



The heavily damaged and looted Volcano Veterinary Center when it was inspected after the fightings

Photos: John and Margaret Cooper



GORILLAS



Members of the Sabinyo group in Rwanda

Photo: John Cooper

Causes of Death and Diseases of Gorillas in the Wild

Captive gorillas are frequently infected with pathogens transmitted by other animals or humans. A drastic change in diet, environment or persistent psychological stress can cause pathogens and parasites which live in their body to multiply and thereby cause illness, although they are not dangerous under

normal conditions. Free-ranging gorillas are also susceptible to human pathogens. The first incidence which became known of a free-ranging gorilla that was infected with a pathogen most probably coming from humans occurred in Rwanda in 1988. The autopsy revealed that the animal had suffered from viral pneumonia. As a precaution against further infection, all gorilla groups which had regular contact with humans were successfully vaccinated

using blowpipes to administer the vaccine.

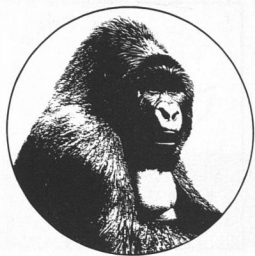
Diseases of the Respiratory Tract

The mountainous climate of the Virunga Volcanoes is chilly and damp, and the gorillas seem not to be optimally adapted to these conditions although they have been living there for thousands of years. Due to the moist climate, gorillas frequently succumb to diseases of the respiratory tract, notably pneumonia, which are the most common cause of death in the mountain gorillas of the Virunga Volcanoes. Wild gorillas may suffer from colds, coughs, rhinitis, sinusitis and inflammations of the laryngeal sac, especially in times of heavy precipitation. If the weather is fine, mountain gorillas can often be seen lying in the sun, while gorillas in the lowland generally seek the coolness of the shade.

Complaints Due to Old Age

In comparison to the dentition of other great apes, the teeth of gorillas show only slight attrition. Whereas western lowland gorillas sometimes get caries, the mountain gorillas' diet is low in sugar, and caries is therefore rare in these animals. However, their teeth commonly have a blackish colour, and tartar often leads to periodontal disease and gingivitis, reabsorption of the jaw bone and eventually toothloss. As a consequence of tooth decay, the sinuses of the upper jaw can become inflamed, especially in males. Frequently in adult gorillas the teeth of the upper jaw may be so affected that the dental roots are exposed. It is possible that older animals actually starve to death because they are unable to chew their food. Lowland gorillas, on the other hand, deposit considerably less tartar and rarely have periodontal disease.

Animals aged 35 years and older frequently suffer from arthritis, particularly affecting the joints of their hands



GORILLAS

and feet. Afflicted animals therefore require more time to forage, feed and move than non-affected group members. However, healthy group members usually adjust their activities to meet the needs of slower family members.

Ectoparasites and Skin Diseases

The jigger *Tunga penetrans*, the tick *Rhipicephalus appendiculatus* and the mite *Sarcoptes scabiei*, all common human ectoparasites, are also occasionally found on gorillas. The gorilla louse *Phthirus gorillae* belongs to the same genus as the human louse *Phthirus pubis*.

Lowland gorillas are occasionally affected by yaws, a chronic infection caused by the bacterium *Treponema pertenue* and spread by body contact. Yaws can cause necrosis of the tissue down to the bone, similar to leprosy.

Endoparasites

The digestive tract of gorillas may contain a variety of parasites (e.g. *Balanitidium coli*, *Entamoeba histolytica* and *Strongyloides fuelleborni*) which also infect humans and various mammals. Some other endoparasites are known in humans and African apes, including the hookworm *Ancylostoma duodenale*, various *Necator* species, and *Onchocerca volvulus*. The pinworm *Enterobius vermiciformis* has only been found in the lowland gorilla, while the tapeworm *Anoplocephala gorillae* has only been found in the mountain gorilla. Various African primates are also hosts to the threadworm *Oesophagostomum stephanostomum*, the most prevalent intestinal parasite of the lowland gorilla. Besides, many species are parasites in the stomach and small intestine of gorillas, e.g. *Probstmayria gorillae*, *Murshidia devians* and several species of trichostrongylids, worms of the intestinal tract. A strong infection with those parasites may result in gastritis. Protozoa, e.g. of the genus *Troglodytella*,

are very common; however, it is not yet clear whether they are intestinal parasites or actually aid digestion.

Occasionally the filaria *Loa loa*, also found in humans, lives in the connective tissue of the abdominal cavity and in the musculature of the gorilla, the filaria *Mansonella perstans* is found in the connective tissue and various species of *Dipetalonema* in the skin. The threadworm *Tetrapetalonema vanhoofi* may be found in the lymphatic and the blood system of gorillas (also in the gall bladder of chimpanzees). The lungs of gorillas and other old world monkeys, but not of humans, may be infected with mites of the genus *Pneumonyssus*.

Various forms of malaria have been diagnosed in western lowland gorillas. The species *Plasmodium rodhaini*, which infects both gorillas and chimpanzees, is most likely identical to *Plasmodium malariae*, which also affects humans. In fact, it is the only malaria pathogen which affects both African apes and humans under natural conditions. The other types of human malaria do not appear to threaten gorillas, just as the gorilla malaria species *P. reichenowi* and *P. schwezi*, which are also found in chimpanzees, are apparently not dangerous for humans under natural conditions.

Injuries and Fatalities Caused by Conspecifics

Humans are probably responsible for most killings of gorillas in the wild. However, many individuals die during interactions with conspecifics. At least 37% of all mountain gorillas in Rwanda who die within the first 3 years of life succumb to injuries incurred by conspecifics – infanticide. Infants are known to die most frequently when their mothers transfer to another group, or when the leading silverback dies and a new silverback assumes leadership of the group. In general, silverbacks are responsible for these infanti-

cides, only rarely blackback males, and according to the observations which have been recorded so far, females never kill infants.

Infanticide by a new group leader has been documented in other primate species as well, for example in human langurs, baboons and chimpanzees. Since nursing naturally suppresses the resumption of hormonal cycles with ovulation in lactating females, infants in their first year of life who still have to be nursed for at least another 2 years are particularly vulnerable to infanticide. The oldest infant killed in this context was nearly 3 years old.

Adult gorillas also attack other adults and may receive and inflict wounds during intergroup encounters. It is estimated that 62% of all injuries to mountain gorillas of the Virunga Volcanoes are the result of intergroup confrontations. The wounds usually heal quickly, but they may also lead to death. During fights between silverback males, their canines may break off and sometimes even get stuck in the skull of the opponent. Injuries incurred during such fights have been fatal in several cases which were recorded in the Virunga Volcanoes.

Angela Meder

Many thanks to Ute Eilenberger for her revision of the manuscript and for valuable additional information.





VIEWPOINT

As some of the contributions in our journal deal with difficult subjects, we are very much interested in providing or discussing alternative opinions. On this page we present a reaction to the contribution on "AIDS in Africa" in our last issue.

AIDS in Africa Is No Myth

Lucia Reisch's article on "Aids in Africa" in *Gorilla Journal* 1/1994 was very timely. The conservation community in Africa is deeply concerned about the impact of AIDS on the continent, which is surely going to be devastating as so many of the nation's most productive age are removed.

May we comment on one of Lucia Reisch's statements, however, and express very strong criticism of the box article "No Aids in Africa? 'The epidemic that never was'" that accompanied Lucia Reisch's piece in the *Gorilla Journal*.

Lucia Reisch wrote, "It is assumed that Tanzanian troops brought the (HIV) virus into Uganda through rapes and prostitution, when they invaded the country in the mid-1980s." This is a potentially divisive statement. A long history of countries blaming others for introducing disease should cause extreme scepticism about such assumptions. Any allegation should surely be made after only the most careful and substantiated research. That is missing in the present case. Why is HIV in Uganda blamed on Tanzanian troops raping in the mid-1980s, when so many other means and sources of transmission are possible and hypothesized, and when HIV was first detected in Uganda before then? In Uganda, HIV was first detected in 1982 on a major trading route, and there is no way of telling whether Tanzania introduced the virus to Uganda, Uganda introduced it to Tanzania, or whether it came from somewhere else (D. Serwadda et al., 1985, *The Lancet*, 19.

October; S. Okware, 1987, *Western Journal of Medicine*, 147, 726).

But that allegation pales by comparison to the damage inherent in the publicity given to a minority opinion that there is not an AIDS epidemic in Africa. It is definitely an editor's responsibility to present alternative viewpoints, but please not when the viewpoint is as potentially dangerous and as unsubstantiated as this one, unless it is accompanied by a critical comment.

The "No AIDS in Africa" article makes three main points. Faulty medical diagnosis has exaggerated the AIDS epidemic. And Westerners have connived in the error and exaggeration, because profits can be made from an epidemic, and because it allows neo-racist stigmatization of a continent.

Let us dispense with the last two points first. Of course profits can be made out of AIDS, as they can out of any tragedy, but the fact that profits can be made does not mean that the tragedy is fabricated; some individuals made immense profits out of World War II, but the Holocaust was not fabricated. As for the claim that concealed neo-racism might lead to an exaggerated epidemic, it could also lead to the opposite, could it not, if neo-racists used claims of a lack of AIDS problem to cut back on funding for AIDS research and treatment in Africa? And that brings us to the claim of faulty diagnoses.

In the past, yes, there were false positives, but the new tests are much better. Subsequent monitoring of HIV-positive patients has confirmed too many diagnoses for anyone to claim that the epidemic is a myth: those who test positive for HIV-1 in Africa are far more likely to die early than those who test negative, and a tragic number test positive. The symptoms of many diseases contracted as a result of AIDS are recognisably different from the symptoms in the absence of AIDS. And the people who die from AIDS are

different from those who die from "normal" disease: mainly old and young died before the eighties; from the mid-eighties on, people in the prime of their life have been dying, and dying at a horrific rate (P. Godfray-Faussett et al., 1994, *Nature*, 368, 183-184).

Experienced doctors are not misdiagnosing AIDS in Africa. AIDS is a terrible epidemic in that continent. To claim that it is a myth is, to quote P. Godfray-Faussett, R. Baggeley, G. Scott and M. Sichone, all working in Africa, "downright dangerous. The awareness-raising that has been going on in (Africa) for a decade will not pay dividends in the form of safer sexual behaviour if people are offered a reason to ignore an unpleasant truth." (ibid.) And the same is true of financial and other supportive cooperation between western nations and Africa.

Alexander H. Harcourt
and Daniel B. Hrdy

The authors present their personal view of this problem here. Lucia Reisch wants to make clear that the statements which are criticized were not meant as the absolute truth but as possible explanations. Readers who want to learn more about AIDS in Africa can order a compilation of references from:

Angela Meder
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READING

The least developed countries, 1993–1994 report. New York (United Nations) 1994. 262 pages. \$55. ISBN 92-1-112354-2.

Population, Environment and Development: Proceedings of the United National Expert Group Meeting on Population, Environment and Development, United Nations Headquarters, 20–24 Jan. 1992. New York (United Nations) 1994. 285 pages. \$30. ISBN 92-1-151265-4.

A part of the preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development, 1994.

Agenda 21 – Earth Summit. The United Nations Programme of Action from Rio. New York (United Nations) 1993. 294 pages. \$25. ISBN 92-1-100509-4.

Complete final texts of Agenda 21, Rio Declaration, Forest Principles.

African Statistical Yearbook 1990/91, Vol. II, Part 4: Central Africa. New York (United Nations) 1993. 177 pages. \$50. ISBN 92-1-025038-9.

Includes Burundi, Rwanda, Zaire.

Susan George and Fabrizio Sabelli Faith and Credit: The World Bank's secular empire. London (Penguin Books) 1994. 282 pages. £6.99.

Adjustment in Africa: Reforms, results and the road ahead. Washington (World Bank) 1994. 304 pages. Paperback ca. £19.

Argues for the success of World Bank prescriptions for development in Africa.

Eileen McCarthy Arnolds (ed.) Africa, human rights and the global system: Political economy of human rights in changing world. UK 1994. 228 pages. Ca. £50.

Addresses concerns about structural adjustment, regional integration,

development and liberalisation, and human rights issues in the African context.

P. Anyang' Nyong'o (ed.) Arms and daggers in the heart of Africa: Studies of internal conflicts. Kenya 1993. 364 pages. Paperback £18.50.

Essays on the origins and reasons which underly conflict in Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, Uganda, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Africa, Liberia.

Sean Kelly America's tyrant: The C.I.A. and Mobutu of Zaire. USA 1994. 289 pages. Ca. £30.

Dan M. Mudoola Religion, ethnicity and politics in Uganda. Kampala (Fountain Publishers) 1993. 120 pages.

Uganda: Growing out of poverty. Washington (World Bank) 1994. 226 pages. Paperback ca. £17.

Uganda: Social Sectors. 222 pages. Paperback £15. Washington (World Bank) 1994.

Argues that if the country's poor social conditions are to improve, expenditure must be increased and must be better used.

Dixon Kamukama Rwanda conflict. Its roots and regional implications. Kampala (Fountain Publishers) 1993. 80 pages.

David Waller Rwanda – which way now? Oxfam 1993. 64 pages. £5.95. ISBN 0-85598-217-9.

Rakiya Omar Rwanda: death, despair and defiance. UK 1994. Paperback ca. £15.

A thorough analysis with chapters on the roots of conflict, the prepara-

tions and the people responsible for the massacres, the first days of the killings, media intimidation, confusions and cover-ups, the unknown death count and ethnic cleansing, death camps, churches ...

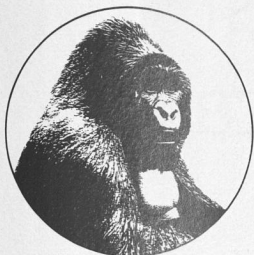
Guy Vasall-Jones Rwanda: an agenda for international action. UK 1994. 48 pages. Ca. £5. New (October 1994) policy and briefing document from one of Britain's leading aid agencies.

International Tropical Timber Agreement. New York (United Nations) 1994. 50 pages. \$12. ISBN 92-1-112163-9.

Assessing forestry project impacts: issues and strategies. FAO Forestry Papers 114. Rome (FAO) 1993. 78 pages. \$8. ISBN 92-5-103428-1.

International Directory of Primatology, 2nd edition. Madison, Wisconsin 1994. 354 pages. In the USA \$15, in other countries \$23 (includes postage and handling). Available from: Larry Jacobsen, Wisconsin Regional Primate Research Center, University of Wisconsin, 1220 Capitol Court, Madison, Wisconsin 53715-1299, USA; Fax +1(608)263-4729, E-mail library @primate.wisc.edu.

The purpose of this directory is to enhance communications among organizations and individuals involved in primate research, conservation and education. It is divided into four organizational sections and five indexes. The organizational sections cover geographically arranged entries for major primate centers, laboratories, educational programs, foundations, conservation agencies and sanctuaries as well as various groups involved with nonhuman primate population management, professional primate societies and major information resources in the field.



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Refund of expenses	1,200.00 DM
Total	21,355.60 DM

Expenses 1 Jan. to 6 Oct. 1994

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Administration	2,034.46 DM
Exp. board of directors	2,591.22 DM
Gorilla Journal	9,916.14 DM
Books, journals	526.80 DM
Gorilla census	19,000.00 DM
Grant U. Karlowski	869.17 DM
Salary C. Shalukoma	2,400.00 DM
Freight costs	670.90 DM
Total	40,605.69 DM

Donations

We want to thank each person and organization who supported us so generously during the period from 1 June to 6 October 1994. Larger contributions were given by *Hauser Exkursio-*

nen, Peter Müller-Schendel, Dr. Pres-
sel, H. J. Reich, *Zoologische Gesell-
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schutz*. Erwin F. Reisch (*Ivory Reisch
Tours*) once again took charge of the
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above mentioned and all the other
donors for their confidence in our work
in 1994, and we hope that they will
continue to support us in 1995.

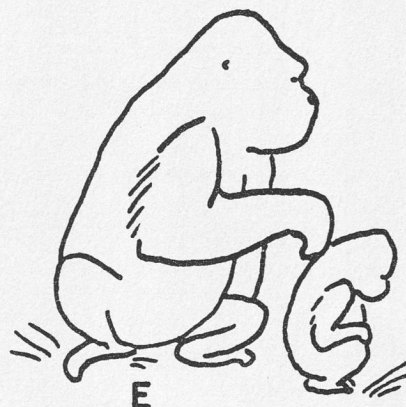
Artists Paint Gorillas

The working group *Art for Gorillas*
wants to arrange an art exhibition in
1995 which shall support the mountain
gorillas in the Virunga Volcano area.
For this exhibition we still need artists
who would like to make works of art
available. These works of art should in
substance cover the theme "gorilla".
However, the artist may decide how he
wants to present it (painting, print,
sculpture, object, new media). Like-
wise, it does not matter if the artist
chooses a naturalistic, concrete or ab-
stract presentation.

This event is in memory of Klaus-
Jürgen Sucker's work, and with the
proceeds his ideas shall be supported
and continued in various projects.

For further information and registra-
tions please contact

Peter Wittig
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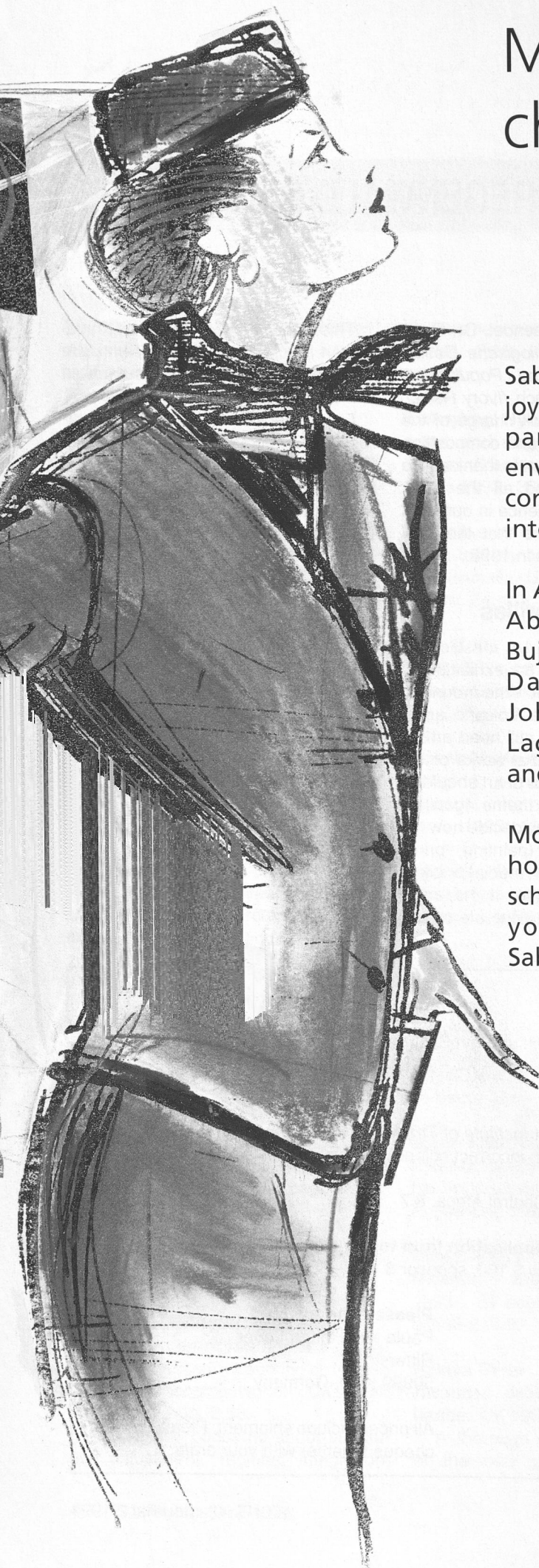
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