

Pan troglodytes vellerosus:

State of knowledge and future plans for research and conservation of an understudied ape

Abstract

Chimpanzees present to the north of the Sanaga River in Cameroon westward to the Dahomey gap are the most endangered chimpanzees in Africa. Participants in this workshop will discuss the state-of-knowledge for these apes and attempt to reach consensus on future efforts to understand and improve the conservation status of populations. One potential outcome is to initiate the production of an Action Plan to coordinate research and conservation activities as well as to generate interest and attract funding. Experts on the chimpanzees from this region will be invited to participate to achieve seven objectives, expanding on information presented during a related symposium:

- (1) A questionnaire will be distributed before the workshop to encourage researchers to provide information on the range, distribution, population status and specific threats to *P. t. vellerosus* in each locality through the existing vellerosus mailing list;
- (2) Two short presentations will be given regarding responses;
- (3) An open discussion will lead to two working groups (for Cameroon and Nigeria) reviewing these data, amended as necessary by those present;
- (4) A reconvened open discussion led by the working groups will provide updated information and identification of knowledge gaps;
- (5) A final discussion will address how to improve our knowledge of these chimpanzees, including the possible production of an IUCN-endorsed Action Plan;
- (6) If deemed appropriate, proposal-writing to fill gaps and for Action Plan development will be discussed and partners to write these grants will be identified;
- (7) A vellerosus website will display these data and coordinate future activities.