

Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment

CARPE

Strategic Plan

FY 2003 – 2010

**This Strategic Plan for the Central Africa Region was assembled by AFR/SD
This Strategic Plan is a 'pre-decisional' USAID document and does not
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attached can be obtained from John Flynn, USAID/Kinshasa.**

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Executive Summary

The USAID Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) is a 20-year regional initiative that began in 1995. Its purpose was to coordinate work on identifying and establishing the conditions and practices required to reduce deforestation and loss of biological diversity in Central Africa. While CARPE has been a nine-country, thirteen-partner project, under this new SO the number of partners will be expanded. Its U.S.-based partners work with African NGOs, research and education organizations, government agencies, and private-sector consultants to evaluate threats to forests and biodiversity in Central Africa and identify opportunities for sustainable forest management.

After seven years of operation, CARPE is shifting its strategic focus and changing the location of its management functions. In its first phase, CARPE's partners focused on increasing our knowledge of Central African forests and biodiversity, and building institutional and human resources capacity. In the next thirteen years, however, CARPE partners aim to apply and implement sustainable natural resources management practices in the field, improve environmental governance in the region, and strengthen natural resources monitoring capacity. Prominent within this new phase is the role CARPE will play in the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP). CARPE will be the primary means through which U.S. funds in support of CBFP will be channeled. In 2002, USAID's reorganization plan to move as many activities and programs to the field as possible coincided with a CARPE evaluation report that recommended that CARPE management be moved to Africa. The management of CARPE will shift from Washington, D.C., to Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, in early 2003.

Central Africa contains the second largest area of contiguous moist tropical forest in the world. More than 60 million people live in the region, and these people depend on their rich forests and other biotic resources for their livelihoods and economic development. These forests form the catchment basin of the Congo River, a watershed of local, regional and global significance. They provide valuable ecological services by controlling and buffering climate at a regional scale, and by absorbing and storing excess carbon dioxide released from the burning of fossil fuels, thereby helping to slow the rate of global climate warming. It is in the self-interest of the United States Government to support the rational and sustainable development of this region, and at the same time address global environmental concerns.

CARPE will operate as regional Strategic Objective in the environment sector managed from USAID-Democratic Republic of Congo. An interagency team will provide advice and recommendations related to CBFP activities under CARPE. In support of the broad goals and interests of the U.S. Government, CARPE's Strategic Objective will contribute to economic development and the alleviation of poverty throughout Central Africa. This will benefit not only the people and countries of the region, but also U.S. citizens and the global community as well. It will do so by helping to conserve the forests and other biological resources that are essential for economic development in the region. It will also contribute to slowing global climate change and conserving the species and genetic resources of the Congo Basin.

The Strategic Objective of CARPE is to reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national, and regional natural resource management capacity.

The Results Framework of this CARPE Strategic Plan provides an umbrella for many of the activities the US will undertake in support of the CBFP. The CBFP is an international partnership among governments, NGOs, and the private sector that was announced at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). The U.S. goal for the partnership is to promote economic development, poverty alleviation, improved governance, and natural resources conservation through support for a network of national parks and protected areas, well-managed forestry concessions, and assistance to communities who depend upon the conservation of the outstanding forest and wildlife resources of eleven key landscapes in six Central African countries.

The objectives of CBFP overlap in significant measure with those of CARPE but CBFP and CARPE differ with respect to scope of activity and entities participating. The CBFP includes partners other than CARPE partners and its activities will cover six, not nine, countries in Central Africa. Importantly, the U.S. contribution to CBFP will focus exclusively on activities in support of conservation of the 11 CBFP landscapes (see list on page 15-16). CARPE will fund CBFP at \$12m / year for three years. Only activities that are consistent with the SO and IRs and are in support of conservation of the 11 CBFP landscapes will be considered for funding that draws on the \$12m per year. CARPE will report the results and impacts of CBFP activities in a separate annual report.

A Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) will be finalized during the first year subsequent to SO approval. Illustrative SO-level indicators are:

- Indicator 1: Number of ecological landscapes and component parts of landscapes with operational management plans
- Indicator 2: Institutional capacity and regional cooperation on forest management in Africa
- Indicator 3: Area of forest loss/degradation
- Indicator 4: Total amount of bushmeat harvested
- Indicator 5: Area of effectively managed protected areas

Intermediate Results to be achieved in order to reach this objective will involve:

- Intermediate Result 1: Implementing sustainable forest and biodiversity management practices
- Intermediate Result 2: Strengthening environmental governance, and
- Intermediate Result 3: Monitoring forests and other natural resources throughout the region.

The implementation of more sustainable plans and practices will contribute directly to long-term, broad-based development. The improvements in natural resource governance that CARPE will foster will contribute to more general improvements in democratic governance, transparency,

accountability, social stability, and reduction in violent conflict in the region as a whole. Monitoring is a crosscutting activity and will enable the program to be flexible and manage its activities adaptively in this dynamic region, as well as to demonstrate results on the ground. Results of monitoring will be disaggregated to reflect progress in the 11 CBFP landscapes distinct from progress in other areas.

Gender should be considered as a crosscutting theme for CARPE partners. Mainstreaming gender issues has many benefits when seeking to achieve sustainable conservation and natural resources management. Deforestation in Central Africa results from complex livelihood-related behaviors practiced by many actors, including both women and men, and CARPE will operate with sensitivity and attention toward gender issues, and in a manner that ensures equal participation and benefit by women.

Central Africa has been a region with a significant risk of violent conflict since CARPE began in 1995, and despite some positive developments that risk still remains. The CARPE program has managed to operate and its partners to carry out their conservation activities despite wars and conflicts in parts of the region. The Strategic Plan for CARPE, Phase II, presented here will maintain the flexibility, diversity of partners, and commitment to a sustained field presence that have allowed CARPE to cope with conflict and continue to operate in an insecure environment since its inception in 1995. In addition, some of the activities and Intermediate Results planned in Phase II of the program, those related to sustainable natural resources management and to better governance, for example, should even help to address some of the root causes of conflict and make it less likely to occur.

I. Purpose of this Plan

A. History of CARPE Assistance

The USAID Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) is a 20-year regional initiative that began in September 1995. It was intended to coordinate work on identifying and establishing the conditions and practices required to reduce deforestation and loss of biological diversity in Central Africa. Although CARPE has been a nine-country, thirteen-partner project, it is expected that under the new SO the number of partners will increase. Its U.S.-based partners work with African NGOs, research and education organizations, government agencies, and private-sector consultants. Through these partners CARPE has engaged a variety of African stakeholders in evaluating threats to forests in Central Africa and identifying opportunities for sustainable forest management.

There were no USAID missions operating in Congo Basin countries when CARPE began, so the decision was made to place management responsibility for the program within AFR/SD in USAID/Washington, and to work through partner organizations that were already operating in the region. Its first set of ten partners included the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), World Resources Institute (WRI), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), World Learning (later succeeded by Innovative Resource Management (IRM)), U.S. Forest Service, the Peace Corps, and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), in collaboration with the Universities of Virginia and Maryland. The tenth partner, the Biodiversity Support Program (BSP), a USAID-funded consortium of the World Wildlife Fund, The Nature Conservancy, and World Resources Institute, handled program management until its Global Bureau cooperative agreement ended in December, 2001. Four other partners began participating in CARPE in 2000: IUCN -- the World Conservation Union, Conservation International (CI), African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

For practical and political reasons, CARPE began in four countries, the Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Republic of Congo. Five other countries were later added: Burundi, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Sao Tome & Principe. Two of the benefiting countries, DROC and Burundi, are currently subject statutory restrictions on assistance. Specifically, assistance to DROC is currently subject to the Brooke amendment, sec. 512 of the FY 2002 Foreign Operations Appropriations Act (FOAA) and to the requirement of FOAA sec. 520 for a regular Congressional Notification. Assistance to the Government of Burundi is currently subject to sec. 508 of the FY 02 FOAA (military coup sanction). However, sec. 508 and 512 may be overcome by sec. 534(b) of the FY 02 FOAA, which authorizes the use of DA and ESF funds, notwithstanding any other provision of law, to support biodiversity and tropical forestry conservation activities and energy programs aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. USAID's practice is generally not to use "notwithstanding" authority to overcome Congressional Notification requirements.

An evaluation of CARPE in 2001 (Environment and Development Group, 2002) concluded: "In sum, CARPE and its partners have worked with great cost-efficiency to deliver a complex, flexible and imaginative contribution to forest conservation in the Congo Basin. ... the first Phase of CARPE has been an extremely worthwhile effort, benefiting greatly from the intellectual

diversity of the many organizations, both in the U.S and in Central Africa that have worked together to execute its program.”

After seven years of operation, CARPE is shifting its strategic focus and changing the location of its management functions. In its first phase, CARPE’s partners have focused on increasing our knowledge of Central African forests and biodiversity, and building institutional and human resources capacity. In the next thirteen years, however, CARPE partners aim to apply and implement sustainable natural resources management practices in the field with an added emphasis on the US contribution to the CBFP. CARPE will also improve environmental governance in the region, and strengthen natural resources monitoring capacity.

B. USAID Reorganization and a Field-Based CARPE

CARPE’s Washington-based management structure served effectively throughout the first seven years of operation. In 2002, however, USAID’s reorganization plan to move as many activities and programs to the field as possible coincided with a CARPE evaluation report that strongly recommended that CARPE management be moved to Africa. As CARPE transforms from a program that emphasized improving our knowledge of conditions and practices needed for sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation to an emphasis on establishing those conditions and applying those practices on the ground, this move to Africa makes sense. The management of CARPE will shift from Washington, D.C., to Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. An Action Memorandum was signed by the Bureau moving CARPE management to the USAID mission in Kinshasa by the end of 2002 has been signed by Africa Bureau Assistant Administrator Constance Berry Newman (Appendix 1). CARPE will operate under a new, stand-alone, regional strategic objective in the environment sector within the USAID Africa Bureau. To help ensure coordination and achievement of US objectives for the CBFP, an interagency committee is being established to provide advice and recommendations to USAID on activities related to the CBFP under this strategic plan. Representative(s) from the committee may also participate in field-based deliberations.

A number of factors prompted the Africa Bureau to select USAID/DROC as the site for locating CARPE management. The Democratic Republic of Congo controls approximately 55% of the dense, humid tropical forest ecosystem that CARPE is designed to help conserve, and Kinshasa has a number of advantages as a headquarter city. Its location will facilitate travel in the region, the supervision of existing CARPE-funded African staff in Cameroon, Gabon and DROC, the administration of the small grants program in the region, and coordination and rapport with appropriate African regional initiatives. USAID/DROC has already identified space to accommodate a full CARPE staff. While the cost of establishing CARPE management in Africa will be significantly higher than the current system, the relative cost versus efficiency still supports emplacement in Kinshasa.

II. Assistance Environment

A. Regional Setting

The Congo Basin contains the second largest area of contiguous moist tropical forest in the world, after the Amazon Basin. Central Africa's tropical forests (of all types) cover approximately 2 million square kilometers; the Congo Basin's moist deciduous forests cover approximately 1.14 million square kilometers, nearly 20% of the world's remaining area of this biome. Tropical rainforest covers parts of Cameroon, the Central African Republic, and DROC, and most of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon. These forests form the catchment basin of the Congo River, a watershed of local, regional and global significance. They provide valuable ecological services by controlling and buffering climate at a regional scale, and by absorbing and storing excess carbon dioxide released from the burning of fossil fuels, thereby helping to slow the rate of global climate warming.

More than 60 million people live in the region, about 22 million are in urban areas. Given present rates of population growth, the region is expected to contain 150 million people by the year 2025. Population density is on the whole quite low, with a regional average of 14 persons per square kilometer. There is considerable variation within the region, however, ranging from 4.5 persons/km² in Gabon, to 25.4 persons/km² in Cameroon. While much of the landscape remains sparsely populated, rapid urbanization has created severe localized pressures on forests and other natural resources. Recent deforestation trends have been troubling, and population and economic pressures are building which could further accelerate forest loss in the region.

It is in the self-interest of the United States Government to support the rational and sustainable development of this region, and at the same time address global environmental concerns. The complex political and economic situation in the region limits USAID's ability to address these important development and environmental challenges on a bilateral basis, because USAID works in only a few countries in the region. For this reason, a regional approach was taken in implementing CARPE beginning in 1995. This program was designed to provide: (1) a mechanism to support conservation and sustainable management of natural resources in the tropical forests of Central Africa; and (2) a flexible instrument to carry out an analytical agenda and foster regional coordination in dealing with environmental issues.

Most of the countries of Central Africa are relatively poorer now than they were when CARPE began. Rural poverty in forest communities, as elsewhere, has not been reduced. Oil and mineral revenues for some countries have been declining (Gabon, Congo and Cameroon, for example), while for others they have started to increase (Equatorial Guinea, most notably). Governments and private commercial interests have meanwhile been turning more energetically to the forest as a revenue source, in some cases to compensate for lower oil and mineral revenues, and in others as a response to global demand for tropical timber products.

B. Conflict Vulnerability

CARPE has been operating in a social, political and economic environment that has been changing rapidly, and to which CARPE and its partners have had to react in order to keep pace

with events. In several countries violent conflicts have occurred since CARPE began. These conflicts and wars have subsided recently, but the security situation in much of the region is tenuous.

The Democratic Republic of Congo, ex-Zaire, has survived the demise of Mobutu Sese Seko and the assassination of Laurent Kabila, and now shows some degree of relative stability under the current regime of Joseph Kabila. Conflict in Rwanda and Burundi has sent floods of refugees and fleeing guerrilla armies into the eastern part of this huge country. Foreign troops from a number of neighboring countries have taken various sides in the fighting in the DROC. The mineral-rich southeastern province of Katanga (called Shaba under Mobutu) has secessionist tendencies that are decades old.

In the Republic of Congo (Congo-Brazzaville), the regime of the elected President, Pascal Lissouba came to a bloody end in civil war ultimately won by Denis Sassou, a former dictator who recently won an election of questionable participation. Here too, the economy is in shambles, though oil and timber revenues hold some promise of a rebound.

In the Central African Republic people took to the streets to demand reform during the 1990s. Despite the emergence of an elected President, Ange-Felix Patasse, events became progressively less stable with several bloody mutinies pitting the northerners against southerners. The economy has stagnated and French political and military support has diminished. The UN has attempted to intervene to keep bloodshed to a minimum. Internal tensions based on past instability remain to the present.

Rwanda's holocaust has left its imprint on the politics and the society, though the economy, fueled by émigré investments and, probably, resources from occupied eastern Congo, nears pre-holocaust levels. Burundi, on the other hand, continues to be a tinderbox of tension with the concomitant decline in economic activity.

Cameroon's political system continues to return President Paul Biya to power, though the opposition frequently charges that the elections are fraudulent. The economy, severely hurt by devaluation in 1994, has recovered to a degree, but chronic problems remain.

Gabon has remained fairly politically stable since the 1960s. Because President Omar Bongo belongs to one of the small indigenous ethnic groups of southeastern Gabon, this has helped to counterbalance the numerically predominant northern Fang. The prosperity in Gabon since the 1970s has also helped to maintain political stability, though with declining oil revenues, future prospects bode ill. Presidential elections continue to return Bongo to power.

Equatorial Guinea's government is completely dominated by President Teodoro Obiang. Although there have been elections of a sort, no meaningful democracy exists. The economy has every reason to appear rosy with new oil finds occurring every year, though the impact on the daily lives of most people is minuscule as oil money is parked in offshore accounts.

CARPE has been able to operate in this relatively insecure and sometimes violent region for a number of reasons, such as:

- Its diversity of U.S. partners, and their networks of partners in Africa give the program considerable flexibility to shift activities and areas of operation in response to insecurity and violent conflict;
- Many CARPE partners have had a long-term, sustained, field-level presence, are trusted and respected, and have local staff and supporters who help maintain their activities even during times of conflict;
- Its apolitical and non-bureaucratic approach;
- Its regional nature allows it to shift operations and activities from a base in one country to another country in response to violent conflicts; and,
- It is equally able to work through partners to support government activities in the region, and to work outside government with NGOs.

In summary, Central Africa has been a region with a significant risk of violent conflict since CARPE began in 1995, and despite some positive developments that risk still remains. The CARPE program has managed to operate and its partners to carry out their conservation activities despite wars and conflicts in parts of the region. By retaining the same flexibility and on-the-ground presence that has allowed them to do so for seven years, it is likely that CARPE partners will be resilient in the face of future conflicts in the area. In addition, some of the activities and Intermediate Results planned in Phase II of the program, those related to sustainable natural resources management and to better governance, for example, should even help to address some of the root causes of conflict and make it less likely to occur.

C. Environmental Issues and Interests

Deforestation

The world's tropical forests have been reduced to about 55 percent of their original cover, with an estimated 100,000 square kilometers being lost each year. The Congo Basin contains about 20% of the world's moist tropical forests. Because the region's forest stock is vast, deforestation rates are relatively low in comparison with other areas of the tropics, on average 0.5 percent annually compared, for example, to 1 percent annually in coastal West Africa (FAO 1992). However, in terms of actual area cleared annually, the forest loss in the Congo Basin is substantial. Based on the 1992 FAO report, the loss of tropical forest in Central Africa between 1980 and 1990 was on the order of 114,000 square kilometers.

Deforestation in central Africa is primarily the result of unsustainable agricultural and logging practices, although fuelwood and charcoal consumption around densely populated areas are contributing factors. While most of the forests of central Africa have, so far, experienced lower rates of clearing than other tropical forests, they represent a huge economic resource certain to be utilized. In comparison with West Africa, which has already lost much of its forest area, central Africa presents an opportunity to avoid the social, economic, and environmental costs of forest loss and degradation.

Rates of forest loss in Central Africa are rising and, given the current demographic and economic dynamics of the region, are likely to continue to increase. The root causes of deforestation include

annual population growth rates of 2.4 to 3.5 percent, insufficient financial, technical, and institutional capacity, inappropriate macroeconomic policies, economic stagnation and the need to earn foreign exchange. These result in increasing pressures on land and forest resources, in order to meet the food, energy, and building material needs of the countries of Central Africa.

Clearing for agricultural purposes is the predominant cause of deforestation in Central Africa. Increasing population pressures are undermining the sustainability of centuries-old systems of shifting cultivation. At the same time, migrants or settlers from outside the forest regions are introducing cultivation practices that are unsuited to local conditions. Faced with diminishing returns, many farmers choose simply to relocate to areas that have been opened up by logging or infrastructure development. The result is an agricultural frontier that advances at the expense of the receding forest. Urban fuelwood requirements also put pressure on nearby forests. In the larger metropolitan areas, such as Kinshasa, Brazzaville and Yaounde, the pressure has resulted in the creation of “urban halos” of deforested land stretching over 150 kilometers from city centers.

Commercial logging poses a serious threat to the forest resource base given the unsustainable and inefficient approaches used. The World Resources Institute, a CARPE partner, estimates that about 50% of Central Africa’s forests are under logging leases. This fact means that the commercial logging sector must be involved and cooperate in order to bring about forest conservation and sustainable use at the landscape scale. The value and diversity of timber species makes the Congo Basin the last potential source for large-scale logging in Africa. The thirty species of high value timber found in Congolese forests are being harvested at clearly unsustainable rates in some areas, and there are few incentives to do otherwise given current policies. While logging companies generally harvest only the most valuable trees, the extraction and transportation of those trees causes significant collateral damage to the forests. Furthermore, the logging roads that are constructed open up formerly inaccessible areas to people who clear the land to establish farms and hunt wildlife.

Government policies in forest management, under pressure from the international donor community, have been evolving rapidly, and are under more intense scrutiny by civil society. The long-term effect of this may be positive; there are good laws, but lawmakers and law-enforcers have been breaking them with impunity for years. This cycle can only be broken when the broader society lets it be known that they will no longer tolerate the destruction of their natural resources.

A number of regional, inter-governmental initiatives in forest conservation and management have gathered pace amongst the countries of the region, which fall into two broad groups: the forested countries, with a well-developed logging industry, of which there are six; and those without, of which there are three. These initiatives have fostered a real spirit of collaboration and common purpose among the nations of Central Africa. International agencies and NGOs active in the field (frequently in the remotest of locations) have played their significant part in this.

A constructive dialogue is emerging between forest conservation agencies and logging companies, particularly those based in Europe. This is leading to a much broader approach to the management of forests, and a converging vision about its future. Of special note here are

potential links to the U.S. President's Initiative on Illegal Logging, which can focus a great deal of attention on the region and the various actors.

Sec. 118(c)(14) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (FAA) prohibits assistance for "the procurement or use of logging equipment, unless an environmental assessment indicates that all timber harvesting operations involved will be conducted in an environmentally sound manner which minimizes forest destruction and that the proposed activity will produce positive economic benefits and sustainable forest management systems". Sec. 118(c)(15) prohibits assistance for the "construction, upgrading, or maintenance of roads (including temporary haul roads for logging or other extractive industries) which pass through relatively undegraded forest lands, unless an environmental assessment indicates that the proposed activity will contribute significantly and directly to improving the livelihood of the rural poor and will be conducted in an environmentally sound manner which supports sustainable development."

Assistance involving logging activities covered by these statutory provisions will be provided only after the requisite environmental assessment is conducted and approved.

Loss of Biological Diversity

Biological diversity, or biodiversity, is the variety and variability of life, including the diversity of genes within species, the diversity of species, the diversity of communities and ecosystems, and the diversity of ecological processes that both support and result from this diversity (USAID, 2002). Biodiversity is the foundation for the Earth's essential goods and services. It provides both material and nonmaterial values and benefits. Biodiversity conservation is important for sustainable development because biodiversity is the natural biological wealth that supports human life and well-being. Biodiversity is being lost at an unprecedented rate. Human activities are driving many species to extinction and damaging or converting natural habitats around the world.

The tropical forests of the world provide major ecological services to humans as watersheds and carbon sinks that buffer regional and global climates. These forests also contain a diversity of species far out of proportion to the area they occupy, an estimated 50 to 90 percent of the world's land species. Some scientists believe that 25% of the world's plant species, and higher proportions of vertebrate and invertebrate species, could die out over the next three decades unless rainforest deforestation rates are slowed immediately. This loss of species will eliminate genetic and biochemical information that could lead to advances in medicine, agriculture, and industrial technology.

Africa's biological resources -- its crops, livestock, fisheries and forests -- are among its most important resources. They yield food, fiber, and fuel that the population needs, and provide the exports and jobs that are the bedrock for broad-based, sustainable growth. The loss of biodiversity would clearly threaten Africa's long-term development. For those living in the region, the most fundamental value of biodiversity is its integral role in the vitality and resiliency of the ecosystem upon which their livelihood depends.

The rainforests of central Africa form one of the planet's last great tropical wilderness areas. The Guineo-Congolian Regional Center of Endemism, as this region is also known, was the area from which much of Africa's existing biological diversity originated. Of an estimated 8,000 species of plants, perhaps 80 percent are endemic to the region. It is also the richest area for fauna in terms of numbers and level of endemism, with 655 species of birds (36 percent of which are endemic) and 58 species of mammals (45 percent of which are endemic). Of these, 16 species of birds and 23 species of mammals are considered threatened or endangered. The region supports the world's largest populations of lowland gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos (pygmy chimpanzees), and forest elephants.

Regional Climate Change

Between 75% and 95% of the rainfall in the Congo Basin is estimated to come from recycled water generated by evapo-transpiration within the region. This differs dramatically from other major tropical watersheds of the world. The Amazon Basin, for example, recycles only about 50% of its water, and Asian rainforests may recycle less than 20%. Thus, Central African rainforests are probably more sensitive and less ecologically resilient than other tropical moist forests. Continuing deforestation in the Congo Basin may set in motion a negative feedback cycle in which forest regeneration is threatened by a regional decrease in precipitation. Decreasing rainfall and its increased variability have contributed to economic and political instability over much of Africa over the decades, and in Central Africa it would likely do the same.

Global Climate Change

Human activities are rapidly increasing the concentration of carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane, and other "greenhouse" gases in the atmosphere. By trapping the sun's heat, these gases produce a greenhouse effect that may change the Earth's climate, increasing temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, and raising sea levels. Scientific advisory committees to the United Nations and the National Academy of Sciences have estimated that the global mean temperature could rise by 1.5 to 4.5° C by the end of the century, assuming the continuation of current trends. In comparison, the earth's mean temperature has risen only 0.3 to 0.6° C in the last century, and probably has not varied by more than 1-2 degrees over the last ten thousand years. Although the magnitude, rate, and geographic distribution of potential climate change are uncertain, their impacts are likely to be far-reaching and damaging over the long-term. Increasing temperatures, changes in precipitation patterns, and other associated environmental changes are likely to seriously disrupt ecological communities and agricultural systems. People in developing countries, who are often dependent on natural resources for survival and who often live at the margins of subsistence, will be especially vulnerable to these disruptions. Environmental and social problems in regions already under stress will only be exacerbated by global climate change. In addition, most developing countries lack the technical and financial resources needed to adapt to, and protect themselves from, the impacts of climate change.

Central African forests represent a vast reservoir of carbon, over half of all vegetative carbon on the continent. Present deforestation rates in Central Africa -- and therefore greenhouse gas emissions from this source -- are modest compared to some parts of the world. Nevertheless, the estimated loss of more than 100,000 square kilometers of Central African forests in a decade (FAO 1992)

represents a significant release of greenhouse gases. If clearing rates continue to rise, a substantial amount of the carbon currently locked up in these forests could be released into the atmosphere in the form of CO₂, thus contributing significantly to global climate change. Forest regeneration and growth, on the other hand, may also allow these forests to take up and store (“sequester”) significant amounts of carbon, thus reducing the rate of increase of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere caused by fossil fuel burning.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) provides a legal and institutional framework for international action to address climate change that may be caused by greenhouse gas emissions from human activities, including the loss of tropical forests (USAID, 2002). It was adopted at the U.N. Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 by 153 nations, and ratified by the U.S. in 1993. The Kyoto Protocol, an agreement adopted in principle by the parties to the CCC in Kyoto, Japan, in 1997, identified emissions targets and timetables for industrialized nations and proposed market-based mechanisms for meeting those targets. To date, the Kyoto Protocol has been signed by more than 80 countries and ratified by 30, but is opposed by the U.S. Government at this time. Market mechanisms proposed in the Kyoto Protocol controlling greenhouse gas emissions include:

- *Joint Implementation*, which would allow countries with explicit emissions targets to obtain credit for project-based greenhouse gas emission reductions in other countries
- *International Emissions Trading*, which would allow countries with explicit emissions reduction targets to trade greenhouse gas allowances among themselves
- *The Clean Development Mechanism*, which would allow countries with explicit emissions targets to receive credit for certified emissions reductions from project activities undertaken in developing countries, and allow private and public sector entities worldwide to enter into cooperative projects to reduce emissions in the developing world

If such mechanisms were adopted, they might provide incentives and new sources of financial support for forest conservation in Central Africa.

The “Bushmeat Crisis”

One of the most severe threats to many large- and medium-sized mammals in Central African forests is uncontrolled hunting to supply “bushmeat” for urban markets and laborers working in the logging industry. Dramatic reductions in mammal populations, the “defaunation” of forests, could lead to ecological disruption of these complex forest ecosystems, damaging their ecological resilience and natural regeneration capacity by eliminating pollinators, seed dispersers, and predators that keep the populations of herbivores in check.

Besides the risk of unpredictable ecological changes to forest ecosystems, there is also a fear that bushmeat hunting and trade contributes to the emergence of new viral diseases into the human population, such as HIV/AIDS and Ebola hemorrhagic fever. HIV appears to have been transmitted to humans by wild chimpanzees, for example. Some populations of wild chimpanzees tolerate the closely related SIV virus with few apparent harmful effects, and medical researchers also are concerned that the bushmeat trade will eliminate these populations

and the potentially invaluable information they could provide that might help in the discovery of a cure for AIDS. The bushmeat issue is thus an issue of global concern.

Better management and supervision of logging sites and long-term efforts to reduce urban demand for bushmeat are both needed to mitigate this critical threat to biodiversity.

D. Donor and Host Country Relationships

A wide range of donors is involved in Central Africa. Several categories of donors can be identified:

- bilateral aid agencies, such as USAID, GTZ, CIRAD, DFID
- international and multilateral agencies such as the World Bank, EU, GEF, UNEP, UNDP, FAO, CIFOR, ITTO
- nongovernmental organizations or foundations who bring their own or leveraged resources to bear on issues in the region, such as WCS, WWF, AWF, and CI

Because the donor organizations themselves are so diverse they use a wide variety of mechanisms for promoting their agendas, including loans, policy reform programs, direct financial support, training and capacity building, and so on. Some of these donors are involved in forest and biodiversity activities in Central Africa. Like any other project, CARPE will operate within the development context created by this wide range of donors. Some of these donors, in particular the conservation NGOs, are also USAID's partners in CARPE. In order to be most effective, CARPE must be cognizant of the programs and activities of other donors, and manage its efforts accordingly. Donor coordination can lead to synergies and reduce redundancies and inefficient overlaps. Collaboration on certain activities can have a multiplier effect. In some cases "division of labor" among donors working on similar issues can be more efficient.

The evaluation of CARPE completed earlier this year identified a number of donors with projects in the forest sector (Environment and Development Group, 2002):

European Union:	ECOFAC program, in 6 countries Other forest conservation programs in 9 countries
World Bank:	Major forest sector reform and investment programs in 2 countries Other programs, such as the CEO's initiative, to encourage logging companies to get engaged in more sustainable practices
GEF:	Numerous projects and programs throughout the region
UNESCO:	Support to protected areas in Democratic Republic of Congo
DFID (UK):	Support to forest sector (several projects) in Cameroon
FFEM (France):	Several projects, in at least 3 countries
GTZ (Germany):	Projects in four countries
DGIS (Netherlands):	Projects in 2 countries
CIDA (Canada):	Projects in 3 countries
ITTO (Japan):	One project in northern Congo

In close cooperation with the region's governments, these donors and organizations are also supporting and/or implementing a number of programs and initiatives, including the:

- African Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (AFLEGT). This process aims to galvanize international commitment in Africa at a high political level in order to strengthen capacity for forest law enforcement, particularly with regard to illegal logging and hunting, associated trade and corruption with a specific focus on the Congo Basin.
- Central African World Heritage Forest Initiative (CAWHFI), a recently launched project focusing on law enforcement and illegal bushmeat trade while using World Heritage image and effective management criteria to improve protected area management and long-term conservation financing.
- Conservation and Rational Use of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa Program (ECOFAC). This program is active in six countries (Congo, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, São Tomé and Príncipe) and involves research, transfer of knowledge, institutional support, and protection of exceptional sites. It has created the “Réseau des Aires Protégées d’Afrique Centrale” (RAPAC), a Gabonese association aiming to support a network of protected areas in Central Africa.
- Regional Environmental Information Management Program (REIMP). This program was created by the governments of Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon with support of a group of multilateral and bilateral donors to help share environmental knowledge and information. Their sub-regional co-operation agreement includes the creation of an implementing body, the “Association for the Development of Environmental Information - ADIE”.

Regional African collaboration

The overarching collaboration process commenced with the Yaoundé Declaration in March 2000. This collaboration process has held two meetings of the Conference of Ministers in charge of Forests in Central Africa - COMIFAC. The first of these (COMIFAC I) was held in Yaoundé in December 2000 and the second (COMIFAC II) in the same location in June 2002. At COMIFAC I, the Ministers adopted the WWF facilitated Biodiversity Vision for the Guineo-Congolian forests as the blueprint for conservation in the region; by this same act they committed themselves to the conservation of 10% of the forest habitat in protected areas. These commitments are expressed in the Conservation Convergence Plan. A three-year priority conservation action plan has been adopted. This three-year action plan calls for developing protected area networks in 12 (11 of which are associated as the CBFP focal landscapes) priority landscapes spanning the Congo Basin. For one of these landscapes, the Sangha Tri-national, a landscape management agreement between Cameroon, the Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic was signed at COMIFAC I in December 2000.

Another important regional forest initiative, the Conference on Central African Moist Forest Ecosystems - CEFDHAC, which engaged the forest ministers of the region, was initiated in Brazzaville in 1996. At COMIFAC II, CEFDHAC was fully subsumed under the COMIFAC process and has become an organ of COMIFAC, thus strengthening and harmonizing the two initiatives.

The Congo Basin Forest Partnership (see below) is an initiative that brings together governments, NGOs, and the private sector in pursuit of goals and objectives that overlap in significant measure with those of CARPE. Maintaining transparency and communication between, and coordinating activities of, CARPE and the CBFP will be a challenge for both of these partnerships, but should be a high priority for both in order to achieve maximum synergy and efficiency. Because both are such diverse partnerships, adequate effort spent on their coordination should go a long way toward maintaining good donor coordination within the entire community of donors interested in the sustainable development and conservation of forests and biological diversity in Central Africa. The interagency committee for CBFP will, *inter alia*, ensure coordination and maintain a strong liaison between policy makers in Washington and field management in Kinshasa.

E. The Congo Basin Forest Partnership

The United States and South Africa, along with 27 public and private partners, launched the Congo Basin Forest Partnership at the WSSD in Johannesburg on September 4, 2002. The U.S. goal in this partnership is to promote economic development, poverty alleviation, improved governance, and natural resources conservation through support for a network of national parks and protected areas, well-managed forestry concessions, and assistance to communities who depend upon the conservation of the outstanding forest and wildlife resources of eleven key landscapes in six Central African countries. (U.S. State Department, Office of Environmental and Scientific Affairs, “Official Final CBFP Fact Sheet,” 23 August 2002). Priorities of the CBFP are to:

- Provide people sustainable means of livelihood through well-managed forestry concessions, sustainable agriculture, and integrated ecotourism programs;
- Help countries develop a network of effectively managed national parks, protected areas, and corridors; and,
- Improve forest and natural resource governance through community-based management, combating illegal logging, and enforcing anti-poaching laws.

The eleven landscapes include (protected areas within the landscape are indicated in *italics*):

- Monte Alen - Mont de Cristal Inselbergs Forest Landscape: *Mt. Seni and Mbé* (Gabon and Equatorial Guinea)
- Gamba - Conkouati Forest Landscape: *Loango / Moukalaba-Doudou / Mayumba / Conkouati* (Gabon, Congo and Democratic Republic of Congo)
- Lope - Chaillu - Louesse Forest Landscape: *Lope / Waka / Dimonika* (Gabon and Congo)

- Dja - Minkebe - Odzala Tri-national Forest Landscape: *Boumba Bek - Nki / Minkebe / Mwangé / Ivindo / Odzala* (Cameroon, Congo and Gabon)
- Sangha Tri-national Forest Landscape: *Dzanga Sangha / Nouabale Ndoki / Lobeke* (Cameroon, Congo and Central African Republic)
- Lac Tele - Lac Tumba Swamp Forest Landscape: *Lac Tele / Lac Tumba* (Congo and Democratic Republic of Congo)
- Bateke Plateau Forest Savanna Landscape: *Mpassa / Haute Ogoue* (Gabon and Congo)
- Maringa / Lopori - Wamba Forest Landscape: *Maringa-Lopori / Wanga* (Democratic Republic of Congo)
- Salonga - Lukenie - Sankuru Forest Landscape: *Salonga* (Democratic Republic of Congo)
- Maiko - Lutunguru Tayna - Kahuzi Biega Forest Landscape: *Maiko / Kahuzi - Biega* (Democratic Republic of Congo)
- Ituru - Epulu - Aru Forest Landscape: *Okapi* (Democratic Republic of Congo).

The U.S. proposes to invest up to \$53 million over four years (2002-2005) including a \$36 million increase for the CARPE program in 2003-2005. Some international conservation organizations in the CBFP have indicated a desire to significantly increase the resources that they are already devoting to forest conservation and wildlife protection in the Congo Basin. CARPE will provide \$12m/year of support to the CBFP for at least three years. Additional resources will come from other governments, the European Commission and the private sector. Partners in the CBFP include the governments of countries in the basin -- Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Republic of Congo; the governments of the United States, United Kingdom, Belgium, Canada, Japan, Germany, France, and South Africa; the European Commission; NGOs including Conservation International, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wildlife Fund, World Resources Institute, Jane Goodall Institute, Forest Trends, and the Society of American Foresters; U.S. and international business organizations, including the American Forest and Paper Association and the Association Technique International de Bois Tropicaux-ATIBT; and international organizations such as the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), IUCN – the World Conservation Union, the Smithsonian Institution, the World Bank, and the International Tropical Timber Organization.

III. Overview

A. Selection of Strategic Objective

CARPE will operate under a stand-alone, regional Strategic Objective in the environment sector of the USAID Africa Bureau, managed from USAID-Democratic Republic of Congo. In support of the broad goals and interests of the U.S. Government, USAID, and the Africa Bureau, CARPE's Strategic Objective will contribute to economic development and the alleviation of poverty throughout Central Africa. This will benefit not only the people and countries of the region, but also U.S. citizens and the global community as well. It will do so by helping to conserve the forests and other biological resources that are essential for economic development in the region. It will also contribute to slowing global climate change and conserving the species and genetic resources of the Congo Basin.

The clearance and degradation of forests in Central Africa leads to a concomitant loss of biological diversity – species, genetic resources, and ecological processes and services. All of these biotic resources can contribute to the sustainable development of the region. The forests and biodiversity of Central Africa are threatened by human factors, choices, practices, decisions, and behaviors – and these threats can only be addressed by improvements in local, national, and regional capacity to manage these resources sustainably, for broad-based benefits to the societies of the region.

Goal: Sustainable natural resource management practiced throughout Central Africa in order to promote sustainable economic development and alleviate poverty for the benefit of people of the region and the global community.

The Strategic Objective of CARPE is to reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national, and regional natural resource management capacity.

Intermediate Results to be achieved in order to reach this objective will involve implementing sustainable forest and biodiversity management practices, strengthening environmental governance, and monitoring forests and other natural resources throughout the region.

The implementation of more sustainable practices will contribute directly to long-term, broad-based development. The improvements in environmental governance that CARPE will foster will contribute to more general improvements in democratic governance, transparency, accountability, social stability, and reduction in violent conflict in the region as a whole. Monitoring will enable the program to be flexible and manage its activities adaptively in this dynamic region, as well as to demonstrate results on the ground.

B. Planning Process

- An independent evaluation of CARPE's first six years was conducted by the Environment and Development Group in 2001 and the results published in February,

2002 (Environment and Development Group, 2002). The findings of this evaluation, which are included as Annex 6, have informed the process of planning for this new SO.

USAID has consulted widely with a variety of partners in development of the new SO, including with members of the expanded CARPE Strategic Objective Team (CARPESOT), consisting of representatives of all CARPE partner organizations. USAID held several meetings with partners to solicit their individual views in late 2001, the second of which, on October 24, 2001, was facilitated by Price-Waterhouse-Coopers. As a result of these meetings, USAID developed a draft Results Framework, illustrative activities, indicators, and targets, which were distributed to the CARPESOT prior to a meeting on December 14, 2001. They were discussed at this meeting, but the draft Results Framework was not revised.

Subsequent to the December, 2001 meeting, additional revisions were made to the draft Results Framework as a result of the September 2002 U.S. Government announcement of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Results Framework of this Strategic Plan provides an umbrella for many of the activities the U.S. will undertake in support of its contribution to the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. CARPE and the CBFP overlap in substantial ways, but each program proposes some activities that are unique to it. Furthermore, in some cases some activities may be a focus for one of these initiatives but not both.

C. Critical Assumptions and Vulnerabilities

CARPE will operate in a regional context in which factors internal to the region and factors from outside it will influence USAID's ability to achieve the goal, strategic objective, and intermediate results described in this strategic plan. In order to adaptively manage CARPE, several of these key factors will need to be tracked. They include:

- the stability of Central African governments;
- the global timber trade;
- international agreements regarding payments to forest-rich countries for forest conservation related to the Climate Change Convention; and
- population dynamics in Central Africa.

As discussed above in the section on "Conflict Vulnerability," many of the governments in Central Africa have been wracked by civil war and other kinds of violent conflicts over the last several decades. They are in many cases unstable and predisposed to further violent conflict. Over the last seven years CARPE has shown that it can operate in a conflict-prone environment, so the main issue for CARPE in its next phase is to build in mechanisms that can allow it to continue to be resilient and effective despite occasional conflict, and to monitor the stability of the governments in the countries in which it works.

International trade in timber is dynamic and changing. One key issue is the degree to which worldwide timber production is shifting from natural forests to plantations. Another issue is the development of certification mechanisms to link producers and consumers in a system of

sustainable forestry. These issues should be followed as CARPE moves forward in its new, regional implementation phase.

Developments in the Convention on Climate Change, in particular the market mechanisms and incentives for forest conservation that may eventually be developed based on the Kyoto Protocol, are a part of the context for CARPE, and should be tracked as the program moves ahead.

Finally, population dynamics in Central Africa -- including population growth rates, rural-urban migration patterns, and large-scale migrations or refugee flows -- is an issue that could influence whether or not this CARPE strategic plan can succeed. Population dynamics should therefore be monitored in a general way throughout the project.

Critical assumptions are that, in general:

- Violent conflict will be controlled and prevented;
- Governments in the region will become more democratic and transparent; and
- Corruption will be controlled and reduced.

D. Cross-Cutting Themes

The Gender Assessment (see Appendix 5) conducted as part of the strategic planning process for CARPE Phase II recommended that “Gender should be considered as a cross-cutting theme for CARPE partners.”

Mainstreaming gender issues has many benefits for those trying to achieve sustainable conservation and natural resources management. Deforestation in Central Africa results from complex livelihood-related behaviors practiced by many actors, including women and men, urban and rural residents, commercial loggers and subsistence farmers, all from a plethora of ethnic groups. Gender mainstreaming means understanding the situation of both men and women and tailoring strategies to address these realities. The proposed activities for the next phase of CARPE may have a negative impact on women, and the more vulnerable segments of society, unless pro-active steps are taken by program implementers to understand gender-related resource use, incentives, constraints and opportunities. Many potential opportunities for gender mainstreaming in Phase II were suggested by CARPE partners.

Equal participation by women should be ensured when CARPE partners are supporting the development of community enterprises linked to landscape-scale conservation, promoting forest-based livelihood opportunities that improve local quality of life and increase incomes from the sustainable use of ecological resources, and introducing agricultural intensification and more sustainable practices in selected communities.

Without attention to gender issues, alternative livelihood and income-generation activities may be dominated by men if they are profitable. Working deliberately with groups of women producers or traders may increase women’s control over the income that they earn. To successfully modify bushmeat hunting and trading practices, CARPE partners need to better

understand and apply information related to the gender division of labor and the intra-household use of income, for forest villagers, forest foragers and urban/town traders. When developing conservation-linked livelihood activities, CARPE partners should be sure to pay special attention to the more vulnerable segments of communities, including women.

When supporting the development of policies and laws regarding protected areas, CBNRM, logging, and bushmeat, gender-related issues such as the effect of new policies and laws on access to resources and income by both women and men should be considered.

In its work to strengthen civil society and NGO sector capacity to engage in advocacy and pressure governments, CARPE should work to involve more organizations with experience in development, social justice, and women's issues as partners, not only traditional conservation organizations.

With a strong emphasis on capacity building in CARPE's next phase, partners will have many opportunities to be pro-active about providing opportunities for both females and males to become conservation and natural resources professionals, and to influence decision-making at local, national, regional and international venues. The dearth of host country female professionals working in conservation natural resources management in CARPE countries reduces the innovation capacity of these professions. Women are consistently underrepresented in national and local government agencies and even NGOs, so it will require pro-active efforts by CARPE to improve the engagement or empowerment of women in environmental governance.

Several entities to which assistance may be provided under this SO, such as rangers, may have law enforcement authorities and thus would be considered as law enforcement entities. While FAA sec. 660(a) normally prohibits assistance to law enforcement entities, sec. 534(b) of the FY 2002 FOAA authorizes assistance "notwithstanding any other provision of law" for support of tropical forestry and biodiversity conservation activities and energy programs aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, FAA sec. 119(b) authorizes assistance "notwithstanding sec. 660", in order to preserve biological diversity, for protecting and maintaining wildlife habitats and in developing sound wildlife management and plant conservation programs.

E. Time Frame

Obligations will be made for this SO over eight years, corresponding to fiscal years 2003 through 2010. The SO Completion Date (the date by which all activities under the SO shall be completed) is September 30, 2011. This time frame is purposefully set fairly far into the future to allow for intensive implementation and the firm establishment of enhanced regional capacity to reduce deforestation and conserve biodiversity. Following the completion of phase II of CARPE in 2010, it is anticipated that the 20 year program will be completed through a final, four year period of "handing over," when CARPE activities and programs will be turned over to Central African institutions.

IV. Results Framework

A. Goal: Sustainable natural resource management practiced throughout Central Africa in order to promote economic development and alleviate poverty for the benefit of people of the region and the global community

B. Strategic Objective: The Strategic Objective of CARPE is to reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national, and regional natural resource management capacity

Illustrative SO-level Indicators:

Indicator 1: Landscapes¹ with operational management plans

Targets: X resources and capacity assessments (FY 04)
(milestones) X management plans developed w/ all stakeholders (FY 05)
X management plans developed w/ all stakeholders (FY 06)
CBFP management plans operational (FY 07) – based on peer review/evaluation

Indicator 2: Institutional capacity and regional cooperation on forest management in Africa

Target: Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT) score increases from X in FY04 to Y in FY10

Indicator 3: Area of forest loss/degradation**

Targets: Forest clearance no more than X%² of FY04 baseline by FY10
Forest thinning (e.g. selective logging for high value species, road penetration, settlements) no more than X% of baseline

Indicator 4: Total amount of bushmeat harvested**

Targets: Amount of bushmeat of selected species in market surveys decreases from baseline (FY04) to X in FY07 and Y in FY10

Indicator 5: Area of effectively managed protected areas**

Targets: Hectares of officially gazetted and managed protected areas increases to X million acres by FY07 and Y million hectares by FY10

¹ The landscapes referred to here are envisioned to be an integrated mosaic of land uses including protected areas (possibly including the full range of IUCN Categories I-IV <[<www.unep-wcmc.org/protected_areas/categories/>](http://www.unep-wcmc.org/protected_areas/categories/)

² Targets should be set at some significant percentage below estimate of rate of forest loss now occurring under the “status quo,” and expected to continue with no intervention by CARPE.

Percentage of protected areas of total national surface area >10%
by FY 10

** Note: Reporting on indicators 1, 3, 4 and 5 to be disaggregated by CBFP landscapes and other project areas; indicators tracked during FY 03 – FY 10 through monitoring carried out under IR 3 (see below)

C. Intermediate Result (IR) 1: Sustainable Natural Resources Management Practices Applied

Sub IR 1.1 Integrated land-use plans developed with participation of all stakeholders

Illustrative Activities for Sub IR 1.1:

- Landscape-scale conservation planning for eleven CBFP landscapes
- Landscape-scale conservation planning for the Virungas ecosystem

Sub IR 1.2 Network of national parks and protected areas established and maintained in landscapes

Illustrative Activities for Sub IR 1.2:

- Provide technical assistance and training to support the development of sustainable finance mechanisms for parks and protected areas
- Training for rangers and game scouts in the 11 CBFP landscapes

Sub IR 1.3 Local community management of forests, other NRs, and sustainable agriculture benefits local livelihoods

Illustrative Activities for Sub IR 1.3:

- Support for development of community enterprises linked to landscape-scale conservation
- Promote forest-based livelihood opportunities that improve local quality of life and increase incomes from the sustainable use of ecological resources (e.g. fishing, bee-keeping, non-timber forest products, and forest camps and other conservation-based tourism enterprises)
- Agricultural intensification and more sustainable practices introduced in selected communities

Sub IR 1.4 Logging concessions are managed for sustainability

Illustrative Activities for Sub IR 1.4:

- Reduced impact logging guidelines developed for Congo Basin forests and trainings and demonstrations provided
- Forest regeneration and forest growth/yield studies promoted and supported
- Access to logging concessions by bushmeat hunters monitored and controlled, laws enforced

Indicator 1.1: Area under sustainable management within CBFP landscapes

Targets: Areas managed as protected areas with operational management plans increased from X to Y hectares
Areas managed through joint management agreements with local communities increased from X to Y hectares
Logging concessions managed through concession agreements that mandate sustainable harvest rates, bushmeat hunting control, etc. increased from X to Y hectares

Indicator 1.2: Area under sustainable management outside of CBFP landscapes

Targets: Same categories of targets as for Ind 1.1

Indicator 1.3: Livelihood benefits and/or incomes of communities generated by improved natural resources management

Targets: Average income in landscapes increases from baseline by X amount
Other quality-of-life/health/development indicators, including gender-linked indicators (e.g., maternal/child health, availability of reproductive health services, access to basic education for girls and women) increased from baseline by X amount

Note: Reporting on each sub-IR 1 indicator disaggregated by country and issue (e.g. PAs, CBNRM, concessions)

D. Intermediate Result (IR) 2: Natural Resources Governance (institutions, policies, laws) Strengthened

Sub IR 2.1 Integrated national land use planning and enforcement capacity developed

Illustrative Activities for Sub IR 2.1:

- Support the preparation of national biodiversity conservation strategies that involve all stakeholders and integrate biodiversity conservation into national development planning
- Support for development of policies and enabling legislation for landscape-scale planning, zoning, and natural resources management
- Workshops, conferences, and technical trainings to improve forest planning capacity
- Training and political support to national initiatives to update forest inventories and zoning plans

Sub IR 2.2 Protected areas, sustainable logging, and other sustainable NRM is supported by policies and laws

Illustrative Activities for Sub IR 2.2:

- Support adoption and strengthening of legislation on protected areas
- Develop basic guidelines for logging concessionaires to ensure compliance with forest management legislation
- Promote and support increased transparency of logging operations within concessions
- Organize workshops and conferences on forest policy issues such as reduced impact logging, forest certification, forest wildlife management, and forest certification

- Support development of policies and laws on timber and non-timber forest products
- Promote the adoption of procurement and investment policies from G8 and other tropical timber consuming countries that support sustainable forest management in Central Africa

Sub IR 2.3 Civil society and NGO sector capacity to engage in advocacy and pressure governments to prevent illegal and/or unsustainable exploitation of resources is strengthened

Illustrative Activities for Sub IR 2.3:

- Develop and implement a broad-based, multi-faceted environmental education and communication strategy to raise awareness of the value of forest and biodiversity conservation in the sustainable development of Central Africa
- Assist NGOs to obtain accurate environmental information and use it for raising public awareness and lobbying government agencies

Sub IR 2.4 CBNRM, decentralization, and local-level management is supported by policies and laws

Illustrative Activities for Sub IR 2.4:

- Analysis of model CBNRM legislation and dissemination of findings throughout the region in the form of policy briefs and other formats useable by decision-makers

Sub IR 2.5 Regional multi-national institutions and policy coordination increased

Illustrative Activities for Sub IR 2.5:

- Mechanisms for institutional communication and coordination regarding transboundary natural resources management supported and strengthened in the eleven focal landscapes of the CBFP and other selected landscapes (e.g. Virungas)
- Support regional processes for communication, collaboration, and policy coordination (e.g. the Yaounde Process, CEFDHAC)

Sub IR 2.6 Human resources for improved natural resources governance are developed

Illustrative Activities for Sub IR 2.6:

- Training in participatory natural resources mapping and monitoring involving local communities
- Develop and implement a series of short-term applied training modules for conservation professionals in Central Africa

*Illustrative Indicators:***

Indicator 2.1: Policies and laws governing protected areas, community-based natural resources management, and logging concessions

Targets: Protected areas policies and laws, by country
 CBNRM policies and laws, by country
 Concessions policies and laws, by country

Indicator 2.2: Civil society is engaged in advocacy supporting sustainable natural resources management

Targets

Indicator 2.3: Institutional capacity of NGOs and target government agencies

** Note: Reporting on each sub-IR 2 indicator disaggregated by country and issue (e.g. PAs, CBNRM, concessions)

E. Intermediate Result (IR) 3: Natural Resources Monitoring Institutionalized³

Sub IR 3.1 Capacity to monitor at local, national, and regional levels is increased

Illustrative Activities for Sub IR 3.1:

- Ecological and socio-economic monitoring systems established in each of eleven focal landscapes of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership
- Ranger-based monitoring in protected areas (e.g. Virungas) expanded to include broader range of land uses
- Logging concessions mapped and database developed
- Monitoring of logging activity from ground and remote sensing increased

Sub IR 3.2 Baseline information compiled/acquired

Illustrative Activities for Sub IR 3.2:

- Support the identification of, agreement on, and implementation of standard methodologies for forest, biodiversity, and socio-economic baseline surveys and long-term monitoring

Sub IR 3.3 Monitoring network covering region is established

Illustrative Activities for Sub IR 3.3:

- Large-scale monitoring of forest access, land use, and deforestation using Landsat and other remote sensing technologies
- Support the OSFAC regional satellite-based monitoring system for Central Africa
- GIS capacity enhanced to link information from local level to larger spatial scales

Sub IR 3.4 Reports on status and changes in resources produced in forms accessible to participants in natural resources governance for decision-making

Illustrative Activities for Sub IR 3.4:

- Environmental information systems and materials supported that help provide citizens with information to participate in natural resources governance
- Technical trainings for forest managers on the use of remotely sensed information for forest planning and decision-making.

³ Monitoring (IR 3) validates benefits of applying sustainable NRM practices (e.g. provides data on SO-level indicators 3 & 4 to demonstrate IR 1 impact); and provides information for adaptive management and improved NR governance (IR 2).

Illustrative Indicators:

Indicator 3.1: Area monitored for forest condition/degradation

Targets: All eleven focal landscapes of CBFP with operational monitoring system

Area monitored in region increased from X in FY04 to Y in FY10

Indicator 3.2: Number and types of resources monitored

Targets: Key/selected species harvested for bushmeat monitored in selected areas

Key/selected high-value timber tree species monitored in selected areas

Key/selected Non-Tree Forest Product (NTFP) species monitored in selected areas

Forest regeneration and growth monitored in selected areas

Indicator 3.3: Information disseminated in accessible forms to NR decision makers and advocacy groups

Target: Maps of forest land use, access, forest condition, and logging concessions publicly available

** Note: Reporting on each sub-IR 3 indicator disaggregated by country and CBFP landscape as feasible.

Results Framework for CARPE II

Reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national, and regional natural resource management capacity.

Overall Indicators:

Ind 1: Landscapes with operational management plans Ind 2: Institutional capacity and regional cooperation on forest management Ind 3: Area under sustainable forest management/area of forest degradation Ind 4: Total amount of bushmeat harvested Ind 5: Area of effectively managed protected areas

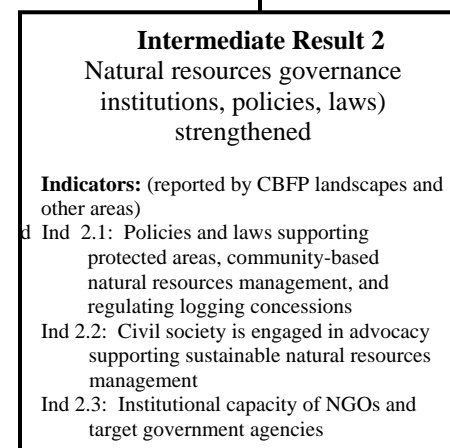
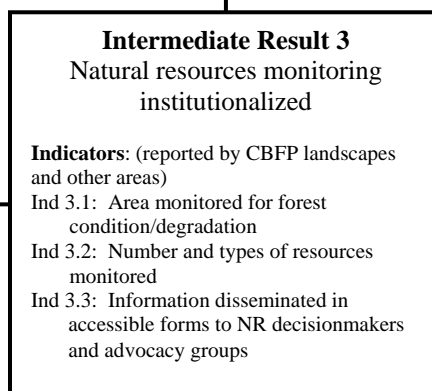
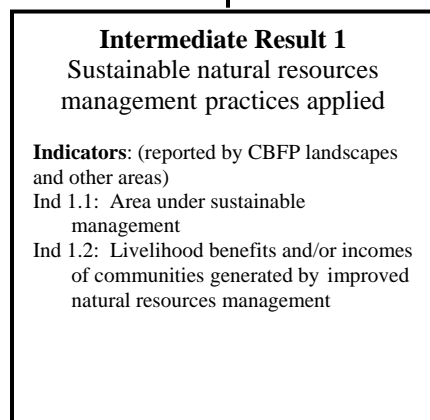
Development Context:

- Stability of Central African governments
- Population dynamics in Central Africa
- International agreements regarding carbon sequestration value of moist tropical forests
- Global timber trade, supply and demand

Critical Assumptions, or Risks to Program:

- Violent conflict prevented
- Corruption controlled
- Governments allow improvements in transparency and environmental governance

Intermediate Results



Illustrative Activity Types

- Support development of landscape-scale conservation plans involving all stakeholders that include protected areas, logging concessions, and community-managed lands
- Promote forest-based livelihood opportunities that improve local quality of life and increase incomes
- Provide technical assistance on sustainable forestry practices
- Control bushmeat harvesting

- Establish ecological and socio-economic monitoring systems in selected landscapes
- Monitor land use, logging activity, deforestation, and forest access throughout the region using remote sensing
- Compile and disseminate information in forms usable by decision-makers and advocacy organizations

- Support development of national land use and conservation planning
- Support development of policies and laws for protected areas, community-based natural resources management, and logging concessions
- Strengthen capacity of civil society and NGO sector to advocate for sustainable natural resources management
- Strengthen mechanisms for regional institutional cooperation and transboundary natural resources management

V. Program Management

A. Field Staffing and Infrastructure

CARPE is a twenty-year regional initiative that began in 1995 in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, the Republic of Congo, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Rwanda, Burundi, and Sao Tome e Principe were added in 1999. At the outset, there were no USAID missions operating in the entire CARPE area, and USAID was consciously consolidating and closing field posts. The decision was therefore taken to retain USAID management responsibility within AFR/SD. This maximized the interaction between USAID and the 11 CARPE implementing partners, all but one being located in Washington. This management structure served effectively throughout the first seven years of CARPE. In an earlier Action Memorandum, dated May 17, 2002, AA/AFR approved the transition plan developed by AFR/SD CARPE to locate CARPE management in USAID/Kinshasa. This plan is proceeding on a timely basis with the Project Manager-designate expected to arrive in Kinshasa on permanent assignment in January 2003. Lengthy discussions with the Mission in June (as we became aware of potential significant funding increases) led the Mission to reserve office space for two expatriate staff and several FSNs, all to manage the CARPE regional activity. Recruitment of the second position will commence after the project manager arrives at post. The relationship of the existing “Focal Points” in Yaounde and Libreville will also be reviewed with input from the Embassies at those locations.

B. CARPE Strategic Objective Teams

It is anticipated that CARPE will involve significant participation of non-governmental organizations, recipient countries, and other USG organizations, in light of their substantial expertise relevant to CARPE. This is consistent with USAID’s strong policy to actively consult with its development customers and partners. While USAID remains accountable and responsible for proper management of CARPE funds, pursuant to normal USAID processes, several structures will be established to provide for this broad participation.

The core SO team, which will consist of personnel with authority to carry out inherently governmental functions on behalf of USAID, will be established for management of this SO.

An expanded SO team (CARPESOT), consisting of both USG and non-governmental partners, may meet periodically to exchange views and coordinate their activities under CARPE. The expanded SO team will include non-U.S., as well as U.S., members, and will meet entirely outside the U.S., to avoid conflict with the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

An Inter-agency committee has been established to provide policy priorities for the CBFP program. The Committee will provide advice and recommendations to CARPE in meeting these policy priorities. USAID recognizes that the policies and parameters of the CBFP, as announced by the Secretary of State, constitute a major portion of CARPE. As USAID is legally responsible and accountable for SO funds, USAID procurement procedures govern SO implementation and provide a number of mechanisms for other USG agencies to participate, including on selection

committees. All agencies must meet procurement integrity responsibilities. In accordance with ADS 105.5.2, a charter for the Committee will be developed.

C. Implementation

This SO will be implemented in accordance with normal USAID procedures with a range of new and existing partners. Mechanisms are anticipated to include awards in response to Annual Program Statements; follow-on cooperative agreements with existing partners; and interagency agreements (Participating Agency Program Agreements – PAPAs – and Participating Agency Service Agreements - PASAs) with several USG agencies; and possibly other mechanisms.

USAID/Kinshasa intends to take responsibility for the execution and management of the small grants program, currently the responsibility of the WWF field office in Gabon. Mission management would ensure greater access by all CARPE partners across the region and would complement the small grants activities now in place under the Mission's CREDP project. Staff requirements to program and monitor the small grants portfolio are included in the Mission's logistic planning.

D. Management Issues

Probably the most significant management issue will revolve around the increased reliance on REDSO for contracting services. With no Strategic Objective Agreement (SOAG) under which to obligate the annual funding allotment, USAID will need to process a series of cooperative agreements, inter-agency agreements, PASA's and letter grants relying on the REDSO contracting office. Initial relationships between USAID/DROC and REDSO in this regard have functioned smoothly, but the volume of contracting action will put pressure on both USAID/DROC and REDSO.

Key assumptions related to the management of CARPE from a regional office in Kinshasa include:

- Political will for conservation and sustainable NRM can be maintained and increased in the countries in which CARPE works;
- Adequate resources are allocated to key institutions in the Congo Basin;
- CARPE partners can collaborate effectively on a regional scale; and
- Most CARPE countries remain without USAID missions.

E. Reporting

Reporting requirements under the Strategic Objective remain to be worked out in detail. Nevertheless, there will be the requirement to develop a reporting system that can efficiently produce progress reports on the CBFP landscapes in response to the needs of the CBFP. Given the planned structure of gathering data on a disaggregated basis for each of the critical IR indicators, it should be relatively straightforward to accumulate that data disaggregated for the CBFP landscapes into timely and complete reports.

VI. Resource Requirements

CARPE, during Phase I, received funding of \$3.0 million a year. There were some minor variations, but this funding was primarily focused on “learning” about the Congo Basin, though in a fashion that emphasized as much on-the-ground activity as possible. Had CARPE continued to receive \$3.0 million per year in the proposed SO timeframe (years 8-16), it would be mandatory to select only a few of the on the ground activities which have been studied. On-the-ground implementation costs greatly exceed those of “learning” and the impact of CARPE across the Congo Basin would be quite limited. Actual availability of funding would decline as USAID management costs will increase because of relocation in Africa.

The CARPE evaluation (February 2002) concluded that the project would be largely unable to respond to the wide-ranging pattern of evaluation recommendations unless the annual resource flow was tripled. On September 4, 2002 at the WSSD in Johannesburg, Secretary Powell announced the commitment of the U.S. government to provide \$12 million annually for three years (2003-2005) to CARPE. The additional funding is specifically for activities in support of the 11 CBFP landscapes. With this level of resources, it will be possible for the ensemble of partners to undertake real, on the ground activity responsive to the CBFP pronouncement and the evaluation recommendations.

This scenario will require a higher level of human resources in the USAID/Kinshasa management structure requiring a second U.S. employee and more local staff.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AFR	Africa Bureau (USAID)
AWF	African Wildlife Foundation
BSP	Biodiversity Support Program
CAR	Central African Republic
CARPE	Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBFP	Congo Basin Forest Partnership
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resources Management
CI	Conservation International
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
CIRAD	Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement
DFID	Department for International Development
DROC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECOFAC	Conservation et utilisation rationnelle des écosystèmes forestiers en Afrique centrale
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FSN	Foreign Service National
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
IRM	Innovative Resources Management
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRM	Natural Resources Management
OCAT	Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool
PASA	Participating Agency Service Agreement
RSSA	Resources Support Service Agreement
SD	Office of Sustainable Development (Africa Bureau)
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WRI	World Resources Institute
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

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Environment and Development Group. 2002. CARPE Phases I and Ib Evaluation – 2001: Main Report. February 2002. Environment and Development Group: Oxford, UK.

USAID. 2002. Biodiversity Conservation Program Design and Management: A Guide for USAID Staff. Washington, D.C.: USAID Bureau of Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade; Office of Environment and Natural Resources. June 2002.

Annex 1: Environmental Assessment – Executive Summary

1. Background

This document constitutes an Environmental Analysis for the Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) Strategic Plan. Together with the Conflict Prevention Analysis and the Gender Analysis, it provides a basis for the priority setting and strategic planning process by USAID, CARPE management, and partners in developing the new strategic plan.

Part 1 presents an overview of environmental assets, threats and opportunities within the region, considers the factors related to the overall environmental sustainability (FAA 117) and addresses the Agency strategic planning guidelines and requirements (ADS).

Part 2 contains the biodiversity and tropical forestry analysis required by sections 118 and 119 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (FAA), for a country strategy.

ADS 201.3.4.11b requires that all country strategic plans contain a biodiversity and tropical forestry analysis required by FAA sec. 118(e) and 119(d). It is mandatory for bilateral programs, and deemed optional for global or regional strategies that cover multiple countries (ADS 201.3.4.11b). Under FAA sections 118(e) and 119(d), all country-level Operating Unit Strategic Plans must include a summary of their analyses of the following issues: (1) the actions necessary to conserve biological diversity, and (2) the extent to which the actions proposed meet the needs thus identified. Additionally, for a **country** within the tropics, the Strategic Plan must also include (1) a summary analysis of the actions necessary to achieve conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests and (2) the extent to which the actions proposed meet the needs thus identified. Since the CARPE Strategic Plan is **regional**, covering nine countries within central Africa, there is no requirement to complete the sec. 118/119 analysis. However, it is desirable to undertake it in this case, since almost 50% of the land area of the Congo Basin is covered by tropical forests, biodiversity is high, and the forests of this region play a global role in climate regulation. The analysis will be conducted from a regional viewpoint.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this environmental analysis is to:

- Provide an overall environmental “snapshot” of the region covered by CARPE
- Briefly describe environmental assets and resources within the region addressed by CARPE
- Analyze key environmental threats and opportunities
- Identify opportunities for addressing environmental threats in the CARPE program
- Describe how the new USAID strategic objective will meet the needs identified.
- Address tropical forestry and biodiversity issues and meet the requirements of FAA 118/119

3. Approach

The analysis is carried out through a literature review and by gathering input from implementing partners in Washington, DC, either through individual meetings and/or through the CARPE

Strategic Objective Team (CARPESOT) meeting held in October 2002. It draws heavily on a number of key documents prepared by CARPE partners, by USAID, and by other entities.

4. The Region

CARPE activities operate in the central African region, within the countries of Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Sao Tome and Principe. These countries make up the core of the Congo Basin, an extremely important watershed of local, regional and global significance, and the world's second largest contiguous lowland tropical forest. CARPE countries extend even beyond the watershed boundaries to include the bulk of the humid tropical forest type within the region. Dense forests extend over 1.9 million km² of Central Africa, covering almost 50% of the landmass.

5. Key environmental Threats and Opportunities

Some of the main environmental threats and opportunities that will be integrated into the USAID/CARPE program are outlined below:

Information and Environmental Decision-making in Central Africa

- **Threat:** Politicians and private sector entities within Central Africa are making far-reaching, often virtually irreversible decisions regarding resource exploitation and use in the region, without sound environmental or socio-economic data to guide them.
- **Opportunity:** to vastly improve the monitoring of forests and environment within the region. Improved data contributes to better management planning and to more sensible and appropriate land use zoning. It can also help to pinpoint problem areas where illegal activities are underway.

Practices related to Forest Utilization

- **Threat:** The roadbuilding, logging and silvicultural practices utilized in Central Africa are often environmentally damaging and unsustainable.
- **Opportunity:** Opportunity exists to incorporate and institutionalize processes and practices that that will result in improved and sustainable management and utilization, i.e. reduced impact logging.

Forest Management

- **Threats:** Forests in the Congo Basin are under threat from many sources.
- **Opportunities:** Forest management can become a process guided by integrated management plans, based on sound data, and incorporating stakeholders in the process.

Adequacy of Protected areas

- **Threats:** Concern that key areas of biodiversity are not protected, and that those that are protected are being illegally exploited.
- **Opportunities:** Review of the size, scope and type of protected areas in central Africa, coupled with the improved management of existing protected areas, will ensure that key landscapes and ecosystems are represented.

Sustainable Agricultural Practices

- **Threats:** Conversion of forest to agricultural lands results in altered landscapes, and decreased habitat for wildlife.
- **Opportunities:** A better understanding of local conditions for agriculture and sustainable local agricultural practices can be gained through research and practice.

Wildlife

- **Threats:** The wildlife of the region is threatened by loss of habitat, increased human presence in formerly “wild” areas, and by hunting.
- **Opportunities:** Improved enforcement measures coupled with significant involvement of local people in the process of controlling illegal wildlife off-take and in developing alternative enterprises.

Water cycle

- **Threats:** High impact logging and the loss of forest in central Africa can affect the water cycle at several levels.
- **Opportunities:** Improved forest management and institutionalizing good management practices.

Carbon

- **Threats:** If current trends continue, the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere will double over the next century.
- **Opportunities:** Improved management can minimize emissions of CO₂. Carbon trading possibilities may offer new economic incentives to keep some central African forests intact.

Priority Setting and Stakeholder involvement

- **Threats:** Communities marginalized and thus not engaged in environmental management.
- **Opportunities:** Develop participatory processes that incorporate all stakeholders.

Policy

- **Threats:** No regional policies. Country policies and legislation at various stages of development. Enforcement issues are problematic.
- **Opportunities:** to strengthen and harmonize policies in the region.

Urban issues

- **Threats:** increasing urban populations strain resources; lack of adequate safe water supply or sanitation facilities and depletion of natural resources adjacent to cities.
- **Opportunities:** most of the population increase will occur in the urban areas in the future, so the opportunity exists now to start designing systems to address urban issues.

6. USAID Priority actions to address threats and improve situation

Targeted actions in various countries and throughout region

Transboundary approach

Focus - Dense Humid Forests of Congo Basin

Mechanisms for regional coordination/sharing of lessons learned

Policy reform and environmental governance

Other actions

PART 2: TROPICAL FORESTS AND BIODIVERSITY: FAA 118/119 ASSESSMENT

This section provides the Biodiversity and Tropical Forests Assessment required by FAA sections 118 and 119 for a country strategy. This is prepared as Part 2 of the Environmental Analysis carried out for the new CARPE strategy and conducted using the same approach – primarily utilizing a desk study and literature review combined with conversations with individual partners in Washington, DC.

Tropical Forest Overview

The Congo Basin contains the second largest continuous tropical rainforest in the world. Dense forests extend over 1.9 million km² of Central Africa, covering almost 50% of the landmass. Biodiversity within the forest is high – with over 400 species of mammals, 10,000 species of plants, over 1000 birds as well as myriads of insects, reptiles and amphibians. Central Africa is home to three of the largest expanses of ombrophilous tropical forests of the world, and its forest ecosystems cover one of the world's major areas of biodiversity.

Importance of forests

Forests in the region are important as:

- a source of food, medicines, materials and shelter for over 20 million people
- commercial economic value
- habitat for a unique array of flora and fauna, including endangered species
- a sink and source of carbon dioxide, the most important gas implicated in global warming
- watershed functions
- spiritual/cultural

Deforestation of tropical forests poses a threat to biodiversity and to forest conservation efforts. The rates of deforestation in central Africa are poorly documented, and vary considerably by location and across the region. The development of meaningful national and regional forest or landscape management plans is hindered by the lack of good data. Generally rates are about ~0.6%/year. Reforestation rates are very low, and do not compensate for forest losses.

Management of forests

More than 50% of the forests outside protected areas (80% in Cameroon) have been allocated for logging concessions. Approximately 14% of the forest has been converted to agriculture, most of which is small-scale cultivation by individual households.

Forests in central Africa are among the most intact in the tropics with more than 2/3 qualifying as “low access” forest regions – roadless areas that are 1,000 square km or more in size (Minnemeyer et al, 2002). Most of these areas, however, are presently allocated for logging (about 60%). Parks and reserves protect about 8% of the “low access” forest areas in the region, but illegal logging is rampant, with logging roads criss-crossing the landscape.

Protected areas cover 6% of the land, and represent the major forest types within the region.

5. Biodiversity in the Central African Region

The tropical forests of central Africa are home to over 400 species of mammals, around 1,000 species of birds, and more than 10,000 species of plants, about 3,000 of which are endemic to the region.

Table: Threatened Species in Central African Countries (from IUCN 2000 Red List of Threatened Species)

COUNTRY	Mammals	Birds	Reptiles	Amphi- Bians	Fishes	Mollusks	Other Inverts	Plants	Total
Burundi	5	7	0	0	0	0	3	2	17
Cameroon	37	15	1	1	27	1	3	155	240
Central African Republic	12	3	1	0	0	0	0	10	26
Democratic Republic of Congo	40	28	2	0	1	41	4	55	171
Equatorial Guinea	15	5	2	1	0	0	2	23	48
Gabon	15	5	1	0	1	0	1	71	94
Republic of Congo	12	3	1	0	1	1	0	33	51
Rwanda	8	9	0	0	0	0	2	3	22
Sao Tome & Principe	3	9	1	0	0	1	1	27	42

Threats To Biodiversity and Tropical Forests in the Central African Region

The tropical forest in the Congo Basin is very threatened. The human population is increasing at 2-3% per year, and this translates into accelerated transformation of the forest. The demand for agricultural land is also increasing, with more than 90% of households in Central Africa involved in agriculture. Forest habitat loss poses a major threat to many species that depend on intact forest biomes, and can result in loss of biodiversity. Extensive conversion of the forest to non-forest land cover results in changes in soil fertility and rainfall patterns that can affect human

livelihoods and ecosystem productivity, not only regionally in the basin, but also throughout the continent through altered water cycles and climate change, and even globally. Oil and mineral prospecting threats also threaten forest cover in selected areas.

Current Conservation Efforts in the Central African Region

A number of conservation activities are taking place in the Central African region. As noted in various documents (evaluation, Byers 1999, 2000), the conservation approach of the various actors ranges from one of resource utilization for economic development, with varying attempts at incorporating sustainability considerations, to one of total protection of resources with no utilization allowed.

2. Role of USAID/CARPE in tropical forest and biodiversity

Under the new strategy, USAID will support the following actions necessary to conserve biodiversity and achieve conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests:

- promote a transboundary approach to protected area planning and management;
- support adequate and functioning protected areas
- improve research and monitoring systems to better catalogue, understand and protect tropical forests and biodiversity in the region
- strengthen policies and laws to provide sound environmental governance
- improve community participation in natural resources management, through community-based natural resources management programs (CBNRM) based on USAID prior successes in this area.
- Explore alternative livelihood opportunities for rural communities
- Encourage dialogue and private-public-community partnerships
- Build capacity to carry out reduced impact logging
- Develop, test and share improved practices in the region

Activities not currently supported by USAID, but critical to conserve biodiversity and achieve conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests:

- Waterbasin activity: recognize the Congo Basin as a unique watershed that requires integrated management through establishing a functioning water basin commission

