
<NEWS>

Resolution by Delegates of Ape Conference in Chicago

An international conference on the conservation of apes entitled "The Apes: Challenges for the 21st Century" was held under the leadership of the Brookfield Zoo and the Chicago Zoological Society (Director: Dr. George Rabb) at the Hilton Hotel, Lisle, Illinois from May 10 to 14, 2000. Three hundred and fifty field researchers, zoo

scientists, conservationists, veterinarians and journalists participated in the meeting. Keynote speakers were David Chivers (gibbons), Russel Mittermeier (overview), Toshisada Nishida (chimpanzees), Claudia Olejniczak (gorillas), Gay Reinartz (bilias or pygmy chimpanzees), and Carel van Schaik (orangutans). A wide range of topics regarding ape conservation was discussed, but the carriers of focus were the bushmeat crisis, conservation medicine, a sanctuary to accommodate and rehabilitate orphaned apes,

and the role of zoo people in saving wild apes.

A resolution to conserve apes was proposed and drafted by Toshisada Nishida in an evening workshop of the bushmeat crisis task force. The draft was revised according to advice by John Oates and other colleagues. On the final day, the revised version was proposed in a plenary session and supported by all of the delegates.

The authorized resolution that is reproduced here was sent to the Director General of UNESCO in the name of Dr. George Rabb, the Conference Organizer. We are waiting for the response of UNESCO to our proposal.

Delegate Declaration adopted at The Apes, Challenges for the 21st Century Conference at Lisle, Illinois, May 13, 2000

Apes are the closest living links to human beings and have similar emotions, behaviors, and intellects to ourselves. They are one of the wonders of nature. Moreover, they play an indispensable role in the maintenance and regeneration of tropical forest ecosystems. However, their numbers are decreasing at an alarming rate because of human activities and, without powerful and effective conservation efforts, they will soon vanish forever. We urge, therefore, that the apes be given a special protected status by UNESCO to ensure that all possible measures are taken to protect them from extinction, and that our descendants may continue to share this planet with our unique relatives. *(Reported by Toshisada Nishida)*
