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September 24, 2019, for World Gorilla Day
Kigali, RWANDA

CELEBRATED PARTNERSHIP FOR MOUNTAIN GORILLAS ANNOUNCES CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL AS NEW COALITION MEMBER

As we celebrate World Gorilla Day, the International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP) has announced Conservation International as its newest coalition member effective today, joining Fauna & Flora International (FFI) and WWF in one of the longest-running and most successful conservation partnerships.

The expanded coalition has also unveiled a revitalized strategic plan <http://igcp.org/library/> to guide its crucial work through 2024, as it seeks to consolidate the notable gains made in mountain gorilla conservation and to tackle emerging threats while enhancing benefits to people, especially park adjacent communities.

At the same time, IGCP announces a change in the Chair of the Board of the coalition programme, with **Dr. Helen Gichohi**, representing FFI, now assuming this position which rotates according to agreement among the three institutions.

Commenting on Conservation International's new membership, **IGCP Director Anna Behm Masozera**, said: "Success for mountain gorillas is built on leadership from and collaboration among mountain gorilla range States, supported by community-based and civil society organizations, research institutions and the private sector. As a programme of multiple international conservation organizations, IGCP continues to play an important niche role."

"In addition to welcoming Conservation International as a coalition member, we are excited about presenting our refined strategic plan and look forward to stronger partnerships with existing and new stakeholders to scale up key pilot projects, especially those related to community engagement and responsible tourism practices," she added.

The new strategy is centered on strengthening IGCP's role as an enduring advocate for collaborative mountain gorilla conservation action. It focuses on reducing threats to mountain



gorillas, providing evidence to inform policy and decision-making by authorities in mountain gorilla range States, empowering people and civil society organizations, and reinforcing tourism as a conservation tool — done through a suite of partnership arrangements with other institutions and organizations working in the region.

FFI Chief Executive, Mark Rose, said: “We are really proud of what we have achieved for mountain gorillas through IGCP over the last 40 years, but the reality is that these great apes are still under enormous pressure and we cannot be complacent. Collaboration - which is the cornerstone of IGCP’s approach - will be essential for our continued success, and we are therefore delighted to welcome Conservation International to our mountain gorilla family.”

IGCP Board Member, Margaret Kinnaird, Wildlife Practice Leader for WWF said: “In 2018, the threat status for mountain gorillas was downgraded from ‘Critically Endangered’ to ‘Endangered’ in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species owing to a recorded increase in their population. In spite of this good news, the need remains for stronger collaboration among all partners involved in efforts to protect mountain gorillas and their forest habitat. As we celebrate World Gorilla Day, we are proud to welcome Conservation International into this important partnership.”

IGCP Board Member, Michael O’Brien-Onyeka, Senior VP of Conservation International’s Africa Field Division, said: “As CI, we are excited to be part of IGCP’s critical work. We look forward to supporting the development of Certified Gorilla Friendly tourism and sustainable production of coffee, tea and other commodities across the Greater Virunga Transboundary Landscape in collaboration with other IGCP partners. We also look forward to enhancing innovative science to strengthen mountain gorilla monitoring and protection.”

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About International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP) (www.igcp.org)

IGCP is a coalition programme of Conservation International, Fauna & Flora International and WWF with a mission to secure the future for mountain gorillas. IGCP achieves this through working in partnership with State and non-State actors in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Uganda. Its Directorate is located in Kigali, Rwanda.

About Conservation International (CI) (<https://www.conservation.org/>)

Conservation International uses science, policy and partnerships to protect the nature that people rely on for food, fresh water and livelihoods. Founded in 1987, Conservation International works in more than 30 countries on six continents to ensure a healthy, prosperous planet that supports us all.

About Fauna & Flora International (FFI) (www.fauna-flora.org)

FFI protects threatened species and ecosystems worldwide, choosing solutions that are sustainable, based on sound science and take account of human needs. Operating in more than 40 countries worldwide, FFI saves species from extinction and habitats from destruction, while improving the livelihoods of local people. Founded in 1903, FFI is the world's longest established international conservation body and a registered charity.

About WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) (<http://www.panda.org>)

WWF is one of the world's largest and most respected independent conservation organizations, with over 5 million supporters and a global network active in over 100 countries. WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the earth's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.
