Book Review

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Helga Rainer, Alison White, Annette Lanjouw (eds.)

Extractive Industries and Ape Conservation

State of the Apes, vol. 1
Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2014
377 pp.; GBP 27.99 (softcover)
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Industrial Agriculture and Ape Conservation

State of the Apes, vol. 2
Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2015
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Within the field of primatology, it is field workers who are confronted with the reality of conflict between human and non-human primates at first hand. For decades, the numbers of wild primates have continued to dwindle, and it has become increasingly difficult to find areas in which primates can be studied in their natural ancestral habitats without the distorting effects of human encroachment. Given their slow life histories, the great apes are particularly at risk of extinction. At this point in time, all great apes species and nearly all small apes are classified as either Endangered or Critically Endangered (IUCN Red List).

Over the last century, our knowledge about the psychosocial similarities between human and non-human great apes has mounted to unprecedented heights. As a result, societies have begun to fundamentally re-evaluate their attitude towards our closest relatives. A milestone in this respect was the 1997 advice of the US National Research Council to retire hundreds of so-called surplus biomedical research chimpanzees owned by the NIH. At the same time, field researchers likewise felt it was time to shoulder responsibility and become involved beyond simply documenting the demise of our next of kin. In 2005, under the umbrella of the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), a new partnership was formed: GRASP – the Great Ape Survival Partnership. The main objective of GRASP is to lift the threat of extinction faced by the great apes. Some dissent remains over the exclusion of the small apes. GRASP operates politically at local, national and international levels to encourage the prioritisation of great ape conservation strategies.

Recently, another player, the Arcus Foundation, has become increasingly visible. The ultimate goal of the Arcus Great Apes Programme is to achieve conservation and respect for the apes – small apes included. It integrates three topics, the ethics of the human-ape co-existence, the well-being of apes in captivity and conservation efforts to ensure protection from extinction.

Critics of initiatives like GRASP and big players like the UNEP doubt that extinction can be thwarted by producing a lot of paper and paying large numbers of people to fly around the globe

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in order to talk endlessly in meetings. Non-governmental organisations have established themselves as integral stakeholders in ape conservation. They can target consumer markets for goods originating from ape range countries and thus influence cost-benefit calculations of companies towards increased sustainability. It has become increasingly clear that conservation and economic development are intricately interwoven: The demise of the apes is not the result of arguably immoral actions like big game hunting or kidnapping for the pet trade, nor is it the result of the actions of a few rogue companies. As a rule, apes are not even targeted specifically. Rather, their demise is the by-product of globalised business. Globalisation and economic development have the potential to alleviate poverty – and ape range countries are among the poorest in the world.

This is the interface where the *State of the Apes* book series endeavours to make visible facts, patterns, trends and interconnections, in order to find angles and scope where changed practices could lead to a better protection of apes. The series' target groups are policy and decision makers, scientists, industry experts and non-governmental organisations. Volumes in the series explore the threats to non-human apes' survival within the context of economic and community development. Two volumes of *State of the Apes* have now been published. The first volume focuses on extractive industries, the second on industrial agriculture.

State of the Apes – Extractive Industries and Ape Conservation has a foreword by the IUCN president Zhang Xinsheng. He points out that a key message of the book is that 'indirect impacts of extractive industry action are often more destructive and extensive, for both apes and their habitat, than the direct impacts'. The term 'extractive industries' refers to oil and gas extraction, mining – both large-scale industrial and artisanal small-scale mining – and industrial timber extraction, which encompasses reduced-impact logging as well as clear felling and selective logging with no regard for its environmental effects. Topics covered in the first section range from zoom-out general presentations to analyses of specific aspects pertaining to the impact of extractive industries on great ape populations and habitat. It starts with an overview on the drivers and trends of extractive industries as they impact ape conservation (chapter 1). This is interwoven with the complicated issues of land tenure, protected areas and local communities (chapter 2). Chapter 3 elucidates how great ape socio-ecology is affected by different extractive industries. Sustainable forest management is examined and its potential to provide habitat for apes within industrial timber extraction concessions (chapter 4). The impact of industrial mining for oil and gas and strategies to implement a mitigation hierarchy for conservation are subjects of chapter 5. This is contrasted with artisanal small-scale mining, which represents a disproportionately serious threat due to the extraction methods used and the large numbers of miners, who are, themselves, amongst the most marginalised members of their respective societies (chapter 6). This leads to the indirect impacts of extractive industries, such as increased influx of people into remote areas as a result of improved infrastructure with its detrimental consequences, such as increased hunting/poaching pressure, habitat fragmentation and degradation, and the risk of zoonotic diseases (chapter 7). Responses of ape range states are reported, with emphasis on three cases where efforts are made to reconcile resource exploitation with the conservation of biodiversity (chapter 8).

Section 2 comprises 2 chapters. One summarises the most recent data on the global distribution and census of apes in relation to environmental conditions. It draws attention to geographic areas of critical importance for the survival of great apes and gibbons. The other examines the status of captive apes in range countries, the EU and the USA with special attention being given to individual welfare.

The second volume, *Industrial Agriculture and Ape Conservation*, appeared in 2015. Industrial agriculture is defined as a method of intensive crop production characterised by large monocultures and relying heavily on chemicals, intensive water use and large-scale infrastructure for transport and storage. Smallholders who rely on industrial partners are included. This volume looks at the impact of industrial agriculture on apes (chapter 1), the extent of spatial overlap between the two (chapter 2), legal frameworks (chapter 4), and ecological impacts (chapter 6). It is generally assumed that the vast-scale habitat destruction seen in Asian countries over the last decades will soon affect African countries likewise, as their economic development is increasing. It is important, therefore, to try and learn lessons before it is too late. An entire chapter (chapter 3) is thus dedicated to African countries and an in-depth analysis of the drivers and the context of agricultural expansion. Palm oil has become something like the arch-enemy of ape conserva-

tionists. Hence it is of particular interest to read chapter 5 on the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil. This chapter is laudable for its balanced approach to a hotly contested topic. In part 2, case studies are used to highlight long-term trends for four species of apes in four different countries. These reiterate the need to find a balance between economic development and ape conservation, but they are also encouraging, showing that protection and natural resource management can lead to positive trends. Apes in captivity are the topic of the last chapter, which includes the situation of apes in captivity in sanctuaries in range countries as well as those in Europe and the USA.

The volumes are well structured, and chapter highlights in the introduction enable the reader to navigate to specific topics, which is useful because the books make for tough reading. This is because it is, essentially, a depressing review of the many threats to great ape survival. The volumes also represent a multidisciplinary approach from which the reader benefits most when s/he steps beyond the boundaries of her/his own expertise. The editors and authors have clearly been aware of these challenges. Comprehension is enhanced by clear structuring: each chapter has an introduction, which also lists key findings, and a conclusion. Easily recognisable boxes provide valuable background information, definitions or case studies. Didactic graphics, tables and maps enable the visually oriented reader to spot and digest concisely presented information with little effort. The potentially depressive nature of the information is balanced with success stories and well-selected photos depicting apes that are both respectful and emotionally touching. Informative photos also document the gruesome and the bleak aspects of the apes' plight. This visual material predisposes *State of the Apes* to be used for information dissemination, be it for teaching or education of stakeholders.

In conclusion, the two volumes of *State of the Apes* achieve the series' goal of providing rigorous background information and opening new angles for the various and often conflicting parties on whose communication and collaboration the continued existence of non-human apes on our planet depends.

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