

In light of the serious threat to African apes due to the bushmeat trade, a number of conservation organisations joined forces in 1998 to form an Ape Alliance. Their aim was to implement effective measures towards a solution for the crisis.

One of the measures created by Ape Alliance was a Code of Conduct for logging operations that extracted forest products from key areas of the bushmeat trade. The code calls on operators to take responsibility and use their influence to help stem the increase in bushmeat trade.

The Code of conduct demands the following:

1. Ensure that your employees, their families and others present in the logging areas follow the laws that protect wildlife.
2. Ensure that protected species are not hunted in your logging concession.
3. Ensure that no bushmeat is exported from your area.
4. Ensure that no poachers travel on your transport vehicles.
5. Do not allow poachers to settle in your camps.
6. Ensure that the workers get supplied with enough meat, so they do not need to hunt for food.
7. Do not allow workers to possess unauthorised firearms within your logging areas.
8. Ensure that the type of munitions available to people in your concessions complies with national laws.
9. Do not permit the use of snares in your concessions.
10. When leaving the concession, ensure that future vehicle access is not possible.
11. Ensure that chemicals are disposed of in a responsible manner to prevent the contamination of local water sources.
12. Ensure the improvement of knowledge of your workers and the local communities in your concessions on national wildlife

An appendix should list the recommended measures, wildlife laws and protected species.

Initial dialogues between representatives of large logging companies, the World Bank and conservation organisations started in October 1999.

The Congolaise Industrielle du Bois (CIB) has entered into a partnership with the Wildlife Conservation Society in a model project in the north of PR Congo (Nouabale-Ndoki National Park). Strict controls are said to be enforced in the CIB area. Official reports say that after two years poaching was reduced by 60% in two adjacent communities, although it is possible that the poachers merely transferred their hunting activities to other areas.....

The following arguments against the Code of Conduct were issued by the logging operators:

- Many of the demands lie within the responsibility of the relevant government authorities (e.g. control of hunting), preventing the companies from guaranteeing the demands, though they are able to declare their willingness to co-operate.
- More flexibility is needed because of different situations in the various countries and regions.
- Logging areas are not development programmes.
- The introduction of alternative protein, such as meat from domestic animals, is usually not accepted by workers.
- Companies cannot finance everything as they have to remain competitive.
- Levies for a given country determine logging quotas and set limited trade frameworks; criteria for the FSC certification are not realisable, therefore an alternative to the FSC certificate is demanded for African forest products.



New settlements are created along logging roads.

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The logging companies conceded to the following:

- Regulations that lie with the companies (e.g. dismissal in the event of poaching) should be applied.
- No provision of munitions, wires and other materials used for poaching, or opportunities for local manufacture of weapons.
- Partnerships with conservation organisations who may visit concessions and monitor activities
- Development of timber companies' own suggestions for low impact logging.

The World Bank, the most significant funding agent of credits and subsidies for developing countries, is an important mediator between economy, politics and conservation. It urges timber companies to develop new strategies taking into account the problems facing threatened biodiversity. It takes action at governmental levels to ensure that concessions are only granted to companies who can demonstrate plans for protective and responsible management of natural resources. Financial support to alliances between logging operators and conservation NGOs should ensue independently and be considered by the European Union and the Global Environment Fund (GEF).