



One Forest Summit
Strategic meeting of the international coalition “corridors of biodiversity in Africa”
Wednesday 1st March 2023. 12h00-13h30
Report

Sequence 1 : presentation of the 2023 coalition’s roadmap

Hereunder the document presented and submitted to the participants during the meeting. **In red, adds and / or comments of the participants (to be completed and amended if necessary).**

Introduction and context :

In the context of an unprecedented state of world biodiversity loss, COP15 in Montreal, from 7th to 19th December 2022 revealed to be a major step for the adoption of new international goals and targets for the fight against biodiversity loss.

The international coalition of biodiversity corridors in Africa just emerged in this context on December 16th.

According to the IUCN, Ecological connectivity has been described as **“the unimpeded movement of species and flow of natural processes that sustain life on Earth”**.

Science shows very clearly that protected areas and other conservation zones, when being ecologically connected, proved to be much more efficient than isolated ones.

To fight against habitat degradation, planning decisions that are going to be taken the upcoming years will decide on african fauna’s future: either the containment in big parks with genetical fragmentation of populations, either a connectedness relying on natural migration areas in corridors where it is crucial to organise human-animal cohabitation.

If this subject appears to high on the global Kunming-Montreal biodiversity framework (especially goal 1, targets 2, 3 and 12), it remains insufficiently taken into account within conservation policies and stays very illegal between countries.

Co-led by the French Republic, the Gabonese Republic, the Guinean Republic and the Tanzanian Republic, the coalition proposes a large mobilisation of actors around ecological connectivity issues, taking advantage of the very favourable international context and new opportunities of convergence between climate-biodiversity-desertification issues.

This text is not intended to legally bind the parties, its objective is to define the main operating principles of the coalition as well as its major goals. To do so, the coalition will rely on the following principles and goals:

Coalition goals

The main goals of the coalition are defined as follows :



- **Stakeholders mobilisation and advocacy:** the aim will be to define a strategy of presence and of influence around ecological connectivity issues through the representation of the coalition and its members on international events and summits of interest. The agenda of the strategy for the mobilisation will be defined by the Strategic Committee but they will remain open on the run for informal exchanges between its members.

- **Knowledge sharing and capacity building :** the coalition will rely on a shared cartography that will enable the visualisation of territories of interest that are at stake, the actions that have already been engaged, the corridors to be created and/or in need of funding. This cartography, viewable on the dedicated website and updated on an ongoing basis, will show a compilation of ongoing initiatives and will rely on the inputs of the cartography working group, as well as on the feedback made from field actors. Furthermore, while focusing on the content provided by the The Observatory of Climate Action in Africa, especially on its **non-state climate action annual report** which will be presented at an international level conference (to be determined). Finally, the website will host any document of interest (appearing to be useful for the comprehension of the thematics) and a newsfeed (relevant projects, publications or events of relevance...).

- **Search for financing solutions :** the biodiversity protection, which funding model mostly relies on tourism incomes, has strongly been challenged with the pandemic crisis due to COVID 19. The loss of wealth due to tourism decrease, combined with a decline in donations and public funding is undermining the sustainable management of the parks. In addition to a reduced surveillance of animal passages due to a lack of human resources, local populations linked to tourism have had to face a brutal drop in their incomes with the already known consequences of a resumption of poaching and unreasoned agriculture. In this context, the world of conservation has no choice but to accelerate the search for **new models of protection that generate sustainable incomes**, in connection with local populations and valorizing all the ecosystem services provided by wildlife. In this way, it will also contribute to the **definition of new compensation standards that integrate climate-biodiversity-ecological connectivity co-benefits**. The coalition will aim to initiate a dialogue and debate around these financing solutions in order to make them converge towards the projects identified in the framework of its work.

- **Project development:** the coalition has set its objective of encouraging the development or support of connectivity projects related to its work. Through the working groups and the various steering bodies, the aim will be to encourage the emergence of these projects or to consolidate their existence, primarily by networking stakeholders.

A dedicated website

The initiative aims at developing a dedicated mobilisation, coordination and exchange platform (website with its proper identity) that will provide substance and data on technical, scientific studies as well as innovating financing solutions for the maintenance and recovering of biodiversity in Africa.

This platform will facilitate exchanges between actors and the reinforcement and coherence of actions. It will also aim to examine the question of financing models in greater depth: the mobilisation of part of the climate funds, which are still not well focused on biodiversity issues, will be explored, while paying attention to their sustainability.

In conclusion, the website is:

- A window platform for the coalition and its members
- A capacity-building and content tool



A window platform that serves as :

- A proper graphic identity (with the coalition's logo)
- A tool to highlighting the partners and their commitments to biodiversity
- A tool to clearing information on how to join and operate the coalition

A capacity-building and content tool with:

- A mapping of ecological connectivity issues in Africa, which looks to identify strategic territories, as the actions undertaken and the opportunities for development
- the identification of projects looking for funding, to connect these with potential funders
- the publication of an annual report on the state of action produced by the Observatory of Climate Action in Africa
- The access to any information or news related to the topic: new projects, scientific publications, major events.

The Coalition's modus operandi

The functioning of the coalition is based on the principle of consensus and debate. The governance defined below is intended to be flexible and adaptable.

Any topic or advocacy opportunity can be proposed by the co-chair countries, contributing members and the secretariat.

The working groups define their own modalities of operation with a minimum of two meetings per year.

The Coalition governance

- The Strategic Orientation Committee

It is composed by the co-chair countries, the partner countries, the funders, the representatives of the working groups and the associated experts. Its missions are :

- To determine the roadmap and the strategic orientations of the coalition
- To monitor the progress of its work and projects
- To validate advocacy opportunities and their content
- To propose new members

Its logic is that of dialogue and consensus. It meets at least once a year, supported by existing major events.

- Colleges and working groups

These are constituted according to the major themes of the coalition, they bring together the member structures of the coalition. Their representatives participate in the Strategic Orientation Committee. Their meeting frequency can vary depending on the needs. These working groups are based on the voluntary and contributory members of the coalition but can be opened to qualified persons or structures.

A first list of working groups is proposed as follows:

- Legislation: comparative analysis of legislation and its efficiency. Elaboration of transposable reference frameworks.
- Innovative financing mechanisms: reflection on alternative financing solutions to traditional models with a particular focus on compensation issues
- Mapping: referencing of territories at stake with, in particular, projects requiring financing
- Human/animal cohabitation

The working groups meet and put together their inputs, gathered in a report that will be published on the dedicated website.



- The Scientific Committee

It is composed by independent personalities and experts in charge of guaranteeing the scientific rigour of the process, notably on the information that is published online. It monitors scientific publications and current research. Its members are appointed individually. It is associated with the reflection of the working groups. Its inputs are published on the dedicated website.

Membership in the coalition

Applications for membership are reviewed and processed by the secretariat. The financial participation is proportional to the size of the organisation but has no effect on its position within the coalition. Any contributing structure is thus a stakeholder in the Strategic Orientation Committee and participates in all the coalition's governance bodies. Membership fees are modulated according to the financial capacities of the applicants.

Roadmap 2023

The following work program is proposed:

December 16, 2022 : Official launch of the international coalition "Biodiversity corridors in Africa

2023 :

March 1, 2023 : One Forest Summit: working meeting on the coalition's strategic roadmap. Presentation of new members. Definition of working groups

April to October 2023 :

1) Design and implementation of the dedicated website

2) 1st remote working group meetings:

WG 1: Innovative financing mechanisms : Working group objectives:

- Identification of sustainable financing solutions
- Offset mechanisms
- Convergence of climate and biodiversity finance

WG 2: Mapping: Objectives of the working group:

- Reference the territories at stake with, in particular, the projects requiring financing
- Discussions on relevant and accessible technological solutions

3) Setting up of the Scientific Committee and 1st meeting. Determination of the roadmap and operating procedures

4) Opportunities for advocacy and visibility of the coalition (to be completed during the discussion)

April 2023: CMS African Carnivores Initiative meeting. Uganda

June 2023 (22 and 23): Innovative Finance Summit (Paris)

19.06.2023–23.06.2023: 32nd meeting of the CITES Animals Committee 19-23 June 2023 | Geneva, Geneve, Switzerland

June 2023 (from 21 to 23): interministerial conference on transhumance in Africa (Cameroon)



September 2023 (from 4 to 8): African Climate Week. Nairobi

October 2023: COP 14 of the Convention on Migratory Species (Samarkand. Uzbekistan. October 23 to 28)

November-December 2023: COP 28 (Dubai. 30/11- 12/12)

CBD Intersessional Working Groups (from October 2023 to May 2024): dates to be determined

October 2023

Climate Chance Africa Summit (23-25 to be confirmed): official meeting of the Strategic Orientation Committee

Presentation of the website

Reports of the working groups
Presentation of the annual report on the state of the action
Adoption of the 2024 roadmap

Sequence 2 : preliminary debates on the international coalition's work. "Mapping" and "Innovative financing mechanisms" working groups

Several points were underlined by the participants:

- "Innovative financing mechanisms" working group :

- The importance of including local governments and communities in the compensation mechanisms. International Conservation is working on "offset funds" solutions responsible for redistributing credits (solutions already implemented in Kenya, South Africa, Liberia, Botswana etc.)
 - The work of the coalition has the capacity to influence the system. Importance of joining quickly.
 - Should we go beyond the existing standards by giving a greater place to biodiversity? If so, how? What impact measurements? What information is needed to make the frameworks more reliable?
- It is important to lean on the existing financial mechanisms and make them more fluid so that the existing can converge. We will then be more able to fit into it.

- "Mapping" working group :

- Ecological connectivity is still an emerging topic and varies greatly from country to country. It is mostly about defining a new approach to the human-animal relationship and generating positive externalities for the benefit of the various ecosystems' elements (water, forest, animals, etc.)
- Be careful with the risk of "paper-parks" and with the fact that important effort still remains to be made. Here again, the reality is very different from country to country, but it is important to evaluate the effectiveness of the management of these parks before addressing the issue of their connection.
- It is important to have a "historical" analysis of existing corridors in order to carry out effective work. SIGN has, for example, photos from the 1950s that are usable. Interactive mapping is needed.
- One of the objectives of this working group could be to guide members on best practices. Imagine, in the long run, the publication of "guidelines"? There are many available solutions and replicable projects (cf: the existing Copernicus program in Europe)



- It is important to define upstream and to be precise about the conservation objective and the impact sought through connectivity. Also have a differentiated approach according to the corridors and according to the countries. Thus, the priority would be to define the prior metrics of the corridor in order to include fauna conservation (so that the carbon metric would not be the only metric to be considered).
- The working group should therefore define three or four reference corridors to feed the common reflection. Participants are invited to share their information on these reference corridors.
- It is important to involve other fields of expertise in the reflection. The Social and Solidarity Economy via the GSEF (Global Social Economy Forum) is one example.