



# THE KAHUZI-BIEGA NATIONAL PARK PROJECT

## Context

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The NGO Minority Rights Group International (MRG), in collaboration with local partners, is pursuing a research project to document conservation-related human rights abuses committed against Batwa communities and land rights defenders in the Kahuzi-Biega National Park (PNKB). The principal purpose of the project is to uncover the nature and extent of conservation-related violence experienced by the Batwa of the PNKB between approximately 2014 and the present. The findings should be used as a basis for the NGO taking action, on the Batwas' side, for the community's defense. Before the students get involved, a complaint had already been made to the African Commission on human and peoples' rights and declared admissible by the Commission. Further action is now at stake.

## Students' involvement

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A group of eight students, who had previously attended the Winter School in Lapland, has been trained to work on some of the issues at stake during the month of July 2020. They have identified and examined, systematically, the reports produced by the United Nations bodies involved in the protection of human rights, the UNESCO and the World Bank, regarding the situation of indigenous peoples' rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, more specifically in relation with the Kahuzi-Biega National Park. The objective was to establish the current state of official statements, as well as the evolutions already observed.

Students worked remotely, due to the pandemic.

They drafted, under the supervision of Professor Patrick Jacob, three reports which were then transmitted to the MR Group.

- » Indigenous Peoples Rights' in DRC seen from the UN
- » Indigenous Peoples Rights' in DRC seen from the UNESCO
- » Indigenous Peoples Rights' in DRC seen from the World Bank