

Gorilla Journal

Journal of Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe

No. 1/1993

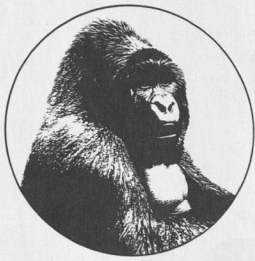


**Economic
Systems in the
Kivu Region and
their Impact on
the Rain Forest**

**The Fate of the
Mountain Gorillas
after the Civil War
in Rwanda**

**Donations for the
Research Center
Karisoke in
Rwanda are
Needed**

**Start of Gorilla
Tourism in
Uganda**



BERGGORILLA & REGENWALD DIREKTHILFE

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Authors of this issue

Rüdiger Braun (born in 1960) studied biology in Würzburg; his main subjects were ecology and philosophy. As a free-lance journalist, he tries to enhance public awareness for ecological issues. During his travels in Uganda and Zaire, he was confronted with the problems of gorilla tourism and has since been involved with conservation of rain forests and gorillas. He was director of the BRD from 1989 to 1992.

Dr. Armin Heymer, D. Sc. CR. CNRS (born in 1937): after 6 years of research in Marine Biology, he joined in 1965 the Institute for Ecology in Brunoy, France, where he still works to date. In 1970 he habilitated in Ethology at the Sorbonne. In cooperation with the Max Planck Institute for Human Ethology in Andechs, he now conducts eco-ethological field research on African Pygmies. He has written over 100 publications, including several books.

Ulrich Karlowski (born in 1959) studied biology at the University of Bonn with emphasis on behavioural research. For 3 years he worked as scientific advisor for the *Deutscher Tierschutzbund* in Bonn and was responsible, among other tasks, for the Mgahinga Project. He is currently involved in public relations for the *Deutsches Tierhilfswerk* in Munich. He has worked for the BRD since 1992.

Karl-Heinz Kohnen (born in 1958) studied pedagogics at the University of Essen. After this he became an independent entrepreneur and he is now the manager of several travel agencies. He has been active in the BRD since 1986 and joined the board of directors in 1989. His primary concerns are project counseling, logistics and travels to Africa.

Dr. Angela Meder (born in 1956) studied biology at the University of Heidelberg. Her diploma and doctoral thesis dealt with the behaviour and development of captive lowland goril-

las. A major aim of her various studies was the improvement of the management, rearing and housing of gorillas in zoos. Today, she works as an editor of animal books. She became part of the board of directors of the BRD in 1992.

Prof. Dr. Carsten Niemitz (born in 1945) studied biology, mathematics and medicine in Gießen, Göttingen and Berlin. He has been a professor for human biology at the Free University of Berlin since 1978. His main subjects are primatology, evolution and communication. He published and edited many articles and books.

Karsten Otte (born in 1959) studied "Landespflege" (natural resources planning) at the University of Hannover. Part of his studies he made in East and Central Africa, thus gaining detailed information about the ecological and social conflicts in this area. Professionally, he manages a fruit orchard in Westphalia, Germany.

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Cover: Cultivated land in the mountains west of Lake Kivu with banana plantations, cassava fields and scattered eukalyptus trees.

Photo: Armin Heymer

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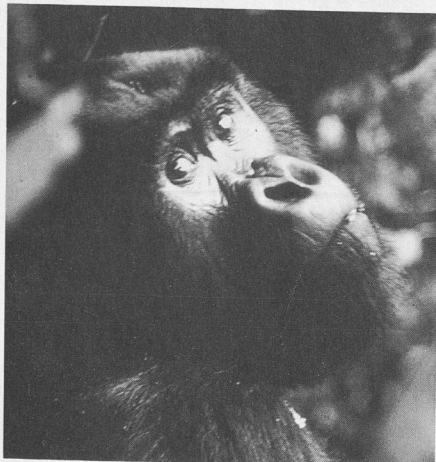
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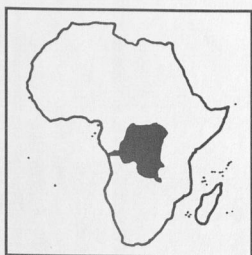
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ZAIRE

Economic Systems and Culture of the People from the Kivu Region and their Impact on the Rain Forest

This report will introduce the people of the mountainous area west of Lake Kivu, their economy and culture, and analyze the effects they have on the rain forests of the area.

According to various records, the original inhabitants were Pygmies: Batwa gatherers and hunters also called 'Barhwa' west of Lake Kivu. In this region, scattered groups of families live nowadays in isolated hamlets. Their special situation will be dealt with in more detail in one of the next issues of this journal.

Today, the dominating ethnic groups belong mainly to the Eastern Bantu who immigrated several centuries ago during the great expansion of the Bantu. The mountainous area west of Lake Kivu is mainly inhabited by the Bashi and the Bahunde. Further west settled the Barega, Wanyanga and Bakumu, and also two smaller ethnic groups, the Batembo who belong to the Barega, and the Bakano belonging to the Bakumu (see map).

The Bashi and the Bahunde have always practised agriculture intensively, and their fields extend from the valleys up to the highest ridges. In order to cultivate fields, the mountain forest was cleared completely and huge areas were deforested. This exposure of the ground, especially on the hills which are often very steep, resulted in landslides and severe soil erosion. This is especially noticeable in the area immediately surrounding Lake Kivu.

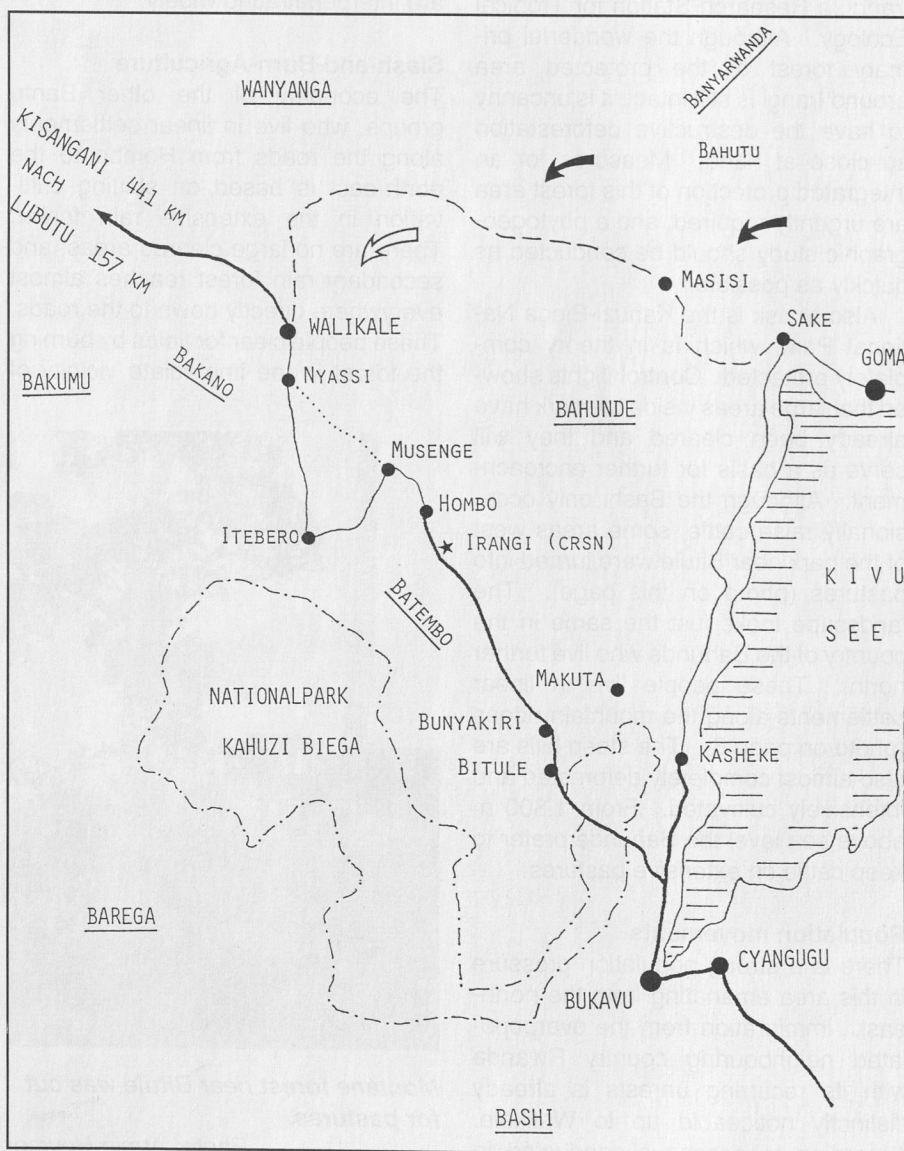
As early as the turn of the century, when the Duke of Mecklenburg passed through this area, the landscape was distinctly man-made. In addition to the traditional agriculture practised by mountain farmers on gentle slopes, commercial plantations have been de-

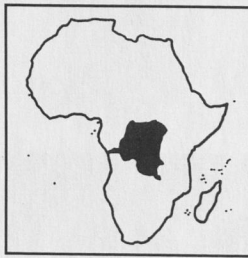
veloped of tea, sugar cane and occasionally coffee; especially common are plantations of the South American *Cinchona* tree by the German Pharmakina in Bukavu. This species contains quinine which is used in the manufacture of anti-malaria drugs. The only true trees that grow here, either scattered or in small copses, are eucalyptus trees imported from Australia (see photo on the cover). In the valleys close to the lake, there are many huge plantations of plantain bananas -

pombe, banana beer, is brewed from the harvest.

The Bashi do not form village communities but live in scattered settlements in small family hamlets. They practise successive polygamy: only the youngest wife serves as the partner for reproduction. Later on, she works in the field and then in the kitchen.

A little sugar cane and a few banana plants are grown in the immediate surroundings of these idyllic hamlets. Cassava, millet, sweet potatoes, yams,





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gourds, peanuts, taro and some rice are grown as well. This intensive agriculture is especially well demonstrated in the Bunyakiri valley.

Deforestation

Over the past 20 years alone, the area deforested was extended 5 km to the north west; at best, tiny islands of forest remained on the hilltops. The destruction of the rain forest already extends as far as 18 km from Hombo, which means that it comes to within 13 km of Irangi, a Research Station for Tropical Ecology. Although the wonderful primary forest of the protected area around Irangi is still intact, it is uncanny to have the destructive deforestation so close at hand. Measures for an integrated protection of this forest area are urgently required, and a phytogeographic study should be conducted as quickly as possible.

Also at risk is the Kahuzi-Biega National Park, which is in theory completely protected. Control flights showed that large areas inside the park have already been cleared and they will serve as a basis for further encroachment. Although the Bashi only occasionally raise cattle, some areas west of the park near Bitule were turned into pastures (photo on this page). The landscape looks just the same in the country of the Bahunde who live further north. These people live in linear settlements along the mountain ridges (photo on page 6). The steep hills are also almost completely deforested and intensively cultivated. From 1,800 m above sea level the Bahunde prefer to keep cattle on extensive pastures.

Population movements

There is a strong population pressure in this area emanating from the north-east. Immigration from the overpopulated neighbouring country Rwanda with its recurring unrests is already distinctly noticeable up to Walikale. According to a census conducted in

1982, the population density around Lake Kivu is approximately 360 inhabitants per km², compared to 240 in the old parts of the Federal Republic of Germany. A general investigation into the mechanisms of the population movements in the whole Kivu area would be of special interest. Ethnic and cultural borders of various small kingdoms that formerly put a more or less effective brake on these movements have lost their influence; different ethnic groups and populations are interpenetrating widely.

Slash-and-Burn-Agriculture

The economy of the other Bantu groups, who live in linear settlements along the roads from Hombo to the north-east is based on shifting cultivation in the extensive rain forest. There are no large cleared areas, and secondary rain forest reaches almost everywhere directly down to the roads. These people clear for fields by burning the forest in the immediate vicinity of

settlements. In the dry season they fell the bigger trees in the selected areas. When those have dried out, trunks, branches and bushes are set on fire. For several days and nights afterwards the fire burns through the fallen trees and lianas. What is left is a field of ash with charcoaled logs. Cassava and plantains are subsequently cultivated intensively on such fields, and, in smaller quantities, maize and taro as well.

At first, these plantations do well without fertilization and the cleared areas are a picture of lush growth. However, the soil only has a thin layer of humus and cannot sustain such an intensive use for any length of time. It is therefore soon exhausted, and the harvest decreases considerably after only a few seasons. Then the plantations are left and not cultivated again for approximately 5 to 7 years. Another field is cleared, not necessarily right next to the former one. While the crops die on the old field, a secondary forest pioneer tree, *Musanga cecropioides*, starts to fill their ecological niche.

The scattered slash-and-burn fields typically extend from both sides of the roads up to 3 to 5 km into the forest. In the surroundings of Lubutu, these areas look quite desolate and the probability for regeneration is very small. Within a radius of more than 50 km from Kisangani, the rain forest has already been completely destroyed. In addition to shifting cultivation, the production of charcoal plays a significant role in the economy of these areas and also destroys the forests.

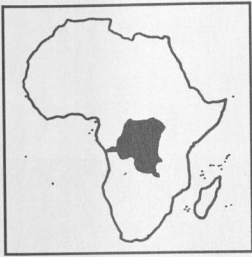
Hunting

Game is hunted everywhere between Hombo and Kisangani, not only with traditional spears and poisoned arrows, but also with modern traps and snares. Guenons and colobus monkeys are the main prey, hunted with ancient Russian rifles, but pangolins, porcupines and cane rats are hunted as well. It is tentatively estimated that



Montane forest near Bitule was cut for pastures.

Photo: Armin Heymer



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Deforested area in montane forest north of the Kahuzi-Biega near Makuta

Photo: Armin Heymer

more than 50,000 guenons and colobus monkeys from the Hombo-Walikale area alone reach Bukavu each year. The two cities of Bukavu and Kisangani each receive an annual supply of 400 tons of bush meat. This may seem a lot, but it is only the equivalent of slightly more than 1 kg of meat per inhabitant and per year!

Although the okapi is completely protected by a law passed in 1933 which is still valid, this solitary and mostly nocturnal animal is still hunted everywhere. From the sale of a single animal's meat, a hunter earns the equivalent of approximately 200 DM, an immense amount of money for him. Occasionally, skulls and skins are openly offered for sale in the villages. People also hunt in the national parks. The Maiko National Park in particular is frequently visited by gold searchers, and along the narrow paths that cut through the park, I found snares with captured blue duikers, sometimes still alive. The trappers act openly and do not feel any guilt.

Concluding Remarks

According to an investigation of the FAO, approximately 20 million hectares of the world's tropical forests are presently logged every year. 4 million hectares are logged in Africa alone – an area twice as big as the total forested area in Germany. According to other sources: every year an area the size of Germany is logged, or an area the size of a football pitch is logged every second. These numbers should be a warning to all of us. What will the future look like? Bare hill slopes as a result of the deforestation, from which tropical downpours carry away the precious soil?

Armin Heymer

Impressions of a Journey in January 1993

My trip with Martin Neumann along the Western Rift Valley took me from the Ruwenzori Mountains in Uganda through the Queen Elizabeth National

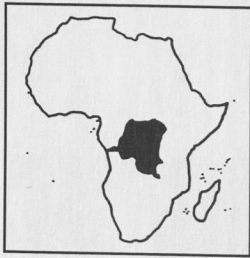
Park and Mgahinga Gorilla National Park, then into Zaire and the Virunga National Park (Jomba) through Goma and Bukavu to the Kahuzi-Biega National Park.

In many areas of public life, Uganda is evidently on the way to recovery, although little has changed in the desperate economic situation of the rural population.

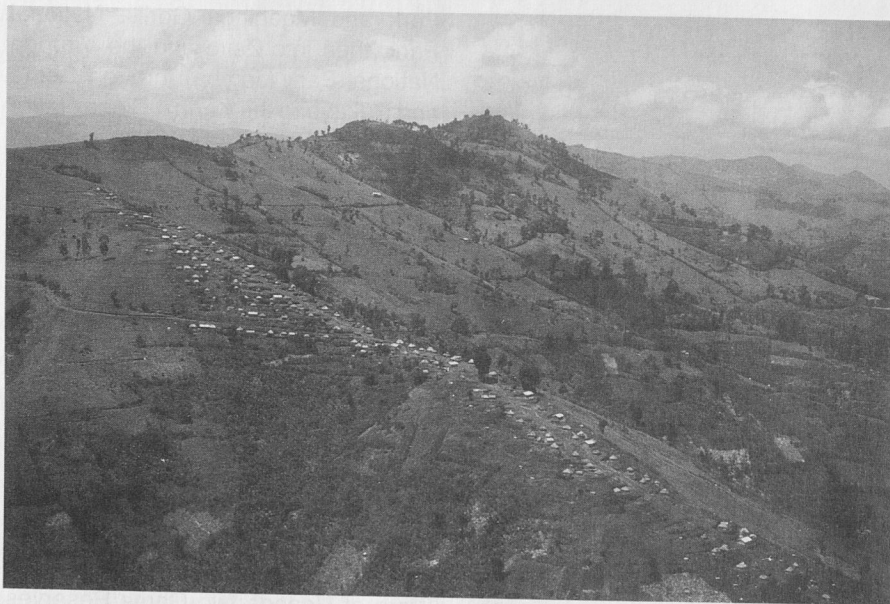
During the last 12 years, I have never seen so much game in the Queen Elizabeth National Park as on this visit. In the opinion of Peter Möller, who has made a decisive contribution to this positive development, poaching is currently negligible. The South African-Swiss hunting safari operator Zwilling has, however, leased from the State of Uganda two Game Reserves which adjoin the National Park. Illegal hunting is known to take place there.

In the southern part of Queen Elizabeth National Park, we already found evidence of the chaos in Zaire: elephants wildly attacked our approaching cars, then panicked and fled. The explanation for this was provided by a Park Ranger. He had learned from a Zairian colleague in the Virunga National Park that a large unit of the Zairian army, including a number of soldiers in an advanced state of drunkenness, had taken lorries out to hunt elephants on 23 December 1992.

We continued on to the Mgahinga Gorilla National Park, where we found the equipment and personnel in excellent condition. The reclamation of zone 2 of the park has been exemplary. The full length of the boundary has already been demarcated and a hedge of *Erythrina* trees has been planted along two thirds of the length until July 1993. In addition, about half is marked with concrete pyramids. Punctually, in accordance with the agreement, the final harvests were gathered from the last fields in zone 2 on 31 December 1992. Parts of the large regenerating area are already being used by wild



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Settlement of Bahunde in the Masisi area with plantations of bananas and cassava and many pastures

Photo: Armin Heymer

animals. Ursula Karlowski has been carrying out a detailed scientific study of the succession for her doctoral thesis.

We had already heard in Germany of the 'shooting incidents' in the northern Kivu region. Soldiers looted Goma on 22 December 1992 and devastated the city. Several traders were killed and some tourists robbed. As we had heard that it was relatively safe to travel again, we decided to visit Zaire.

At first we moved quite cautiously on foot along paths through banana fields. At the mountain gorilla post at Jomba, we saw that the Park Rangers and Gorilla Trackers had very little to do: Since the unrest started they had had only a few customers. The Frankfurt Zoological Society hut was fully intact and pleasant to stay in. For a few million Zaires we were able to get a simple meal: a choice between potatoes with beans and cabbage, and cabbage with beans and potatoes. The nearby luxury lodge was evidently abandoned and is deteriorating.

It is clear that the Park Rangers of the Virunga National Park work under very difficult conditions. Along with the military, they have not been paid since September, and with 13,000% inflation they would not be able to buy anything anyway. The Ugandan example suggests that there is nothing worse for the long-term conservation of nature than unpaid Park Rangers. We were favourably impressed by the Jomba Park Rangers, however, and their tracking was competent and correct.

On foot, by motorcycle-taxi and in a lorry carrying coffee, we travelled on through Rutshuru to Goma. Just a few years ago, this city was a pulsating center of tourism, but no more today. The main road for shopping was deserted, and the half-hearted efforts of a few shop owners to plaster over the bullet holes left by the soldiers' Christmas shopping spree had done nothing to ease the troubled atmosphere. You constantly felt that at any moment the lorries full of marauding troops could come back, even though

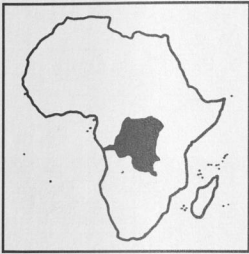
there was nothing more there for them to take.

At the other end of Lake Kivu, in Bukavu, we experienced the political unrest at first hand. This took a different form, however: demonstrations, a general strike, a mass for the murdered Patrice Lumumba and road blocks. It is remarkable that the citizens seek their rights through peaceful civil disobedience.

Subsequently, we visited the GTZ-IZCN Project at Kahuzi-Biega National Park. The aims of this project, which was originally very well supported financially, were, through infrastructural and agroforestry development in the vicinity of the park, to reduce the exploitation of the forest itself and to create a more positive attitude towards nature conservation within the local population. Why this could not be conducted according to plan boils down to the following: delays caused by transport logistics, chaos and corruption in Zaire, and frustration caused by exaggerated safety regulations imposed by the German Foreign Office. The very committed project staff are restricted to Bukavu, and are not able to work 100 km further away at the critical places.

Short-term visitors like us, even if we do have a certain amount of experience in Africa, cannot usually judge the success of conservation activities. Nevertheless, we found that the Park Rangers were having a positive effect in the Kahuzi-Biega National Park. One evening, a Park Ranger led us to a hill on the eastern boundary of the park. There, less than 200 m from us, we saw two old elephant bulls with long tusks feeding on the fresh grass of a fallow field. From the same spot, 80 m away, we could see a lone silverback gorilla sitting in the crown of a tree having his supper. Such observations confirm that good work has been done for many years.

Karsten Otte



ZAIRE

Report from Chantal Shalukoma

The team in charge of public relations activities, which is led by Chantal Shalukoma, continued its work in the periphery of the Kahuzi-Biega National Park. Additional pygmy groups have been registered, and at the same time the team tried to reduce hunting and agricultural activities within the park itself. Unfortunately, their efforts to persuade all pygmies to refrain from these activities within the park have been unsuccessful. Further visits have therefore been planned in order to continue these efforts. In addition, the pygmies will be taught to read and write.

The Zimbabwe movie *Nhaka Yedu* has been translated into Swahili and shown in rural areas. The movie deals with such topics as reforestation and shows how to set up tree nurseries and how to prevent erosion.

Chantal Shalukoma's activities have been supervised by Andrea Breuer-Heisel, who is working in the Kahuzi-Biega Project since 1991. She further manages all financial transactions between the *Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe* and Ms. Shalukoma.



Mountain gorilla in Virunga National Park (Zaire)

Photo: Angela Meder

Maiko National Park

Due to the unstable situation in Zaire, the program for the Maiko Project has been changed. The results from the preliminary study are to be thoroughly evaluated and presented in printed form. No definite plans have been ma-

de yet for the further steps to conservation of the Maiko National Park.

Deforestation in Zaire despite Increasing Unrest

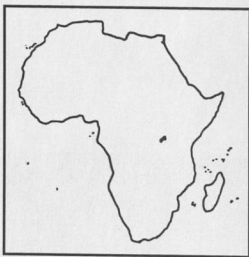
Based on information from Epulu near the Ituri Reserve, a German timber company has revved up its activities in Zaire. This company is now close to the protected area. In response to this, the patrols by the guards have been intensified. It almost seems as if the current political upheaval is being taken advantage of by this timber company, so they may proceed with their activities without being noticed. We hope that we can give more detailed information in the next issue of our journal.

The Ituri Reserve is not only home to the okapi and many other rare animals, but also to the Mbuti pygmies. The natural living area of these people has already been severely diminished, and the intense utilization of the forest would further restrict their range.

Curriculum Vitae of Claude Sikubwabo Kiyengo

As we described the personal background of Claude Sikubwabo incorrectly in the last edition of our newsletter (December 1992), we will give a more detailed introduction of this researcher here.

Claude Sikubwabo Kiyengo was born in Rumangabo (North-Kivu, Zaire) on June 7th, 1960. After school and a two-year teaching job, he studied biology at the University of Kisangani with majors in ecology and conservation. He finished these studies with a degree. Since 1987 he has worked as a research assistant in the Ituri Project with John and Terese Hart. His main tasks included the following: research on the ecology and the behaviour of okapis, a survey of elephants in eastern Zaire, instruction of administrators of National Parks and Reserves at the International UNESCO Seminar in Rwindi, visits to various forests for surveys of animals and plants, instruction of teachers on conservation issues and of Park Rangers on orientation and data collection. Since 1989 he has worked in the Maiko National Park. In addition, he co-authored several publications on the results of his research.



RWANDA

The Fate of the Mountain Gorillas after the Civil War in Rwanda

In April 1993, I visited both Rwanda and Zaire (Kahuzi-Biega and Bukima in the Virunga National Park). Ruhengeri, which lies in northern Rwanda and is the starting point for visits to the Parc National des Volcans, was totally deserted. All the stores on the main street have been abandoned and the windows shattered. The hospital has also been shell-bombed, and a hole in the roof stands as proof. By mid-April, the hotel serving as temporary housing for military personnel is to resume its original function. Otherwise, the atmosphere in Ruhengeri is peaceful, perhaps due to the omnipresence of military. The station in the National Park is said to be shot into pieces. The Park Rangers in Bukima say that three gorilla groups have crossed the border to Zaire, thus escaping the shellfiring. In the meantime, visits to these gorillas are probably possible again.

The initial rush to the park, instigated by the movie about Dian Fossey, has since flagged. Even though Rwanda was temporarily inaccessible to visitors, only 40% of the guided tours to Kahuzi-Biega were booked; the situation was similar in Bukima. However, to ensure that the gorillas remain habituated, the guards still make their daily tours to the gorilla groups. The decline in tourism is mainly due to the fact that the starting point of tours to these two Zairian parks lies in Rwanda.

In the small country Rwanda (approximately 7 million inhabitants), some 1 million refugees have found shelter in huge camps close to the capital Kigali. The current political situation gives good reason for hope, although the long-term fate of the mountain gorillas in Rwanda is also dependent on peace process and the return of the refugees to their homes.

Carsten Niemitz

Effects of the Civil War on Karisoke

The civil war in Rwanda commenced again on February 8th, just about 6 months after armistice. In Ruhengeri, near the Virungas, violent fights also took place. On February 13th, five expatriate researchers at the Karisoke Research Center were evacuated, and on February 18th armed military forced Rwandese co-workers to flee from the station. Karisoke and the Volcanoes Veterinary Center in Ruhengeri were ransacked and severely damaged.

Peace talks started on March 16th, and the country seemed to calm down again. Rwandan co-workers resumed their work. The Park Rangers had to increase their patrols, because about 20 times as many snares were set than before the civil war.

In the home range of Group 5, Karisoke co-workers found traces of blood, and they first assumed that gorillas had been shot at. In the meantime the patrols found out that the blood came from a parturition. Apparently no gorillas were harmed during

the fights. However, there is bad news from Group 5: A young female died of pneumonia, and during the last days of April the leading silverback, Ziz, died, probably also of pneumonia. The fate of his large group is open; the researchers hope that the 18-year-old male Pablo will take it over.

Angela Meder

The Civil War and its Consequences for the Mountain Gorillas

Regarding the article "Die stillen Riesen" in the German magazine *Stern* 24/1993, I want to state that I never said "the civil war in Rwanda caused the death of at least 10 gorillas". This has to be regarded as simple sensationalism of *Stern*. In the presence of witnesses, I talked to the *Stern*-journalists only about the well-known death of one mountain gorilla in Rwanda in May 1992, which was caused by the war.

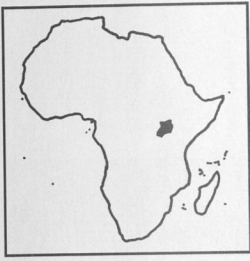
When explosives were removed in Mgahinga National Park in March 1993, we found out that in this part of the

Karisoke Needs our Aid

In May the director of Karisoke, Dieter Steklis, and his wife Netzin Gerald visited the station to get an impression of the damage. The loss of equipment and technical materials was easier to accept than the destruction of the archive and all scientific notes and data. However, in July all the researchers want to return to the station and continue with their scientific work.

Before the work can be completely resumed, the equipment must be replaced and the housing re-built. Nearly everything was either stolen or destroyed during and after the fighting. The re-establishment of Karisoke will probably cost about 90,000 US\$. The *Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund*, which runs the center, cannot provide such a high sum immediately.

Therefore, we have offered to help this organization raise funds for Karisoke. We want to ask you for a donation for this research center. It will enable the personnel to resume their work, which was started more than 20 years ago by Dian Fossey, as soon as possible. 5,000 DM is the sum that we want to collect and transfer to DFGF this summer, and we hope that you will support us. If you want to donate money particularly for the re-establishment of the Karisoke Research Center, please mark this with 'Karisoke'.



UGANDA

Virungas no gorillas or other animals died as a direct effect of the war. However, more than 2,400 snares were confiscated and destroyed; they had been set during the unrest in some parts of the Mgahinga Forest.

It is certain that some gorilla groups wandered over unusually long distances, which may well be regarded as flight. The split-up of one family was documented. Statements regarding further gorillas which may have died as a result of the civil war in Rwanda should not be given before

- explosives in the eastern part of the Parc National des Volcans in Rwanda have been removed,
- regular patrols in the eastern volcanoes have been resumed,
- a new census of the gorillas on all six volcanoes in Rwanda, Uganda and Zaire has been completed.

It is possible that the negative effect on the gorillas is limited because the animals are so well-known and because the conservation projects in the Virunga Volcanoes continued to work during the war.

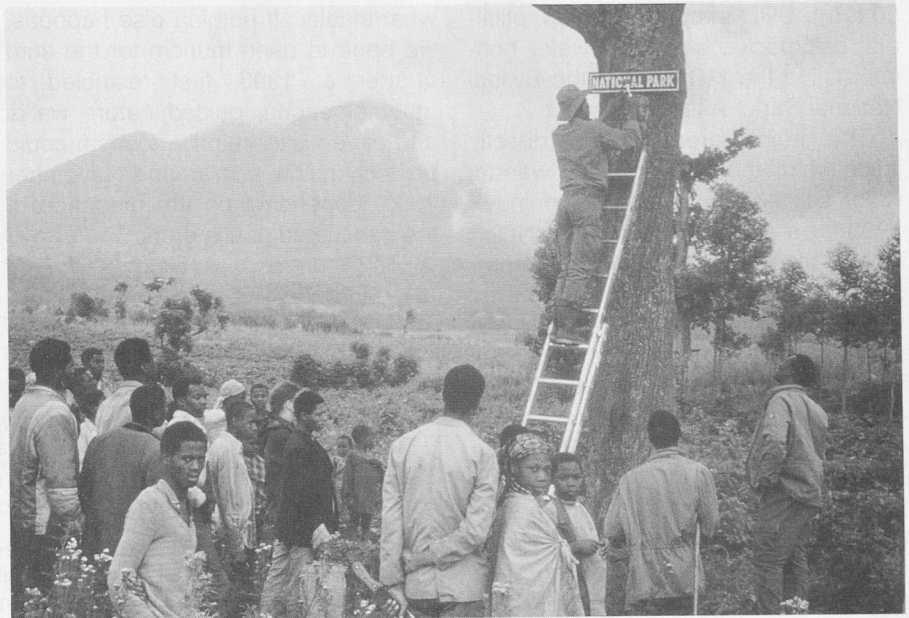
Further threats can only be averted if the interrupted peace talks between the two opponents of the civil war are successfully concluded. The MGNP Project will continue to contribute to gorilla conservation in the Virunga Volcanoes. For this purpose we need the absolute support of all the benefactors.

Kisoro, 6 July 1993, K.-J. Sucker

Summary of the Reports from Mgahinga Gorilla National Park

Report 13 (1 Oct. to 31 Dec. 1992) – Annual Report 1992, and Report 14 (1 Jan. to 31 March 1993)

Essential progress was made in the Mgahinga Gorilla National Park (MGNP) in 1992. The prerequisites for the further development of the park could be fulfilled through a memoran-



Demarcation of the Mgahinga National Park boundary near the Sabynio

Photo: Klaus-Jürgen Sucker

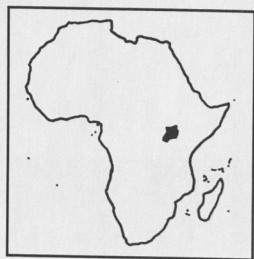
dum of understanding between the *Ministry of Wildlife, Tourism and Antiquities, Uganda National Parks* and the local representatives. Illegal use of zone 2 was finally stopped and it could be integrated successfully into the National Park and into conservation activities. The inhabitants voluntarily moved out and stopped growing their crops and grazing their cattle there. 1,300 people have left zone 2; they received compensation agreed upon by USAID and UNP at the end of 1992. In December 1992 a group of gorillas ventured into zone 2 for the first time.

The MGNP now has the highest density of Park Rangers per km² of all the areas that protect gorillas and all the National Parks in Uganda. The staff was increased to 29 Park Rangers and 3 Park Wardens. The Park Rangers finally received better weapons in January 1993. In addition to the old one-shot carbines from the First World War, they are now equipped with 15 semi-automatic machine guns to control illegal activities.

Park Rangers' camps were built in three areas of the MGNP. The former main camp was moved to the new boundary of the National Park - where the Park Station is planned - and now serves as the new Headquarters.

Considerable progress was made with the demarcation of the northern park boundary in 1992. With the help of local people, 130 of 200 boundary markers were constructed faster than expected. 25 bricklayers, stonemasons, workers and porters are constantly at work to complete the boundary marker construction. The preliminary demarcation of the park boundary was finalized already in Feb. 1993. More than 51,766 seedlings, which were planted along the boundary by more than 250 neighbours of the National Park, are forming a new hedge; only Mt. Muhavura is left.

The agroforestry project *Development through Conservation (DTC)* has been started and its activities have been extended to the three neighbouring communities (approximately



UGANDA

50 km²). BRD supplied T-shirts, stickers, backpacks, sweaters, water bottles etc. to the MGNP and the Bwindi National Park. All arrived intact.

The project area was not directly involved in the civil war in Rwanda, which started again at the beginning of 1993 for a short time. However, it left traces also in the MGNP: anti-personnel mines and other explosives were left behind. But with the help of a special unit of the Ugandan army they were removed quickly. Klaus-Jürgen Sucker also participated in the search of the Mechanized Regiment which included the summits of the three volcanoes. 1 land mine, 6 hand grenades and 9 artillery shells were removed. The MGNP can be visited once again without risk. During the search they not only found that no wild animals had been injured or killed, but also discovered the traces of five groups of gorillas. After the explosives had been removed, the conservation activities of the Rangers and the project were resumed in all areas of the National Park.

During the civil war many families of farmers fled from Rwanda to Uganda. In Kisoro alone approximately 9,000 people were camping on the airfield by the end of March 1993.

Whereas at the beginning of the conservation activities, poachers received relatively ineffective punishments, such as a fine the equivalent of approximately 8 DM or 14 days of prison, in January 1993 a poacher who had killed a forest antelope was sentenced to either 6 months in prison or a fine the equivalent of approximately 60 DM for the first time. This should increase the deterrent against poaching.

The future work and the tourism activities also depend on the observation of the truce in the civil war area. The direction of the park is very optimistic: "Here in the MGNP the situation looks better than it has for a long time... We have cooperated with the highest authorities to keep the situation some-

what stable. If nothing else happens, we hope to open tourism for the third quarter of 1993, first restricted to mountaineering, guided nature walks and cave visits. Gorilla tourism could possibly follow suit around November 1993, depending on the presence of the habituated gorilla group."

Ulrich Karlowski

Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe will continue to support the Mgahinga Project with materials and funds. In 1992 BRD funded this Project with 936.40 DM. From now on we will take over a part of the rent for the National Park Office, which amounts to 65 to 70 DM every 3 months. Additionally, we were asked in February 1993 for the

Petition against the Premature Start of Gorilla Tourism in Uganda

To: President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni; the Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities; the Director of *Uganda National Parks*, Eric Edroma

Dear Mr. President, Minister, Director Edroma,

The beauty and diversity of Uganda's natural and cultivated landscape offer a unique potential for the development of tourism. We are confident that given stable conditions Uganda will be able to play an important role in the international tourism industry in the future. The exploitation of natural resources should take place in a sustained and careful way so as to ensure that these resources are not permanently destroyed. This is why we believe that mass tourism would have negative consequences for Uganda even if high profits are expected in the short term.

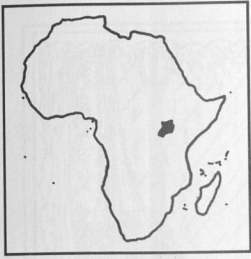
During a promotion tour through southern Uganda from 18th February to 24th February 1993, several German journalists and tour operators were able to see for themselves that some highways and hotels are in excellent condition – the cornerstone for a touristic infrastructure is set up. The participants in this journey were especially interested in the two gorilla groups near Buhoma, which are to be ready for tourist visits by 1st June. Although the journalists had been granted a special permit by *Uganda National Parks*, they had to leave the park without accomplishing anything, for not a single park warden or gorilla tracker was available to lead them to the gorillas.

After inquiries were made, it became apparent that these two gorilla families were not yet fully habituated. The habituation is not expected to be completed until June 1993 at the earliest. There is no touristic infrastructure at all at Buhoma – there are neither simple lodges nor campsites with latrines. An overnight stay at or near Buhoma, however, is necessary as long as the road from Queen Elizabeth National Park via Ishasha is not extended. As *Uganda National Parks* is not taking the initiative to build these facilities, several private tour operators are presently trying to buy land at Buhoma to build their own lodges and campgrounds. This development is in danger of getting out of control.

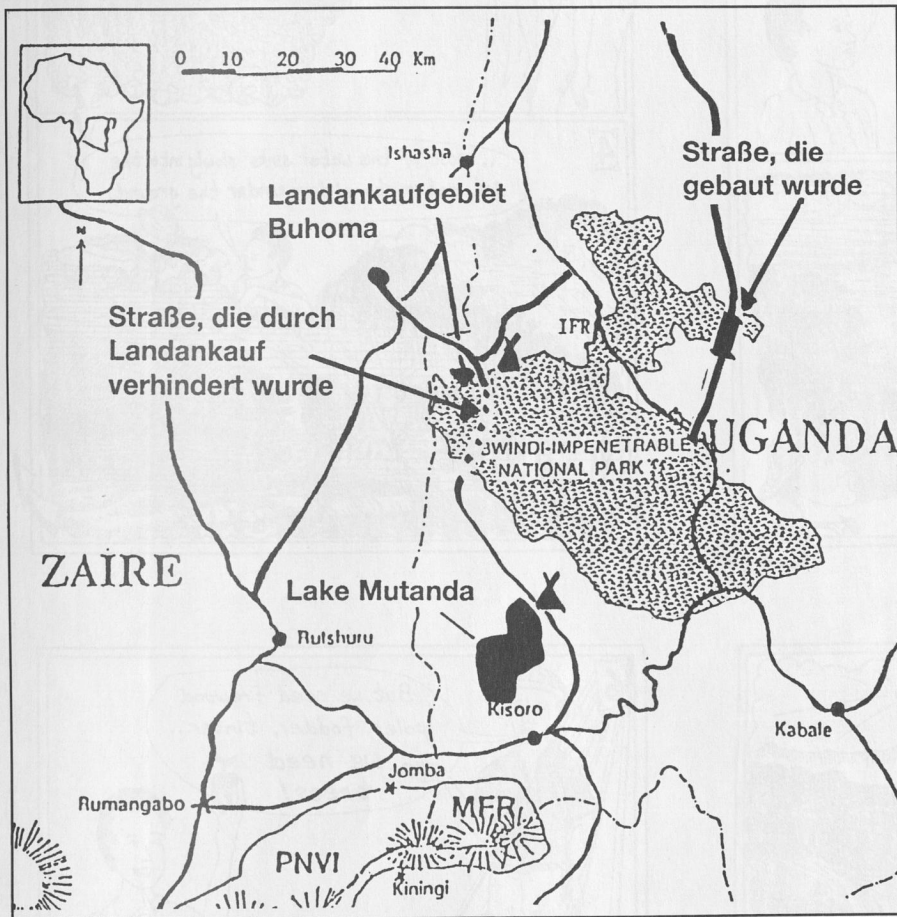
We ask you to have the responsible authorities in Uganda set up and implement the framework for a touristic infrastructure at the park entrance at Buhoma. We are very much concerned about the fact that Uganda started gorilla tourism too early. Please consider the following: frustrated tourists who have to pay between \$ 80 and \$ 120 for a walk in the forest without having seen even the shadow of a gorilla will not be a positive advertisement for the recovering tourist industry in Uganda. Even a minor accident with a half-wild gorilla will lead to a throwback for several years for the ambitious project at Buhoma.

In the spirit of a high quality tourism, we also propose raising the fee for gorilla visits to \$ 200 per person. \$ 80 from this fee could go directly to the gorilla project (for equipment and training of the park wardens and gorilla trackers); it could also be used for investments in the surrounding areas of the park (for building schools, improving medical services, etc.).

Please do everything in your power to ensure that gorilla tourism in Uganda takes place in a controlled and sustained way and that it does not start until the following prerequisites are established: full habituation of the two or three gorilla families, better training of the gorilla trackers, campgrounds with latrines, restriction of 4-6 persons per gorilla group per day, and an office for advance bookings. Until these basic requirements are fulfilled, we cannot recommend gorilla visits in Uganda to our customers - even though there is presently a great demand for them in Germany.



UGANDA



Buhoma there is no infrastructure for tourists whatsoever at this time: there are no simple lodges, only a simple campground. However, an overnight stay in Buhoma is necessary as long as the road from Queen Elizabeth National Park to Bwindi via Ishasha has not been re-built.

As *Uganda National Parks* is not taking the initiative to construct this infrastructure, several private tour operators are trying to buy land in Buhoma and to build their own campgrounds or lodges. The situation at Buhoma is presently very confused and the development of the kind of tourism that was originally planned has to be kept under control. For this reason, *Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe* has appealed to the German tour operators specializing in nature tourism to sign a petition against the premature start of gorilla tourism in Uganda, which asks the responsible agents to act cautiously. Up to now the following tour operators have joined the campaign: DUMA, Hauser, Explorer and the marketing consortium *Best of Africa*, which consists of 24 leading tour operators (e. g. Karawane, Feria International, Jetstream, Ikarus Tours, Natur-Studienreisen, Safari aktuell).

following equipment: 15 sleeping bags, 15 belts, 20 whistles and 10 torches. These materials were purchased by us and will soon be sent to Uganda.

Start of Gorilla Tourism in Uganda

One group of gorillas can be visited by tourists in the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park since April of this year. Another family is still being habituated. The starting point for guided tours is the Buhoma valley, although the visit have to be booked in the *Uganda National Parks* office in Kampala. In the starting phase, which will last until Sept. 1993, only 4 people are allowed access to a group of gorillas in one day;

after that, 6 people at the most. The tracking permit for a gorilla visit costs \$ 80 for foreign visitors until December; this will increase to \$ 120 from January 1994. Ugandans receive an 80% discount, inhabitants of the immediate surroundings of the park a 90% discount.

Investigations showed that the habituation of the gorillas was unexpectedly difficult. The silverback of one of the two best habituated groups still reacted very aggressively towards visitors in February. Farmers also complained about this gorilla family that had already destroyed banana plantations and fields several times. Even the Head Park Ranger, Josef Serugo, doubted whether this group can be habituated at all. On top of that, in

It has now been decided to invest up to 20% of the income generated by tourism in the surroundings of the park, for example for schools and health care. The *National Park Management Advisory Committee* is supposed to supervise this. Conservationists like Klaus-Jürgen Sucker and the Wardens of the MGNP are members of this committee, as well as local representatives of churches, the civil service and the local Resistance Councils.

In addition, in 1992 the *World Bank* made funds available for the conservation and management of both gorilla national parks in Uganda. The quality of life of the local people is also planned to be improved with these funds.

Rüdiger Braun

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1 ... every leaf gives off oxygen and water vapour...

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3 When it rains... ... the forest holds millions of litres of water...

4 ... most of this water sinks slowly into the soil and is stored deep under the ground.

5 And in the dry season?...

... the Springs and Streams continue to flow from underground and keep our land watered - thanks to the forest.

6 But we need firewood, poles, fodder, timber... we need trees!

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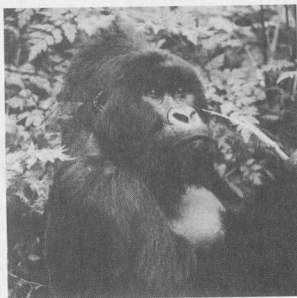
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READING

E. Fischer and H. Hinkel

Natur Rwandas - La nature du Rwanda. Mainz 1992. 452 pages, 349 colour photographs. DM 40.00. Can be ordered from: Dr. Eberhard Fischer, Botanisches Institut der Universität, Meckenheimer Allee 170, 53115 Bonn, Germany.

This book, written in German and French, covers the flora and a part of the fauna (in particular reptiles and amphibians) of Rwanda.

T. Swanson and E. Barbier (eds.)

Economics for the wilds. Earthscan. £ 12.95.

In several contributions the conflict between nature conservation and development is discussed. The pros and

cons of national parks are compared with the consequences of intense exploitation of unprotected wildlife. The authors show that development without nature conservation is just as futile as nature conservation without the support of the local population.

J. G. Goldammer (ed.)

Tropical forests in transition: Ecology of natural and anthropogenic disturbance processes. Basel, Switzerland (Birkhäuser) 1992. DM 114.

M. Colyn

L'importance zoogeographique du bassin du fleuve Zaire pour la spéciation: Le cas des primates si-miens. Tervuren (Belgium). *Annalen*

Zool. Wetenschappen Vol. 264. 250 pages. In French. 1430 Belg. Francs. Available from: Publications Marketing Department, Museum Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, B-3080 Tervuren.

M. Colchester, S. Kirschbaum, H. Schücking and J. Wolters

Indigene Völker und Wald. In German. 93 pages. Free (only shipment). Can be ordered for \$ 5 from our organization address.

A strategical paper which was published by the German *Regenwälder-Kampagne* and the *Forest People's Programme* of the *World Rainforest Movement*. Its aim is to give the German government some advice for developmental politics.

Ulrich Karlowski and Karl-Heinz Kohnen
Über-Lebensgeschichte eines Bergregenwaldes.
Part 2. *Ökozid-Journal* 2/93. In German. DM 9.80.

A report about the Impenetrable Forest (the first part was published in *Ökozid-Journal* 1/1993). This part deals mainly with land purchase, tourism and developmental projects. Can be ordered for \$ 12 from our organization address (including shipment). The first part of this report can also be ordered for the same price.

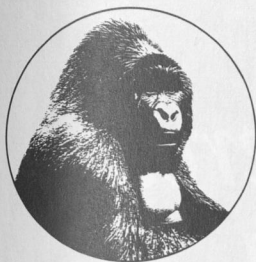
Angela Meder

Gorillas. *Ökologie und Verhalten.* In German. Heidelberg (Springer) 1993. Ca. 240 pages, 8 colour photographs, 36 black-and-white photographs, 13 drawings, 14 tables. DM 29.80. Can be ordered from our organization address for \$ 29.80 (including shipment).

The most important results of the author's studies on gorillas in zoos are summarized in this book. Moreover, the book discusses the numerous field studies. The following topics are addressed: the species *Gorilla gorilla* – Ecology and Habitat – Activity and Social Structure – Behaviour – Gorillas in Zoos and Institutions – Human Influence on the Gorilla Population. An extensive bibliography is included. The author's royalties go to *Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe*.

You can order these two publications and some more with the order form in this journal or directly at our organization address. A certain part of the proceeds of those books and journals will be donated to *Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe*.





BERGGORILLA & REGENWALD DIREKTHILFE

New Names for Conservation Organizations

Wildlife Conservation International (WCI), our partner in the Maiko Project, is now officially called *The Wildlife Conservation Society*. Moreover, the *Digit Fund*, which was founded by Dian Fossey and supervises the scientific work and conservation efforts at the Karisoke Research Center in Rwanda, has been renamed to *The Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund*. The President of this organization is Patricia McGrath and the Director is Richard Block. The London office is led by Greg Cummings.

Donations

In February Jan Rafert and Sandy Vojik from Milwaukee informed us that a some of the proceeds of the auction at the 1992 Gorilla Workshop (more than 1,700 DM) were donated to *Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe*. Besides this, many persons and companies have donated money to BRD since January 1993. We received larger amounts from Baader, Christa Baumgärtl, Jane Dewar, Florin AG, M. Gruber-Dönges, Karawane Reisen, Angela Meder, Renate Rabenstein, DUMA Reisen, H. J. Reich, Erwin F. Reisch (Ivory Reisch Tours) and Elisabeth

Schwyn. We would like to thank all these generous donors, as well as those not mentioned here!

Job in Kahuzi-Biega Filled

In the July 1992 issue of our newsletter, we were seeking applicants who wanted to work in the Kahuzi-Biega National Park. Although many applicants were highly qualified for the position, only one person could be hired, due to the precarious situation in Zaire. Should the situation improve, we will contact additional applicants. For the moment, however, it makes no sense to apply for the position.

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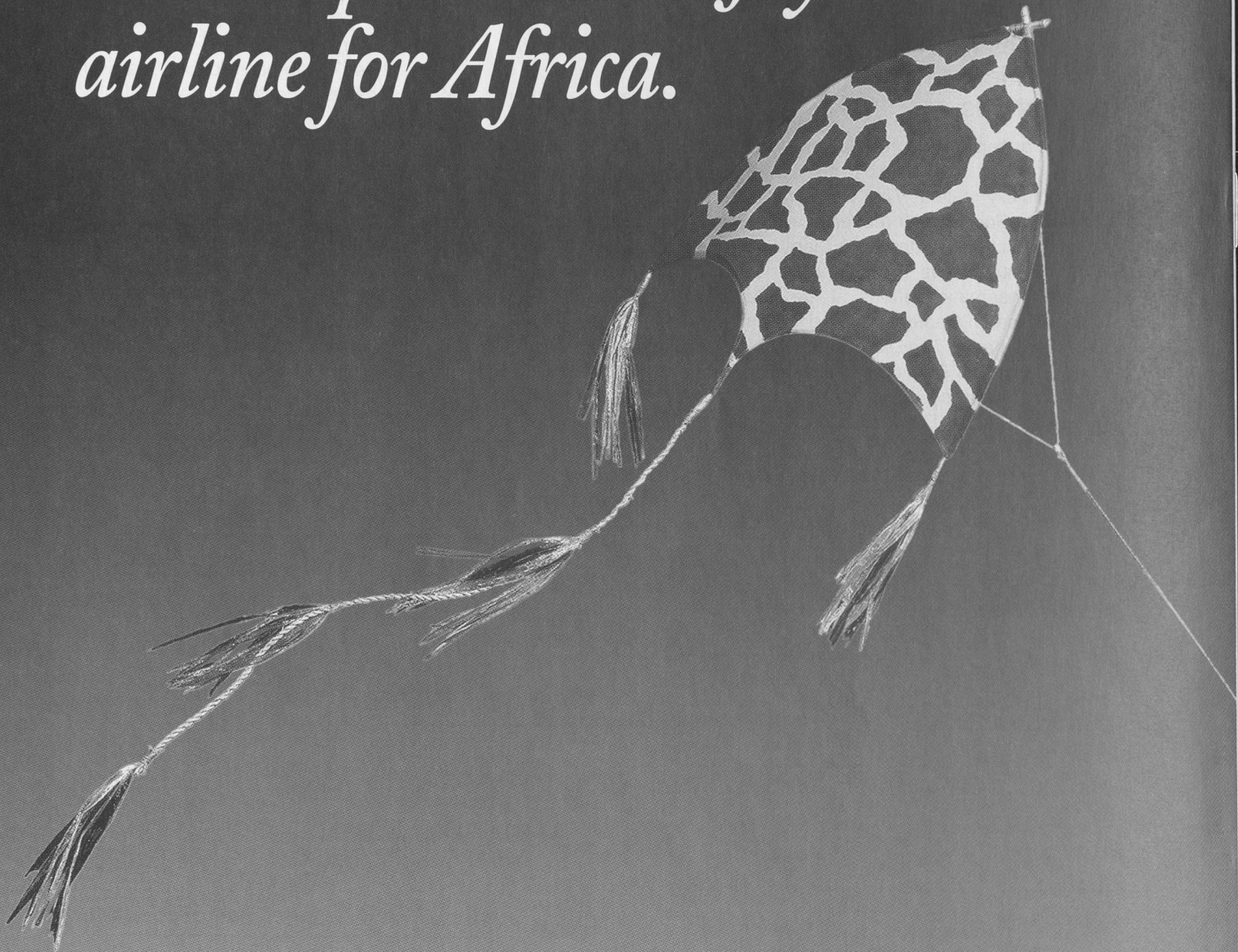
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