

Knowledge about apes has been distributed to the "Western World" by books and films. We know about their intelligence and social ability, such as compassion, humour, affection and mourning. Scientists recognise that apes have a conscience and moral understanding. Therefore many people have developed a special affinity to apes.

The scientists *Dian Fossey* and *Jane Goodall* allowed their readers to share the life stories of members of their study groups. Nowadays names such as Flo, Fifi, Digit and Beethoven are familiar to many interested persons and it is as if they know them personally. This personal **identification** has led people to regard the slaughtering and consumption of apes as murder and cannibalism.

Are they not human enough?

If relatives of our domestic and wild animals, for example pig, buffalo or antelope are hunted, people speak of utilisation or over-exploitation of natural resources. In the case of closer relatives such as monkeys or even apes, it becomes more difficult for us. However, our culture and living standards are **not comparable** with African circumstances - as is the case with our ethical beliefs.



K. Armentrout/WSPA



C. Schurr

Gorilla fingers are in demand for magical purpose. They were cut off even from a baby under 1 year old.



K. Armentrout/WSPA

Do we have a moral obligation to reject the consumption of apes? Is it more reprehensible to eat apes or monkeys than it is to eat pigs, elephants or other socially living and intelligent species? Is intelligence or degree of relatedness a criterion?

Where to draw the borderline?

Is it acceptable that we inflict our moral views on others in a neo-colonialist way?

— **What really counts is the long-term preservation of biodiversity,** which has a definite economic but an even greater ecological value. Natural habitats are like a motor: if a part of it is missing it can't function!
And every part is so unique that you can't replace it!

This is the knowledge that we must communicate, in order to achieve understanding for regulations, laws and restrictions. In addition, we are morally obliged to do everything we can personally (consumer power, political and humanitarian aid) and **not shift the blame and responsibility** to people of other cultural backgrounds. Especially as Europeans, because it is European timber companies who **exploit the tropical forest and Western money actually co-finances the killings!**

Different cultures (Morakinyo), different opinions:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Animals | - raid fields
- are dangerous
- taste good
- are a way to become rich quickly |
| Nature and Animal Protection Laws | - are unrealistic
- are inappropriate
- mostly unachievable
- should be ignored |



Marius, the highest ranking male in a society of Tai-Chimpanzees.

Wild Chimpanzee Foundation