

REPUBLIC OF CONGO FOREST GOVERNANCE FORUM – CONCEPT NOTE

Project Name: Citizen Voices for Change – Congo Basin Forest Monitoring Project
Project Funding: the European Commission (EC); the UK Department for International Development (DFID) Forest Governance, Markets and Climate (FGMC) programme

Introduction and Objectives

This concept note outlines the aims and objectives, and indicative themes for the Republic of Congo regional Forest Governance Forum (FGF), which will be held on the 30th - 31st October 2018 in Brazzaville.

This event will be the 1st under the CV4C project, but the 11th under a series of similar international conferences implemented under the Centre for International Development and Training (CIDT)'s previous projects 'Strengthening African Forest Governance' (SAFG) and the [EU-CFPR project](#). The CV4C project is supported by the European Union and DFID and is implemented in Cameroon, Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, and Republic of Congo. The project is led by CIDT, University of Wolverhampton, working in partnership with Centre pour l'Information environnementale et le Développement Durable (CIEDD), Centre pour l'Environnement et le Développement (CED) and Forêts et Développement Rural (FODER) Cameroon, Observatoire de la Gouvernance Forestière (OGF) in DRC, Brainforest in Gabon, Cercle d'Appui à la Gestion Durable de Forêts (CAGDF) in Republic of Congo including Field Legality Advisory Group (FLAG) as the regional partner and World Resources Institute (WRI) as the international partner.

The FGF, modelled along the well-known **Chatham House** bi-annual **Illegal Logging Update** meetings *aims* to contribute to the wider aims of the CV4C project through experience sharing, networking and raising awareness, and raising the profile of FLEGT-VPA, land use change, REDD+, participatory forestry and other relevant policy processes in the Congo Basin. Information on the previous FGFs is available at <http://forestgovernanceforum.com/>. More information is also available on the [CIDT](#) website.

The 11th edition of the FGF is organised in collaboration with the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) as part of the CBFP Streams on forest governance, REDD+ and Land Use in preparation for the high level conference of parties meeting scheduled for the week of the 26th of November, 2018 in Brussels. It is expected that recommendations from the forum will feed into and inform the political level negotiations between parties.

The **objective** of the FGF is **to provide a free, deliberative and open space for the exchange of information, experiences, lessons, ideas and up to date research around Forest Governance, FLEGT-VPAs, REDD+, participatory forestry, land use and other initiatives seeking to improve forest governance and combat illegal logging, deforestation and forest degradation.**

Issues relating to private sector engagement, forest conversion, domestic timber markets, private sector actions, independent monitoring, indigenous peoples' rights, and participation among others will also be discussed at this regional forum.

Organisation

Approximately 200 participants will be invited by the organisers and their partners. These participants will be drawn from government, civil society, the private sector, forest-dependent communities, indigenous peoples, international organisations, the academic community, the media and donor organisations from Republic of Congo, the region and internationally. The regional event will aim to work with international partners and other projects to bring international delegations to participate in the conference and to share experiences, thus enriching the global FLEGT and REDD+ processes.



The event will focus on experience-sharing and documenting of lessons learned on regional forest governance, land use and REDD+ processes and, will include looking at developments that lie ahead for the future. The outcome of the event will be a conference report which captures the results of the Q&As at session level and the findings from the working groups, with some recommendations for the CBFP conference of parties in Brussels amongst others.

The RoC FGF will comprise of three 1.5 hour sessions on each day, with three presentations in each session followed by 45 minutes of open audience Q&As. There will be opportunities for networking and participant interaction including structured working group sessions as well.

A national **Forest Governance Forum Steering Group** will be set up to spearhead the organisation and preparation of this Forest Governance Forum. The national Steering Group will be made up of the following members, representing the key stakeholder groups;

- Ministries of Forests, water, wildlife and environment
- Civil society
- Private sector (represented by 2 members)
- Communities
- Donors and international partners (e.g EC Delegation, World Bank, AFD, FAO etc)
- CV4C project

The national Steering Group will coordinate all FGF preparation activities including the successful delivery of the forum. Their main role will include;

- On behalf of their constituents highlighting the issues to be included in the agenda and thematic sessions
- Publicising the event amongst their constituents to ensure maximum visibility
- Advising the FGF/project organisers on the general organisation of the event
- Liaising with the FGF Coordinator and team on all FGF preparatory issues
- Recommending and inviting on behalf of the organisers high level speakers for the event e.g. opening and closing remarks
- Agreeing on the final agenda for the event

Indicative Themes

The indicative themes for the Congo Brazzaville - Regional Forest Governance Forum are;

- Forest legislative processes in the Congo Basin
- Transparency in the forest sector – implementation of the transparency annex
- Participatory Forestry, Tenure and rights of Indigenous peoples
- REDD+, zero deforestation, agro-business
- Synergies between FLEGT, REDD+ and land use governance
- Independent Forest Monitoring/Observation
- Conversion Timber
- Participation of stakeholders in FLEGT, REDD+ and land use:
 - Private sector (formal and informal)
 - Forest communities and Indigenous peoples
 - Issues of representation
 - Civil society participation
- Actions of the private sector to promote good governance, legality, certification
- Domestic timber market
- The role of the media in promoting good forest governance
- Benefit sharing and local development related to forests
- The role of lawmakers and inter-ministerial coordination
- Gender in forest governance



A detailed agenda for the event will be distributed in late **October (30/10/2018 – 1/11/2018 - date tbc)**. In the meantime for more information, comments and suggestions please contact the organisers;

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