



Three Countries, One Landscape!



Intergovernmental Organization

GVTC is an intergovernmental institution that managed to operate in conflict and post-conflict context. As a coordination mechanism between DRC, Rwanda and Uganda, GVTC led and helped the conservation partners, governmental institutions as well as their populations to transcend conflicts and intercommunity mistrust so that they could combine conservation with development, peace building, security to improve the living conditions of the populations living in the Greater Virunga Landscape.

1990: Informal collaboration between the park wardens of Rwanda, Uganda and DRC to monitor trans-border movements of mountain gorillas. The Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration (GVTC) was then born during armed conflicts.



Joint Patrols Rwanda-DRC

2006: Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between DRC, Rwanda & Uganda on Tourism Revenue Sharing from the Transboundary Gorilla Tourism Groups.

2009: The Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration is institutionalized between DRC, Rwanda & Uganda through an interministerial board



GVTC ES & ICGLR ES after the signing of MoU

2014: CITES, through ICCWC, acknowledged the progress made by GVTC in natural resources and biodiversity conservation and accepted to support GVTC to fight illegal trade and criminality against biodiversity in the Virunga Landscape.

2014: MoU signing between ICGLR-ECGLC-GVTC

2014-2015: GVTC actively participated in regional and international conferences organized by the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP); GVTC is now member of CBFP.



Consultations between Experts from the Three Countries on the GVTC Treaty Project

2015: Consultations and negotiations between Experts from the three partner states to harmonize views and comments on the GVTC Treaty Project.

2015: Agreement signing of a three-years funding between GVTC and the Ministry for Foreign Trade & Development Cooperation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Kigali-Rwanda.

2015: Signing of the Treaty on the Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration on Wildlife Conservation and Tourism Development.



GVTC Treaty Signing by Representatives of the Three States (DRC, Rwanda & Uganda)

Dec 2015: GVTC participated in the COP 21 held in Paris on Climate Change.

2015-2016: GVTC is coordinating mountain gorilla census operations in the protected areas of DRC, Rwanda & Uganda, with valuable support from institutional partners: ICCN, RDB, UWA, IGCP, etc.

GVTC participation in the Private Sector Investment Conference for the Great Lakes Region, Kinshasa(DRC), 24-25th February 2016

Rich biodiversity of the Greater Virunga Landscape

293 species of mammals; 890 species of birds; 135 species of reptiles; 91 species of amphibians; 117 species of butterflies; 366 species of fish and 3755 species of plants;

Volcanoes National Park(Rwanda): 160km²; Virunga National Park : 7727 km²; (DRC); a huge area of 10km covering the Sarambwe Reserve(90km²/DRC); and 5 Ugandan National Parks: Semuliki National Park(220 km²), Kibale National Park (7955 km²), Rwenzori Mountains National Park (996km²), Queen Elizabeth National Park (1978km²), Bwindi Impenetrable National Park (321km²), Mgahinga Gorilla National Park (33.7km²) and other natural reserves.

The tourism attractions in the Greater Virunga Landscape are vast and unique: the only place where tourists can view mountain gorillas in their natural habitat. The tourism incomes are contributing to community projects implementation: cultural dancing, handicrafts, traditional medicine, agro-veterinary initiatives (mushrooms growing, fish farming, beekeeping, water supply, alternative energy access, etc.)

It is in that context that GVTC supported community projects thanks to the funds provided by donors. Those projects are designed to combine conservation and improvement of the living conditions of the populations living in the Virunga Landscape: (1) a study focused on the context analysis of timber illegal trade, charcoal and wildlife products; (2) a study on the ecological impacts of oil, gas and ore exploration in the Greater Virunga Protected areas; (3) a study conducted on the betterment of water resources management as ecosystem services provided to the populations; (4) agroforestry projects funding; (5) funding of mushrooms farming and beekeeping projects; (6) organization of regional workshops in favor of state representatives, leaders of NGOs, public and private business leaders; those workshops are generally focused on the need of combining biodiversity conservation and socioeconomic development in favor of the populations living around the protected areas; (7) funding of the construction works to build Kinigi and Rwerere centers, designed to generate income for the local communities; (8) funding of trainings aimed at capacity building and women's empowerment.

Challenges and needs: continue the implementation of the Transboundary Strategic Plan for the 10 coming

(1) Consolidate the previous achievements gained from transboundary cooperation through intercommunity dialogue between the populations of the three sister countries (Rwanda, Uganda-DRC): trans-border trade, cooperation increasing between peoples through development projects, including the informal trade, agro-livestock, etc.

(2) Bring decision-makers as well as their communities to understand the need of combining conservation, peace building and socioeconomic development within the post-conflict area of the Virunga Landscape.

(3) Advocate with decision-makers, medias and other stakeholders of the three sister countries: facilitate the GVTC Treaty endorsement, its promulgation by Heads of State, as well as its implementation to promote tourism, development and the social welfare of transboundary populations.

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Mountain gorillas in the Greater Virunga Landscape



Kinigi Community Commercial Complex (KCCO), Musanze (Rwanda), funded by GVTC



Rwerere Community Center for Tourism (RCCCT), Kisoro (Uganda), funded by GVTC



GVTC Press conference in Kinshasa, DRC, 2015

At its beginning, GVTC received financial support from some donors to operate and implement its Strategic Plan: American State Department, Sweden, the Kingdom of the Norway and currently from the Kingdom of the Netherlands.