



Ape Alliance, c/o RSPCA Building, 30 Lansdown, Stroud, GL5 1BG, UK, Tel: +44 (0)1453 765 228

An open letter to:
Rt Hon David Miliband MP
Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR

19th March 2007

Minister,

I write as Chairman of the Ape Alliance, a global coalition of conservationists, primarily NGOs with a combined membership of several million people, in response to the DEFRA consultation on carbon trading.

In our view, it is essential that the UK's proposed regulatory framework for voluntary carbon trading should recognise the importance of 'avoided deforestation' as well as reforestation and afforestation, particularly in tropical countries. The fact that neither the Kyoto Protocol nor the EU Emissions Trading System does so means that some of the most important sources of greenhouse gas emissions are currently outside the systems designed to reduce same – most notably the burning of forests and peat swamps in Borneo and Sumatra, and forest destruction and degradation in Africa and Latin America. Please find attached a summary, prepared by Sustainable Forestry Management, of the reasoning behind our support for this critically important change.

As the recent UNEP Rapid Assessment Report points out, earlier predictions of forest loss in Indonesia were 30 per cent under-estimated (see www.unep.org/grasp/docs/2007Jan-LastStand-of-Orangutan-report.pdf). At current revised rates of forest loss, orangutan extinction seems likely by 2020, with many key populations gone by 2012. Ironically, this is the same timescale for implementation of FLEG processes and post-Kyoto negotiations, leading to the inevitable conclusion that by the time we have put systems in place to protect these forests, it will be too late!

One of the biggest constraints to conservation and sustainable development initiatives in ape habitat countries is the lack of finance. Many of the already identified priority actions, such as the National Great Ape Survival Plans drawn up by GRASP, the UN Great Ape Survival Project, remain without funding. And yet there are huge reserves of private-sector capital available for carbon offsets. By taking the lead in stating the intention to support 'avoided deforestation' in future negotiations, the UK could stimulate immediate private sector investment in the sustainable management of tropical forests for their ecological services – most notably carbon storage and sequestration but also water catchments and erosion control. This would bring benefits to biodiversity conservation and benefits to local communities, as well as contributing to the stabilisation of global climate.

Without such investment, targets to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010, and the Millennium Development Goal No.7, to ensure environmental sustainability, are unlikely to be met. Donor governments and agencies currently show little sign of being able to contribute the level of funding necessary to achieve these global aspirations. But if the UK were to indicate a change in policy direction in future carbon negotiations, trading in carbon futures would immediately bring new sources of finance to forest management.

Members include: **Born Free Foundation; International Primate Protection League; SFM; World Society for the Protection of Animals**
Australian Orangutan Project; Chimps Inc; Friends of Washoe; Jane Goodall Institute; Orangutan Foundation; RSPCA; Sumatran Orangutan Society
Les Amis des Animaux au Congo; Animal Defenders; Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe; Borneo Orangutan Society Foundation; Bonobo Conservation Initiative; Bonobo Project; Bristol Zoo; Budongo Forest Project; Bushmeat Crisis Task Force; Bushmeat Project; Cameroon Wildlife Aid Fund; Captive Animals' Protection Society; Care for the Wild; Cercopan; Chimfunshi Wildlife Orphanage; Chimpanzee Rehabilitation Project; Cockroach Productions; Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund; Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust; Environmental Investigation Agency; Fauna & Flora International; Forests Monitor; Friends of Conservation; Friends of the National Parks Foundation; Forest Monitor; Gearing up 4 Gorillas; Gorilla Haven; The Gorilla Organization; Great Ape Project; Great Apes Trust of Iowa; Great Apes Film Initiative; Habitat Ecologique et Liberte des Primates; Humane Society US; International Gorilla Conservation Programme; International Ranger Federation; Jane Goodall Institute; John Aspinall Foundation; Kalawit and Sebangau Gibbon Behaviour, Socio-ecology and Feeding Ecology Project; Limbe Wildlife Centre; Lola ya Bonobo; Lukuru Wildlife Research Project; MONA-UK; Monkey World Ape Rescue Centre; Nature Alert; Orang Utan Republik Education Initiative; Pan African Sanctuaries Alliance; Pandrillus; People Against Chimpanzee Experiments; Primate Conservation Inc; Primate Society of Great Britain; Primate Taxon Advisory Group; Rettet den Regenwald e.V. (Rainforest Rescue); Sepilok Orangutan Appeal UK; Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Programme; Support for African/Asian Great Apes; Tropical Forest Forum; Universities Fund for Animal Welfare; Volcanoes; Wild Life Line; Wildlife Friends Thailand; WWF; Zoological Society of London



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Ian Redmond to David Miliband, 19.3.07, page 2,

I understand that at the forthcoming G8 +5 meeting, climate change and biodiversity loss are high on the agenda. Given that tropical forests are the most bio-diverse terrestrial eco-system, containing half the world's species, and that destruction and degradation of these forests makes them the second largest source of greenhouse gas emissions; these two issues are intimately linked. The solution to both problems must, therefore, include sufficient investment in the sustainable management of these forests and recognition of their valuable eco-system services. And the private sector interest in their carbon storage and sequestration is the only viable, long-term source of such investment; moreover, it has the added advantage of bringing training and employment opportunities that can also lift forest-dwelling communities in Least Developed Countries out of poverty.

Thus, we urge you to adopt rules at both the national and international level which will encourage carbon finance to protect old-growth, bio-diverse forests in the tropics, and encourage afforestation and reforestation – even of recently-cleared areas (post 1989). When Jim Knight signed the Kinshasa Declaration on Great Apes in 2005, he commented to the Independent, “I think it is achievable; I wouldn't have signed it if I didn't.”

Unfortunately, the continuing decline in most populations of gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos and orangutans indicate that we have much to do and little time to do it in (to say nothing of gibbons and indeed most other species of primate in Africa, Asia and Latin America). This is an unparalleled opportunity to turn this situation around, for the benefit of all.

Along with colleagues in the Ape Alliance Carbon Working Group, I would like to request a meeting with you to discuss this important matter at your earliest convenience,
Yours sincerely,

Ian Redmond OBE
Chairman Ape Alliance
ele@globalnet.co.uk

Cc Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP, Secretary of State for International Development
Gareth Thomas MP, DfID Minister for Environmentally Sustainable Development
Barry Gardiner MP, Minister for Biodiversity, Landscape and Rural Affairs
Ian Pearson MP, Minister for Climate Change and Environment
Tim Yeo MP, Chairman Environmental Audit Committee
David Drew MP for Stroud
Mike McCarthy, Environment Editor, The Independent
Ape Alliance members listed below.

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