



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

US FOREST SERVICE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

US Forest Service is providing targeted technical assistance to the government of DRC in the areas of forest zoning, land-use planning, and forest carbon inventories and monitoring

DRC government partners include the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, its Department of Forest Inventory and Zoning, Department of Sustainable Development, and National Zoning Steering Committee. USFS also collaborates in DRC with World Wildlife Fund, African Wildlife Foundation, World Resources Institute, Observatoire Satellital des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale, Conservation International, and the Wildlife Conservation Society

The Forest Service sponsors DRC ministry staff to continue their education through scholarships for master's degree programs and seminars in the US focusing on climate change and protected area management

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

At over 900,000 square miles and with over 65 million people, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is the largest country in the Congo Basin of Central Africa. The Congo Basin rainforest is the second largest rainforest in the world and includes the largest undisturbed or intact forest areas globally. With over 200 ethnic groups, DRC has a rich traditional and popular culture. DRC also holds diverse ecosystems: from active volcanoes and glaciers, to savannah grasslands and rainforest. It is the last and only home of the charismatic mountain gorilla (*Gorilla beringei beringei*) and the bonobo (*Pan paniscus*), the humans' closest genetic relative. Widely regarded as one of the richest countries in the world for minerals, diamonds, and other natural resources, DRC's GDP is growing at a steady 6% annually, with great potential for large-scale development and growth.

Given the immense importance of Congo Basin forests for biodiversity, carbon sequestration and sustainable development, the US Forest Service has provided technical assistance since 2007 to DRC in partnership with the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the US State Department. As part of the USAID Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE), the Forest Service supports the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and its Forest Inventory and Management Department through the provision of technical advisors and training courses. National forest carbon monitoring systems are a global priority in forested countries like the DRC with the rise of climate change issues and USFS draws on its extensive expertise to support DRC design, execute and monitor its national forest carbon inventory. USFS support has also worked with USAID and local partners to advance implantation of field management plans in the areas of forest zoning and planning, fire management, and rangeland ecology. The Forest Service also provides support to the ministry and its partners to implement the seven pillars of the national climate change strategy to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.



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