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CHIMPANZEE ECOTOURISM GUIDELINES FOR VISITORS

For

Budongo Forest Ecotourism Development Programme

May 2006

Acronyms

BEDP: Budongo Ecotourism Development Project

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

JGI: the Jane Goodall Institute

NHP: Non Human Primates

NFA: National Forestry Authority

TB: Tuberculosis

Table of Contents

Acronyms.....	2
1.0 Introduction.....	4
1.1 Background	4
1.2 General Principles	5
2.0 Visitor Guidelines for Chimpanzee Viewing.....	6
APPENDIX I.....	8
APPENDIX II.....	10

1.0 Introduction

The health protocols manual for chimpanzee ecotourism is a set of guidelines for protective measures that are followed during routine operations that pertain to tourism and research activities where humans may come into close proximity with wild chimpanzees.

These guidelines aims to:

promote and maintain the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being of wild chimpanzees

prevent illness among wild chimpanzees caused by our presence and activities

ensure employees in their jobs understand and comply to the rules to ensure the well being of the wild populations of chimps that they are custodians of, and

ensure visitors are aware of their responsibilities in ensuring the health of wild populations of chimpanzees

1.1 Background

In February 2000 an epidemic claimed the lives of two adolescent chimpanzee males, Galahad and Jackson, in Gombe National Park. Within the past 4 years, 13 known chimpanzees died from epidemics. The likely causes are human-related. With the guidance of Dr. Jaco Homsy's gorilla study (*Ape Tourism and Human Diseases: How Close Should We Get? A Critical review of the rules and regulation governing park management and tourism for the wild mountain gorilla as a guideline*), new proposed protective health protocols have been designed. Implementation of strict regulations is crucial to protect the Budongo chimpanzees and other primates.

The health guidelines that follow emphasise the requirement for health awareness sessions. The purpose of such sessions is to explain the potential dangers (such as the common cold) and to raise awareness to reduce the risk of disease transmission. All Budongo residents and guests must clearly understand the devastating effects of irresponsible behaviour. The behaviours of tourists, BEDP, NFA and JGI employees are of serious concern as well. It is highly recommended that they, too, are educated about disease transfer. Education is vital to reducing the risks.

For this reason, it is everyone's responsibility to ensure the following guidelines and rules are adhered to.

1.2 General Principles

The aim of the Budongo Ecotourism Development Programme (BEDP) is to provide sustainable revenue generating opportunities from ecotourism activities to support the protection and maintenance of Budongo Forest Reserve (BFR).

The underlying principle interest of JGI is to ensure the long-term survival of a viable population of chimpanzees and their habitat for generations to come. To this end, ecotourism is a key approach to management of the landscape in which they live.

For the NFA, the guiding principle is sustainable forest management (SFM), and forest conservation is a key to this. Therefore, ecotourism is a very good non-consumptive management approach that contributes to SFM.

With these guiding principles, it is important that all stakeholders ensure that all activities do not, in any way, harm the lives of the wild chimpanzee population in Budongo Forest. All effort must be taken to ensure their well being.

2.0 Visitor Guidelines for Chimpanzee Viewing

All visitors must adhere to the following instructions:

- 1. If you are sick, you are not allowed to enter the forest to follow the chimpanzees.** Human illnesses can infect and kill these animals. Do not approach chimpanzees if they arrive in camp. Even if you are not visibly sick, you may be carrying a disease that can kill them which is why following these rules are so crucial.
- 2. It is crucial that you remain a minimum of 10 meters/33 feet from chimpanzees and baboons at all times.** If an animal starts to approach, move away to a distance of 10 meters. It is your responsibility to keep the safe and proper distance.
- 3. The number of people in your group must never exceed six (6), including your guide, while following the chimps.** You must be accompanied by a guide at all times whilst in the forest. If you encounter another group of people observing chimps or baboons, wait patiently at a distance until they move away. Children under the age of 7 years old are not permitted in the forest.

- 4. You are allowed to remain with a group of chimpanzees for one hour,** after which you may visit scenic areas of the park and/or enjoy an interpretive walk through the forest.
- 5. It is very important that you stay together in your group.** Never spread out or surround animals that you are observing. When you come upon chimps or baboons in the forest it is best that you sit or stand quietly. You will see more natural behaviour if the chimps are relaxed.
- 6. If you must talk in the forest, speak quietly.** Do not use arm gestures while talking. This may be seen as a threat by baboons and chimps. Never stare at a baboon, as it is taken as a threat.
- 7. Carry your equipment, backpacks and other items at all times.** Both chimps and baboons will steal anything left unattended. These unfortunate incidents increase the risk of disease transfer and result in damage to your belongings. Be especially careful with bandanas and tissues. Never leave belongings outside and unattended in camp.
- 8. Do not spit or nose blow on the ground. Suppress sneezes and coughs while in the forest.** If you must, cover your face and turn away from the animals being observed.
- 9. Do not smoke or eat in the forest.** Always eat indoors behind a latched door. Visitors have been seriously injured by baboons who have tried to steal food.
- 10. Never feed the chimpanzees, baboons or other wildlife.**
- 11. Use the latrine and wash hands with soap before entering the forest and upon return.** You are responsible for digging a 1 ft deep hole in the forest for burying faeces when a latrine is not available.
- 12. Never attempt flash photography or use reflective devices.** Wild animals are unpredictable when startled. Visitors have been seriously threatened by chimps after ignoring this rule. Never try to attract an animal's attention in order to take a better photograph.
- 13. Littering of any kind is forbidden.** Never throw food, candy wrappers, cigarette butts, or any other man-made product onto the ground. Transporting your rubbish to Masindi (or your next town) would be greatly appreciated.

APPENDIX I

Pathogens that can affect the survival of wild chimpanzees

The attached table lists a few of the most persistent human pathogens capable of infecting chimpanzees and other primates.

Pathogen	Pathology/ symptoms in humans	Pathology/ symptoms in chim	Transmission	Pathogen Survival
Coxsackie virus	Often asymptomatic; or wide variety of clinical syndromes	fatal respiratory enteric syndrome	Fecal-oral ←	150-170 days in soil 15 days in food
Herpes Simplex 1&2	Herpes syndrome (fever, rash, conjunctivitis, diarrhea, CNS signs)	Same	Aerosol↑ Contact→	Hours on fomites↓
Orthomyxovirus	Influenza (flu)	more severe flu	Aerosol	<3 days in dry food 1-2 day on hard surface <12h on porous surface Up to 2 months at 4C (about 40F)
Parainfluenza (type 3)	Few signs in humans	Flu-like symptoms	Aerosol	4-10hrs on absorptive and non-absorptive surfaces
Paramyxovirus	Measles	asymptomatic to fatal	Aerosol Contact	Can survive and conserve infectivity in droplet nuclei for > hours
Poliovirus	Meningitis, encephalomyelitis, Paralysis	Same	Fecal oral	150-170 days in soil 50 days in cockroaches 15 days in food
Respiratory Syncytial virus	Respiratory infections including bronchopneumonia	Same	Aerosol	1-6 hrs on skin-fomites
Mycobacterium tuberculosis	Pulmonary/extra-pulmonary TB	Same	Aerosol	12 years cultured at 37C highly resistant to drying
Sarcoptes scabies	Scabies	same	Contact	
Giardia lamblia	Diarrhea, malabsorption	same	Fecal-oral	Can survive in water for months

Table derived from Dr. Jaco Homsy's study: *Ape Tourism and Human Diseases: How Close Should We Get? A Critical review of the rules and regulation governing park management and tourism for the wild mountain gorilla as a guideline.* February 1999.

Key to Table I

←Transmission via faeces, contaminated food, water, any other ingested substance or
object coming in contact with the mouth, the hands

↑ Transmission via dust or water particles transported by suspension in the air, therefore
transmission of disease to an ape does not require direct or prolonged human contact

→Transmission by direct (skin or mucosal) touch

↓ Formites are non-living objects acting as potential carriers/vectors for transmission of
infectious agents (clothing, mats, bedding)

NOTE:

Certain pathogens survive outside the human body for hours, even days. One contagious disease of great concern is tuberculosis (*Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and *Mycobacterium bovis*). TB is spread relatively easily through spitting or coughing. Tubercle bacteria are highly resistant to drying and can live for hours in the air remaining viable and virulent after 12 years in proper conditions. TB is difficult to cure in humans and impossible to cure in wild chimpanzees.

APPENDIX II

ECOTOURISM GUIDELINES FOR NATURE TOUR OPERATORS: MAIN DOCUMENT

By The International Ecotourism Society 1993

For list of advisers (Green Evaluations Committee) see end of document.

PREDEPARTURE PROGRAMS -- VISITOR INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

Guideline:

Prepare travelers to minimize their negative impacts while visiting sensitive environments and

- Offer visitors the educational materials they need to learn about the places and people to be visited and introduce the importance of contributing to the conservation of places being visited.
- Educate visitors about the full range of natural and cultural phenomenon to be observed.
- Educate visitors to consider the effects of their visit in advance and to modify their behavior while traveling, with the objective of minimizing impacts.
- Provide introductory information on the people and ecosystems to be visited in predeparture packages. Stress the importance of reading pre-departure information, such as selected bibliographies, and review additional resources for each destination.
- Keep information objective and well-grounded using examples of phenomenon visitors might encounter.
- Provide general travel ethics addressing standards for behavior in natural areas and with local cultures.
- Provide information on the equipment, clothing and personal supplies suitable to the regions being visited.
- Warn against bringing disposable goods that contribute to the solid waste burden in the region.
- Provide information on products to avoid that are illegally traded.

- Provide information, as required, on avoiding the accidental transport of foreign, exotic species into isolated ecosystems being visited.

Visitor Benefits:

- Visitor is attuned to the full range of opportunities for viewing wildlife and learning about different cultures.
- Awareness of personal responsibility to minimize impacts on the environment and local cultures before departure.
- Visitor has proper gear and clothing for environments and cultures to be visited.

GUIDING PROGRAMS -- GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF GUIDING TOURS

Guideline:

Prepare travelers for each encounter with local cultures and with native animals and plants.

Objectives:

- Pave the way for reciprocal sensitivity between cultures by teaching tourists to be unobtrusive while they are encountering environments and cultures.
- Provide visitors with the opportunity to learn more about the social and political circumstances of the region being visited.
- Provide visitors with the opportunity to learn more about local environmental problems and conservation efforts.

Techniques:

- Provide quality orientation and enough leaders to manage the group according to the sensitivity of the environment visited.
- Give quality interpretation at all times; explain local cultures and describe natural history. Encourage interaction with local people while overseeing contact to avoid cultural errors.

- Conduct briefings before each stop, including behaviors to avoid, restricted practices and zones, special alerts for fragile and endangered species, specific distances to maintain with local wildlife, and local regulations.
- Use of time on road and in cities for educational discussions of all kinds including balanced discussions of local issues.

Visitor Benefits:

Awareness of how to encounter cultures and environment with minimum negative impact.

Insight into the visitor's own role and potential contribution to local conservation and sustainable economic development efforts.

GUIDING PROGRAMS -- PREVENTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Guideline:

Minimize visitor impacts on the environment by offering literature, briefings, leading by example, and taking corrective actions.

Objectives:

Help visitors to minimize their negative impacts by enhancing their understanding of the fragility of the environment.

Company guides should pursue the following procedures:

Provide a set of environmental guidelines, created by the company, specific to the area being visited.

- Obtain and distribute available guidelines for each natural area visited.
- Allow protected area staff to introduce guidelines if possible.
- Brief visitors on proper behavior - on trails, in campsites, around wild animals, around fragile plants - and with trash, with human waste, with fires, and with soaps.

- Advise all travelers on the level of difficulty of each excursion to prevent damage to the environment caused by lack of experience or ability to maneuver in unfamiliar terrain.
- Discourage unrealistic expectations of observing rare wildlife and plants by interpreting all aspects of the ecosystem.
- Advise against collecting souvenirs from natural areas, such as feathers, bones & shells, unless it is specifically condoned by local authorities.
- Advise against purchasing specific crafts that are produced from threatened natural resources.

Visitor Benefits:

- Learns how to travel without leaving footprints.
- Gains a greater understanding of travel's impact on the environment.
- Is informed of the rules and regulations of natural areas and the need to follow them.

GUIDING PROGRAMS -- PREVENTION OF CULTURAL IMPACTS

Guideline:

Minimize traveler impact on local cultures by offering literature, briefings, leading by example, and taking corrective actions.

Objectives:

Protect the integrity of the cultures being visited by minimizing visitor contribution to acculturation and the decline of local values. Enhance visitor understanding of local cultures but avoid improper intrusions into the private lives of others.

Techniques:

- Company guides should be aware of the following procedures:
- Interpret local cultural values and history of local cultures.
- Provide a set of cultural guidelines created by the company, specific to the area being visited. Where available, obtain and distribute guidelines written by local communities.

- Advise visitors to accept differences, adopt local customs, and be unobtrusive. Discuss appropriate behavior when photographing.
- Discuss appropriate behavior when purchasing goods, tipping, and responding to begging.

Visitor Benefits:

- A better understanding of local values and cultures and how to behave with local peoples to minimize cultural impacts.
- The ability to look, listen and learn from others without intruding.

MONITORING PROGRAMS -- PREVENTION OF ACCUMULATED IMPACTS OF TOURISM

Guideline:

Use adequate leadership, and maintain small enough groups to ensure minimum group impact on destinations. Avoid areas that are undermanaged and overvisited.

Objectives:

- Diminish accumulated effects of tourism on sensitive sites.
- Avoid overloading local visitor management capabilities if there are inadequate funds and staff to manage visitors in sensitive sites.
- Contribute to an effort to disperse tourism, and lighten the load on popular destinations during peak seasons.
- Recognize sites, in advance, that are inappropriate for tourism, or need assistance with existing damage.

Techniques:

- Be sensitive to total number of groups visiting sites simultaneously. Informally census the number of groups encountered on trails or roads within protected areas and keep track of sites with rapid increases. Notify authorities or landowners if the number of groups is growing rapidly.
- Monitor negative environmental impacts, including trail erosion, improper waste dumping, littering, water pollution, species

harassment, illegal collecting of plants or animals, feeding of wildlife, or wild animals that have become abnormally tame or aggressive. Notify authorities or land owners both verbally and, if need be, in writing.

- Assist land managers in monitoring key, indicator species, or offer logistical assistance to researchers working on tourism impacts.
- Design itineraries and promotions to avoid overselling popular sites, particularly those that are inadequately managed for visitation during peak seasons.
- Watch for accumulated cultural impact and work to prevent or buffer them. Indicators include; inflated prices for goods in communities; hostility towards tourists from local communities; black markets, drug dealing and prostitution catering to the tourist industry.

Visitor Benefits:

- Avoids contributing to the destruction of sites visited.
- Learns to recognize the negative impacts of tourism and the importance of notifying the authorities when this occurs.
- Learns to avoid overloading popular sites, by making trips in off-season or avoiding peak visitation hours.
- Learns to recognize cultural impact and avoids contributing to the decline of local values.

MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS -- PREVENTION OF NATURE TOUR COMPANY IMPACTS

Guideline:

Ensure managers, staff and contract employees know and participate in all aspects of company policy to prevent impacts on the environment and local cultures.

Objectives:

Make the nature tour company as environmentally and culturally sensitive as possible, both in the office and in the field.

Techniques:

- Establish an environmental code and objectives manual for the company.
- Confidence in the personnel who are leading the organization and the tours.

MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS -- TRAINING**Guideline:**

Give managers, staff and contract employees access to programs that will upgrade their ability to communicate with and manage clients in sensitive natural and cultural settings.

Objectives:

Offer meaningful opportunities for staff and contract employees to work within a sustainable economy.

Techniques:

- Establish clear guidelines for staff regarding opportunities and company support available for training, via internal training programs (natural and cultural history) and via training programs available locally (language skills and first aid, accounting, mechanics).
- - Establish an operators consortium for training. - Establish a relationship with a local educational facility and work to integrate needed training components into the curriculum. - Work with nongovernmental organizations to establish an ecotourism training program.

Visitor Benefits:

Opportunity to contribute to a local sustainable economy that offers local people opportunities to be employed in increasingly responsible positions.

MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS -- CONSERVATION CONTRIBUTION PROGRAMS**Guideline:**

Be a contributor to the conservation of the regions being visited.

Objectives:

- Put tourism-generated revenues into the hands of local environmental organizations and protected area management agencies for conservation initiatives.
- Ensure that tourism revenues cover the costs for the management of tourism on wild lands and protected areas.
- Help parks and protected areas generate revenue, thereby providing economic impetus to a conservation agenda on the national level in destination countries.

Techniques:

- Provide corporate contributions to local non-profit conservation initiatives and protected areas through direct corporate donations, partnerships, technical assistance, education programs, publicity, facilitation, direct staff involvement, and becoming involved in joint initiatives.*
- Facilitate visitor contributions to local conservation initiatives during the trip by: providing literature on projects in the regions being visited and guidelines for in-kind contributions; arranging briefings and visits to local projects with project staff; or offering opportunities for visitors to volunteer.
- Facilitate visitor contributions to local conservation initiatives after the trip by: sending follow-up mailings to clients with local nonprofit membership literature, brief descriptions of projects that need assistance, upcoming opportunities to do volunteer services, or opportunities to work at home by being an ambassador or fund raiser or organizer for local projects.*
- Encourage writing to government and corporate organizations whose policies are damaging to the environment or local cultures in the areas visited by providing addresses and contact names.

*This may not apply to non-profit organizations running tours

Visitor Benefits:

A better understanding of how tourism can be a net contributor to the conservation of cultures and environment visited.

A chance to be a part of the effort to conserve a beloved place on a long-term basis and preserve biological diversity and cultural heritage worldwide.

MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS -- LOCAL EMPLOYMENT & JOBS PROGRAMS

- Provide competitive, local employment in all aspects of business operations.
- Make ecotourism beneficial to local communities.
- Provide local people access to jobs that are not destructive to the environment.
- Provide local people with a full range of opportunities beyond the service employment sector.

Techniques:

- Hire locally-owned businesses including transport (vehicle and boat rental services), accommodations (hotels, lodges, camps), and restaurants.
- Buy local supplies from food and craft vendors and avoid all products made from endangered or threatened species.
- Hire local office and field staff. Pay competitive wages, above minimum wage for the region, and offer acceptable benefits.
- Contribute to community enterprises and development efforts that support a wide variety of local residents, with special sensitivity to indigenous groups.

Visitor Benefits:

- Opportunity to contribute to a sustainable market economy, e.g. to provide job opportunities that are not destructive to the environment.
- Awareness that the choices visitors make affects the lives and livelihoods of others.

LOCAL ACCOMMODATIONS CHECKLIST

- Offer site-sensitive accommodations that do not waste local resources or destroy the environment and that provide ample opportunity for learning about the environment and sensitive interchange with local communities.

- Ensure all aspects of the visitor's experience are in harmony with the natural and cultural environment.
- Review the following check list of considerations when booking new accommodations.
- Select accommodations that are in compliance with environmental regulations.
- Review facility's level of destruction to natural surroundings.
- Consider facilities efforts to maintain a scale in keeping with the local environment and to reflect national or local cultural design motifs in architecture and interior design.
- Review facility's use of energy saving devices and renewable energy resources.
- Review facility's treatment of solid and organic waste. Ensure that solid waste is safely disposed of and that recycling programs are in place where possible. Ensure that all waste products are treated to prevent effects on natural resources.
- Determine if restaurant is composting and using other techniques to reduce waste such as avoiding paper products and styrofoam.
- Determine if facility is offering meaningful opportunities for locals.
- Check into training programs offered by lodge.
- Review opportunities for locals to have sensitive cultural interchange, on their own terms, with visitors.
- Look for locally produced craft and food items available for sale on the premises or used in facility restaurants, and ensure that all products from threatened natural resources are avoided.
- Check for the interpretive/educational materials inside the facility that are available to guests. Look for field guides, videos, books, pamphlets, and check lists of species found locally.
- Check for availability of interpretive services outside, such as self-guided trails and guide services.
- Check for the facility's sensitivity to interpretive opportunities; i.e. how well the facility has interpreted its own land's natural features and

natural resources, or the local cultural backgrounds and perspectives of its own staff, for visitors.

- Ask if owners contribute to conservation or community development efforts with financial, technical or logistical support.
- Avoid sites that bait animals, or that keep exotic species on the property that were trapped in the wild, especially threatened or endangered species.

Visitor Benefits:

- An appreciation of the possibilities for sustainable living.
- Greater sensitivity to the role of the resort in a community, its impact and contribution to locals, and how to select resorts that are environmentally and socially sensitive.
- Better opportunities for sensitive cultural interchange and enlightening field trips accompanied by staff or representatives of local communities.

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