

GEF Congo Basin Sustainable Landscapes Impact Program

Congo IP

**Inception Workshop
Pullman Hotel**

31st May – 2 June 2022, Kinshasa, DRC

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Photo: RAPELEAC

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Photo: Johannes Refisch

Acronyms

APDS	Dzanga-Sangha Protected Area network, CAR
APOI	Africa Palm Oil Initiative
ARRC	Avoid, Reduce, Restore Conservation (“Extractives”) sub-group of IUCN SGA
CAFI	Central African Forests Initiative
CAR	Central African Republic
CBFP	Congo Basin Forest Partnership
CBSL	Congo Basin Sustainable Landscapes
CEFDHAC	Conference on Dense and Moist Forest Ecosystems of Central Africa
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
CMRC	Campo Ma’an / Rio Campo landscape
COMIFAC	Central African Forest Commission
DGEPN	Directorate General for the Environment and Nature Protection, Gabon
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC in French)
ECOFAC	EU-funded program “Preserving Biodiversity and Fragile Ecosystems in Central Africa”
EG	Equatorial Guinea
FIPAC	Forum on Indigenous Peoples of Central Africa
FOLUR	Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration GEF Impact Project
FP	Focal Point
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GRASP	UNEP Great Apes Survival Program
ICCA	Territory or area conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities
ILUMP	Integrated Land Use Management Plan
IP	Impact Program
IPLCs	Indigenous People and Local Communities
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
KM	Knowledge Management
LTLT	Lac Tele / Lac Tumba landscape
LUP	Land use planning
MAMC	Monte Alen / Monts de Cristal landscape
MEDD	Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, RoC
MEF	Ministry of Economic Forestry, RoC
MIKE	Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (CITES program)
MIKE-CCU	MIKE Central Coordination Unit
NCA	Natural Capital Accounting
NTFP	Non Timber Forest Product
OECM	Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures
PARCIC	Support to the Reforms and Strengthening of ECCAS Institutional Capacities Program (UNODC)
PGRN	National Resource Governance Project, CAR
PNMB	Mbaéré-Bodingué National Park, CAR
PSC	Project Steering Committee
REPALEAC	Network of Indigenous and Local Communities for the Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa

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RoC	Republic of Congo
RP	Regional Program
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SGA	IUCN Section on Great Apes
TNS	Sangha Tri-National landscape
TriDOM	Tri-National Dja-Odzala-Minkebe landscape
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USFS	United States Forest Service
WCMC	UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature

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Mbeli Bai, Nouabale-Ndoki National Park, Republic of Congo. Photo: Wildlife Conservation Society / WCS.

Background

The Congo Basin Sustainable Landscapes Impact Program (hereinafter referred to as Congo IP) comprises seven “child” projects: one regional and six national projects. Overall coordination is with the United Nations Environment Program as implementing agency, which also executes the Regional Program and national projects in RoC and DRC, while the World Bank executes the national project in CAR, UNDP in Gabon, IUCN in Equatorial Guinea and WWF-US in Cameroon.

The Regional Project (RP) serves as a platform for coordination and exchange of knowledge and best practices. The regional and national projects will coordinate their efforts to provide integrated solutions, supporting innovative and scalable activities to the challenges faces by this region.

The regional component of the Congo IP is built on the rationale that several interrelated factors drive deforestation and degradation in the Congo Basin, and that, without collaborative action among neighboring countries to tackle common threats and to take advantage of regional opportunities, it would be difficult to maintain forest cover and the flow of ecosystems services over the long term.

The Congo IP aims to catalyze transformational change in conservation and sustainable management of key landscapes in the Congo Basin – most of them straddling two or more countries – through landscape approaches that empower local communities and forest-dependent people, and through partnerships with the private sector. Through the Impact Program, the GEF, its implementing/ Executing Agencies and partners will help Congo Basin countries pursue holistic and integrated approaches to promote transformational change in key economic systems such as biodiversity, SFM and livelihood improvement, in line with countries’ national development priorities.

The key components of the regional project include:

1. Integrated Transboundary Land Use Planning;
2. Targeted management interventions to provide safe and extensive habitat for stable and/or increasing populations of endangered species;
3. Empowerment of IPLCs and forest-dependent people and greater private sector engagement;
4. Knowledge Management;
5. Program Coordination and Communication

The RP will foster collaboration, strengthen knowledge exchange and best practices sharing among the countries, which is critical for deepening transboundary collaboration. It will also provide support to innovative and scalable activities across countries to effect transformation change in key economic sectors such as biodiversity and livelihood improvement. It will provide technical assistance and services and capacity building to national projects on areas that are relevant to their actions on the ground: areas such as natural capital valuation, development of methodology for the cross sectorial land use planning to protect biodiversity, and engaging with global and national value to promote deforestation-free commodities.

1.1. Congo IP: Result Indicators

The indicators listed in the Results Framework are a vital list of deliverables for the project leaders and managers who will be responsible for Congo IP implementation:

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Component 1: Transboundary Integrated Land Use Management Planning

- Number of Congo Basin countries that adopt the enhanced methodology and related tools provided by the regional project in their national land use planning processes
- Number of transboundary ILUMPs endorsed by regional inter-sectoral mechanisms or other relevant bodies

Component 2: Targeted management interventions to provide safe and extensive habitat for stable and/or increasing populations of endangered species

- Relevant law enforcement officials adopt management actions to address wildlife crime
- Zoonotic disease surveillance system applied by relevant national stakeholders in all three segments of the TNS landscape
- Percentage of MIKE sites in the Congo-Basin that provide elephant mortality-related data to the MIKE CCU
- Number of regional development policies, action plans and/or frameworks that include great ape and elephant conservation

Component 3: Empowerment of IPLCs and forest-dependent people and greater private sector engagement

- Number of ILUMPs developed with full participation and Free, Prior Informed Consent from IPLCS
- Increase in share (%) of sustainably produced/sourced palm oil and cocoa by the companies that receive technical support from the regional project
- Number of priority landscapes that establish multi-stakeholder partnerships including IPLCs
- Total amount of private sector financing leveraged through the digital platform

Component 4: Knowledge Management

- Share (%) of platform users who confirm benefiting from the platform in advancing their respective work
- Number of local level policy analysis and planning documents that integrate landscape specific climate predictions
- Number of landscape interventions that apply the species and habitat suitability analysis in modelling

Component 5: Program Coordination and Communication

- Regular program-wide reporting against a common results framework produced
- Number of Congo IP followers on Twitter and friends on Facebook

2. Workshop Objective and Anticipated Outcomes

The purpose of the Inception Workshop was to launch officially the GEF Congo Basin Sustainable Landscapes Impact Program (Congo IP) and convene all key partners and stakeholders involved in delivering the Program's objectives.

The workshop was a platform to ensure common understanding of the Program delivery structure and the roles and responsibilities of each partner in the child projects (Implementing Agency, Executing Agency, Component Leads, and Delivery Partners), as well as to establish linkages and synergies across all of the Program's constitutive projects.

The workshop was organised as a hybrid event, with the majority of participants present in person in Kinshasa, DRC, and others joining remotely via Teams. Simultaneous translation from English to French and *vice versa* was available for participants in the room.

During the workshop, participants:

1. Reviewed the Congo IP institutional framework and implementation arrangements, including presentation of the governance structure and the role of the Project Steering Committee (PSC);
2. Identified areas of engagement and collaboration across child projects, with a view to align timelines and workplans;
3. Discussed the Communication & Visibility Plan for the Program, including discussion on the Knowledge Management platform to be created and of the Monitoring and Evaluation System approach.
4. Explored partnerships and synergies between Congo IP national projects and the regional project, and with initiatives beyond the Congo IP.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Improved understanding of the Congo IP, its components as well as roles and responsibilities of Delivery partners of the Regional Project;
- First Program Steering Committee held;
- Alignment achieved on program approach and Improved understanding by Child Projects of the M&E approach and next steps; methodology and design of ILUMPs, Natural Capital Accounting approach and next steps, etc.;
- Vision and next steps for a Communications Plan agreed between Regional and National Projects;
- Synergies explored between Congo IP national projects and the regional project, and with other donor-funded initiatives in the Congo Basin.

3. Workshop Report

3.1. Opening Remarks

The purpose of the opening session was to re-state the overall goal and specific objectives of the Congo Basin Sustainable Landscapes Impact Program in order to underpin the presentations on individual national (“child”) projects later on Day 1 and the cross-cutting, thematic presentations on Day 2. Following introductions by all participants in the room (and later online), opening remarks were made by:

- **Dr. Honoré Tabuna**, Commissioner in Charge of the Environment, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Rural Development at the Economic Commission of Central African States (ECCAS);
- **Mr. Chouaibou Nchoutpouen**, Deputy Executive Secretary and Technical Coordinator of the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC);
- **Mr. Jean-Marc Sinnassamy**, Senior Environment Specialist at the Global Environment Facility (GEF);
- **Ms. Doreen Robinson**, Head of Biodiversity and Land at the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP); and
- **Mr Benjamin Toirambe**, Secretary General of the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, Democratic Republic of Congo.

Speaking first, **Dr. Tabuna** welcomed the launch of the new GEF Congo Impact Program and expressed his particular thanks to the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo for hosting the workshop, to the GEF and UNEP for their roles in developing the project, and to technical and financial partners for their continuing support of sustainable natural resource management in the region. He emphasised the high priority accorded to environmental matters by ECCAS since its restructuring in 2019. He noted that, with the creation of the Department of the Environment, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Rural Development at that time, regional Heads of State demonstrated their support for the structural transformation of the natural resources economy of Central Africa in general, and that of transboundary landscapes in particular, with the aim of enhancing ecosystem services and boosting the role of the environmental economy in the creation of wealth, jobs and new business opportunities.

Dr. Tabuna expressed the hope that the Congo IP program would learn the lessons of previous initiatives in the region, notably the disappointing socio-economic impacts of community programs in cross-border landscapes, and develop a truly regional framework in which socio-economic and cultural elements could be fully integrated along with other project components. He said success will also depend on clarity about the roles of all stakeholders, including that of his own Commission within ECCAS, whose support he offered for the coordination of sub-regional initiatives relating to the environment and the management of natural resources to achieve through, among other things, the development of the green economy. An upcoming Regional Program for the Economy of Transboundary Landscapes would mark the transition from the traditional approach to conservation in transboundary landscapes to one that integrates economic opportunity with conservation. In that context, he viewed the Congo IP as a pilot project for the sustainable economic development of

transboundary landscapes in the region. See [here](#)¹ for the full text (in French) of Dr. Tabuna’s opening remarks.

Mr. Chouaibou Nchoutpouen of COMIFAC welcomed the role of GEF in supporting implementation of the COMIFAC regional convergence plan, to which he said the Congo IP would make an important contribution, in particular through its transboundary components and themes. He noted the importance of the COMIFAC convergence plan in realising the vision of the regional Heads of State when they signed the Yaoundé Declaration in 1999. By his reckoning, M. Nchoutpouen said that GEF had contributed over \$42m to biodiversity conservation and sustainable economic development projects in the region since 2007. Despite the progress made with those funds and the support of many other donors, much remained to be done, so COMIFAC welcomed GEF’s support for the new Congo IP and welcomed this inception workshop to work out synergies between the child projects and arrangements for implementation.

See [here](#)² for the full text (in French) of Mr. Nchoutpouen’s opening remarks.

Mr. Jean-Marc Sinnassamy noted how much time had passed since the GEF Congo IP planning workshop held in Libreville in January 2019 but said it was a pleasure to see all the agencies concerned convened in person after the disruptions caused by Covid-19. He thanked DRC for hosting the meeting, UNEP for organising it, and the other agencies concerned for their engagement and ongoing work in the region. Moving on, he reiterated the overall goal of GEF8 – to halt nature loss and ensure that the world is nature-positive by 2030 and carbon neutral by 2050 – and its preference for integrated approaches for example in relation to the conservation and sustainable management of forests.

Mr Sinnassamy identified three priorities for the launch workshop, which required a common approach:

1. **Clarity on project governance** in order to ensure that the Impact Program functions as such with effective coordination and communications mechanisms in place at both national and regional levels.
2. **Cooperation on cross-cutting themes**, including integrated land use management plans, tackling illegal hunting and wildlife trade, capacity building at the level of indigenous people and local communities, private sector engagement, and infrastructure development. In addition, some issues were particularly significant in transboundary landscapes: coordinated approaches to wildlife monitoring and law enforcement in relation to poaching and the illegal wildlife trade, illegal mining, deforestation and the cross-border bushmeat trade.
3. **The establishment of shared platforms** to ensure effective communications both within the Congo IP and with external audiences, e.g. involving exchanges between national projects. Mr. Sinnassamy noted that this theme would be explored on Day 2 as part of the thematic discussion led by UNEP consultant Kirsten Milhahn.

¹ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wa65sLmofPijwHb6oYyz4eXDaGAB9hgG/view?usp=sharing>. Access to online files is limited to workshop participants whose email addresses have been shared with UNEP.

² https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_WLqfTQ9a8XETAcuwT4PdIo5mVw7RERb/view?usp=sharing

Ms. Doreen Robinson thanked workshop participants for convening in Kinshasa, echoed Commissioner Tabuna’s call for natural resource managers in the region to “get out of the environment bubble,” noted the upcoming climate change and biological diversity Conferences of the Parties and the opportunities they would bring to highlight work being done in the Congo Basin, and the need for financial flows in support of improved long-term natural resource management, not just short-term project funding.

Finally, **Mr. Benjamin Toirambe**, Secretary General of the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, officially opened the Congo IP inception workshop on behalf of the host country, the Democratic Republic of Congo. Welcoming the GEF funding in particular, the SG noted the broader GEF7 context and the fact that GEF8 negotiations were under way and thanked other agencies too for their respective financial and technical contributions to the program. He said that the Congo IP program had been conceived in such a way that there were no conflicts to speak of, with each country taking the lead for designing the national project for its own territory. Complementing that, the project was characterised by strong transboundary collaboration which to his mind was one of its main attributes. Biodiversity and relatively intact forests were the Congo Basin’s greatest wealth in comparison to other continents, he said, and he was convinced that the CBSL-IP would make a significant contribution to its protection and restoration.

3.2. Scope and Implementation Arrangements of the Congo IP

Ms. Doreen Robinson launched the first workshop session with a [presentation](#)³ emphasising the overall scope and ambitious overall goal of the project.

Project Goal

To catalyse transformational change at a regional level by scaling up best practices and innovations originating from sustainable forest management in national and transboundary landscapes across the Congo Basin

Component 1	Integrated Transboundary Land Use Planning
Main objective	Land use planning decisions in transboundary landscapes in the Congo Basin are based on enhanced integrated land use management plans (ILUMPs) developed in a consultative manner and based on natural capital accounting and systems thinking
Key activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an enhanced methodological process and make available other tools for land use planning (<i>USFS, UNEP-WCMC, with CAFI, COMIFAC and ECCAS</i>) • Prioritize training needs and develop training modules on the methodological process for developing ILUMPs (<i>UNEP-WCMC and USFS</i>) • Develop ILUMPs in consultation with stakeholders and advocate endorsement by relevant bodies (<i>USFS with COMIFAC, ECCAS</i>) • A knowledge base for sustainable vegetable oils in the Congo Basin developed and disseminated (with a special focus on palm oil) (<i>IUCN Palm Oil Task Force</i>)

³ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NvKq2Yyv180CGLWNtZsQFkFpFW8LnIfK/view?usp=sharing>

Geographical Location	ILUMPs developed in the RoC and Cameroon segments of the Sangha Tri-National (TNS) transboundary conservation complex and the Gabon segments of the Monte Alén-Monts de Cristal region.
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Component 2	Targeted management interventions to provide safe and extensive habitat for stable and/or increasing populations of endangered species
Main objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced regional capacity for addressing wildlife crime Conservation of great apes and forest elephants is integrated into regional development processes
Key activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen transboundary networks working against wildlife crime (<i>UNODC</i>) Promote a harmonized approach in dealing with wildlife crime across the Congo Basin by strengthening monitoring of illegal killing of elephants (<i>CITES-MIKE</i>) Strengthen Long-term zoonotic disease surveillance systems in the TNS landscape (<i>WCS</i>)
Geographical Location	All six target countries / national projects

Component 3	Empowerment of IPLCs and forest-dependent people and greater private sector engagement
Main objective	Local communities, forest-dependent people and private sector implement and scale up SFM investments in the Congo Basin
Key activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mechanisms are created and enhanced to scale up market access and private sector investments in cocoa, including through the enhancement of a digital platform for data management and improved community access to financing (<i>Rainforest Alliance</i>) Local communities, forest-dependent people and private sector implement and scale up SFM investments in the Congo Basin (<i>REPALEAC and Rainforest Alliance</i>)
Geographical Location	All six target countries / national projects

Component 4	Knowledge Management
Main objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National and transboundary stakeholders use enhanced knowledge for Congo IP SFM on-the-ground actions Enhanced knowledge on current and potential impact of climate change on Congo Basin applied for policy planning and analysis
Key activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge harvesting, creation and systemization, to be captured in the Congo Basin IP knowledge management platform (KM Platform) that will be made operational Development of Congo IP online Community of Practice (CoP) and enhanced through increased membership and diversity of users

Geographical Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional capacity development through training and knowledge sharing workshops, field visits and study tours, and online training events <p>All six target countries / national projects</p>
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Component 5	Program Coordination and Communication
Main objective	Improved coordination among program stakeholders and other donors, and increased awareness of Congo IP and lessons among national decision-makers and the global audience
Key activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish regional presence by setting up a coordination office in Kinshasa Develop a Congo IP Communications and Outreach Strategy to ensure the importance of the Congo Basin and the work of the program reaches the relevant audiences. Establish an M&E system which will track program-wide results, and feeds back into adaptive management of the Congo IP program strategy.
Geographical Location	All six target countries / national projects

Ms. Robinson reminded participants that total Congo IP project funding amounts to USD 58,258,951, including USD 8,192,366 in GEF funding and co-financing consisting of USD 20,803,281 (cash) and USD 29,263,304 (in-kind contributions).

Delivery partners working on cross-cutting themes in coordination with regional bodies and national child projects are:

- CITES-MIKE
- IUCN Primate Specialist Group, Section on Great Apes, ARRC Task Force
- IUCN Oil Palm Task Force
- Rainforest Alliance
- REPALEAC
- UNEP-WCMC
- UNODC
- USFS
- WCS



Photo: Johannes Refisch

Despite challenges and delays during the project development phase caused in particular by COVID-19 related travel restrictions, most of the pieces are in place now to proceed with project implementation. The project team is being hired, with the coordinator expected to arrive in August 2022; contracts with Executing Agencies are nearly all finalized; a consultant (Kirsten Milhahn) has been hired to support development of a communications strategy; a strategic presence is being established within the region (in Kinshasa); and consultations have been undertaken with other GEF Impact Programs of similar structure and nature ([Amazon SL](#)⁴, [Drylands](#)⁵, [FOLUR](#)⁶ and others).

Discussion

Points raised by workshop participants following Ms. Robinson's presentation included a question from the moderator and comment from Dr Tabuna of ECCAS about engagement with the private sector; an intervention by Gilles Etoga of WWF Cameroon about transboundary work and private sector involvement in the TRIDOM landscape; and a summary of the role of CEFDHAC by the regional president of its monitoring committee, M. Louis Roger Essola Etoa, who also asked about the theory of change and anticipated results of the Congo IP.

On private sector engagement, Dr Tabuna stressed the importance of involving private companies in the implementation of the Congo IP given the priority accorded by ECCAS to economic development and improving the livelihoods of local communities in the region. Ms. Robinson reiterated the focus by some national projects on the palm oil and cacao sectors, and recognised the role to be played by private companies in other sectors including tourism and in generating financial flows derived from carbon sequestration and reduced carbon emissions.

On the Congo IP Theory of Change and Expected Results, M. Johannes Refisch of UNEP said that they have been developed for each Country Child Project which would be presented in the following session. The overall Congo IP Results Framework can be viewed [here](#)⁷ and the Result Indicators are reproduced above on page 6.

3.3. National Child Project Presentations and Discussions

The following National or Child Project presentations were made by the respective national teams using a range of different structures. Links to all presentations are provided for precision's sake. In the section that follows, each component is presented in line with the overall Congo IP structure reflected in Doreen Robinson's introduction (Section 3.2).

3.3.1. Congo DRC

[The Congo DRC Country Child Project](#)⁸ was presented by GEF Focal Point M. Godefroid Ndaukila, Director of Sustainable Development of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. The GEF Implementing Agency for the DRC Child Project is UNEP.

⁴ <https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/Amazon-Sustainable-Landscapes-Program-2018.pdf>

⁵ <https://wwfgef.org/gef/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/mongolia-drylands-fact-sheet.pdf>

⁶ https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/2021-11/gef_food_systems_land_use_restoration_folur_impact_program_2021_11.pdf

⁷ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/12tXCLwnxlHTm6mMv114wuF90pG2wFJL9/view?usp=sharing>

⁸ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VK9EGHj8fUcwbzedI_0ar1PWH_bC9_vv/view?usp=sharing

Overall Goal

Expand and strengthen community-based natural resource management in targeted cross-border landscapes

Specific objectives

- 1. Target 600,000 hectares of conservation areas beyond national protected areas for effective management**
- 2. Support their restoration**
- 3. Ensure habitat protection for vulnerable species**
- 4. Promote ecosystem connectivity**
- 5. Improve ecosystem service productivity**

Component 1	Integrated Transboundary Land Use Planning
Objective	Integrated land use planning model supports conservation and sustainable development in target landscapes in DRC
Key activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three provincial governments have indicative zoning plans • Legislation on land rights and resource use rights of indigenous peoples and local communities are enacted at the national level
Geographical location	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Greater Kivu landscape on the border with Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virunga National Park (territories of Lubero and Walikale/North Kivu) • Maïko-Taina-Kahuzi Biega corridor (territories of Kabare and Kalehe/South Kivu) 2. Lac Télé – Lac Tumba landscape (shared with the Republic of Congo): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRC segment: the corridor of the Mabali-Tumba Ledima-Ngiri Scientific Reserve (territories of Bikoro, Lukolela/Equateur and Kiri/Mai-Ndombe)

Component 2	Targeted management interventions to provide safe and extensive habitat for stable and/or increasing populations of endangered species
Objective	Ensure biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration in target forest landscapes
Key activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 600,000 ha of conservation areas (other than national protected areas) in targeted landscapes are effectively managed to ensure habitat protection for vulnerable species, the promotion of ecosystem services and improved connectivity
Geographical location	As above (Component 1)

Component 3	Empowerment of IPLCs and forest-dependent people and greater private sector engagement
Objective	Promote sustainable and efficient land use in priority landscapes

Key activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25% of Local Community Protected Areas in priority areas are implementing climate-smart land use practices
Geographical Location	As above (Component 1)

Component 4	Knowledge Management
Objective	Capacity building, knowledge management and cross-border collaboration
Key activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three provinces in DRC have the capacity to monitor wildlife trafficking, land use change and SDG progress in priority areas; • The governance structure (under the current treaty) improves cross-border coordination and actions against wildlife trafficking
Geographical Location	As above (Component 1)

Challenges cited by M. Ndaukila included slow bureaucratic processes under Covid-19 conditions and developing the appropriate partnerships for project implementation on the ground. He confirmed that, as in other countries in the sub-region, building inter-departmental processes within government in support of land use planning (LUP) is an additional challenge. Although M. Ndaukila also agreed that it will be important to coordinate support for LUP under the Congo IP with existing planning processes underway within individual jurisdictions, M. Refisch of UNEP emphasized that the purpose of Component 1 of the broader project is to support those existing processes rather than to develop independent, potentially conflicting plans. M. Nchoutpouen of COMIFAC mentioned the additional challenges associated with departing from “business as usual,” citing in particular the critical importance of including the needs and interests of indigenous people and local communities in conservation, and of adopting a “conservation for development” approach rather than “conservation for its own sake.” In that respect, the role and involvement of REPALEAC in the Congo IP was identified as a vital innovation compared to earlier programmes such as CARPE.

3.3.2. Republic of Congo

[The Republic of Congo Country Child Project](#)⁹ was presented by M. Pascal Locko, Advisor to the Minister of the Environment, Sustainable Development and the Congo Basin. The GEF Implementing Agency for the Republic of Congo Child Project is UNEP.

Overall Goal
Promote a model for integrated community conservation and management of protected areas applied to the peatland zone and the forest ecosystem of the Lac Télé landscape

Component 1	Integrated Transboundary Land Use Planning
Objective	Support the development and implementation of land use management plans for protected areas in the Lac Télé landscape and surrounding area with a focus on formalizing community participation

⁹ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CBfSPS-5J0Xg_jSNR4dzy2-DQ-7lXnG/view?usp=sharing

Geographical location	Lac Télé landscape and surrounding area (contiguous with Lac Tumba landscape in Congo DRC)
Component 2	Targeted management interventions to provide safe and extensive habitat for stable and/or increasing populations of endangered species
Objective	Community-based natural resource management
Geographical location	As above (Component 1)
Component 3	Empowerment of IPLCs and forest-dependent people and greater private sector engagement
Objective	Diversify sources of community income, for example by promoting ecotourism and certified cocoa production
Geographical Location	As above (Component 1)
Component 4	Knowledge Management
Objective	Engage the private sector in conservation
Geographical Location	As above (Component 1)
Component 5	Program Coordination and Communication
Objective	Communications, knowledge management, project monitoring and evaluation
Geographical Location	As above (Component 1)

Challenges described by M. Locko included the absence of land use management planning processes and capacity at the local level; insufficient coordination between sectoral institutions; limited participation of communities in the management of natural resources; limited choices for local people in terms of alternative incomes and livelihoods; the absence of policies and regulatory frameworks for reconciling and managing the multiple interests and stakeholders engaged in the conservation, use and management of forest resources; and insufficient technical information to support improved peatland management in particular.

Questions raised by workshop participants related to the engagement of Congolese government ministries besides the Ministry of the Environment; the inadvertent omission of COMIFAC from the list of project partners presented by M. Locko; mechanisms for coordination and communications between the RoC and Congo DRC in the LTLT landscape; and the availability of appropriately qualified personnel to implement the proposed project. In response, M. Locko highlighted the peatlands agreement already in place between the two Congos in the context of the Global Peatlands Initiative, and M. Refisch of UNEP mentioned the complementary Congo Peatlands project that is about to be launched with German government (IKI) funding.

3.3.3. Cameroon

[The Cameroon Country Child Project](#)¹⁰ was presented by M. Adama Saidou, National Project Director. The GEF Implementing Agency for the Cameroon Child Project is WWF-US.

Overall Goal

To strengthen the integrated management of Cameroon’s globally important forest landscapes in the Congo Basin to secure its biological integrity and increase economic opportunities and livelihoods for forest dependent people

Component 1	Integrated Transboundary Land Use Planning
Outcome	Participatory, informed, and integrated land use planning establishes a framework to plan, monitor and adapt land management across approximately 1,200,000 ha
Geographical location	Cameroon segment of the transboundary TRIDOM landscape

Component 2	Targeted management interventions to provide safe and extensive habitat for stable and/or increasing populations of endangered species
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management effectiveness of Campo Ma'an and Lobéké national parks is improved through inclusive governance and management systems • The effectiveness of forest and wildlife management in the peripheries of Campo Ma'an and Lobéké national parks is strengthened through increased engagement and capacity, and the establishment and adaptive management of equitable and transparent management agreements between local stakeholders • The long-term zoonotic disease surveillance systems in Campo Ma'an and Lobéké national parks and their peripheries are strengthened to minimize the risks of disease transmission between humans and wildlife and vice versa.
Geographical location	Campo Ma'an and Lobéké national parks

Component 3	Empowerment of IPLCs and forest-dependent people and greater private sector engagement
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened and/or established sustainable NTFP value chains that engage IPLCs, and the private sector reduce the impacts of unsustainable natural resource use and deliver benefits to at least 30 communities in the Cameroon segments of three transboundary landscapes • Public-private partnership (i.e., Ebony Project) to create a sustainable and socially responsible value chain for tropical hardwood species is

¹⁰ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Z0MCKckqeD33rRbBvQPHtS3h67CIVxYW/view?usp=sharing>

	expanded and delivering tangible benefits, including restoration and income generation, in the TRIDOM landscape
Geographical Location	Cameroon segment of the transboundary TRIDOM landscape, and Campo Ma'an and Lobéké national parks

Component 4¹¹	Improving benefit generation from biodiversity through sustainable tourism development
Outcome	Sustainable tourism value chain that engages IPLCs and the private sector is strengthened, reducing the impacts of unsustainable natural resource use and delivering benefits to IPLCs
Geographical Location	Campo Ma'an NP landscape

Component 5	Knowledge Management, Program Coordination and Communication
Objective	Project results monitored, and lessons learned inform adaptive management and outreach in support of SFM at national and regional levels.
Geographical Location	Cameroon segment of the transboundary TRIDOM landscape, and Campo Ma'an and Lobéké national parks

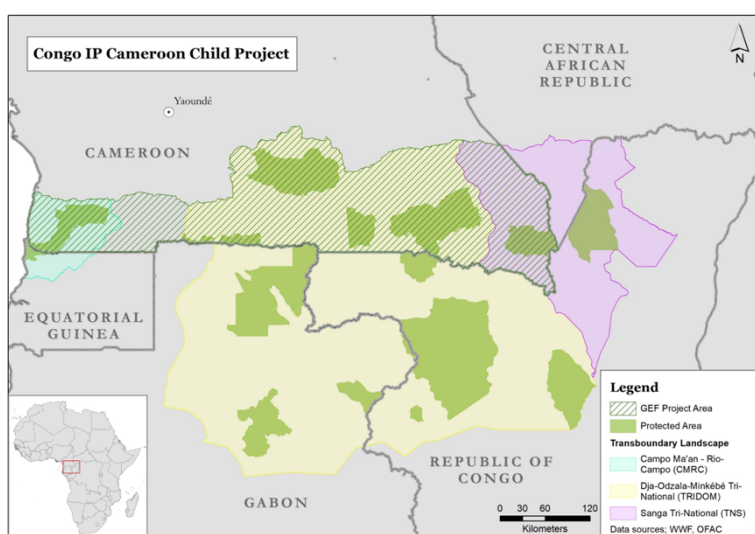


Figure 1: Cameroon segment of the transboundary TRIDOM landscape, and Campo Ma'an and Lobéké national parks

Questions posed to M. Saidou concerned delays experienced in the Campo Ma'an landscape during the project development phase, the importance of coordinating with COMIFAC, and the potential challenges posed by having too many project partners to manage. In response, M. Saidou acknowledged the importance of engaging with COMIFAC and explained that working collaboratively with multiple stakeholders at sites like Campo Ma'an takes time, which is not a bad thing if that is the price of achieving consensus on common goals, annual work

plans, project implementation, etc.

¹¹ Component 4 of the Cameroon National Project differs from other National Projects. For the sake of consistency across projects, it could otherwise be presented as a third element of Component 3. Knowledge Management is included in Component 5 along with Program Coordination and Communications.

3.3.4. Gabon

[The Gabon Country Child Project](#)¹² was presented by Ms Tsayi Tsengue Mouvagha of the Ministry of the Environment and Nature Protection, Gabon, and Ms Gloria Kpinsoton of UNDP Gabon. The GEF Implementing Agency for the Gabon Child Project is UNDP.

Overall Goal

To protect forests with high conservation value and high carbon stocks (HCV/HCS) and forest-wetland complexes in two major watersheds in Gabon: the Lower Ogooué and Lower Nyanga

The Gabon project was presented at the workshop in a different format to other National Projects so the following division into the same components as other individual Congo IP projects is provided for the sake of consistency and comparison and may not reflect its structure once finalised. See hyperlink above and/or URL in footnote below for the full Gabonese presentation.

Component 1	Integrated Transboundary Land Use Planning
Objective	To adopt more integrated perspectives in land use planning and management at the regional level, taking into account important landscapes and watersheds and natural capital accounting, as well as OECMs including ICCAs / Territories of Life
Geographical location	The Lower Ogooué and Lower Nyanga watersheds
Component 2	Targeted management interventions to provide safe and extensive habitat for stable and/or increasing populations of endangered species
Objective	Improving governance of natural resources through collaborative and inclusive approaches
Geographical location	As above (Component 1)
Component 3	Empowerment of IPLCs and forest-dependent people and greater private sector engagement
Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening value chains for the benefit of local communities • Reduction of inequalities through better access to information and increased involvement of IPLCs, which will improve joint design interventions and strengthen IPLC decision-making capacity
Geographical Location	As above (Component 1)
Component 4	Knowledge Management
Objectives	Learning by doing, continuous reflection, adaptive management, co-production of knowledge and mutual learning

¹² <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Rj0sr1qLYXo2yxqCcUA3yj4Qgl8CJiKW/view?usp=sharing>

Geographical Location	As above (Component 1)
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Questions posed to the Gabon team focused in particular on the decision to focus on the southern part of the country rather than the north, which was originally planned to include the Gabonese components of the Monte Alèn, Monts de Cristal (MAMC) and TriDOM landscapes. The Gabonese team and J-M Sinnassamy for GEF explained that the security situation in the north of the country, where cross-border elephant poaching is still widespread, had already caused such delays that the decision was taken to focus instead on the Lower Ogooué and Lower Nyanga watersheds in the south. The principle of linkages to the rest of the Congo IP was still important but that would be done via thematic linkages (e.g. incorporation of natural capital accounting into land use planning) rather than in contiguous landscapes as originally planned. Some transboundary work in the Gabonese parts of the MAMC landscape will still be undertaken as part of the UNEP Regional Project.

There was also a discussion after the Gabon presentation about the distinction between the French terms “indigenous” (*indigènes*) and “native” (*autochtones*) people in reference to IPLCs in the Congo Basin, and their respective connotations in terms of ethnic origins in the region. The blanket term “IPLC” is used throughout this report because it includes all ethnicities and carries no connotations in terms of inclusion or exclusion.

3.3.5. Central African Republic

Presentation of the [Central African Republic Country Child Project](#)¹³ was not possible during the inception workshop itself but it is included here for the sake of completeness. The GEF Implementing Agency for the Central African Republic Child Project is the World Bank. The scope for questions by workshop participants was similarly limited.

Overall Goal

Strengthen the connectivity between Mbaéré-Bodingué National Park (PNMB) and the Dzanga-Sangha Protected Area network (APDS) by initiating a new approach to conservation within the PNMB and its periphery and to development in its buffer zone

The National Project in CAR was presented at the workshop in a different format to other projects so the following division into components is provided for the sake of consistency and comparison and may not reflect its structure once finalised. See hyperlink above and/or URL in footnote below for the full presentation of the CAR National Project.

Component 1	Integrated Transboundary Land Use Planning
Objective	Strengthening governance and management frameworks
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional, technical and logistical support to relaunch conservation activities and impact monitoring in the PNMB and surrounding areas • Support national and local government agencies responsible for protected areas (Ministry of Water, Forests, Hunting and Fishing –

¹³ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Oj_UD7-QmaLSK7ZeSG8LNLdm35aI3BID/view?usp=sharing

	MEFCP) and the environment (Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development – MEDD).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support strategy development at national and landscape levels, including in the transboundary Sangha Tri-National (TNS) zone with the Republic of Congo and Cameroon.
Geographical location	Mbaéré-Bodingué National Park (PNMB) landscape and corridor towards the APDS

Component 2	Targeted management interventions to provide safe and extensive habitat for stable and/or increasing populations of endangered species
Objective	Scaling up ecological corridors and cross-border connectivity through the integrated management of natural resources
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the PNMB Development and Management Plan • Relaunch conservation activities (surveillance, anti-poaching...) and support for local development with 1300 farming households and 11500 members of IPLCs sustainably exploiting natural resources (non-timber forest products, wildlife or fish resources, etc.) in the buffer zone of the PNMB • Contribute to a significant reduction in deforestation and forest degradation in the target landscape, aiming for 12.5m tonnes of CO2 equivalent in avoided emissions
Geographical location	Ngotto Forest and Mbaéré-Bodingué National Park (PNMB) landscape

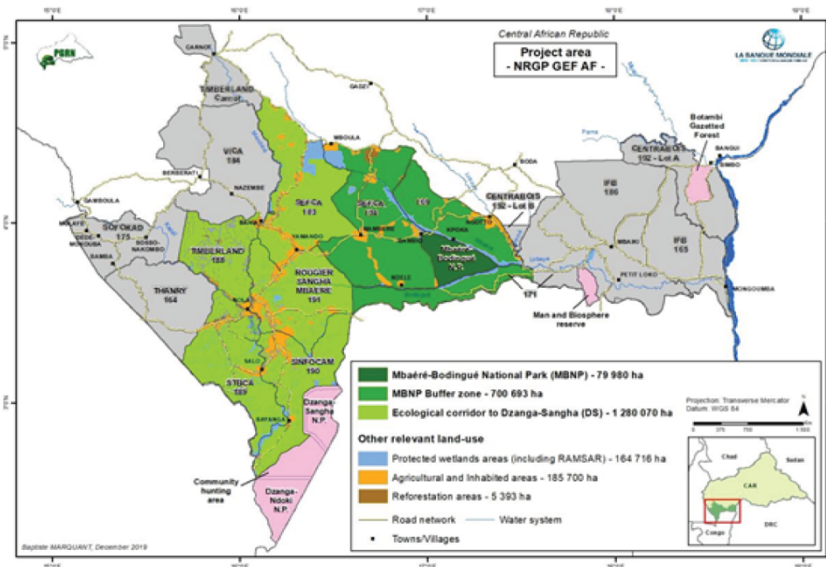
Component 3	Empowerment of IPLCs and forest-dependent people and greater private sector engagement
Objective	Promote management approaches and economic activities that contribute to the sustainable use and regeneration of natural resources
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This component is designed to reduce any pressure exerted by IPLCs on the biodiversity of the MBNP and its buffer zone, while improving their living conditions and supporting integrated environmental management. • Specific support will be provided to logging concessions in the project area to limit the environmental impacts of their activities • The activities will involve at least the ministries responsible for Forests, Agriculture, Environment, Mines and Decentralization.
Geographical Location	PNMB buffer zone and corridor towards the APDS

Component 4	Knowledge Management
	Integrated into other components

Component 5	Program Coordination and Communication
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Objective	Project Management, Monitoring & Evaluation and Capitalization
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Congo IP National Project activities in CAR will be carried out in coordination with the National Resource Governance Project (PGRN) with the support of additional funding An M&E, capitalization and communications system will be put in place supported by the additional funding under the PGRN
Geographical Location	Ngotto Forest, Mbaéré-Bodingué National Park (PNMB) landscape and corridor towards the APDS

Since presentation of the CAR National Project was not possible during the workshop, questions and discussion were limited. The main concerns raised by other participants, and answered by M. Lambert Gnapelet, the GEF Focal Point for the Central African Republic, were about the apparent delay in appointing a new project director within the Ministry of the Environment, and whether the government had bought into the project in the same way as other countries. M. Gnapelet and M.



Sinnassamy reassured participants of that government buy-in and of the strategic importance of the CAR work in relation to the TNS transboundary landscape, highlighted the security difficulties of working in the region, and expressed his optimism that the project would contribute to improving the situation. That point was endorsed from the regional perspective by M. Tabana of ECCAS.

3.3.6. Equatorial Guinea

[The Equatorial Guinea Country Child Project](#)¹⁴ was presented by M. Kenneth Angu, IUCN Regional Forest Program Coordinator for Central and West Africa and head of the IUCN Cameroon Country Office. The GEF Implementing Agency for the Equatorial Guinea Child Project is IUCN.

Overall Goal

Scaling up sustainable forest management through integrated land use planning, improved livelihoods and biodiversity conservation in the Monte Alen and Rio Campo transboundary landscapes in Equatorial Guinea

Objective

To conserve and sustainably manage biodiversity and forest ecosystems in the Monte Alen and Rio Campo landscapes in Equatorial Guinea through an inclusive landscape approach; effective land

¹⁴ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1q7Atx2ZCafqINUPBCQRj-s4sHAn73h2/view?usp=sharing>

use planning; enhanced management of protected areas; and the promotion of local governance and sustainable livelihood options

Component 1	Integrated and improved land use planning, policies, and management
Objective	Contribute to improving the enabling environment for the development of integrated land use plans and better land use planning policies that take natural resources into consideration.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation/planning/governance at national and landscape levels • Rights of forest dependent people • Development and uptake of integrated land use management plans
Geographical location	<p>Monte Alen – Monts de Cristal landscapes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South and southeast of Equatorial Guinea and the northwest of Gabon <p>Campo Ma’an – Rio Campo landscapes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern coastal strip of the continental region of Equatorial Guinea <p>Five specific protected areas in EG: Monte Alen National Park, Altos de Nsork National Park, Piedra Nzas Natural Monument, Rio Muni Nature Reserve, Rio Campo Nature Reserve</p>
Component 2	Ensuring the long-term viability of forests providing important habitat to endangered species and critical ecosystem services
Objective	Strengthen protected area management in the landscapes to ensure sustainable conservation of the forest ecosystems within them
Activities	Improved management of natural resources and protected areas
Geographical location	As above (Component 1)
Component 3	Reduced community and production sector impacts on important forest services in landscapes
Objective	Work with local communities living near protected areas to develop alternative livelihood activities, in order to decrease the dependence and pressure on forest ecosystems and the services they provide, deliver socioeconomic benefits, and increase local people’s resilience to climate change
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local livelihoods and strengthen incentives to conserve forests • Improve sustainable logging practices by private logging companies
Geographical Location	As above (Component 1)
Component 4	Knowledge exchange, partnership, monitoring and assessment
Objective	Raise public awareness and educate school children on the value of the forest ecosystems and the importance of conserving them

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public awareness of the value of natural resources and the importance of conservation Progress of Congo IP in Equatorial Guinea is tracked and adaptively managed Operational system to monitor and evaluate progress, provide information to contribute to Congo IP Regional Information system and web-portal
Geographical Location	As above (Component 1)

Component 5	Project management and monitoring
Objective	Project is effectively and efficiently managed
Geographical Location	As above (Component 1)

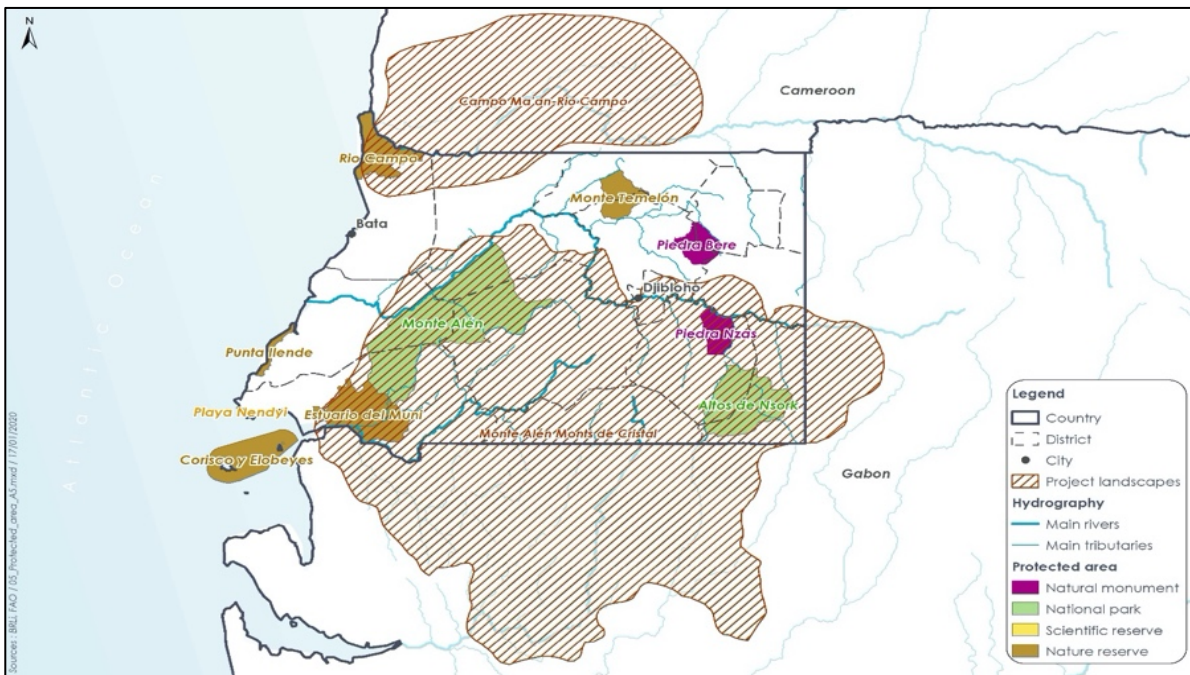


Figure 3: Equatorial Guinea National Project intervention sites

M. Angu was asked after his presentation about political buy-in to and technical involvement in the project by the government of Equatorial Guinea. M. Angu regretted that the government was not present at the inception workshop but pointed to the long list of partner ministries involved as an indication both of political buy-in and of the commitment of the wide range of ministries necessary for successful integrated land use planning.

3.4. Linkages within the GEF Congo IP and to other donor-funded programs in the region

Several links had already emerged from Day 1 presentations and discussions for example in relation to transboundary landscapes and to common themes that will be addressed by all Congo IP child projects. It was noted that many of those themes would be discussed in more detail in the course of Day 2. In the absence of Jean-Jacques Bambuta of the Peatlands Unit in the DRC Ministry of the Environment, Johannes Refisch of UNEP described the framework in place for coordination on peatland conservation in the LTLT transboundary landscape between the RoC and Congo DRC, as an example both of linkage mechanisms within the Congo IP and for coordination with other initiatives in the sub-region. M. Refisch also mentioned the multi-donor coordination group in DRC (*“groupe inter-bailleurs”*) as a framework for ensuring the coherence of multiple projects with similar goals and/or working in the same geographies.

Dr Tabuna then provided a summary, from his perspective as the ECCAS Environment Commissioner, of the main issues confronting the region and individual National Projects including but not limited to EG, and the related opportunities for coordination. He flagged the economic value of natural resources in Central Africa, and the major contribution that carbon makes to that value, but noted that monetising it is complex on political, economic and technical levels. Approaches to such monetisation must be participative, and require rapid modernization at local, national and regional levels of government. The entire institutional context needs re-examining in order to clarify the roles of different stakeholders in the evolving economic and political landscape. Training, capacity building and infrastructure needs must also be taken into consideration, along with links to other sectors such as water, energy, education, transport, waste management, and so on.

Following up on Dr Tabuna’s intervention, other participants including M. Nchoutpouen of COMIFAC and M. Adama Seidou of WWF Cameroon highlighted the need for the Congo IP to adopt a transboundary landscape approach; the opportunity for protected areas to evolve as development hubs in their landscapes; the importance of annual work plans to translate broad principles and good intentions into concrete actions; ensuring coherence between project activities in different countries, in particular in transboundary landscapes, at the same time as respecting the sovereignty of individual states; and the importance of effective communications to maximise that coherence and inform innovation.

Doreen Robinson’s closing remarks for Day 1 are summarised in [Section 4](#) below.

3.5. Communication vision for the Congo IP

The Day 2 program began with a [presentation by UNEP communications consultant Kirsten Milhahn](#)¹⁵ about the general role that effective communications can play not only in supporting but also in achieving project goals. Ms. Milhahn explained that her contract with UNEP had only begun recently so she had not yet had the time to engage with project partners

¹⁵ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1w_TSrOkt0kJpZDPz9HOKHriT7FDj_t12/view?usp=sharing

about communications needs and existing initiatives under way. As a result, her presentation focused instead on the broad principles that would underpin that plan as it was developed.

The discussion that followed explored many of the characteristics of the Congo Basin sub-region that would need to be taken into consideration as the communications plan was prepared. M. Sinnassamy of GEF started by pointing out that, while a website might be important for reaching urban populations, it was unlikely to be seen by rural communities who would be better reached for example via radio programmes, mobile phone companies and/or social media. Dr. Tabuna of ECCAS was delighted that the communications strategy was such an important component of the Congo IP but voiced the strong opinion that it should be developed as a social marketing program rather than with the goal of gaining media coverage. He advocated for the project and its key messages to be marketed to the public in the same way as a commercial product, where success is measured in terms of sales / impact. Even though the project was regional in scope, it consisted of multiple child projects with differing objectives, target audiences, initiatives already under way, and so on. That diversity would need to be reflected in the communications strategy as it was developed. National governments and regional initiatives such as COMIFAC and ECCAS already had existing strategies in place which the Congo IP comms plan should aim to support and complement. Dr. Tabuna also recommended working closely with the private sector, specifically telecoms companies such as AirTel that were important potential conduits for reaching both urban and rural communities, and potential partners for really innovative social marketing campaigns in the sub-region.

M. Etoga of WWF Cameroon stressed that each National Project would need its own plan tailored to its individual context, and that a bottom-up approach should be taken to developing those plans. M. Angu of IUCN said that the comms plan should include targeted “narrow-casting” as well as the more traditional “broad-casting.” In addition, Raquel Agra of UNEP-WCMC pointed out that the comms strategy would need to be phased to reflect the planned evolution of the project over its four-year lifecycle; that it should look carefully first at what was already working; and that it must also include a strong internal communications element. An effective internal communications mechanism – whether a regular newsletter, electronic bulletin or shared website – was vital to ensuring the cohesion of the Congo IP project as a whole.

In response, Ms. Milhahn thanked participants for their helpful feedback and proposed to coordinate with them following the workshop on preparing and circulating a questionnaire to understand better the needs of individual child projects, communications and public outreach infrastructure already in place, proposed target audiences, and so on. That offer was welcomed and accepted.

3.6. Delivery Partner (= thematic) presentations and discussions

The main focus of the Day 2 was on a series of presentations under six thematic headings cutting across multiple child projects. Nine Delivery Partners have been contracted to support the overall Congo IP project in this way:

	Thematic Area	Delivery Partners
1	Enhanced regional capacity for addressing wildlife crime	UNODC and CITES-MIKE
2	Strengthening long-term zoonotic disease surveillance systems	WCS
3	Empowerment of IPLCs	REPALEAC and Rainforest Alliance
4	Sustainable vegetable oil development	IUCN Oil Crops Task Force / University of Liverpool
5	Methodology and design of ILUMPs integrating Natural Capital accounting	USFS and WCMC
6	National capacity-building program to respond to challenges posed by infrastructure projects	IUCN PSG SGA ARRC Task Force

3.6.1. Enhanced regional capacity for addressing wildlife crime (UNODC and CITES-MIKE)

The first thematic presentations, on tackling wildlife crime, were made by [M. Constant Ndjassie of CITES-MIKE](#)¹⁶ and [Ms. Alejandra Euceda of UNODC](#)¹⁷. M. Ndjassie gave a summary of the MIKE program in the Congo Basin and how it could support monitoring of the illegal killing of elephants across the Congo IP project through a targeted program of training and capacity building, including at 15 MIKE monitoring sites in the six participating countries. Ms. Euceda described the support that UNODC would provide to the project in coordination with its EU-funded “Support to the Reforms and Strengthening of ECCAS Institutional Capacities Programme” (PARCIC).

Questions were posed by workshop participants in relation to MIKE’s list of priority sites (which are not all located in Congo IP landscapes); to the migration of elephants into and out of those sites; to coordination with other law enforcement support measures (besides PARCIC) in place with other partners; and to the continued easy access to firearms in many parts of the Congo Basin. M. Ntchoupouen of COMIFAC flagged his institution’s potential as a partner for MIKE and UNODC in the region, citing COMIFAC’s engagement with TRAFFIC, WWF, USFS and the Organisation for African Unity (OAU), and involvement in numerous capacity building workshops in the region. Dr. Tabuna of ECCAS noted that the Congo Basin had moved on from the previous bad practices that hindered effective law enforcement in many countries in the region. The support that MIKE and UNODC now planned to provide under the Congo IP should be properly coordinated with national and regional institutions.

¹⁶ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KQGAJUQt5IdrIIX5_e6qDEA0q9r3WFJP/view?usp=sharing

¹⁷ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xS9Paa-ljWzKXJLCSyMxkjfFMEIzJFz_/view?usp=sharing

3.6.2. Strengthening long-term zoonotic disease surveillance systems (WCS)

The next thematic presentation of the day was by [Dr. Emma Stokes of WCS](#)¹⁸. Dr Stokes described the zoonotic disease early warning system developed by the Wildlife Conservation Society in northern Congo over the past 15 years in collaboration with the Congolese Ministry of Health's National Laboratory and the Ministry of Forest Economy (MEF) responsible for wildlife and protected areas. With Congo IP funding, WCS and its partners will further develop these surveillance systems, training facilities at the Bomassa research centre in northern Congo, and capacity for collaboration with other sites in the subregion.

In the following discussion, Dr Tabuna of ECCAS welcomed the work described by Dr Stokes and voiced the hope that it could be scaled up across the entire region and coordinated with the REDISSE programme already in place funded by the World Bank. He also evoked the concept of "One Health," which recognizes the close relationship – and indeed the interdependency – that exists between human and wildlife health. WWF Cameroon said that they would particularly like to see the approach replicated there. M. Locko of the RoC said that the environment brief in RoC is now split between two ministries: the Ministry of Forest Economy mentioned by Dr Stokes and his own, the Ministry for the Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD). Dr Stokes responded that all WCS's activities in Congo since 1991 have been conducted in partnership with MEF and that they are now negotiating a *Protocol d'Accord* with MEDD in order to cement that relationship as well. On upscaling the surveillance program across the region, she reiterated the capacity building component of the zoonotic disease monitoring work under the Congo IP and the need for additional resources to roll out surveillance systems in landscapes beyond northern Congo.

3.6.3. Empowerment of IPLCs (REPALEAC and Rainforest Alliance)

The presentations on empowering Indigenous People and Local Communities were made by [M. Joseph Itongwa of REPALEAC](#)¹⁹ and [M. Armand Mala of the Rainforest Alliance](#)²⁰. M. Itongwa provided a quick overview of the role of REPALEAC in lobbying on behalf of IPCLs in the region and advocating for improved living conditions for IPCLs that recognise their traditional customs and lifestyles at the same time as contributing to the sustainable management of natural resources. REPALEAC's role in the Congo IP will be to ensure full engagement with IPCLs in every component of the project's work. M. Mala's presentation for the Rainforest Alliance focused specifically on supporting engagement between IPLCs and other stakeholders, including in the private sector, in fulfillment of Component 3. That engagement will concentrate on the cacao sector among others, on facilitating public-private partnerships, and on pursuing deforestation-free production goals.

Dr Tabuna of ECCAS offered M. Itongwa his warm congratulations for his presentation, the key role that REPALEAC has played in promoting the interests of IPLCs in the region, and specifically for the crucial role that REPALEAC had played in the Forum on Indigenous Peoples of Central Africa (FIPAC) becoming an ECCAS executing agency. He said that it represented long-overdue innovation within the region and that it brought important economic and cultural benefits as well. He closed by saying that M. Itongwa had been excessively humble in failing to mention his role in bringing about a vital February 2014 FIPAC meeting in Brazzaville involving three heads of state, saying that it was decisions made at that meeting that had led to the progress seen today.

¹⁸ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YQLP02GGWkzfZB-BX586PfpZzy5twY8/view?usp=sharing>

¹⁹ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f0C3Y371U6qs9WXkP9UPL_NL7qolIuIJ/view?usp=sharing

²⁰ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Sdsaq21v1nS0FR89KuB5ATEk2ni-NvU/view?usp=sharing>

3.6.4. Sustainable vegetable oil development (IUCN Oil Crops Task Force / Liverpool John Moores University)

[Prof Serge Wich of the IUCN Oil Crops Task Force and Liverpool John Moores University](#)²¹ outlined a three-year project to develop a model to optimise the production of vegetable oil (mainly palm oil) in the Congo Basin while minimising environmental and societal costs. Key outputs would be maps of major vegetable oil production areas in the Central African region, divided into smallholder vs industrial-scale where possible, and of areas where oil crop development can best occur to optimize biodiversity protection and food security as well as delivering wider economic benefits. The project would also make recommendations on promoting sustainable oil crop development in the region, including alignment of oil crop development scenarios with the Principles and Criteria of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) as well as methodological recommendations for applying environmental tools such as High Conservation Value Forest assessments and High Carbon Stock assessments.

M. Sinnassamy of GEF proposed to put Prof. Wich in touch with another GEF project in the region whose scope includes sustainable plant oil production — the Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration (FOLUR) Impact Project – in which all African RSPO members are involved. He also pointed out that palm oil production companies are often controlled by financing institutions and not necessarily free to make their own decisions about sustainability. The opportunity might therefore exist to engage with those institutions to encourage adoption of more sustainable production practices by the companies they control.

Regarding smallholder palm oil producers, Prof. Wich agreed that there are opportunities to be explored, for example in relation to palm oil cultivation in an agroforestry setting as part of mixed cropping systems, possibly also including livestock, where palm oil is produced in a system that offers livelihood and biodiversity conservation benefits that are not associated with standard monocultural plantations.

Dr Tabuna of ECCAS introduced his comments by thanking Prof. Wich for his presentation, saying that palm oil was a very sensitive political topic globally and in the Congo Basin. ECCAS, he said, had been discussing sustainable agricultural production in Central Africa with WWF since 2009. That resulted in a regional sustainable palm oil initiative and adoption of a regional palm oil strategy by ministers in Chad in July 2017 that is now being prepared for discussion by heads of state. The strategy includes both agricultural and environmental policy elements, and link to projects already underway in the region including production by smallholders.

The challenge facing the project presented by Prof. Wich, said Dr Tabuna, was therefore how best to feed into and coordinate with that process that has already been underway in the region for more than 12 years. He suggested that the Africa Palm Oil Initiative / APOI²² – which will be meeting in Abidjan later this year – might provide that framework. He added that the APOI in the RoC was working with the private sector on the possibility of expanding palm oil production in grassland / savannah areas as a way of reducing pressure on forests, and working with the European Union, WWF and other on a raft of related topics including agreed definitions of the terms “forest” and “zero deforestation” in the Central African context, how best to address European concerns about imported

²¹ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oetWJIRuadd9pIy_AtuaApeZPuKYy8qRp/view?usp=sharing

²² See <https://partnershipsforforests.com/partnerships-projects/africa-palm-oil-initiative/> and <https://www.tropicalforestalliance.org> for more details.

deforestation, etc. He also welcomed the opportunity to work with Prof. Wich and colleagues on modelling sustainable oil crop production systems that could deliver both economic and biodiversity conservation benefits in the region. He closed by saying that ECCAS and the region very much welcomed the program of activities presented by Prof. Wich and want to work with him to ensure it's fully aligned with the existing initiatives he'd described.

In response, Prof. Wich replied that he agreed that coordination and integration with existing initiatives was absolutely vital. He said he was aware of some of the projects mentioned but not all of them, so asked workshop participants to contact him with that information after the meeting.

3.6.5. Methodology and design of ILUMPs integrating Natural Capital Accounting (USFS and WCMC)

Presentations on two mechanisms to support integrated land use management planning in the Congo IP were made by [Olivier Sene of the US Forest Service](#)²³ and [Raquel Agra and Tanya Payne of the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre](#)²⁴. M. Sene of USFS, first of all, talked about how enhanced land use planning will support sustainable forest management by the Congo IP at transboundary sites, incorporating participatory approaches and Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) tools and principles. The UNEP-WCMC presentation explored in more detail the Natural Capital Accounting Framework, the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting, Ecosystem Accounting, and how such tools can be integrated into land use management planning. USFS and UNEP-WCMC expertise will be available to National Projects in support of Congo IP Component 1 implementation (integrated transboundary land use planning).

In comments later about NCA, Dr Tabuna of ECCAS urged partners to be open-minded in adopting the new practices, saying that expertise is available within the region to support uptake and pointing to a December 2021 OAU meeting in Brazzaville focused on NCA as part of economic diversification within the region and involving ECCAS, FAO, WWF and others.

3.6.6. National capacity-building program to respond to challenges posed by infrastructure projects (IUCN PSG SGA ARRC Task Force)

The final thematic presentation of the workshop, on a capacity-building program to mitigate the impacts of industry on apes, was made by [Dr. Tatyana Humle of the IUCN Primate Specialist Group, Section on Great Apes](#)²⁵. Dr. Humle said that industrial-scale development projects (mining, linear infrastructure, etc.) are one of the main threats to great apes in Central Africa, and outlined the elements of the program she will lead, under the Congo IP, to increase national capacity to mitigate that threat. The approach used by the ARRC Task Force is based on the mitigation hierarchy²⁶, which provides a framework for avoiding, reducing, restoring and potentially offsetting the residual impacts of industrial-scale development. The skills acquired as a result of the ARRC Task Force training, while focused in this instance on great apes, would be transferable to other wildlife taxa and to other contexts. M. Nchoutpouen of COMIFAC wondered whether it would be possible to plan that

²³ https://drive.google.com/file/d/18UjO5gWtBpx4-YBfVJ_8E4adN66U3OCR/view?usp=sharing

²⁴ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_2tB_KSt0ebfOTH3wHji16T1ckJFIEWp/view?usp=sharing

²⁵ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YGWi_t0IOCAXOUV3ituM_t9E7gMwiMK/view?usp=sharing

²⁶ See <https://www.thebiodiversityconsultancy.com/our-work/our-expertise/strategy/mitigation-hierarchy/> for more detailed explanation of the mitigation hierarchy. See also <https://comboprogram.org> for information on application of the mitigation hierarchy at national level in four African countries: Guinea, Madagascar, Mozambique and Uganda.

transferability into the training from the outset. M. Sinnassamy of GEF mentioned that the Arcus Foundation, which provides financial support for the ARRC Taskforce, also supports the application of the mitigation hierarchy more broadly and other activities focused on great ape conservation in the Congo Basin.

3.7. Thematic break-out group discussions

Because of overruns earlier in the day, the time available for break-out discussions in the afternoon was shorter than originally planned. In the event, three groups – on Land Use Planning, Wildlife Crime and IPLCs – were formed with instructions to state their expectations of the UNEP-led Regional Project in supporting effective project implementation in their defined area of focus:

3.7.1. Breakout Group 1: Land Use Planning

Expectations of the UNEP-led Regional Program suggested by the Land Use Planning breakout group to support project implementation were as follows:

1. Promote the sharing of experiences on land use planning models that already exist in the countries or transboundary sites chosen for this program;
2. Support provided on economic development models appropriate for protected areas;
3. Access provided to the technical expertise and standards necessary for the effective implementation of projects on the ground;
4. Capacity building and information sharing mechanisms in place to enable project teams and actors in the field to generate local change;
5. Need of regional bodies (ECCAS, COMIFAC, etc.) to have National Projects as facilitators and entry points for access to data on the different Congo IP landscapes.

There was insufficient time for the group to develop these bullet points further. They should be noted by the Regional Project in relation to the implementation of Component 1 and potentially explored in more detail as the project moves into its implementation phase. The rapporteur for Group 1 was M. Olivier Sene.

3.7.2. Breakout Group 2: Wildlife Crime

Expectations of the UNEP-led Regional Program suggested by the Wildlife Crime breakout group to support project implementation were as follows:

1. Develop joint capacity building activities with MIKE along with TRIDOM and TNS partners;
2. Child Projects must work in collaboration with the MIKE focal points and the relevant government departments in each country;
3. UNODC should participate in the training of officials in the fight against wildlife crime.
4. UNODC should undertake a study on the illegal circulation of arms in cross-border landscapes and activities to combat such trafficking by establishing links with transit and manufacturing countries;
5. Consolidate and update the mapping of wildlife trafficking routes by establishing links with both transit and destination sites;
6. Share information between Congo IP National Projects and partners engaged in the Regional Project;
7. Map actors and their initiatives in the fight against wildlife crime in transboundary landscapes.

There was insufficient time for the group to develop these bullet points further. They should be noted by the Regional Project in relation to the implementation of Component 2 and potentially explored in

more detail as the project moves into its implementation phase. The rapporteur for Group 2 was Ms. Tsayi Tsengue Mouvagha.

3.7.3. Breakout Group 3: Indigenous People and Local Communities

Expectations of the UNEP-led Regional Program suggested by the IPLC breakout group to support project implementation were as follows:

1. Capacity-building of actors and stakeholders in support of project implementation at the sub-regional level and in the targeted challenge areas;
2. Capacity monitoring and evaluation;
3. Establishment of a framework for exchange and communications;
4. Promote economic development, e.g. i) mobilize investors, ii) develop local and regional markets; iii) develop and promote traditional know-how and local ecotourism
5. Add value to national efforts by catalyzing dialogue and cross-border exchanges, sharing experience and assessing the consistency of actions;
6. Develop a holistic approach, in particular by integrating environmental and economic development elements of the project (dams, road infrastructure, village water supply, small processing tools/small production units, etc.);
7. Involve indigenous and local populations in communications by appropriate means and according to the local context of each area.

There was insufficient time for the group to develop these bullet points further. They should be noted by the Regional Project in relation to the implementation of Component 3 and potentially explored in more detail as the project moves into its implementation phase. The rapporteur for Group 3 was M. Joseph Itongwa.



Several speakers at the Congo IP launch workshop participated online. Photo: Johannes Refisch

4. Conclusions, Recommendations and Next Steps

During the workshop, participants reviewed as planned the Congo IP institutional framework and implementation arrangements, including its the governance structure. The role and responsibilities of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) were discussed at a separate meeting on June 2nd. Areas of potential engagement and collaboration across child projects were identified and agreement reached in principle on the need to align strategies, timelines and workplans. The need was discussed for a common communications strategy and agreement reached on a questionnaire as the best way to identify communications needs and communications initiatives already underway. Proposed activities relating to Congo IP Knowledge Management (Component 4) were presented by the Regional and National Projects and reference made to the Results Framework and Results Indicators in relation to project monitoring and evaluation. Synergies and potential partnerships between Regional and National Projects within the Congo IP were one of the main themes of the workshop and the need was recognised for similar links to other donor initiatives in the sub-region.

The anticipated outcomes defined for the workshop (p8) were largely achieved:

4.1. Improved understanding of the Congo IP

As demonstrated above, over the course of the two-day workshop participants were presented with detailed information about the Regional Project, five of the six national projects, a communications vision, and six sets of activities to be implemented by Delivery Partners. The lively discussions that took place after each presentation or set of presentations indicated that they were understood by the majority of participants, along with their broader policy implications. The only national component that could not be presented during the workshop was the one for the Central African Republic. That plan is summarized in this report (p21), available online, and any questions or comments may be addressed to the GEF Focal Point for CAR, M. Lambert Gnapelet, and/or the World Bank Focal Point, M Nyaneba Nkrumah.

Participants provided constructive criticism of project elements when warranted. Attention was drawn to an incomplete list of project partners in the case of one National Project; to the slow recruitment of a new National Project director in a second; to possibly weak government buy-in in a third country; and to a last-minute change in the focus of the National Project in a fourth, with implications for activities in neighboring countries. It was understood as inevitable, however, that program design had progressed at different speeds in different countries.

Common challenges identified across National Projects included establishing multi-sectoral partnerships between government ministries in support of land use planning; uncertainty at this stage about how closer engagement with the private sector will work, for example in relation to smallholder palm oil production and developing financial flows based on carbon markets; and identifying commercially-viable small businesses in local communities that can be nurtured without negative impacts on forests and wildlife.

4.2. Program Steering Committee (PSC)

The meeting that took place on June 2nd after the project inception meeting laid the groundwork for the official first meeting of the PSC, which will take place once terms of reference, composition and rules of procedure have been agreed. That meeting was held and will be reported on separately from the inception meeting.

4.3. Alignment on program approach

Detailed presentations were given and follow-up discussions held about integrated land use management planning (USFS) and the Natural Capital Accounting approach (UNEP-WCMC). The technical support of those bodies for the ILUMP element of the Congo IP (Component 1) will clearly be very important when it comes to project implementation. There was no time for the planned working group discussions about how ILUMP would be taken forward in individual transboundary landscapes. Similarly, information was provided to workshop participants about the project Results Framework and Results Indicators as the basis for monitoring and evaluation, but there was no time to go into details in relation to individual child projects, and indeed that was not planned at this inception workshop.

4.4. Communications vision

The fact that the contract between UNEP and the communications consultant for the Congo IP project had been finalized just shortly before the inception workshop meant that discussions about the vision remained very general. The consultant presented the broad principles that should underpin a communications plan and agreement was reached very quickly with participants that the first step towards development of a detailed plan should be a questionnaire enabling project partners to provide information on their expectations of a future communications plan, existing communications tools and channels already in place, priority audiences and key messages, etc. Following the inception workshop, the communications consultant will coordinate with all child projects as well as with UNEP on the content of the questionnaire.

4.5. Synergies explored between Congo IP national projects and with other initiatives in the Congo Basin

Actual and potential synergies between Congo IP national projects and the regional project were one of the core themes of the inception workshop. All national projects used a common template for their presentations which helped to highlight common themes under the five project components. There were commonalities across all projects including the need to develop good working relationships with IPLCs, where the skills and experience of the REPALEAC network and the Rainforest Alliance may be very helpful, as well as in relation to effective law enforcement and tackling illegal wildlife trade. There was also strong interest from Cameroon in replicating the early warning system for zoonoses developed by WCS in the Republic of Congo. The need was mentioned on several occasions for effective communications within the Congo IP, perhaps in the form of a regular newsletter or virtual electronic noticeboard, in order to identify and build those synergies between projects.

One recurring theme across all discussions was the need for Congo IP activities – especially the thematic projects presented by Delivery Partners on Day 2 – to be properly coordinated with existing initiatives. That point came out particularly strongly under the communications and oil crop agenda items, but was emphasized by Dr Tabuna of ECCAS in other contexts as well.

In contrast, there was relatively little discussion during the workshop of mechanisms to ensure the coordination of the Congo IP with other donor-funded initiatives in the region. Despite the emergence in the past 20-30 years of regional bodies and mechanisms including CAFI, CBFP, CEFDHAC, COMIFAC and ECCAS, such coordination appears only to be possible at the level of individual countries. The planned placement in Kinshasa of UNEP staff involved in Congo Basin projects will at least give the project a presence and voice in the region to coordinate with other existing initiatives, and ideally to engage with new ones to ensure coherence. It should be said, however, that this is not a problem unique to the Congo Basin. All parties concerned should hold themselves and each other responsible

for applying the principles of ownership and alignment in the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Impact, which should have made the lack of coordination between different aid initiatives a thing of the past.

4.6. Summary of conclusions

The following table is included for ease of reference, summarizing actions points from Section 3 above:

Section Reference	Conclusion / Action	Responsibility
3.3.5	Any comments / questions on the CAR National Project to be directed to M. Lambert Gnapelet and / or M. Nyaneba Nkrumah since presentation and discussion not possible during the workshop itself.	M. Gnapelet, workshop participants
3.5	UNEP communications consultant, Kirsten Milhahn, to prepare a questionnaire to understand better the needs of child projects, communications strategies already in place, proposed target audiences, etc.	Ms. Milhahn, workshop participants
3.5	Communications plan to include provision for internal communications between Congo IP child projects	Ms. Milhahn, UNEP
3.6	All thematic programs to coordinate closely with existing national and regional initiatives and institutions	Delivery Partners
3.6.2	Seek opportunities, besides training, to expand zoonotic disease surveillance from northern Congo to other landscapes in the Congo IP	WCS, all partners
3.6.4	Sustainable vegetable oil thematic program to coordinate with existing GEF FOLUR IP and Africa Palm Oil Initiative specifically	Prof. Wich, J-M Sinnassamy, etc.
3.6.6	Seek opportunities to extend mitigation hierarchy training to species besides great apes, and to other contexts	ARRC Task Force, all partners
3.7	UNEP-led Regional Project consider picking up conclusions from breakout group sessions in future meeting	UNEP RP

In terms of next steps, most funding contracts have been finalized already and first tranches disbursed. UNEP is in the process of hiring key staff including those who will be based in Kinshasa, and the first formal meeting of the Project Steering Committee will take place once agreement is reached on terms of reference, composition and rules of procedure.

4.7. Summary remarks by Doreen Robinson, UNEP (end of Day 1)

Following up on the closing discussion at the end of the Day 1 session, Doreen Robinson started by noting the need to ensure complementarity between individual elements in the Congo IP program, and avoid duplication of effort. That will involve sharing workplans between child projects, an effective communications system, and a spirit of collaboration among project partners. Mutual trust among partners is essential.

The role of UNEP in that partnership will be a coordinating and supporting one, which should not be confused with the supervisory role that will be played by GEF as the common donor. UNEP will have project staff based in Kinshasa and will ensure that adaptive management measures are in place in order to respond to changing circumstances on the ground or interventions that are not working.

UNEP's hope is that the role of those staff will evolve over time from coordination to facilitating collaboration between partners.

Looking at the project in its entirety, Ms Robinson suggested that it will be important – as the project moves into its implementation phase – to bear in mind the “three Ps”:

1. **Principles:** there are several core principles that will be key to the project's success. Inclusivity, for example around gender and accessibility, should be engrained in everything that the project does. The project should also be strategic, at the same time as being selective about its interventions: it can't be all things to all people. Where necessary, it should be prepared to play a leadership role on the issues it tackles, at the same time as working collaboratively with other initiatives. It should also embrace the principle of economic growth mentioned by Dr Tabuna in his opening remarks.
2. **Practices and Processes:** in order for general principles to be put into practice, they will need to be reflected in day-to-day project operations and management processes, for example engaging with IPLCs as a matter of course, not as an afterthought or a box-ticking exercise. Ms Robinson's instinct is that more thought will need to be given in coming months to ensuring the good governance of the project on a day-to-day level.
3. **Partnership:** the principle of partnership is at the core of the Congo IP project. That means approaching implementation with a spirit of engagement and collaboration, being realistic about goals and the capacity of individual partners, ensuring the complementarity of roles, and being prepared to take the lead when required.

If the Three Ps are not engrained in the way the Congo IP is managed, money will not be spent effectively.

In closing, Ms Robinson set a challenge both for the second day of the workshop and the implementation phase of the project: she urged workshop participants to be *visionary*, and to match their visions with the *practicality* of their day-to-day operations.

4.8. Summary remarks by Jean-Marc Sinnassamy, GEF

M. Sinnassamy started his remarks by observing that the UNEP Regional Project is one of the seven child projects of the Congo IP alongside the six national components. Those six projects will take place in legally-defined landscapes (“jurisdictions”) located for the most part in transboundary areas. The reason for that transboundary nature is that the program is focused on forested landscapes at the heart of the Congo Basin that are especially rich in carbon and biodiversity as well as being important for indigenous people and local communities.

All countries concerned have made remarkable efforts during the project development phase: the national project in the **Central African Republic** demonstrates the value of forest corridors to improve ecological connectivity; in **Gabon**, government buy-in has been particularly high and the national project will provide a case study for implementing a decentralized land use plan at local level; the **Equatorial Guinea** component is the result of close collaboration between IUCN and the government and is especially strong on capacity building; the emphasis on peatlands of proposed work in the **Republic of Congo** is very significant, as well as synergies with work in neighboring countries and other initiatives managed by UNEP; and the close involvement of GEF focal points and their teams in **Cameroon** and **Congo DRC**, along with coordination with WWF and the private sector, has resulted in

particularly strong national projects. The engagement of everyone in the room up to this point has been vital and will remain so into the implementation phase.

At the same time, there will be challenges to be confronted in all countries and for all projects: the difficulties of inter-sectoral coordination were mentioned several times during the workshop; a siloed approach won't be good enough, and indeed contradicts the principles underlying landscape and natural capital which are at the heart of the Congo IP project. Building those inter-sectoral links is likely to require profound change on the part of institutions in the region, which in turn will depend on political will and realism within those institutions.

M. Sinnassamy noted that UNEP is the Lead Agency both of the Congo IP and of its Regional Project component. This face-to-face inception workshop has been an important milestone in the development of the project. The next time we meet is likely to be in the course of field missions linked to one of the many aspects of project implementation. The success of the RP depends on its partners, both within and beyond the Congo IP. Success will depend too on effective coordination between the regional project and national projects, which depends in turn on well-designed and -implemented communications and knowledge management components. Knowledge exchange between projects of the sort that took place during this workshop will be particularly important, so many thanks to all participants, to the government of Congo DRC as hosts, and to UNEP for bringing everyone together in this very useful face-to-face meeting.

4.9. Closing Speech by Dr Honoré Tabuna, ECCAS

Dr Tabuna started his closing comments by congratulating participants on the collaborative spirit in which the workshop had been conducted, noting that it had become the context not just for professional exchanges but also for forging friendships. He said that significant progress had been made in terms of increased understanding of the Congo IP program and its challenges on multiple levels: legal, diplomatic, operational, territorial, as well as in terms of coordination between project components. He believed that government expectations of the Congo IP had been clarified in many cases, as well as potential complementarity between child projects and the expertise available to those projects from the various partners, such as UNEP-WCMC, who'd presented their programs earlier on Day 2. He echoed Jean-Marc Sinnassamy in emphasizing that it is an Impact Program, and therefore that the most critical challenges – in translating carefully-crafted plans into concrete actions – were yet to come. He looked forward to the meeting the following day to discuss the functioning of the future Project Steering Committee (PSC) that will oversee project implementation. Dr Tabuna underlined the role of regional institutions in supporting the Congo IP and said that ECCAS was particularly well-placed to ensure that the program was aligned with broader sustainable economic development in the sub-region.

Finally, Dr Tabuna thanked the Democratic Republic of Congo for the warm welcome extended to workshop participants, in particular by the Secretary General of the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development who had found time in his busy schedule to attend the meeting and officially open it on the first morning. He declared the workshop closed and wished everyone a safe return home.

Annexe 1: Workshop Agenda

DAY 1 (May 31, 2022)

08.00 – 08.30	Registration	
	Opening	
	<i>Co- Chaired by Dr. Honoré TABUNA, ECCAS Commissioner in Charge of the Environment, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Rural Development, and by Doreen Robinson, Head of Biodiversity and Land at UN Environment Program</i>	
08.30 – 08.45	Introduction of participants	All participants
08.45 – 09.15	Welcome remarks by:	Dr. Honoré TABUNA (ECCAS), CHOUAIBOU NCHOUTPOUEN (COMIFAC), Jean-Marc Sinassamy (GEF), Doreen Robinson (UNEP),
	- ECCAS	
	- COMIFAC	
	- GEF Secretariat	
	- UNEP	
09.15 – 09.25	Welcome Speech, official opening of the workshop: <i>Host Country SG, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable development</i>	tbc
	Scope and Implementation Arrangements of the Congo IP	
	<i>Chaired by Doreen Robinson, Head of Biodiversity & Land at UN Environment Program</i>	
09.25 – 10.00	Congo IP brief, with a focus on the Regional Project: Objectives, Components, institutional framework and delivery structure	Doreen Robinson, UNEP
10.00 – 10:30	Group Photo/Coffee Break	
10.30 – 11.00	Discussion following RP presentation	All participants
11.00 – 12.30	Congo IP brief, with a focus on Country Child Projects: Objectives, Components, institutional framework, implementation arrangements and linkages to the Regional Project	Presentation by each National child project team (indicative outline for the presentation has been shared) each presentation followed by discussion focused on linkages between Regional and National Projects: - DRC Child Project - RoC Child Project - Cameroon Child project

13.30 – 15.00	Congo IP brief, with a focus on Country Child Projects continued: Objectives, Components, institutional framework and implementation arrangements, linkages with RP	Presentation by each National child project team. Each presentation followed by discussion focused on linkages between Regional and National Project. - Gabon Child Project - CAR Child project - Equatorial Guinea Child Project
15.30 – 16.30	Identifying linkages within GEF and to other donor funded programmes	Moderator, with all participants
16.30 – 17.00	Wrap up and closure of Day 1	

DAY 2 (June 1, 2022)

08.30 – 09.30	Discussing a communication vision for the Congo IP	Presentation by Kirsten Milhahn, discussion all participants
09.30 – 12.30	Delivery partners: Outline Plan to support the program. - Enhanced regional capacity for addressing wildlife crime (UNODC + CITES-MIKE) - Strengthening long-term zoonotic disease surveillance systems (WCS) - Empowerment of IPLCs (REPALEAC + Rainforest Alliance) - Sustainable vegetable oil development (IUCN Oil Palm Task Force with University of Liverpool)	Presentation by each partner followed by discussion with National child project teams to discuss alignment of timelines and workplans
13.30 – 14.30	Delivery partners: Outline Plan to support the program. - Methodology and design of ILUMPs integrating Natural Capital accounting (USFS + WCMC) - National Capacity building program to respond to challenges posed by infrastructure projects (IUCN ARRC Task Force)	Presentation by each partner followed by thematic break out groups with National child project teams to discuss alignment of timelines and workplans
14.30 – 15.15	Thematic break out groups discussions	Three main breakout groups to be formed: - Land Use Planning - SFM, Private Sector and IPLCs - wildlife crime/management

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15.30 – 16.30	Thematic break out groups discussions continue, including sub-groups on transboundary landscapes ILUMPs (TNS / TRIDOM / MA-MC)	Breakout groups to be formed: - SFM, Private Sector and IPLCs - wildlife crime/management On Land Use Planning, geographic sub-groups will be established based on transboundary landscapes.
16.30 – 17.00	The Way forward: Wrap up and Closing	Moderator, with final remarks by Dr. Honoré TABUNA, ECCAS



Photo: Wildlife Conservation Society / WCS

Annexe 2: List of Participants

Participants to the workshop included representatives from the GEFSEC, all Congo IP child project leads, partners involved in executing the project activities, and regional and national stakeholders. Individuals marked with an asterisk (*) participated remotely.

First Name(s)	Last Name	Affiliation
Raquel	Agra	UNEP WCMC
Kenneth	Angu	IUCN
Antonio Micha Ondo	Angue	GEF Equatorial Guinea FP
Adamou	Bouhari	UNEP
Morgane	* Cournarie	WCS Congo
Charlotte	* Daniels	UNEP-GRASP
Zacharie Laurent Nzoo	Dongmo	WWF Cameroon
Blandine Moukossi	Eph	CEFDHAC
Louis Roger Essola	Etoa	CEFDHAC
Gilles	Etoga	WWF Cameroon
Alejandra	Euceda	UNODC
Lambert	Gnapelet	GEF Central African Republic FP
Matthew	Hatchwell	UNEP consultant facilitator
Tatanya	* Humle	ARRC Working Group of IUCN SGA
Joseph	Itongwa	REPALEAC
Francis	James	UNDP-Gabon Resident Rep
Cyrille	Kengne	World Bank
Gloria	Kpinsoton	UNDP-AU AfYWL Fellow
Pascal	Locko	MEDD, RoC
William	Mala	Rainforest Alliance
Kirsten	* Milhahn	Communications consultant
Stanislas Stephen	Mouba	UNDP-Gabon Government Rep
Tsayi Tsengue	Mouvagha	Gov't of Gabon
Chouaibou	Nchoutpouen	COMIFAC
Godefroid	Ndaukila	GEF DRC FP
Constant	Ndjassie	CITES-MIKE
Bianca	* Notarbartolo	UNEP-GRASP
Nadège	Nzoyem	Rainforest Alliance
Serge Alain	Okollo	Rainforest Alliance
Stanislas Stephen Mouba	Olouna	GEF GABON FP
Tanya	Payne	UNEP WCMC
Johannes	Refisch	UNEP-GRASP
Doreen	Robinson	UNEP
Goetz	* Schroth	UNDP
Adama	Saidou	WWF Cameroon, Country Project Director
Olivier	Sene	USFS
Jean Marc	Sinnasamy	GEF Secretariat

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Emma
Jonas Kemajou
Honoré
Andre
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* Stokes
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Toham
Unusa
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WWF Cameroon
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GRASP / University of Liverpool



Photo: WWF Cameroon