

IUCN/SSC Primate Specialist Group

APES Database

Data Access and Release Policy

I. Introduction

The Apes, Populations, and Environments (APES) database of the IUCN/SSC Primate Specialist Group (PSG) aims to provide an accurate and objective global picture on the distribution and status of great apes, and thus inform long-term management and conservation strategies for these taxa. Data entered into the APES database are obtained through the generous participation of many governments, organizations and individuals from numerous ape range states throughout tropical Africa and Asia.

The APES database comprises a number of distinct components:

- a. Electronic maps encompassing areas where past and current wild ape populations range.
- b. All available geo-referenced survey information on ape population status, with associated information on survey protocol, data reliability, and other relevant variables.
- c. Electronic maps depicting ape distribution. Some of the areas depicted in the distribution maps have been formally surveyed, whereas others have not. Distribution maps are linked to database tables which give additional information about the nature and reliability of range information.
- d. Electronic maps depicting ancillary information, such as protected areas, national boundaries, roads, rivers and relief. Most of these ancillary maps have been obtained from third-party providers and do not belong to the APES database.
- e. Supporting documentation for the electronic database.

The APES database is a collaborative effort of several academic departments and conservation organizations which is endorsed by the IUCN/SSC Primate Specialist Group's Great Ape Section. Each of these organizations has representation in the Data Review Working Group (DRWG) whose functions are to oversee the organization of the database, ensure the long-term maintenance of data sets, create an efficient user interface, produce and disseminate annual status reports, evaluate and follow-up requests for data, and ensure adherence to database policies. The DRWG is also charged with implementing measures to evaluate the quality of data deposited in the database and promoting high standards for future ape surveys. This database is hosted by the Primatology Department of the Max Planck Institute of Evolutionary Anthropology.

The DRWG has the mandate to review and summarize all data in the APES database at any given time. These processes lead to the preparation and publication of an annual APES Status Report, with the aim of using all available survey data to depict the most precise and accurate portrait of ape status worldwide. However, the electronic version of the APES Database is a continual 'work in progress' and may therefore include contradictory and/or unverified information at any given time between the production of status reports.

II. Objectives and General Policy Statement

The primary objective of this policy is to make information in the APES database as freely and widely accessible as possible, while encouraging users of APES data to take account of the limitations of the data in their analyses.

Under the auspices of the IUCN/SSC PSG, it is the duty of DRWG to ensure that:

- a. APES data are used for the benefit of ape conservation.
- b. All databases and user interfaces are regularly updated.
- c. Proposals are reviewed for scientific merit and that source data requested are suitable for the proposed research.
- d. The wishes of providers of source information who have placed express restrictions on the dissemination of their raw data are respected.
- e. Clear guidelines are established between source providers and interested parties for source data usage and reporting (Refer to Section IV of this document).
- f. All available source data are collated within a centralized database and accessible to the DRWG to provide the most accurate information on ape population status in APES reports.
- g. Any agreements with providers of ancillary GIS information are respected.
- h. The integrity of the database is maintained by discouraging the circulation of multiple modified versions.

It is the belief of the IUCN/SSC PSG that the above objectives can best be achieved with the following broad policies:

- a. Hard copy and 'read-only' electronic versions of the status reports generated from the APES database are freely available. Electronic versions of the status reports can be downloaded from the internet. Printed versions are available on request, subject to logistic and financial constraints.
- b. Full or partial, editable versions of the updated electronic database will be made available on a controlled basis, with conditions designed to restrict the dissemination of altered versions and of ancillary data layers that are not the property of PSG.
- c. In accordance with all restrictions on the circulation of source data, such data will be made available for inspection upon request, subject to logistic and financial constraints.

The details of these policies are set out in the two sections that follow.

III. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

APES Database – An electronic collection of tables, georeferenced maps and any other datasets containing information relating to the distribution and abundance of free-ranging apes. Any data captured or digitized and integrated into the APES database and any views or extracts thereof remain the property of the PSG.

Source Data – Reports, personal communications, questionnaire replies, publications and any other form of data or information submitted to the PSG for input into the APES Database.

Data Provider – Individual or organization who have provided source data according to APES database protocols (See “Data Deposit Form”). With regard to published data, this will refer to the first author on a published manuscript or author of an unpublished report. The data provider maintains ownership of all source data and serves as the point-person for permission regarding data usage and collaborations.

Proposal Author – Individual who has submitted an official data request (See “Data Request Form”) to the DRWG for access to digital data extracts in the APES Database.

Status Report – Any of the reports on the status and distribution of apes produced by the DRWG in hard copy and/or read-only electronic format.

Ancillary Datasets – A collection of tables and maps in digital format and views and extracts thereof produced by third parties and employed in the APES Database.

Digital Data Extract – A subset of data contained in the APES Database in editable, tabular or graphic, geo-referenced format.

View – A snapshot of a subset of data contained in the APES database and/or related digital databases operated by the IUCN/SSC PSG, in a non-georeferenced, rasterized or non-editable electronic vector format, or in hard copy.

IV. General Guidelines for Access to APES Database

All data sets within the APES Database will be accessible to the DRWG for preparation of status reports, but data to be used in any other capacity will fall under the guidelines of the data request policy. Specific datasets may be available to other groups or individuals provided the conditions of formal data requests and release satisfied (See “Data Release and Users Agreement”).

1. Access to APES Status Reports

For the purpose of data release and access, APES Database status reports and any data views contained therein are in the public domain once they have been published in hard copy or released in read-only electronic format on the official APES Database internet web site. Access to hardcopy APES Status Reports is subject to availability. Dissemination of altered hard copy or electronic APES Status Reports by third parties is not permitted.

2. Access to Views from the Ape Database

Views of the database depicting processed summary tables or maps in non geo-referenced, bitmapped or non-editable vector graphic formats may be made available upon written request, subject to resource constraints.

3. Access to Digital Data Extracts from the APES Database

The release of digital data extracts from the APES Database is subject to the following conditions which are also described in the “Data Release and Users Agreement”:

- a. Any party wishing to obtain digital data extracts from the APES Database must complete a “Data Request Form” and submit a formal, written proposal according to specifications noted in that document to the DRWG. The request and proposal will be evaluated for conservation relevance and scientific merit. Digital data extracts will only be released if the DRWG considers the release not to violate existing agreements with data providers, the intended use is anticipated to be beneficial to ape conservation, and the proposal takes into account limitations of data quality. The “Data Release and Users Agreement” which outlines the specific terms and conditions of data usage must be signed and returned to the DRWG of the Apes Database before any data will be released.
- b. Any party who has received a digital data extract from the APES Database must submit a final draft of all documents which include these to the DRWG for review and comments prior to submission, publication, or dissemination. This stipulation for data usage is detailed in the “Data Release and Users Agreement” concerns any

output containing any views, alterations, manipulations or analysis of digital data extracted from the APES Database.

- c. Any alteration to digital data supplied by the APES Database and intended for publication, dissemination or placement in the public domain, must be accompanied by a statement by the author(s), clearly describing the nature of any alterations effected on data extracted from the APES Database. The author(s) is obligated to submit the altered dataset in its entirety to the DRWG for review and integration into the APES database.
- d. All digital data extracts released to any person or group will remain the property of the APES Database, an official activity of the IUCN/SSC PSG. As specified in the “Data Release and Users Agreement”, these data will not be passed on to any third party.
- e. Any data extracts utilized in papers, reports, publications or any other output will be given proper acknowledgement as agreed upon in the “Data Release and Users Agreement”.
- f. A digital and printed copy of any document or output in which data from the APES Database is used must be submitted to the DRWG.

4. *Access to Source Data*

As a custodian of APES Source Data, the IUCN/SSC PSG has no rights of ownership or any obligations to their dissemination, but unless specifically restricted by the Data Provider, will allow their inspection by third parties. Any other conditions imposed by the Data Providers on the release of Source Data, views or extracts thereof will be observed.

5. *Access to Ancillary Datasets*

As an end user of Ancillary Datasets, the IUCN/SSC PSG has no rights to their dissemination. If the data provider has indicated that these data may be available to third parties, release of this information will be subject to any conditions imposed by the Data Provider. In all other cases the DRWG will re-direct any requests for such datasets to the appropriate data provider.

V. Organizations

The following organizations are involved in the development of the APES database:

- IUCN/SSC Primate Specialist Group
- Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology
- Harvard University
- Jane Goodall Institute
- Wildlife Conservation Society

VI. Effective Date and Disclaimer

This policy applies to existing data types held within the APES database as of 1 April 2005. Any new data types would require a new policy agreed upon by the IUCN/SSC

PSG and the DRWG of the APES Database. This policy is subject to change without notice with the approval of the members of the IUCN/SSC PSG and the DRWG of the APES Database.

This agreement was based directly on the African Elephant Database Data Access and Release Policies, which is also under the auspices of the IUCN/SSC. Any suggestions or concerns with regard to this document should be directed to the DRWG of the APES Database (email: apes@eva.mpg.de).