

Annex 2.

Stakeholder Interview Summary: Interests in the Peatlands, Peatland Uses, Economic Benefits, Future Aspirations and Expectations.

A total of 52 semi-structured interviews were conducted with stakeholders from four different groups: government (14), civil society (27), private sector (2), international organisations and donors (9). For the Indigenous Peoples and local communities, 93 surveys were conducted and 34 participatory activities: 254 people took part in participatory activities in two study sites: 214 Mboshi in the Cuvette department, 40 Sangha-Sangha in the Sangha department and 70 Mbendjele in the Sangha department; of the 93 households surveyed, 52 households were in Cuvette department (all from the Mboshi ethnic group) and 41 were in Sangha department (22 with Sangha-Sangha and 19 with Mbendjele).

Stakeholder Mapping

Stakeholder group	Main use of / interest in the peatland	Additional uses of / interest in the peatland	Main economic benefit of / interest in the peatlands	Aspirations	Expectations
INTERVIEWEES					
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES					
<p>Mbendjele people in Sangha department who are part of the BaYaka ethnic group which extends across the north of the Republic of the Congo, Cameroon, Central African Republic and Gabon.</p> <p>Interviews + Participatory activities: 25 men, 45 women</p> <p>Household survey with 19 people.</p>	<p>The Mbendjele rely on the forest for their livelihood, culture, wellbeing and spirituality. As a food source, the Mbendjele use the peat swamp forest for fishing, collecting fruit, yams, mushrooms, honey etc. and for hunting. The peat swamp forest also provides medicine and materials for house construction. Other forest types are also used, and some terra firme forest is converted to fields and some Indigenous Peoples work in the fields of non-Indigenous (local community) households to earn a daily wage.</p>	<p>BaYaka and Mbendjele identity is based on a way of life as a hunter-gatherer in the forest, polyphonic music, a demand-sharing economy and egalitarian society. The role of forest spirits in ensuring wellbeing (spiritual, physical, emotional and social) means the forest is vital is core to their identity.</p>	<p>The Mbendjele surveyed in the Sangha department produce food and goods worth on average \$1,943 per household per year. The peatlands contribute 37% of household revenue, and rivers contribute 31%.</p>	<p>Mbendjele expressed a wish to have peaceful and respectful relationships with their neighbours. They aspire to playing an active role in decision making.</p> <p>Interviewees expressed the hope that access to health care and education would improve.</p>	<p>The young men want to introduce a rest period for the forest to allow species recovery, as scarcity of food in the forest is a concern expressed by women and youth alike. All groups said they need better market access for selling forest produce and for purchases. Expectations were low in terms of provision of services by the state, or an active role in decision making.</p>

Stakeholder group INTERVIEWEES	Main use of / interest in the peatland	Additional uses of / interest in the peatland	Main economic benefit of / interest in the peatlands	Aspirations	Expectations
LOCAL COMMUNITIES					
<p>The Mboshi ethnicity in the Cuvette department (site 1) and the Sangha-Sangha in Sangha department (site 2).</p> <p>Interviews + participatory activities: 90 men, 73 women.</p> <p>Surveys: 22 in site 1 and 52 people in site 2.</p> <p>Villages are next to the peatlands throughout northern Congo, located on terra firme next to rivers or lakes.</p>	<p>The villagers depend on the forest for their livelihood. Fishing in the peat forest contributes a major part of their household food. Peatland uses include fishing in peat pools and hunting turtles, crocodiles and snakes; harvesting fruit; and collecting Raphia palm products such as palm wine, palm grubs. Raphia palms also provide fronds for roof thatch. The peat forest also provides vines and hardwood for house construction; and bark and leaves for medicinal use.</p>	<p>The peat forest is where their children learn, and where the spirits of the ancestors reside. Money is left in the forest for the spirits of the ancestors when collecting bark or leaves for traditional medicines, and without this the medicines do not work.</p>	<p>The Mboshi surveyed in the Cuvette department generated products worth \$2,807 per household per year from the surrounding forest. In the Sangha department this was on average \$2,925 per household per year. In the Cuvette department, the peatlands and rivers contribute 65% of household revenue, of which 12% was from the peatlands. In the Sangha department, the peatlands and rivers contribute 21% and 20% of household revenue respectively.</p>	<p>The main aspiration was increased access to the forest. In Cuvette department, where access to fishing grounds in the peat swamp forest had been restricted by the creation of a national park. In the Sangha department, the Sangha-Sangha chief was pursuing land title for his customary lands.</p> <p>Aspirations were for jobs or income earning opportunities, a mobile phone network, electricity, improved transport connections, and improved health services.</p>	<p>The expectations in the Cuvette department were low, since the phone network, electricity and piped water system used to function but stopped due to mismanagement. In the Sangha department, expectations were for further investment by the logging company into education, transport and health services. In both sites, people expressed hope that their children would get jobs as civil servants, in order to benefit from job security and pensions.</p>

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INTERVIEWEES					
PRIVATE SECTOR					
CIB-Olam (Singapore), FSC certified.	Logging concessions include areas of peatlands, usually around their fringes. Peat swamp forest is not logged because of access difficulties, but it could be affected by roads and drainage. Forest Management Units are divided into production, protection, conservation and research zones, and interviewees said that if peat is in a production zone it will not be logged, and that, with a map of the peatlands, peat will be zoned for conservation or protection.	As a FSC certified company, reputation for sustainable logging, protection of biodiversity and human rights is important. CIB-Olam has put areas of their concessions into national parks on two occasions, once with and once without state compensation.	According to CIB-Olam there is no economic sense in exploiting peat swamp forest. The percentage of a concession zoned for production is fixed by the state and may include peat but there is no intention to exploit it.	CIB-Olam has no interest in exploiting peat swamp forest, as they do not want to cause environmental harm. They would like the government to waive taxes on the peatlands in production zones.	They want evidence-based guidance to be produced on how to reduce the risk of unintentional damage to the peatlands, e.g. through roads or infrastructure. CIB Olam expects to have some income from the peatlands, e.g. from the future sale of carbon credits in the Pikounda Nord concession, which has significant areas of peat swamp forest.
M. Barthelemy NGUIESSAN, Directeur RSE Adjoint					
Baptiste Leborgne, Chef de Service Aménagement,					
Vincent Istace					
Head of Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability.					
OLAM acquired Congolaise Industrielle des Bois (CIB) in 2011. It is the largest logging company in the Republic of the Congo and operates five forest management concessions (2.1 Mha) in the Sangha and Likouala departments.					

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INTERVIEWEES					
GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES					
Ministry of the Environment, Sustainable Development, and the Congo Basin (MEDDBC); Mme Arlette SOUDAN-NONAUT, Minister for the Environment, Sustainable Development and the Congo Basin; Vidalie, ANDEA, Technical Advisor; Rozan ETOUA, Peatlands Management Unit Coordinator (at the time of interview).	<p>Peatlands protection falls under the authority of the MEDDBC, regulated by the Law No. 33-2023 of November 17, 2023, on sustainable management of the environment in the Republic of the Congo. MEDDBC is responsible for the development and implementation of a national peatlands policy</p> <p>with a view to ensuring the conservation and sustainable management of peatlands as an ecosystem effective in carbon sequestration, the preservation of biodiversity and the regulation of the water regime.</p>	<p>Protect the peatlands for their contribution to the climate equilibrium, and for the people living in, and sustainably managing the peatlands for generations.</p> <p>Article 45 of Law No. 33-2023 defines the peatlands as an integral natural reserve, and prohibits the development of industrial activities.</p>	<p>The peatlands contribute to the local economy through the provision of livelihood services to local populations (see above). At present the government is not receiving revenue from the peatlands because there is negligible industrial activity.</p>	<p>The aspiration is to achieve dual social and environmental objectives: sustainable development and peatland protection, with a financial mechanism for long term peatlands funding.</p>	<p>The main expectation is to receive fair financial compensation for sustainable peatland management, including revenue from carbon storage, sequestration, and other ecosystem services.</p> <p>Also, to develop a national peatland strategy and to assign</p> <p>a legal status to the peatlands. In addition, for secondary legislation for the Law on Sustainable Management of the Environment (2023) to be adopted; and a</p> <p>a multi-resource inventory of fauna, fisheries and flora to be carried out to inform</p>

					peatlands-based economic development.
Minister of Forest Economy (MEF) Mme Carine Sandrine MILANDOU, MEF, Director of the National Centre for the Inventory and Management of Forest Resources. Mme MOYA, Deputy Director of the Congolese Agency for Wildlife and Protected Areas (ACFAP); David Kokolo, Chef de Services des Relations Communautaires et Génératrices de Revenu; Patrick Ondje, Collaborateur des Activités Génératrices de Revenu	<p>MEF has forests concessions around the peatlands, some overlapping with peatlands, under the supervision of the Departmental Forest Economy Directorate.</p> <p>Protected areas in the peatlands include Ntokou Pikounda National Park and Lac Tele Community Reserve. Both are co-managed by ACFAP and NGO partners, with a focus on ending poaching and wildlife trafficking, e.g. species such as the lowland gorilla, elephant, buffalo, hippopotamus, and sitatunga.</p>	<p>MEF is responsible for sustainable management of forests, and since peatlands are forested, they have a role in the management of the peatlands (according to the Law on Sustainable Management of the Environment (2023), MEF is involved the development of a management plan for the peatlands). MEF is responsible for protected areas, including those in peatland zones, and any potential new ones created in the peatlands</p>	<p>MEF has income from logging industry lease fees and area taxation where production zones overlap with the peatlands.</p>	<p>Aspiration that peatland zones are protected against poachers, so threatened species are protected, with funding provided so communities benefit:</p> <p>Estimates that \$10m-\$15m is needed for communities. MEF wants further research conducted to inform how to protect the peatlands, as</p> <p>“the whole of humanity depends on them”. MEF would like to see a global effort to protect the peatlands.</p>	<p>The expectation is micro-projects for community development.</p> <p>Need protected areas to be managed in partnership – not all protected areas have NGO partners – and without partners, communities receive no improvements.</p> <p>Need job creation and agriculture support, otherwise conservation measures are at put at risk.</p> <p>Need a closed season, like with hunting, 1 May – 1 Dec to reduce the risk of overfishing.</p>

**Ministry of Land Use Planning,
Infrastructure and Road
Maintenance (MATIER)**

**Mme Ursule Thecle, Directrice de
Géomatique et de la Cartographie**

MATIER aims to develop and operationalize the national sustainable land use plan to reduce conflicting and overlapping land uses, including in the peatlands. MATIER implements the regional planning law of 2014 (Law on the orientation of regional planning and development, 2014) and its decrees. MATIER's technical team advises on whether land uses are compatible.

The peatlands are in the workstream of the Sustainable Land Use Programme, called PUDT. As the guarantor of intersectoral coordination, MATIER leads the technical secretariat of the interministerial committee with the support of the Sustainable Land Use Programme, called PUDT (MATIER is the host ministry for PUDT).

MATIER supports sustainable land use planning in the peatlands.

MATIER aspires for a special legal status for the peatlands, informed by research and taking into account the future national Land Use Master Plan.

MATIER has a mapping unit that wants to lead the mapping of the peatlands zone based on the official definition. MATIER is pulling together data on concessions, protected areas, wildlife corridors, administrative boundaries etc., so see the value in integrating this with peatlands data. They would like peatlands geospatial data to be shared with them so that they can play a role in the protection of the peatlands.

**The Sustainable Land Use
Programme (PUDT). PUDT aims
to define an inclusive and
concerted process for planning
the use and utilization of rural
land at the national level. This is
financed by AFD and the Central
African Forest Initiative (CAFI)**

PUDT's objective is to support the Republic of the Congo in implementing a process of spatial planning, in line with its policy of low-carbon economic diversification, following three principles: intersectoral coordination, consultation (all decisions must be subject to consultation), and inclusive

PUDT is supported by CIFOR in the conducting a study of current uses of peatlands, and proposing a legal status for the peatlands and measures for the protection and sustainable management of peatlands.

PUDT supports the government to implement the Letter of Intent (2019)

The aspiration is a special legal status for the peatlands is established, and that that this will be translated into law.

The expectation is that work on producing a harmonised land use map for Republic of Congo continues to be funded through to completion. This is likely to be by a second CAFI letter of intent to support a second, operational phase of the PUDT.

participation of
stakeholders.

**Ministry of Economy and
Finance. General Directorate of
Taxation of the Large Enterprises
Unit (GDTLEU); Director, M.
Toussaint Niabia**

As a tax administration, the Directorate's role is to capture the contribution of all sectors to public finances, including the peatlands.

Logging is minimal in the peatlands and there is almost no oil exploitation. Peatlands valorisation was qualified as a subject of interest by the ministry of economy and finance, despite the lack of carbon payments.

The GDTLEU see a potential income from the sale of carbon credits. However, the tax administration is seeking advice on this.

The GDTLEU aspires to have the income from the peatland area, either by peatland exploitation or by carbon offsetting.

There is a need for financial mechanisms, beyond carbon credits, that generate income.

The expectation is that the international community should help the country through compensatory measures if the Republic of the Congo is to protect its peatlands.

The GDTLET expects training on how to better integrate carbon into public accounts and sell carbon on the market, to broaden the tax base to include all ecosystem services.

Ministry of Finance. General Directorate of Economy (GDE)

Director: Dr. Franck Mondesir MBOUYILA TSASSA

The mission of the GDE is to support all companies established in the Republic of the Congo, including those in and near peatlands.

The role of the GDE to promote economic growth, including from the peatlands region.

Peatlands should generate resources either through industrial activities around the peatlands or through peatlands conservation rewards, including through carbon credits.

Creation of financial mechanisms to fund the peatlands protection, leveraging from existing and future mechanisms.

Integration of environmental information into the national accounting matrix.

The GDE wants to be present at exchanges with partners on the future of the peatlands, and should be kept informed of major developments. The peatlands need to be mapped, and according to the map the prohibition on industrial exploitation will be respected.

Ministry of Finance. General Directorate of Budget (GDB);

Budget Director, M. Jean Claude Iwanga

The GDB is interested in the revenue from industry e.g. production, taxes, profits, and other sources such as wildlife conservation.

The GDB also assesses risk and balances revenue against risk. It has identified the damage to the peatlands as a risk.

There is almost no income from the peatlands, due to the ban on most industrial activities.

Where activities occur, the proportional oil/mining royalty rate is reduced in areas that are difficult to operate in, such as the peatlands.

The GDB aspires to the establishment of innovative financing mechanisms such as carbon credits, debt-for-nature swaps.

The GDB wants to be an active partner in the debate about protecting the peatlands, financing mechanisms from peatland protection, and pursuing exploration and/or exploitation.

<p>Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fishing; Director General, Raphael Paul ONGOUALA;</p> <p>Rufain EDZOBI, Director of the Center for the Popularization of Agricultural Techniques; Director of agricultural production and climate change,</p> <p>Christian Parfait NIEME; Cacao Programme Coordinator</p> <p>IKOUEBE, Sylvain</p>	<p>The peatlands are mostly used for fishing and harvesting of non timber forest products (NTFPs). They are important to the local economy. Since the CAFI Letter of Intent, agriculture is directed away from the peatlands and towards the savanna.</p>	<p>New largescale plantations cannot be created in forest, including peat swamp forests (L'Arrete N°9450/MAEP/MAFDPRP).</p>	<p>The ban on agriculture in peatlands (and the restriction on agriculture in non-peatlands forests on <5 ha) merits compensation with carbon credits.</p>	<p>In return for protecting the peatlands forest for the benefit of the world, there should be payments to the state and benefits for the local population.</p>	<p>Need compensation for damage to agriculture in the forest by wild animals (destroys one sixth of crops).</p> <p>Need support for livestock breeding, to reduce pressure on wildlife.</p> <p>More investment is needed in rural infrastructure.</p>
<p>Ministry of Energy and Hydrology</p>	<p>The government aims at building two hydroelectric dams, one on the Ibenga River (18 MW) and the other on the Motaba River (23 MW) within the peatlands to supply electricity in the Likouala and the Central African Republic.</p> <p>Solar energy requires open spaces, so it can lead to deforestation.</p> <p>Feasibility studies for the dams are underway.</p>	<p>The ministry aims to provide drinking water in challenging areas, including swampy and flooded forests, via the extraction of groundwater in peatland zones, ensuring communities have the water supply they need.</p>	<p>The peatlands are very important for access to water and electricity, which are important for economic development.</p>	<p>Sustainable access to drinking water and energy, while protecting water resources in peatlands. Also an aspiration to map and protect the water sources that feed the peatlands, so that awareness can be raised of the importance of maintaining the hydrology of the peatlands.</p>	<p>A better understanding the hydrological functioning of the peatlands, informed by studies of the hydrology.</p>

**Sub-prefect of Ntokou
Department**

BOMETA, Valentin

Indigenous Peoples and local communities deeply depend on the peatlands for their daily subsistence via fishing and foraging.

The rivers are used for transport (improvement needed) and as a water source.

Indigenous Peoples and local communities do not know whether their activities contribute to protecting or to destroying the peatlands. There are no industrial multinationals operating in the peatlands, no imminent threat.

Fishing income is recognised as one of the main benefits of the peatlands to the Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

There is an aspiration for responsible practices that safeguard this natural resource.

There is an aspiration for the security services to be operational, for youth employment, and for local development supported by the peatlands in the next 20 years.

There is limited power for the sub-prefect to influence the department on the peatlands management.

Further expectations include the necessity for improved infrastructure, such as electricity, communication systems, clean water sources, sanitation, and transportation on the river.

CONGOLESE CIVIL SOCIETY					
Stakeholder group Interviewees	Main use of / interest in the peatland	Additional uses of / interest in the peatland	Main economic benefit of / interest in the peatlands	Aspirations	Expectations
<p>L'Association pour la Promotion des Ecosystèmes Tropicaux et le Développement de la Sangha (APETDS)</p> <p>Eric Kodja, Director</p> <p>Ouessou</p> <p>N.B. The staff at APEDTS are moving to Centre d'Encadrement et d'Etudes pour le Développement Communautaire (CECD) in August 2024.</p>	<p>Protecting the peatlands contributes to the APETDS mandate of the sustainable management of the Congo Basin forest through improved governance, sustainable development, gender promotion and defending the rights of Indigenous Peoples.</p>	<p>APETDS is working for the recognition of Indigenous land tenure, for Indigenous Peoples' rights to collect NTFP in forestry concessions (e.g. in Tala Tala concession with SEFYD), and to stop mistreatment by anti-poaching patrols.</p>	<p>APETDS have no direct economic interest in the peatlands, but APETDS support the economic right of Indigenous People and local communities who utilise the peatlands.</p>	<p>For Indigenous Peoples and local communities to have their land rights recognised and access to forest resources guaranteed, and the richness of the forest ecosystem restored. For the loss of Indigenous culture to be halted and reversed.</p>	<p>Secondary legislation is developed a) for the 2011 Law on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples so Indigenous Peoples can gain formal title of their customary land; and b) for the 2018 Law on the Acquisition of Land in order to be in compliance with the 2011 Law.</p>
<p>Cadre de Concertation des Réseaux des Organisations de la Société Civile (CACROS)</p> <p>Felix BATANTOU</p> <p>President</p> <p>Conseil de Concertation des ONG de Développement (CCOD)</p>	<p>CACROS brings civil society organisations together to strengthen their voice and increase their influence.</p> <p>Members include Plateforme de Gestion Durable des Forêts, CACO REDD+, RENAPAC and Réseau Agroécologique au Congo</p>	<p>Conseil de Concertation des ONG de Développement (CCOD), the Brazzaville network and founding member of CACROS, has EU funding for capacity strengthening of 15 CSOs.</p>	<p>CACROS is dedicated to improving the wellbeing of people and protecting the environment, and therefore would like to see the protection of the peatlands and peatland-dependent livelihoods.</p>	<p>Aspire for the civil society organisations working on forest and environmental issues to collaborate and to increase their impact by working collaboratively through a common platform.</p>	<p>Civil society has the capacity to improve living conditions and access to services in the peatlands. It would be possible to implement and scale up programmes and maintain strong community participation and monitoring.</p>

M. Dominique Matondo,
President de CCOD

M. Marcel Loumouamou,,
Secrétaire Exécutif

Caritas Ouessou

Abbé Albogassfe

Director

A diocesan organisation, part of Caritas Congo and part of the Caritas Internationalis global confederation.

Main interest is the social development of Indigenous Peoples and local communities living in the diocese of Ouessou which includes peatlands, for example, implements small agriculture projects with Indigenous Peoples (not in the peatlands).

As an arm of the Catholic church has influence locally and can share information about the value of peatlands and importance of peatland-dependent livelihoods

Caritas Ouessou does not have activities in the peatlands.

Aspiration is for the local populations to have improved living standards, access to health and education, and to live in harmony with nature.

Expectation is for small projects supporting Indigenous Peoples' livelihoods and community development.

Centre des Droits de l'Homme et du Développement (CDHD)

Nzobo Roch Euloge, Coordinateur de CDHD

M. Alvain Nkumba

Work relating to the peatlands supports the CDHD mandate of human rights training and citizen education. CDHD advocated for the clause in the 2023 Environment Law banning industrial activities in the peatlands, and is working on the Protected Area law to address the loss of usage rights in protected areas (Article 13

Coordinated the drafting of Law No. 5-2011 of 25 February 2011 on promoting and protecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

CDHD's main interest is in protecting the rights of people who live near the peatlands and their continued access to and use of peatlands resources.

To protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities to use the peatlands for their livelihoods and to have the right to manage their customary forest.

To ensure forest usage rights for Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the new Protected Areas law and for the government to pass secondary legislation setting out a process to create a community forest.

in Environment Law of 2023).

Comptoir Juridique Junior (CJJ)

Lilian Barros, Secrétaire Permanent

Ines Mvoukani, Juriste

To support people to know and defend their rights and protect their natural resources; to contribute to judicial reform; to conduct independent monitoring of companies' application of the law in industrial concessions.

To defend the rights of people to their customary land, and to Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), when land use decisions are made.

CJJ provides communities with legal advice and would like their volunteers, and the people they work with, to be better informed about the importance of the peatlands and peatlands-related laws.

To have a national plan for land management (PNAT) that secures forest land for Indigenous Peoples and local communities. To limit the extent of and damage caused by mining, logging and oil exploration to people and the environment.

For Indigenous Peoples to obtain land title according to the 2011 law.

Forum pour la Gouvernance et les Droits de l'Homme (FGDH)

Maixent Agnimbat Emeka

Conducted a social study of the peatlands in 2021 and lobbied against the auction of oil and gas permits in the peatlands.

FGDH has observed that reductions in fishing stock are increasing agricultural pressure on the peatlands.

The peatlands are an essential source of economic livelihood for Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

The legal status of the peatlands recognises customary tenure. Once there is legal status, a peatlands management plan identifies where Indigenous Peoples and local communities livelihood activities take place.

The peatlands to have a special legal status. Secondary texts for the 2011 law on the promotion of Indigenous rights setting out the procedure for recognition of Indigenous land.

Global Participe Ivan KIBANGOU NGOY, Executive Director	<p>Working on social justice, forests and climate so people can benefit from carbon projects; monitoring the Pikounda Nord concession and the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility emissions reductions programme in Sangha and Likouala – areas with large extents of peatlands.</p>	<p>Training para-legals to support communities on FPIC and making complaints</p>	<p>Global Participe does not have direct economic interests in the peatlands.</p>	<p>Aspire for Indigenous Peoples and local communities to have land tenure security and to realise the benefits of carbon programmes that are due to them according to the law.</p>	<p>To secure land title for Indigenous Peoples and local communities</p>
L’Observatoire Congolais des Droits de l’Homme (OCDH) Nina Kiyindou, Acting Director	<p>Mandated to protect human rights and conduct human rights monitoring, OCDH’s interest in the peatlands is to protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities who depend on them. Having advocated for the elaboration of the 2011 Law, they want to see it applied.</p>	<p>OCDH is supporting the Ministry of Justice by conducting consultations with Indigenous Peoples to ask for their free prior and informed consent on draft legislation that relate to Indigenous People’s land rights. OCDH has conducted monitoring of the Atama palm oil concession which overlaps with peatlands.</p>	<p>OCDH does not have direct economic interests in the peatlands.</p>	<p>To support Indigenous Peoples and local communities in their role conserving the peatlands. For customary land rights to be recognised in the National Plan for Land Management (PNAT).</p>	<p>To obtain special legal status for the peatlands (as set out in the CAFI letter of intent). To have Indigenous Peoples and local communities input into the drafting of secondary legislation on community forests, on the formalisation of customary Indigenous tenure, forest use in Protected Areas and the creation of Territories of Life.</p>
Observatoire Indépendant des Tourbières (OI-T)	<p>An NGO created after the signing of the Brazzaville Declaration, OI-T’s aim is to monitor legal compliance of</p>	<p>OI-T has conducted missions to the peatlands, for example to Makua District, to assess local</p>	<p>OI-T’s main interest is in gaining funding so that it can actively fulfil its mandate as</p>	<p>To see improvements in the lives of people living in remote peatlands areas</p>	<p>To raise awareness of peat among Indigenous Peoples and local communities of the</p>

<p>Nazaire MOUNDZOUNGUELA, Director</p> <p>Mandated at the 3rd meeting of the Global Peat Initiative in 2018 on issues of climate, forests and land rights.</p>	<p>social and environmental safeguards in wetlands, mangroves and peatlands; and to collect reliable data; and to monitor High Carbon Stock and High Conservation Value forests.</p>	<p>populations' knowledge of the peat and its importance.</p>	<p>the official independent monitor of the peatlands.</p>	<p>through funding for peatlands protection that includes direct benefits for local populations.</p>	<p>special status when it is accorded to peatlands, and of the work of the PUDT and government on peatlands.</p>
<p>The Network of Indigenous and Local Peoples for the Management of Central African Ecosystems (REPALEAC-CONGO)</p> <p>Parfait DIHOUKAMBA, Coordinator</p>	<p>Advocating for Indigenous rights in the Republic of Congo, particularly relating to forest governance and customary land tenure.</p> <p>In Likouala department, REPALEAC is consulting with Indigenous Peoples and local communities on the possible creation of a territory of life.</p>	<p>REPALEAC is consulting forest dependent communities in nine districts on a GEF-funded sustainable landscapes project. Component 2 of the project aims to create 600,000 ha of new protected areas (considering categories V and VI and OECMs) adjacent to Odzala-Kokoua with an unspecified extent in the peatlands. The consultation informs people of this initiative and of alternative income sources such as ecotourism (MEDDBC/GEF funding).</p>	<p>To have an economic benefit for the Indigenous Peoples when a protected area is created, a "cahier de charge" that compensates them for their conservation of the peatlands.</p>	<p>Fair compensation for IPLCs so their economic conditions improve, with funding for improved livelihoods and increased household revenue generation.</p> <p>Fair share of revenue from ecotourism in peatlands for Indigenous Peoples and local communities.</p>	<p>A multi-actor committee is put in place for the governance of the peatlands (government, private sector, civil society, Indigenous Peoples and local communities). Management decisions are inclusive and Indigenous Peoples and local communities are consulted; proposed plans follow the full FPIC process.</p>

Stakeholder group Interviewees	Main use of / interest in the peatland	Additional uses of / interest in the peatland	Main economic benefit of / interest in the peatlands	Aspirations	Expectations
INTERNATIONAL NGOS				Future aspirations	Expectations
<p>Amis des Bonobos au Congo (ABC)</p> <p>Fanny MINESI, General Director</p> <p>Dominique Morel, Chair of the Board ABC-USA</p> <p>ABC is a Congolese NGO in DRC working to rescue orphaned bonobos, release them in the wild, fund community development and raise awareness of bonobos. They co-manage a protected area that is mostly peatlands.</p>	<p>Bonobos are released back into the wild in Ekolo ya Bonobo Community Reserve in Equateur province, DRC, a provincial protected area with 45,500 ha of peat swamp forest, co-managed with the community. The aim is to protect bonobos and their habitat, which includes a large areas of peat swamp forest.</p>	<p>Communities at Ekolo ya Bonobo Community Reserve have provided resources for the primary school, health centre and technical support for NTFP value chains, and education on sustainable management of their resources including peat pools and fishing.</p>	<p>ABC have a direct economic interest in the peatlands, to continue to generate funding for community development.</p>	<p>To end the killing of bonobos for the bushmeat trade through education, awareness and building a better future through conservation.</p>	<p>To increase the role of the community in co-managing the reserve, to increase benefits to communities through expanded and more effective community development activities and to expand education and awareness activities to reduce the killing of bonobos for bushmeat.</p>
<p>Catholic Relief Services (CRS)</p> <p>Alemayehu GEBREMARIAM, Country Representative, Republic of Congo.</p> <p>CRS is the Caritas agency of the United States.</p>	<p>Every year since 2018 CRS does door to door distribution of bednets for malaria prevention funded by Global Fund. Achieved 98% coverage of households nationwide, including the peatlands; also supply chain of</p>	<p>CRS is implementing disaster risk reduction in Likouala, Cuvette, Sangha, & Plateau departments, including savings and lending groups to build assets. Has done emergency relief for</p>	<p>CRS does not have direct economic interests in the peatlands.</p>	<p>CRS is keen to develop programmes in the environment and climate change adaptation, including in the peatlands.</p>	<p>Based on current programming, aim to see reduction in malaria morbidity and mortality, and reduced impact of disasters.</p>

medicines and health system strengthening. In partnership with Caritas Congo and other partners such as Medecins D'Afrique.

Indigenous Peoples after floods.

Centre for International Development and Training (CIDT)

Aurelian Mbzibain, Consultant formerly working for CIDT.

A training programme of the University of Warwick

Improving forest governance through training and certification of forest monitoring to strengthen credibility.

Strengthening the capacity of Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' to claim their rights according to Forest Law (2020) and the Law Promoting and Protecting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2011).

CIDT does not have direct economic interests in the peatlands.

Special status for the peatlands is established based on their importance for climate and ecology. Overlapping interests in the peatlands are resolved through improved land use planning. The Law Promoting and Protecting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2011) is applied to secure land tenure. Community concessions give Indigenous Peoples and local communities the right to manage their natural resources.

Improved forest monitoring holds companies and government to account for FPIC, cahier de charge and other social responsibilities.

<p>ClientEarth</p> <p>Caroline Haywood, Senior Law and Policy Advisor</p>	<p>ClientEarth works on forest governance and law reform to recognise the rights of IPLC living in forests, which includes the peatlands. ClientEarth is actively involved in the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (on timber legality) which includes timber potentially illegally extracted from the peatlands. The approach is to provide legal advice to Congolese civil society and facilitate meetings to increase the role of civil society in legal reform.</p>	<p>ClientEarth supported civil society organisations to draft legislation (secondary legislation under the Forest Law of 2020) on community forestry, which could apply to the peatlands, for example by creating a procedure by which the government could grant management rights to Indigenous Peoples and local communities for a demarcated area of customary forest.</p>	<p>A sustainable model for peatlands protection is needed, with communities at the heart of it.</p>	<p>The peatlands present an opportunity to look at the UN Convention on Biological Diversity commitment on effective biodiversity conservation in 30% of land and seas by 2030 and create a human centred approach to achieve this in an inclusive and rights-based way.</p>	<p>As biodiversity credits or payment for ecosystem services emerge as a financial mechanism for peatlands protection, hope for equitable benefit sharing for Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and simplicity in design to avoid the complexity of REDD+. Also, expect legal reform that recognises Indigenous Peoples and local community rights, initially through community forestry.</p>
<p>Forest Peoples Programme</p> <p>Lassana Kone – Country Representative for DRC and RoC</p> <p>Dalton Aweleka, Ouessou Representative</p> <p>Anouska Perram, Congo Basin Coordinator</p>	<p>Self-determination for forest peoples including Indigenous Peoples and local communities who live in/near the peatlands. Supporting Indigenous Peoples and local communities to make decisions about how they manage their customary</p>	<p>Support communities to defend their rights in forestry concessions and Protected Areas, e.g. FPIC.</p>	<p>FPP has no direct economic interest in the peatlands.</p>	<p>Indigenous Peoples and local communities are consulted about the sustainable management and options are explained in an appropriate and accessible way, and that their preferences</p>	<p>Inclusion of Indigenous and local Community Conservation Areas (ICCAs)/Territories of Life in the new Protected Areas law to give communities management rights over their land.</p>

land and natural resources;
advocating for legal reform
and protection of their
rights.

are adopted by the
administration.

Global Witness

Colin Robertson, Senior Investigator

The Forests Campaign at Global Witness aims to end the financing of deforestation, with a focus on Latin America.

Main interest is to stop the financing of deforestation, so this could include the financing of oil and gas extraction in the peatlands, or other industrial activities.

Additionally, interested in exposing illegal logging and mining

Global Witness has no direct economic interest in the peatlands.

Aspire to halt deforestation, achieve deforestation-free supply chains and recognition for Indigenous Peoples and local communities as custodians of the forest.

Hold financial institutions, companies and governments to account for the financing of / supply chains / weak governance that drive deforestation

Rainforest Foundation UK

Joe Eisen, CEO

Ana Osuna Orozco, Head of Programmes

Rainforest Foundation UK

A rights-based approach to forest protection, including the peat swamp forest. Supports Congolese civil society on forest governance reform, campaigns to protect the peatlands from oil extraction, and recognition of customary tenure of forested land.

ADD SOMETHING

RF UK has no direct economic interest in the peatlands.

Aspiration is for Indigenous Peoples and local communities to secure land rights through participatory mapping and legal channels; and for secondary legislation under the Forest Law (2020) to establish the procedure for creating community managed concessions; and

Expects the ban on logging in the peatlands to require monitoring and enforcement. Given the threat of oil exploration in the peatlands will not go away, expects the campaign to keep running.

				secondary legislation under the Law on the Promotion and Protection of Indigenous Peoples (2011) to establish the process for Indigenous Peoples to gain land title.	
Rainforest Trust	Protects tropical forests through providing grants for the creation of legal protections and establishment of management – not ongoing costs.	Want local people to have access to their livelihoods and want land use change in the peatlands to be ruled out.	Rainforest Trust has no direct economic interest in the peatlands.	Want to see the peatlands protected and under community management or with security of tenure.	Want to see long term financing committed for the protection of the peatlands.
Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) Margane Cournarie, Directrice Technique Clement Louzingou, Peatlands Coordinator	WCS co-manages (with the Ministry of Forest Economy) Lac Tele Community Reserve which includes a large area of peatlands and adopts a community-based conservation approach in the Community Reserve. The main aim is to stop poaching, to conduct research, and to educate and support the communities (e.g.	The population living in the reserve use the peatlands to fish as well as NTFP collection and hunting of non-protected species – alongside WCS's protection of wildlife in the reserve. There are no restrictions on access or activities.	Exploring the possibility of raising financing through the High Integrity Forest Initiative (HIFOR)	Aspiration is for the peatlands to access some carbon financing which contributes to wildlife conservation and community development.	To support the government with peatlands management options – through further research. To change behaviour on the use of fire to clear paths and to reduce the burning of gallery forest.

community fishing charter,
access to mobile health
clinic).

World Wildlife Fund

**Eric Essomba, Regional Head,
Environmental & Social
Safeguards, WWF International**

WWF has managed Ntokou
Pikounda National Park
since 2017. Covering 4,572
km2, it includes extensive
peatlands and is part of the
TRIDOM (Tri-National Dja-
Odzala-Minkébé)
landscape.

The peatlands are an
ecosystem supporting
endangered species
including chimpanzees,
lowland gorillas and forest
elephants.

WWF has no direct
economic interest in
the peatlands.

To reduce poaching
in and around Ntokou
Pikounda National
Park, particularly of
snakes, crocodiles
and elephants.

To mitigate the social
and environmental risks
related to the
management of Ntokou
Pikounda National Park,
for the benefit of the
approx. 7,000 people
who live in the wider
periphery of the park,
and for its wildlife.

**World Resources Institute (WRI)
Jean Bakouma, the Republic of
the Congo Country Manager**

**Teodyl Nkuintchua, Congo Basin
Strategy and Engagement Leader,
WRI RoC**

Responsible for mapping
current land uses to provide
reliable data for decision
making, funded by CAFI.

ADD SOMETHING HERE

WRI has no direct
economic interest in
the peatlands.

To ensure benefits for
the communities who
depend on the
peatlands for their
livelihoods and who
are guardians of the
peatlands.

Reliable mapping of land
use provides geospatial
data that supports
decision making.

Stakeholder group Interviewees	Main use of / interest in the peatland	Additional uses of / interest in the peatland	Main economic benefit of / interest in the peatlands	Aspirations	Expectations
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS & DONORS					
Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI) Julie Veyseyre Technical Expert CAFI Secretariat, Jules Katubadi Technical Specialist CAFI Secretariat Office of the Resident Coordinator Brazzaville	<p>CAFI partners with the government to implement the Letter of Intent (2019)'s commitment to "protecting the peatlands by prohibiting any drainage or drying." CAFI recognizes the role of the peatlands in conserving a globally important carbon stock and biodiversity.</p> <p>CAFI is working to minimise the direct and indirect impact of industrial activities on forests and peatlands.</p>	<p>CAFI is supporting improved sustainable land use planning involving key stakeholders and safeguarding Indigenous Peoples and local communities' land rights.</p>	<p>Developing an innovative finance mechanism at the regional level based on the payment for ecosystem services (PES) approach, with direct payments for improved livelihoods for local populations to incentivise protecting the peatlands.</p>	<p>New regulations enacted to demarcate the peatlands with a special legal status, across the departments of Likouala, Sangha, Cuvette and Plateaux, that prevents drainage and recognizes and respects the land and resource use rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.</p>	<p>The sectoral policies in the Republic of Congo in relation to land allocation are harmonized thanks to an inter-ministerial coordination.</p> <p>Sustainable management practices are adopted in peatland areas to prevent drainage or drying.</p>

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)

Andrew Carr: Central Africa Climate & Environment Lead | Africa Programmes & Expertise Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

The UK's Overseas Development Assistance is disbursed by FCDO. The peatlands provide ecosystem services, including fishing for communities, carbon store or habitat for biodiversity. FCDO supports efforts to maintain these services.

The Congo Basin Forest Action Programme is active (2024-2031) and includes maintaining high forest low deforestation landscapes and peatlands.

The Forest Governance and Markets and Climate programme worked in the Republic of the Congo in its first phase and is likely to continue to do so in the next phase.

Creating financial mechanisms for forest and peatlands protection. Using a landscape approach and defining how finance will flow to monetise the peatlands. At the same time improving the livelihoods of Indigenous People and local communities.

Assisting the development of resilient landscapes – such as the peatlands - across the Congo Basin. FCDO funding that provides grassroots support to Indigenous Peoples and local communities while, in the unprotected areas around that are under threat of active deforestation, protecting the peatlands.

FCDO expects continued political leadership and commitment to the continued protection of the peatlands, including good governance with the effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

EU Delegation

Séverine DEMERRE, Cooperation Officer | Forest, Environment, Delegation of the European Union in the Republic of Congo

The EU and Congo work in partnership to improve the sustainable management of biodiversity, and priority actions include timber legality and implementation of the Letter of Intent (2019).

The EU also funds projects raising

Interest in resolving the challenges related to overlapping land use at the level of forest concessions, peatlands, and protected areas.

The peatlands provide ecosystem services, including fishing for communities, a global carbon store and habitat for biodiversity.

The EU shared the CAFI and PUDT aspiration that the government will define a legal status for the peatlands, as set out in the Letter of Intent. Also, for sustainable management, biodiversity conservation and community development with full respect for the rights

Financial and institutional support within the framework of CAFI trust fund, contributes to strengthen inter-ministerial coordination on land use.

awareness of the Law on Promotion and Protection of Indigenous Rights.

Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Matt Warren, Forestry Officer – Peatlands,

Maria Nuutinen, Forestry Officer, Peatlands

The FAO is currently responsible for developing sustainable livelihood approaches in the peatlands as part of the project led by the UNEP. The FAO is piloting sustainable approaches that promote wellbeing and equity.

The FAO has developed principles for sustainability in the management of the peatlands, on request of the government of the Republic of the Congo

The FAO received funding from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection International Climate Initiative (BMUV) through the International Climate Initiative (IKI) to implement the Congo Basin peatlands project led by the UNEP.

The main aspiration of the FAO is to promote evidence-based decision-making on peatlands and to improve the wellbeing of peatlands-dependent populations.

Among the expectations, FAO aims to foster collaboration and strengthen the transformative dialogue between stakeholders.

Forests, People, Climate (FPC)

Samuel Nnah FPC point person for the Congo Basin strategy

Lindsey Allen, Focal Point for the Congo Basin strategy at CLUA/ Executive Director, CLUA

FPC aims to strengthen the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, promote sustainable livelihoods, and transparent

FPC supported the civil society campaign for the provisions to protect the peatlands within the Law on Sustainable Management of the Environment (2023)

FPC wants to see a strong civil society network in the Republic of the Congo and a greater share of funding going directly to Congolese

To put local livelihoods at the centre of protecting the peatlands.

To put in place grants and build the capacity of civil society to implement programs to protect the peatlands.

governance. In the peatlands FPC's interest is to secure local peatlands-dependent livelihoods and the protection of the peatlands ecosystem.

organisations and Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

French Development Agency (AFD)

Franklin Kounou

Consultant in charge of monitoring the joint AFD-CAFI programmatic framework in Congo – PUDT

Morgane Seger, Forest, Agriculture, Climate and NGO Project Manager AFD

AFD funds the PUDT and monitors their progress towards targets. AFD supports implementation of the Letter of Intent (2019).

AFD contributes to the Country Package for Forests, Climate and Nature to support the Republic of the Congo to expand the protected areas network to cover 30% of terrestrial and marine areas, and to enhance scientific knowledge on carbon sinks and biodiversity

AFD contributes to the CAFI trust fund and provides bilateral support to the government for sustainable development, promotion of the green economy, conservation and sustainable management of forest ecosystems.

AFD's aspirations align with the Republic of Congo's commitment to protect the peatlands, including mapping and defining a legal status for peatlands

Through its support to PUDT, AFD expects to see overlapping land uses in the peatlands resolved.

World Bank

David Maleki

The World Bank is preparing a Sustainable Congo Basin Forest

The World Bank's Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) aims to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest

The World Bank supports natural capital accounting that measures the

The World Bank aspiration is for the government to value their natural

The World Bank expects the ongoing protection of the peatlands to form part of the Republic of

**Senior Natural Resources
Management Specialist
Environment, Natural Resources
and the Blue Economy – West
and Central Africa - The World
Bank (Brazzaville, Republic of
Congo)**

Economies program which will loan money to governments including the Republic of the Congo's to finance forest protection and reduced deforestation. The government could decide to use this to finance some aspects of peatlands protection.

degradation, conserve and enhance forest carbon stocks and sustainably manage forests. In the Republic of Congo, FCPF's Emissions Reduction Programme includes large areas of peatlands, though the base rate of deforestation was already low so emissions reductions are not anticipated from the peatlands.

value of peatlands as ecosystem service providers

ecosystems and finance their protection in the long term.

the Congo's Nationally Determined Contributions.