



## 65 million agreement for Congo-Brazzaville forest signed in Paris

**Paris, 3 September** – On the occasion of the state visit of President Sassou-Nguesso in Paris, President Emmanuel Macron today signed a Letter of Intent committing 65 million US dollars for the preservation of the rainforest in the Republic of Congo, commonly known as Congo-Brazzaville.

This deal is made with the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI), of which France holds the presidency this year. Norway, France and the European Union contribute 45 million US dollars to the agreement, plus 20 million from the French Development Agency (AFD), the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the German Federal Ministry of the Environment (BMU).

Covering 23.9 million hectares – which is equivalent to Greece and Portugal combined and represents 69.8 percent of the national territory – Congo-Brazzaville's forests are invaluable sources of biodiversity and of high carbon stocks.

The agreement will support land use plans for sustainable management and protection of peatlands, by prohibiting their drainage and drying out. Discovered in 2017 in the Congo Basin, these peatlands are vitally important in the fight against climate change, as they contain nearly three years of global greenhouse gas emissions.

Congo's vision is to maintain a historically low rate of deforestation while diversifying its economy. Thus, the country is willing to mitigate future risks, including those related to agro-industrial exploitation, as was shown in a recent interministerial decree (2018) that directs these activities to savannah areas.

In the deal signed today, Congo-Brazza also commits to avoid conversion of more than 20,000 hectares of forest per year, and this only outside of forests that boast high carbon stocks and high conservation value.

The agreement with CAFI aims to help Congo address a complex challenge: reaching a sustainable economic development while making commitments in key growth sectors such as agriculture, mining and hydrocarbons and minimizing climate change impacts.

This Letter of Intent with the Republic of Congo is the third signed between CAFI and its partner countries, after the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2016 and Gabon in 2017. The forests of Central Africa cover 240 million hectares and are considered as Earth's second lungs after the Amazon.

CAFI supports strategic and holistic national investment frameworks based on REDD + and low-emission development, focusing on six high forest cover countries in Central African region.

CAFI is managed by the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF), where United Nations agencies, the World Bank and bilateral development partners act as implementing agencies to support partner countries. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) hosts the CAFI Secretariat in Geneva.

**For more information**

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