

CBFP Session Summary

How to ensure that biodiversity is adequately represented in the economic planning systems employed by the Congo Basin countries

24 October 2017

Key words: Biodiversity and Economic planning cost benefit analysis, leapfrogging to a restorative economy. Opportunity Cost for biodiversity damage, adequate tool for capturing economic value of the biodiversity, making the economic case for biodiversity conservation and restoration of ecosystems, country development rationale and biodiversity stake, transformational economic model and biodiversity deliveries (trade off, PES, offset and business corporates, resource corridors and aggregated offsets etc).

Rationale: The focus of this session is to have a technical discussion on how CBFP partners can influence economic decision makers to take account of biodiversity information to stimulate the transition development models that safeguard biodiversity and restore ecological systems important to people. The conversation will start with a normative approach...what are the tangible benefits from biodiversity (e.g. revenue, jobs, products)? And incorporate insights from teams who are applying/implementing to ground the discussions. Focus will be on spatially limited and/or sectoral areas that allow specificity of approaches to be explored.

Expected Output: A road map for embedding biodiversity priorities in development plans at national, sub-national and/or sectoral levels with specific recommended actions for the range of actors implicated in advancing the agenda of mainstreaming biodiversity into economic planning in the region.

Definition of the Question

The Congo Basin contains the second largest tropical forest after the Amazon extending over six countries: Cameroon, Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Central Africa Republic (CAR) and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Its biodiversity and ecosystems constitute the second largest area of contiguous tropical forest in the world. The region harbors the most diverse assemblage of plants and animals in Africa including over 400 mammal species, more than 1,000 bird species, and likely over 10,000 plant species of which some 3,000 are endemic. Coupled with its global importance for the regulation of the greenhouse gas and regulation of regional and local weather patterns; It provides a critically important resource base for the livelihoods and well-being of tens of millions of people both in Africa and beyond.

Faced with the growing population, the countries of the Congo Basin are developing future strategies for economic diversification, and poverty reduction to sustain its future development and growing population. Policies are developed based on the development of

key sectors, such as infrastructure, agriculture, forestry or mining. However economic planning is going forward in the region without a great deal of interest in/awareness of biodiversity or ecosystems. Biodiversity and ecosystem services are not valued among economic actors/decision makers in the Basin, yet contribute significantly to the economic output of the region. Conservation practitioners have invested significant effort in understanding the spatial context of biodiversity priorities in the region, and understanding the threats posed to those priorities from economic development priorities emerging in the region. And though biodiversity in the region has shown to have a demonstrably economic and livelihood value, especially for the poorest, its importance has been persistently marginalized by the very economic policies that are tied to strengthening livelihoods, reducing poverty and achieving sustainable socio-economic development.

There is, however, an appetite among political decision makers and leaders in the regional leaders (ECCAS and Ministers) to understand the economic values of biodiversity and ecosystem services including their contributions to the national economies and development plans. And thus there is a renewed call for information. Government Minister's in charge of biodiversity are under pressure to demonstrate the income generation potential of biodiversity, and the economic risk to other national economic sectors of not accounting for and managing biodiversity and ecosystems. And this is the time!

Recently, there are emerging initiatives from Congo basin governments of biodiversity mainstreaming in national planning documents. Rwanda's **EDPRS** *Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy*, and **Green Gabon** are examples of how governments are starting to incorporate biodiversity and ecosystems into economic and development planning. Others, such as those involved in the **African Leadership Group on Biodiversity Mainstreaming (ALG)** programme, have worked to integrate development planning into the revision of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) in order to position biodiversity more centrally into National Development Plans (NPDs). The ALG has also worked to promote the integration of biodiversity into national economic or sectoral development plans, and national Budgeting processes and monitoring systems. Lessons from the experiences can provide insight to other CBFP partners.

There remain barriers to making integration happen. Though biodiversity could have a link with the economic development, there has not been enough progress in mainstreaming biodiversity into economic development processes, plans or implementation. The ALG methodology is innovative and promising in overcoming these hurdles. ALG approach consisted of creating champions for biodiversity mainstreaming within countries, including people in biodiversity, finance and planning authorities who are now coordinating and helping to make a business cases for biodiversity, peer reviews of biodiversity mainstreaming between countries; in-country training of key mainstreaming stakeholders including biodiversity, finance and planning and sector authorities; co-development and testing of tools and guidance to support mainstreaming; review of experiences and lessons learnt; developing

measures of mainstreaming progress and success. This has produced tangible results in their respective countries of integration of biodiversity into policies and regulations, National Development Plan and revised NBSAPs. A guidance document based on the experience of the ALG has been produced and it provides important iterative elements and tasks on how the ALG approach can be reproduced in African context and elsewhere. This guidance could be used to guide Congo Basin's governments. Key ingredients for biodiversity mainstreaming success include strong leadership, continued guidance and political steering, linking successful mainstreaming examples to real political agendas, building ownership within other sectors and developing practical tools for mainstreaming that can be tailored to different context

As a partnership invested in the sustainable development of the Congo Basin, CBFP partners are well placed to articulate the value of biodiversity and ecosystem services in meaningful ways to economic decision makers, to map out barriers to getting biodiversity and ecosystem services embedded into economic decisions, and to develop solutions to address these barriers and guide economic actors in processes to ensure that biodiversity risks and opportunities are taken into account in decision making processes and managed more effectively for both short-term and long term benefits.

This session will bring together members of the 7 Colleges of the Partnership including, importantly, government representatives, practitioners from both the biodiversity and development co-operation communities, international scientific communities and other experts to meet, exchange information and experience, analyze approaches, and share insights on the opportunities and challenges to mainstreaming biodiversity into development policies and planning in Congo Basin countries.

Session timing: 1 day – Thursday 26th October 2017

Session Outputs: The main output is a road map for embedding biodiversity priorities in development plans at national, sub-national and/or sectoral levels with specific recommended actions for the range of actors implicated in advancing the agenda of mainstreaming biodiversity into economic planning in the region. The road map will include technical and political recommendations that constitute a menu of options for actors to effect change primarily at the national and sectoral levels. This roadmap will contribute to the medium-term priorities (2018-2022) for the Partnership whereby CBFP becomes a vehicle, as a resource for others to tap into, optimally mobilise CBFP in this transitional economy (targeting the governance reform...how do we use the power of the Council structure of the CBFP for influencing a transitional economy). An outline of how to use the diversity of the partnership to deliver on the diversity of actions that need to happen to achieve the goal, and use the CBFP as the partnership itself to create the shared vision, alignment in action, and complementarity in roles. Elements include land management, biodiversity management, and policy/advocacy strategies.

Session inputs: Description of the issue/definition of the issue, national/subnational examples, visions, open questions for discussion.

Session objectives:

1. Understand existing barriers and opportunities for integrating biodiversity into economic planning and seed strategic alliances for engaging priority economic planning processes.
2. Build a shared understanding among CBFP of the key economic plans likely to impact on biodiversity priorities and of the benefits taking biodiversity into account in the Congo Basin (resilience, economic opportunity, ecological integrity).
3. Engage influencers to understand the perception of biodiversity conservation in corporate planning world (mining, infrastructure, Agro plantation etc) and explore innovative mechanisms that structurally embed the biodiversity conservation stake while planning for economic development.

A vision for the region to shift from the current economic model to a transitional economic model that is restorative.

Co-organisers/key contributors: AWF, WRI, IIED, ALG, World Bank, COMIFAC

0900-0905	Welcome and settling-in Charly Facheux – AWF / Chair of Morning Session
0905-0920	Introduction to the Session: Presentation of the background paper and overview of session objectives, structure and expected output. Jean Maurice Muneza WRI
0920-0940	Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Economic Planning Processes Abisha Mapendembe - UNEP-WCMC
0940-1010	Keynote - Vision of Success Ronald Kaggwa - environmental economist who was an economist in the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) in Uganda and now has been mainstreamed to be the Head Production and Trade Planning National Planning Authority (NPA). His work aims to show how biodiversity contributes to the country's national development goals, including employment, poverty reduction and export revenue. Ronald thinks that a main challenge for the NBSAP revision process is to convince policy and decision makers to view biodiversity as an economic asset. They must take it seriously and put in place supportive policies at macro and sectoral levels, with sufficient budget to back this up.
1010-1030	Facilitated Roundtable Discussion on Experiences from the Congo Basin Call on National Focal Points. What are the experiences of integrating biodiversity into economic and development planning? Where are the opportunities in the national, sub-national and sectoral planning processes? Charly Facheux – AWF

<i>Coffee break</i>	
1100-1115	<p>Reflections from CEEAC/ECCAS Honore Tabuna CEEAC/ECCAS</p> <p>Reflections from COMIFAC TBD COMIFAC</p>
1115-1145	<p>Reflections from Tri Sanga landscape Endamana Dominique – IUCN</p>
1145-1215	<p>Africa Leadership Group Lessons, Tools and Approaches Abisha Mapendembe - UNEP-WCMC</p>
1215-1230	<p>Overview of the Afternoon Working Groups Participants are asked to divide into working groups to discuss a framework of questions leading to a consolidated road map for the CBFP. Manfred Epanda – AWF</p>
<i>Lunch</i>	
1400	<p>Welcoming back and moving to working sessions Jean Maurice Muneza WRI / Chair of Afternoon Session</p>
1405-1515	<p>Country-focused working group session Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and São Tomé and Príncipe <i>Use the Strategic Diagnostic Tool from the ALG process</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the economic decision-making processes that are a priority to engage bringing a biodiversity perspective (national and sub-national levels)? Examples include national development plan review, green growth plan development, agriculture sector strategy formulation, public expenditure review, REDD strategy, or tourism - Who ‘owns’ the priority processes? Which ministry/decision-making body? - Who are key stakeholders in the processes? Other ministries, Private sector or trade associations, International bodies, etc. - What are the entry points and timelines for engaging? - Next steps – who needs to do what?
1515-1630	<p>Sectoral focused working group sessions Forestry, agriculture, mining/oil and gas, power, roads/rails</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who are the main decision-makers determining strategy? - Who are the main implementers? Financiers? - Focusing on the sectoral processes identified in the country sessions, what kind of biodiversity information is most important to convey to those involved in the sector programs/plans/projects? - Next steps – who needs to do what?
<i>Coffee break</i>	
1630-1730	<p>Plenary report back of working groups and Road map elements</p>

	Jean Maurice Muneza WRI
1730-1800	Roundtable reflections on priorities and next steps Charly Facheux – AWF