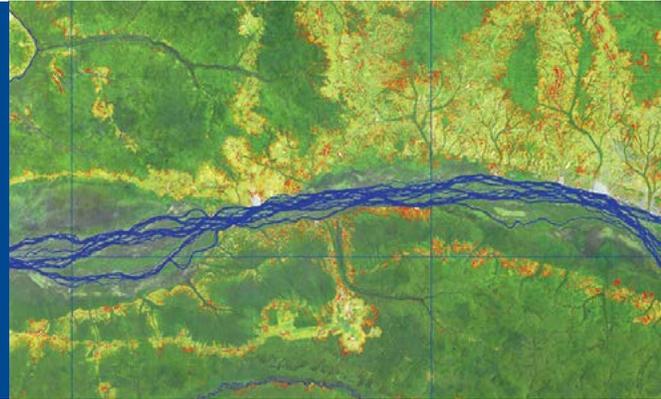




USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



THE ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND POLICY SUPPORT PROJECT



OVERVIEW

The Congo Basin is the world's second largest contiguous rainforest. It is unequalled in its biodiversity, with a rich array of wildlife often found nowhere else in the world. It is also the second largest global "sink" for carbon, the most important gas implicated in global warming.

The forests are also an important source of food, materials and medicine for more than 80 million people who live in the region. The lack of economic alternatives for the local inhabitants and the expected doubling of the population in Central Africa over the next 20 years are increasing pressures to clear forests.

Deforestation, forest degradation and biodiversity loss due to habitat destruction, the bushmeat trade and wildlife trafficking, environmental destruction from civil and military conflicts, population growth, and growing global demand for food, timber, minerals, petroleum and other resources are combining to create great and growing threats, impacting the region both now and in the future.

Economic growth and poverty alleviation are dependent on the effective and sustainable use and sound management of natural resources. The governments of the Congo Basin countries have recognized the growing pressures on their forests, and have indicated a desire to act, but they also need to strike a balance between managing the resources to meet current local and global needs and conserving the resource base for future generations.

Some governments have begun to put legislative and policy frameworks in place, although implementation is lagging due to inadequately trained personnel and other deficiencies in capacity to implement these commitments. So while official recognition of the need for regional cooperation in tackling these challenges is high, and has already led to cooperative work and the formation of channels and structures for collaboration, much more needs to be done to protect these valuable and irreplaceable resources.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO – 2011: USAID supports the use of remote sensed data sets to monitor the forests of Central Africa. The map above depicts forest cover change. Photo by University of Maryland for USAID

CARPE at a Glance

The Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) is a long-term initiative of the United States Government to promote sustainable forest management, biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation in the Congo Basin through increased local, national and regional natural resource management capacity.

CARPE has been implemented in three phases:

CARPE Phase I (1995-2002) built a natural resources information base for the region, and developed local capacity, through a small grants program focused on three themes: forestry, protected area management and environmental governance.

CARPE Phase II (2003-2012) implemented systematic land use planning to support forest and biodiversity conservation needs, and established partnerships and activities to create sustainable conservation management systems and climate change mitigation.

CARPE Phase III (2012-2020) is "institutionalizing" the conservation monitoring and management approaches developed in CARPE II by building individual, organizational and systems capacity necessary to ensure that the ecological integrity of the humid forest ecosystem of the Congo Basin can be sustained without USAID support.

THE CENTRAL AFRICA REGIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

In 1995 the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) established the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE), a 25-year program aimed at reducing the threats of forest and biodiversity loss within the Congo Basin. CARPE aims to slow the rate of forest degradation and the impact it can have on climate change by increasing local, national and regional capacity and participation in natural resource management, and strengthening conservation policy development and implementation.

CARPE's approach is both top-down and bottom-up. It works at the local level with forest dwelling communities and at the national level with an array of international, regional, national and local partners to transition from the past spiral of environmental degradation and poverty toward a trajectory characterized by climate resilience and rising earnings from sustainable low emissions development and flourishing biodiversity.

Now in its third phase, CARPE is "institutionalizing" the management of the Congo Basin forests through individual, organizational and systems capacity building. To achieve this, two distinct but interdependent projects have been established: the Environmental Monitoring and Policy Support (EMAPS) project, which works to boost the quality and scope of conservation policy-making, and forest monitoring, analysis and information dissemination; and the Central Africa Forest Ecosystems Conservation (CAFEC) project.



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO – 2015: With USAID's support, the U.S. Forest Service is training community members to use appropriate fire management techniques in the Lac Télé-Lac Tumba landscape. Photo by Jordan Kimball for USAID

EMAPS at a glance

USAID's Environmental Monitoring and Policy Support (EMAPS) project develops Central Africa's national and regional policy and regulatory capabilities, and improves forest monitoring, analysis, and information dissemination to help maintain the ecological integrity of the humid forest ecosystem of the Congo Basin.

EMAPS creates policy-making environments for sustainable forest and biodiversity conservation management, and strengthens the capacity to monitor, analyze and disseminate information about forest cover change, forest-based greenhouse gas emissions and carbon sequestration and biodiversity at local, national and regional levels.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the University of Maryland and the Central Africa Forest Satellite Observatory (OSFAC) collaborate to produce detailed analyses of forest change across the Congo Basin. To help ensure this information is included in policy-making and regulatory mechanisms, the NASA-led consortium partners with a second EMAPS consortium led by the World Resources Institute, and includes the African Wildlife Foundation, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wildlife Fund and the Council for the Defense of the Environment through Legality and Traceability.

EMAPS and the Central Africa Forest Ecosystems Conservation (CAFEC) project, which strengthens the management of targeted Congo forest landscapes and the mitigation of threats to biodiversity, are "institutionalizing" the management of the Congo Basin forests through individual, organizational and systems capacity building during the third phase of USAID's Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) program.

The EMAPS and CAFEC projects are complementary. The information collected and shared through the local efforts of CAFEC informs national and regional policy work, while improved policies supported under EMAPS allows for better conservation efforts and land use management at the local landscape level. They both align with and contribute to the Presidential Initiative on Global Climate Change and the National Strategy for Combatting Wildlife Trafficking.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND POLICY SUPPORT PROJECT

The Environmental Monitoring and Policy Support (EMAPS) project is developing Central Africa's national and regional policy and regulatory capabilities. Better policies and implementing frameworks, along with new remote sensing technologies, help improve forest and biodiversity monitoring and conservation, allowing for state-of-the-art analysis of forest cover change, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, carbon sequestration and other environmental benchmarks.

To achieve this, EMAPS concentrates on two key objectives to meet the goal of maintaining the ecological integrity of the humid forest ecosystem of the Congo Basin.

The first is to create policy and regulatory environments that support sustainable forest and biodiversity conservation management. EMAPS does this by strengthening local, provincial, national and regional institutions to formalize and enforce forest, biodiversity and global climate change (GCC) policies, improving local civil society's ability to successfully engage in public dialogue and disseminate relevant information, and by increasing community-based organizations' knowledge of forestry, biodiversity and GCC policies and regulations.

The second is to strengthen the capacity to measure, monitor, report and verify forest cover change, forest-based GHG emissions and carbon sequestration and biodiversity at local, national and regional levels. EMAPS does this by increasing access to technologies and methodologies for natural resource and biodiversity monitoring and GCC mitigation.

The Congo Basin forest presents huge logistical challenges to the collection of reliable and current data on biodiversity status and threats. To meet these challenges, EMAPS strengthens the ability of local and national institutions to use satellite data and geographic information systems to inform both conservation and management efforts and policy-making.

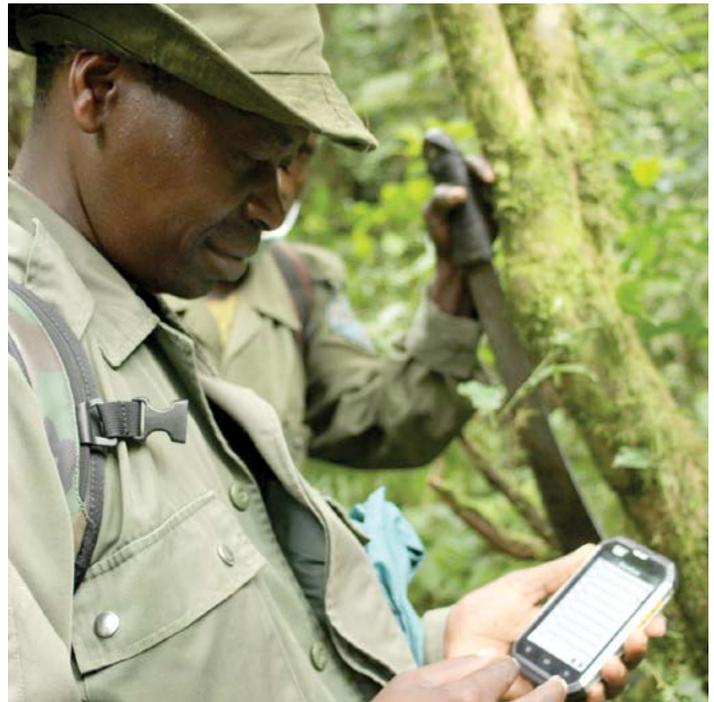
A partnership between National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the University of Maryland (UMD), and the Central Africa Forest Satellite Observatory (OSFAC)¹ has produced detailed analyses of forest cover and loss across the Congo Basin. These analyses are key reference documents for Central African countries

¹ Observatoire Satellital des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale

developing national baselines of forest carbon stocks and emissions for their national climate change mitigation programs. The work is complemented by the U.S. Forest Service, which provides technical assistance, as well as helping to build local institutional and community capacity.

To complement the forest cover monitoring and analysis work implemented under EMAPS, USAID funds the development of national interactive forest atlases. These atlases show the location, extent and different land use and land rights classifications, including logging concessions, in relation to protected areas and other land uses. They also identify risks to protected areas including illegal cutting, mineral extraction, and road construction.

EMAPS also works with the Congo Basin Forest Partnership² to promote the sustainable management of the Congo Basin's forests and wildlife across country borders by improving communication, cooperation and collaboration.

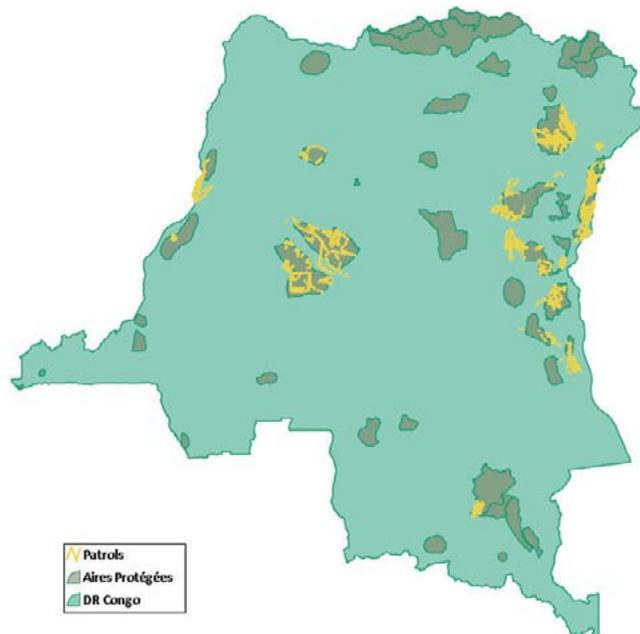


DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO – 2014: Tito Biriandwa, a ranger at Kahuzi Biega National Park, uses a mobile device to record his patrol and the gorillas he observes in the park. With support from CARPE, the data will be downloaded into national SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool) database to help park management more effectively plan patrols and better protect wildlife. Photo by Natalie Bailey for USAID

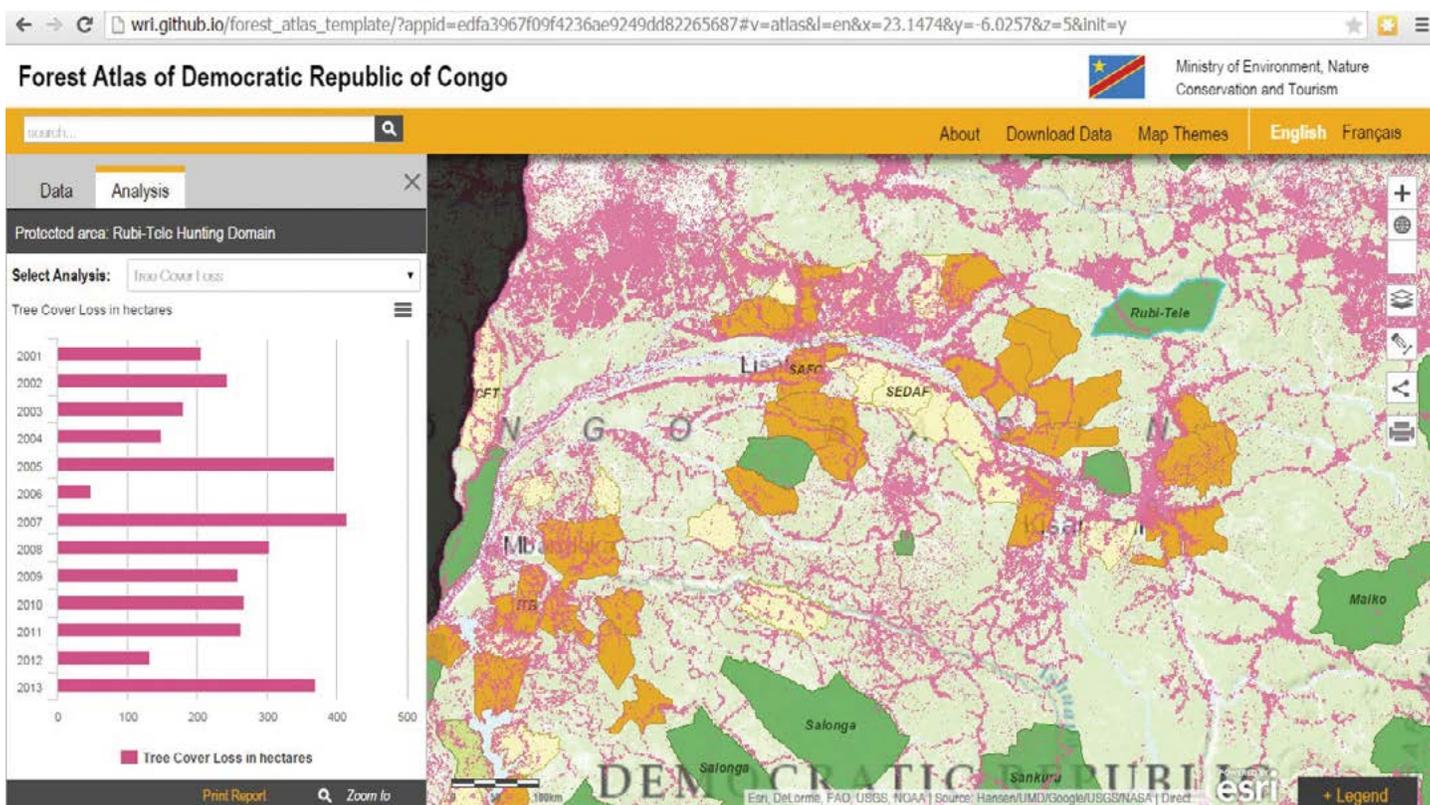
² Comprised of more than 70 members, including African countries, donor agencies and governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, scientific institutions, and the private sector

Select Recent Accomplishments

- Training nearly 8,200 people in conservation and climate change mitigation, management, monitoring, and governance skills.
- Updating online atlases of protected areas, community forests, and forest concessions for Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Central African Republic and Gabon. The atlases support each country's land use planning efforts that will reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.
- Developing a primary forest alert system with EMAPS partners that is being pilot tested in six landscapes within the DRC to identify and monitor areas where rapid land cover change is occurring.
- Creating a system for tracking wildfire occurrences that is being tested within three landscapes in DRC.



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO – 2015: With USAID's help, the protected areas management authority in DRC is vastly improving the quantity and quality of wildlife law enforcement patrols throughout the country's protected area network.



USAID is making it possible to develop online forest atlases that provide up-to-date information about forest cover losses in the region.
Photo by WRI for USAID

For more information:

www.carpe.umd.edu

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