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Press Release

For Immediate Release

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MT. EVEREST PHOTO OF MONKEY BANNER PRESENTED TO NEW FOREST MINISTER

Wildlife Watch Group and the International Primate Protection League Sponsored Ascent to Highlight Threats to Nepal's Native Monkeys

LALITPUR, NEPAL, July 29, 2009 Jyamchang Bhote, a young professional mountaineering guide, reached the summit of Mount Everest for the third time on 19 May 2009 at 10 A.M. local time. He held up a banner sponsored by the Wildlife Watch Group (WWG) and the U.S.-based International Primate Protection League (IPPL). The banner carried the slogan "Stop the Monkey Business! Don't Export Nepali Monkeys to American Labs."

Today a framed photograph of this historic expedition, dedicated to prevent Nepalese monkeys from being sent to deadly experiments in U.S. labs, was handed over to Nepal's new Forest Minister, the Honorable Deepak Bohara, at his office at Singh.

Before presenting the framed photograph to the Minister, Mangal Man Shakya, Chairman of WWG, handed over the joint Appeal with Nepalese Federation of Forest Resource Users Group (NEFUG) and a special letter from the Chairwoman of IPPL, Dr. Shirley McGreal, O.B.E., addressed to Minister Bohara.

In the letter Dr. McGreal said, "We understand that one monkey breeding centre has already been established at Lele and are concerned for the well-being of the animals removed from their free-living families to live there.... they should be released to the wild or live in large, spacious corrals and subjected to no cruel experiments." She further stated, "... Please revoke all permits that may have been granted to any party/parties to incarcerate monkeys."

Last year Dr. McGreal was presented with the Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.) "for services to the protection of primates" by Queen Elizabeth II at a ceremony held at Buckingham Palace.

Similarly, WWG and NEFUG reminded the new Minister of the decision of the former Ministry on 20 June 2008, regarding not allowing the export of rhesus monkeys for biomedical research, stating that the Wildlife Farming, Reproduction and Research Policy of 2003 does not include any clause for allowing export of rhesus monkeys for use in biomedical research. WWG and NEFUG requested the continuation of the decision of the former Ministry to the new Minister.

NEFUG is a new partner in the WWG- and IPPL-led "Stop the Monkey Business" campaign coalition, which was started in 2006 to oppose local and international monkey trafficking.

After receiving the photograph and letters, Minister Bohara said he would thoroughly look into the issue and take appropriate steps.

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