

**Joint declaration of the Franco-Gabonese facilitation for the Congo Basin Forest Partnership,
outcome of its 20th Meeting of Parties**

From Kinshasa to Belém: the Congo Basin Forest Partnership mobilises for the forests of Central Africa.

The Congo Basin Meeting of Parties and the Youth Forum, June 2024

Created in 2002, the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) is an international coalition aimed at the conservation and sustainable management of forests. Gathering representatives of governments, regional and international organisations, research bodies, civil society and the private sector, it is a platform for voluntary, agile and ambitious dialogue, aimed at preserving the world's second-largest tropical forest basin. The CBFP works to protect this vital ecosystem in regulating global climate, conserving biodiversity, supplying fresh water and supporting the livelihoods of local communities, while promoting sustainable economic and social development.

In this context, the Franco-Gabonese facilitation, launched in July 2023, has been particularly active in mobilising Congo Basin stakeholders. This innovation in the way the CBFP managed has led to greater mobilisation and closer collaboration among the actors involved in preserving tropical forests. It has proved its efficiency and potential. We are convinced that this co-facilitation will keep bearing its fruits.

The Youth Forum held in prior to the 20th Meeting of Parties(MoP20) was welcomed by all. The mobilisation of Central African Youths out passed our expectations, reflecting as such their commitment and determination to take up environmental challenges. This dynamic and innovative generation incarnates the future of tropical forests.

The 20th Meeting of Parties (MoP20) was a significant moment typified by the presence of eight Congo Basin ministers and more than 600 participants depicting the importance and scale of our partnership. The CBFP has proved once again that it is an indispensable forum for dialogue and cooperation. The diversity and commitment of present stakeholders were a driving force for emulation and fruitful collaboration. Finally, the exemplary cooperation with Congolese authorities greatly contributed to making this meeting a success.

At a time when the end of 2024 will be typified by the Conferences of the Parties (CoPs) to the Three Rio Conventions on climate change, biodiversity and desertification, the meeting of the parties was a first milestone in the collective renewal of ambition for Congo Basin ecosystems. To this end, members of the partnership suggested solutions to jointly prepare for the Belém CoP in Brazil, scheduled for 2025, in order to give the forests of Central Africa all the visibility they deserve.

As such, the thematic workshops organised during MOP20 examined the following issues in greater depth:

1. Supporting the network of protected areas in Central Africa to meet the global Kunming-Montréal objectives for biodiversity;
2. Ensuring effective and sustainable land-use planning, integrating conservation and development needs;

3. Strengthening sustainable value chains in Central Africa by promoting environmentally-friendly economic practices;
4. Speed up the development of innovative funding mechanisms to mobilise additional resources for conservation;
5. Fighting against environmental crimes which are a serious threat to our ecosystems and communities;
6. Increasing scientific and academic cooperation and dialogue, to build local capacities and promote science-based solutions.

Recommendations will be made to help implement the partnership's 2023-2025 roadmap.

As we prepare for Belém, efforts to protect the tropical forests of the Congo Basin must step up in multilateral forums. The Franco-Gabonese facilitation team is fully playing its part and is committed to:

- to reflect, after the *One Forest Youth Forum in Libreville in 2023*, on the prospects of the **CBFP Youth Forum of the Congo Basin**, in order to encourage the long-term involvement of youths in conservation and sustainable development;
- to continue our efforts to **evaluate and strengthen the effectiveness of our partnership**. We will widely share widely results of the study on the assessment and evaluation of the CBFP and take necessary steps to strengthen our effectiveness;
- strengthen our **collaboration with the private sector**, to increase their involvement and contribution to our conservation goals;
- to organise a **regional conference on environmental crime in 2025** to affirm the collective ambition of all the Partnership members to combat this scourge, under the guidance of the States and competent regional organisations,

We reassert our unwavering commitment to protecting the forests of the Congo Basin and to support its people.

We call on all our partners and members to continue and step up their efforts. Co-facilitators of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership.

Kinshasa, June 5, 2024

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