

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

**ANNEX 1 – STREAM 1 a**

## Stream 1a: Summary of challenges and conditions for successful sustainable land use

Land use planning is seen by several Global Conventions as a basic tool to ensure sustainable development goals (poverty reduction, zero hunger, fight against climate change, responsible consumption and production, biodiversity protection, and reduction of inequalities, among others). These conventions, coupled with national policies, highlight the need for a better planning of sustainable development.

Most of the countries in the sub-region have drafted and adopted new Land Use Acts and initiated a set of land zoning and planning tools to optimise land use. Some are strongly focused on securing high-value forests, while others are much less so.

The Stream 1a Working Group was tasked with identifying the challenges of effective land use planning, and the conditions for success, in the context of a high forest cover region.

The following challenges were identified, although some countries in the Congo Basin have already addressed some of them:

1. *Lack of consensus on TA purpose, processes and tools in some countries, compared to others;*
2. *Lack of clarity regarding the articulation between national development strategies; sectoral plans; spatial and operational planning; and urban and rural planning.*
3. *Decentralised Territorial Authorities (DTAs) with weak capacities, linked to a lack of effective decentralisation in the sub-region.*
4. *Local actors with little information and involvement in the actual planning choices in some countries, but with strong involvement in others.*
5. *Inadequate legal categories and procedures for enforcing permanent forest heritage and securing rural areas for local communities and vulnerable groups*
6. *The current and projected impact of extractive industries (mining and hydrocarbons) and structural investments on deforestation and biodiversity.*

In order to meet these challenges, harmonisation of concepts, tools and practice of land-use planning between actors, and capacity building is needed at national and sub-regional level. It is recommended to:

**A. Create formalised spaces for dialogue and coordination of spatial planning** in order to identify, review and revitalise the frameworks for consultation in this area at local, provincial, regional and national level in each country; and to take stock of their missions and effectiveness in meeting the requirements of sustainable development, decentralisation and inclusive multisectoral representativeness.

- In these formalised spaces for dialogue, it is recommended to (i) analyse all land use planning instruments and clarify the objective, scope, enforceability, horizontal (between sectors) and vertical articulation (between levels of government - central and decentralised) in the spirit of decentralisation; and (ii) share experiences on the preparation and implementation of land use plans, learning from successes and failures.
- Adopt a decentralised approach to the development of land use plans at the local level, guided by national policies and strategies, national and sub-national schemes. sufficiently clear priorities adapted to each jurisdiction's conditions; quality technical tools and analysis and expert facilitation, with a view to reaching a consensus on the sustainable development strategy at the level of each jurisdiction
- Launch a regional programme, which could be translated into country programmes, to support local land use facilitators in regions where land tensions are the greatest, together with specialised decentralised administrations.

**B. Delineate and secure rural areas in order to guarantee their sustainability through models of governance and land tenure security adapted** to each type of activity and stakeholder (state, private sector, communities, vulnerable groups). These models must recognise, secure and ensure the inclusive management of overlapping rights.

**C. Prioritise and incentivise the protection of high value forests** and to do so, it is recommended to:

- Develop a common definition of high value forests in terms of cultural, socio-economic, biodiversity and carbon values, through participatory processes, in order to integrate these areas into land-use plans and policies.
- Prioritise the sustainability of high-value forests by ensuring equitable sharing of costs and benefits between local, national and international stakeholders, including through appropriate, transparent and sustainable financing mechanisms, such as PES and carbon finance.
- When net losses of valuable forests cannot be avoided, develop standards to assess the impacts of structuring public and private investments and develop appropriate environmental and social compensation mechanisms.

We the authors of Impulse Paper and all the members of the working group look forward to working further together as Congo Basin countries to improve and standardise our approaches to land-use planning in order to better achieve the common goals of sustainable development.

**Libreville, 8 July 2022**

**The participants**