



Congo Basin Forest Partnership

Federal Republic of Germany Facilitation (2020-2021)

Eighth Meeting of the CBFP Governing Council, High-Level Political Dialogue and Related Meetings

December 8-11, 2020, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo

Summary note of the CBFP Governing Council Meeting and related meetings in Kinshasa

Towards a Declaration of the ECCAS / COMIFAC countries and supported by the members of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) for the forests of the Congo Basin and their periphery

Dear Partner,

The Eighth Meeting of the CBFP Governing Council, a High-Level Political Dialogue and related meetings were held in Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo) from 8 to 11 December 2020. These CBFP meetings in Kinshasa were organized by the Federal Republic of Germany Facilitation of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) in close collaboration with the current Presidency of the Commission of Central African Forests (COMIFAC) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The meetings were co-chaired by the Honorable Dr. Christian Ruck, Facilitator of the CBFP, and the current President of COMIFAC, His Excellency Jules Doret Ndong, Minister of Forests and Wildlife of Cameroon, and hosted by His Excellency Claude Nyamugabo Bazibuhe, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, Democratic Republic of Congo.

The CBFP Meetings in Kinshasa were enhanced by the effective presence of High-Level politicians (several Ministers), of High Representatives of ECCAS and COMIFAC, Diplomatic Representations and High Representatives of Technical and Financial Partners. Representatives of the CBFP colleges also took an active part.

150 participants attended in person and approximately 300 virtually at all CBFP and related meetings in Kinshasa.

The Meeting was organized with the financial support of the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the technical support of the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ).

Regarding the draft Declaration of the ECCAS / COMIFAC countries, supported by the members of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) for the forests of the Congo Basin and their periphery, the following conclusion was reached in Kinshasa:

- The thematic workshop of the CBFP colleges, constituted as a technical segment of the experts gathered in Kinshasa, approved, then validated in plenary **through a final public communiqué, a draft Declaration** that was circulated to all participants at the end of the thematic workshop and transferred to the Ministers. Each country of the COMIFAC/ ECCAS space was represented by three thematic experts, 8 experts from the Executive Secretariat of COMIFAC, 2 experts from the ECCAS Commission and the colleges by at least 4 representatives.
- This version of the draft Declaration resulting from the thematic workshops was amended **by the Ministers meeting in the CBFP regional college**. The Ministers asked the CBFP Facilitation to integrate their comments (notably on the issue of "zero deforestation") into the draft Declaration text, and then to transfer the new version of the Draft Declaration to the ECCAS/COMIFAC countries to allow for internal (**inter-sectoral**) consultations in each country. The Ministers asked the CBFP Facilitation to take into account the political and institutional framework **in the implementation** of the Declaration.
- The 8th Meeting of the Governing Council **took note** of the draft Declaration resulting from the workshops and the Ministers' amendments. The Facilitator indicated in the closing Ceremony that as soon as the Ministers' comments will be incorporated the "ball will then be in the court" of the Ministers of the ECCAS/COMIFAC countries for consultations in their countries with a view to adopting the draft declaration as soon as possible given the challenges and the 2021 deadlines.

"The Declaration presented by the Facilitation in Kinshasa is the outcome of a six-month consultation process. In March, all members of all seven colleges received a comprehensive questionnaire on the challenges and proposed solutions for the conservation and sustainable management of the forests of the Congo Basin, accompanied by video conferences with the colleges. After several postponements of the deadline, the answers were compiled by two consultants on behalf of the Facilitation, processed, completed with the help of the Facilitation and sent to all members again. The resulting draft of the Declaration was discussed, commented on, amended and completed in a workshop on 8 and 9 December with the experts from the respective ministries of the COMIFAC countries, the experts from the COMIFAC Executive Office, the experts from the ECCAS Commission and the delegated representatives of the colleges. The resulting version was unanimously adopted by the aforementioned members of the workshop in the evening of 9 December, through a Final Communiqué.

The ministers of the COMIFAC member countries and the representative of the ECCAS discussed the Declaration (during the meeting of the Regional Colleges) and decided to involve other ministries concerned due to the multi-sectoral approach of the text. The facilitation was asked to subsequently adapt the Declaration accordingly and also to take into account the new institutional setting between ECCAS and COMIFAC. Furthermore, as a detail, the statement on zero-deforestation in the Declaration was questioned by the Minutes of the Regional College. The Facilitation will endeavor to implement these guidelines of the Ministers and the ECCAS Commissioner as soon as possible. The Declaration thus released by the ministers should serve as a signal, offer, but also expectation on the part of the countries of the Congo Basin towards the actual negotiations on forests/climate/biodiversity in 2021 - supported by a broad representation from science, civil society, the private sector, environmental INGOs, multilaterals and donors engaged in the partnership." ***Honorable Dr Christian Ruck, Federal Republic of Germany CBFP Facilitator***

Annexes - A summary of the CBFP meetings in Kinshasa and several parallel events of the partners organized throughout the week of the meeting is available below

December 8 to 9, 2020 - Technical segment (Workshop) of experts from ECCAS/COMIFAC countries and CBFP colleges

After the reading and amendments to the foreword of the draft Declaration had been made in the plenary workshop, the work on the examination of the said draft Declaration continued within the Partnership's colleges. The results of the colleges were presented in a plenary session followed by discussions at the end of which the **draft Declaration was validated and approved by the participants**. Available:

- The Final Workshop Communiqué
- The draft Declaration of the countries of the ECCAS / COMIFAC space and supported by the members of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) for the forests of the Congo Basin and their periphery.

10 December in the morning - Meeting of the CBFP Regional College made up of Ministers of the ECCAS/COMIFAC space countries including ECCAS and COMIFAC. (December 10th)

The Regional College of the CBFP, made up of the Ministers of the ECCAS/COMIFAC countries, met in the morning of December 10. **With regard to the draft Declaration of the ECCAS/COMIFAC countries for the forests of the Congo Basin and their periphery, the Ministers:**

- congratulated the experts (Technical Segment) who elaborated and enriched the draft Declaration to be used as a working document as a basis for the preparation of major international meetings;
- expressed concerns about the commitment to pursue the objective of "zero deforestation" in all productive sectors for the countries of Central Africa;
- invited the countries to amend the draft Declaration within their sectoral administrations and transmit their comments to the CBFP Facilitation before its adoption at the regional level;
- invited the CBFP Facilitation to integrate the concerns expressed by the various stakeholders into the draft Declaration and to reframe the draft Declaration in terms of both form and substance;
- invited the CBFP facilitation to take into account the political and institutional framework in the implementation of the Declaration on Forests in Central Africa.

The minutes of the CBFP Regional College signed by the current President of COMIFAC were circulated.

December 10, 2020 afternoon – High-Level Political Dialogue

The High-Level Political Dialogue between the financial partners (meeting within the CBFP Donor College) and the ministers of forests/environment/climate of the Central African countries, the members of COMIFAC and ECCAS (meeting within the Regional College of the CBFP) took place on **December 10, 2020 in the afternoon**. This dialogue focused on financing, the contributions of financial partners in Central Africa and the common positioning of the ECCAS/COMIFAC countries for the forests of the Congo Basin and their periphery in preparation for major international events that require the participation of all Central African countries and their partners in close ranks. Following the various speeches given by representatives of CBFP, Germany, ECCAS, COMIFAC, and the DRC Minister in charge of the environment and forests at the opening of the High-Level Political Dialogue session, also followed by partners online, two brief introductory presentations by CIFOR and OFAC provided an update on the state of funding mobilized for forests and conservation in the Congo Basin and its periphery over the last twelve years. Several financial partners, members of the CBFP, took the floor successively to confirm their commitment to the forests of the Congo Basin. Thus, the EU, Germany, France, Norway, the USA and Belgium, through their high-level representatives, had to recall their longstanding commitments, with a presentation of the main programs and projects financed and/or being implemented in Central Africa. The ECCAS/COMIFAC countries want a fair share of climate financing to be effectively allocated to the subregion, and that the support also contributes to the economic and social development of forest and peripheral areas, including the issue of transhumance whose growing activity is increasing the pressure on the entire northern edge of the Congo Basin forests.

Available:

- The Report of the High-Level Political Dialogue;
- The statements of the financial partners.

December 11, 2020 - 8th Meeting of the CBFP Governing Council

A series of recommendations to ensure the revitalization of our Joint Partnership on key thematic issues, were agreed upon at the 8th CBFP Governing Council Meeting (December 11).

The 8th Governing Council of the CBFP formally proposed to the ECCAS/COMIFAC countries to hold consultations in their respective countries in order to accelerate the process of adoption of the draft Declaration that emerged from Kinshasa. The ball is now in the ministers' court in order to be able to meet the deadline for the next Berlin Tropical Forest Symposium. The Governing Council reiterated the readiness of the German Facilitation to support the states and their CBFP partners to this end.

Available:

- Minutes of the CBFP Governing Council;
- Statement of the CBFP Colleges.

On the sidelines of these meetings, several side events were organized during the week, namely:

December 8, 2020 - second edition of the CBFP Civil Society Day

In parallel to the thematic workshops, the second edition of the CBFP Civil Society Day was held on December 08, 2020. It was organized by the Leaders of the said College, namely, the President of the Regional Steering Committee of the Conference on the Ecosystems of the Central African Humid and Dense Forests (CEFDHAC), His Honorable Majesty Louis Roger Essola Etoa, and the Executive President of the Network of Civil Society Organizations of the Green Economy of Central Africa representing non-affiliated organizations (ROSCEVAC), Mr. Nicaise Moulombi, with the support of CBFP Facilitation. The overall objective of this meeting was to share experiences resulting from the activities carried out by civil society actors, in order to prepare their contribution to the major international meetings to come (notably the ones on climate and biodiversity, the IUCN World Congress and the China-Africa, EU-Africa policy dialogues, etc.), and to question the involvement of civil society actors in the support of certain emerging themes, not without dwelling on the reorganization of the CEFDHAC as the umbrella body for non-state actor organizations specializing in the support of themes related to the implementation of COMIFAC's Convergence Plan.

For more information, please consult the Final Communiqué of the second edition of **the CBFP Civil Society Day**.

December 8, 2020 - First Congo Basin Regional Programs Day

CBFP meetings have always been an opportunity for its partners and related organizations to organize side-events promoting their activities or addressing a theme of interest for the conservation. With the support of the CBFP Facilitator from the Federal Republic of Germany, Honorable Dr. Christian Ruck, the Regional Program ECOFAC 6 was honored to organize the first "Congo Basin Regional Program Day" within the framework of the CBFP on Tuesday, December 8, 2020. The main focus of this Regional Programs Day was on "ECCAS Reform and Natural Resources, Regional Physical Integration, Institutional Architecture, Land Use Planning, Biodiversity Management and Valorization, Landscapes and Territorialities of PAs, Local Communities, Regional and International Technical Cooperation; Eco security in the sub-region, Decision Support Tools, Peatlands, Capacity Building (this is a non-exhaustive list). The presentations also covered, among others, the ECCAS Institutional Reform and the Vision on Natural Resources, the summary presentation of each regional program on the axes of thematic capitalization, harmonization, coordination, synergies and mutualization of interventions, monitoring and programmatic tools. The presentations focused on: ECOFAC VI; SMW (FAO), GIZ on regional training, OFAC (Forest Observatory) and CAFI. Due to technical difficulties, the GEF Impact Program for the Congo Basin could not be presented. At the end of the discussions, it could be noted that ECCAS made presentations on the various structuring programs in the sub-region. They also presented their programmatic axes at the Central African level. These discussions revealed the need to maintain ongoing exchanges among these different programs in order to ensure coherence and coordination of the various donor investments in the subregion, and the need to recognize the major link between operators, beneficiaries and donors through regional programs.

For more information, please read again **the information note on the Regional Programs Day**.

December 9, 2020 - Transhumance Day

In parallel to the thematic workshops, a day on transhumance was held on **December 9**, on the follow-up of the **implementation of the N'Djamena Declaration**, on the need to shape the framework for cross-border collaboration and the dynamics of regional transhumance by taking better account of issues of security, wildlife management, and the increasing degradation of ecosystems due to climate change.

The programmatic logical frameworks, the budgeted roadmaps and the political and diplomatic action sheets of the CBFP Facilitator, the fruits of intensive work carried out from **May to September 2020** by the Leaders and Co-leaders of the Geographical Blocks set up to monitor the implementation of the N'Djamena Declaration are available at the CBFP website. The leaders of these geographical blocks are: Western Block (GIZ - BSB Yamoussa), Central Block (WCS), and Eastern Block (APN).

The transhumance day was organized by the GIZ BSB Yamoussa, the RIOFAC project with the support of the German CBFP Facilitation. It was moderated by Mrs. Bertille Mayen of the GIZ BSB Yamoussa project. Available:

- The summary notes of the day on Transhumance adopted by the participants.
- Re-read the concept note and the agenda of the day on Transhumance.

9 December 2020 - Council of Ministers of the Transboundary Forest Complex the Tri-national Sangha (TNS) - Tri-national Supervision and Arbitration Committee meeting of the Tri-national Supervision and Arbitration Committee of the TNS Tripartite Agreement.

The CTSA is the supreme decision-making body of the TNS. It is composed of the Ministers in charge of Wildlife and Forestry of the participating states and the Permanent Secretary of the Organization for the Conservation of Wildlife in Central Africa (OCFSA) as rapporteur. According to the provisions of the Cooperation Agreement, the CTSA should meet in an ordinary session once every two years, the most recent took place on October 26, 2017 in Douala, Cameroon. This meeting made it possible to achieve the three objectives pursued: Follow up on the resolutions of the last CTSA; designate the members of the Tri-national Scientific Committee (TSC) and designate a new Chairman in office.

For more information, please refer to the **Final Communiqué of the Technical Committee for Monitoring and Arbitration (CTSA), Ministerial Session of the Tri-national Scientific Committee of the Sangha (9 December 2008).**

December 9, 2020 - Second Session of the Council of Ministers of BSB Yamoussa - Tri-National Supervision and Arbitration Committee meeting of the Tri-National Supervision and Arbitration Committee of the N'Djamena Tripartite Agreement between Cameroon, CAR and Chad

Under the presidency of Mr. Jules Doret Ndongo, Minister of Forests and Wildlife of Cameroon and current Chairman of the Tri-National Supervision and Arbitration Committee, the meeting of the Tri-National Supervision and Arbitration Committee of the N'Djamena Tripartite Agreement between Cameroon, the Central African Republic and Chad, relating to the fight against cross-border poaching, abbreviated to "N'Djamena AT-LAB", was held on December 9, 2020 in Kinshasa. The Ministers and Plenipotentiaries of the following participating countries took part in the meeting: Cameroon and the Central African Republic. The Republic of Chad was represented at this meeting by Mrs. Nenodji Madingar, Deputy Technical Director General for Forest Resources, Wildlife and Fisheries. Mrs. Rosalie Matondo, Minister of Forest Economy of the Republic of Congo participated as an observer. The representatives of the following sub-regional institutions, international organizations and donors also took part: The solemn opening ceremony was marked by two speeches: that of Mr. Raymond Ndomba Ngoye, Executive Secretary of COMIFAC and the opening address of Mr. Jules Doret Ndongo, Minister of Forestry and Wildlife of the Republic of Cameroon, current Chairman of the CTSA.

Available: Final communiqué of the CTSA of BSB Yamoussa (December 9).

December 10 in the morning: Extraordinary Council of Ministers of COMIFAC

Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, December 10, 2020 - Following the invitation of the Minister of Forests and Wildlife of Cameroon, current President of the Commission of Central African Forests (COMIFAC) and with the support of the Federal Republic of Germany, Facilitator of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP), an extraordinary session of the Council of Ministers in charge of Forests and Environment of COMIFAC member countries was held on December 10, 2020 in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, on the sidelines of the 8th meeting of the CBFP Governing Council.

This Extraordinary Council of Ministers of COMIFAC had only one item on the agenda, namely the renewal of the statutory staff of the Executive Secretariat of COMIFAC.

Please refer to the **Final Communiqué of the Extraordinary Council of Ministers of COMIFAC (December 10, morning).**

Several other side events were organized by the partners during the week, namely:

- a) **December 4-5, 2020:** ECOFAC VI Steering Committee, and Steering Committee of the National Indicative Programme on the 11th EDF - **ECOFAC VI RTAP**;
- b) **December 7, 2020:** Steering Committee of the RIOFAC project, by **CIFOR/RIOFAC**;
- c) **December 7, 2020:** A Webinar on: "Community-based forestry in Africa in the time of COVID-19: How can we unleash the potential of CBF for livelihoods, biodiversity and climate-resilience in the coming decade" by **FAO, FERN and CBFP**;
- d) **December 9, 2020:** Side Event on Climate Governance and the Achievement of NDCs in Central Africa: Role of the Civil Society? by **FERN - Transparency International**;

- e) **December 10, 2020:** Side Event on Sustainable Forest Management in the DRC: Participatory Approaches for Resilient Development of Local Communities (Kinshasa);
- f) **December 10, 2020:** Side event on experiences of taking into account human rights in the processes of sustainable management of forests and protected areas in the COMIFAC area;
- g) **December 10, 2020:** Side event on community conservation as a solution to the sustainability of conservation actions and local development. The events e to g were **organized by the GIZ green sector projects (Regional Support to COMIFAC, BSB Yamoussa, BGF) in collaboration with COMIFAC and REPALEAC.**
- h) **December 14-16, 2020:** Workshop on the State of Central African Forests 2021 by CIFOR/OFAC.