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Proposal Title: *Projet de Réunion Régionale de Planification des Activités de la Conférence sur les Ecosystèmes de Forêts Denses Humides d'Afrique Centrale*

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Abstract

In 1996, the Government of Congo and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) jointly organized a conference of the nations of the Central African region in Brazzaville, the focus of which was the conservation and sustainable use of the regions unique, largely intact dense tropical (humides) forests. The objectives of this Conférence sur les Ecosystèmes de Forêts Denses Humides d'Afrique Centrale (CEFDHAC) were 1) to bring together politicians, scientists and technicians and NGOs to address these issues on a regional basis, 2) increase understanding of international conservation instruments, 3) promote the exchange of information and dialogue to harmonize national forestry policies, 4) encourage the adoption of conservation and sustainable use programs based on Agenda 21 and the Sustainable Development Commission, 5) sensitize governments and governing bodies, as well as the civil societies of each country on the ecological, economic, social and cultural importance of the forests, and 6) arouse greater interest and commitment within the international community to mobilizing necessary resources for sustainable management of Central African forests. With the participation of 8 of the 9 Central African countries, the CEFDHAC adopted the Brazzaville Declaration along with a set of recommendations favoring sustainable management of the forests and conservation of biodiversity directed to the Central African states and contributors. A follow-up meeting was scheduled to take place in the Democratic Republic of Congo (ex-Zaire), to create a two-year workplan and elaborate a regional biodiversity conservation strategy.

To implement the decisions of the CEFDHAC, the Central African Regional Office of IUCN, among others, recruited and maintains a consultant who analyzes forest management initiatives and coordinates the workplan. As such, their participation in the CEFDHAC planning meeting was deemed essential. The SOS Fund provided this grant to make it possible for the IUCN members' charged with coordination and analysis to attend the meeting and take part in the development of the workplan, a regional conservation strategy, and a schedule of activities for 1997-1998.