

# Great Apes Survival Project



[www.unep.org/grasp/](http://www.unep.org/grasp/)

Project pour la survie des grandes singes

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Executive Director,  
Arcus Foundation,

Dear Sir,

I am writing as chairman of the Ape Alliance ([www.4apes.com](http://www.4apes.com)) and Chief Consultant of GRASP – the UNEP/UNESCO Great Ape Survival Project, in support of the IPPL grant application for LAGA, the Last Great Ape Organisation, Cameroon.

On a number of occasions I have had the pleasure of meeting the LAGA team in Cameroon, and cannot praise them highly enough. From volunteer Cameroonian investigators to government officials and even a High-Court Judge, they are a truly diverse group of people united in their determination to change things for the better. The leadership skills of Ofir Drori are important to this endeavour – dedicated leadership by example – but it is certainly not a one-man band. LAGA is very much a partnership of skills and each member of the team brings his or her qualities to bear on the plan. And the plan works. By helping the wildlife law enforcement agencies collect evidence, bring prosecutions and then publicise the convictions, LAGA has demonstrated that poachers and illegal traders can no longer operate with impunity.

I have also worked closely with LAGA in international meetings, such as CITES and the recent Inter-Governmental Meeting on Great Apes. It is clear from their presence on the Cameroon delegations at these events that they have the full support of the Government of Cameroon.

It is rare for a small, newly formed organisation to have such a significant effect so quickly, but LAGA has changed the face of conservation in Cameroon, and its influence is now spreading throughout the Central African region. Other countries are looking at the positive international reaction to these activities, and seeking advice on how to emulate them. One of the major limiting factors, however, has been operating funds for investigations and the resulting prosecutions. Thus, putting LAGA on a more secure financial footing is likely to have a disproportionately large impact on conservation in Central Africa. I do hope you will be able to help.

If you would like to discuss this further please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Redmond