



Jane Goodall Institute Uganda and Volcanoes Safaris Partnership Trust
Form Partnership to Implement Integrated Program in Support of the Endangered Chimpanzees,
Habitat, and the Communities of Kyambura Gorge

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Kyambura Gorge, Uganda (May 15, 2021) Jane Goodall Institute Uganda (JGI) and Volcanoes Safaris Partnership Trust (VSPT) announce a long-term partnership for supporting the threatened chimpanzee community at Kyambura Gorge. The plight of a small community of 28 chimpanzees, isolated from other chimpanzee communities has brought these two organizations together to support their future survival, in collaboration with the Uganda Wildlife Authority.

For the last eleven years, the VSPT, which is funded by Volcanoes Safaris, guests, and private donors, have been champions for these chimpanzees. As COVID-19 continues to impact tourism in Uganda, the partnership with JGI will significantly reinforce community-led conservation and ecotourism development centred around the Kyambura Gorge landscape in the Queen Elizabeth National Park in Uganda. The National Park is one of the most biodiverse areas in Africa, but the surrounding area remains under threat of habitat loss and degradation from increasing human activity.

The partnership will focus on the following five key objectives:

- Expanding community outreach programs through the JGI Roots & Shoots program and VSPT Community Centre
- Expanding the VSPT buffer zone to protect chimpanzee habitat
- Developing ecotourism activities
- Diversifying local livelihoods and improving smart crop husbandry
- Evaluating the feasibility of restoring habitat to re-connect chimpanzee communities

"Focused efforts to help the chimpanzees of Kyambura is another great example of how the Jane Goodall Institute supports individuals and their communities, as well as populations of chimpanzees across their range," said Anna Rathmann, Executive Director of Jane Goodall Institute USA. "There is significant potential for community-driven conservation - especially through sustainable ecotourism - and we look forward to what this partnership will deliver for these chimpanzees."

While the Kyambura Gorge forest offers the chimpanzees protection, the increasing agricultural cultivation and development nearby are leading to fragmentation of ecosystem services, increased environmental pollution, greater human-wildlife conflict, and enhanced probability of spread of zoonotic diseases such as COVID-19.

Being cut off from neighboring forests means the chimpanzees cannot connect with other chimp communities, which could lead to health threats caused by inbreeding and potentially local extinction in the long term. Safeguarding the future of these chimpanzees and working to reconnect them to nearby habitats and other chimpanzee groups, while providing local human communities with economic benefits is the key to the chimpanzees' survival, and the focus of the JGI and VSPT partnership. Both organizations have successfully executed practical models on the ground that link conservation of great apes with community development and ecotourism models in Uganda and other parts of Africa, which they will use as potential models.

A full list of joint initiatives can be found in Appendix I below.

Founder of Volcanoes Safaris and Chair of VSPT, Praveen Moman, shared "As pioneers of great ape ecotourism we believe strongly in linking our lodges to chimpanzee conservation and giving communities a stake in conservation and tourism. This partnership will build on our decade long work in the Kyambura Gorge Landscape. We're excited for this partnership with JGI to reinforce the foundation we've started and provide their unique resources to scale the necessary activations this cause needs."

This partnership will build on the Jane Goodall Institute's expertise in chimpanzee conservation, research, and community outreach. It will support holistic ecosystem health and socio-economic wellbeing as part of the JGI's Tacare community-driven conservation approach which is integral to the long-term sustainability of the wildlife resources protection efforts - an approach that relies on the knowledge and expertise of local communities - JGI looks forward to the growth of this partnership to include other stakeholders, both public and private.

Volcanoes Safaris (VS) and Volcanoes Safaris Partnership Trust (VSPT) bring over twenty years of expertise in great ape eco-tourism and working with communities on developing skills that can be applied in hospitality to enhance their livelihoods while supporting chimpanzee and gorilla conservation. In particular, this partnership builds on the decade-long work VSPT has done in this region through the [Kyambura Gorge Ecotourism Project](#), making them an important stakeholder in the Kyambura Gorge landscape working alongside the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and the local communities.

JGI and VSPT strongly believe a partnership working with other important stakeholders such as the UWA and other community and conservation organizations can support the endangered chimpanzee community. It can also contribute significantly to safeguarding the Kyambura Gorge landscape through local community outreach and supporting community livelihood and ecotourism development. The two organizations will begin this partnership with the implementation of a participatory planning process involving local stakeholders, organizational staff, and technical experts. That plan will form the basis of the work to be undertaken through the JGI/VSPT partnership over the coming years.

Promotional Assets:

["Protecting The Lost Gorge of Kyambura" Video](#)

[Volcanoes Safaris Kyambura Gorge Lodge Images](#)

[JGI x VS in Kyambura Press Images](#)

[Kyambura Gorge Chimpanzee Images](#)

About Volcanoes Safaris:

Volcanoes Safaris is recognized as the leader in great ape tourism specializing in mountain gorilla and chimpanzee trekking in Rwanda and Uganda. With four eco-luxury safari lodges, all recently reimagined and upgraded, guests can enjoy all the highlights of Uganda and Rwanda in comfort and style while primate trekking through East Africa. Guests can also experience and take part in the eco-tourism and conservation efforts with the local communities, developed by the Volcanoes Safaris Partnership Trust (VSPT).

www.volcanoessafaris.com | [Instagram](#) | [Youtube](#) | enquiries@volcanoessafaris.com

About Jane Goodall Institute:

The Jane Goodall Institute (JGI) is a global, community-centered conservation organization founded in 1977 that advances the vision and work of Dr. Jane Goodall in over 30 countries around the world. Its aim is to understand and protect chimpanzees, other apes, and their habitats, and empower people to be compassionate citizens in order to inspire conservation of the natural world we all share. JGI uses research, collaboration with local communities, best-in-class animal welfare standards, and the innovative use of science and technology to inspire hope and transform it into action for the common good. Through JGI's Roots & Shoots program for young people of all ages, now active in over 68 countries around the world, JGI is creating an informed and compassionate critical mass of people who will help to create a better world for people, other animals, and our shared environment.

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Appendix I

1. Expansion of the VSPT Outreach Activities

The VSPT Kyambura Community and Conservation Center serves as a major resource for the neighbouring communities and is key to the partnership. VSPT will continue to extend the existing three kilometre buffer zone it has created along the gorge; use of the football pitch to develop local sporting talent among young people; enhance the training in skills offered by the Kyambura Cafe and hospitality training centre; expand the women's coffee cooperative; develop the wetland for guests and local environmental education; as well as support conservation through trainings and workshops for teachers and community.

2. JGI Roots and Shoots Program

JGI hopes to expand its Conservation Education and Roots & Shoots Programs into adjacent schools to give young people the agency and skills to shape our world and get practical eco-social skills to make a positive difference for animals, the environment and mankind. In support of this, JGI explore expanding its Forest Education Center Program into the VSTP center to support teachers, pupils, and neighboring community members in protecting the forest environment.

3. Development of Eco-Tourism

The Kyambura Gorge landscape has major potential for ecotourism development, both inside the protected area and outside. JGI and VS will examine how this potential can be developed further working with UWA, communities and other partners. It will also examine how to develop participation and support from guests in areas such the corridor project, conducting a chimp census in the Gorge, providing education and interpretation for guests, and setting up special itineraries and programs for them.

4. Creating the Kyambura Landscape Conservancy

VSPT and JGI will explore how to create a conservancy of stakeholders involved in chimpanzee conservation tourism around the neighbouring forests of Kyambura, Kalinzu, Maramagambo involving communities, local government representatives, UWA and National Forest Authority, as well as private sector players involved in the Kyambura Gorge landscape. This forum will address issues affecting the people, conservation, wildlife, tourism, the ecosystem, and community livelihoods.

5. Diversifying & Improving Local Livelihoods

Develop alternative livelihood activities to diversify household incomes and enable them to obtain skills as tourism guides and hospitality trainees. This is similar to VS' Bwindi Bar near the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest, which acts as a community restaurant and bar and trains local talent in hospitality services.

- A. Promote climate smart crop husbandry – crops which are non-palatable to wildlife, but profitable to grow. Coffee, onions, soya beans, chili, vanilla, and sunflower among others shall be grown adjacent to the Kyambura area to increase household income and reduce human-wildlife conflict
- B. Apiculture – expanding VSPT's work with setting up beehives to produce multiple high value bee products and to deter elephant foraging
- C. Produce cooperatives – using the VSPT women's coffee cooperative as a model to develop further produce group cooperatives that provide sustainable revenue

6. Strengthen Monitoring and Law Enforcement through Community-Government

Collaboration through monitoring and law enforcement activities related to protecting wildlife and forests will be expanded. This could include reducing poaching through snare removal, camera traps and predator response. Government rangers and community monitors will be empowered with high resolution satellite imagery alerts, mobile and other mapping technologies to more effectively patrol, report and communicate their observations, to inform conservation decisions and actions and measure conservation success

7. Evaluate the feasibility of creating a Wildlife Corridor Linking Kyambura Gorge to an Adjacent Chimpanzee Habitat

VSPT and JGI want to explore the idea of developing wildlife corridors to connect the isolated chimpanzee community in Kyambura Gorge to the greater chimpanzee populations to ensure its viability. The practical design and implementation of such corridors requires careful studies using the best data and science available as it is complex to achieve and will require a long-term collaborative planning process. Consultation with the relevant interest groups across the proposed corridor options will be undertaken and feasibility plans prepared for different options. Creation of wildlife corridors is likely to take some time and will need to align with the UWA vision for its protected areas and support of local communities.