

Congo: New National Park to Protect Gorillas

Finally, lowland gorillas in Congo can breathe a sigh of relief thanks to the creation of a brand new national park by WCS (Wildlife Conservation Society). This is a great step that has been taken towards protecting the animals. The park was officially created on 28th December and is believed to offer shelter and protection to more than 15, 000 animals which have been among the "critically endangered species" for a number of years.



The national park is located in the northern part of the country and is known as Ntokou– Pikounda National Park. This covers about 1765 square miles. It features a very dense forest to the extent that J. Michael Fay an explorer took 455 days to walk through the forest back in 1999. At the time it was known as the green Abyss. The lush rain forests provide an ideal environment for the animals to create a comfortable home. It is important to note that they also share the premises with an estimated 8000 elephants and about 1000 chimpanzees. These are two other species that sadly also face extinction.

Since the park is relatively new, there isn't much that has been done in terms of tourism infrastructure just yet. However the region houses a couple of small towns and villages which will most likely build a great economy as a result of tourism. Tourism dollars have been utilized effectively in countries nearby like Uganda and Rwanda to improve the living conditions of the people who live here as well as fund various efforts that aim to take care of gorillas and other wild animals.



The idea of the park construction was hatched when WCS visited Congo in 2008 and was stunned to find that about 125,000 gorillas were living in some very remote regions. The sad fact was that this was also threatened by the high levels of deforestation that is growing rapidly in the country. In addition to this, there are ruthless poachers who are after the animals. Ebola virus also threatens the gorillas thus the park was a very smart move in regards to protection of the animals. This way, future generations will not only read about the animals in history books as they can also get a chance to see them.



Tourists from other parts of the globe who wish to see the animals are also welcome in the Republic of Congo. Knowing the situation on the ground, it is important to make sure that you take safety precautions to enjoy your time there without any conflicts with anyone. It is vital that anyone who wants to travel to the region carry out thorough research about the tour companies here. It is best to work with the locals as they know what happens in their country thus are in a position to advise on the places to go as well as the ones to avoid in order to remain safe and see the animals without endangering lives. Make sure you adhere to all the laws and regulations to stay safe.

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