



# The Libreville plan

In the wake of COP15 on biodiversity, and the commitment of the international community to protect 30% of natural areas between now and 2030, more than 20 countries representative of the great forest basins met in Libreville, surrounded by African forest, for a One Forest Summit dedicated to seeking solutions to protect tropical forests, with the scientific community, African youth, business leaders, indigenous peoples and senior staff from UNESCO, the IUCN, the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund all present.

## OVERVIEW OF THE LIBREVILLE PLAN :

- A fair agreement between forest countries and the international community, to reconcile environmental ambition with economic development.
- A hallmark initiative to protect the most vital carbon and diversity reserves: Positive Conservation Partnerships (PCPs), with an initial budget of €100 million, and a mechanism to remunerate exemplary countries via “biodiversity credits”.
- An emblematic scientific project called “One Forest Vision”, to measure the net balance of carbon sequestration and accurately map the most vital carbon and biodiversity reserves in the Amazon, Africa and Asia over the next five years.
- A 10by30 strategy for business leaders in the three forest basins to generate 10 million jobs by 2030 in activities related to sustainable exploitation of tropical forests, and a series of tangible corporate commitments.

## THE SPIRIT OF LIBREVILLE: A FAIR AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND FOREST STATES

Following on from COP15, we need a fair agreement between the international community, the future of which depends on the conservation of carbon sinks and biodiversity, and forest countries, which rightly wish to reconcile environmental ambitions and economic prosperity for their peoples.

→ This agreement is founded on five fundamental pillars, strongly voiced at Libreville:

1. A political commitment - We will not win the fight against climate change without tropical forests, which are one of the world’s key carbon sinks. We must urgently stop and reverse deforestation by 2030.

2. A principle of cohabitation between humans and nature - Protecting forests requires a vast selection of tools, ranging from strong protection such as national parks to methods of sustainable management of natural resources. A protected forest, which maintains and increases its carbon sequestration rate, remains open to people. A protected forest is one that is sustainably managed and benefits local populations.

3. Environmental ambition working for people - Protecting forests also provides economic opportunity: the potential of the bioeconomy and local and sustainable transformation of forest products is huge. But deforestation is currently a threat to people: destroying forests upsets the water cycle, degrades land and diminishes genetic diversity, an inestimable source of innovation and knowledge.

4. Protecting what is vital - Certain vital carbon and biodiversity reserves warrant a high level of protection because their degradation would have irreversible consequences. This is the case for mangroves, peat bogs and certain primary forests, home to what are called umbrella species because they alone support ecosystems (gorillas, orangutans, elephants, jaguars, etc.).

5. Remunerating forest countries for providing services to the rest of the world - Developing forest countries that have high aims for nature and are working to achieve these aims should be remunerated by the international community.

## COMMITMENT BY ALL ACTORS TO REPLACE NATURAL CAPITAL AT THE CENTRE OF OUR ECONOMY

To fulfil our commitments, international solidarity must be increased, and we need to demonstrate that environmental ambition is synonymous with economic prosperity. The One Forest Summit is the first international summit to focus discussions on promoting natural capital. It is a challenge for forest countries, and for the global economy, which must stop seeing nature as a free, inexhaustible good.

To translate this approach into tangible actions, four major communities of stakeholders met in Libreville to make commitments:

→ **la communauté scientifique** **The scientific community** launched the One Forest Vision project, which aims to gain more knowledge about the value of the forest, by mapping out the vital carbon and global biodiversity reserves in the next five years, and measuring the level of carbon sequestration in rainforests.

→ **Some fifty business leaders**, who came together within a "One Forest Business Forum", launched the 10by30 initiative, which aims to create 10 million jobs in activities linked to sustainable management of forests by 2030. This vision should accelerate the transition to the bioeconomy and local transformation, which generate much more income for local populations. Several businesses made concrete announcements in that area, which you can read about in the annex.

→ **Gabon, France and Canada** launched an intergovernmental platform on the sustainable use of wood and bio-based materials in construction, to help replace concrete and cement in the years to come and in particular to transform African urbanization strategies. Nine countries decided to join this coalition (Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Republic of the Congo, Uganda, the United Kingdom, Zambia, France, Gabon and Canada).

→ On the basis of recommendations made by a group of experts coordinated by the Global Environment Facility, **a multi-stakeholder coalition of States, investors, certifying bodies and non-governmental organizations**, launched a Libreville work plan to accelerate the structuring of a market for carbon credits of very high environmental and social quality, for projects or national policies and initiatives.

→ **Indigenous populations** are the rainforest's primary guardians, through their knowledge and ancestral traditions, and also through the unique relationship that they can attest to between humans and nature. Uganda, France and Gabon are launching a One Forest Guardian, to propose to interested countries that these practices, of inestimable value for the future of humanity, be added to the UNESCO World Heritage List by 2024.

→ **Young representatives and leaders from the Congo basin** organized the One Forest Youth Summit in order to put forward recommendations and solid project proposals to Heads of State and Government to promote conservation and sustainable management of rainforests.

## PROTECTING WHAT IS VITAL: POSITIVE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIPS (PCPS)

This initiative, launched at COP27, offers a political and financial “contract” to countries that agree to keep vital carbon and biodiversity reserves in their territory intact. These partnerships involve an investment plan for the protection of carbon and biodiversity reserves and aim to prevent deforestation.

The One Forest Summit brought progress on PCPs, in the form of a three-phase schedule.

### 1) **Le temps de l’engagement politique.**

**1) The political commitment phase.** The countries with the most vital carbon and biodiversity reserves can commit to protect them with the support of the secretariat of the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People (HAC). This is the first step towards generating much more significant finance from the international community.

**2) The implementing phase.** This provides forest countries with financial resources and technological and scientific tools under the One Forest Vision partnership, as well as economic solutions via the 10by30 initiative.

**3) The compensation phase.** This rewards services to the rest of the world: in return for their commitment, the international community will provide forest countries with more finance, as well as a compensation mechanism for the services provided, including carbon sequestration, by the preserved natural reserves. Based on rigorous monitoring of the implementation of these commitments and their results, the PCP initiative aims to create a compensation mechanism for the services provided by forest countries: committed States would produce “biodiversity certificates” that could be purchased by sovereign States or private actors as a positive contribution to the protection of nature.

→ Based on the recommendations of the Global Environment Facility, the aim will be to sketch out the form of this new innovative financing tool, tied in with carbon credits (one tree planted, one tree saved) and with a view to guaranteeing the full environmental integrity of a potential biodiversity certificates market.

— **Lastly, in order to swiftly initiate PCPs and to ensure tangible results by COP28 in Dubai, France, Conservation International and the Walton Family Foundation are announcing the creation of a first PCP contracts investment of €100 million.**

— ANNEX

# Corporate commitments at the One Forest Summit

At the One Forest Summit, businesses announced the following commitments and partnerships:

**SouthBridge**, a Pan-African advisory and investment company, announced a €2 billion fund for restoration and reforestation at COP27, in partnership with **Eurazeo**. At the One Forest Summit, SouthBridge and Eurazeo set out the schedule for the first projects that will be announced in the run-up to COP28 and expressed interest in coordinating this fund with the PCP country approach.

**Eramet and its Gabonese subsidiary Comilog** presented Biomine, their project to develop bio-reducers to replace the coke currently used as a reducer in their metallurgical furnaces. The company is also committed to a forest-planting programme to contribute to the development of a forest economy in Gabon's Haut-Ogooué region.

**Touton**, a major trader in cocoa and other tropical agricultural commodities involved in sustainable projects, and **Inarix**, a start-up developing an innovative technology using artificial intelligence and biometric recognition by smartphone, have formed a partnership to improve traceability in the cocoa and coffee industry. Inarix is now capable of delivering quality analysis after harvest via a smartphone, based on a mere photograph of beans, as well as certain key traceability criteria such as geographical origin.

By determining the zone of origin of a batch of commodities based on a photograph, Inarix could, for example, identify the produce of protected areas and thus fight deforestation.

**Touton** has committed to strong partnerships with other start-ups through the funding of pilot projects and prototypes and by incorporating them into its value chains, such as **NetZero**, which works on pyrolysis of tropical biomass in Cameroon and Brazil to generate biochar, which is then applied to soils to sequester carbon and generate high-quality credits.

The start-up **Kermap**, a Greentech Innovation laureate, announced the launch of its Nimbo project that will offer a digital twin for almost-real-time Earth observation. Nimbo will provide new tools that are both functional and effective in order to facilitate environmental monitoring and ensure reliability. It will contribute to ongoing efforts to improve control and sustainable management of forests. The project will also provide precious data for the prevention of future pandemics, with an approach combining environmental, animal and human health.

**Rougier**, a company specialized in local production, processing and sale of logs, sawn timber and plywood that operates almost 900,000 hectares of FSC-certified forest concessions in Gabon and will celebrate its centenary in 2023, signed a strategic agreement with **Flying Whales**, an innovative company developing a solution for transport of wood in forests using airships, with no footprint on the ground and limited carbon emissions in flight. This agreement aims to study applications of the Flying Whales technology and its benefits for the forest sector, in terms of operability, yield and security, as well as reducing carbon intensity and logistical pressure on ecosystems. The positive effects of this new airship-based transport system could include stimulation of local economies, training, employment and service opportunities, and improved autonomy and quality of life, as well as a long-term boost to revenue diversification thanks to relations with this industry.

**Flying Whales** also signed a strategic agreement with the **GSEZ** (Gabon Special Economic Zone), a public-private partnership between the Gabonese government and **Arise IIP**, a company specialized in the design, financing, construction and management of cutting-edge infrastructure in Africa, which operates in a dozen African countries. The agreement aims to lay the foundations for the installation of Flying Whales operational sites in Gabon. It will provide Gabon with a country-wide air transport service for goods all year round. Other applications with considerable added value will also be addressed, such as deployment of the "Flying Care" air-transported mobile hospital, enabling pooling of a complete hospital facility in areas where they are lacking. These developments will aim to cut isolation and foster inclusion and supply availability for local communities while preserving Gabon's exceptional natural capital: 88% of the country is covered by forests and wetlands.

**Arise IIP** committed to develop wood energy plantations in Gabon (3,000 ha), DRC (3,000 ha), Togo (2,000 ha), the Congo (3,000 ha) and Benin (3,000 ha) and develop two new training centres in partnership with local governments (in addition to existing ones in Benin and Togo). The company is launching a \$100-million fund to support SMEs, as well as roadshows in France, Germany and Italy from April to encourage European SMEs to invest in sustainable industrialization and local processing of natural resources. Arise IIP will sign an MoU with **Okala** to help monitor biodiversity in Gabon, 80% financed by ATIF, a joint stakeholder in Arise. Arise invests in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in industrial zones for wood processing and agriculture. The company will also adopt CarbonCure technology in industrial estates.

Cameroon's **Conseil Interprofessionnel du Cacao et du Café (CICC, cocoa and coffee trade council)** presented its partnership with the French association "**Les Chocolatiers Engagés**", which pays cocoa producers a fairly high price, negotiated and mutually agreed on at the beginning of each cocoa production season.

This commitment is in line with the French Initiative for Sustainable Cocoa (**IFCD**), launched in 2021, the objective of which is threefold: economic, social and environmental. The entire French sector committed to improving the income of cocoa farmers and of their families, so that they may have a decent income, to bring an end to supplies from deforestation, and to fight against forced labour and child labour. The CICC sets up centres of excellence and conducts a programme called New Generation through which hundreds of young people, both boys and girls, have begun working in cocoa farming for the long term. The CICC and Les Chocolatiers Engagés lead cooperatives that produce sustainable, ethical cocoa, with a particular focus on forest preservation.

The **French cosmetics industry** announced that it would allocate more than €500,000 to compile a "cosmetopoeia" on plants sourced in the Congo forest basin (Central Africa). This financing, drawn from the **Cosmetic Valley** endowment fund, will enable grants to be allocated in countries to set up traineeships, doctorate and post-doctorate programmes. This commitment by the French cosmetics industry aims to enable study and classification by local stakeholders of the plant genetic resources found in the forest and their traditional uses for skin and hair protection and beauty.

**Valgo**, the leading French company in clean-up and remediation of polluted sites and soil, presented the results of a comprehensive study at Libreville, equivalent to a declaration of intent, carried out as part of a partnership between Gabon and France for the remediation of the Mindoubé rubbish tip. The project involves the remediation of the Mindoubé tip to convert it into a high-quality, exemplary ecological area, to be used by local communities. The study will enable the Gabonese authorities to launch a general-interest environmental project for the health of local communities and the revitalization of the environment.