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HOW NONHUMAN GREAT APES RESPOND TO ANTHROPOGENIC CONTEXTS

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Understanding how nonhuman primates adapt their behaviours to anthropogenic contexts is central to answering questions about how they perceive and adjust to human-influenced situations and environments, and whether or not sympatry is sustainable. The high cognitive abilities of nonhuman great apes mean that they are often able to adapt flexibly and innovatively to human-induced changes, but large home ranges and body size often result in contact, competition and conflict with local people. Sympatry between human and non-human great apes results in a complex web of behavioural, ecological, epidemiological, social and economic relationships. In this symposium we seek to present selected examples of how great apes change their behavioural patterns to anthropogenic contexts that range from brief tourist encounters to daily contact with local people in cultivated areas and roadsides. These interactions will be presented within a human and great ape ethno-primatological framework, and as such will provide a more holistic approach to studies of great ape behaviour and conservation in changing environments. Such knowledge is crucial when attempting to develop strategies aimed at managing ape populations affected by humans, with effective conservation strategies requiring species-specific and in-depth knowledge of great ape behaviour.

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