

CHALLENGES

- To stop and reverse the present loss of biodiversity and degradation of the Ngiri – Tumba – Maindombe Wetland by:
 - Protection, conservation, management and wise use of the Ngiri – Tumba – Maindombe Wetland resources in and around lake Tumba Ramsar Site;
 - Taking advantage of global remote sensing and GIS data sets to consistently and accurately map wetland extent, dynamics and variability;
 - Participative sustainable management involving civil social and local communities;
 - Empowering communities, raising awareness.
- Contribution to land use planning that negatively affects wetlands on public and private property, zoning and sustainable management using new information technologies (GIS and Remote Sensing).
- Promote understanding of the importance of the Ngiri – Tumba - Maindombe Wetland resources and its biodiversity.
- Sharing information from local knowledge on natural resources to various groups of people.
- Classification of the site in view to help with a coherent planning process and mobilise all stakeholders to abide by the rules.

WHAT DO WE NEED NOW?

More financial funding from governments, international environmental agencies and donors to:

- Achieve these main goals (protection, conservation, participative management and wise use of the Ngiri – Tumba – Maindombe Wetland resources);
- Address Environmental Impacts and Security Assessments studies;
- Increase research efforts to study, protect, and wisely manage the Ngiri – Tumba – Maindombe Wetland;
- Detect climate and forest cover change, and forest degradation using remote sensing and GIS technologies based, e.g., on the Institute for Environmental Security's Methodology;
- Strengthen management capacity and improve Information access and dissemination;
- Continue surveys of largely unexplored areas with the objective of helping the Government to create new protected areas;
- Expand social science work in communities in order to integrate human livelihood concerns into the conservation of protected areas;
- Discover and disclose the networks of the illegal timber and bushmeat trade originating in this Wetland site, and strengthen overall law enforcement in and around the protected area.

ABOUT IES

The Institute for Environmental Security (IES) is an international non-profit non-governmental organisation established in 2002 in The Hague, with representatives in Brussels, London, California, New York and Washington, DC. The "Knowledge and Action network" was set up to increase political attention to environmental security as a means to help prevent conflict, instability and unrest. The Institute's mission is: "To advance global environmental security by promoting the maintenance of the regenerative capacity of life-supporting eco-systems." Its multidisciplinary approach integrates the fields of science, diplomacy, law, finance and education. Activities are designed to provide policy-makers with a methodology to tackle environmental security risks in time, in order to safeguard essential conditions for peace and sustainable development. EnviroSecurity Assessments developed by the IES and partners, are meant to provide decision makers in government, the private sector and NGOs with an array of practical decision tools, strategic maps and initial policy recommendations for globally significant flash-point areas. Initial assessments should lead to the development, finance and implementation of multi-year EnviroSecurity Action Plans that seek to enhance global environmental, economic and human security. In each case we aim to identify the interdependency between conservation of eco-system services and poverty alleviation.

| Contact |



INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY
The Hague - Brussels - London - California - New York - Washington DC
International Secretariat
Anna Paulownastraat 103
2518 BC The Hague, The Netherlands
Tel: + 31 70 365 2299 / Fax: + 31 70 365 1948
Email: info@envirosecurity.org / Url: www.envirosecurity.org
Project Coordinator: Dr Patrice Yamba T. Kantu - (patrice.yamba@tele2.be and/or patrice.yamba@envirosecurity.org)



View of Lake Tumba (Photo by Judith Rose)

WHY CONGO BASIN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO CASE STUDY

The Congo Basin forest is the second largest contiguous moist tropical forest in the world. It plays a key role in securing the livelihoods of millions of Central African citizens. The forest supplies vital regional and worldwide ecological and climatic services.

From a global perspective the Congo Basin forest is especially important with respect to the huge and unique biodiversity (more than 10,000 species of plants, 1,000 species of birds and 400 species of mammals) and the climate-relevant functions of the largely intact tropical forest.

The Congo Basin forest is spread over the territory of six countries – Cameroon, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

But, despite enormous stocks of natural resources such

as: minerals (tin, coltan, diamond, copper, cobalt, uranium, zinc, gold, nickel), energy (oil, methane gas and high potential hydraulic and solar energy), forest (timber and non-wood products including medicinal plants and wildlife) and water, the people in the DRC are among the poorest in the world. The situation of the rural population, in particular in the regions bordering immediately on the natural reserves, is marked by poverty, food insecurity and local conflicts.

The abundance of natural resources in the DRC has not, throughout its history, benefited the Congolese people. Mismanagement has led to the paradox of an economically poor people in a naturally rich country. "Securing local forest values in the DRC is the top priority" (*Forests in post-conflict Democratic Republic of Congo, Analysis of a Priority Agenda*, ©2007 CIFOR, The World Bank and CIRAD).

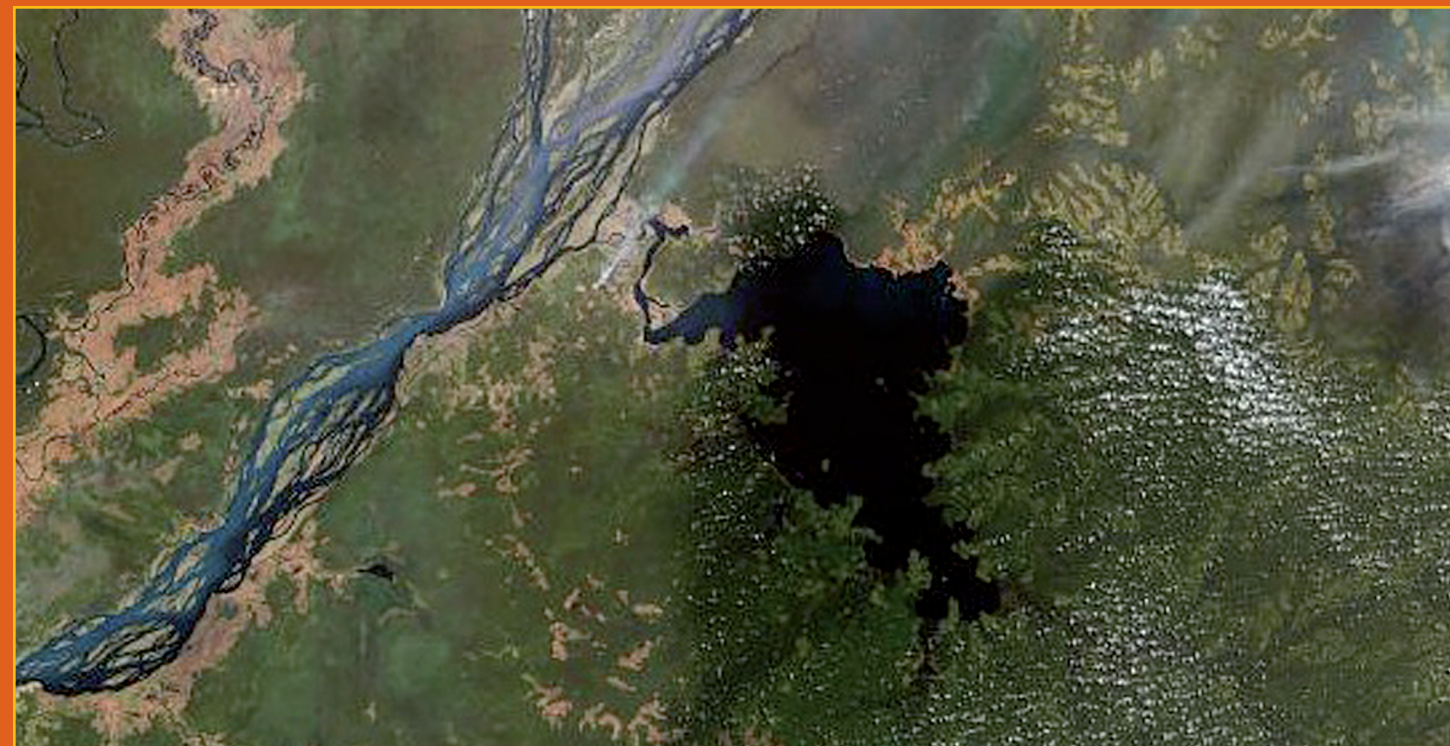


Selected Site in the Congo Basin: The New Ramsar's Ngiri - Tumba - Maindombe Wetland Landscape

INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE OF THE NEW LAKE TUMBA WETLAND LANDSCAPE IN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO / PROVINCE OF EQUATEUR

THE NGIRI - TUMBA - MAINDOMBE WETLAND AREA IN DRC/PROVINCE OF EQUATEUR = THE NEW LARGEST RAMSAR'S WETLAND IN THE WORLD

- Situated around the Lake Tumba region in the Central Western Basin of the DRC, Province of Equateur, the Ngiri - Tumba - Maindombe Wetland area has become, since July 2008, the world's largest Wetland of International Importance, officially recognised by the Ramsar Convention, a treaty protecting designated wetlands.
- It is one of the highest concentrations of biodiversity anywhere in the world. It contains species of conservation concern such as forest elephants, forest buffalo and leopards. There are an estimated 150 species of fish, a wide variety of birds, and three types of crocodile as well as hippopotamus.
- These animals rely on the water, land and vegetation of the Ngiri - Tumba - Maindombe region, but humans do too. Area communities rely on wetlands for economically important crops, storm protection, and a clean water supply.



Aerial view of Lake Tumba and Congo River - © Google

NATIONAL AND LOCAL BENEFITS FROM THE NGIRI - TUMBA - MAINDOMBE AREA WETLAND

- Essential for the supply of fresh water, maintenance of biodiversity, mitigation of the effects of climate change, groundwater recharge and flood control.
- Cassava, sweet potatoes, sugarcane and bananas are all grown in the Ngiri - Tumba - Maindombe site while oil palm plantations, groundnuts and rice are the principal commercial products.

THREATS TO THE NGIRI - TUMBA - MAINDOMBE WETLAND AREA'S NATURAL RESOURCES

- Illegal and legal logging,
- Over fishing,
- Poaching and hunting.

PRESENT ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY CONCERNS ARISE FROM:

- Forest,
- Food,
- Energy,
- Weakness and poor environmental governance (management, policy and laws implementation, local communities involvement and participation).

INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE OF THE NGIRI - TUMBA - MAINDOMBE AREA WETLAND

- An area of 65,696 square kilometer, more than twice the size of Belgium.
- Its rivers and lakes constitute a major sink for the most prevalent greenhouse gas: carbon dioxide.
- It contains the largest freshwater body in Africa.
- Fish from the area helps to stimulate the economies of big cities such as Kinshasa, Brazzaville and Mbandaka.
- Vegetation cover at the flood basin acts as a buffer zone against floods for towns all along the Congo River and provides fish with breeding sites, while different forest types help filter water and maintain its quality.
- The Ngiri - Tumba - Maindombe area contributes to the regulation of flooding and regional climate and ensures that the quality of the water remains good enough for millions of people who depend upon it.