

One Forest Summit – March 1-2, 2023

On November 7th, 2022 in Sharm el-Sheikh, at the occasion of a One Planet high-level event on vital reserves of carbon and biodiversity, President Emmanuel Macron and President Ali Bongo announced that a Summit on the preservation of tropical rainforests will be held in Libreville on the 1st and the 2nd of March 2023.

Tropical rainforests provide an invaluable service both to local populations and to humanity by offering many resources but also by sequestering carbon and hosting biodiversity hotspots. The Summit will be a key moment to move forward both on climate action and biodiversity preservation and to promote North-South solidarity, which is essential to preserve these vital reserves.

1 – A focus on the Congo Basin

The Summit will first strengthen cooperation and regional dialogue on the sustainable management of tropical rainforests of the Congo Basin. It will build on existing initiatives, and will be an opportunity to bring together the partners of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP), which will be facilitated by France and Gabon in 2023.

The main topics of the discussion will be: i) how to increase the payments for the ecosystem services of the tropical rainforests in the Congo basin; ii) how to enhance sustainable use of forest resources in the region, at the benefit of local populations; iii) how to increase access to international finance for forestry States in the Congo basin; iv) how to enhance regional coordination.

2 – Launching a “One Forest Lab”

The summit will also mobilise, within the framework of a One Forest Lab, all the key non-governmental players involved in the protection of tropical rainforests at the scale of the three basins (Congo, Amazonia and Asia) with the objective to provide advice and solutions for voluntary countries willing to protect their rainforests.

This action-oriented focus will be key in the follow-up of COP27 and the launch of “positive conservation partnerships” (PCPs) and of COP15 in Montreal. This One Forest Lab will be focused on three main communities:

1) The scientific community – Forests cover over four billion hectares of the Earth's landmass and around 31 percent of total land area. However, these rich and complex ecosystems remain partly misunderstood. Increasing knowledge and cooperation between rainforest experts in Latin America, Africa and Asia is essential to improve the preservation of forest cover. The One Forest Lab will be an opportunity to bolster scientific cooperation projects spanning across the globe, bringing together scientists from all countries, in order to develop scientific networks in countries with the largest reserves of carbon and biodiversity, and to share the economic gains from biodiversity research more fairly. Finally, we will be able to take stock of the essential work that has already been carried for preserving our ecosystems, particularly in the field of global health, with the PREZODE initiative, which fights the risk of zoonoses.

2) The business community – Forests play a key role in the global economy, supporting many economic activities and providing livelihoods for communities around the globe. The One Forest Lab will be an opportunity to promote best practices for a sustainable use of rainforests, enabling communities to thrive and to protect local know-how, while preserving the vital reserves of carbon and biodiversity captured in these ecosystems. These best practices will include exemplary public policies by forest states but also in consumer markets, as well as commitments from local and international companies, notably through the sourcing of certified and sustainably produced products and the investment in local transformation and training.

3) The financial sector – The One Forest Lab will also aim to accelerate existing initiatives and efforts to increase the remuneration of the ecosystem services coming from the forests, including carbon credits with high environmental value (around 30\$/tCO₂e) and results-based payment mechanisms. A report on innovative mechanisms to address the biodiversity financing needs will be published by a high-level working group led by the Global Environment Facility, in partnership with the One Planet Lab. As businesses and governments are becoming more aware of the necessity to measure the impact of their activity on biodiversity, this exploratory work will focus on the principle of "biodiversity certificates", which should enable investors to finance biodiversity conservation projects.

Finally, **the One Forest Lab will also be an occasion to progress in the implementation of Positive Conservation Partnerships (PCP)** designed as country-based strategies to strengthen the conservation of the most vital reserves of carbon and biodiversity.

These three communities will gather on the 1st of March for a series of ministerial-level side events. On the 2nd of march, they will report to Leaders (a detailed program will follow).