



SOMMET DES TROIS BASSINS
DES ÉCOSYSTÈMES DE BIODIVERSITÉ
ET DES FORÊTS TROPICALES
26-27-28 Octobre 2023, Brazzaville

SUMMIT OF THE THREE BASINS AMAZON – CONGO - BORNEO MEKONG SOUTHEAST ASIA

BIODIVERSITY ECOSYSTEMS AND TROPICAL FORESTS

Draft technical memorandum of Summit contents*

DRAFT

** This version is a draft that can be amended and completed by members of other basins as well as all other stakeholders*

I- Background and issues

The preservation of large biodiversity ecosystems and tropical forests is a priority issue for humanity, in view of the acceleration of climate change and its increasingly visible and negative impacts on human communities and for animal and plant species, particularly in developing countries.

As early as 1992, at the Earth Summit in Rio, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which encourages countries to participate in climate change mitigation, was adopted, as well as two other Rio conventions that make it possible to join or strengthen climate initiatives, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). Other conventions deal with these issues, such as the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat or RAMSAR Convention, signed in 1971, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora adopted in Washington in 1973, also known as CITES, the Abidjan Convention (1981) which aims at cooperation in the protection and development of the marine environment and coastal region of West and Central Africa, or the Bamako Convention (1998) which encourages States to conclude bilateral, multilateral and regional agreements on hazardous wastes. However, action and implementation have been slow to materialize. Aware of the importance of biodiversity for humanity, the various States of the three basins of tropical forests and biodiversity have acceded to these different conventions.

Overall, there is a growing awareness of the need to adopt nature-based solutions in which the management of biodiversity ecosystems and tropical forests occupies a prominent place. Thus, the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP) in Glasgow in 2021 served as a platform for statements by international donors in favor of the protection of the world's tropical forests, and especially their local and indigenous populations. Recently, the 2021-2030 Decade, proclaimed by the United Nations for the restoration of ecosystems, calls for a global mobilization in the face of the environmental and climate emergency.

It is the entire natural balance of the planet that is now threatened and whose vital process is now under way if we do not react without delay and with a strong and appropriate response.

The central challenge of the Summit is to constitute, through the union of the three basins, a global alliance of biodiversity ecosystems and tropical forests, a coalition with strictly South-South governance, structuring the three global ecosystems that represent 80% of global biodiversity and ensure the vital role of global regulator of carbon balance and life on earth. The three basins are expected to capture 80% of the existing and future financial mobilization announced at COP 27 for climate and COP 15 for biodiversity.

This global alliance of the three basins will be a force for proposal and legitimate negotiation within multilateral climate and biodiversity forums.

II- Strategic and operational objectives

The Summit has six strategic objectives:

- Define and adopt the broad outlines of a global governance framework through a cooperation agreement between the three basins and the formation of a global alliance of the three basins;
- Develop a common strategy, with a work programme and a portfolio of investment projects to anticipate and prepare requests for funding from existing and future funding mechanisms;
- Sign financing agreements with multilateral and bilateral donors, global philanthropy and develop financial mechanisms with the private sector, particularly with the creation of a sovereign carbon market to ensure sustainable financing of the three basins;
- Create a sub-regional and intercontinental scientific and technical cooperation platform and build capacity in the three sub-regions;
- Decomartmentalize climate and biodiversity issues, closely linked to the scale of ecosystem issues and the reconciliation of environmental law resulting from the Kunming-Montreal Agreement and climate law resulting from the Paris Agreement;
- Constitute a legitimate proposal and negotiation organization of reference within multilateral climate and biodiversity forums.

III- The Summit Programme

Three sections structure the 3-day program:

- Day 1: Technical Section

| Schedule | Activities | Hall |
|--------------|---|------------------------|
| 9am-9.45am | Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Message from the representative of OCTA (Organization of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty), 15mn • Message from the representative of ASEAN/AFoCO, 15mn • Opening speech by Mrs. Arlette SOUDAN-NONAUULT, Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development and Congo Basin, Technical Coordinator of the Congo Basin Climate Commission and the Blue Fund for the Congo Basin, 15mn | Plenary |
| 9:45am-10am | Presentation of the program of the day (<i>moderator to be identified: a journalist from each of the basins</i>) | <i>To be indicated</i> |
| 10am-12.45am | State of the art of the three tropical forest basins of peatlands and mangroves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction by FAO: Overview of degradation and deforestation of forests, peatlands and mangroves • Focus on the Congo Basin, by COMIFAC (Central African Forest Commission) • Focus on the Amazon basin, by the OTCA (Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization) • Focus on the Borneo Mekong Basin Southeast Asia by AFoCO (Asian Forest Cooperation Organization) | Plenary |
| 12.45am-1pm | Family photo | |
| 1pm-2pm | Lunch | <i>To be indicated</i> |
| 2pm-5.30pm | Summit Panels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel 1: Regional and global governance (1h30) • Panel 2: Strategy, programs and integrated investment plans (1h30) • Panel 3: Financial mechanism and sovereign carbon market (1h30) • Panel 4: Scientific cooperation and capacity building (1h30) • Panel 5: Reintegrating climate and biodiversity into a global framework (1h30) | <i>To be indicated</i> |
| 2p-5.30pm | Summit Side-Events¹ <p>Cluster 1: Cooperation (1h30)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing international financing for high integrity forests • Building a scientific and technical research platform for the three basins • The state of biodiversity ecosystems and tropical forests, peatlands and mangroves • Commitment of development banks to the financing of the Blue Fund investment plan for the Congo Basin under the coordination of BDEAC, Trust Manager of the Fund (CCBC-BDEAC) • What cooperation for the management of water resources in ecosystems? <p>Cluster 2: Biodiversity – Climate (1h30)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reintegration of climate and biodiversity • Preservation of protected areas • What strategy and implementation plan for the conservation and restoration of forests, peatlands and mangroves in the three basins? • Reintegrating carbon projects into the Paris Agreement • <i>To be determined</i> (Société Nationale des Pétroles du Congo) | <i>To be indicated</i> |

¹ The titles of side-events may be amended

| | | |
|-------------------|---|------------------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The One Health approach in the context of the health, environment and biodiversity relationship (WHO) <p>Cluster 3: Ecosystem financing (1h30)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity certificates Financing biodiversity Insurance against climate risks Boosting investment in science and better understanding the Congo Basin The new climate economy <p>Cluster 4: Civil society, youth, women and indigenous peoples (1h30)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The role of local authorities in ecosystem management Young Climate Champions Women, drivers of climate and biodiversity Feeding nature: youth at the centre of biodiversity preservation Indigenous peoples at the heart of ecosystem management | |
| 5.30pm-6pm | <p>Closing ceremony</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Message from the representative of OCTA (Organization of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty), 10mn Message from the ASEAN representative, 10mn Closing speech by Mrs. Arlette SOUDAN-NONAULT, Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development and Congo Basin, Technical Coordinator of the Congo Basin Climate Commission and the Blue Fund for the Congo Basin, 10mn Presentation of the Departmental Section Program | Plenary |
| 8pm-9pm | Lunch | <i>To be indicated</i> |

• **Day 2: Departmental Section**

| Schedule | Activities | Hall |
|------------------------|---|------------------------|
| 9am-10am | <p>Opening Ceremony</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Message from the Minister of Environment and Climate Change of the Federative Republic of Brazil, 10mn Message from the Minister of Environment and Forests of the Republic of Indonesia, 10mn Message from the [Prime Minister] of the Democratic Republic of Congo, 10mn Opening address by Mr. Collinet MAKOSSO, Prime Minister of the Republic of Congo, 10mn | Plenary |
| 10am-10.15am | Family photo | <i>To be indicated</i> |
| 10.15am-11.30am | <p>Presentation of panel and side-event reports by the rapporteurs -Session 1 (5mn per report)</p> <p>Under the High Authority of the Presidium (<i>to be confirmed</i>)</p> | Plenary |
| 11.30am-12am | Coffee break | <i>To be indicated</i> |
| 12am-1.15pm | <p>Presentation of panel and side-event reports by the rapporteurs -Session 2 (5mn per report)</p> <p>Under the High Authority of the Presidium (<i>to be confirmed</i>)</p> | <i>To be indicated</i> |
| 1.30pm-3pm | Lunch | <i>To be indicated</i> |
| 3pm-4pm | Eight Closed Ministers | <i>To be indicated</i> |

| | | |
|------------|---|-----------------|
| | Review of the Declaration of the Three Tropical Forest Basin Summit | |
| 4pm-5.30pm | Session of presentation and financing of projects by the three basins to the TFPs | Plenary |
| 5.30pm-6pm | Closing ceremony | Plenary |
| | Reading of the Ministers' Final Communiqué Closing remarks by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Congo | |
| 6pm-7.30pm | Official visit of the pavilions | Pavilion area |
| 8pm | High-level official dinner | To be indicated |

- Day 3: High Level Section

| Schedule | Activities | Hall |
|----------------|--|-----------------|
| 9am-10.30am | Opening Ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Message from the mayor of the city of Kintélé, 5 mn • Official interventions by senior representatives of the States of the three basins and the Partner States (<i>to be confirmed</i>) • [Message from Mr GUTERES, Secretary-General of the United Nations, • Speech by HE Luiz Inácio LULA DA SILVA, President of Brazil, • Speech by HE Joko WIDODO, President of Indonesia, • Speech by H.E. Félix Antoine TSHISEKEDI TSHIOMBO, President of the Democratic Republic of Congo, • Opening speech by H.E. Mr. Denis SASSOU NGUESSO, President of the Republic of Congo, Head of State, President of the Congo Basin Climate Commission] | Plenary |
| 10.30am-11am | Family photo and coffee break | To be indicated |
| 11am-11.30am | Report of the ministerial segment on the work of the Summit | Plenary |
| 11.30-12.30 pm | Closed Doors of Heads of State and Government (Format: 1 + 4) | To be indicated |
| 12.30am-1.30pm | Closing ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading of the Declaration of the Three Tropical Forest Basin Summit • Closing speech by H.E. Mr. Denis SASSOU NGUESSO, President of the Republic of Congo | Plenary |
| 2pm-3pm | Lunch | To be indicated |
| 4pm-5pm | Tree-planting ceremony | To be indicated |

IV – Framing of Panels

PANEL 1: ESTABLISHING GLOBAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNANCE OF THE THREE BASINS

- Chair of the Panel: forthcoming;
- Technical Rapporteur of the Panel Day 2: forthcoming;
- Political Rapporteur of the Panel Day 3: forthcoming.

A- Context

The 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 27), held in Sharm el-Sheikh (Egypt), in November 2022, ended with the creation of a "loss and damage" fund awaited for more than thirty years by the countries of the South. At the end of the event, His Excellency Denis Sassou-Nguesso called for the establishment of an alliance of the world's three forest and biodiversity basins, whose main objective will be to ensure global governance of conservation, cooperation and financing policies for the ecological and climate lung of the planet, as well as the holding of this summit of the three basins.

The recent 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 15), in Montreal (Canada), under Chinese Presidency, in December 2022, resulted in the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework², whose main objective is to "*protect 30% of the world's land, inland waters, coastal areas and oceans*". A special biodiversity trust fund will be established within the Global Environment Facility, with USD 20 billion by 2025 and USD 30 billion by at least 2030.

Thus, the Sharm el-Sheikh and Kunming-Montreal agreements entrust the three global forest and tropical ecosystems with the responsibility and legitimacy of establishing and implementing an operational roadmap for the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030).³ They are the last bastion that ensures the survival of plant and animal species, and indigenous peoples in the three regions. 80% of the funding announced in Sharm el Sheikh and Montreal should be allocated to the three basins.

The 36 biodiversity ecosystems and tropical forests of the three basins concentrate 80% of the net carbon sequestration capacity in annual stock and fluxes with forests, mangroves and peatlands. Carbon credits generated by reduction and net absorption results are under Article 5 of the Paris Agreement, under the REDD+ mechanism, and Article 6, under the mechanism for international transfers of carbon credits, ITMOS.

The implementation of the Paris Agreement and the Kunming-Montreal Agreement through ecosystem conservation, preservation and restoration programs supports and participates in the United Nations Decade 2021 – 2030, but requires several prerequisites:

- On the one hand, a level of structuring and integration of each of the Three Basins with a political, technical and operational organization, which will take into account the specificities specific to each of the basins;
- On the other hand, a global governance of the Three Basins making it possible to:
 - Constitute an inclusive alliance, integrating all public and private actors, with a long-term vision, a strategy, qualitative and quantitative objectives, action programs and common means and tools, placing at the heart of the challenges the consideration of indigenous communities and the protection of animal populations and plant species;
 - Speak with one voice in multilateral climate and biodiversity fora to promote the views and expectations of the Three Basins for the conservation, preservation and restoration of ecosystems;
 - Participate in the prefiguration of multilateral financial mechanisms and the construction of governance procedures;
 - Establish a robust, transparent, compliant and sustainable sovereign carbon market by making the carbon-sovereign value chain more reliable and ensuring its governance, in particular on control procedures and the premium sovereign and sovereign carbon price;
 - Establish a platform for monitoring and monitoring ecosystems based on the mobilization of the scientific and technical community of the States of the Three Basins, supported by the Partner States;

² Convention on Biological Diversity, Kunming Global Biodiversity Framework in Montreal

³ <https://www.decadeonrestoration.org/fr>

- Evaluate the conservation, preservation and restoration policies undertaken and take corrective measures.

At present, the level of integration of the Three Basins appears to be very heterogeneous from one basin to another.

Presentation of the three basins:

- The Congo Basin, the world's second largest carbon sink, appears to be the most politically and technically structured ecosystem. By the will of the Heads of State, expressed in the Yaoundé Declaration in 1999, the countries of Central Africa have set up the first political and technical body for guidance, coordination, harmonization, and decision-making in the conservation and sustainable management of forest and savannah ecosystems in Africa. In 2005, the countries of Central Africa adopted the first convergence plan for harmonization, subregional cooperation, development and strengthening of policies for the sustainable management of forest ecosystems and biodiversity. The Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, recognizes the critical role of forests in the fight against climate change. To ensure the active participation of countries in the process of operationalizing the planned mechanisms, and to assert their interests in view of the decisive role played by the natural ecosystems of the Congo Basin in maintaining and regulating the global ecological balance, the countries of Central Africa under the joint leadership of President Sassou-Nguesso and King Mohamed VI, host of COP 22, have set up a Congo Basin Climate Commission in 2016, under the aegis of the African Union.
- The Amazon Basin, the largest ecosystem and tropical forest on the planet, covers 9 countries: Brazil, representing 60% of the Amazon rainforest, Peru (13%), Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Bolivia, French Guiana, Suriname and the Republic of Guyana. For about ten years, it has had various regional integration processes (the Southern Common Market "MERCOSUR", the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO). The latter, created in 2002, is the Amazonian centralized body for international cooperation with programs and strong links with organizations such as WHO, UNCFAD, UNEP, UNESCO, FAO, WMO, OAS, CAN, World Bank, BIO, IBRD, CAF, European Union, bilateral cooperation agencies of Holland, Japan, Germany, Canada, France, Finland, United States, among others, and multilateral initiatives such as GEF and I1RSA, and national and international non-governmental organizations such as WWF and UICN. Politically, Brazil over the past two decades has been the voice of the Amazon.
- The Borneo-Mekong-Southeast Asia Basin, composed of two sub-regions, that of the island of Borneo and that of the Mekong River, this basin of Southeast Asia is the third global ecosystem of biodiversity and tropical forests. The Mekong is one of the largest rivers in the world, it crosses six countries: China, Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam which share the natural resources and land that surround it. Borneo is the fourth largest island in the world. It represents only 1% of the planet's land, but holds about 6% of the world's biodiversity in its tropical forests. Indonesia is the figurehead of the Borneo Mekong basin in Southeast Asia. ASEAN is the most developed political structure in the region, comprising 10 countries, led by Indonesia, and could be the legitimate leader of the basin.

B- What model of regional governance?

The first bilateral exchanges between the Congo Basin and the two leaders of the two basins, Brazil for the Amazon and Indonesia for the Borneo Mekong Basin Southeast Asia, highlighted the maturity and level of integration of the Congo Basin, through the Congo Basin Climate Commission (CCBC), established in 2016 by the African Union under the impetus of His Majesty the King of Morocco, on the sidelines of COP 22 in Marrakech.

The Amazon and Mekong Borneo Southeast Asia basins have expressed the wish to engage in close cooperation with the CCBC to fully understand its governance model, which remains under the political tutelage of its 17 member states, to serve as a basis for the development of their own regional governance model. The Blue Fund for the Congo Basin (CBDF) financing mechanism has also been the subject of interest from the Brazilian and Indonesian authorities.

The success of the OTCA, CCBC and ASEAN in cooperation with bilateral and multilateral organizations in favor of the preservation and restoration of ecosystems would allow an exchange of good practices and to extend certain programs to the scale of the other two basins, and thus generate synergies at the scale of the three basins.

Three elements underpin the fundamentals of the structuring of the Congo Basin and the challenges and opportunities for the other two regional basins:

1- The creation of a regional Climate Commission established by a legitimate regional political organization, the African Union for the Congo Basin.

- a. For the Amazon, the OTCA is the structure for internationalizing policies for the preservation and restoration of ecosystems. However, the nationalization of ecosystem governance in a South-South governance appears central in the perspective of a political management of ecosystems, in particular in the establishment of a Global Alliance of the three basins. From this point of view, Brazil, which represents 60% of the Amazon by the extent of its forest territory, appears as the natural and legitimate political leader of the Amazon basin. Brazil will play a central role in structuring the alliance of the three basins and coordinating the other member nations of the Amazon.
- b. For Southeast Asia Mekong Borneo, ASEAN is the legitimate political structure to establish the Borneo Mekong Basin Climate Commission Southeast Asia. Indonesia, the ASEAN chairman, in view of its territorial representativeness, could be designated as the lead agency and its chairman-designate Chairman of the Basin Climate Commission.

2- The creation of a legal basis in a Memorandum of Understanding, establishing the Climate Commission, setting the vision of the Heads of State and the mandate given to the Climate Commission, its President and its Permanent Secretariat.

- a. For the Amazon, Brazil could federate its regional partners to form the Climate Commission for the Amazon Basin and would carry its Permanent Secretariat. The deadlines seem tight enough to form such a regional alliance before the Three Basin Summit, but the latter could prove to be the starting point to initiate its creation on the basis of the Brazzaville exchanges.
- b. For Borneo Mekong Southeast Asia, work with ASEAN in the coming months should make it possible to initiate dialogue among its members to support the creation of the Climate Commission, and to conclude at COP 28 in Dubai.

The Oyo Memorandum⁴, supported by close cooperation with the CCBC, funded by the United Nations, should facilitate progress in the creation of this legal basis endorsed by the Heads of State of the other two basins.

3- The institutional organization of the Climate Commission with: the appointment of a lead State, President of the Climate Commission; the establishment of political governance bodies with the Council of Heads of State and the Council of Ministers of the Environment, Sustainable Development and the Basin on the political level at the level of their country the problems of the basin; its management body with a Permanent Secretariat, a Director/Secretary General, supported by a network of focal points responsible for ensuring the proper functioning of the Commission, constitutes an operational model that works and satisfies all the members of the Congo Basin Climate Commission.

- a. For the Amazon, the organization of continental and island states of the Amazon basin will have to designate its lead state, thus prefiguring the political and operational structuring. Brazil, with the support of the United Nations and the CCBC, could play a structuring role in the creation of such a regional organization;
- b. For Southeast Asia Mekong Borneo, the ASEAN Environment Commission could, with the support of Indonesia, which chairs ASEAN, play a leading role in structuring the Climate Commission for the Southeast Asia Mekong Borneo Basin. The experience of the CCBC and all the existing literature on the functioning of governance will feed the work of ASEAN within the framework of an enhanced Africa-Asia cooperation plan, led by the African Union and funded by the European Union and the United Nations.

The three areas of collaboration defined above constitute the basis for the development of the Climate Commission within the Amazon and Borneo Mekong basins in Southeast Asia.

C- What model of global governance?

The Sharm-El-Sheikh and Kunming-Montreal Agreements confer legitimacy and responsibility on the three basins of biodiversity ecosystems and tropical forests to establish a model of global governance, based on a political and strategic vision, an operational roadmap with a work program, an investment portfolio, transparent financial mechanisms and meeting international obligations and standards to receive and distribute These funds are fair and relevant within the three basins.

⁴ [MEMORANDUM-F2BC.pdf \(ccbc-cbcc.org\)](#)

In this perspective, it is fundamental that the three are structured in a global alliance with a governance scheme that should define the key elements that will govern their operating model with, in particular, the following ten governance rules:

1. The steering bodies of the alliance, their composition and the appointment of representatives of the three basins within these bodies for balanced, fair and representative governance;
2. The method of appointment of the Presidency and the 3 Vice-Presidencies of the Three Basins Alliance;
3. The rules and modus operandi of the alliance with the organizational and decision-making processes;
4. The founding and associated States;
5. The technical and financial partners of the alliance;
6. The political vision on which the Three Basins alliance is based:
7. The strategic objectives of the alliance to serve the political vision of the Heads of State and Government of the Three Basin Alliance, in support of the objectives of the Decade 2021 – 2030 for the restoration of Ecosystems :
8. The reference framework and the rules of organization of the annual rotating summit of the three Basins;
9. The method of financing the alliance, its Permanent Secretariat and its work programme, the annual operating and three-year programmatic budget;
10. Any other subject that could be the subject of approval by the three Basins for the operational functioning of the alliance.

On each of these points, a text presenting technical suggestions will be made available to the prospective leaders of the Three Basins:

- Brazil for the Amazon basin;
- The Climate Commission for the Congo Basin;
- Indonesia for Borneo Mekong Basin Southeast Asia.

D- The proposed text

[coming soon]

PANEL 2: Develop a common roadmap with a programme strategy and investment plan, to anticipate and prepare funding requests from existing and future funding mechanisms

- Chair of the Panel: forthcoming;
- Technical Rapporteur of the Panel Day 2: forthcoming;
- Political Rapporteur of the Panel Day 3: forthcoming.

A- Context

At the initiative of one State, El Salvador, followed by more than 70 other States, the United Nations General Assembly adopted, on 1 March 2019, a resolution proclaiming the period 2021–2030 as the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

The United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) aims to intensify the restoration of degraded and destroyed ecosystems globally as it is essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including climate change, poverty eradication, food security, water and biodiversity conservation. The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration must be a global effort to restore the planet and ensure the health of people and nature. This immense challenge can only be met if all actors, including States, local governments, private sector partners, academia and civil society, work together to provide viable and sustainable solutions. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) were invited to ensure the implementation of the Decade.

It is essential to restore damaged ecosystems such as forests, mangroves and peatlands, which act as carbon sinks. Preserved soils can store more nutrients and produce better quality plants, allowing the planet to feed a growing population of 9 billion by 2050, without worsening deforestation. Safeguarded ecosystems can support a wide diversity of wildlife species, now threatened with extinction. Restoring 350 million hectares of degraded landscapes by 2030 could generate \$9 trillion for rural economies in the form of ecosystem services, contributing to poverty alleviation.

Also, restoring coastal and marine ecosystems helps protect and restore some of the most biodiverse hotspots on the planet. These ecosystems also provide protection from storms, a favourable environment for fisheries and carbon sinks. Between 20% and 50% of the world's blue carbon ecosystems (highly productive vegetated coastal ecosystems such as mangroves, salt marshes and seagrass beds) have already been converted or degraded. Wetland restoration can offer 14% of the mitigation potential needed to limit global warming to 2 °C. The area covered by blue carbon ecosystems is equivalent to only 1.5% of terrestrial forest cover, but their loss and degradation is equivalent to 8.4% of CO₂ emissions due to land-based deforestation due to their high carbon stocks per hectare.

Rural communities, especially indigenous peoples, have always been stewards of ecosystems. Guaranteeing their rights and taking into account their knowledge are therefore crucial for the success of restoration and for the preservation and sustainability of much of the planet's terrestrial biodiversity. The strategy for the decade resulting from the consultations is to:

- Help define clear and measurable objectives;
- Accelerate restoration efforts to restore 350 million hectares of degraded forests by 2030;
- Reduce barriers to restoration efforts hampered, inter alia, by lack of funds and difficulties in accessing knowledge. \$1 trillion is needed to restore 350 million hectares, or 0.1% of global economic output, by 2030;
- Governments will need to align development sector planning with restoration goals, including through Nationally Determined Contributions, make additional commitments and provide additional resources;
- People contribute differently to the restoration of the planet's ecosystems. Recent discussions at the Global Landscapes Forum have highlighted the need to combine indigenous knowledge, modern technology and recent advances in scientific research. Ecosystem restoration is a local response to global challenges, as evidenced by countless global initiatives.

B- The proposed approach

The Amazon, Congo and Borneo Mekong and Southeast Asia alliance could endorse the main strategic and operational objectives of the United Nations Decade on the Restoration of Ecosystems by adopting a 2030 programme of work, based on the NDCs of the States that make up the Three Basins, which would have as its ambition **seven clear and measurable objectives** :

- Restore 350 million hectares of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems by 2030;
- Raise \$1 trillion needed to restore 350 million hectares;

- Allow the 36 member states of the Three Basin Alliance to become net carbon absorbers to continue to exercise their systemic service and ensure the role of global regulator of carbon emissions;
- Involve indigenous communities, scientists and modern technologies in the search for ecosystem restoration solutions;
- Generate, through ecosystem services and high value-added economic activities, employment and a decent income for indigenous peoples, representing 1.5 billion people;
- Support the creation of a sovereign carbon market with a view to establishing a premium carbon price representative of the costs of preserving and restoring tropical forests to ensure the long-term self-financing of the three basins in the production of their systemic services and guarantee their sustainability;
- Develop transparent, ethical and fair mechanisms for distributing carbon revenues.

The alliance's work programme will aggregate the programmatic frameworks of the Climate Commissions of the Three Amazonia, Congo and Mekong Borneo and Southeast Asia basins and their regional investment portfolios.

A block funding mechanism will ensure the collection and distribution of funds to the three basins to finance programs in each basin. This financing mechanism for the 2030 work programme of the Three Basin Alliance would aim to accelerate regional integration in political, economic and sustainable development.

A mechanism for steering and reporting on the progress and results of the alliance of the three basins on the quantitative and qualitative objectives set will be set up offering an analytical reading of the overall performance of the alliance, each basin and each Member State of the three basins.

The method used by the Congo Basin Climate Commission (CCBC) to mobilize and federate its Congo Basin Member States and their political, technical and financial partners and civil society representatives around a common project consisted in developing a work program aimed at building a portfolio of investments, to develop a common financing mechanism (the Blue Fund for the Congo Basin) and a common governance of the financial mechanism so that each of the States can fully contribute and take advantage of the means and tools provided.

This structuring strategy, based on the construction of a common heritage, has demonstrated its effectiveness in terms of the results obtained: an investment portfolio of nearly 300 projects for a valuation of 10 billion dollars of investment over a period of 10 years with a real appetite for cross-border and multi-country projects that represent about a third of all projects.

A similar initiative could be successfully initiated in the other two basins. All the methodological elements and results of the work carried out within the Congo Basin will be made available to them and within the framework of the enhanced cooperation on the one hand between the Amazon and the Congo and on the other hand between Mekong Borneo Southeast Asia and Congo.

C- The proposed text

[coming soon]

PANEL 3: Leading to a global financing mechanism, based on sovereign carbon credits and biodiversity certificates

- Chair of the Panel: forthcoming;
- Technical Rapporteur of the Panel Day 2: forthcoming;
- Political Rapporteur of the Panel Day 3: forthcoming.

A- Context

The consultation launched by the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030 highlights that lack of funding is the primary barrier to ecosystem restoration and that \$1 trillion is needed to restore 350 million hectares of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems by 2030.

Every year, the COPs are an opportunity for announcements of financial mobilization, but it is clear that these declarations remain in the state of communication and do not turn into disbursement. In this regard, and in accordance with the proposal of Louise Mushikiwabo, Secretary General of the OIF (International Organization of La Francophonie), announced funding, to be officially recognized, must be the subject of a formal commitment with a disbursement schedule. Otherwise, the rain of funding announcements at COPs undermines the credibility of all climate and biodiversity finance.

FAO's 2021 report on local financing mechanisms for forest and landscape restoration⁵ presents a fairly comprehensive overview of all existing public and private financing tools, and detailed in the form of case studies of each of these mechanisms.

This publication highlights the proliferation of local initiatives, which is a very positive signal from local actors but also illustrates a problem of scale and the inadequacy of the resources mobilized with regard to the needs required to restore ecosystems.

The IPCC regularly recalls that one of the prerequisites for achieving the common ambition of the Paris Agreement by 2050 is the halt to uncontrolled deforestation by 2030, with the risk that the ecosystem services provided by three basins of biodiversity ecosystems and tropical forests are no longer sufficient to ensure the global regulation of the planet's carbon emissions.

The challenge, therefore, is the change of scale of public and private financial mobilization to ensure sufficient and sustainable financing of ecosystems and how to mobilize \$ 1,000 billion by 2030 to restore carbon sinks (forests, mangroves, peatlands) of the three basins Amazonia, Congo, Mekong Borneo and Southeast Asia.

Ultimately, this consists of taking two actions:

- Recognize and accept the cost of carbon emissions emitted for the production of a manufactured good or a public or private service with the obligation to reduce carbon emissions, but also to offset them by financing ecosystems by a direct contribution to the financing of ecosystem restoration and preservation actions.
- Act against the world's slowness to tackle the climate crisis, behaviour that undermines our chances of limiting warming to a sustainable level, as scientists at the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warn in a new report, noting that only "urgent climate action can ensure a livable future for all".

B- The proposed approach

The establishment of a global and sustainable financing mechanism for the three basins presupposes a binding global incentive mechanism that encourages public and private actors, on the one hand, to reduce their carbon emissions in proportion to the collective effort of the Paris Agreement and on the other hand, to offset their emissions by purchasing sovereign carbon credits, in accordance with Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, to finance ecosystem services. This structured approach, which empowers carbon emitters and absorbers, and structures the carbon supply and demand market, cannot be envisaged without the single recognition of sovereign carbon credits whose legal and accounting materiality will make it possible to cancel the carbon debt of companies, States and local authorities.

The establishment of such a mechanism requires strong encouragement from the United Nations and global and regional organizations that govern trade transactions and the free movement of goods and services. It can be considered as an incentive or coercive.

⁵ Local financing mechanisms for forest and landscape restoration - FAO [cb3760en.pdf \(fao.org\)](#)

The coercive approach with a carbon tax will prove to be the most effective way in the long run but will take time to implement. On the other hand, the incentive approach could be initiated without delay by granting visible recognition to companies and public bodies of State and local authorities that meet the two mandatory conditions to benefit from a carbon neutral status:

- Reducing emissions in proportion to the ambition of the Paris Agreement;
- Offsetting emissions by purchasing sovereign carbon credits, certified by the United Nations, and paid to the Three Basins Alliance.

Finally, international and national bodies should stop recognizing funding pledges if they are not accompanied by a formal commitment with a disbursement schedule because they create confusion and disillusionment among recipient countries.

C- The proposed text

[coming soon]

DRAFT

PANEL 4: Create a sub-regional and intercontinental scientific and technical cooperation platform and strengthen the capacity of the three sub-regions

- Chair of the Panel: forthcoming;
- Technical Rapporteur of the Panel Day 2: forthcoming;
- Political Rapporteur of the Panel Day 3: forthcoming.

A- Context

The 2020 IUCN report, *Science-Based Ecosystem Restoration for the 2020s and Beyond*⁶, produced by the Scientific Working Group of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, provided a comprehensive vision of the conditions for multidimensional success in ecosystem restoration, based on the results of the consultation launched by the United Nations, as part of the 2021-2030 Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

The same consultation, which inspired the strategy for the United Nations Decade, recommends involving indigenous communities, scientists and modern technologies in the search for ecosystem restoration solutions.

The sub-regional and intercontinental scientific and technical cooperation platform will align with the various international/multilateral scientific cooperation and monitoring forums that guide global orientations on climate and biodiversity:

THE IPCC

The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) evaluates the state of knowledge on climate change, its causes, its impacts. It identifies opportunities to limit the magnitude of warming and the severity of its impacts and to adapt to expected changes. IPCC reports provide a regular inventory of the most advanced knowledge. This scientific production is at the heart of international climate negotiations. It is also fundamental to alert decision-makers and civil society. The permanent liaison between the IPCC and States is ensured by a national focal point.

In its latest report, the IPCC concludes that "*anthropogenic climate change is exposing the ocean and its ecosystems to conditions not seen in millennia.*"⁷ Ocean warming, rising sea levels, acidification, deoxygenation, and the multiplication of extreme events are all phenomena linked to climate change, with increasing consequences for marine biodiversity and the world's population. Combined with pressures from human activities, the combination of these different impacts increases the vulnerability of marine and coastal ecosystems, as well as that of all societies that depend on them. This is particularly the case for mangroves, kelp forests and coral reefs, which have already suffered significant losses – even though these ecosystems play a vital role in biodiversity and human societies by providing them with many ecosystem services.

IPBES

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) is an intergovernmental body established in 2012. It is under the aegis of the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Its mission is to constitute an interface between the scientific community and governments. It contributes to responsible policy decision-making by disseminating multidisciplinary knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystems. It is considered the "IPCC of biodiversity".

In its latest report⁸, IPBES points out that in most parts of the world, nature has now been significantly altered by multiple human factors. In total, 75% of the Earth's surface is significantly altered, 66% of the oceans are experiencing increasing cumulative impacts and more than 85% of the wetland surface has disappeared. In most tropical regions, rich in biodiversity, 32 million hectares of primary or regeneration forest were lost between 2010 and 2015. The average abundance of native species in most major terrestrial biomes has dropped by at least 20%, potentially affecting ecosystem processes and thus nature's contributions to populations.

OECD GLOBAL SCIENCE FORUM

⁶ [Science-based ecosystem restoration for the 2020s and beyond - resource | IUCN](#)

⁷ AR6 Climate Change 2022 : Impacts, Adaption and Vulnerability - GIEC

⁸ Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (2019) - IPBES

In response to the need for international collaboration in science to address complex and interrelated societal, environmental and economic challenges, the overall objective of the Global Science Forum (GSF) is to help countries improve their science policies and share the benefits of international collaboration. The GSF is a forum for consultation and mutual learning for senior science policymakers from OECD member countries. It carries out analytical work on high-priority science policy issues. More specifically, the GSF assists its members in the formulation and implementation of their science policies by:

- Exploring possibilities and mechanisms for new or strengthened international cooperation in selected priority areas;
- Defining international frameworks for the development of national or regional science policies;
- Addressing the science policy dimensions of issues of global concern.

The conclusions of the United Nations, its agencies and the scientific platforms of Climate and Biodiversity are unanimous and unambiguous with regard on the one hand to the level of criticality of biodiversity ecosystems and tropical forests and on the other hand the preeminent role of science in the search for solutions to increase the effectiveness of initiatives of the means allocated to the preservation and restoration of ecosystems.

B- The proposed approach

The implementation of the many initiatives recommending the urgent deployment of enhanced cooperation in favor of the preservation and restoration of ecosystems to fight climate change and the preservation of biodiversity will be accelerated by the creation of an intercontinental scientific platform at the scale of the three basins Amazonia, Congo, Borneo Mekong and Southeast Asia. The latter will serve seven strategic and operational objectives:

- Bring together the best scientific experts from academia and the private sector from the countries of the Three Basins Alliance Amazonia, Congo, Borneo Mekong Southeast Asia;
- Structure a scientific work programme on the restoration of biodiversity ecosystems and tropical forests;
- Disseminate the best practices developed within the three basins and support cooperation between the Member States of the three basins;
- Establish structured cooperation with public and private partners:
 - UN agencies;
 - Universities in OECD partner states;
 - Private research centres specialising in biodiversity and tropical forests;
 - Foundations and philanthropic organizations of a scientific nature;
 - The Joint Research Centre of the European Commission.
- Report the orientations and results of their work, at the annual summit of the three basins;
- Inform the Presidency, the Council of Heads of State and the Council of Ministers of the alliance of the three basins of biodiversity ecosystems and tropical forests on the solutions to be developed;
- Propose scientific projects to be financed by prioritizing projects to be integrated into the investment portfolio of the alliance of the three basins.

C- THE TEXT PROPOSED FOR DISCUSSION

[coming soon]

PANEL 5: Reintegrating climate and biodiversity into a global framework

- Chair of the Panel: forthcoming;
- Technical Rapporteur of the Panel Day 2: forthcoming;
- Political Rapporteur of the Panel Day 3: forthcoming.

A- Context

IPCC and IPBES call for integrated management of climate change and biodiversity loss

The first joint report of 2021 of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) highlights the importance of protecting biodiversity in the fight against climate change, including by using nature-based solutions. EcoAct's Research & Innovation team examined the benefits of addressing these two aspects together.

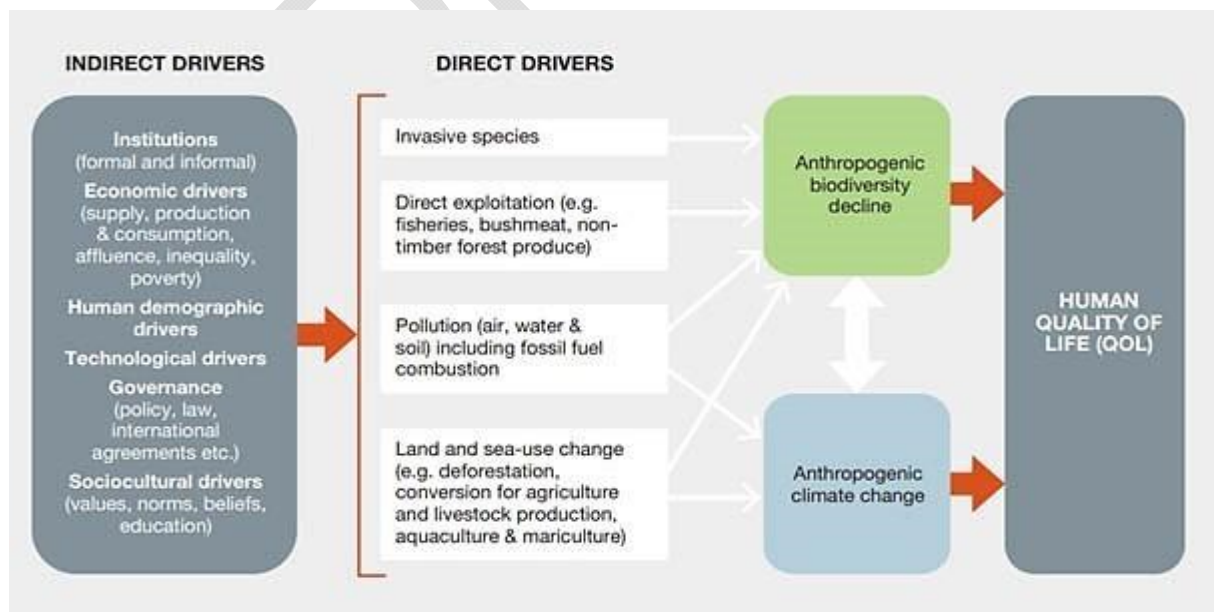
While climate and biodiversity issues have long been managed separately, there is now a growing interest in developing integrated management to accelerate action by policymakers and organizations. The IPCC/IPBES report "Biodiversity and Climate Change – Scientific Achievements", funded by the governments of the United Kingdom and Norway, highlights that biodiversity loss and climate change must be addressed together if we are to achieve our global climate and environmental ambitions.

From sustainable development to the fight against biodiversity loss and climate change

Since the 1970s, sustainable development has been the subject of international concern, revolving around the challenges of climate change and biodiversity. In the Brundtland Report (1987), it was described as "*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*." This macroscopic approach aimed to steer growth towards a resilient future for all.

Nevertheless, today, huge gaps remain between theory and the real world. Greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere are increasing, while biodiversity is collapsing. These two environmental issues have long been managed separately, which has had a negative impact on both. This report could mark a turning point by making it possible to tackle the two subjects together more effectively. It demonstrates the need to merge these challenges, citing multiple factors such as pollution and land/sea use change that have a significant impact on climate and biodiversity.

IPCC and IPBES highlight joint benefits of climate action and biodiversity protection



According to the report, "protecting and restoring carbon-rich ecosystems is the top priority from a joint perspective of climate change mitigation and biodiversity protection." Four pillars of action are identified as essential to increase climate and nature benefits:

- **Protect:** reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation coupled with biodiversity conservation and conservation of carbon-rich non-forest ecosystems on land and sea, including freshwater systems and coastal areas;
- **Restoration:** restoration of degraded ecosystems, such as wetlands that are effective carbon sinks, flood prevention ecosystems and biodiversity hotspots;
- **Manage:** valuing climate- and biodiversity-friendly agricultural, forestry and fishing practices, changes in consumption to reduce pressure on land, optimising the location of supply chains (about 30% of threats to species worldwide are linked to international commodity trade);
- **Create:** urban greening and biodiversity support to reduce energy consumption and enable cities to become carbon sinks, mitigation opportunities on new habitats combining low-carbon materials and spaces for the reintroduction of biodiversity into the city, mitigation options combining technology and nature.

The combination of positive climate and biodiversity actions shows that it can lead to climate change mitigation and the adaptation and protection of biodiversity as ecosystem services.

Towards a life-cycle vision of climate change mitigation

Although some actions are beneficial for the climate and nature, it is wrong to extrapolate the results by claiming that all mitigation actions improve ecosystem services and vice versa. The IPCC and IPBES clearly warn that reducing emissions can sometimes contribute to biodiversity collapse:

- **Poorly managed reforestation and afforestation** : Reforestation and afforestation are considered relatively cost-effective climate change mitigation options. However, if poorly managed, they can also promote the use of planted forests as sources of bioenergy, thus having adverse effects on carbon storage, water balance, biodiversity and food security of existing ecosystems. Therefore, international standards are essential for the effective management of afforestation and reforestation projects.
- **Solar energy and land-use change:** Large-scale solar power plants require land, which may involve clearing or converting otherwise managed land, limiting biodiversity.
- **Wind energy and species migration:** Land-based wind turbines can interfere with migratory or flying birds as well as bats, with mortality rates that can be of a similar magnitude to those caused by other human infrastructure (industry, cars).
- **Hydropower and ecosystem modification:** The construction of dams for freshwater storage and the creation of hydroelectricity alters the habitats of all freshwater organisms and blocks fish migration, leading to range contraction and population decline.
- **Impact of rare and critical minerals on marine ecosystems:** Given the growing demand for rare and critical metals for low-carbon technology products, deep-sea mining has raised concerns about its impact on biodiversity and ecosystem functioning, in an area that is largely understudied.

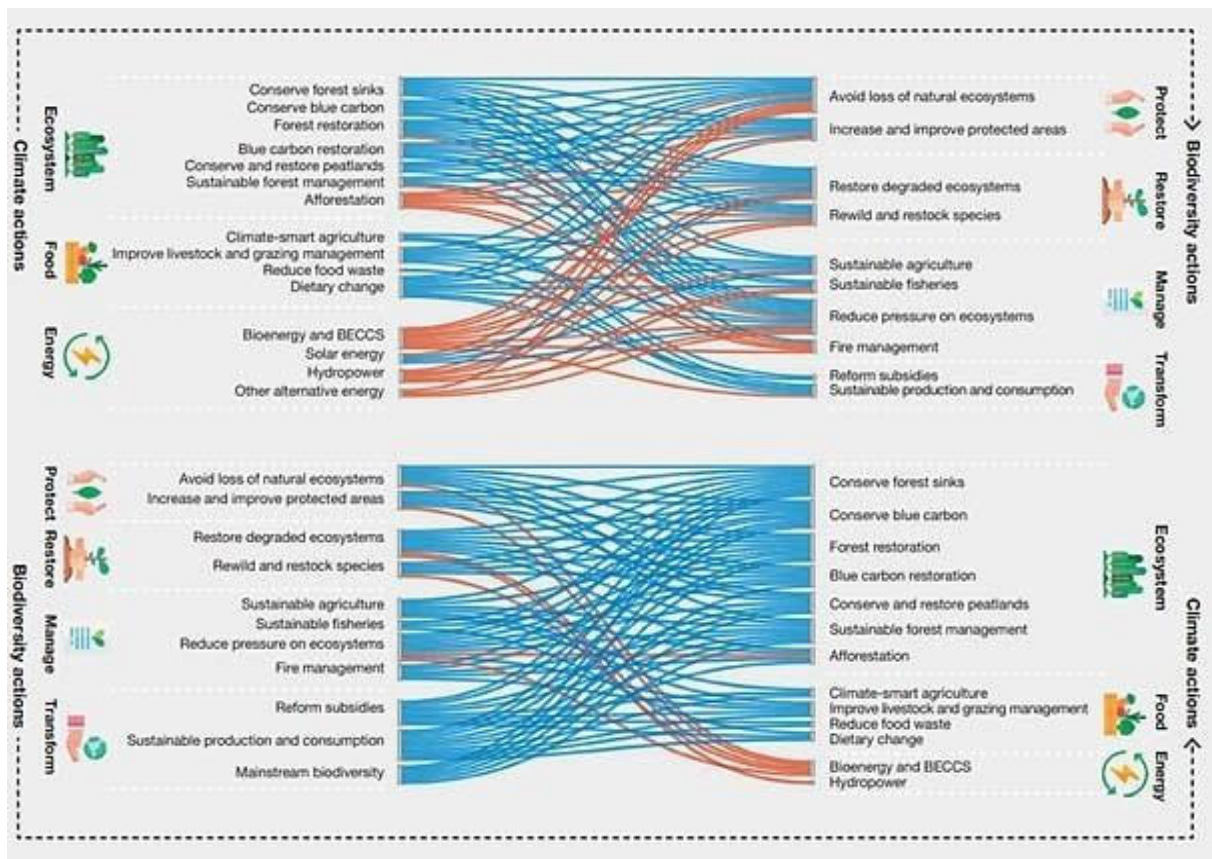


Diagram showing the positive and negative effects of climate change mitigation actions on biodiversity loss mitigation actions (top), and biodiversity loss actions on climate change mitigation actions (bottom). Blue lines represent positive effects, while orange lines represent negative effects.

This shows that the vast majority of actions involve positive co-benefits in both directions. Key warnings regarding afforestation, bioenergy, BECCS (bioenergy with carbon capture and storage) and hydropower as mitigation actions, with the potential to harm biodiversity (loss of natural ecosystems, fire management, pressure on ecosystems). Nevertheless, biodiversity actions almost always have climate benefits.

This is why it is essential to conduct life-cycle assessments of mitigation and biodiversity-focused projects. Only a multi-criteria approach will ensure strong co-benefits for the climate and nature. Knowing and recognizing trade-offs will enable intelligent integrated management for optimal reduction of greenhouse gas emissions associated with biodiversity conservation.

B- The proposed approach

The reintegration of climate and biodiversity into a global framework requires the implementation of an approach that reconciles the two themes within international regulatory bodies, work and cooperation programs at the ecosystem level and financing methods by multilateral and bilateral donors. Only this multipolar convergence will eventually make it possible to systematize the simultaneous management of the two themes.

In this perspective, the alliance - Amazonia, Congo, Mekong Borneo and South-East Asia - of the three basins of biodiversity ecosystems and tropical forests will constitute a large-scale demonstration action that will accelerate the rapprochement of the two interdependent policy issues within ecosystems and will support them at the political, technical and operational levels the work in the following areas:

- Integrated negotiating framework;
- Integrated regulatory framework ;
- Integrated Programme Framework;
- Integrated financing framework;
- Integrated communication framework.

1- Integrated Negotiating Framework

The alliance of the three basins must constitute a group for consultation, proposals and negotiations (ad hoc group on biodiversity and tropical forest ecosystems) within the multilateral climate (climate COP) and biodiversity (biodiversity COP) multilateral for a. This status will allow it to raise and instil within these two bodies the problems and solutions responding to them to include them in the texts and means decided by the Climate Convention and the Biodiversity Convention.

2- Integrated regulatory framework

The comparative review of the Paris Agreement and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework would make it possible to verify the elements of alignment and possible discrepancies between the two institutional frameworks with a view to seeking convergence of texts, particularly on the target objectives and provisions governing the basins of biodiversity ecosystems and tropical forests, and avoiding contradictory incentives or obligations. Although not legally mandated as a treaty, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework is a strategic plan, endorsed by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The alliance of the three basins will work closely with the two Conventions on the coherence and convergence of the two institutional frameworks impacting support for the preservation and restoration of ecosystems for climate and biodiversity.

3- Integrated programme framework

The parties committed to support the common ambition of the Paris Agreement through their Nationally Determined Contributions which set out the climate roadmap for mitigation and adaptation. These same parties endorsed the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which is the strategic plan for biodiversity. This implies that these two ecosystem-level roadmaps converge and come together in a common programmatic framework, a common reporting system, similar to the national climate communications relating to the transparency framework of Article 13 of the Paris Agreement.

The alliance of the three basins will work closely with the two Conventions on the development of an integrated climate and biodiversity roadmap and integrated programmatic framework for the preservation and restoration of ecosystems.

4- Integrated Funding Framework

The financing of adaptation and mitigation activities is specific to financial instruments dedicated to the fight against climate change such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Climate Change Adaptation Fund (CCAF). Biodiversity finance is specific to environmental financial instruments such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF). With regard to bilateral financial instruments, again the financing programmes are specific to climate actions or environmental actions.

The alliance of the three basins will work closely with the United Nations and the European Union and their multilateral financial instruments and with bilateral donors to build bridges between the instruments themselves, and to create new cross-cutting "climate – biodiversity" financing lines integrated with bilateral donors for the preservation and restoration of Ecosystems.

In addition, the alliance of the three basins plans to create a financing mechanism common to the three basins to rationalize and accelerate the financing of the preservation and restoration of ecosystems and thus limit the slowness of the GCF, the ELF and the Adaptation Fund whose administrative time due to the slowness and complexity of the procedures prove incompatible with climate and biodiversity issues.

5- Integrated Communications Framework

The climate and biodiversity COPs are essential meeting points for sharing, proposing, initiating, promoting, establishing partnerships and financing new initiatives, results and experiences of the parties and their partners. The alliance of the three basins wishes to place biodiversity ecosystems and tropical forests at the heart of these two global events for the climate and the environment.

The alliance - Amazonia, Congo, Borneo Mekong Southeast Asia - of the three basins of Biodiversity Ecosystems and Tropical Forests will federate within a common pavilion the ecosystems of the three basins that represent 80% of the world's biodiversity, ensures the vital role of global regulator of the carbon balance should capture 80% of the existing and future financial mobilization announced at COP 27 for climate and COP 15 for biodiversity.

C- The proposed text

[coming soon]

V – Framing of side-events*

**All side-event concept notes are expected by October 3.*

Side-event n° 14: The place of local authorities in ecosystem management

Framing elements:

The Summit of the three largest forest basins on the planet is an initiative created by the President of the Congo Basin Commission, His Excellency Denis Sassou N' Guesso, President of the Republic of Congo, to lay the foundations for a renewed and strengthened South-South collaborative framework around the preservation of the three forest basins given their fundamental roles in regulating the global climate system, in particular by the scale of its carbon sequestration, which is at the heart of the challenges of the objectives of the Paris Agreement. Congo's forest basins with the Amazon and South Asia Borneo and Mekong account for 80% of the world's tropical forests and are home to two-thirds of the world's biodiversity.

As the planet suffers from the crises of the climate emergency, the loss of its biodiversity and the devastating damage to the environment, the communities of three of the most important rivers on the planet, recognizing the rights of nature as interdependent with the rights of humanity, are fighting to preserve life and its human, plant and animal ecosystems.

Given the frontline position of local and regional governments and local communities, the Summit will aim to bring them to play a central role in the conversation and preservation of the ancestral know-how of different communities, such as indigenous communities, who have traditionally been stewards of the planet. It is indeed high time to listen to the advice of those who have respected and developed a specific relationship with Nature and Life, protected the continuous fabric that unites life from the depths of forests and jungles to urban environments. The LRG Day organized on 22 March on the occasion of the United Nations Water Conference 2023 recalled the crucial importance of strengthening cooperation at all levels around the basins. This was recalled in the Global Task Force (GTF) statement issued on 22 March 2023.

In this respect, it should be noted that the conclusions of the latest IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) report insist on the fact that the forest sector can make an important contribution to efforts to mitigate global warming. We face a dual challenge: adapting forests to new climatic conditions and mitigating the greenhouse effect. In particular, cooperation tools such as peer learning, inclusive governance and a renewed partnership framework guided by the principle of common but differentiated responsibility must be disseminated and strengthened. There is also a need for a programme of acceleration and implementation of solutions to restore and close the financial gap to address this problem. The creation of a specific Fund for Loss and Damage at COP27 was an important step forward in recognizing the essential role of local communities in protecting biodiversity, water, the environment and the planet in general, as also reported in the Pact for the Future of Humanity, the new social contract to which the Local Governments of the World committed themselves at the Daejeon Congress, in November 2022.

Moreover, humanity has long regarded rivers as natural boundaries. They are often used to limit the territories in which the political mandate is exercised. But rivers know no other frontiers than their banks. Carrying their water from their upper reaches to their lower reaches, they travel through states, regions, and local communities.

Aware of the induced effects of river pollution, governments at all levels - and especially local governments because of their proximity to the population - are called upon to engage in dialogue on river management as catalysts for life. United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG Africa) is mobilizing for the organization of a Forum of Local and Regional Governments, directly involving local and regional authorities of the three basins, to bring this crucial issue to the highest level of global governance, in synergy with Nations and with Local and Regional Governments confronted on a daily basis with the adverse effects of climate change and biodiversity degradation.

UCLG Africa, initiator of this dynamic, with the support of the Latin American Federation of Cities Municipalities (UCLG Flacma) and United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific (UCLG Aspac), coordinated by the UCLG World Secretariat, has engaged in this process, with a view to promoting a space for dialogue for Local Governments to express their needs and concerns, share solutions and ideas, so that UCLG World can carry the voice of the local authorities of the three basins on the world stage and

ultimately allow a better respect for this part of the Earth which ensures the global balance of biodiversity, and which undoubtedly constitutes a firewall against global warming.

In this perspective, the organization of this forum will be structured around four central themes of the agenda of solutions to this forestry problem. The Forum aims to outline a new approach oriented towards and through action and where the different actors are at the service of a common ambition configured around an inclusive governance framework and an action and cooperation plan for the preservation and enhancement of this world natural heritage.

Initially, there will be a debate and exchanges on the issue of carbon sequestration and the opportunities offered by the carbon market in the preservation and enhancement of forest heritage.

In a second step, the discussions will focus on loss and damage and highlighting the problem of access of local and regional authorities to potential resources and the governance of their implementation.

The third sequence should concern the decentralized cooperation component between the three watersheds and the partnership component as a lever for accelerating the just and equitable transition towards a process of decoupling pressure on resources and growth.

Finally, the fourth session will focus on the definition of a common position and the establishment of a decentralized framework for the operationalization and territorialization of the Declaration of the Three Watersheds Summit.

Opening and framing session:

Facilitated by Mr Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi, Secretary General of UCLG Africa

- **Ms. Arlette Soudan-Nonault**, Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development and Congo Basin;
- **Mr. Alioune Ndoye**, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of Senegal;
- **Mr. Lee White**, Minister of Water, Forests, Sea and Environment of Gabon;
- **Mr. Dieudonné Bantsimba**, President of the Association of Mayors of Congo and Mayor of Brazzaville;
- **Ms Emilia Saiz**, Secretary General of UCLG World;
- Representative of the Amazon Basin;
- Representative of the Borneo-Mekong Basin;
- Representative of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- Representative of the UNFCCC.

Session 1: Carbon Market: Opportunities to structure the action agenda of the three forest basins

Moderated by UCLG; UCLG Flacma

Stakeholders from target countries:

- 2 cities representing the Congo Basin: Gabon; Congo;
- 2 cities representing the Amazon Basin: Brazil; Colombia; Venezuela;
- 2 cities representing the Greater Mekong Basin: China; Vietnam;
- The World Bank (CPLC);
- The African Development Bank (AfDB).

Session 2: Loss and damage: towards direct access to finance for local and regional authorities

Moderator: Mr Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi, Secretary General of UCLG Africa

We are now entering an era marked by an increase in the impacts of climate change. Loss and damage is intensifying and placing a heavy burden on ensuring a fair and equitable resilient low-carbon transition.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the rate of forest loss worldwide is alarming. 420 million hectares of forests were lost to deforestation between 1990 and 2020, an area equivalent to the size of the EU.

This worrying process exacerbated by climate change and deforestation is taking place intensively mainly in the three major forest basins of the Amazon, Borneo Mekong Southeast Asia and Congo.

In response to the objectives of the Paris Agreement on greenhouse emissions, an incentive mechanism has been put in place to reduce deforestation and REDD+ forest degradation.

This session will be an opportunity to address and identify the different levers to repair loss and damage and register local authorities and communities.

- 2 cities representing the Congo Basin: Equatorial Guinea; Cameroon;
- 2 cities representing the Amazon Basin: Brazil; Colombia; Venezuela
- 2 cities representing the Greater Mekong Basin: China; Cambodia; Vietnam
- The World Bank
- The African Development Bank (AfDB)
- Bank of Central African States (BEAC)
- C40

Session 3: Decentralized and partnership cooperation as a guarantee of structured and coordinated action for the safeguarding and enhancement of the forest ecosystem

Moderator: Emilia Saiz, Secretary General of UCLG World

South-South cooperation is an accelerating lever and plays a central role in the implementation of the action agenda because it is based on the same concept of development: Concept based on collective action and solidarity between the three basins

During this session, the various speakers will be able to discuss how to unite and systematize efforts to achieve the expected objectives and thus take advantage of synergies in terms of exchange of experience; capacity building; transfer of technology and know-how; and the establishment of exchange platforms.

Speakers:

- **The *Minister* of Territorial Administration, Decentralization and Development of Congo**
- **Secretary General of UCLG Flacma**
- **Secretary General of UCLG ASPAC**
- **The Secretary General of UCLG Africa**

Wrap-up and Closing Session:

The session will focus on defining a common political position based on a decentralized framework for the operationalization and territorialization of the Three Watersheds Summit Declaration.

Side-event n° 18: Women, locomotives of climate and biodiversity

- Partner : OIF - UN Women
- Chair of the Panel: forthcoming;
- Technical Rapporteur of the Panel Day 2: forthcoming;
- Political Rapporteur of the Panel Day 3: forthcoming.

A- Context

THE KUNMING-MONTRÉAL GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework **reaffirms its expectation that Parties and other Governments ensure that the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities are respected and implemented in the implementation of the Kunming Global Biodiversity Framework in Montreal.**

It clarifies that it aims to catalyze, enable and galvanize urgent and transformative action by governments, subnational and local governments, and with the participation of society as a whole, to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, achieve the results it defines in its vision, mission, goals and targets, and thereby contribute to the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its protocols.

Finally, it recognizes the important roles and contributions of indigenous peoples and local communities as stewards of biodiversity and partners in conservation, restoration and sustainable use. Its implementation must ensure that their rights, knowledge, including traditional knowledge associated with biodiversity, innovations, worldviews, values and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities are respected, documented, preserved with their free, prior and informed consent, including through their full and effective participation in decision-making, in accordance with relevant national legislation, international instruments, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and human rights law. In this regard, nothing in this framework can be interpreted as diminishing or extinguishing the rights that indigenous peoples now have or may acquire in the future.

THE PARIS AGREEMENT

The Paris Agreement states that Parties recognize that adaptation action should follow a country-driven, gender-sensitive, participatory and fully transparent approach, taking into account vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, and should take into account and be guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional knowledge, indigenous peoples' knowledge and local knowledge systems, with a view to integrating adaptation into relevant socio-economic and environmental policies and measures, as appropriate.

It affirms that the Parties shall cooperate in taking, as appropriate, measures to improve education, training, awareness-raising, public participation and public access to information in the field of climate change, taking into account the importance of such measures in strengthening action under this Agreement.

THE UNITED NATIONS STRATEGY FOR ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION 2021 – 2030

The strategy for the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030 highlights the role of rural communities, particularly indigenous peoples, who have always been stewards of ecosystems. Guaranteeing their rights and taking into account their role and knowledge are therefore crucial for the success of restoration and for the protection of a large part of the planet's terrestrial biodiversity.

UNEP

The UNEP Civil Society Unit is committed to working in partnership with major groups and stakeholders to ensure transparency and inclusiveness in UNEP's intergovernmental decision-making process. He has been mandated to engage with accredited civil society organizations such as non-profit organizations, networks and associations, as opposed to individual companies or individuals, who bring valuable research, expertise and advocacy functions to the table. These UNEP allies and partners provide long-term, broad-based and essential support to UNEP's mission and mandate.

UNEP strives to ensure effective and balanced participation of major groups and stakeholders as they play a central role in providing relevant expertise and knowledge. They also channel the voices of those most likely to be directly affected by environmental issues and related policies and draw the necessary attention to emerging issues as they reach their respective communities and the general public.

Recognizing the crucial role of civil society, member Governments endorsed UNEP's practice of organizing the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF) – in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA). The Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum aims to inform civil society actors about current and future UNEP policies and to provide a platform for representatives of major groups to exchange views and develop common ground to contribute to policy dialogues at the multi-stakeholder level during UNEA. The Forum is preceded by preparatory Regional Consultative Meetings (RCMs) within civil society to ensure that regional perspectives on all UNEP mandates are included in the Environment Assembly.

Interaction between UNEP and civil society has increased considerably over the past decade and more than 800 NGOs now have formal consultative status. Organizations that wish to seize this opportunity and make their voices heard at UNEP can get directly involved by applying for accreditation with UNEP's United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), which grants them observer status with UNEA.

A WOMAN

Gender inequality and climate change

Around the world, women are more dependent on, but have less access to, natural resources. In many areas, women bear disproportionate responsibility for the provision of food, water and fuel. Agriculture is the most important sector of employment for women in low- and middle-income countries. During periods of drought and erratic rainfall, women, as agricultural workers and mainly in charge of purchasing, work harder to secure their families' income and resources. This puts additional pressure on girls, who often have to drop out of school to help their mothers cope with this increased burden.

Women, pillars in the fight against climate change

Around the world, women play a vital role in the management of natural resources and are key actors in biodiversity conservation. Women, especially low-income women in rural areas, most often depend on forests for fuel, fodder and food. They are therefore at the forefront of identifying innovative solutions and developing action programmes based on successful experiences. As representatives of indigenous communities, they have their trust. This situation gives them a prominent place in the implementation of innovative programs and in supporting local populations for change.

Consequently, the role, place and co-benefits of the involvement of civil society in the preservation and restoration of ecosystems is well established, as its value is recognized. The place of women as driving forces in the structuring of civil society and the fight against gender inequalities in the face of climate change is a central issue in the preparation of the texts that will inspire the future of the alliance of the three basins and its modus operandi. The Three Basin Summit wishes to closely involve representatives of civil society in the construction of the Three Basin Alliance, its governance and the implementation of its work programme.

B- The proposed approach

Civil society mobilization and engagement will be at the heart of the process of creating the Three Basin Alliance of Biodiversity Ecosystems and Tropical Forests and in its implementation plan. In this perspective, the Three Basins Summit plans to:

- Include in the terms of reference of the official delegations of the States of the Three Basins the participation of civil society actors. It is up to each of the official delegations to mobilize and invite representatives of civil society that they consider useful in view of their current and future role;
- Place the role of women at the heart of the structuring of civil society in the preservation and restoration of ecosystems;
- Involve civil society representatives in the governance of the Three Basins Alliance;
- Involve representatives of civil society in reflections on all the themes of the construction of the Three Basins alliance and aimed at establishing the fundamentals of an inclusive and long-term collaboration;
- Involve civil society representatives in the events and actions carried out during the climate and biodiversity COPs by the Three Basins Alliance.

A- The proposed text

[coming soon]