

GREAT APES IN AFRICA

Great Apes are primates without a tail and they are also characterised by **large bodies** and a wider degree of freedom of motion at the shoulder joint.

98%

They share **over 98%** DNA material with humans.

4

SPECIES

There are **4 species** of Great Apes in Africa;

Their Conservation Status:



1) Western Gorilla
- Western lowland gorilla
Critically Endangered
- Cross river gorilla
Critically Endangered



2) Eastern Gorilla
- Mountain Gorilla
Endangered
- Eastern lowland gorilla
Critically Endangered



3) Bonobo
Endangered



4) Central Chimpanzee
Endangered

Benefits of Great Apes

- **Ecosystem:** Aid in seed dispersal of forest trees.
- **Economy:** Great Ape tourism contributes to employment, community development and national economy.

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KEY THREATS FACING GREAT APES

Great Ape tourism contributes positively to **Africa's economy**.
However, Africa's Great Apes are highly prone to **respiratory diseases**.



1) **Transmission
of respiratory diseases from
human to Great Apes.**

Factors influencing disease transfer:

- Inappropriate tourism marketing.
- Lack of awareness or limited knowledge of great ape tourism rules.
- Inadequate capacity to manage disease outbreaks
- Poor public health systems



2) **Poaching**



3) **Habitat loss and
fragmentation**



4) **Wildlife
trafficking**

Threats faced by the Great Apes differ by countries and sites. The intensity of the threats depend among other things on the level of tourism and types of conservation approaches at each site.



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RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENTS

Due to the **high level of threat** faced by **Great Apes**, different stakeholders can play a role in their conservation.



It is recommended for governments to:



- Consider **testing** and **vaccination** of park staff against preventable diseases, to keep both staff and wildlife safe from diseases.

- Encourage **mandatory wearing of masks** by park staff, tourists and researchers viewing Great Apes within a distance of 10 meters.



- Introduce **strict measures** for Great Ape viewing.

- **Support local communities** to develop both tourism and non-tourism dependent livelihoods that are compatible with Great Ape Conservation.



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RECOMMENDATIONS TO TOUR OPERATORS

Due to the high level of threat faced by Great Apes, different stakeholders can play a role in their conservation.



It is recommended for tour operators to:

- Strengthen surveillance to ensure adherence to the best practice guidelines for responsible marketing of all services, visitation as well as health monitoring. Some of these practices are;



1. Wear a mask



2. Sanitize/hygiene



3. Keep a 10 meters
distance

- **Sensitize clients** about Great Ape tourism guidelines and best practices ahead of the visit.
- Encourage clients to **promote conservation at Great Ape sites** by supporting local communities.

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