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CBFP 2013 -2015 AMERICAN FACILITATION IS WORKING HARD



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Edito

CONSENSUS

The history of national and international natural resource management has resulted in sound agreements, policies, programs, work plans, roadmaps and projects developed by consensus and applied carefully while adjusted to specific conditions in areas of intervention as important success factors. Whenever the principle of the fittest is applied by an actor improperly to impose his ideas on those of other actors, mistrust results. Partnership or participative management is not only a constellation of institutions or actors involved in the same cause. It's essentially based on the principle of reasonable consensus. For the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP), the culture of consensus has proved to be one of the basic conditions of a credible and successful partnership. Witness the last Canadian facilitation.

The commitment of the U.S. facilitation "to build its work plan on the basis of a consensus that has been agreed with the partners," according to the new American facilitator, holds a promising future for the CBFP.

Similarly, the case of Gabon, which seeks to become "a world leader in certified tropical timber, supported by an innovative industry" through a process that is participatory is exemplary. Indeed, the ban of export of timber logs to promote local processing seems to be unanimously supported by all stakeholders.

The recent meeting of the COMIFAC national coordinators, the creation of a fund for green economy in Central Africa, not to mention the fourth conference for "Protected Areas Days" in Central Africa are all part of growing momentum and dynamism.

Obviously, reasonable consensus is still necessary as an important ingredient in any participatory, collaborative and integrated environmental management.

After scheduled appointments and holidays in October, we will continue to inform you through our website and the info-alert Communicators' Network for the Environment in Central Africa (RECEAC). ■

Raoul SIEMENI



TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR NATIONAL COORDINATORS COMIFAC



Family photo

Credit Photo: COMIFAC

The Commission of Central African Forests (COMIFAC) with the support of its partners GIZ (German cooperation), JICA (Japan International Cooperation) and the Ministry of Environment and Fisheries Resources of Chad, held from Monday 1st to Thursday, July 4, 2013, the workshop capacity of COMIFAC National Coordinators (CNC) for Monitoring and Evaluation in N'Djamena.

The main objective of this workshop was to strengthen the dynamic exchange between the CNC and the Executive Secretariat of COMIFAC, seeking synergy in their overall mission and their mastery of evaluation tools and monitoring. The meeting in N'Djamena was attended by all national coordinators and their deputies of the ten countries of COMIFAC, except Rwanda. The opening ceremony was chaired by His Excellency Amir ADOUDOU ARTINE, Minister of Pastoral Development and Animal Production, representing the Minister of the Environment and Water Resources, who could not be present. The ceremony took place in the presence of Madam Secretary General of the Ministry of Environment and Fishery Resources, the

Executive Secretary of COMIFAC and the new U.S. CBFP Facilitator. "We can affirm that the choice to hold this event in N'Djamena, for the national coordination teams of all COMIFAC member states is not a coincidence. Indeed, with its position straddling dry and humid Africa, Chad and its capital N'Djamena seem the best possible choice by the organizers to accommodate these discussions, as this will without a doubt give a shared experience to participants in this area of bio-climatic transition "said the Minister of DPPA at the opening of the workshop. The opening ceremony was also marked by the speech of U.S. Facilitator of the CBFP, Mr. Matthew CASSETTA who was impressed by the development of capacities in COMIFAC as manifested by the establishment of functional and operational coordination within the COMIFAC countries. He encouraged them to exercise leadership for the effective implementation of the Convergence Plan. He also affirmed that the CBFP facilitation will continue to support COMIFAC as a central tenet of the partnership. In this way, all facilitation activities will include and contribute to strengthening of COMIFAC, especially the network of national coordinators. In presenting the roadmap of the U.S.-led facilitation of



Award trophy

Credit Photo: COMIFAC

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Field visit

CBFP, Mr. CASSETTA noted that: "The vision and aim of the facilitation over the next two years (2013-2015) will be to promote African leadership to address critical threats facing the countries of Central Africa."

For three days, participants learned to better plan their activities according to the GAR approach and use the dashboard for the effective monitoring of their PTA. At the end of this training, all coordinators were satisfied with the quality of the training and how the work should be carried out. A certificate of participation was given to each participant, as well as COMIFAC banner for each office of the CNC.

On the sidelines of the workshop, participants engaged in the planting of trees at the site in the green belt of N'Djamena. This planting ceremony was held on July

4th, to support the Chadian government's fight against desertification and climate change. Chad's Minister of the Environment and Water Resources and colleagues took part in the ceremony, joined by members of GTBAC (Biodiversity Working Group of Central Africa), which also met in N'Djamena for their seventeenth session.

"I hope that all present, if you have occasion to return to our country, will be assured that the tree you planted has indeed grown tall. Because when the tree has grown that you can say you have helped to reduce the effects of climate change in Chad. We also need to expand this effort as a key activity of COMIFAC" concluded Mr. Raymond MBITIKON, Executive Secretary of COMIFAC. ■

Comifac.org

COMIFAC – GABON : THE NATIONAL COORDINATING SHARING ACQUIRED KNOWLEDGE



City of N'Djamena, Chad, hosted, from 1 to 3 July, the workshop of the National Coordinating COMIFAC monitoring and evaluation focused on results. The conclusions of this meeting were the focus of the debriefing session held on July 9, 2013 in Gabon, under the auspices of the Minister of Waters and Forests, Mr. Gabriel TCHANGO.

Six days after the foundation of the training workshop of COMIFAC National Coordinating monitoring and evaluation focused on results, which were held in N'Djamena, Chad, gentlemen Raymond NDOMBANGOYE and Jacques MOULOUGOU respectively Gabon National Coordinator and Deputy Coordinator of this institution, successively presented during the restitution meeting held on July 9 conclusions of such work. Chaired by the Minister of Forestry of Gabon, Mr. Gabriel TCHANGO, this meeting focused exclusively on the presentation of COMIFAC, operations and missions of national coordination. The annual work plan, fiscal year 2014 for the coordination and presentation tool for monitoring and evaluation activities of the national coordination were also on the menu for this meeting to be held in the conference room of the Office of the Minister and consolidated several administrative entities in charge of issues related to forest and aquatic ecosystems. After describing the salient features of the history of the COMIFAC Raymond NDOMBANGOYE presented the annual work plan for

the account of the year of 2014 that coordination had to run. For his part, Mr. Jacques MOULOUGOU dwelt on the presentation tool for monitoring and evaluation of the activities of national coordination. While projecting screen different components of the tool in question, he said that this tool contained two interfaces for data entry, on the one hand and the visualization of the results in the form of graphics, on the other. At the end of this exchange, the Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry urged members to pursue fiscal coordination within various entities of the government and with partners involved in the management of forest ecosystems of Gabon. Gabriel TCHANGO took this opportunity to present to its collaborators the new Secretary General of the ministry Mr. Raymond OKINDA appointed by the Council of Ministers.

Note that the purpose of this information and awareness session is to enable all those involved in the management of forest ecosystems to capture the process of COMIFAC so that the vision pursued by the sub-regional organization is interiorized in each state. ■

Wilfrid LAWILA in collaboration
with Jacques MOULOUGOU

- Exploiter c'est indispensable,
- reboiser est plus que nécessaire
- l'exploitation doit rimer avec développement

CBFP 2013-2015

AMERICAN FACILITATION GETS UNDERWAY



The official announcement of the American facilitation for the period 2013-2015 on the sidelines of the 12th meeting of CBFP in March 2013 moved

more than one participant in the meeting. Since then, the U.S. State Department has affirmed that it is aware of the major challenges for the second facilitation of the United States. The team, led by CBFP Facilitator Matthew V. Cassetta, intends to positively mark the history of the CBFP by putting forward a detailed plan of facilitation that places access to knowledge and information exchange advanced as the basis of its vision facilitation for the period 2013-2015. The U.S. Mission's consultations with partner countries in the sub-region during the month of July got off to a flying start, and bode well for 2014 and beyond.

ECCAS consulted by the American facilitation

CONTINUITY: by accepting the CBFP Facilitation "trophy" from COMIFAC President His Excellency Amir ADOUDOU ARTINE, Minister of Pastoral Development and Animal Production of Chad, representing His Excellency Halikimi MAHAMAT ISSA, Minister of Environment and Fishery Resources of Chad, on Monday July 1, 2013 in N'Djamena (Chad), the United States agreed to lead a second term to support

the countries of the Congo Basin in the implementation of the Plan of the COMIFAC Convergence for the sustainable management of forest resources in the region. "Clearly, the American Facilitation aims to promote the exchange of knowledge and information technology, coalitions for action against the causes of deforestation and facilitate anchoring workshops, to mobilize existing CBFP partners and recruit new partners.

STARTING OFF RIGHT. In order for the facilitation to be effective from the outset, the U.S. Facilitation visited several countries of the region to meet with partners, to ensure that the roadmap is understood and supported. Implementing a shared vision is a process that must be given due time and attention. After the official handover ceremony in N'Djamena, the team travelled to Brazzaville, Kinshasa, Libreville and Yaoundé to engage partners in consultations and to receive feedback on the vision contained in the American road map.

ADVANCED INFORMATION FOR ACTION. It is clear from the detailed plan of the U.S. facilitation document that access to knowledge and information exchange will be advanced by U.S. facilitation activities. Afrique Environnement plus, your magazine, which has the difficult task of administering the Communicators' Network Environment in Central Africa (RECEAC) considers this approach essential in terms of seizing the power of knowledge for benefit-sharing of information dissemination.

We recall that on February 21, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) released a report entitled "The Future of the Africa Environment Outlook (AEO-3)." This report, though devoted to the strategic environment-health link, presents the state of environmental management (current status) while providing possible solutions. This report has perhaps inspired the American facilitation roadmap, which indicates that "options to improve the weak implementation of existing policies include: data and adequate information systems, mobilizing partners, mechanisms to ensure institutional partner alignment around common goals and collaboration, capacity building of all stakeholders and a clear implementation of a roadmap with achievable goals and funding mechanisms."

The vision is thus: creating the conditions for a transparent and coordinated African leadership, confronting critical threats to biodiversity and forests; adapting to climate change and implementing effective institutions, plans, regulations and governance to address issues to conserve forests and wildlife at regional, national and sub-national levels in Central Africa. An essential approach will be to increase capacity and participation of women, youth and local communities, in part by improving the access to information technology. There is no doubt



Crédit Photo: PFBC

that poor policy decisions, violations of forest law by people and traders are the result of a deficit of such information. Should we return to the meaning of the term "advanced information"? It is worth to note that the plan available to us did not go into full details.

In analogy to the current challenges, we can say without risk of being mistaken for the American facilitation, it is the qualitative and quantitative information that enable all

stakeholders to convert real obstacles into opportunities for the good of all. This type of information is often lacking among leaders, and citizens often do not have reliable data to make informed choices.

PRAGMATIC. We must always remember the limitations of laws and regulations for the conservation of wildlife and more efficient land use to encourage consensual modes of action as well as binding legal obligations. Strong efforts are being made and significant resources mobilized for developing effective



Consultation at Congolese Forest Ministry

strategies, programs, plans, legislation but these often result in unenforced or simply misapplied regulations. This situation shows that the regulations should not be the only policy tool for sustainable management of natural resources. Besides binding measures, non-binding measures, and activities of promotion, dissemination, information, education and outreach are also useful. They can be augmented by information, education and awareness for behavior change within nation states.

A CLEAR LANGUAGE FOR ALL. Another difficulty lies in the fact that data and information available are often difficult to understand for their intended users. Improving communication between all stakeholders in clear language is a factor to be taken into account by the U.S. Facilitation to ensure that the information made available to stakeholders is accessible to them in clear language that can be readily understood. "Clear language to understand the causes and consequences of climate change is needed to act accordingly, so everyone can understand without language and complicated terms known only to insiders in the field. It is also a matter of respect for those who are called to participate in the sustainable management of resources," says one adviser to the Minister in charge of the Congo Basin forests.

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER. The choice is clear. The way forward is access to information, and especially improving the quality, reliability, and clarity as we try month after month to deliver the best news and sources of information to give more meaning to global environmental news in general and Africa in particular, on paper, on TV channels and on the Internet. As such, our communication strategy 2013- 2018 aims to contribute to the great challenge also faced by the CBFP. Ultimately, we are witnessing important times that will determine the relationship between regional partners. If the U.S. is facilitating communications, if all members of the CBFP and other stakeholders

take responsibility and if all the cards are on the table, we all stand to benefit. ■

Brice Séverin PONGUI.

DETAILED PLAN FACILITATION OF THE UNITED STATES 2013-2015

Vision

The focus of the United States' Facilitation is to promote African leadership to address the critical threats to Central Africa's forests and biodiversity, with the ultimate goal to advance the conservation and sustainable use of the region's forest ecosystems.

Objective

Clear and concerted African leadership (government institutions, civil society, communities, scientists, and the private sector) guiding progress towards low-emissions development and sustainable management and conservation of forests and wildlife.

Action to address critical threats to biodiversity and forests, such as illegal logging, unsustainable resource extraction, and wildlife trafficking.

Full participation in efforts to adapt to and combat climate change, including actions to mobilize funds from new sources, such as finance for carbon emissions reduction and sequestration via REDD+.

Effective institutions, regulatory regimes, and governance to address forests and wildlife at regional, national, and sub-national levels across central Africa, with measurably strengthened capacity and participation by women and local communities.

Facilitation Activities (in addition to ongoing projects)

State-of-the-art knowledge and information sharing - Using web, social media, and traditional media platforms to make the collective knowledge base accessible to all partnership constituents.

Coalitions for action to address the drivers of deforestation - Mobilizing programs, investments, commitments, and leadership to advance knowledge, build capacity, and guide initiatives and investments for the most effective wildlife conservation strategies, land use planning and management.

Facilitated Anchor Workshops Workshops - Bringing together innovators and thought leaders to address the drivers of deforestation and threats to wildlife in a multi sectoral context along the following thematic areas:

- Livelihoods and economic development;
- Forest knowledge, tools, and technologies; and
- Ecosystem services and biodiversity.

Strategic mobilization of CBFP partners in support of the Plan de Convergence, involving a partner and resource mapping assessment and targeted resource facilitation.

Interview

**MATTHEW V. CASSETTA, U.S. FACILITATOR
UNVEILS CBFP ROADMAP**

AEP: You just made a regional tour to present the vision of the new facilitation leading the CBFP, what observations can you share?

Matthew V. CASSETTA : We have engaged in consultations with five countries on this trip; these include Cameroon, Chad, Congo, the DRC, and Gabon. The purpose of this tour is to listen, to share and discuss important issues with our partners to inform our plans and our roadmap for the next two years ahead. We have been receiving very useful feedback which we will use to propose and pursue actions with partners.

AEP: You've met a number of authorities and civil society representatives. What have you learned in terms of key suggestions for your facilitation?

We could group many of the suggestions we've received into a few main subject areas. At the top of this list is effective communications: many partners have suggested using networks and other mechanisms to improve information flow between partners, opportunities for exchange, and make the partnership a real platform for the exchange of ideas, experiences and vital information. This is critical to assure that our 70 partners can share lessons and updates for their specific projects. We also noted during our travels that civil society networks in the sub-region are very dynamic but that the innovative work of many NGOs are not well-known to the general public. We have also noted that the involvement of local populations in projects is not systematic, and in some cases is lacking. So over the next two years of the U.S. facilitation, we will seek to showcase the work of these different types of actors and organizations.

AEP: How can this learning be incorporated into the roadmap for the next two years?

The vision of the American facilitation of the next two years is to build and contribute to the promotion of African leadership that is able to tackle the problems the region is facing to sustainably manage shared resources. Concerning the roadmap, we have articulated four objectives, namely the promotion of African leadership to make progress on issues of conservation and sustainable management of natural resources; mobilizing action for the preservation of biodiversity and forest management; mobilization of funds to support countries in the fight against climate change and adaptation to climate change;

promoting effective institutions and strengthening forest governance and increased participation of youth, women and local communities. These will be our guiding goals for the next two years. We are now in regional consultations and after this we will build an action plan through the consensus that we have built with our partners.

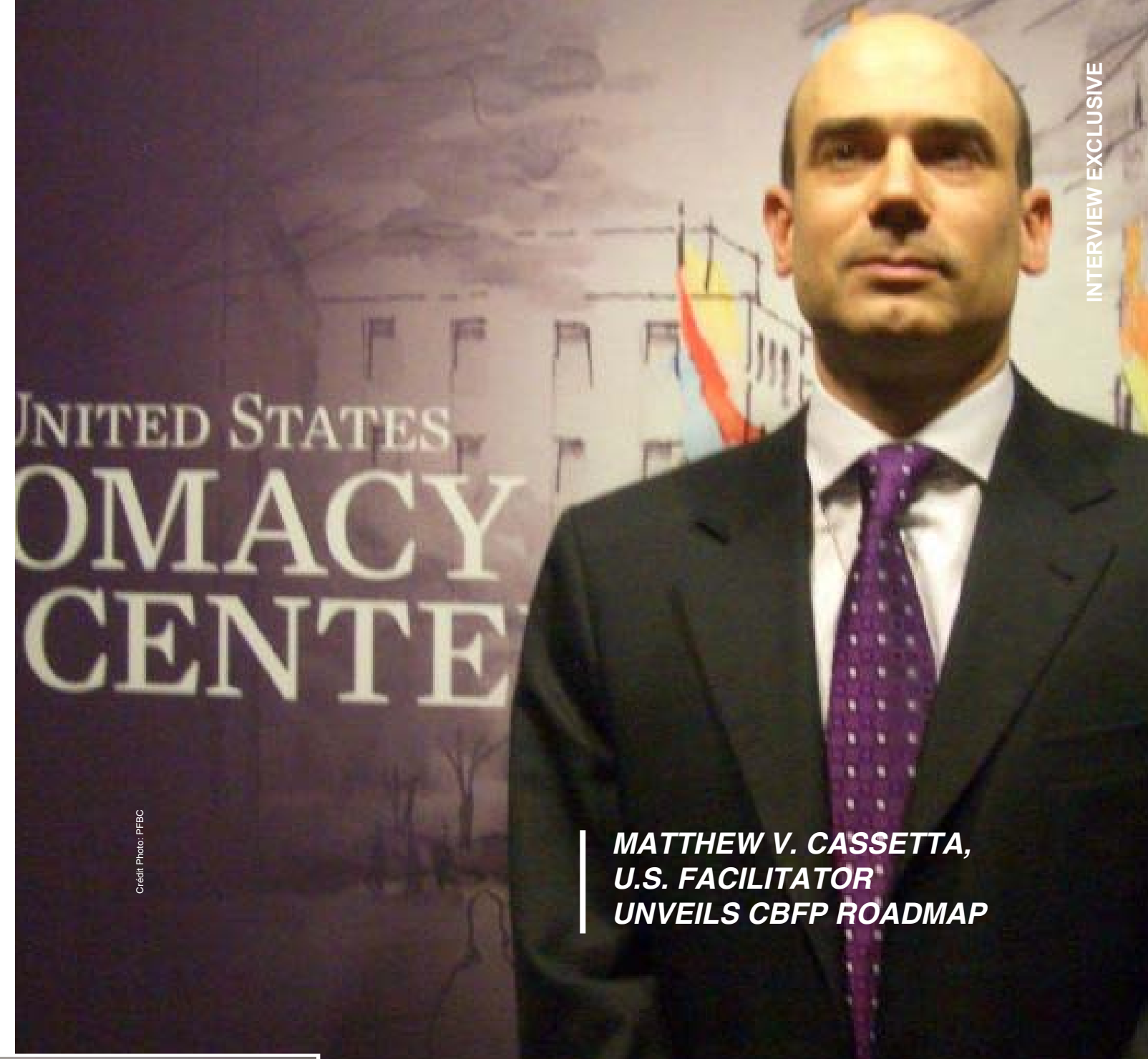
This is the second time that the U.S. facilitation is brought to the head of the PFBC. What do you think of past facilitations?

I closely followed the French facilitation from 2004 to 2006 and I saw how they brought together partners to find solutions for challenges such as effective capacity-building.

After this came the German facilitation, which brought vision and strategic action in a number of areas during their two years. Following this, the Canadian facilitation offered a focus on civil society and gender issues in the region. We took over after the Canadian facilitation in 2013, and it must be said that the challenges are formidable, some issues are long-standing or have worsened over time. We believe that we can change by expanding the

structure of partnership discussions to include other ministries and agencies to achieve wider debate, since climate change, large-scale poaching and cross-border issues are challenges that can only be overcome by involving the full range of stakeholders. Our approach will be less technical but more inclusive; we have many partners with advanced technical information, but we

The vision of the American facilitation for the next two years is to build and contribute to the promotion of African leadership that is able to tackle the problems the region is facing to sustainably manage shared natural resources



INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

must promote a more inclusive approach accessible to the general public and targeted stakeholder populations.

It is obvious that most people are not experts in environmental matters, and as we know the benefits of forests go far beyond economic revenues. Forests are diverse ecosystems that form the basis of our food production, supplying protein from fishing, subsistence hunting as well critical products such as medicinal plants, which

are important for local populations who live far from clinics, market or cities. The forest is also a source of cultural inspiration, as we can see in the rich traditions of forest peoples in the Congo Basin.

Within the U.S. roadmap, there is a line devoted to information and communications. How do you hope to address this in the CBFP?

In fact, we want to offer our partners a broad platform at the partnership level for better communication, to assure a richer exchange of lessons and experiences. We are in the process of finalizing our programs and activities to be conducted in the field after discussion with our partners. We do not have fixed ideas but rather we are open to all ideas so as to build our work plan on the basis of a consensus among the partners. ■

Interviewed by Raoul SIEMENI

ECCAS

TOWARDS THE CREATION OF A FUND FOR GREEN ECONOMY IN CENTRAL AFRICA



Family photo

The member countries of ECCAS are facing environmental degradation, which is a serious threat to their prospects for long-term development. Aware of this threat and the fact that their financial, material and human resources are all limited to initiate, otherwise accelerate the transition to a green economy, the idea of creating a fund for green economy in Central Africa is gradually becoming a reality under the leadership of ECCAS, even if there is still some way to go, as reluctances to internal sub-regional level are still visible.

After the meeting lawyers from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs / External Relations of ECCAS, 30 and 31 August 2012 in Brazzaville, the Congolese capital has once again offered its legendary hospitality of July 1 to 3, the Ministers of ECCAS of Economy and Finance. Reason for the meeting; adopt the Agreement establishing the Fund for the green economy in Central Africa, FEVAC acronym.

Ahead of the meeting, national and international experts representing stakeholders (public sector, private sector, civil society, development partners of the Congo, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, etc.) had the mission floor on both the agreement establishing the FEVAC, mode of contribution states, funding mechanisms and disbursement of the financial contribution required to start business members and the

criteria for participation in pooled funding and States the directors of replenishment of the fund principles, not to mention the definition of a route sheet post-conference. The experts made with skill targets in the preparatory meeting of the ministers' meeting. Only downside of this conference, the notable absence of the majority of the ministers concerned or their duly authorized representatives who did not adopt the draft agreement and post-conference road map proposed by the experts of the sub region. According to the final communiqué of fact read by the Deputy Minister for Planning and Congolese integration, representing the Minister of State for the Economy, Finance, Planning, Public Portfolio and Integration, thus should not be considered bad faith on the part of the States of the sub region, but explained as an obvious consequence of the difficulty of gathering in one place of the ministers sometimes hectic agendas. According to the same statement, appointment has been made in the last quarter of the year, during the Annual Meetings of the IMF, which usually include all the ministers involved in the FEVAC. "Yet ECCAS is not a small institution which programs an important meeting regardless of the agendas of each other. The Green Fund green economy in Central Africa may suffer the same fate as the free movement of persons within CEMAC "strikes a member of the civil society that has not digested the fact that experts have worked hard for three days to see the ministers' decision postponed to a later date. ■

Brice Séverin PONGUI

Préserveons notre environnement pour que les générations futures aient une bonne lecture de ce que nous leur avons légué.



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GABON FOREST VALUATION, LINK SENSITIVE OF GABON GREEN PROGRAM



By accessing the presidency in 2009, President Ali Bongo Ondimba launched the implementation of its ambitious program called "Emerging Gabon" with the goal of making Gabon an emerging country by 2025. The country hopes to benefit from the current situation to sustainably diversify its economy once dependent solely on oil and gas resources. Since then, the Water and Forestry sector which is at the heart of the three pillars of growth baptized "Industrial Gabon", "green Gabon" and "Gabon services" has been involved in a country covered 85% of forests. Four years after the launch of the program, the revitalization of Water and Forestry sector seems firmly engaged. The results are encouraging. This report, far from satisfying the highest authorities of the country, instead pushes harder. Small survey in the corridors of the Ministry of Water and Forests.

GREEN OIL

Oil and gas are not inexhaustible. That is why green economy in Gabon is one of the keys to its future. The Gabonese authorities have well understood the lesson. Water and forests are now considered part of the resources of the first capital of the country. The sector generates employment for 28% of the Gabonese population which is about 28,000 jobs. It is the first private sector employer and the second after the Public Service.

INCREASE VALUE ADDED

For the Ministry of Water and Forests, "the forest is an asset that should be exploited so that it fulfills its economic functions while focusing on other functions (ecological and socio-cultural)." Beyond speech, it is a rapidly changing sector. 11% of the territory erected in National Parks is 2420 000 hectares more than in 1400, 000 in other areas protected as national parks, according to figures of the Ministry of Water and Forests.

For the only wood industry 114 processing units were identified in 2012 against 81 in 2009. In 2011, the actual capacity of all of these units was 1,625,000 m3. In this

vein, we already announced the presence of more than 62 investors in the Special Economic Zone Nkok, appropriate space available to investors to promote the production and processing of timber in the country under the best conditions.

National authorities' estimate to 3000 the number of jobs created in three years thanks to the measure requiring wood processing at national level. Insufficient to satisfy the government, which wants to "make Gabon a world leader in certified tropical timber, supported by an innovative industry ..." under the Forest Sector Plan wood.

"The decision of the further transformation of our Timber trailers local production is a major milestone in the consolidation of the pillars Green Gabon, Gabon Gabon Industrial Services and the Emergence policy implemented by the Government and instructed by the President of the Republic, Head of State, His Excellency Ali BONGO ONDIMBA "rejoices Gabriel TCHANGO Minister of Forestry.

The themes on which the shares of the Ministry of Water and Forest based Gabon

- Good governance sector Water and Forests
- Sustainable Forest Management
- The further industrialization of wood, Timber Trade and Promotion of forest products
- The preservation of wildlife and protected areas Valuations
- The management and economic valuation of aquatic ecosystems
- The Taking account of the environmental dimension in the activities of the sector
- Respect the commitments made by the Gabon international
- Revision of the tax system in the field of Forestry
- Management bodies under supervision of the Ministry
- Strengthening of relations with the social partners (NGOs)
- Strengthening of cooperation with development partners
- The involvement of local communities in the sustainable management of forest ecosystems, water and biodiversity conservation.



CONSUME GABONESE

However, the development of Gabonese forest resources must rely on the domestic market by developing further timber and non-timber forest products processing. Obviously, the industrial sector and domestic entrepreneurship will strengthen faster if all Gabonese included the need to promote the quality and consume first Gabonese. This would reduce the import of finished products from abroad and often poor quality products. In this regard, the State, other public bodies and governments should lead by example, by example requires; matter of bringing the private sector and communities to change their mentality.

NO QUICK SOLUTIONS

Valuation of the forest, yes, but not at any price. Wheel Program "green Gabon 2025" turns slowly but surely. Moreover, sustainable development requires strategic choices for the long term even if the impatience of the people can try the authorities to choose quick fixes. Failures and mistakes of the past so grow caution. As a good father

or a generation that cares about future generations, the Gabonese government has learned the lesson of the quick fixes that often end up disappointing. "There is no point in rushing. Quick fixes have the advantage of satisfying the short term and the disadvantage of disillusioning medium and long term," says an observer of the Gabonese public policy. The prudent commitment of the country in the process FLEGT-APV and REDD + is perhaps something.

Meanwhile, make the most productive forests of Gabon should not be at the expense of other environmental, social and societal missions. This is why, despite the global economic downturn has resulted in the depletion of responsible investors and the proliferation of rogue traders, the Gabonese Government seeks to choose its partners among the leaders. The creation in June 2012, the implementation of activities of the timber industry, which sets up a grid of legality and helps to identify the operators contribute to this approach Agency.

TOGETHER

Any reform of the management of natural resources always brings a lot of protest ... and misunderstandings. The current reform to the Forestry sector a significant link in Gabon Green Program itself pillar Grand Gabon emerge Program is no exception to the rule. But the Gabonese authorities do not intend to let it go. Strengthening relations with the social partners and the involvement of local people in the management of resources is a priority for the country.

| Forest industry / wood Gabon in Brief | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Forest cover | 22 millions ha |
| Planted forests | 30 000 ha |
| Area potentially exploitable | 12.5 millions ha |
| Wood processing units in 2012 | 111 factories |
| Certified forests | 2,000,000 ha |
| Managed forests | 6,707,543 ha |
| Jobs in the forest-based sector | just over 28,000 |
| National Parks | 2.42 million (11% of the territory) |
| Other protected areas as national parks | 1400000 ha |



WILDLIFE AND PROTECTED AREAS OF GABON

Gabon has a very diverse with many endemic fauna. Wildlife contributes to the ecological balance of ecosystems. It has a large ecotourism potential for the national economy.

There are at least 150 mammals, 600 bird species, 65 reptile species and 44 protected species of which 31 are fully and 13 partially protected. To preserve the abundant wildlife, 11% of the territory were established in National Parks, about 2.42 million hectares. But the country has various other protected national parks. The area occupied by these protected areas be around nearly 1.4 million hectares.

To preserve the wildlife, Gabon has recessed its conservation policy with the adoption of Law 16/01 of 31/12/01 on the Forest Code in the Gabonese Republic. He also made commitments at the international level by the signature and ratification of several international agreements it implements. Gabon's wildlife heritage is managed by the General Directorate of Wildlife and Protected Areas. It is supported in its mission by the National (ANPN) Agency National Parks and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international (WWF, WCS, Conservation Justice ...).

Credit Photo: SEATURTLE.ORG



Aquatic ecosystems of Gabon

Gabon is full of large water tanks judging by the density of its water system. There are at least three major rivers, nine rivers of great importance, at least 614 rivers, 23 lakes over large areas and 800 km of seacoast. Despite this abundance, the fact remains that access to quality water for the greatest number is a key issue. Water is the basis of all life. It is both habitat, food, means of production, transportation and many merchant. It is linked to other natural resources (land, forests, biodiversity, etc.).. Given the multiple functions performed by this resource, it could contribute to the improvement of the gross domestic product (GDP). The creation of a Directorate General in charge of the management of aquatic ecosystems thus has a twofold problem: the preservation of water resources, both in quantity and quality and its economic recovery. ■

BRICE SÉVERIN PONGUI IN
COLLABORATION WITH
JACQUES MOULOUNGOU

Ne braconez pas !
N'achetez pas !
Ne vendez pas !
Ne laissez pas
transiter tout
produits illicites
issus d'une faune
protégée par la
Convention CITES!



Respectez et faites
respecter votre
faune et votre flore
pour les générations
actuelles et futures



Interview

*Gabriel TCHANGO, Minister Of
Water Affairs and Forests in Gabon*



"Sustainable management of forests and resources they contain is based primarily on the laws governing these areas" this is how Gabriel TCHANGO, Minister Of Water Affairs and Forests in Gabon held to introduce his remarks following the interview with the Africa Environment More magazine, issue to emphasize the responsibility to continue the implementation of the development plan "Green Gabon" dearly led by His Excellency Ali BONGO, President of the Republic of Gabon.

AEP: Mr. Minister, Gabon enjoys a very good reputation in the management of forests and forest resources, what are the areas of your policy?

GABRIEL TCHANGO : Sustainable management of forests and resources they contain is based primarily on the laws governing these areas. But it's not just text, it takes text side, and women dedicated to the management to enforce not only the regulation men, but also the techniques contributing to optimized resource management of our forests. Returning to the text, Gabon has several institutions and legal instruments that govern resource management and environmental protection. Thus, at the national level, Gabon has:

a Climate Council and a climate plan that aim to ensure a real control GHG and ensure the country's adaptation to climate change.

A National Strategy for Sustainable Development focuses on:

- Promoting good governance;
- Development and economic prosperity;
- Improvement and generalization of social welfare and;
- Protection of the environment.
- Of Law 16/01 on the Forest Code adopted in 2001 organized around four strategic areas:
- Sustainable management of forest resources;
- Industrialization of the timber industry;
- The conservation of biodiversity through;
- The involvement of communities in the management of these resources.

To this day, more than 40 regulations have been taken to make the law more operational.

Gabon has banned since 2009, exports of logs. What is your assessment of this decision on the national economy?

The measure banning the export of logs is part of the vision of social and economic development in Gabon declined by the President of the Republic, Head of State. In his vision, the development of forest resources, including timber is at the heart of this policy should lead to the Gabon concert emerging nations. But how can we foster the emergence of a forest industry if we continue to take the raw material for processing in other lands?

You ask me the results that can be done as a result of this measure. It is necessary to understand that Gabon has gone from a situation of strict exporter of logs to an exporter of processed products even if the majority of these products are derived from the first transformation.

Moreover, if one refers to the statistics, we can see that before this measure precisely in 2009, Gabon had 82 plants. In 2013, we are at 130 plants with more a leader of the third transformation. The implementation of these plants is its corollary higher volumes processed products increased from 463 m3 in 2009 to 900 000 m3 of processed



**Gabriel TCHANGO,
Minister Of Water
Affairs and Forests in
Gabon**

wood. Among other advantages of this measure include job creation and therefore the fight against poverty and the settlement of forces in the country that are young and developing the hinterland, because forest activity is provider of social services in low coverage areas (education, health, etc..) while contributing to the planning (routes, electrifying uncovered areas, zoning vocation territories etc.).

The current conservation in Central Africa is dominated by the issues of poaching, particularly of elephants. How do you feel this threat here in Gabon?

VYou raise a fundamental question as it applies to the survival of our species. Indeed, for nearly a decade, we see an increase in poaching. This is a new type of poaching because poachers do not kill for food purposes, but for financial reasons, making them hard on iconic species such as elephant and felines that provide significant short-term revenue.

The Gabon is not spared from this scourge and the Government has taken the problem head on. To do so:

it was carried in increasing the number of eco-guards at the National Agency for National Parks (ANPN) and the involvement of other agencies, particularly the Department of Defense and the Department of Justice in the anti poaching. These short-term awareness, strengthen the repressive framework, and strengthen the presence of agents in the target areas (national parks Minkébé, Wonga Wongué, Ivindo ...). Efforts for conservation of biodiversity and wildlife will continue, with the goal of having more than 4 million hectares of protected areas.

In addition, the 4th days of Central African Protected Areas which just held in Libreville in Gabon which I sponsored the work, showcased the initiatives undertaken by the sub-regional organizations, namely COMIFAC and ECCAS Exchange of experiences relating thereto in the sub-region, particularly in protected areas; highlight the job of ecoguard regarding the status, tasks, risks, and recovery; discuss issues governance related to the involvement of local populations and monitoring patrols and finally present the tools for monitoring and enforcement. Efforts for conservation of biodiversity and wildlife will continue, with the goal of having more than 4 million hectares of protected areas.

What is your view on the sub-regional institutions responsible for the harmonization of issues of forest and environmental governance in Central Africa?

I think you are referring to the Forests Commission (COMIFAC) and its affiliated organs or ECCAS, if I'm not mistaken. These institutions have emerged as a result of the findings. Regarding forest management, the Head of State of Central Africa, aware of the importance of forests in the economy of their respective countries and the goods and services that these forests provide to local people and even the whole world in terms of environmental issues, decided to establish in 1999 a structure called COMIFAC for sustainable and coordinated management of forest resources. Other institutions such

“ **It is necessary to understand that Gabon has gone from a situation of strict exporter of logs to an exporter of processed products even if the majority of these products are derived from the first transformation.** ”

as the RAPAC, OCFSA were created in the same vein, that of managing wildlife resources in the sub-region in a concerted manner. Despite the financial difficulties faced by these institutions, it is none the less that those responsible for animating said structures perform their duties with dedication. This is reflected by the inclusion in each country concerns in sustainable management of forest and environmental resources in the national sectoral policies.

Management and water supply to the population remains a real challenge for the governments of Central Africa, how do you overcome this challenge?

The water management is not my area of expertise. But government solidarity and as a member of the Government, I would like to give you some answers on the understanding that my colleague in charge of water resources is better placed to tell you more. Indeed, there is plenty of water in Gabon. It rains 9 months out of 12 and over the hydrographic network is very dense. However, in view of the increasing population and pollution of any



kind that generates the availability of drinking water is not necessarily guaranteed.

To meet this challenge, the Government, under the leadership of the President of the Republic, Head of State has engaged in an extensive program of construction of reservoirs and water supply in areas where this problem arises with great acuity. Besides this aspect, there is also the setup of hydraulic pumps in rural areas for the supply

of face lack of drinking water populations. This does not mean that everyone has access to safe drinking water, but efforts are being made in this direction and Gabon among the first countries in Central Africa, where the rate of population with access to safe drinking water is high. ■

Interviewed by Antoine SIEMENI



GABON : Industrialization of Timber Sector

How could foster the emergence of a forest industry if we continue to take the raw material for transformation in other lands? This was the motivation of the President of Gabon, Ali Bongo Ondimba to take the decision that no log is supposed to get out of Gabon. This decision was taken on November 5, 2009, it came into effect in January 2010 by authorities of that country, prohibiting the export of this species in order to promote local transformation.

The objective of this decision, to get Gabon from the country of logging to that of processing, developing and enhancing the material and wood products. The day after this life-saving measure considered by populations, but the operators at the time did not find the hasty decision because, according to them, the government has taken them short. Today, a committee for implementation and monitoring support to the industrialization of the timber industry measures are implemented. It is responsible for implementing government decisions related to the measure of ban on exports of logs and make proposals with respect to this measure to push for greater local wood processing. Now all the wood cut must be processed locally before being sold in foreign markets.

To sustain this measure, Gabonese authorities have implemented a strategy for the development of the timber industry, contained in the Strategic Plan "Gabon Emergent." Also the creation and development of five areas of industrial wood. This policy is consistent with the

vision of a multipolar economic development and promote the establishment of processing industries close to the resource and communication channels, but also focus on products with high added value and modernize the sector.

To make this policy effective, legal arsenal was established with the creation of different structures, namely the Committee for the implementation and monitoring support to the acceleration of the industrialization process measures and the construction of a wood technology laboratory, and the implementation of a strategy for development of the timber industry, the application of the 0273 Decree establishing the status of abandoned wood; revision of standards and standardization of processed products; revision in terms of templates for a scrupulous respect of tonnage the axle logging trucks and load bearing on the roads of Gabon. Finally, the valuation of non-timber forest products through the application of Decree 1029/PR/MEFEPEPN December 01, 2004, regulating the exploitation, processing and marketing of forest products other than timber.

All these measures have only one motivation, good governance, which necessarily involves institutional strengthening to ensure the sustainability of fish and wildlife environmental forest resources, and to protect biodiversity. This institutional strengthening according to the Gabonese government, also takes into account the operational capacity building of human resources and infrastructure. The economic performance of a country cannot be separated from good governance, think Gabonese authorities. On this, the Ministry of Water and Forests intends to introduce new managerial codes based on the effectiveness of the forestry administration and on lighted and open collaboration between different actors and stakeholders involved in the management of forest resources together both locally and internationally. All these mechanisms will lead the Gabon to good forest management, in other words, good forest governance. ■

Wilquette LAWILLA in collaboration
with Jacques MOULOUNGOU



PROTECTED AREAS

Ecoguards status and protection of marine protected areas in Central Africa at the heart of discussions at the fourth edition of days of protected areas in Central Africa in Libreville areas.



Opening of proceedings by the Gabonese Minister

The problems ecoguards Central Africa in the course of their work were featured, prominently, the foundations of the 4th edition of days of protected areas in Central Africa, held, on 9 and 10 July 2013, to Libreville, Gabon. A recommendation has been adopted for the improvement of their working condition.

The curtains in the fourth edition of days of protected areas in Central Africa, fell on 10 July 2013, after 48 hours of work. Placed under the theme "anti-poaching and marine protected areas struggle", this meeting allowed participants to share their experiences in conducting discussions on the modes of creation and management of protected areas in Central Africa. Enhanced at the opening by the presence of the Minister of Forestry of Gabon, Mr. Gabriel TCHANGO, this fourth edition has been a real advocate of the guards Eco. After the adoption of the call Libreville on the valuation of business ecoguards, it was recommended at the end of the work, to adopt special measures to secure and improve their wages and working conditions. In recognition of their dedication to the national and sub regional levels, the foundations of Libreville suggested it be held periodically ceremonies honors in favor of conservation officers in general and eco-guards,

in particular, Awards like Abraham. The award calls for a recognition of merit for conservation in the DRC. All participants in this seminar have agreed to organize these ceremonies distinction during the Days of Protected Areas (JAP).

Note that, in the work of the second session of the fourth edition of days spent on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), discussions focused on the awareness of certain views on the profession, status and working conditions of Eco guards: status unclear or non-existent, often inadequate training, working conditions more unfavorable paltry income, including risk of loss of life. A film relating the actual field situations was screened. This was followed by the presentation of the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement and the fight Anti-Poaching (LAB). This session on protected areas has also contributed presentations and discussions on current topics which



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adopt special measures to secure and improve the wages and working conditions of conservation officers in general, and in particular eco-guards;
- Organize regular ceremonies honors in favor of conservation officers in general and in particular ecoguards in recognition of their dedication to the national and sub regional levels, like Abraham Awards. These ceremonies can be organized on the occasion of JAP.
- Train and sensitize judicial administrations on issues of enforcement of wildlife
- Strengthen actions coordinated management of resources in border areas
- Integrate the issue of wildlife crime on the agenda of regional security and stability in
- Monitor and continuously improving performance of agents with an indicator based on the number of arrests and lawsuits against major drug traffickers
- Establish deterrents (prosecutions, convictions, penalties and effective enforcement of sanctions)
- RAPAC / ECOFAC V, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Abidjan Convention, IUCN / MACO and partners, should consider the possibility of developing training programs for technicians and senior managers in the management of coastal ecosystems and sailors, involving, in particular the Higher Institute of Fishery Resources Yabassi, school Garoua Wildlife, ENEF and ERAIFT and the Higher Institute of Sahel Maroua. "
- Encourage States to establish marine protected areas
- Establish systems concerted management of data on marine protected areas, in order to better prevent and fight against piracy on the fishery resources.

have many opportunities in terms of mainstreaming conservation, economic and even security. The themes touched on political, strategic and technical aspects with a focus on mapping resources matching strategic tracks. The foundation of Libreville has spoken further on the next international conference on AMP-IMPAC3 to be held in Marseille, France. At the end of this meeting, the participants made the finding of a number of deficiencies and proposed recommendations on all two topics (see box).

It should be recalled that the previous three editions of the JAP were allowed to exchange particular on "Protected Areas, reservoirs of biodiversity and jobs for careers in conservation in Central Africa" for the first edition held in 2007, in the Democratic Republic Congo and had led to the adoption of the "CALL of KINSHASA" which featured a plea on the general situation of protected areas, the need to strengthen their legal status at national level and implicitly evoked the problems related to lack of funding. The second edition in turn held in 2009, focused on "Sustainable financing of conservation and human development in and around protected areas in Central Africa." It was the aim of managing the procedures and mechanisms for mobilizing and managing funds to improve cooperation and ensure the representativeness and effectiveness of protected area management in the sub region areas.

And finally the third edition held in 2011 in Brazzaville at the Summit of Heads of State of the three forest areas on the theme: "The Protected Areas and Climate Change: Legislation and Sustainable Financing." ■

Wilquette



Signing of the headquarters Agreement



View of participants



SAVOIR-FAIRE



Interview

SAMY MANKOTO OUTGOING PRESIDENT AND AMBASSADOR OF RAPAC MAKES US THE RESULTS OF HIS TEN YEARS AT THE HEAD OF THIS INSTITUTION.

AEP: We are at the 4th edition of the protected areas of Central Africa, this activity is becoming a tradition. What is your reading of this initiative?

Samy Mankoto: I welcome this initiative, which was launched in 2007 as part of a strategic vision by the Board of RAPAC and I had the privilege of chairing in Kinshasa called regional and national days of protected areas. These days are organized at the level of each Member State, and then at the headquarters level, it organizes regional days of protected areas in Central Africa. The first days organized in Kinshasa concerned biodiversity, protected as a bastion of biodiversity areas, out came the Kinshasa Declaration, the 2nd day focused on funding issues, the 3rd day took place in Brazzaville margin summit of Heads of State and governments of the three major tropical basins of the world in June 2011. As such, the environment minister, Henri Djombo presided these days whose central theme was the issue of sustainable funding. These days 4th standing here in Libreville, our headquarters have to focus marine protected areas and anti poaching. Significant advances have been identified as part of this initiative because with the theme of marine protected areas, the RAPAC has just developed a new partnership with the United Nations Convention called Abidjan Convention and also partnerships with IUCN to participate in development planning methodology of marine protected areas that are very important sites on the economic plan for the local population. This is a very significant step forward for the RAPAC in the implementation of its strategic plan and the plan of the COMIFAC Convergence.

AEP: You are at the end of your term of office after 10 years at the head of this institution. What is your assessment of your career?

First, I congratulate my successor Mr. Anatoli NDONG MBA should now officiate as Chairman of the RAPAC. It is always difficult to review itself, but I will say that over the last 10 years, progress has been made in the implementation of the activities of RAPAC. I take as an example the solemn signing yesterday at the Ministry of Affairs, the Headquarters Agreement between the RAPAC and the Gabonese Republic. It is a real obstacle course but we had the support of the Gabonese government at the highest level: the Head of State, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, and with this support, a working capital has been made to the Board, to the General Assembly to update the status of the RAPAC as a regional and international because we are already a member of IUCN since 2009. So this headquarters agreement was signed yesterday, shows that the RAPAC has

taken a truly international dimension and it will also update the substantial funding we receive from partners like the EU, ECCAS is our client within the framework of the implementation of the program ECOFAC V RAPAC. ADB finances us through PACEBCo, and also members of the RAPAC States have always supported our actions. I would point out that when I took office in 2003, I initiated with the support of my Executive Secretariat, and the Memorandum of Understanding was signed between COMIFAC and the RAPAC. It is also part of the Yaoundé Declaration signed by Heads of State in March 1999, which was approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations, and later in February 2005, in Brazzaville at the Summit of Heads of State on the conservation and sustainable management of forests in Central Africa, a treaty was signed in which the RAPAC has been recognized as one of the tools through the pillar of COMIFAC. As part of this activity, we now have a contract major grant of about 20.531.299 euros we manage under the financing agreement ECCAS-EU RAPAC is the prime contractor and thanks to this important funding that we continue to follow the mission of RAPAC of helping members to harmonize policies and legislation on protected areas States. We protected even without an effective marine protected areas help states find funding mechanisms to train high-level executives to better management of protected areas.

Speaking precisely marine protected areas have also been at the center of this 4th day of Protected Areas, why such consultations in Central Africa on these marine protected areas?

The Atlantic coast of Central Africa has a great fishing potential, and thus in the context of an overall vision of conservation, could not we at the RAPAC, keep us away from this theme marine protected areas because we already have sites of marine protected areas in the coastal zone Mayumba-Conkouati between Congo and Gabon could even become a marine border area and in terms of methodology, the RAPAC can provide more value in terms of expertise for the conservation of these areas. The exploitation of these marine areas will also

benefit local populations. We need a good management plan and presented it to experts. We, at the RAPAC, we will examine the possibility of launching the training of trainers and management of protected marine areas many participants suggested the use of Garoua school Wildlife for the training of technicians, but I have also proposed a regional postgraduate school development and integrated management of tropical forests and lands, ERAIFT acronym which is managed by the UNESCO in the DRC is a regional school that trains specialists in an integrated and systemic approach Master 2 level for designers at the ministries, the private sector, civil society. It will be of continuing education courses of short duration until the experts reflect on the training modules adapted to marine and coastal areas in terms of diplomatic training. To this end, note that the RAPAC, through its ECOFAC V program, has signed a major contract with service delivery ERAIFT to encourage the training of senior executives to manage protected areas in Central Africa.

One of the key points of this meeting was the adoption of a statute of poachers when we know that the sub-



**SAMY MANKOTO
OUTGOING PRESIDENT
AND AMBASSADOR OF
RAPAC**

region including the elephant problem that drives the news, this is a responsibility that urges states in terms of support, what is the vision of RAPAC in the context of the adoption of such a document?

If we take as an example the collapse of populations of elephants with the emergence from 2007-2008, the increase in the price of ivory poaching highway, the use of weapons of war, to this phenomenon The ACPC believes that we need a policy that should gain support states in the pus high level of Heads of State. I congratulate the same time the organization of the meeting of Ministers in charge of Water and Forests, environment, defense and others, held in April in Yaoundé (Cameroon), and organized by ECCAS. During this meeting, an important statement was adopted and the establishment of a regional anti-poaching cell level. RAPAC support this kind of initiative and is willing to support actions along the lines of the organization of a regional strategy to fight against this scourge. I think it is important that once the action plan for the fight against poaching will be finalized by ECCAS, it adopted by the Heads of State have a possibility of implementation at all levels, whether the Ministry of Finance for financial support or technical ministers are forestry ministries and development partners who accompany us in this process. As such, during this workshop, voices were heard for the ecoguards who are mostly poor, are often supported in the punch by the military operations, the security forces as it is done in Bouba Ndjida park in Cameroon. Thus we

can secure the protected areas because they may witness the disappearance of this species plays a role not only economically but also ecologically important. So we must see things systemically. There are aspects of development, conservation, and in its dynamic RAPAC trying to encourage the development and implementation of management plans or development, taking into account all these aspects to development.

What do you think of environmental information in Central Africa?

I think that efforts should still be done in this area. There is already ADIE (Development Agency of Environmental Information), but the actions are conducted in a disparate manner, there must be better coordination and ADIE could help in this direction, and I am already pleased to see Africa Environment more so than the RECEAC (Network of Communicators for the Environment in Central Africa), which has also been established, contributing to know what is happening in Central Africa. The problem is that central Africa does many things but we talk less so than in other parts of Africa, the environmental information is conveyed. There are national and international NGOs that are doing extraordinary work, but this is an area that remains to consolidate and further develop. ■

Interviewed by Raoul SIEMENI



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