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Assessing Implications of Global Change for Mountain Gorillas in the Albertine Rift

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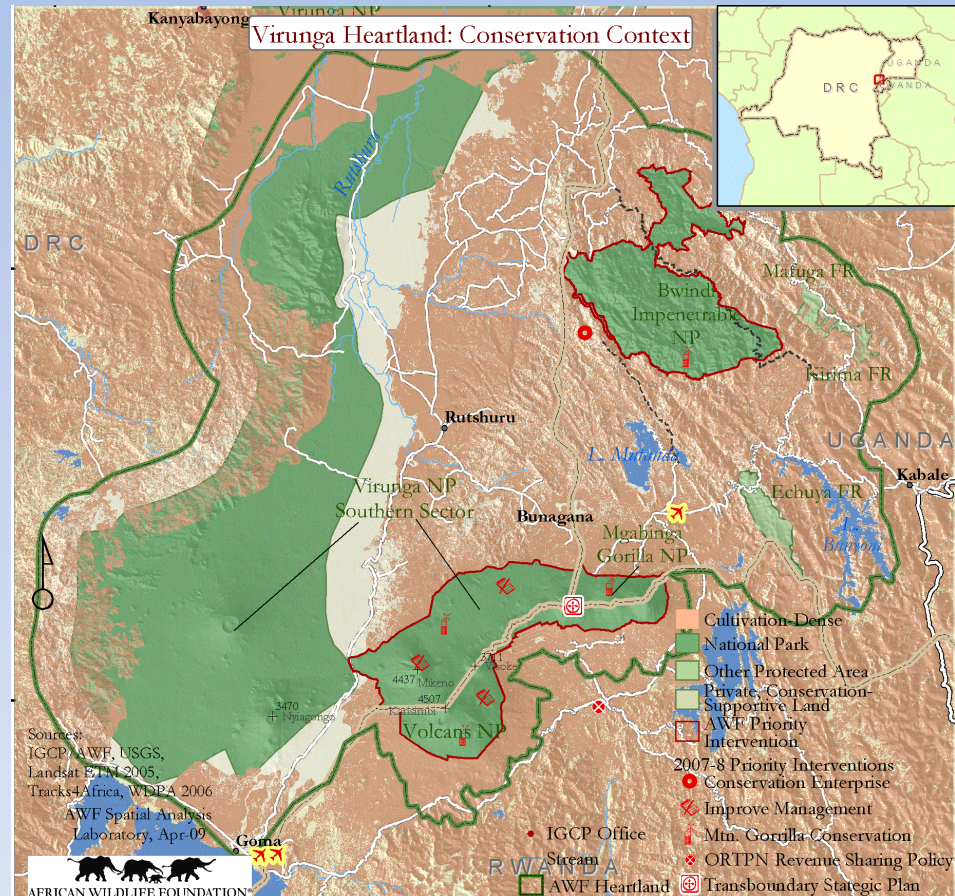


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Project Context

Project Location: The Albertine Rift, Central Africa: DRC, Uganda, Rwanda

- Status: Mtn. Gorilla *pop* reduced to ~720
- Threats:
 - High human density & poverty (disease)
 - Habitat loss (agriculture, fuel wood extraction)
 - Hunting (collateral casualties)
 - Political and social conflict



Project Context

- Research and conservation efforts span decades yet little known about CC impacts, nor have any CC adaptation strategies been developed.
- 1st CC adaptation project for AWF/IGCP

Overview

Overall goal:

- To reduce the vulnerability of mountain gorillas to the negative effects of climate change.
 - vulnerability assessment of mountain gorillas to CC-related stressors
 - Development of an IGCP climate change response plan
 - Capacity-building to enable scientists, managers, and policy-makers to continue adaptation planning , implementation, and monitoring.

Partners:

- *International*: International Gorilla Conservation Program (AWF, WWF, FFI); EcoAdapt; MacArthur Foundation.
- *Local*: Protected Area Authorities in Uganda (UWA), Rwanda (ORTPN) and DRC (ICCN).

Results...stage set

Completed:

- Established regional IGCP platform with strong relationships w/protected Area Authorities;
- Established program monitoring dynamics between mountain gorillas, threats, and their habitat>>significant database; links with other MacArthur-funded CC projects involving birds, and ecosystem services/biodiversity (WCS, Birdlife)
- Leveraged expertise from EcoAdapt and Univ. of California to support species distribution modeling simulating CC responses and development of adaptation strategies.

Lessons Learned

Stay tuned...

Plans/Expected Outcomes

- Introductory stakeholder meeting (Oct 2009) including formal presentation of project to Park and regional officials and expert planning.
- Assessment of the vulnerability of gorilla habitat and range to CC stressors considering biology, population distribution, habitat, and conservation areas, and interplay with threats, and land use/socio-economic trends>>White paper. (Sep 2009 - early 2010)
- Stakeholder workshop (early 2010) to discuss white paper, identify response and adaptation strategies, gaps, and synthesize findings.
- Final vulnerability assessment and adaptation plan produced (mid 2010).
Will feature
 - adaptation strategies and means of reducing non-climate stresses.
 - monitoring strategy to support ongoing adaptation efforts.
 - knowledge base supporting CC consideration within cons. planning + adaptive mgt.
- Boost capacity of AWF, IGCP etc to monitor and assess CC impact.



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Thank you