



**Final Communiqué of the 19th Meeting of Parties
of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership**
5-8 July 2022
Libreville, Gabon

ANNEX 2 – STREAM 2

Stream 2 Session: Biodiversity - Future of Protected Areas in Central Africa

Recommendations:

- (i) *With regard to the alignment of conservation area surfaces with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) target of 30% conservation areas by 2030 (Recommendations for COP15), COMIFAC Member States are invited to:***
- study the social impacts of the 30x30 strategy, particularly on indigenous and local communities;
 - evaluate the opportunity of the 30x30 strategy to formalise community lands as important areas for forest conservation;
 - Increase funding, improve management, and focus the few resources on more limited areas (strategic retreat) to improve the effectiveness of protected area management.
 - Better coordinate various national initiatives/efforts towards the 30x30 goal
- (ii) *With regard to effective management models and sustainable financing of Protected Areas in Central Africa, COMIFAC Member States are invited to***
- adapt management models to their needs and specificities;
 - respect human rights and create coalitions with communities;
 - Seek innovative models to capitalise, recognise and integrate local natural resource governance structures into decision-making and sustainable development;
 - diversify sustainable financing initiatives for protected areas;
 - Improve legal and procedural environment
- (iii) *Concerning institutional capacity building, COMIFAC member states are invited to:***
- Ensure as a priority the functional and operational networking of PA agencies in Central Africa.
 - Define a governance pillar standard to be achieved for at least two or three PA agencies in Central Africa
 - Create a sub-regional centre of excellence for biodiversity in the Central African forest, bringing together all the good practices and regional capitalisation of experience in the management of Protected Areas.

- Strengthen at the relevant sub-regional, national and territorial levels the role of competent territorial authorities in the governance of protected areas and OECM
- Strengthen the capacity of civil society around protected areas to support sustainable development of natural resources.

(iv) *With regard to the development of eco-tourism in Central African protected areas, COMIFAC Member States are encouraged to rapidly develop the various tourism segments within the multiple ecosystems of Central Africa:*

- Improve the business climate in the tourism sector, in particular by granting tourist visas (introduce electronic visas);
- Create road and air infrastructure to facilitate tourist access to protected area complexes;
- Facilitate and secure private investment in accommodation and tourist services in the framework of long-term partnerships,
- offer fiscal advantages to investors in difficult areas and to reinforce the security of goods and people.
- create a sub-regional ecotourism quality label for tourism operators in and around protected areas and other zonal conservation measures (OECM).

(v) *Concerning community development and respect for human rights in and around protected areas in order to allow better integration of protected areas into their economic and social environment and to limit conflicts between stakeholders, local populations and wildlife, COMIFAC Member States are encouraged to:*

- put the human factor at the centre of conservation, including demographic forecasting, and facilitate a sub-regional platform for exchange
- set up a verification mechanism that allows for the joint observation of possible allegations of human rights violations on the one hand, and to decide jointly (Donor, State and other accused actor) on corrective measures on the other hand;
- Capitalise on existing approaches to community development and human rights in and around protected areas.
- Promote respect for the right to free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC) in the development and implementation of biodiversity conservation programmes;
- Adopt a human rights compliance framework for conservation at the appropriate regional level.
- Share knowledge and experience on human-wildlife conflict prevention and management.
- Develop a sub-regional platform to manage human-wildlife conflicts: Countries in Central Africa should consider the issue as urgent for the future of biodiversity, and create a sub-regional platform to share knowledge and experiences in order to have information at the same level.

Libreville, 8 July 2022

The participants