

CONGO BASIN FOREST PARTNERSHIP – CBFP

**The 17th Meeting of Parties
Douala, Cameroon, 24 – 27 October 2017**

Information for media

Short version

The 17th Meeting of Parties

The EU Facilitation of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) is pleased to announce that the 17th Meeting of Parties of CBFP will take place in Douala, Cameroon, on 24-27 October 2017.

The meeting will serve to consolidate the strengthening of CBFP governance initiated under the EU Facilitation, adopt a set of medium term priorities for the Partnership for the period 2018–2022 and consider the introduction, on a pilot basis, of a system of annual CBFP priorities. Parties will also take stock of the coordination and harmonization of efforts to promote the Congo Basin forest ecosystems, and consider how to achieve a better articulation between sustainable forest management strategies and economic and development objectives in the region. The Meeting will provide a framework for promoting a broad-based and efficient dialogue and cooperation between all stakeholders in the Partnership.

Structure of the Meeting Program

The programme of this event will start with a political segment, consisting of meetings of the CBFP colleges and the third meeting of the CBFP Council.

Then there will be a technical segment comprising three "Streams", which will discuss the following themes:

- Stream 1: Forest Governance and Land Use,
- Stream 2: Biodiversity and Wildlife
- Stream 3: Climate Change (Mitigation and Adaptation)

Finally, a second political segment will follow with a plenary session, comprising feedback from the Streams, a high-level Partners' dialogue and a concluding session.

The programme of the meeting also includes networking slots.

During the event, an exhibition area hosting close to 10 exhibitors will be available to CBFP partners.

Throughout the week, a number of related events will also be organised concurrently with the official programme.

The official programme and logistical and other practical information regarding the 17th Meeting of Parties of CBFP will be uploaded to the CBFP website (<http://pfbc-cbfp.org>).

Detailed version

CBFP

CBFP is a non-binding multi-stakeholder partnership enabling member organizations to cooperate on a voluntary basis. Currently, CBFP comprises more than 104 African and international partner countries and organizations from both the public and private sectors as well as from civil society and the academic and scientific community. It is the most comprehensive regional platform dealing with the challenges facing the Congo Basin forests.

With the signing of the Central Africa Forests Commission (COMIFAC) Treaty and the adoption of the sub-regional COMIFAC Convergence Plan in 2005 in Brazzaville, the Heads of State and Government of the Congo Basin countries confirmed their commitment to the principles of conservation of the biodiversity and the sustainable management of Central African forest ecosystems, the fundamental rights of their populations to benefit from forest resources and the imperative to reconcile development needs with conservation within the framework of international cooperation.

Cooperation within CBFP aims to support this shared vision of the Central African Heads of State, notably by improving measures taken, including technical and financial support measures, to promote the conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable management of forest ecosystems, to combat climate change and to alleviate poverty in Central African countries in line with the COMIFAC Convergence Plan.

The CBFP Meeting of Parties

The CBFP Meeting of Parties is the “General Assembly” of the Partnership. It is held once a year in a COMIFAC Member State and all CBFP stakeholders are invited to register to attend.

The CBFP Meeting of Parties is a unique event in the region, bringing together a wide range of stakeholders from local, national, regional and international levels to discuss and exchange on a set of key topics regarding the protection and sustainable management of the Congo Basin forests.

The 2016-2017 EU Facilitation of CBFP

The 17th Meeting of Parties of CBFP will be the second such meeting held during the 2016-2017 period, when the European Union is leading the Partnership through the CBFP Facilitation.

For more information on the objectives and priorities of the EU Facilitation of CBFP, please follow this link: http://pfb-cbfp.org/facilitation_en.html.

The 17th Meeting of Parties of CBFP - main meeting objectives

The 17th Meeting of Parties of CBFP will be held on 24-27 October 2017 in Douala, Cameroon. It is expected to be a major event with around 500 participants.

The meeting in Douala falls at a time when the Congo Basin forests are facing challenges of growing complexity and gravity. There is an urgent need in the region for a better articulation between sustainable forest management strategies and economic and development objectives, something which in turn requires improved possibilities for discussing and debating issues, including those of a cross-sectoral nature, and following up on shared viewpoints.

CBFP can and should be able to play an important role here. However, in view of the severity and complexity of the challenges to the forests and the significant growth of the membership of CBFP, there has been a need to strengthen the capacity of CBFP to fulfil this role. The EU Facilitation of CBFP has made major efforts to foster progress in this area. Key steps in this direction, which will be further promoted at the Douala meeting, include:

- consolidating and using the potential of the new cooperation structures - the CBFP colleges and Council created last year - to promote an efficient and results-oriented structured dialogue among CBFP partners;
- adopting a set of Medium-Term Priorities on which CBFP partners agree to focus their cooperation under the aegis of the Partnership for the period 2018-2022;
- introducing, on a pilot basis, a system of Annual Priorities for CBFP action;
- identifying and high-lighting the added-value of the Partnership;
- explicitly attributing more credit and visibility to CBFP as an enabling structure, which allows more effective partner action;
- taking increased common responsibility for the functioning and development of CBFP, including consideration of how individual member organisations can contribute to cooperation inside the partnership structures;
- promoting a significantly strengthened participation of private sector entities in CBFP cooperation, in order to increase the capacity of the Partnership to address the current complex and cross-sectoral challenges facing the Congo Basin forests;

Regarding work on key thematic issues, an important objective for the Douala meeting is to produce concrete outputs of direct relevance and value to CBFP members and practitioners in the field, as well as key recommendations addressed to policymakers on a limited and well-focused set of crucial issues.

Meeting programme

Political segment (part 1)

The official programme for the Meeting of Parties will begin with a political segment, consisting of meetings of the CBFP colleges and the third meeting of the CBFP Council.

Technical segment

This will be followed by a technical segment, comprising three thematic working sessions, known as “Streams”, dealing with the following topics:

Stream 1: Forest management and land use

Issue:

How to address the lack of adequate regulation of the fast-growing national and regional timber markets in the Congo Basin?

Leader: FAO

Co-leaders: WRI, COMIFAC governance working group

Partner responsible for preparing and presenting background paper: CIDT – University of Wolverhampton

For more information on Stream 1 please contact Emmanuel Heuse :
emmanuel.heuse@agreco.be

Stream 2: Biodiversity and wildlife

Issue(s):

- (1) How to address the lack of sufficient action as regards Illegal Wildlife Trade (including high organised criminal poaching system) IWT hot spots in the Congo Basin?
- (2) How to ensure that biodiversity is adequately represented in the economic planning systems employed by the Congo Basin countries?

Leader: AWF

Co-leaders: For issue (1) : WCS, TRAFFIC, GT COMIFAC, IUCN

Partner responsible for preparing and presenting background paper:

For issue 1 : AWF, Traffic, IUCN, WWF, COMIFAC

For more information on Stream 2 please contact: maxime.nzita@pfbc-cbfp.org

□ **Stream 3: Climate change - adaptation and mitigation**

Issue(s):

- (1) How to promote accelerated and well-coordinated implementation of NDCs and REDD+ actions on the ground in the Congo Basin
- (2) How to promote improved access of the Congo Basin countries to international climate financing mechanisms

Leader: World Bank (PRE-REDD+), COMIFAC Climate Working Group

Co-leaders: EU, USFS, WHRC, FOKABs, Cameroon (MINFOF, MINEPDED), Congo, REFACOF, FAO, CAFI, Norway, ATIBT, USFS, UICN, GEF; EFI (EU REDD/FLEGT Facility); CIRAD; AFD, GIZ, AMCC, CBFF, WWF, TI, Rainforest alliance, Tropenbos International

Partner responsible for preparing and presenting background paper: CIFOR/ITTA, with Woods Hole Research Center (WHRC) and FOKABs

For more information concerning the Stream 3, contact dany.pokem@pfbc-cbfp.org

Political segment

The technical segment will be followed by a second political segment.

In the evening of 26 October, there will be a formal Opening Ceremony.

The Meeting of Parties will then culminate on 27 October in a Plenary session, with participation at ministerial level.

The Plenary will include a key note address, sessions covering the work of the Streams, a high-level partners' dialogue and a concluding session, during which a final communiqué will be adopted.

In parallel to this official programme, throughout the week there will be an Exhibition Space, where CBFP partners will exhibit and reach out with information on their objectives, priorities, programmes and activities.

A number of related side-events will also be organised concurrently with the official programme.

Further information

Further information about the programme of the 17th Meeting of Parties of CBFP in Douala, Cameroon, can be found here: <http://ccr-rac.pfbc-cbfp.org>

For general information about CBFP or the 17th Meeting of Parties of CBFP, please follow the link below:

CBFP: www.pfbc-cbfp.org