



Office Guinéen des Parcs et Réserves



Wild Chimpanzee Foundation®

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Press release

Creation of the Moyen-Bafing National Park World Heritage Biodiversity Jewel

The President of the Republic of Guinea, His Excellency Professor Alpha Conde, signed on May 04, 2021 the decree on the creation of the Moyen-Bafing National Park. With an area of 6'767 km², this park hosts the largest continuous population of chimpanzees in West Africa, a subspecies classified as 'critically endangered' by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. This magnificent park located in the north of the country along the Bafing River, near the border with Mali, is a treasure of biodiversity with an array of habitats typical of the region and a strong tradition of co-existence with a human population of 287 villages.

Since 2009, the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF) has been working closely with the Ministry of Environment, Water and Forests and the Office Guinéen des Parcs et Réserves (OGPR) to identify the richest areas in the country for chimpanzees in order to help save this species, being the closest living relatives of humans. The General Director of the Office Guinéen des Parcs et Réserves, Colonel Mamady Sayba Keita, said "We are very proud to contribute with this creation not only to the safeguard of an animal species, heritage of humanity, but also to bring a strong signal for the conservation of natural environments of Guinea and their stabilization in the face of climate change and the advance of the desert. We congratulate His Excellency the President of the Republic of Guinea for this important initiative. "

An accurate inventory of chimpanzee and large mammal populations conducted by WCF and OGRP between 2009 and 2012 in all areas of Guinea had highlighted the area of Moyen-Bafing, located astride 7 classified forests of the country. The process of classification of a protected area officially started November 24, 2015 with the release of a mandate for OGPR and WCF from the Minister of Environment Water and Forests. This was confirmed on September 28, 2017 by a ministerial order, officially launching the process of creation of the national park by the WCF and OGPR. An extensive consultation process was then undertaken with local population to obtain

their free and informed consent in August 2020 launching the final phase before the signature of the presidential decree.

WCF President, Professor Christophe Boesch, says: "It is a wonderful day for all of us to have succeeded with our Guinean partners in securing the protection of 8% of the national territory and to contribute to the safeguarding of West African chimpanzees, a species I have been working on since 1979 as a research scientist with many colleagues also in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, and Gabon. The Moyen-Bafing National Park is conceived on a unique model in the world, since it is at the same time the object of an ecological compensation process for the negative impacts suffered by the chimpanzees in the concessions of two mining companies, thus ensuring a sustainable financing on the medium term."

OGPR's focal point for the project, Salian Traoré, emphasizes, "The unique cooperation of the Guinean state with the private sector and an international NGO has made it possible to support both the development of the industrial sector in the country and the conservation of the severely affected environment here".

For further information, please contact:

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