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GREAT APE CONSERVATION IN THE FACE OF A DEVELOPING WORLD

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Extractive industries concerned with logging and mining, and large-scale commercial plantations continue to implant themselves in regions of high value for great ape conservation and biodiversity as a whole. Since world-wide demand for raw materials is ever increasing, it has therefore become increasingly urgent to assess the impact of such activities on great apes and their habitat. How such activities are affecting natural habitats and great ape demographics, behavior, habitat usage and rates of capture, as well as susceptibility to disease are all issues of concern. In parallel it has become essential to identify possible mitigation strategies at the policy level, as well as at the local-level. How can researchers and conservationists meet the challenge of great ape conservation with development in the 21st Century? This symposium aims to draw on lessons learnt from case studies, and to provide perspective on global trends and patterns. In essence, this symposium aims to stimulate a debate on how best to evaluate the impact on great apes and biodiversity and develop concerted effective mitigation strategies that balance both conservation objectives and the socio-economic realities on the ground.

Keywords: great apes, conservation, development, mitigation strategies