



Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology
Max-Planck-Institut für evolutionäre Anthropologie

NEWS

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2015 Winner Announced - Chimpanzee Conservation

A multi-level conservation project, which aims to protect the largest remaining population of wild chimpanzees on the Foutah Djallon-Bafing River (FDBR) region in Guinea, West Africa has won this year's St Andrews Prize for the Environment.



Figure: Christophe Boesch (left) and his Wild Chimpanzee Foundation are the winners of the 2015 St Andrews Prize for the Environment. (Credit: St Andrews University, Scotland, UK)

Great apes, especially Western African chimpanzees are severely threatened. The confirmation of a 4,700 strong population of chimpanzees in Guinea represents a unique opportunity to contribute to the survival of this largest-known and non-fragmented chimpanzee population in West Africa.

Threatened by agriculture, logging and poaching, an integrated landscape conservation project was initiated with the full support and collaboration of the Guinea Ministry of the Environment. The aim is to preserve the chimpanzees and their habitat through a participatory process including local populations and Guinean State services in an area of roughly 8,000 square kilometres of semi-mountainous, moderately anthropised and relatively well preserved landscapes.

At a ceremony at the University of St Andrews today, Christophe Boesch from the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF) was presented with the winning prize of \$100,000 USD. He says: "Considering the fate of the chimpanzees throughout West Africa, this funding from the St Andrews Prize for the Environment will directly contribute to make a signal that

chimpanzee conservation can work and at the same time profit the human population. I have spent many years working on a long-term field project in Tai National Park on the Ivory Coast and I have seen with my own eyes how the human population has increased around the park, how the forest cover has decreased and how the human pressures have increased on nature. The chimpanzees have brought so much into my life and this funding will go towards helping to secure them a future.”

The St Andrews Prize for the Environment is an environmental initiative by the University of St Andrews, which attracts scholars of international repute and carries out world-class teaching and research, and independent exploration and production company ConocoPhillips.

[St Andrews University, Scotland, UK]

Links:

Website - The St Andrews Prize:

<http://www.thestandrewsprize.com/news-articles/2015-winner-announced-chimpanzee-conservation>

Website - Wild Chimpanzee Foundation:

<http://www.wildchimps.org/wcf/deutsch/start.htm>

Website - Department of Primatology at the MPI for Evolutionary Anthropology:

<http://www.eva.mpg.de/primat/index.html>

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