

***2nd International Conference on
Biodiversity in the Congo Basin,
Kisangani, February 2023
Terms of Reference***

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The strong involvement of the local and regional stakeholders during the 1st conference in 2014, organised with mainly Belgian financial support, and the subsequent activities in the region have drawn the attention of several international stakeholders who expressed interest to support or become involved in a second edition of such a conference.

It seems timely to convene an international conference to address current and future challenges resulting from the periodically emerging epidemics from zoonotic origin, global climate changes, massive deforestation as well as the steep demographic growth in the region. Discussing these issues requires the mobilisation of novel science-based answers and their translation into adequate policy measures.

The program of a 2nd conference would therefore comprise themes, that emphasize the link between biodiversity, climate change and public health : biodiversity and food security, the valorisation of ecosystem services, biodiversity and climate change, sustainable agriculture, the development and facilitation of supra-national and interregional collaborations in scientific research, new approaches in conservation, sustainable exploitation of natural resources, forestry and biodiversity, industrial development and biodiversity, the availability of official environmental data, biodiversity in the city, and policy making. Links with the CBD post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and SDG's will be stressed and discussed. Adding these and possibly other new themes to the conference programme would draw an even more diverse and cross-fertilizing audience than during the 1st conference. The main objective of the 2nd conference would be to immerse the participating African colleagues in the emerging common understanding of the importance of preserving humankind's natural environment in an effort to address future health issues, a stable climate and resilient social ecological systems (hence, also a direct link to the new thematic strategic framework on ecosystem resilience, 'SECORES').

Expected outcome:

- enhanced awareness and pressure on (inter)national and provincial political authorities to increase their efforts to safeguard the Congo Basin and its unique fauna and flora, in view of the increasing demographic pressure and economic development, and its effects on the use of the available renewable natural resources as well as in view of its potential to manage possible threats to human health. This can be linked to other ongoing diplomatic efforts of e.g. the Congo Basin Forest Partnership and other platforms, the Belgian embassy & ENABEL (with the new environmental strategy and the new five year program), and the EU permanent representation in DRC.
- strengthening the existing local and international network of scientists and civil society
- The national Ministry for Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD) needs to fulfil its international reporting obligations in the framework of, amongst others, the Convention on Biological Diversity, by publishing a National report on the country's biodiversity in 2022. The workshop, originally planned to update of the 'État des lieux de la biodiversité dans la RD Congo', published in 2014, will contribute to this report.
- strengthening the One Health concept will facilitate the creation and reinforcement of links between biological and medical research teams.
- increased pressure on local authorities to make their data related to the exploitation of renewable natural resources publicly available.

Organisation of sessions or scientific or policy contributions already discussed for the 2nd conference -list to be actualised by the scientific committee with input of organising partners (Africamuseum, RBINS, Botanic Garden Meise) :

- BIP (Biodiversity Indicators Partnership), London : biodiversity indicators
- CIFOR: side event tailored at their students
- CRC Antwerp: conservation aspects
- ERAIFT: economical valuation of ecosystem services
- IIED (International Institute for Environment and Development), London: communication science-policy interface
- INRB (Institut National de Recherche Biomédicale, Prof Muyembe), Kinshasa
- IOB (Instituut voor ontwikkelingsbeleid), University of Antwerp : political ecology
- IPBES (RD Congo and Belgium)
- ITM (Institute of Tropical Medicine), Antwerp
- SANBI (South African National Biodiversity Initiative): uptake biodiv info, science-policy interface and mainstreaming efforts in Africa with UNEP-WCMC
- UGent: climate-biodiversity interactions
- World Resources Institute - Theodore Trefon : societal aspects

Support expressed for 2nd conference:

- L'Université de Kisangani (UNIKIS) and the Centre de Surveillance de la Biodiversité (CSB) as local organiser
- Ministère de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable (RDC)(MEDD)
- The National Focal Point to the CBD (RDC)
- Africamuseum, Tervuren
- BELSPO
- Botanic Garden Meise
- EU delegation, Kinshasa
- GIZ delegation, Kinshasa
- The Royal Belgian Institute for Natural Sciences, Brussels
- USAID delegation, Kinshasa

More reach- out planned (not an exhaustive list):

- CBFP (Congo Basin Forest Partnership)
- UNDP: FONARED, PIREDD, ...
- AFD (Agence France de développement), Kinshasa
- WWF RDC and Belgium

Timing of the activities

January 2022	Preparations kick off for the Conference and for the 'Etat des lieux'
February-March 2022	Workshop 'Etat des lieux'
February 2023	Conference

Location:

The city of Kisangani, in the middle of the tropical forest of the Congo Basin, would be the place by excellence to demonstrate the important role of nature for the survival of humankind on this planet. Ethiopian Airlines should resume its direct flights to the city in the coming time. The number of

decent hotel rooms has increased substantially in the last 5 years, although the city was already able to accommodate all guests in good conditions in 2014.

Kisangani is situated at roughly 80 km from the UNESCO Yangambi Man and Biosphere reserve, harbouring INERA and its famous Herbarium, supported by the Botanic Garden Meise. The Africamuseum runs a wood biological lab at Yangambi and monitors carbon stocks and sinks in experimental plots. Carbon stocks in forest plots are also being measured in the footprint of the recent flux-tower site (CongoFlux) of Ghent University in CR Yangambi. Belgian scientists are putting the Congo basin in the global international framework for carbon monitoring of tropical forests, so needed for constructing climate change models. The conference can be a rallying moment for all these different projects and cooperation.

Moreover, organising the conference in Kisangani would be welcomed as a symbolic beacon of hope and progress in this otherwise rather disconnected region.

Reporting:

Article 3 of the Framework agreement between DGD and BELSPO, requires financial and narrative reporting about additionally subsidised activities reinforcing research networks and regional partner organisations in the North as well as in the partner countries of the Belgian Development Cooperation, even if they are not already included in the Framework agreements. The required financial and narrative reports will be provided no later than 9 months after the end of the Conference.

Budget:

The estimated budget, printed below, contains three parts : one for expenses related to the preparation of the activities, a second one for the '*Etat des lieux de la biodiversité en RDC*'-activities and a last part for the conference itself

The first budget part, containing the funds for preparing the activities, should be available from December 2021 onward, to be able to prepare and start concluding contracts for the preparatory phases.

The second part of the budget, the organisation of an update of the '*Etat des lieux de la biodiversité en RDC*' covers the cost of a 5-day workshop with participants from all over the DR Congo and will be developed in collaboration with the National Focal Point to the CBD. This part of the budget should also be available from December 2021 onwards, as this activity will have to be organised in early in 2023.

The third table contains the budget for the main conference, which should be available in July 2022 to secure its timely organisation in February 2023.

The numbers in each budget line are estimates, which may need adjustments. Some flexibility to use the funds will be essential.

The CEBioS program of the RBINS, supervised by MD8 and BELSPO, will coordinate the organisation. Expenses, beforehand agreed upon, made by the Africamuseum in the framework of the organisation of the conference can be covered by a transfer between both federal research institutes. Other organisations will be reimbursed for beforehand agreed upon expenses on the basis of regular invoices.

Preparation of the activities (2022-2023)				
Description	number	days	PU (€)	PT (€)
Promo & Communication				
website, flyer, local press				€ 1,500.00
Organiser travel				
travel	4		€ 1,500.00	€ 6,000.00
lodging	4	10	€ 65.00	€ 2,600.00
per diem	4	10	€ 50.00	€ 2,000.00
divers	4		€ 800.00	€ 3,200.00
Local costs				
remuneration local staff				€ 3,000.00
travel of expert-organiser (from other African country)				€ 2,500.00
communication costs				€ 1,000.00
transportation costs				€ 800.00
total				€ 22,600.00
'Etat des lieux'				
	number	days	PU (€)	PT (€)
Participation Congolese scientists, MEDD				
travel	30		€ 500.00	€ 15,000.00
lodging	30	7	€ 65.00	€ 13,650.00
per diem	30	8	€ 20.00	€ 4,800.00
Participation local moderator				
travel	1		€ 500.00	€ 500.00
lodging	1	7	€ 65.00	€ 455.00
per diem	1	8	€ 50.00	€ 400.00
fee	1		€ 375.00	€ 375.00
Local transportation participants				
	1	7	€ 50.00	€ 350.00
Diverse				
coffee/lunch	35	5	€ 20.00	€ 3,500.00
room rent	1	5	€ 150.00	€ 750.00
Printing Etat des lieux	300		€ 7.00	€ 2,100.00
total				€ 41,880.00
Conference				
	number	days	PU (€)	PT (€)
Participant African scientists, including Congolese				
travel	50		€ 900.00	€ 45,000.00
lodging	50	7	€ 65.00	€ 22,750.00
per diem	50	8	€ 20.00	€ 8,000.00
Catering				
coffee/lunch	250	4	€ 20.00	€ 20,000.00
room rental	1	4	€ 150.00	€ 600.00
Local transportation participants				
	1	6	€ 150.00	€ 900.00
Invited speakers				
travel	10		€ 1,600.00	€ 16,000.00
lodging	10	10	€ 65.00	€ 6,500.00
per diem	10	10	€ 50.00	€ 5,000.00
fees	6		€ 500.00	€ 3,000.00
divers	10		€ 567.00	€ 5,670.00
Printed material				
Conference book	300		€ 7.00	€ 2,100.00
total				€ 135,520.00