



## WRI engagement with civil society in the Congo Basin

*WRI will be posting periodic updates on the CARPE website regarding the SCAEMPS program it is leading within the third phase of CARPE. This update provides a brief description of how SCAEMPS works with civil society. Future updates will highlight specific activities, success stories and lessons learned.*

The 5 year, USAID-CARPE 3 funded program “Strengthening Central Africa Environmental Management and Policy Support (SCAEMPS)” was launched in February 2014 and is implemented by World Resources Institute (WRI) in collaboration with WWF, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), and *Le Conseil pour la Défense Environnementale par la Légimité et la Traçabilité* (CODELT). SCAEMPS is implemented nationally in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Republic of Congo (ROC).

Through the SCAEMPS program, WRI will contribute to achieving the overall CARPE goal – the ecological integrity of the humid forest ecosystem of the Congo Basin is maintained – **by supporting policy reform and by building capacity at multiple levels to monitor forest cover change, biodiversity, and policy implementation.** To achieve these goals, WRI works with a wide range of stakeholders including government, civil society, CARPE partners, private sector and other donor funded initiatives. Working closely with national civil society is absolutely essential to achieving program objectives.

### How does WRI-SCAEMPS work with civil society in the region?

WRI and civil society work together to improve governance of natural resources through national policy reform and monitoring. In fact, the majority of SCAEMPS policy related work will be driven by national civil society with support from WRI. WRI will work with civil society through:

1. **Long term partnerships** with CSOs that work closely with WRI and other CARPE partners to identify policy reform priorities, develop and implement reform strategies, and help develop systems to monitor policy implementation for the duration of SCAEMPS. In DRC, *Le Conseil pour la Défense Environnementale par la Légimité et la Traçabilité* (CODELT) is currently working with WRI on policy reform related to protected areas, land use planning, extractive industries, and REDD+.
2. **Short and medium-term contracts** with CSOs to tackle specific thematic areas in the SCAEMPS program. For example, WRI is currently exploring sub-contracts with the mandated Independent Monitors of Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (IM-FLEG) in DRC and ROC to conduct investigations, help develop the Forest Transparency Initiative (FTI)<sup>1</sup> and ensure that forest sector policy reform is well informed.
3. **Collaboration and capacity building** – WRI and civil society partners will engage with other CSOs and national civil society platforms to ensure strategy harmonization and maximum impact. WRI will also support civil society through technical trainings to address specific

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<sup>1</sup> <http://alpha.foresttransparency.org/en/home>.



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identified needs that respond to the overall SCAEMPS objectives, such as trainings on using Global Forest Watch to monitor land cover change and monitor extractive industries.

### **How does WRI-SCAEMPS decide which CSOs to work with?**

In lieu of a competitive small grants program, WRI will identify and support CSOs to develop targeted projects that contribute to achieving SCAEMPS objectives. This approach will ensure that WRI is supporting a range of civil society groups in DRC and ROC, while ensuring that their work contributes to the broader CARPE strategy. WRI identifies collaborating CSOs through: consultations with CARPE partners, civil society platforms, and other actors; evaluations of CSO capacity based on work experience and demonstrated expertise; and expressions of genuine interest from CSOs.

### **How can CSOs express their interest in working with WRI?**

CSOs are encouraged to contact WRI directly to explore potential collaboration. In ROC, the regional policy expert, Adonis Milol ([AMilol@wri.org](mailto:AMilol@wri.org)), organized a workshop in January attended by over 20 representatives from civil society to explore civil society’s current priorities and, more specifically, their role in policy reform and monitoring related to national land use planning. Adonis will be following up with civil society in Brazzaville in February to develop a strategy and work plan.

In DRC, the national policy expert, Felix Lilakako ([FLilakako@wri.org](mailto:FLilakako@wri.org)), is currently working closely with CODELT on developing and implementing policy reform strategies related to four sectors: REDD+, protected areas, extractive industries, and land use planning. Institutional mapping is underway to identify key stakeholders of each sector. If your organization is involved with policy reform or monitoring related to one or more of these sectors, please contact Mr. Lilakako.

### **Global Forest Watch Small Grant Fund**

While SCAEMPS does not manage a competitive small grants program, WRI’s Global Forest Watch (GFW) program is currently operating a civil society Small Grants Fund that includes the Congo Basin region. [Applications are now being accepted for the 2015 GFW Small Grants Fund](#). Selected organizations will be provided a grant between \$10,000 and \$40,000 USD for a short-term project that transforms Global Forest Watch information into action. The fund is open to civil society organizations working to strengthen local forest management and conservation practices, conduct evidence-based advocacy and campaigning, and/or promote transparency in the forest sector. The submission deadline is March 1, 2015. [Learn more about the Small Grants Fund and apply now](#).