

Aligning international financial flows and the COMIFAC Convergence Plan

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Introduction

Central African forests, including those in the Congo Basin, play an essential role at the global level. They help to regulate the global climate, in part through the exchange of gases, which has led to them being designated the planet's 'second tropical forest lung'. The carbon stock held in their biomass and peatlands is estimated at 80 billion tons, equivalent to almost 10 years of global carbon dioxide emissions.¹ Central Africa's undisturbed forests now sequester more carbon than those in the Amazon (Dalimier et al. unpublished) and South-East Asia, and currently constitute the world's largest tropical carbon sink.² According to recent estimates by Global Forest Watch (GFW) researchers, forests in the Congo Basin sequester 600 million tons of CO₂ more than they emit annually. On average, these forests emit 530 million tons of carbon each year – a figure that has remained stable – and remove 1.1 billion tons.³

Central Africa is a priority conservation region for biodiversity, considering its exceptional natural heritage and high level of endemism. Its ecosystems constitute a common good for both present and future generations (Pierre Proce et al. 2021). The forests of Central Africa are integral to the lives of around 100 million people, who live within or around their borders. They perform essential social and cultural functions for the local and indigenous peoples who thrive there.

However, the forests of Central Africa seem to attract less attention than those of the Amazon or South-East Asia, whether from official or private international actors or philanthropic initiatives. For example, one analysis by the Central African Forest Observatory (OFAC) found that, over the 10 years from 2008 to 2017, Central African forests received only around 11 percent of international financial flows for the sustainable management and conservation of the planet's tropical forests.⁴

In response to this situation, the Central African Forestry Commission (COMIFAC) has drawn up a Convergence Plan and an accompanying business plan. These documents provide figures on the funding needed to support the sustainable management and conservation of forest ecosystems in Central Africa. The Convergence Plan and the corresponding business plan serve as a strategic

1 https://www.lemonde.fr/planete/visuel/2021/10/29/le-bassin-du-congo-deuxieme-puits-de-carbone-du-monde-entre-preservation-et-exploitation_6100375_3244.html

2 https://www.africamuseum.be/fr/research/discover/news/tropical_forests_carbon_sink

3 <https://www.globalforestwatch.org/blog/climate/forests-carbon-emissions-sink-flux/>

4 https://www.observatoire-comifac.net/docs/policy_brief/OFAC-Brief-03-fr-web.pdf

framework for attracting funding and organizing the implementation of activities aimed at the sustainable management and conservation of Central African forests.

This chapter highlights the funding needs of Central African forests and identifies possible ways to overcome the challenge of funding their sustainable management and conservation, with particular emphasis on funding from sources outside the region.

4.1 An overview of the COMIFAC Convergence Plan

The COMIFAC subregional Convergence Plan serves as a reference and coordination framework for all interventions relating to the conservation and sustainable management of forest ecosystems and the fight against climate change in Central Africa. The Convergence Plan was adopted in February 2005 in Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo, and revised and approved in July 2014 by the COMIFAC Council of Ministers for the 10 years from 2015 to 2025.

The Convergence Plan is rooted in the international, regional and subregional conventions, treaties and agreements that COMIFAC countries have signed up to (including the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030). It must therefore be implemented in accordance with the fundamental values set out in the Yaoundé Declaration, including:

1. Respect for human rights and the rights of indigenous peoples;
2. Gender mainstreaming;
3. Cooperation, partnership and solidarity;
4. Good governance.

The Convergence Plan is divided into six priority areas:

1. Harmonization of forest and environmental policies;
2. Management and sustainable exploitation of forest resources;
3. Conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity;
4. Combating the effects of climate change and desertification;
5. Socioeconomic development and multi-stakeholder participation;
6. Sustainable financing.

The plan also sets out three cross-cutting themes:

1. Training and capacity building;
2. Research and development;
3. Communication, awareness raising, information and education.

4.2 Current sources of funding for the sustainable management and conservation of forests in the COMIFAC area

Part of the funding for the forestry sector in Central Africa, whether from the subregion's governments or external partners, is currently channelled through the COMIFAC Executive Secretariat. A significant portion is also disbursed by donors to countries directly through bilateral channels. In all cases, the Convergence Plan is rarely mentioned as a framework for mobilizing funding.

4.2.1 Funding through the COMIFAC Executive Secretariat

The COMIFAC Executive Secretariat receives three types of funding: the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) grant, contributions from Member States and funding from partners. Contributions from ECCAS and its Member States are generally assigned to operational costs, while those from partners are allocated to the implementation of the activities under the Convergence Plan and the Annual Work Plan of the COMIFAC Executive Secretariat and Office of the Presidency.

Contributions from ECCAS and Member States

To finance its own operations and activities, ECCAS has designed and implemented a self-financing mechanism called the “Community Contribution to Integration” (CCI). The CCI is funded by a levy – set at 0.4 percent – on products imported from third countries into the ECCAS area. The Extraordinary Conference of Ministers of ECCAS-COMIFAC held in Kinshasa in September 2009 adopted a resolution to automatically direct 0.1 percent of the CCI to COMIFAC for its operations, as part of the self-financing mechanism. However, the amounts agreed have not been paid consistently and ECCAS has struggled to collect the levy itself. To date, the Central African Republic is the only country that has implemented this resolution. Nevertheless, the ECCAS contribution could constitute an important source of funding for COMIFAC operations. Indeed, ECCAS did contribute XAF 320 million in 2018.⁵ The outlook in terms of stabilizing this funding source is all the more encouraging given the institutional reforms at ECCAS in 2020, which reflect policymakers' growing interest in this institution, on which COMIFAC depends. The implementation of this self-financing mechanism is one of the best routes to consolidating COMIFAC's achievements.

Member States contribute XAF 45 million per country each year. However, most do not contribute regularly. Although the Council of Ministers designated the self-financing mechanism as COMIFAC's primary source of funding, it is not operational in the vast majority of countries in the subregion. Contribution arrears amounted to nearly XAF 3 billion in 2021 and only Cameroon has paid in full. In contrast, Sao Tome and Principe has not paid any dues since joining COMIFAC.

This low level of direct contributions makes it difficult for COMIFAC to fulfil its missions. The fact that there are no sanctions for countries that do not contribute and no benefits for those that pay in full prevents COMIFAC from reaching its potential.

⁵ Approximately EUR 487,805

Funding for subregional initiatives from partners

Partners and other development actors have set up initiatives (projects, programmes and platforms) to support the implementation of the Convergence Plan. In 2020, a dozen subregional programmes and projects were implemented under the coordination and/or supervision of the Executive Secretariat. Among these partners, Germany plays a major role (from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and German national development bank KfW often channelled through the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)). Germany's financial commitments to Central Africa for 2005–2022 total EUR 147 million.

The European Union (EU) is another particularly important partner. European funding under the theme of information management totalled EUR 14 million from 2007 to 2022. This funding has been used to support the Central African Forest Observatory (OFAC) in various ways.⁶

The most emblematic EU initiative in the Central Africa subregion is however implemented through the Central African Forest Ecosystem (ECOFAC) programme. This funding is channelled through ECCAS and not COMIFAC because the ECOFAC programme pre-existed the establishment of COMIFAC. Established in 2007 under the Lomé Convention (EU-Africa, Caribbean and Pacific), the ECOFAC programme has gone through six successive phases, the last of which alone required funding of nearly EUR 85.5 million (Brugiere and Donfack 2021).

In addition to those benefiting from German and EU funding, several other subregional projects under initiatives spearheaded by the COMIFAC Executive Secretariat have received funding over the past 5 years:

- Congo Basin Ecosystems Conservation Support Programme (PACEBCo) (AfDB);
- Regional REDD+ Institutional Capacity Building project (Global Environment Facility – GEF);
- COMIFAC support project (Japan International Cooperation Agency – JICA);
- CBSP-Partnerships for Biodiversity Conservation: Sustainable financing of Protected Areas in the Congo Basin-PIMS 3447 (United Nations Development Programme – UNDP);
- Public-Private Partnership for the sustainable management of Central African forests (P3FAC) (French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) – France).

These projects or programmes support COMIFAC to achieve its objectives through their activities on the ground. Under a resolution passed by the Council of Ministers, partners must pay a share of the budget of any programme or project to COMIFAC as a management fee to facilitate the institution's operations. However, several projects carried out under the auspices of COMIFAC do not comply with this requirement. Partners often justify their failure to pay COMIFAC management fees for projects and programmes based on the internal rules imposed by donors to satisfy the requirements governing the management of public funds in contributing countries. Unpaid management fees, combined with the difficulty of collecting Member States' contributions, make it difficult for COMIFAC to operate effectively.

⁶ African Forests (FORAF), Consolidating the Central African Forest Observatory (CEOFAC), Observatory of Biodiversity and Protected Areas of Central Africa (OBAPAC), Strengthening and institutionalizing the Central Africa Forest Observatory (RIOFAC), Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA), Joint Research Centre Convention

4.2.2 Analysis of international financial flows to the Central African forest and environment sector

A study was conducted by Favada et al. (2019) on international financial flows for the sustainable management and conservation of forest ecosystems in Central Africa covering 2008–2017.

The main results of the study by Favada et al. (2019) are that, the bilateral and multilateral financial flows to forests and the environment totaled approximately USD 2 billion from 2008 to 2017. EODA aid accounted for more than three-quarters of the total FEODA aid. Over the study period, the evolution of bilateral and multilateral flows was very irregular. Since 2015, both flows have steadily decreased (see Figure 4.1).

The top five of all FEODA donors, in descending order, were Germany, EU, GEF, United States and World Bank. The top five FEODA bilateral aid donors, in descending order, were Germany, United States, France, Japan and Sweden. Finland and Denmark were completely absent in Central Africa during the study period. The top five FEODA multilateral aid donors, in descending order, were EU, GEF, World Bank, CIF and AfDB. GCF and the Adaptation Fund were completely absent in Central Africa during the study period. Figure 4.2 shows that Germany is top 1 overall donor of FEODA, both bilateral and multilateral.

The top five recipients of all FEODA aid, in descending order, were DRC, Chad, Cameroon, Rwanda and Gabon. Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome and Principe accounted for less than 1 percent each of all FEODA aid. The top five recipients of FEODA bilateral aid in descending order, were DRC, Chad, Cameroon, Rwanda and Gabon. The top five recipients of FEODA multilateral aid, in descending order, were DRC, Chad, Cameroon, Rwanda and Congo. Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome and Principe each accounted for the lowest share (0.1 percent) of multilateral and bilateral FEODA aid.

The top five areas financed by all FEODA aid, in descending order, were biodiversity, environmental policy and its administrative management, forestry policy and its administrative management,

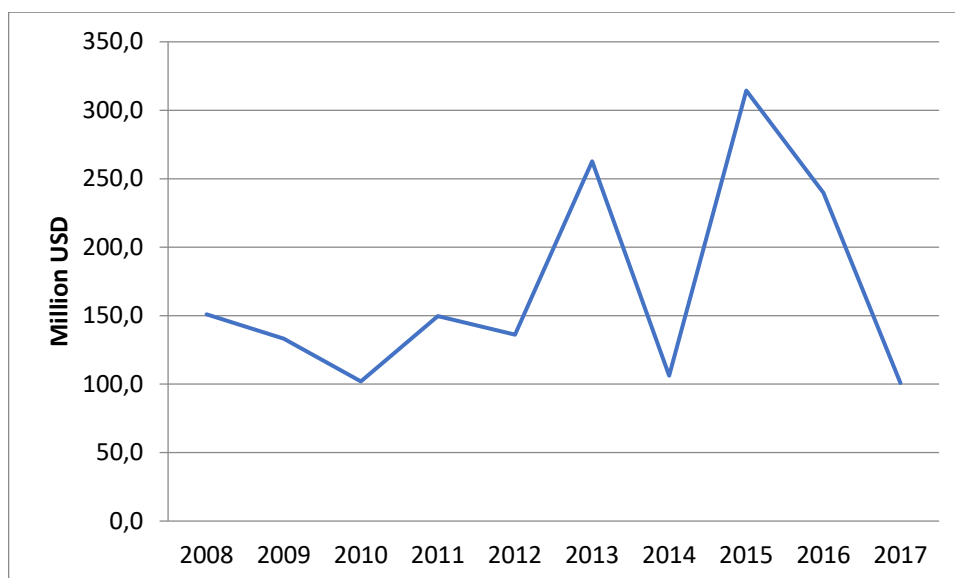


Figure 4.1: International funding flows to Central Africa Forest and Environment (Favada et al. 2019)

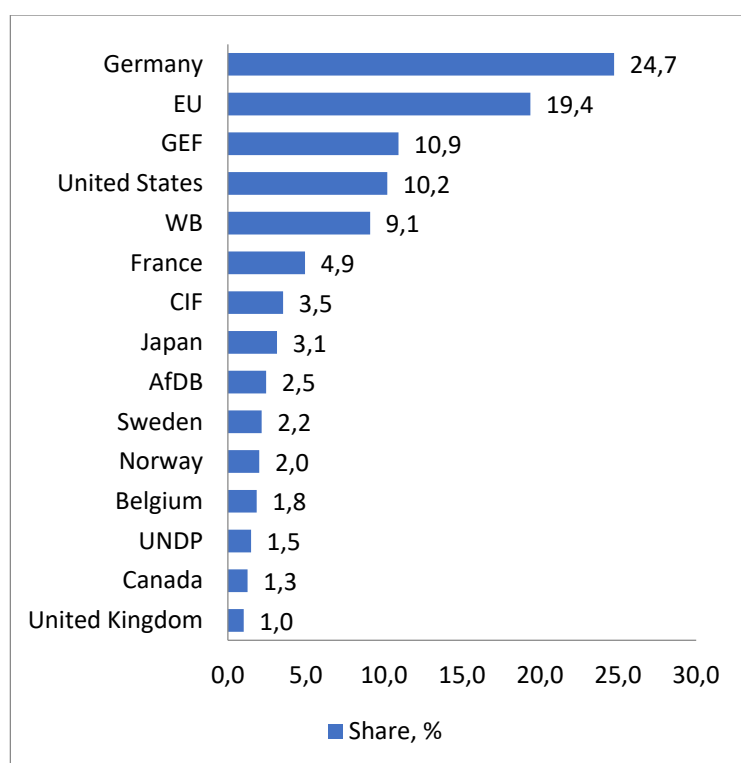


Figure 4.2: Share of total Forest and Environment Official Development Assistance (FEODA) per donor

Source: Favada et al. 2019

environmental research and biosphere protection. The top five areas financed by FEODA bilateral aid, in descending order, included biodiversity, environmental policy and its administrative management, environmental research, forestry policy and its administrative management, and forest enhancement. The top five areas financed by multilateral financial flows, in descending order, were environmental policy and its administrative management, biodiversity, biosphere protection, forest policy and its administrative management, and forest enhancement.

The top five areas financed by all FEODA aid accounted for 89% of the total amount of the FEODA. This constitutes a thematic imbalance of the total FEODA to CA.

Bilateral donor presence was high in Rwanda, Cameroon, DRC and Congo, and lowest in Equatorial Guinea. Bilateral donor absence was high in Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe, Chad and Gabon. Cameroon and Rwanda recorded the highest number of donor presence. Fourteen donors were absent in Equatorial Guinea and 12 absent in Sao Tome and Principe. Seventeen bilateral donors financed 470 ODA projects in Central Africa from 2008 to 2017. The DRC received the largest share, followed by Rwanda and Cameroon. Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome and Principe received less than 5 percent of all bilateral ODAs to Central Africa. On average, the DRC received ODA funding for 9 projects per year, followed by Cameroon and Rwanda (8 each), Congo (5), Chad and Gabon (4 each), Burundi and CAR (3 each), Equatorial Guinea (2), and Sao Tome and Principe (1). Burundi did not receive bilateral ODA in 2017 and Sao Tome and Principe did not receive any ODA in 2010, 2011 and 2015.

Multilateral donor presence was high in Rwanda, Congo, DRC and Cameroon. Equatorial Guinea recorded the lowest number of multilateral donors. Equatorial Guinea recorded the highest number

of multilateral donor absences, followed by Burundi and Sao Tome and Principe. Ten multilateral donors were absent in Equatorial Guinea. Twelve multilateral donors financed 189 multilateral ODA projects in Central Africa. Cameroon received the highest number of multilateral ODA flows, followed by DRC, Congo and Chad. On average, Cameroon, Congo and DRC received about three multilateral ODAs, followed by Burundi, CAR, Chad, Gabon and Rwanda receiving 2 each, and Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome and Principe received 1 each. Burundi did not receive multilateral ODA in 2010. CAR did not receive multilateral ODA in 2015. Equatorial Guinea did not receive multilateral ODA from 2014 to 2017. Gabon did not receive multilateral ODA in 2008. Sao Tome and Principe did not receive multilateral ODA in 2009, 2010 and from 2014 to 2017.

4.2.3 Thematic areas supported by international funding for the conservation and sustainable management of Central African forests

According to Favada et al. (2019), the top five thematic areas supported by international financial flows from 2008 to 2017 were: biodiversity (27 percent of all ODA for forests and the environment to Central Africa); environmental policies and their administrative management (26 percent); forest policies and their administrative management (15 percent); environmental research (11 percent); and biosphere protection (10 percent).

Forestry administration and environmental education and training accounted for the lowest share, with less than 0.03 percent each. Environmental research, forestry education and training, fuelwood and forestry research received negligible amounts.

4.2.4 Differences between Central Africa and other tropical regions

Central Africa recorded the lowest share of all FEODA aid directed to the three tropical zones, the Amazon Basin, Central Africa and South-East Asia. South-East Asia received the highest share.

In Central Africa, the top five areas financed by bilateral aid, in increasing order, were biodiversity, environmental policy and its administrative management, environmental research, forestry policy and its administrative management, and forest enhancement. In the Amazon Basin, the top five areas financed, in increasing order, were environmental policy and its administrative management, biodiversity, biosphere protection, forestry policy and its administrative management, and forestry enhancement. In South-East Asia, the top five areas financed, in order of importance, were environmental policy and its administrative management, flood prevention or control, biodiversity, forestry policy and its administrative management, and biosphere protection.

Comparing the top five areas financed by bilateral aid in Central Africa, Amazon Basin and South-East Asia, the common areas financed by bilateral aid are biodiversity, environmental policy and its administrative management, and forestry policy and its administrative management. Biodiversity ranked first for Central Africa, it was second for the Amazon Basin and third for South-East Asia. Environmental policy and its administrative management ranked second for Central Africa, first for Amazon Basin and South-East Asia. Forestry policy and its administrative management ranked fourth for Central Africa, Amazon Basin and South-East Asia.

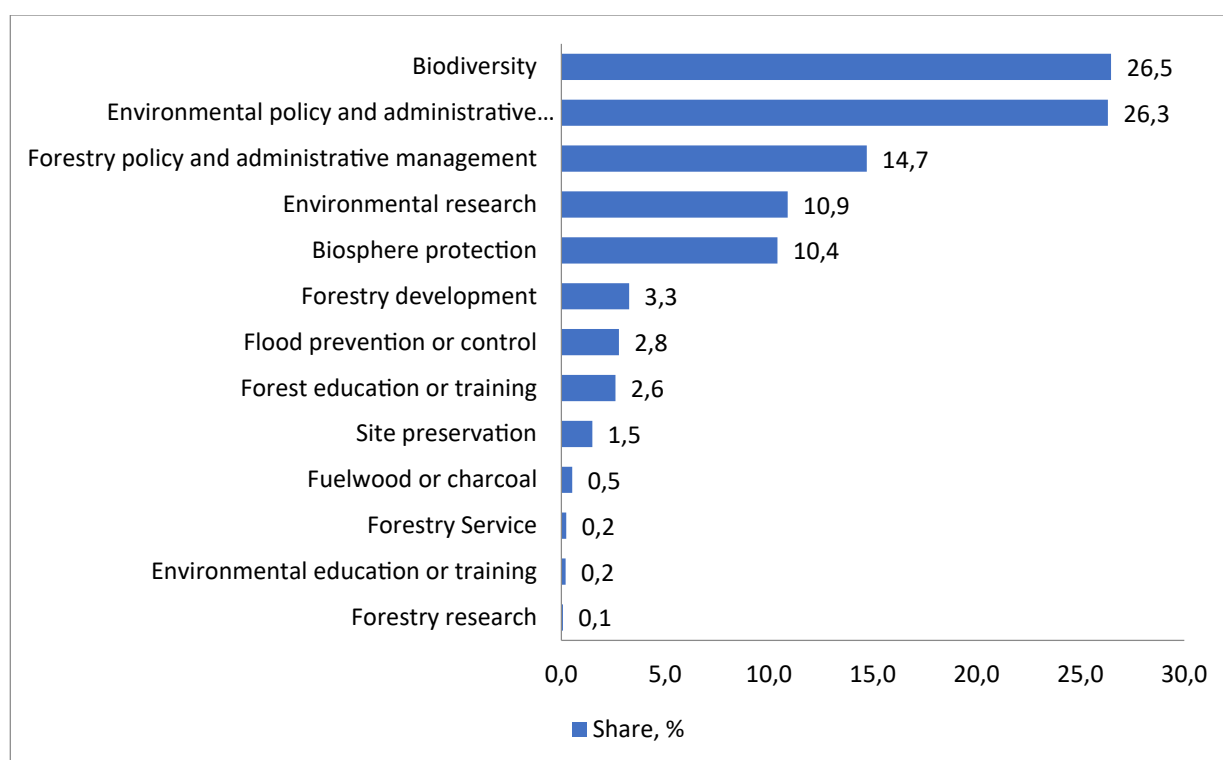


Figure 4.3: Thematic areas supported by international funding received by Central Africa , 2008–2017

Source : Favada et al. 2019

In Central Africa, the top five areas financed by multilateral aid, in increasing order, were environmental policy and its administrative management, biodiversity, biosphere protection, forestry policy and its administrative management, and forest enhancement. In the Amazon Basin, the top five areas financed by multilateral aid, in increasing order, were biodiversity, environmental policy and its administrative management, forestry policy and its administrative management, flood prevention or control and forest enhancement. In South-East Asia, the top five areas financed by multilateral aid, in increasing order, were environmental policy and its administrative management, flood prevention or control, biodiversity, forestry policy and its administrative management, and forest enhancement.

Comparing the top five areas financed by multilateral aid in Central Africa, the Amazon Basin and South-East Asia, the common areas financed by multilateral aid were environmental policy and its administrative management, biodiversity, forestry policy and its administrative management, and forest enhancement. Environmental policy and its administrative management ranked first for Central Africa and South-East Asia, and second for the Amazon Basin. Biodiversity ranked first for the Amazon Basin, second for Central Africa and third for South-East Asia. Forestry policy and its administrative management ranked third for Amazonian Basin and fourth for Central Africa and South-East Asia. Forest enhancement ranked fifth for the three tropical zones.

In Central Africa, the top five areas financed by all FEODA aid, in increasing order, were biodiversity, environmental policy and its administrative management, forestry policy and its administrative management, environmental research and biosphere protection. In the Amazon Basin, the top five areas financed, in increasing order, were environmental policy and its administrative management, biodiversity, biosphere protection, forestry policy and its administrative management, and flood

prevention or control. In South-East Asia, the top five areas financed, in increasing order, were environmental policy and its administrative management, flood prevention or control, biodiversity, forestry policy and its administrative management, and biosphere protection. In comparing the top five areas financed by FEODA aid in Central Africa, the Amazon Basin and South-East Asia, the common areas financed by FEODA aid were environmental policy and its administrative management, biodiversity, forestry policy and its administrative management, and biosphere protection. Environmental policy and its administrative management ranked first for the Amazon Basin and South-East Asia, and second for Central Africa. Biodiversity ranked first for Central Africa, second for the Amazon Basin and third for South-East Asia. Forestry policy and administrative management ranked third for Central Africa and Amazon Basin, and fourth for South-East Asia. Biosphere protection ranked fourth for Amazon Basin and fifth for Central Africa and South-East Asia.

In Central Africa, the top five bilateral donors, in increasing order, were Germany, the United States, France, Japan and Sweden. In the Amazon Basin, the five top bilateral donors, in increasing order, were Norway, Germany, France, the United States and Japan. In South-East Asia, the top five bilateral donors, in increasing order, were Japan, France, the United States, Germany and Norway.

In Central Africa the top five multilateral donors, in increasing order, were the EU, GEF, WB, CIF and AfDB. In the Amazon Basin, the top five multilateral donors, in increasing order, were GEF, the EU, CIF, GCF and World Bank. In South-East Asia, they were: the World Bank, GEF, CIF, the EU and UNDP.

4.3 Funding needed for the effective implementation of the Convergence Plan

As part of the preparation of the operational plan for the Convergence Plan, COMIFAC commissioned a study that estimated the financial needs for 2021–2025 (COMIFAC 2021). The study estimated that USD 191,290,000 will be needed to implement the priority actions between 2021 and 2025.

An estimated USD 4,500,000 will need to be mobilized from governments over the period in question, with each contributing equally to the COMIFAC Executive Secretariat budget.

An estimated total of USD 120,349,800 will need to be sought from development partners over the five years. This will cover the administrative costs of implementing the operational plan for the Convergence Plan (2021–2025), estimated at USD 8,914,800, i.e. 8 percent of the total from partners.

The operating costs of the COMIFAC Executive Secretariat, the COMIFAC National Coordination (CNC) units and other related bodies are expected to reach USD 12,441,200 (i.e. 6.79 percent of the total budget for activities under the ‘low budget scenario’). Table 4.1 shows a breakdown of the funding needed for the COMIFAC Convergence Plan priority areas and cross-cutting themes.

Table 4.1 also shows that the most resource-intensive priorities are the management and sustainable exploitation of forest resources (priority 2), combating the effects of climate change (priority 4) and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity (priority 3). It should be noted that these funding needs mainly concern subregional activities under the supervision of COMIFAC, possibly in the form of support for several Member States, and do not include the needs of individual countries identified at the national level.

Table 4.1: Funding needs of the COMIFAC Convergence Plan by priority or cross-cutting theme (in USD), 2021–2025

Priority or theme	Heading	Amount (USD)
Priority 1	Harmonization of forest and environmental policies	4,260,000
Priority 2	Management and sustainable exploitation of forest resources	83,390,000
Priority 3	Conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity	30,090,000
Priority 4	Combating the effects of climate change and desertification	49,400,000
Priority 5	Socioeconomic development and multi-stakeholder participation	5,950,000
Priority 6	Sustainable funding	7,900,000
Theme 1	Training and capacity building	4,000,000
Theme 2	Research and development	2,800,000
Theme 3	Communication, awareness raising, information and education	3,500,000
Total		191,290,000

Source: Adapted from the operational plan of the Convergence Plan (COMIFAC 2021)

Research and development and capacity building are among the priority areas requiring the least funding. This is likely the result of underestimation, given that the subregion is generally recognized as lacking capacity in this respect. However, recent figures put forward by leading scientists and policymakers estimate that research, development and training needs across all Congo Basin countries will amount to USD 150 million over 10 years.⁷

4.4 Current and potential sources of international funding for the Convergence Plan

Activities in the forest, environment and conservation sector in COMIFAC countries can access funding from several sources, including:

1. Multilateral ODA from organizations such as: (a) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) funds managed by the World Bank; (b) UNFCCC funds managed by the United Nations; (c) funds managed by various accredited agencies; (d) EU funds; and (e) funds managed by AfDB;
2. Bilateral ODA, including from: (a) Germany, Norway and the United Kingdom (known as the GNU initiative); and (b) bilateral donors such as: Norway, Germany, France and the United States;
3. Private international funding for tropical forests, which covers: (a) private sector funding mobilized by NGOs to combat deforestation; (b) other private funding initiatives such as impact investing, carbon markets, green bonds and foundations.

Table 4.2 provides a detailed map of the potential sources of funding for tropical forest management that Central Africa could access.

⁷ <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1258572/societe/cop-26-150-millions-de-dollars-pour-le-bassin-du-congo/>

Table 4.2: Mapping potential funding sources for forest ecosystem management in Central Africa

Source	Type of funding	Role of COMIFAC	Comments on intervention areas
Funds managed by the World Bank			
Global Environment Facility (GEF)	Grants with co-financing requirements	Partner of national projects	GEF interventions prioritize sustainable forest and land management, conservation of protected areas and biodiversity protection. All COMIFAC Member States are eligible.
Least Developed Countries Fund and Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) managed by GEF	Grants with co-financing requirements	Partner of national projects	Interventions focus on climate change adaptation.
Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF)	Grants		The aim of the FCPF is to prepare countries for the REDD+ incentive mechanism (Phase 1) and to compensate them for the forest greenhouse gas emissions reductions they achieve through financial incentives (Phase 3).
Climate Investment Funds (CIF)	Grants/loans Investment plan required		The CIF works to help governments adopt sustainable forest management practices and achieve measurable reductions in carbon emissions linked to deforestation and forest degradation.
UNFCCC funds managed by the United Nations			
United Nations REDD Fund	Grants	Beneficiary and/or partner	Funding programmed until 31 December 2020 (expected end of Phase 1). The fund exclusively supports REDD+ Phase 1 activities, including the development and implementation of national REDD+ programmes and capacity-building activities.
Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI) Multi-Partner Trust Fund	Grants	Partner	Designed to respond to the fragmentation of aid, the fund aims to mobilize additional funding for the region. Preparation for REDD+ and development of Investment Plans (in partnership with FCPF and the Forest Investment Programme (FIP))
Funds managed by the World Bank			
Green Climate Fund (GCF)	Grants mainly/ possibility of loans	Beneficiary/partner	Focused on reducing carbon emissions, but also on adaptation (improving the living standards of vulnerable populations, food security and access to water, ecosystem resilience and ecosystem services)
The Adaptation Fund	Grants mainly	Beneficiary/partner	Focused on the implementation of national adaptation plans
Land Degradation Neutrality Fund (LDNF)	Grants mainly	Beneficiary/partner	Focused on the regeneration of forest landscapes
European Union funds			
Global Climate Change Alliance Plus (GCCA+)	Grants	Beneficiary/supporter	Capacity-building on mitigation and adaptation, access to the carbon market Promotion of national, regional and international projects and programmes that support climate change adaptation and mitigation and the transition to low-emissions and climate-resilient societies.
EU REDD+ initiative	Grants	Beneficiary/partner	This initiative aims to reduce deforestation by improving land-use governance.

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Table 4.2 : Continued

Source	Type of funding	Role of COMIFAC	Comments on intervention areas
EU FLEGT initiative	Grants	Beneficiary/partner	The FLEGT fund finances the EU Action Plan adopted in 2003, which aims to strengthen the legal framework around and governance of forests and combat the trade in illegal timber.
Bilateral ODA			
GNU initiative (Germany, Norway and the United Kingdom)	Grants		Germany, Norway and the United Kingdom have jointly pledged USD 5 billion over 2015–2020, or USD 800 million per year, with the aim of reaching USD 1 billion per year by 2020. The conditions for accessing these funds have not yet been announced.
Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI)	Grants	Beneficiary, partner, supporter	The aim of Norway's bilateral NICFI programme, launched in 2008, is to: (i) create effective tools to support the implementation of the UNFCCC; (ii) contribute to measures to prevent deforestation and forest degradation; and (iii) promote the conservation of primary forests given their role (carbon storage and biodiversity).
USA: Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE), with USAID as lead implementing agency and other US agencies, including the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the United States Forest Service	Grants	Partner	This programme aims to slow the rate of deforestation and biodiversity loss in DRC and the Republic of the Congo. In light of the budget guidelines imposed by the current administration, ODA for forests and the climate has been restricted.
France via the French Development Agency (AFD) and FFEM	Grants/loans	Beneficiary, partner	AFD has focused mainly on the application of sustainable forest management practices through technical and financial support for forest policy reform in Congo Basin countries. Its interventions cover the thematic areas of biodiversity preservation, forest carbon and the application of the REDD+ mechanism.
French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM)	Grants	Beneficiary, supporter	The FFEM takes a holistic approach that addresses the issues of climate change, biodiversity and desertification. Its objective is to promote an integrated strategy for the conservation and management of natural resources through a 'landscape' approach (agroecology).
Germany through the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMU) and the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL). The implementing agencies are GIZ and German national development bank KfW.	Grants	Beneficiary, supporter	Biodiversity protection, conservation, climate change and local community engagement. Three pillars: forest conservation and climate change mitigation, forest landscape restoration and deforestation-free supply chains.
Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMU) – International Climate Initiative (IKI)	Grants	Beneficiary, supporter	Idem

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Table 4.2 : Continued

Source	Type of funding	Role of COMIFAC	Comments on intervention areas
The United Kingdom through CAFI and the Forest Governance, Markets and Climate Programme	Grants	Beneficiary, supporter	Idem
Japan with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)			
Canada			
Private international funding for tropical forests			
Funding mobilized through NGOs	Grants	Partner	In the Congo Basin, NGOs do not form a single homogeneous block. On the one hand, there are major conservationist NGOs such as Conservation International, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and World Resources Institute (WRI), which are more willing to build partnerships with governments and concessionaires in support of a sustainable approach to forest management. On the other are the advocacy NGOs, which are more reserved when it comes to this type of approach (Greenpeace).
Impact investment	Investments	Partner	Impact investors target agroforestry, sustainable land and agricultural development, and deforestation-free production and supply chains.
Carbon market	Purchase of carbon credits	Partner, supporter	Transactions ^a are carried out on the primary markets, i.e. directly from seller to buyer, or on the secondary market through intermediaries. ^b
Green bonds	See comments	See comments	Green bonds are debt instruments issued on a financial market and are intended to finance projects to combat global warming and support the energy transition. Few green bonds are issued for the forest sector at the global level and mainly relate to emissions from major North American and European (Scandinavian) forestry actors.
Philanthropic foundations	Grants	Advocacy, information	A small number of foundations – mostly based in the United States – provide funding for the environment and forests and for REDD+ in particular. They include: Betty and Gordon Moore Foundation, Bezos Earth Fund, ClimateWorks Foundation, Ford Foundation, David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Good Energies Foundation, Oak Foundation, Sobrato Philanthropies, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Christensen Fund, the Children's Investment Fund Foundation, the Protecting Our Planet Challenge, the Arcadia Fund, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Nia Tero, Rainforest Trust, Re:wild, the Wyss Foundation and the Rob and Melani Walton Foundation. However, funding from the majority of these foundations is directed to Latin America.

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Table 4.2 : Continued

Source	Type of funding	Role of COMIFAC	Comments on intervention areas
	Private international funding for tropical forests		
Leaf Coalition: Lowering Emissions by Accelerating Forest finance (LEAF)			The aim of this coalition is to halt deforestation by funding the large-scale protection of tropical forests. In 2021, the coalition mobilized USD 1 billion of funding. This level of funding was unprecedented for a joint public and private sector initiative for tropical forests.
Agricultural Commodity Companies Corporate Statement of Purpose: https://ukcop26.org/agricultural-commodity-companies-corporate-statement-of-purpose/			In this statement, which is supported by the Tropical Forest Alliance (TFA), the 12 signatory agri-food companies undertake to draw up a roadmap by COP27 to intensify their efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C.

a The market is not very transparent because carbon credits are traded directly between the buyer and seller

b <https://pfbc-cbfp.org/news-partner/Carbon-Pricing.html>

4.5 Aligning potential sources of funding and funding needs

Table 4.3 maps the links between potential (and current) sources of funding and funding needs for the sustainable management and conservation of forests in Central Africa. In order to access the funds available to Central Africa, the region's governments, under the supervision of COMIFAC, must build diplomatic ties and sign agreements with donors. This requires Central African governments to identify sustainable management, biodiversity conservation, combating climate change and related issues as priorities for their development.

The table also shows that the capacity to draw up convincing proposals is crucial for these countries and all actors in the Central African forest management space. Governments must be able to mobilize the national expertise at their disposal from government bodies, academic and scientific institutions, and civil society to develop integrated programmes that include the forestry sector. While developing project and programme proposals is necessary, it is not sufficient as they need to be set within a persuasive system of governance. For example, funds managed by the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund must be managed by accredited entities. However, in the entire COMIFAC area, only Rwanda has an accredited entity. For subregional activities, it would be preferable to have a body whose governance practices are recognized as meeting international standards. Access to some financial mechanisms is subject to the same requirements for all countries. In this context, Central African countries are allocated fewer resources when compared with countries in the other two tropical basins (this is the case for FFEM, for example).

Countries can also seek support from international organizations within and outside the United Nations system to build the capacity of national actors. Examples include: the AFR100 Initiative, and the NDC Partnership whose technical partners can provide expertise for the development of forest landscape restoration programmes.

Efforts to raise funds for the management and conservation of Central African forest ecosystems has been hindered by weak communication about their importance for addressing the global challenges posed by climate change and global biodiversity loss. The forests of the Congo Basin, which are relatively well conserved compared with those in the Amazon Basin, have attracted less attention from philanthropic organizations, for example. There are a number of initiatives in place to gradually address this communication gap. OFAC is working to disseminate information and the COMIFAC Declaration on the subject was presented in September 2021. This declaration was negotiated within the framework of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership and facilitated by Germany, following a multi-stakeholder consultation that lasted over a year. As a result of these efforts, a group of donors pledged USD 1.5 billion for forests in the Congo Basin at the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) of the UNFCCC (see Box 4.1).⁸

⁸ <https://ukcop26.org/cop26-congo-basin-joint-donor-statement/>

Table 4.3: Links between sources of funding and funding needs for forest ecosystem management in Central Africa

Thematic area in need of funding	Potential source of funding	Main actor	Type of measures
COMIFAC Executive Secretariat operations	Governments of Member States	- Countries	Improving the collection of contributions Implementing the COMIFAC self-financing mechanism
	Projects' financial partners (project management fees)	- COMIFAC Executive Secretariat	Drawing up regional project proposals
Adopting policies and governance practices for forests, the environment and sustainable land use	Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI)	- Countries	Letter of Intent – preparation of a national investment framework (NIF) – donor coordination framework
	European Union	- Countries	Negotiations of FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) and bilateral agreements with the European Development Fund
	German Cooperation (BMZ)	- Countries - COMIFAC Executive Secretariat	Negotiating regional and national projects
	World Bank	- Countries	Negotiating bilateral agreements, loans
Sustainable management and exploitation of forest resources	Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI)	- Countries	Letter of Intent – preparation of a national investment framework (NIF) – donor coordination framework
	European Union	- Countries - COMIFAC Executive Secretariat	Negotiating bilateral agreements, national projects
	French Development Agency (AFD)	- Countries - Private companies	Negotiating bilateral agreements, PROPARGO loans for private sustainable forest management initiatives
	African Development Bank (AfDB)		
	Private banks		
Biodiversity conservation in countries	Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI)	- Countries	Letter of Intent – preparation of a national investment framework (NIF) – donor coordination framework
	European Union	- Countries	Negotiating bilateral agreements
	GEF	- Countries	Drawing up project proposals, mobilizing co-financing, identifying implementing agencies, validation by the administration
	All donors	- Civil society	Establishing partnerships with international environmental NGOs
	Philanthropy	- Countries - Civil society actors	Running information campaigns, drawing up project proposals

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Table 4.3: Continued

Thematic area in need of funding	Potential source of funding	Main actor	Type of measures
	Private sector	- Local actors	Local communities can benefit from payments for environmental services to enable them to carry out biodiversity conservation activities. This can be done as part of infrastructure development projects and with the support of civil society organizations.
Forest landscape restoration	BMZ	- Countries - Decentralized local authorities (communes) - Civil society actors	Countries need to demonstrate political will and seek technical support from AFR100 Initiative technical partners to design development programmes and projects for submission to financial partners.
	AfDB	- Countries	Designing and negotiating forest landscape restoration programmes and projects – AfDB loans
	Forest Investment Programme – Climate Investment Funds	- Countries	Countries can use climate finance instruments (for adaptation and mitigation) to develop programmes that include forest landscape restoration.
	Private sector	- Local communities	Local communities can benefit from payments for environmental services to enable them to carry out forest landscape restoration activities. This can be done as part of infrastructure development projects and with the support of civil society organizations.
Cross-border biodiversity conservation initiatives	European Union	- Countries - COMIFAC Executive Secretariat - ECCAS - Civil society	Drawing up and negotiating partnership agreements
	Global Environment Facility (GEF)		Drawing up project proposals, mobilizing co-financing, identifying implementing agencies, validation by the administration
Climate change mitigation	Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI)	- Countries	Letter of Intent – preparation of a national investment framework (NIF) – donor coordination framework
	Green Climate Fund	- Countries - COMIFAC Executive Secretariat	Drawing up competitive project proposals, identifying accredited entities, validation by the relevant government bodies (national authorities)
	Global Environment Facility (GEF)	- Countries	Drawing up project proposals, mobilizing co-financing, identifying implementing agencies, validation by the administration

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Table 4.3: Continued

Thematic area in need of funding	Potential source of funding	Main actor	Type of measures
Climate change adaptation	Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI)	- Countries	Letter of Intent – preparation of a national investment framework (NIF) – donor coordination framework
	Green Climate Fund	- Countries - COMIFAC Executive Secretariat	Drawing up competitive project proposals, identifying accredited entities, validation by the relevant government bodies (national authorities)
	The Adaptation Fund	- Countries	Drawing up project proposals, identifying accredited entities, validation by the relevant government bodies (national authorities)
	Global Environment Facility (GEF)	- Countries	Drawing up project proposals, mobilizing co-financing, identifying implementing agencies, validation by the administration
Land-use planning	Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI)	- Countries	Letter of Intent – preparation of a national investment framework (NIF) – donor coordination framework
	French Cooperation (AFD)	- Countries	Negotiating bilateral agreements
	German Cooperation (BMZ)	- Countries	Negotiating bilateral agreements
Community resource management	German Cooperation (BMZ)	- Countries - National NGOs - Decentralized local authorities	Negotiating bilateral agreements, drawing up project proposals
	British Cooperation (Department for International Development – DFID)	- Civil society organizations	
Capacity-building and research	European Union	- Countries - Universities - Research centres	Monitoring information on available funding, drawing up competitive funding proposals, incorporating research and development activities in development projects, building partnerships with regional and international scientific and academic institutions
	DFID	- Network of Forestry and Environmental Training Institutions of Central Africa (RIFFEAC)	
	All donors	- Research Network on Central African Forests (R2FAC)	
Communication, information and awareness raising	European Union	- Countries - COMIFAC Executive Secretariat	Negotiating bilateral and regional agreements, proposals for national and regional projects

Box 4.1: Joint Donor Statement at COP26 on supporting the protection and sustainable management of the Congo Basin forests

Congo Basin Joint Donor Statement at COP26

Supporting the protection and sustainable management of the Congo Basin forests

With reference to the Glasgow Leaders Declaration on Forests and Land Use of 2 November 2021 and its commitment *'to working collectively to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030 while delivering sustainable development and promoting an inclusive rural transformation'*, we, the Ministers and representatives from the countries and organizations listed below make the following statement, that we:

Recognize the ecosystem goods and services derived from Central Africa's Congo Basin forests, the world's second largest tropical rainforest region. This includes their critical contribution to global climate change mitigation, provision of rainfall to large parts of African agriculture, hydropower production, biodiversity preservation and helping meet the goals of the Paris Agreement, including the pursuit of efforts to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. They provide a foundation for sustainable development and are critical to the livelihoods and culture of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Welcome the political leadership of Central African countries that have sustained forest cover in the face of mounting pressures, including but not exclusively through the commitments set out in the 2021 COMIFAC Declaration and in national Letters of Intent signed with CAFI under the 2015 CAFI Joint Declaration, noting the need to support efforts by working in partnership with Central African countries and regional organizations, to achieve jointly defined objectives.

Recognize that progress on tackling the systemic drivers of forest loss in Central Africa will continue to require high-level, cross-sectoral leadership from Central Africa's forested countries, measured through reductions in forest loss whilst meeting local sustainable economic development needs and implementing principles of sustainable management of natural resources. This will require substantial domestic resource mobilization and long-term financial support from the international community, both public and private sector, also noting the importance of business and governance frameworks conducive to investments.

Acknowledge that maintaining and enhancing protection, sustainable management, and restoration requires scaled up finance, from both public and private sources, in light of the goods and services provided by the Congo Basin forests and their critical importance in achieving local, regional and international climate, biodiversity and development objectives. Also recognizing that more effective, efficient and accessible forms of support will be required to help countries in this region implement development strategies rooted in sustaining these precious forests.

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Box 4.1: Continued

We are demonstrating our commitment to this important region today by announcing an initial collective pledge of **at least \$1.5 billion** of financing between 2021–2025 to support ambitious efforts and results in the region to protect and maintain the Congo Basin forests, peatlands and other critical global carbon stores. We intend to build on this in subsequent years, by seeking increased finance and investment from a wide variety of public and private sources while also improving coordination, effectiveness and accessibility. We also call on other donors to significantly increase their support for the protection and sustainable management of the Congo Basin forests.

Supported by:

- European Commission on behalf of the European Union
- Federal Republic of Germany
- French Republic
- Japan
- Kingdom of Belgium
- Kingdom of the Netherlands
- Kingdom of Norway
- Kingdom of Sweden
- Republic of Korea
- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- United States of America
- Bezos Earth Fund

4.6 Recommendations

In order to attract funding commensurate with the role played by the forests of the Congo Basin in regulating the global climate and conserving the planet’s biodiversity, we make the following recommendations.

For COMIFAC

COMIFAC should improve its communication and participation in international debates to attract the attention of international actors to the importance of Central African forests and place them at the centre of discussions about combating climate change and conserving biodiversity. COMIFAC could also use more appropriate terminology to talk about its priorities to better reflect the latest funding priorities. This could include adopting the ‘fair deal’ and ‘fair share’ approach taken at COP26. This approach was also taken throughout the process that led to the COMIFAC Declaration, at the Tropical Forest Symposium and the Congo Basin Forest Day in Berlin in September 2021, and by the United Kingdom as part of preparations for the Glasgow Declaration published jointly by donors for the protection of Congo Basin forests. Governments should advocate for payment for the ecosystem services delivered by Congo Basin forests as a global matter of urgency. COMIFAC should talk more about ‘combating deforestation’, an issue not yet on COMIFAC’s agenda, but which has become a global concern. Another example concerns Priority 4 of the Convergence Plan, which refers only to the effects of climate change (adaptation), even though the forests of Central Africa are also recognized for their potential contribution to mitigation.

COMIFAC should also strengthen its capacity to mobilize international funding (political advocacy, lobbying financial mechanisms) and to draw up project proposals to enable it to submit high-quality proposals to competitive processes and bankable programmes and projects. This capacity building should also extend to the governance of the institution to improve its credibility and enable it to become an internationally recognized accredited entity. Another area for improvement at the subregional level is the promotion of public-private partnerships, which are an effective way to attract structural investors to the Congo Basin.

In order to address the range of problems facing the forestry sector, including deforestation, COMIFAC should open communication channels with other land-intensive sectors in Central Africa, such as agriculture and mining. This could be achieved through better integration with the framework developed by ECCAS.

For countries

COMIFAC Member States should make the financial contributions necessary to implement the Convergence Plan by paying their dues to COMIFAC regularly. One solution could be to tie Member States' contributions to the value of exports of timber and non-timber forest products and to design mechanisms to require private exporters to pay these levies via a subregional payment platform. Member States should also coordinate to create an international negotiation unit to attract more funding to the subregion. Each country should also have at least one credible institution whose governance practices meet international fund management standards to enable them to receive funds raised at the international level. Currently, only Rwanda has such an institution.

For partners

Technical and financial partners of the COMIFAC area should ensure their interventions support the implementation of the 2005 Paris Declaration and the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action on Aid Effectiveness, by incorporating the COMIFAC Convergence Plan into their work. Technical and financial partners should also coordinate their activities to harmonize project funding (areas of intervention, targets, etc.). They should endeavour to comply with the terms of project implementation contracts, in particular by paying management fees to COMIFAC for the projects it coordinates. An innovative approach would be to assess the value of the ecosystem services performed by Central African forests and to propose that donors provide funding representing a small proportion of the value of these services to Central Africa, a fraction of which would go to COMIFAC.

The Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) partners have taken significant steps to improve communication and raise the international political profile of Central African forests. They should, however, do more to make Central African forest ecosystems a global priority. A college of donors established within the CBFP should serve as an intermediary for accessing the various funding opportunities identified at the international level.

Conclusions

Recognition of the role played by Africa's forests in global climate regulation is increasing. Indeed, they rank first among global tropical forest blocks for carbon sequestration. Moreover, Central Africa is a priority conservation area, considering its natural heritage and the endemism of its forest ecosystems. Its forests are a common good of humanity, both for current generations and those to come. Central African forests should, therefore, be the focus of global efforts, including the mobilization of financial resources, to conserve and sustainably manage them.

In order to coordinate their forest management activities, Central African governments established COMIFAC, a unique initiative to harmonize and coordinate at the subregional level. In terms of technical progress, COMIFAC has adopted a Convergence Plan that defines both priorities and cross-cutting themes to underpin the coordinated management of forest ecosystems.

Notwithstanding their importance and the framework developed to manage them, Central African forests are finding it difficult to attract the same level of funding as the other tropical forest blocks in South America and Asia. Over the decade from 2008 to 2017, the Central African forest and environment sector received only 11.5 percent of the funding made available for the conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests. Moreover, COMIFAC's ability to operate is impeded by the difficulty of collecting Member States' contributions. Financial flows consist mainly of ODA, while contributions from the private sector, foundations and philanthropic organizations remain very low. The main financial contributors are Germany, the European Union and the GEF. New funding opportunities emerged at COP26 – embodied in the declarations made by philanthropic organizations and actors in the private agricultural sector⁹ – and must now be harnessed. Indeed, a striking number of philanthropic organizations committed to mobilize USD 1.7 billion for indigenous peoples and local communities for the protection of tropical forests (see Box 4.2).¹⁰

A significant share of the international financial flows to Central Africa for the conservation and sustainable management of forests is allocated to individual countries. There are however some noteworthy initiatives of subregional scope, including: the ECOFAC programme funded by the EU over 30 years, the German COMIFAC support project, the Congo Basin Ecosystems Conservation Support Programme (PACEBCo), and others including the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE), CAFI and GEF 7.

Financial partners should strive to align their subregional initiatives in the forest and environment sector with the COMIFAC Convergence Plan in the spirit of the 2005 Paris Declaration.

The thematic areas that attract the most funding are biodiversity conservation, environmental policies and forest management policies. Conversely, training and research are neglected, with serious consequences for the subregion, which is severely lacking capacity in this respect.

Central African forests are gradually rising on the international political agenda, thanks in part to the CBFP, which is stepping up diplomatic efforts to promote their essential role in regulating the planet's climate. At COP26, for example, a collective declaration by twelve of the richest countries, and the Bezos Earth Fund, pledged to mobilize at least USD 1.5 billion for the protection and sustainable management of Congo Basin forests.

⁹ <https://ukcop26.org/agricultural-commodity-companies-corporate-statement-of-purpose/>

¹⁰ <https://ukcop26.org/cop26-iplc-forest-tenure-joint-donor-statement-french/>

Box 4.2: Donor Statement for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities for Tropical Forest Protection

Advancing Support for Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities' Tenure Rights and their Forest Guardianship.

With reference to the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use of 2 November 2021 and its commitment *'to working collectively to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030 while delivering sustainable development and promoting an inclusive rural transformation'*;

We, the Ministers and representatives of the countries and organizations listed below:

Recognize the critical guardianship provided by Indigenous Peoples and local communities in protecting tropical forests and preserving vital ecosystem services, and the global contribution they make to climate change mitigation, biodiversity preservation, and inclusive and sustainable development.

Acknowledge the land and resource rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, in accordance with relevant national legislation, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and other international instruments, as applicable, and that, despite the important role they play in protecting forests and nature, only a small fraction of these communities enjoy secure rights to own, manage, and control land and resources and have access to the support and services required to protect forests and nature and pursue sustainable livelihoods.

Note with concern the rising cases of threats, harassment and violence against Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Welcome the political leadership and steps taken by many countries to recognize and protect Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' land and resource rights, in accordance with relevant national legislation and international instruments, as applicable.

Welcome the initiatives and efforts of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in securing the legal recognition of land and resource rights and in strengthening their institutions, organizations and networks to support concerted action to protect their land, forests and resources.

Commit to renewed collective and individual efforts to further recognize and advance the role of Indigenous Peoples and local communities as guardians of forests and nature, in partnership with governments and other stakeholders, with a particular focus on strengthening land tenure systems, protecting the land and resource rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and protecting indigenous and community defenders of forests and nature.

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Box 4.2: Continued

Commit to promote the effective participation and inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in decision-making and to include, consult and partner with them in the design and implementation of relevant programmes and finance instruments, recognizing the specific interests of women and girls, youth, persons with disabilities and others often marginalized from decision-making.

We are demonstrating our commitment today by announcing an initial, collective pledge of USD 1.7 billion of financing, from 2021 to 2025, to support the advancement of Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' forest tenure rights and greater recognition and rewards for their role as guardians of forests and nature. We call on other donors to significantly increase their support to **this important agenda**.

This financing will be directed at:

- channelling support to Indigenous Peoples and local communities, including through capacity building and financial support for group activities, collective governance structures and management systems, and sustainable livelihoods;
- activities to secure, strengthen and protect Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' land and resource rights, including, but not limited to, support to community-level tenure rights mapping and registration work, support to national land and forest tenure reform processes and their implementation, and support to conflict resolution mechanisms.

Endorsed by:

- Federal Republic of Germany
- Kingdom of Norway
- Kingdom of the Netherlands
- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- United States of America
- Ford Foundation
- Good Energies Foundation
- Oak Foundation
- Sobrato Philanthropies
- The David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
- The Christensen Fund
- Children's Investment Fund Foundation
- The Protecting Our Planet Challenge
- Arcadia
- Bezos Earth Fund
- Bloomberg Philanthropies
- Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation
- Nia Tero
- Rainforest Trust
- Re:wild
- Wyss Foundation
- Rob and Melani Walton Foundation

Central African countries must now seek to clarify the commitments of each donor country, and the mechanisms and arrangements for effectively managing the funds pledged.

COMIFAC must mobilize in pursuit of equitable financing, for a fair deal and a fair share for the Congo Basin. Such funding should amount to USD 6 billion/year to bring in funding commensurate with the contribution of Congo Basin forest ecosystems to the global climate.

There are many opportunities and potential sources of international funding for the Central African forest and environment sector. To benefit from them, capacity building will be required to enable the subregion to draft high-quality proposals and build the credibility of Central African financial institutions in terms of governance, whether at the country or the subregional level. As a first step, Member States must make COMIFAC a priority and pay their agreed annual contributions.