

Civil Society Regional Coalition for Forests and the Environment of the Congo Basin

Meeting of the Reflection Committee on 3 and 5 June 2024 aside the 20th Meeting of the Parties of the CBFP in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo

Final Communiqué

On 3 and 5 June 2024, two meetings of the Regional Reflection Committee of the Civil Society for Congo Basin Forests and Environment were held aside the 20th Meeting of Parties of the CBFP in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. This meeting brought together platforms and Civil Society networks, was open to all platforms and networks in Kinshasa and aimed at building-up reflections to implement the kick-off of the Coalition and major takeaways of the Congo Basin CSO Coalition to the said CBFP Meeting of Parties.

After fruitful and friendly discussions on all items of the agenda, and discussions mainly aimed at implementing coalition entities within a year as adopted and stated in the Declaration and Final Communiqué of the Bujumbura deliberations together with key participation elements of the Coalition to the 20th CBFP Meeting of Parties, the following resolutions have been adopted:

Resolution 1:

The one-year activity roadmap for the implementation of governing entities of the Congo Basin SCO Coalition was adopted with emphasis laid on the need of its funding by the ECOWAS, CEMAC, COMIFAC, CBBF, BDEAC and the CBFP. This roadmap is framed around the following main points:

1. Defining and operationalising the structure and governing mode of the SCO Coalition;
2. Fine-tuning the positioning level of the Coalition of SCOs of the Congo Basin and present it to all stakeholders;
3. Defining the collaboration mode with other stakeholders;
4. Elaborating and operationalising the communication strategy ;
5. Elaborating and operationalising the mobilisation strategy;

Resolution 2:

Mrs Cecile Ndjebet, winner of the Champion of Forest Award was, by consensus and unanimously elected Leader of the Coalition for a one-year transitory period with the following as main duties:

- 1 Representing the coalition States and regional, sub-regional and international institutions level and wherever needed.

- 2 Monitoring processes of institutional development, organisation building and the implementation of CSO Coalition governance entities of the Congo Basin via an inclusive animation of the Reflection Committee and of all Civil Society actors of the Forest and Environment Sector;
- 3 Interacting with governments, institutions and all Parties of sustainable forest ecosystems and environmental concerns of the Congo Basin and giving clear and precise views of SCO Coalitions, in all regards, on current matters, processes and professional, political and diplomatic initiatives while protecting the rightful interests of Congo Basin countries, indigenous people, local communities, women, youths and other vulnerable populations;
- 4 Ensuring that the Coalition guarantees the interests of CSOs as a whole and working towards the mobilisation and funding of the Coalition and CSOs by Congo Basin governments, regional institutions and all other stakeholders, with no conditions or influences on the freedom and autonomy of the Coalition in its stances and actions, and consequently to refuse any contingent funding.

Resolution 3:

The Coalition highlights its active participation to the MoP20 deliberations thanks to the financial support of the French and Gabonese Facilitation for the CBFP to whom it extends her gratitude. The BC CSO Coalition congratulates the governments, ECCAS, COMIFAC, CEFDHAC, the CBFP, the technical and financial partners and all participants to the deliberations for the discussions and sharing of experiences. It takes this opportunity to ask the CBFP to clarify the political and institutional endorsement of the conclusions and recommendations that will emerge from its deliberations.

In closing its deliberations, the CSO Coalition expressed its deep concern about the scale and impact of the Congo Basin's position as the world's largest carbon sink, and the fact that it receives less than 4% of the funding allocated to each of the other two tropical forest basins (Amazonia and South-East Asia). To this end, and in view of the vital economic stakes for Central Africa, it reiterates the urgent need to hold a meeting to clarify the institutional roles and responsibilities of stakeholders. It therefore calls on representatives of all stakeholders to take part in this meeting, to be included as a side event, and for the presentation of CSOs' vision of a paradigm shift in the forest economy proper to the Congo Basin.

Done in Kinshasa on June 5, 2024

Participant(s)