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INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

**CASE CONCERNING ARMED ACTIVITIES ON THE TERRITORY OF THE CONGO
(DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO v. UGANDA)**

**SECOND PHASE
QUESTION OF REPARATION**

**MEMORIAL
OF THE
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

**VOLUME 8
(Annexes 5.1 to 5.14)**

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ANNEX 5.1

**United Nations Security Council, *Statement by the President of the Security Council*
on “The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo”,
document S/PRST/2000/20, 2 June 2000**



Security Council

Distr.: General
2 June 2000
English
Original: English and French

Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4151st meeting of the Security Council, held on 2 June 2000 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council recalls the letter from the Secretary-General of 18 April 2000 (S/2000/334) and the letter from its President of 28 April 2000 (S/2000/350). The Council also recalls the letters from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations to its President of 26 April 2000 (S/2000/362) and of 1 June 2000 (S/2000/515).

The Security Council welcomes the recommendation made by its mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, contained in paragraph 77 of its report of 11 May 2000 (S/2000/416), to proceed with the early establishment of an expert panel on the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to establish this panel, for a period of six months, with the following mandate:

- To follow up on reports and collect information on all activities of illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including in violation of the sovereignty of that country;
- To research and analyse the links between the exploitation of the natural resources and other forms of wealth in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the continuation of the conflict;
- To revert to the Council with recommendations.

The Security Council stresses that in order to implement its mandate, the expert panel, which will be based at the United Nations Office at Nairobi, may receive logistical support from the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and make visits to various countries of the region, making contact during its visits with diplomatic missions in the capitals concerned, and, if necessary, to other relevant countries.

The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to appoint the members of the panel, in consultation with the Council, on the basis of candidates' professional expertise, impartiality and knowledge of the subregion. The Council stresses that the Chairman of the panel should be an eminent personality with the necessary experience, and decides that the panel will consist of five members, including its Chairman. The Council underlines that the panel might call upon the technical expertise of the Secretariat and of the Funds and Programmes and Specialized Agencies of the United Nations, as required. Voluntary contributions to support the panel would be welcomed.

The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to report to it on the steps taken to establish the expert panel. The Council requests also that the expert panel, once established, submit to the Council, through the Secretary-General, a preliminary report with initial findings after three months and a final report, with recommendations, at the end of its mandate.”

ANNEX 5.2

**United Nations Security Council, *Statement by the President of the Security Council*
on “The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo”,
document S/PRST/2001/13, 3 May 2001**



Security Council

Distr.: General
3 May 2001
English
Original: English and French

Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4318th meeting of the Security Council, held on 3 May 2001, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council recalls the statement of its President of 2 June 2000 (S/PRST/2000/20). It expresses its intention to give full consideration to the report of the Expert Panel on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2001/357). It takes note of the action plan of the Expert Panel for the extension of its mandate (S/2001/416).

"The Security Council notes that the report contains disturbing information about the illegal exploitation of Congolese resources by individuals, Governments and armed groups involved in the conflict, and the link between the exploitation of the natural resources and other forms of wealth in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the continuation of the conflict.

"The Security Council condemns the illegal exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and expresses its serious concern at those economic activities that fuel the conflict. It urges the Governments named in the report in this regard to conduct their own inquiries into this information, cooperate fully with the Expert Panel while ensuring necessary security for the experts, and take immediate steps to end illegal exploitation of the natural resources by their nationals or others under their control.

"The Security Council notes with concern the terrible toll the conflict is taking on the people, economy and environment of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

"The Security Council believes that the only viable solution to the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains the full implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement (S/1999/815) and the relevant Security Council resolutions.

"The Security Council emphasizes the importance of a comprehensive approach addressing all the root causes of the conflict to achieve a lasting peace settlement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.



“The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to extend the mandate of the Expert Panel for a final period of three months, and requests also that the Expert Panel submit to the Council, through the Secretary-General, an addendum to its final report which shall include the following:

“(a) An update of relevant data and an analysis of further information, including as pointed out in the action plan submitted by the Panel to the Security Council;

“(b) Relevant information on the activities of countries and other actors for which the necessary quantity and quality of data were not made available earlier;

“(c) A response, based as far as possible on corroborated evidence, to the comments and reactions of the States and actors cited in the final report of the Expert Panel;

“(d) An evaluation of the situation at the end of the extension of the mandate of the Panel, and of its conclusions, assessing whether progress has been made on the issues which come under the responsibility of the Panel.

“The Security Council expresses its intention to examine and respond to the recommendations of the report in the light of the addendum submitted by the Panel, so as to advance the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.”

ANNEX 5.3

Maps of OKIMO concessions from DRC mining register

[Annex not translated]

ANNEX 5.4

**Message No. 40/27/2000 of 17 March 2000 concerning the
UPDF/ISIRO brigade commander's visit to Doko**

[Annex not translated]

ANNEX 5.5

**Report sent by OKIMO to the Governor of Kibali-Ituri
province, 4 September 1999**

[Annex not translated]

ANNEX 5.6

**Handwritten letter dated 19 March 2001 from the head of operations at Moto
to the Commissioner for Haut-Uélé district**

[Annex not translated]

ANNEX 5.7

Letter No. DG/SDG/135/2001 of 23 May 2001

[Annex not translated]

ANNEX 5.8

**Ugandan Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, *Annual Report 2002*, p. 40,
Table 5 (production in 2001 and 2002) and Table 6 (exports in 2001 and 2002)**

iii) Licensing

a) Licenses Granted

During the year, the following licenses were granted:- 46 Prospecting Licenses (PL), 31 Exclusive Prospecting Licenses (EPL), 3 Special Exclusive Prospecting Licenses (SEPL), 9 Locations Licenses (LL), 3 Mining Leases (ML) and 10 Mineral Dealers (see table 4 below).

Table 4: Mineral Licensing Status as at December 2002

Licence	Granted	Expired	Current
Prospecting	46	42	46
Exclusive Prospecting	31	29	53
Special Exclusive Prospecting	03	00	09
Location	09	08	25
Mining Lease	03	01	13
Special Mining Lease	01	00	01
Mineral Dealers	10	00	10
TOTAL	103	80	157

b) Notable License Holders

A number of exploration and mining companies were granted licenses and their licenses were renewed or expired during the year under review. The notable ones are:

- Tororo Cement Industries Ltd. was granted exploration and mining licenses. It also renewed some of the licenses.
- Kisita Mining Company had one of its exploration licences renewed and the other expired. The company was granted also a Special Mining Lease to mine gold in Mubende district.
- Canmin Resources Limited was granted another Exclusive Prospecting Licence to expand the area of exploration for vermiculite within the Bukusu Carbonatite Complex.
- Gold Empire Limited renewed some of its licences and expired others by effluxion of time.
- Cresta Mining Company was granted Exclusive Prospecting Licences for diamond, gold, lead, copper and zinc in Kabale, Bushenyi, Mbarara and Kamwenge districts.
- Roraima Mining Company renewed its exploration licences for gold Busia and Bugiri districts.

2.3.5 Mineral Production and Exports

a) Mineral Production

Reported Mineral production for the year 2002 declined compared to the previous year (table 5). The total value of mineral produced amounted to Shs. 11.88 billion, was about 28 percent of the previous year's value. The decline was due to the halt in production of cobalt as a result of the collapsed prices on the world market.

Table 5: Mineral Production for 2001 and 2002

Mineral	Quantity (in Tons)		Value (in 000,000 Ug Shs)	
	2001	2002	2001	2002
Limestone	173,825.9	140,022.51	13,906.08	11,2001.801
Pozzolanic Materials	22,782.25	12,388.44	478.43	260.158
Columbite- Tantalite	2.02	6.463	30.30	96.945
Iron Ore	1,097.29	NIL	21.95	NIL
Cobalt	511.992	NIL	25,599.60	NIL
Gold	0.000142	0.002565	2.46	44.436
Kaolin	90.00	178	9.00	17.800
Wolfram	26.686	24.817	32.02	29.777
Venniculite	NIL	664	NIL	225.760
Gypswn	NIL	5.12	NIL	Not Given
TOTAL VALUE			43,079.84	11,876.677

b) Mineral Export**Table 6: Mineral Exports for 2001 and 2002**

Mineral	Exoort in (Tons)		Value (in 000,000 Ug Shs)	
	2001	2002	2001	2002
Gold	6.09	7.589	105,504.76	131,545.54
Wolfram	50	50.35	78	78.54
Tantalite-Columbite	14.96	3.35	224.4	50.25
Cobalt	574	NIL	201.090.00	NIL
Venniculite	100	724	34.00	246.16
Tin	25	NIL	25	NIL
TOTAL VALUE			125,976.16	131,920.49

Note: there was slight increase in mineral exports in 2002 compared to 2001. This was due to gold export increase by 1.449 t

2.3.6 Earthquake Monitoring

The National Seismological Network Project carried out the routine collection and analysis of seismological data from stations at Entebbe, Dundu, Kilembe, Hoima and Kyabi as well as simple routine maintenance of equipment

Data collected (figure 6) indicates that locations of most of the events lie in the proximity of the Uganda - D.R. Congo border, which form part of the western arm of the East African Rift System. A cluster of events was also located within the Rwanda - D.R. Congo area. These are earthquakes

ANNEX 5.9

**Ugandan Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, Annual Report
2003, p. 35, Table 5 (production) and Table 6 (exports)**

Table 5: License Status During 2003

Type of License	Granted	Expired	Current (as at 31 st December 2003)
Prospecting Right	37	27	56
EPL	17	3	67
SEPL	02	0	11
Location License	15	0	40
Mining Leases	03	0	17
Mineral Dealers'	17	0	17
Total	91	30	208

b) Major License Holders during 2003

A number of exploration and mining companies were granted licenses. However, the major licence holders during the year were:

- Hima Cement Industry, for mining limestone in Kasese and Kabarole districts.
- Tororo Cement Industries Limited, for exploration and mining in Moroto and Kapchorwa districts.
- Nilefos Minerals Limited, for exclusive prospecting of phosphates in Tororo district.
- Busitema Mining Cie Limited, for mining of gold in Busia district.
- Krone (U) Limited, for mining wolfram in Kabale district.
- Canmin Resources Limited, for exclusive prospecting of vermiculite in Mbale district.
- Gold Empire Limited, for exploration and mining of gold in Bushenyi district.
- Greystone Resources limited, for exploration and mining limestone in Moyo district.
- Cresta Mining Company Limited, for exclusive prospecting of diamond, gold, lead, copper and zinc in Kabale, Bushenyi, Mbarara and Kamwenge districts.
- Riviera Limited, for exclusive prospecting of gold in Mbarara and Bushenyi districts
- Technical Supports and Services Limited, for exploration and mining of tantalite as well as exclusive prospecting oftin in Wakiso and Ntungamo districts.

iii) Mineral Statistics

The mineral statistics are provided in tables 6 and 7 and are based on the data received by the time of reporting.

a) Mineral Production

The value of reported mineral produced in the year 2003 increased to, shillings 21, 197,941,000/- compared to 11,876,677,000 billion in 2002. The increase is attributed to production of limestone and pozzolanic materials (Table 6). The total value of mineral produced would have been higher if the world market price for cobalt had improved.

Table 6: Mineral Production for 2002 and 2003

Mineral	Quantity (in Tones)		Total Value (in Million U2 Shs)	
	2002	2003	2002	2003
Limestone	140,022.510	226,408.460	11,201.801	18,112.677
Pozzolanic Materials	12,388.440	65,586.980	260.158	1,377.326
Columbite-Tantalite	6.463	16.240	96.945	243.600
Iron Ore*	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Tin	NIL	1.000	NIL	25.000
Cobalt*	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Gold	0.002565	0.040	44.436	846.480
Kaolin	178.000	NIL	17.800	NIL
Wolfram	24.817	2.160	29.777	2.419
Vermiculite	664.000	1,724.000	225.760	586.160
Gvosum	5.120	42.790	Not Given	4.279
TOTAL			11,876.677	21,197.941

* No production was reported in the two years. No mining licence was issued for iron ore. In the case of cobalt, non-production was as a result of the temporary closure of the plant.

Mineral Export

There was a decline in mineral exports in 2003 as compared to 2002 (Table 7). This was due to gold exports, which declined by 3.429 tons.

Table 7: Mineral Exports for 2002 and 2003

Mineral	Export in (Tones)		Total Value (in 000,000 Ug. Shs)	
	2002	2003	2002	2003
Gold	7.589	4.16	131,545.54	88,033.850
Wolfram	50.35	33.95	78.54	38.024
Columbite-Tantalite	3.35	6.10	50.25	91.500
Vermiculite	724	2,280.00	246.16	775.200
Tin	NIL	17.40	NIL	435.000
Beryl	NIL	139.00	NIL	8.340
TOTAL			131,920.49	89,381.913

2.3.7 Geodata Services

The Geological data and information received in the year was processed, appropriately preserved for easy retrieval and also disseminated to investors, the general public, researchers and staff members. Computerization a mineral occurrence database also commenced. The main activities are summarized as below.

ANNEX 5.10

**All Party Parliamentary Group on the Great Lakes Region and Genocide Prevention,
*Cursed by Riches: Who Benefits from Resource Exploitation in the Democratic Republic
of the Congo?*, November 2002**



**ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON THE GREAT LAKES
REGION AND GENOCIDE PREVENTION**

**Cursed by Riches:
Who Benefits from Resource Exploitation
in the Democratic Republic of the Congo?**

NOVEMBER 2002

“The international community could..., with our help, sort out the blight that is the continuing conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where three million people have died through war or famine in the last decade.”

Prime Minister Tony Blair, to the Labour Party Conference, October 2001

Background to the Research

This research project evolved from the main findings of an earlier report by the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on the Great Lakes and Genocide Prevention. In August 2001, members of the APPG took part in a fact-finding mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Their report expressed concern over the widespread humanitarian disaster and raised issues about the impact of the exploitation of DRC's resources.¹

Since the publication of this report, there has been some progress on the issue of resource exploitation. The APPG has welcomed further investigations on illegal exploitation of natural resources by the UN Panel of Experts.²

In view of the publication of the final report of the UN Panel of Experts, the APPG decided to commission its own independent research to consider how the exploitation of natural resources is impacting on people's lives in the region, and its implications for a lasting peace in the region.³ This report also seeks to make constructive recommendations to the UK government to act on the main findings of the report of the UN Panel of Experts.

Methodology

Research into this report involved a review of existing reports and documentation from a range of international and national organisations, and individuals, with a track record in conducting research into this area. Meetings and conversations with aid agencies, the United Nations and government officials took place between July and September 2002.

A major part of the research was a four-week visit to the region in August 2002, in order to obtain first-hand accounts of the impact of resource exploitation on the population and the environment in the DRC. It should be emphasised that the visit took into account resource exploitation in the whole country, including western and eastern provinces. Unfortunately, due to security reasons, a planned visit to Ituri did not go ahead, although there were discussions with individuals and organisations based there.

The meetings in the DRC and the region were mainly on a one-to-one basis with individuals, organisations and companies who were able to give their own views and perspectives on the resource exploitation in the country: how it is affecting the lives of people, and what role it is playing in the peace process. Many of the meetings were conducted in confidentiality as most people wanted to remain anonymous due to the sensitivity of the subject matter. Evidence from credible first-hand accounts has been backed up by reports, and confirmed with international experts.

Acknowledgements

The report has been commissioned and published by the APPG. The author of the report is Richard Burge, who is an independent consultant with over eight years experience in the Great Lakes region. Many people have contributed to this report, including the APPG Chair. The author would like to thank all those involved in the drafting of the report and assisting with the research, and all of the individuals and organisations interviewed in the DRC and the region.

The recommendations are the collective view of the APPG.

¹ APPG (Aug 2002) 'Visit to the Democratic Republic of Congo, 2-6 August 2001'. The report made a series of recommendations that specifically referred to the exploitation of natural resources (see appendix 1).

² While the first Panel of Experts report identified major issues of concern, it was heavily criticised. An addendum to the report (S/2001/1072), published on 13 November 2001, concluded that there was a direct link between conflict, humanitarian catastrophe and the natural resource exploitation.

³ See appendix 2 for terms of reference.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has had a devastating humanitarian impact on the local population, leaving over 2.5m dead since 1998 in the east of the country alone¹. Congolese and foreign armed forces have exploited the DRC's natural resources. **We recommend that the relationship between resource exploitation and conflict is fully addressed both by the peace process and by the policies of influential governments such as the United Kingdom**
- 1.2 The recent peace accords and the withdrawal of foreign armies from the country are welcomed. However, the power vacuum caused by troop withdrawal is likely to worsen the immediate security situation, compounding the humanitarian catastrophe. It is the responsibility of the international community to offer security both to the Government of Rwanda and the people of eastern DRC. **We recommend the full and urgent implementation of the mandate UN observer mission (MONUC) to disarm negative forces, safeguard the population and monitor troop withdrawals.**
- 1.3 The international community must help end the culture of impunity in the region. Perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide remain inside the DRC and must be brought to justice. There is also a need to address the mass human rights violations that have taken place in the DRC since 1998, including cases of sexual violence, where rape has been used as a weapon of war.
- 1.4 Resource exploitation undermines long-term stability and development in the region. Political and military elites have used formal and informal networks, some of which have been involved for decades in widespread fraudulent and illegal exploitation. The violence and insecurity associated with illegal economic exploitation will continue to result in displacements and food shortages. These systems of exploitation should be completely dismantled to ensure the viability of the peace process. This would require sustained international pressure on all governments in the Great Lakes Region, in particular the DRC, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe.
- 1.5 The Zimbabwean regime has used its presence to negotiate favourable joint ventures with the DRC government and Congolese companies in order to exploit some of the richest resources. In eastern DRC, opportunistic Ugandan generals have adopted a system of decentralised control to set up Ugandan or Congolese-led companies. Politicians and senior officers linked to the Rwandan army have established a more centralised system. Acting with the rebel authorities, they have secured favourable terms for Rwandan-owned companies, or directly exploited the resources themselves, in some cases allegedly using Hutu prisoners as labour.² Warlords of the different militias, including the Mai-Mai, have engaged in resource exploitation for their own benefit. A significant number of Western companies are also involved, although there are very few UK companies working in the country.
- 1.6 There is considerable evidence of a continuation of criminality linked to exploitation, including fraud, smuggling, counterfeit money, extortion, and tax evasion. Many resources are flown directly out of the country without being taxed. It is alleged that criminal networks are used to transport and sell 'unofficial' quantities of minerals and other forms of wealth, in return for arms. There has been a proliferation of small arms, with the rise of ethnically-based militias and even private armies.

¹ International Rescue Committee (May 2001), 'Mortality in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo'.

² See Box 2, reference 62 (p 21).

- 1.7 In the Zimbabwean zone of influence, the exploitation of diamond concessions in the areas around Mbuji Mayi has led to a series of human rights violations perpetrated by Congolese and Zimbabwean security forces. Abuses include forced evictions of Congolese farmers from their lands and the shooting dead of trespassers. In the Ugandan zone of influence (especially Ituri), the pursuit of minerals and timber by military leaders has resulted in people being displaced around mineral-rich sites. Humanitarian access to such locations has been extremely restricted. Violent conflict between the Hema and Lendu has escalated and the Ugandan army has failed to uphold safeguards for the civilian population.
- 1.8 In the Rwandan zone of influence (especially in the Kivus and Maniema), there has been widespread destruction of the socio-economic base. This has been compounded by the violent activities of various militia groups, such as the Interahamwe, Burundian rebels, and the Mai-Mai. The result has been food insecurity, widespread looting, irregular taxation, forced labour, continuous population displacements, and environmental destruction, especially in the national park areas. Human rights violations have occurred on a massive scale, including widespread sexual violence.
- 1.9 The UK government must be commended for trying to alleviate the suffering of the people in the DRC through humanitarian aid and support to the peace process. However, there is a need for an overarching regional policy. This would incorporate individual country programmes (Rwanda and Uganda) while at the same time putting the security and development needs of all the people of the Great Lakes at the heart of a regional strategy. **We urge the UK government to produce a Regional Strategy Paper on the Great Lakes Region which incorporates all existing country programmes. We also urge the government to support the idea of a Regional Conference.**
- 1.10 The UK government is in a position to influence the situation. The APPG welcomes the report of the UN Panel of Experts on Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of Congo. **We urge the UK government to make a statement in the House of Commons, and ensure that the main findings are acted upon in the UN Security Council and the European Union.**
- 1.11 The Department for International Development (DFID) country programmes in Uganda and Rwanda have had outstanding successes. We remain concerned, however, that Ugandan and Rwandan involvement in the DRC runs contrary to the principles of DFID agreements, in particular the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Rwandan government. **We urge the UK government to commission evaluations on the implications of the involvement of Uganda and Rwanda in the DRC on the DFID country programmes,** particularly given the likelihood of these governments returning their troops to the DRC.
- 1.12 UK assistance to the DRC has been limited to humanitarian relief and support to the peace process. While very welcome, resource exploitation is impacting on the UK's aid programme. We therefore request greater support for sustainable livelihoods and the regulation of resource exploitation. (See p.6, recommendation 2.13.)

2. FULL LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Prevention of further conflict

The APPG urges the governments of the Great Lakes Region to:

- 2.1 Fully recognise the serious security concerns for the people of Rwanda and the DRC as ‘negative forces’ remain in eastern DRC. We commend the Rwandan government if it continues to uphold its commitments to the Pretoria Agreement. We strongly urge the DRC government to comply with its obligations under the Pretoria Agreement to disarm and demobilise negative forces within eastern DRC. The Mai-Mai and ethnically-based militias in Ituri must be brought into the process of disarmament and demobilisation, with the assistance of MONUC.
- 2.2 Fully and permanently withdraw all foreign armies from the DRC (in particular Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi) and fulfil their obligations under the Lusaka (and subsequent) Agreements. These governments must also be compelled by the international community to dismantle the networks established to carry out illegal or illicit exploitation of natural resources in the DRC.³
- 2.3 Pressure their allies in eastern DRC to stop the recruitment of child soldiers and comply with past agreements on full demobilisation.

The APPG urges the United Nations to:

- 2.4 Ensure MONUC’s mandate is urgently implemented to its full capacity, which includes monitoring troop withdrawal and the current power vacuum, carrying out demobilisation and disarmament of all combatants, and protecting civilians under imminent threat of violence. MONUC and other international donors must assist the DRC government in funding, training and deploying a civilian police force in eastern DRC.
- 2.5 Support the establishment of a UN Commission of Experts to investigate and determine responsibility for grave violations of human rights and humanitarian law in the DRC, including sexual violence. A mechanism should be created to bring persons responsible for human rights violations to justice.⁴

Corporate responsibilities

The APPG urges the UK government (Department for Trade and Industry) to:

- 2.6 Support proposals in the Lusaka Accords to ensure that all contracts, concessions and commercial agreements made since 1996 are reviewed and revised under a special monitoring body in close collaboration with the World Bank. Environmental impact assessments should be legally binding and conducted by independent evaluators.
- 2.7 Carry out a review of all UK companies and individuals named in the third report of the UN Panel of Experts. We recommend that the UK government contacts these companies to remind them of their corporate responsibilities in the DRC and the need to implement the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

³ This entails a series of measures, some of which are also recommendations (complete troop withdrawal, full implementation of MONUC’s mandate, an independent monitoring mechanism on mining activities, a review of all contracts with companies, support for regulation of mining sectors, and regional economic development initiatives).

⁴ This supports the recommendation made by Human Rights Watch in its report of June 2002, ‘*The War Within the War: Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls in Eastern Congo*’.

UK aid and foreign policy

The APPG urges the UK government (Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office) to:

- 2.8 Make a statement in the House of Commons on how it plans to act upon the findings of the report of the UN Panel of Experts on Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The UK government should use its powers to ensure that the main findings are acted upon in the UN Security Council and the Council of Ministers of the European Union, and ensure that a set of agreements on reconstruction and sustainable development are drawn up to address the economic dimension of the regional peace process.
- 2.9 Produce a Regional Strategy Paper on the Great Lakes Region, which incorporates all existing country programmes. This should be jointly led by the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, in consultation with the Department for Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Defence.

The APPG urges the UK government (Department for International Development) to:

- 2.10 Produce a proposal around a Regional Conference on the Great Lakes Region to take place within the next six months, covering key issues including a regional security framework and a regional economic plan.
- 2.11 Commission an evaluation on the implications of Uganda's intervention in the DRC on DFID's country programme in Uganda. The findings of the defence spending review and the Porter Commission should be considered in the evaluation.
- 2.12 Commission, in light of the contradictions between the Memorandum of Understanding with the Rwandan government and the Rwandan government's activities in the DRC, an evaluation of the implications for its own aid programme of Rwanda's intervention in the DRC. The MoU should be strengthened in the area of conflict resolution to cover human rights and resource exploitation. The UK government should also support a defence spending review and encourage the Rwandan government to establish its own national commission on resource exploitation in the DRC (similar to that established by the Ugandan Government).
- 2.13 Expand its current bilateral and multilateral aid programme to the DRC to target alternative livelihood strategies, particularly for populations living in and around areas of natural resources (including the national parks), while continuing to support humanitarian relief and peace building.
- 2.14 Support the DRC government's compliance with the Kimberley Process for the certification of diamonds, and pressure other governments in the region to comply. We recommend the introduction of similar certification schemes for timber and other materials.
- 2.15 Ensure that the new African Partnership for Development (NEPAD) process addresses the connection between resource exploitation and conflict. The use and extraction of natural resources should be in the interests of promoting sustainable economic development.

3. CONTEXT OF THE CONFLICT

3.1 The humanitarian catastrophe

The conflict in the DRC has been described as one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world. Over 2.5 million people have died in eastern DRC alone since the war began in 1998.⁵ Of these deaths, 350,000 were the result of direct violence, and the remainder caused by malnutrition and preventable disease. An estimated eighteen million people have no access to services of any kind.⁶ There are some 2,275,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), most of whom are in the eastern provinces.⁷ Of a population of 49 million, an estimated 20 million are regarded as “*vulnerable general population affected by adverse effects of the conflict and chronic insecurity*”.⁸

This report argues that a major cause of the ongoing human suffering in the DRC lies in the systems of resource exploitation established by political and military elites, including warlords of various militia groups. The presence of foreign armies in the DRC has been due increasingly to the desire to exploit natural resources and other forms of wealth, and less to security concerns.⁹ The recent withdrawal of foreign troops from the country does not necessarily indicate that security concerns have been solved or that the economic attractions of staying in the DRC have expired. Foreign governments are likely to continue to support proxy forces in the country as long as the interlinked interests of resource exploitation and security remain.

Despite a ceasefire and the movement of foreign troops out of the country, the humanitarian crisis appears to have worsened. The United Nations states that numbers of IDPs have increased over the last six months. The situation is compounded further by the recent escalation in fighting in eastern DRC as foreign troops withdraw. Humanitarian access is severely limited in parts of the country, especially in the eastern region. National and international relief workers remain frustrated by constant obstacles put in their way by government, military and militia officials.

THE HUMAN FACE OF THE CONFLICT¹¹

A farmer and his family are evicted from their land by Zimbabwean and Congolese soldiers, near to Mbuji Mayi, as the land contains diamonds; land that they have worked for over 40 years.

Faced with starvation, a family is forced to work in the mines at Manono which are controlled by rebel and Rwandan troops; this includes boys and girls as young as ten years old, who have no opportunity to go to school.

A young girl of 14 years old enters into prostitution in a mining area in Masisi, where there is an opportunity to make some dollars from the resident soldiers guarding the mining areas.

⁵ International Rescue Committee (May 2001), ‘Mortality in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo’.

⁶ Christian Aid, Oxfam, Save the Children (Aug 2001), ‘No End in Sight: the human tragedy of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo’.

⁷ The main locations are in North Kivu (760,000), South Kivu (435,000), Maniema (160,000), Katanga (415,000) and Orientale (250,000). Source: report by Human Rights Watch (June 2002), ‘The War Within the War: Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls in Eastern Congo’.

⁸ OCHA Regional Support Office (July 2002): Democratic Republic of Congo.

⁹ See previous APPG report (2001), ‘Visit to Democratic Republic of Congo, 2nd – 6th August 2001’.

¹⁰ See previous APPG report (2001), ‘Visit to Democratic Republic of Congo, 2nd – 6th August 2001’.

¹¹ All of these cases have taken place this year, and were recorded during a field visit in August 2002.

A woman who has been gang-raped has suffered such severe genital mutilation that she has to be flown out of the country as the international medical team lacks the means to provide proper surgery.

A woman witnesses her 20-year-old daughter having her genital labia cut off by the Interahamwe for resisting rape, and then asking her assailants, "Please kill me".¹²

Women walking out of the forest around Shabunda claim to have been kept as sex slaves by the Mai-Mai, having endured months of sexual violence and forced labour.

A former coltan miner tells about regular night raids by the Rwandan army and its allies on villages in Masisi, where the people are obliged to give up any money or valuable possessions, and in some cases are required to supply the local military commander with a specified quantity of coltan.

Aid workers report on attacks in Ituri, which is occupied the Ugandan army supposedly to protect the civilian population. Firstly, in Bunia, there are attacks by the Hema on the Lendu, in which up to 400 people are killed. This is followed by revenge attacks, including one on a hospital in Nyankunde where Hema patients are slaughtered in their beds.

Men and boys found to have trespassed in the diamond mines around Mbuji Mayi are shot at on a regular basis by Congolese security forces, including the army.

A man in Bunyakiri (Masisi) has his throat slashed after telling a Western journalist that foreign soldiers had come into a mining area to disperse the population in order to exploit coltan.

All of the elephants, and most of the gorillas, in Kahuzi-Biega national park are slaughtered for meat or for the sale of ivory or hides to interested foreign parties.

3.2 Background to the conflict

The humanitarian crisis is the result of a complex conflict. The war in the DRC has involved six foreign armies from neighbouring countries, together with a range of foreign and domestic rebel and militia forces. Its roots are embedded in the history of the Great Lakes Region, although much of the current conflict stems from the violence and mass displacements unleashed by the Rwandan genocide of 1994. Over two million people, mainly Hutus, became refugees in the neighbouring countries of Tanzania and the DRC (then Zaire). Refugees in the DRC numbered some 1.2m and included many of those responsible for the genocide. They were mostly located near the towns of Goma and Bukavu, and it was here that the seeds of the current conflict were sown – with the international community partly to blame. The refugee camps were situated too close to the Rwandan border, rather than 50km away as recommended under international law. This encouraged incursions back into Rwanda by the Interahamwe militia, whose presence inside the camps went largely unchallenged for at least the first nine months.¹³

The presence of the Interahamwe in the Kivus region of the DRC has not been the only source of conflict for the wider Great Lakes Region. Operating in the same area, but further south, the *Forces de défense pour la démocratie* (FDD) have battled against the regime in Burundi. In the northwest, the presence of another rebel force was seen as a direct threat to the Ugandan government in Kampala.

In September 1996, a rebellion broke out in the Kivus, led by Laurent Kabila and his *Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaire* (AFDL), and heavily backed by

¹² Taken from a report by Human Rights Watch (June 2002), 'The War Within the War: Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls in Eastern Congo'.

¹³ For a full account of the problems of the refugee camps, see 'The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwanda Experience' by the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda, March 1996.

the Rwandan and Ugandan armies. All of these parties wanted to overthrow the Mobutu regime in Kinshasa and neutralise the threat of the various foreign militias. However, while the rebellion was successful, with Kabila acceding to power in May 1997, the problems of regional security continued.

Relations between the new regime in Kinshasa and its former allies of Rwanda and Uganda deteriorated as the latter accused the Kabila government of failing to deal with the militias and even of arming them, thus threatening the security of both Rwanda and Uganda. In August 1998 a new conflict broke out, with the Rwandan and Ugandan governments providing support to the *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie* (RCD) in an attempt to overthrow the government in Kinshasa. Loosely allied to the RCD was the *Mouvement pour la libération du Congo* (MLC) of Pierre Bemba, based in the province of Equateur. In response to this threat, the Kabila government called upon the support of fellow SADC (Southern African Development Community) governments, claiming that DRC sovereignty had been violated. As a result, the governments of Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia and Chad sent in troops to prevent the overthrow of the government. Burundi also became involved on the side of Rwanda and Uganda, for similar reasons.

Despite an attempt at a peace agreement at Lusaka in July 1999, fighting continued. This was compounded by clashes between the Rwandan and Ugandan troops and between different factions of the RCD, especially in Kisangani.¹⁴ Moreover, in eastern DRC, a Congolese militia, the Mai-Mai, emerged to fight against the RCD and its Rwandan and Ugandan allies. On occasions, it joined forces with the Interahamwe and the FDD, whose presence have continued despite four years of war.

Since the signing of the Lusaka Accords, the different parties to the conflict have agreed to disengage from fighting. Most recently, separate accords have been signed in Sun City (between the DRC government, the MLC and the Ugandan government) in April 2002, in Pretoria (between the DRC and Rwandan governments) in July 2002, and in Luanda (between the DRC and Ugandan governments) in September 2002. These are encouraging signs. The peace agreements focus on the security of national borders, the sovereignty of nation states and the neutralising of 'negative' forces (especially the Interahamwe and the FDD).

However, one of the major weaknesses in the peace accords, which commit countries to withdrawing their troops, is that they focus on security and political issues without addressing the economic issues and the problem of illegal exploitation of resources. Many observers believe that economic factors have become a major reason for the perpetuation of the conflict, despite security being initially the key reason for intervention in the country. As long as the economic causes of conflict remain outside the remit of the peace negotiations, then long-term peace and stability in the region will remain a chimera.

3.3 Security issues

"We cannot turn our backs on conflicts and violation of human rights within other countries if we still want to be secure." (Tony Blair, April 1999)¹⁵

"The leaders in Rwanda and Uganda, and in the West, talk about the need for the security of their borders, but what about the security of the Congolese people?" (Human rights official, Bukavu, August 2002)

Security was the main reason put forward by the governments of Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi for their presence in eastern DRC. Protection of a sovereign state was the main

¹⁴ Kisangani is the main diamond centre in eastern DRC.

¹⁵ Taken from his speech, entitled 'Doctrine of the International Community', in Chicago.

reason put forward by the Zimbabwean government for the presence of its army. The argument of the Angolan government focused on both the sovereignty issue and the presence of its own UNITA rebel opponents. The recent withdrawal of most of these armies is encouraging, although it does not necessarily indicate that the security concerns of their governments have been allayed.

Foreign armies

During the course of the four-year conflict, external security motivations gave way to more overt economic and commercial considerations. The presence of foreign troops coincided closely with areas of mineral resources. An earlier APPG report documented the coincidence of troop deployment and natural resources.¹⁶ Despite troop withdrawal, it is likely that the location of armed forces, whether Congolese or foreign, will continue to be determined as much by economic as by security factors. This report documents cases where foreign troops, together with national or rebel security forces, have carried out operations which appear to be concerned with resource exploitation rather than the provision of security. It has been in the interests of certain politicians, business people and military officers to use their soldiers in this way. For example, in the provinces of Katanga and Kasai Oriental, it is alleged that the Zimbabwean army was engaged more for commercial than security reasons – to exploit resources such as timber, copper, cobalt and diamonds.¹⁷

None of the foreign armies have safeguarded the security of Congolese citizens. For example, despite claims that the Ugandan army remains in Bunia for the protection of the local population, its presence has actually had the opposite effect, in fostering an escalation of the conflict between the Hema and Lendu populations.¹⁸

All sides in the conflict in eastern DRC hold some responsibility for committing acts of violence on civilian populations. People interviewed in villages and towns in the Kivus and Maniema province described how their security has been violated by all sides, including the opposing Congolese factions. Foreign and rebel forces continue to operate inside the DRC, particularly in these provinces. Their activities threaten the security of the whole region, and not only the Congolese people. There are regular reports of fighting between the rebel authorities, with their foreign allies, and with different militias.¹⁹ These reports confirm first-hand accounts by Congolese citizens of attacks on their land. The groups responsible are associated with the Interahamwe, the FDD, the Mai-Mai, and the Hema or Lendu militias in the northeast. Attempts to establish civil defence forces by the RCD and the Ugandan army have possibly accentuated the problem of long-term security, by pitting one group against another and encouraging further flows of small arms into the region.

The Interahamwe

The Interahamwe has continued to threaten the security of the people of eastern DRC as well as Rwanda and the region. Recently, civil society organisations in eastern DRC have reported attacks upon individuals and property by groups who they themselves call Interahamwe.²⁰ The numbers of Interahamwe fighters continue to be disputed. One report suggests that

¹⁶ See APPG report, Visit to the DRC, 2-6 August 2002. While this table is now dated, it does demonstrate how natural resources have played a significant role in the positioning of foreign armies in their zones of occupation.

¹⁷ Dietrich, Christian (June 2002), 'Hard Currency: the Criminalised Diamond Economy of the DRC and its Neighbours'; CENADEP (August 2002), 'Atelier sur le pillage des ressources naturelles de la RD Congo'; Global Witness (Feb 2002), 'Branching Out: Zimbabwe's Resource Colonialism in DRC'.

¹⁸ Interviews with humanitarian organisations in Goma/London, August/Sept 2002. See also final report of UN Panel of Experts (S/2002/1146) on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (15 Oct 2002).

¹⁹ See reports by International Crisis Group (Dec 2001), 'Disarmament in the Congo: Jump-Starting DDRRR to Prevent Further War', and reports by OCHA (July 2002), Human Rights Watch (2002), 'The War Within the War, and Héritiers de la Justice bulletins (2002).

²⁰ Reports obtained from three civil society organisations in Bukavu and two civil society organisations in Goma, August 2002.

members of the Interahamwe have formed the basis of the *Armée de Liberation du Rwanda* (AliR). It is alleged that this force, numbering between 24,000 and 32,000, has been supported by the DRC government.²¹ A lower figure of between 8,000 and 12,000 Interahamwe has been provided by MONUC.²² Whatever the number, it is crucial that those members of the Interahamwe who have been accused of genocide in Rwanda in 1994 are brought to justice.

The Mai-Mai

The presence of the Mai-Mai poses a serious threat to everyday life in eastern DRC. In places such as Kindu and Mwenga, displaced people talk about their villages being attacked by the Mai-Mai. It runs contrary to the opinion of a few members of civil society and international observers in the DRC, who talk about the Mai-Mai as ‘freedom fighters’. The name Mai-Mai appears to be a catch-all phrase for a range of disparate groups, some of which have a political agenda, while others are engaged in pure banditry. While they need to be brought into the peace processes at the national and local levels, the presence of the Mai-Mai can be seen as a reaction to the activities of the RCD and foreign armies in eastern DRC, especially in South Kivu and Maniema. It is unlikely, however, that a complete withdrawal of foreign troops will lead to a reintegration of men and boys who may have taken part in the rape and pillage of their own people, and have acquired arms which provide them with a livelihood.

Security vs commercial gain

While these groups undoubtedly threaten the security of Congolese people at the local level, the security arguments put forward by the Rwandan and Ugandan governments are questionable. In particular, the Rwandan army’s activities on the ground have not appeared to be consistent with their posited security concerns. Evidence suggests that, in the Kivus, the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) and RCD have ignored information as to the locations of the Interahamwe. On various occasions, local sources have given evidence of collusion between the RPA/RCD and Interahamwe over the extraction and trading of minerals in eastern DRC.²³

All of the discussions held indicated that the presence of the Rwandan and Ugandan armies had not brought about a secure environment for the Congolese population. Despite occupying large parts of the country for over four years, and despite their own level of sophistication compared to the militias for whom they were searching, the security situation in eastern DRC has deteriorated. There have been numerous examples of the RPA and RCD being located in areas where the Interahamwe did not exist, or were at least 50km away.

3.4 Troop withdrawal and demobilisation

“How do you observe what is going on when you have so few people?”
(Human rights worker, Bukavu, August 2002)

Since September 2002, there has been a dramatic withdrawal of foreign armies from the country. The armies of Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe have reduced their numbers significantly. It is reported that the Zimbabwean army has withdrawn from the Equateur region and various locations in Katanga province. In eastern DRC, the Ugandan army has

²¹ International Crisis Group (Dec 2001), ‘Disarmament in the Congo: Jump-Starting DDRRR to Prevent Further War’. The report also details the locations of the AliR, with the main concentrations being 3,000-4,000 in N Kivu (Masisi/Shabunda/Walikale), 6,000-8,000 in the south of South Kivu (near to Kalemie), and 10,000-12,000 in Katanga, Kasai and Equateur.

²² Discussion with MONUC officials in August 2002.

²³ Discussions held in strict confidentiality with villagers, civil society, and several international staff personnel in Masisi, Goma and Bukavu, in August 2002.

²⁴ Confirmed in recent Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) reports (September and October 2002).

withdrawn all but two of its battalions, while the Rwandan army also claims to have pulled out its troops, although there are signs that some troops have moved back in around Uvira.²⁵

The withdrawal of foreign troops from the country, however, presents a dilemma. On the one hand, foreign armies have clearly been used by individuals motivated as much by economic as by security issues, and therefore their departure provides an opportunity for peace. On the other hand, a serious power vacuum has opened up in large parts of eastern DRC, which continues to threaten the security of the local population. The weakness of the rebel authorities to combat threats from the militias demonstrates that they were clearly dependent upon their foreign allies for political, military and economic support.

While the fighting between the different Congolese factions in eastern DRC needs to be addressed, the return of foreign troops would be a setback, as they are clearly part of the problem. This report argues that the foreign troops have been used for the exploitation of natural resources. There are reports of some Ugandan and Rwandan troops being relocated to other areas in the DRC. However, in the context of an escalation in local conflicts, it is extremely difficult to monitor and verify exactly any ongoing military activities in the mineral-rich areas.

We urge the governments of the Great Lakes Region to fully and permanently withdraw all foreign armies from the DRC (in particular Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi) and fulfil their obligations under the Lusaka (and subsequent) Agreements. These governments must also be compelled by the international community to dismantle the networks established to carry out illegal or illicit exploitation of natural resources in the DRC.

The sudden withdrawal of the Rwandan, Ugandan (and Burundian) armies from the DRC will need commensurate efforts to protect and uphold the rights of ethnic minority groups who may face violence. The war economy has increased the level of ethnic tension. In eastern DRC, no ethnic group remains immune to the violence, especially the Banyamulenge population who are facing anti-Tutsi sentiments and the revenge of the Rwandan army for their desertion from the ranks of the RCD. Recent events in Kisangani, Kindu and Uvira do not bode well.²⁶ The continued presence of the ‘negative forces’ of the Interahamwe and the FDD remain a threat to the security of the whole population.

Rwandan government view on troop withdrawal

Rwandan President Paul Kagame spoke to a delegation of British MPs in Kigali on 13 October 2002. Talking about the Rwandan withdrawal from the DRC a few days earlier, he said: *“Just because we are out today, I’m not sure we won’t be going back tomorrow.”* When asked about the numbers of ex-FAR and Interahamwe troops, President Kagame said that numbers were not the issue, but rather what the troops represented: *“Even if there are only 1,000, they act as a smoke-screen for other activities in the DRC. Either way they constitute a grave threat to Rwandan security.”*

President Kagame estimates that 20-25,000 active ex-FAR and Interahamwe rebels remain in the DRC. Other estimates range from 5,000-30,000. President Kagame was clear that if the Kinshasa government and the international community were unable to deal with this problem, Rwandan troops would return to the DRC. In reference to a possible re-occupation by his government, he said: *“We will be doing it on another platform. We will have proved we were not in the Congo for human rights abuses or to exploit resources.”*

²⁵ Confirmed in recent Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) reports (September and October 2002).

²⁶ See OCHA (July 2002) report, p.17, and recent IRIN reports (Oct 2002).

We fully recognise the serious security concerns for the people of Rwanda and the DRC as ‘negative forces’ remain in eastern DRC. We commend the Rwandan government if it continues to uphold its commitments to the Pretoria Agreement. We strongly urge the DRC government to comply with its obligations to disarm and demobilise ‘negative forces’ within eastern DRC. The Mai-Mai and ethnically-based militias in Ituri should also be brought into the process of disarmament and demobilisation, with the assistance of MONUC.

Ituri region

The escalation of the conflict in Ituri, which has been occupied by the Ugandan army, is extremely worrying. Since June 1999, an estimated 50,000 people have been killed and up to 500,000 displaced. The local leadership of the *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Mouvement de libération* (RCD-ML) has fragmented along ethnic lines dominated by the two main groups, the Hema and the Lendu. This has seen the emergence of another group called the *Union des Patriotes Congolais* (UPC), which took control of Bunia (the main city in Ituri) in August 2002. These splits have led to a series of mass killings, most recently in Bunia and Nyankunde, and targeted rapes.²⁷

Disarmament and demobilisation

An important part of the peace process is the disarmament of armed groups. This process is known as Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (DDRRR). However, there has been little progress. In May 2002, due to insecurity, MONUC was prevented from establishing DDRRR teams in parts of eastern DRC (Masisi, Walikale and Shabunda).²⁸ There are serious concerns that DDRRR will only be successful if the economic motivation for foreign armies and the various militias is addressed.

It is vital that the UN has the means to effectively monitor troop withdrawal and demobilisation, to ensure that security improves. A recent UN Security Council mission recommended that a UN force should be deployed along the DRC international borders, both to guarantee security of neighbours’ borders and to ensure foreign troop withdrawal. MONUC could be more effective if its capacity and positioning was changed. Therefore,

We recommend that MONUC’s mandate is urgently implemented to its full capacity, which includes monitoring troop withdrawal and the current power vacuum, carrying out demobilisation and disarmament of all combatants, and protecting civilians under imminent threat of violence. MONUC and other international donors must assist the DRC government in funding, training and deploying a civilian police force in eastern DRC.

There are also reports of an increase in the recruitment of child soldiers by the RCD, the Mai-Mai and the local defence forces. This is deeply worrying, as there had been some progress towards the demobilisation of child soldiers in the last two years.

We urge the DRC, Rwandan, and Ugandan governments to pressure their allies in eastern DRC to stop the recruitment of child soldiers and to comply with past agreements on full demobilisation.

²⁷ Information on Ituri obtained from discussions with human rights organisations and humanitarian agencies, in Goma and London, between August and October 2002.

²⁸ OCHA report (July 2002).

Further support should be given to local peace-building efforts that are inclusive in nature. Civil society can play a positive role (as in the case of DFID-supported peace and reconciliation projects). However, at the same time, civil society must recognise that its own use of ethnically exclusive language is not always conducive to promoting peace and reconciliation.²⁹

While a number of observers are happy to talk about the withdrawal of the Rwandan army, there is not the same concern about the impact that such a withdrawal may have. In Rwanda, there will be a need to step up measures to ensure that any withdrawal is fully supported with its own DDRRR programme. As there are ex-FAR, and even allegedly Interahamwe, elements in the Rwandan army, their reintegration into Rwandan society will present huge challenges for a society that has already suffered greatly, but which has also seen significant progress over the past eight years. This was certainly the view of members of survivors' and human rights organisations in Kigali.

“How can we ensure that the demobilisation of the ex-FAR (and even the Interahamwe) will not lead to increased harassment, theft and even killing in our communities in Rwanda?” (Leader of a widows' organisation, Kigali, August 2002)

Even with the withdrawal of all foreign troops, the conflict will leave behind a legacy of war crimes. Congolese civilians have suffered (and continue to suffer) persecution by armed forces, both foreign and national, which have enjoyed impunity. Women and children in particular have been victims. While recognising the weaknesses of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, an attempt must be made to break the cycle of impunity in the region.

We support the establishment of a UN Commission of Experts to investigate and determine responsibility for grave violations of human rights and humanitarian law in the DRC, including sexual violence. A mechanism should be created to bring persons responsible for human rights violations to justice.

4. CONTEXT OF EXPLOITATION

4.1 Historical perspectives

“Today, it is like the Congo Free State of old – an opportunity for foreigners to come in and take whatever they want.” (Congolese policy analyst, Goma, August 2002)

While the DRC is richly endowed with natural wealth, little of it has been used to develop the country. The majority of Congolese have suffered a long history of exploitation. Understanding the current context requires some knowledge of this history. In the times of King Leopold II of Belgium (1885-1908), a Congo Free State was established to facilitate a most brutal exploitation of the country's natural resources. It is claimed that up to ten million people died as a result, amounting to what has been referred to as a 'genocide' against the peoples of the Congo.³⁰ While the most savage aspects of human rights violations ended when the Belgian government became the colonial power in 1908, the country's resources were exploited largely for the benefit of a tiny elite.

²⁹ This was seen in conversations with a few individuals in Kinshasa and Bukavu. See also Africa Rights (2000), 'The Cycle of Conflict: Which Way out in the Kivus?'

³⁰ Hothschild, Adam (1998), King Leopold's Ghost.

When independence came in 1960, the hope for change under Patrice Lumumba was short-lived. The military leader Mobutu Sese Seko seized power and held onto it for some 35 years, until 1997.³¹ In these years, Mobutu and his ruling elite ran a kleptocratic state (renamed Zaire), exploiting natural resources purely to line their own pockets. Corruption was rampant, with a high level of smuggling of minerals and goods. Moreover, any attempts by the Mobutu regime to initiate public policy were doomed by inappropriate policy choices (such as pursuing import substitution at the expense of developing agricultural production) and a severe lack of investment in key economic sectors (most notably agriculture and mining). In effect, the ruling elite raped the state of its wealth. Mobutu himself amassed a fortune estimated at US\$5-US\$8 billion, much of it deposited in Swiss banks.³² The international community largely ignored Mobutu's kleptocracy, as the Cold War powers competed for influence over key countries in Africa and encouraged foreign companies to benefit from their resources.

The lack of state funding in the public sector meant that government employees received small salaries, or no salaries at all. Corruption filtered down to every level. Individual soldiers, border officials, judges, even teachers and doctors, were forced to exact private charges from the local population. During the 1980s and 1990s, a parallel economy developed as Zairians were forced to rely on their own resourcefulness to meet their basic needs.

While members of the ruling elite were the main beneficiaries of this economic anarchy, others (including foreign business people) sought opportunities to take advantage of a system of corruption and the lack of governance. In the exploitation of the most lucrative resources, informal networks overlapped with criminal syndicates. In the case of the diamond sector, for example, while the official production of the parastatal *La Société Minière de Bakwanga* (MIBA) declined from 18 million carats in 1960 to 6.5 million carats in the 1990s, informal production increased fourteen-fold, much of it used for the personal enrichment of President Mobutu and his cohorts.³³

All economic sectors were affected by this system of corruption. From the 1970s, for example, it is reported that some 60 per cent of Zaire's coffee crop was smuggled out of the country, bypassing the state marketing boards.³⁴ In some ways, the exploitation of today is a continuation of the old pattern of corruption and personal enrichment at the expense of the majority of the people. Unsurprisingly, precious metals and minerals remain the biggest attractions. In 1997, diamond exports were worth US\$715 million, although the lack of certification of the origin of diamonds means that the real figure may be much higher.³⁵ Recently, it was estimated that US\$400 million per annum is lost due to fraud in diamond sales.³⁶

4.2 Current perspectives

Since the outbreak of the conflict, those in control of the foreign armies on both sides have utilised existing formal and informal networks to control the local economy. Given the history outlined above, many of these networks are inevitably involved in fraudulent and illegal exploitation. In many cases, the Congolese government or rebel authorities, together with new and old Congolese business people, have benefited from or helped to facilitate new

³¹ With the actual or tacit support of the CIA and Belgian secret service.

³² Clark, John (1998), 'Zaire: the bankruptcy of the extractive state', in Villalon and Huxtable, 'The African state at a critical juncture'.

³³ Dietrich, Christian (2002), 'Hard Currency: the Criminalised Diamond Economy of the Democratic Republic of Congo and its Neighbours'.

³⁴ MacGaffey, Janet (1991), 'The real economy of Zaire: the contribution of smuggling and other unofficial activities to national wealth'.

³⁵ Democratic Republic of Congo: Diamond Mining and Conflict, unattributed.

³⁶ CENADEP/PAC/11.11.11 rapport final (August 2002), 'Atelier sur le pillage des ressources naturelles de la RDCongo'.

systems of exploitation. Moreover, foreign businesses have also played a key role in the large-scale mining of minerals, and in financing and transportation.

The new trend in the current stage of exploitation is the dominant role played by foreign armies, militias and even private armies. Evidence clearly shows that foreign armies, in league with various Congolese forces, have waged war in order to exploit natural resources in the country. Politicians, business people and military officers have used armed forces as a key tool in their pursuit of profits.

Commanders of the main foreign armies and their political and business associates have established a system of military commercialism in their zones of influence. Troop withdrawal, in itself, will not dismantle these systems. In western DRC, the system could be described as straightforward military commercialism by the Zimbabwean regime. It negotiated favourable joint ventures with the DRC government and with Congolese companies to exploit some of the richest resources. In Ugandan-controlled areas, it appeared to be more linked with the individual opportunism of Ugandan generals, who adopted a system of decentralised control to set up Congolese-led companies. In the case of the Rwandan army, it was a more centralised system, acting in concert with the RCD authorities, which either provided favourable terms for Rwandan-owned companies or directly exploited the resources themselves.

Warlords of the different militias (including the Mai-Mai) have also been involved, albeit to a lesser extent, sometimes colluding with foreign armies but more frequently establishing their own external contacts and means of exportation. It has been reported that other neighbouring countries have also benefited from the smuggling of natural resources.³⁷ In all cases, it appears that this exploitation is being conducted with the approval, either directly or indirectly, of State authorities at the highest level.

With each system, there has been a failure to invest in domestic industry and social capital and to ensure that there are safeguards for the environment. There is also considerable evidence of a continuation of criminality linked to exploitation, including fraud, smuggling, counterfeit money, extortion and tax evasion. There is clear evidence that criminal networks are being used to transport and sell 'unofficial' quantities of minerals and other forms of wealth. In turn, these networks have sold arms to the armies and militias which have controlled and exploited the resources.³⁸

Some individuals talk about the existence of a 'mafia economy'.³⁹ There is a myriad of private networks, based on links with the political and military elites, involving airline companies, trading agents, mining companies, and gun-runners. Recent reports named two individuals, Victor Bout and Sanjivan Ruprah, who have allegedly been involved in supplying arms for diamonds in Kisangani and Bunia.⁴⁰ The war economy has encouraged a proliferation of small arms in the region, allowing foreign and local armed forces to take or maintain control over mineral-rich areas.

While the foreign armies have been withdrawing their soldiers from the DRC, it is doubtful that this will result in a complete dismantling of the different systems of military commercialism. Individuals and companies have vested interests in continuing their involvement in resource exploitation. The links between military commercial systems, criminal networks and legitimate business is of great concern. They may no longer require

³⁷ See final report of UN Panel of Experts (S/2002/1146); Dietrich, Christian (2002), 'Hard Currency'.

³⁸ See final report of UN Panel of Experts (S/2002/1146).

³⁹ Interviews with individuals in Goma and Kinshasa, August 2002. The final report of the UN Panel of Experts (S/2002/1146) refers to organised or transnational criminal groups.

⁴⁰ IPIS (2002), 'Network War: An Introduction to Congo's Privatised Conflict Economy', final report of UN Panel of Experts (S/2002/1146).

the presence of troops to sustain them. It is highly probable that ethnically-based militias will continue to be used, especially in eastern DRC, by military and political elites to continue exploiting the country. This is most clearly seen in the case of Ituri, where senior officers of the Ugandan army are believed to have armed Hema militias who act as their proxies.⁴¹

The troop withdrawal may therefore see a new stage in the systems of exploitation unless there is a real commitment on the part of the foreign regimes to curtail their economic opportunism. This will require substantial pressure from the international community on all regimes that have engaged in military commercialism. There is a need for rigorous and continued monitoring of the withdrawal of troops, and also of those political, economic and security systems that are left in place. Recent stories about the possible Iraqi procurement of uranium from the Shinkolobwe mine in Katanga province provide an interesting angle, in that they demonstrate the importance of having an international body to closely monitor illegal activities in *all* major mines in the DRC.

The systems of military commercialism have also allowed for a range of foreign companies (many with close military and political links) to operate in the country through unfair and sometimes fraudulent agreements. Therefore, it is vital that there is a fundamental review of all major commercial contracts and agreements.

We urge the UK government to support proposals in the Lusaka Accords to ensure that all contracts, concessions and commercial agreements made since 1996 are reviewed and revised under a special monitoring body in close collaboration with the World Bank. Environmental impact assessments should be legally binding and conducted by independent evaluators.

The historical legacy of an anarchic, informal and sometimes criminal economy will take years, if not decades, to overcome. The systems that have been established by the foreign armies may exist for some time, despite the withdrawal of their troops. A closer examination of each of the main systems of exploitation is required.

4.3 The Zimbabwean connection

The DRC government is heavily indebted to its allies for their intervention. This is particularly the case with the Zimbabwean regime, whose army has negotiated favourable terms to exploit timber, cobalt, copper, and diamonds. The structure of the Zimbabwean Defence Force's holdings in the DRC is based around OSLEG (Operation Sovereign Legitimacy), which is effectively the commercial arm of the Zimbabwean army.⁴² OSLEG has entered into a number of joint ventures with Congolese companies in order to exploit resources in the DRC. One such joint venture is known as COSLEG Ltd. In its partnership agreement, it states that OSLEG has

*“the resources to protect and defend, support logistically, and assist generally in the development of commercial ventures to explore, research, exploit and market the mineral, timber, and other resources held by the state of the Democratic Republic of Congo”.*⁴³

⁴¹ Final report of UN Panel of Experts report (S/2002/1146); IPIS (2002) 'Network War: An Introduction to Congo's Privatised Conflict Economy'.

⁴² According to Global Witness (Feb 2002), its directors are listed as Lt Gen Vitalis Zvinvashe; Job Whabara, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Defence; Onesimo Moyo, the Director of Minerals Marketing Corporation of Zimbabwe; and Isiah Ruzengwe, the General Manager of the Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation. OSLEG is represented in the DRC by Zvinvashe's brother, Col Francis Zvinvashe, retired Maj-Gen Dauramanzi and Brigadier John Moyo.

⁴³ Global Witness (Feb 2002), p.10.

There have been other ventures. In the case of timber a Congolese logging company, the *Société congolaise d'exploitation du bois* (SOCEBO), was established to facilitate logging by the Zimbabwean military in Katanga. This company has close links with OSLEG. In terms of cobalt and copper, an agreement was made to appoint Billy Rautenbach, a Zimbabwean businessman and a supporter of Zanu-PF, as the head of Gecamines, which is the DRC's state-owned cobalt mining company. However, as with many business ventures, this proved to be much less profitable for the Zimbabweans than anticipated.⁴⁴

Possibly one of the most interesting deals has concerned diamond concessions. In Mbuji Mayi, the effects of the concession granted to a company called Sengamines have raised a number of concerns. Sengamines is partly owned by senior members of the Zimbabwean government.⁴⁵ In 1999, the company was handed control of two of the richest diamond concessions by MIBA. It is understood that the deal was brokered between the Zimbabwean government and the government of Laurent Kabila in order to secure Zimbabwean military support.⁴⁶ The contract clearly shows the significant involvement in the venture of OSLEG, which holds 49 per cent of the total shares of Sengamines. The person signing on behalf of OSLEG was General Vitalis Musungwa Zvinavashe, commander of the Zimbabwean forces in the DRC. OSLEG has now nominated a company called Oryx Natural Resources to hold its 49 per cent share and to act on its behalf.⁴⁷

While the Zimbabwean government claims that this is a legitimate deal, there are serious concerns firstly that the Sengamines operation is having a negative impact on the local population and, secondly, that the profits it is making have contributed to the Zimbabwean war effort in the DRC. It is unclear what kind of taxes Sengamines is paying for the exportation of diamonds, or whether all of the diamonds are being exported legally.⁴⁸ In Mbuji Mayi there is indignation over the activities of the company, which is reported to be shipping out sacks of soil, supposedly containing diamonds, from the local airport.⁴⁹

At the same time, the Government of the DRC has continued to be a willing partner in this exploitation, with little evidence that it has the ability to challenge the activities of the Zimbabwean regime and its associates. Furthermore, there are accusations that the DRC government is failing to deal with internal corruption, fraud and smuggling within some of the major mining industries. An investigation into MIBA indicates that there is a criminal cartel at the heart of the company.⁵⁰

The current government in Kinshasa claims that it is attempting to deal with corruption. The government appears committed to the Kimberley Process, which it is hoped will lead to the certification of diamonds and will prevent the transaction of illicit and conflict diamonds (including those from the eastern provinces). A new Mining Code has also been drawn up with the assistance of the World Bank. This will aim to grant exploration and mining rights to legitimate companies, which can show that they have sufficient financial resources. It should also lead to greater transparency and investment in the industry. While these are all

⁴⁴ See Global Witness (Feb 2002), Michael Nest (2002), 'Ambitions, Profits and Loss: Zimbabwean Economic Involvement in the DRC', in *African Affairs* (2001) 100, pp. 469-490. Final report of UN Panel of Experts (S/2002/1146).

⁴⁵ Sengamines was formed by the COSLEG umbrella company consisting of OSLEG, Comiex (Générale de commerce d'import/export au Congo) and Oryx Zimcon. The latter is a joint venture between the Zimbabwean Defence Forces (ZDF) and Oryx Natural Resources. The DRC government is the major stakeholder in Comiex. Amnesty International report (2002).

⁴⁶ Final report of UN Panel of Experts (S/2002/1146), Amnesty International (2002), 'Making a Killing: the diamond trade in government-controlled DRC'.

⁴⁷ The breakdown of shareholders is: Oryx 49%, Comiex 33.8%, MIBA 16%, and three individuals at 1.2%. Source: 'La Minière de Senga Senga Sengamines: Procès Verbal de l'Assemblée Générale Extraordinaire', Kinshasa, 04 Novembre, 2000. Obtained in Nairobi, in August 2002.

⁴⁸ Final report of UN Panel of Experts (S/2002/1146) refers to diamond smuggling and illegal exchange transactions.

⁴⁹ Although this was not seen by the author, at least four witnesses mentioned this particular aspect. It was also alleged that the local Congolese authorities are displeased with this, and have declared that they will not handle transportation of the sacks.

⁵⁰ Overseas Security Services Ltd (OSS), Operations Report, mid-November 2001 to mid-February 2002. The report claims that there had been a criminal cartel working within MIBA, siphoning off high-value carats, until OSS began its operations at the request of financial backers of MIBA. See also Dietrich, Christian (2002) 'Hard Currency', and UN Panel of Experts report (2002).

positive signs, the DRC government needs to be encouraged to implement the policies and to honour its commitments.

4.4 The Ugandan connection

It has been widely reported that certain members of the Ugandan army have been benefiting from the resources in the northwestern area of the DRC. Individuals such as Commander Major-General James Kazini and Salim Saleh are alleged to have exploited resources from the Congo, and to have made considerable personal profits.⁵¹ A number of companies, both Ugandan and Congolese, have been set up to facilitate this exploitation. Moreover, there are reports of ongoing fighting between different rebel factions around the locations of natural resources, such as the Bafwasende gold mine, where troops loyal to Pierre Bemba have made recent advances. Roger Lumbala's UPC (or RCD-National) is said to be fighting the RCD-ML over resource-rich areas around Watsa, Dugu and Mahagi, as well as targeting customs posts on the Congo-Uganda border, as these can provide a source of revenue to fund the war effort. The intensification of the ethnic conflict between the Hema and Lendu in Ituri can be linked to the interests of certain parties in gaining access to economic resources.⁵³

Reports have shown that Ugandan export figures of certain minerals, such as diamonds, which are found in the area under Ugandan influence, have exceeded the country's own domestic production figures (see table 1).⁵⁴ Some of these minerals are not even found domestically in Uganda. The Ugandan government has argued that this is the result of legitimate business activities which use Uganda as a transit country, and that the rebel forces have *de facto* legitimacy to produce and trade.

Year	Gold exports (tons)	Gold production (tons)	Coltan exports (tons)	Coltan production (tons)	Niobium exports (US\$)	Diamond exports (US\$)
1994	0.22	0.0016	-	0.435	-	-
1995	3.09	0.0015	-	1.824	-	-
1996	5.07	0.0030	-	-	-	-
1997	6.82	0.0064	2.57	-	\$13,000	\$198,302
1998	5.03	0.0082	18.57	-	\$580,000	\$1,440,000
1999	11.45	0.0047	69.50	-	\$782,000	\$1,813,500
2000	10.83	0.0044	-	-	-	\$1,263,385
2001						\$2,539,000

Sources: Coltan and gold figures from Ugandan Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development; niobium figures from WTO aggregated data; diamond figures from the Diamond High Council (all figures appeared in the UN Panel of Inquiry Report April 2001, except for 2001 diamond figures which appeared in Dietrich, Christian (2002)). It should be noted that there is no production of niobium or diamonds in Uganda, therefore these are re-exports of minerals that are extracted elsewhere.

The Ugandan government set up its own Commission of Inquiry after the publication of the accusations made in the first and second interim UN Panel reports. This commission, headed by Justice David Porter, has gathered evidence to show that General Kazini has played a major role in the transportation of Ugandan goods into the DRC without government authority. It was also claimed by the UN Panel and other reports that General Kazini had brokered deals for a company called Victoria Diamonds to carry out business in gold, diamonds and coffee.⁵⁵ Lebanese businessmen have facilitated diamond sales in Europe.

⁵¹ Final report of UN Panel of Experts report (S/2002/1146).

⁵² BBC World Service, February 2002.

⁵³ According to local human rights organisations: reports obtained in October 2002.

⁵⁴ The Ugandan government has disputed these figures, which were originally shown in the first report of the UN Panel of Experts.

⁵⁵ IPIS report (2002), 'Network War: An Introduction to Congo's Privatised Conflict Economy'; final report of UN Panel of Experts (S/2002/1146); The Monitor, Kampala, May 21 2002.

A further development in the area under Ugandan influence is oil exploration. This year, a company called Heritage Oil Corporation of Canada negotiated an agreement with the DRC government to operate in a concession area of 3.1 million hectares in Ituri and Butembo provinces. These areas are under a constantly changing authority. Today part of the area is controlled by the *Union des Patriotes Congolais* (UPC) while others are controlled by the *Rassemblement pour la démocratie-Kisangani-Mouvement pour la libération* (RCD-K-ML). Both groups are backed by the Ugandan regime. It is understood that the contract was signed with the Congolese government in Kinshasa following the recent peace accord at Sun City.⁵⁶

The company says that it will respect the areas of the national park, which is designated as a World Heritage site. However, exploration for oil in the region could raise the stakes between competing military forces. It was recently reported that the RCD and RPA had moved some of their troops into Ituri, as Ugandan troops departed. According to sources in Goma, there is real concern that this may lead to further conflict in an already volatile region.

4.5 The Rwandan connection

The Rwandan army, in alliance with the *Rassemblement Congolais pour le Développement* (RCD-Goma), has established economic control over much of its region of influence. This control, which includes the financial system, is built on the old systems of 'business' in the Kivus and Maniema province. However, a new breed of Congolese business person has emerged which has undoubtedly upset some business associates of former regimes.⁵⁷

In 1998, when the RCD took power, it took over all of the DRC's mining concessions and stocks. The former state mining company SOMICO, which had been granted the major concessions by Laurent Kabila's government, claims it is owed reparations of some US\$750 million by the RCD and RPA, consisting of stolen stocks, loss of earnings, and capital equipment.⁵⁸ While the overall figure can be disputed, the main concern is whether the mining industry has been used for social and economic development and not to benefit military and political elites.

Box 1: Brief history of mining companies in the Kivus

Formed in 1976 from a number of Belgian mining companies, a company called SOMINKI was given ownership of most of the large mining concessions in eastern DRC. Gold mining represented about 80 per cent of its activities, with the remainder being the mining of cassiterite and coltan. SOMINKI was responsible for schools and hospitals at the major mining locations. During the 1980s economic crisis, SOMINKI had to hand over many of its industrial mines to individual artisan practices. However, the company retained effective control of these sites.

Between 1995 and 1997, SOMINKI was effectively closed down, and Banro took over the concessions. However, its legitimacy was questioned by Kabila Sr, who gave the concessions to SOMICO instead. This was short-lived as the RCD took power in August 1998 and encouraged a system of liberalisation, while also requisitioning all stocks of coltan and cassiterite. At one stage, there were some 19 companies engaged in coltan mining, most of which were owned or managed by Rwandans. In November 2000, the RCD established a company called SOMIGL which had a monopoly on all exports. This lasted some six months until, in April 2001, a process of liberalisation was once again encouraged. Only a few of the original companies (or *comptoirs*) have remained. These include Rwanda Metals and Grands Lacs Metals.

⁵⁶ Interviews with two sources in Goma.

⁵⁷ As expressed in meetings with business people in Goma and Bukavu, August 2002.

⁵⁸ The Congo Mining Company, SOMICO, documents obtained in Nairobi, in August 2002.

In the context of mining activities, three strategies of exploitation have been employed in the region. Firstly, the more official mining sites have been managed by companies (called *comptoirs*), which tend to be mainly Rwandan-owned, although some are Congolese with close links to the RCD and/or the RPA. One of the latest developments is the establishment of Congo Holding Development Company, which has the purpose of '*Purchasing, Marketing, Securing Concessions and Mining for Gold, Columbo-tantalite, Cassiterite, Diamonds, Cobalt, Wolframite and other Metals, Minerals, Precious and Semi Precious Stones.*'⁵⁹ Most of the companies are owned by Rwandan businessmen who have received favourable conditions of entry into the mining areas from the RCD authorities. A reliable source with direct knowledge of the contracts system confirmed that some Rwandan companies have not been obliged to pay the fees charged for a company to operate, whereas Congolese companies have been put off by what are already extortionate fees.⁶⁰

Secondly, various sources reported that the Rwandan army itself took responsibility for some of the mining activities and used either Congolese labour, sometimes forced, or Hutu prisoners from gaols inside Rwanda (see box 2). Thirdly, there are unofficial artisan sites that have experienced sporadic attacks by the militias and the RCD and RPA. Some of these sites were controlled by the Interahamwe or Mai-Mai, such as around the gold-rich areas of Kamituga and Mwenga. There were also reports, especially in and around the Kahuzi-Biega National Park, and Kalehe, that the Interahamwe and Mai-Mai were selling the coltan they had mined to Congolese intermediaries, who in turn sold it to the RPA and/or to Rwandan-owned companies.

Box 2: Use of prison labour by the Rwandan army⁶²

It was widely reported in the Kivus and Maniema that, occasionally, the Rwandan army used Hutu prisoners from the gaols inside Rwanda to facilitate their mining activities in eastern DRC. It is alleged that in some cases Hutu prisoners were offered up to Rwf 1,000 for working in the Congolese mines. Eyewitness accounts tell of the use of prison labour in various locations in mining areas in Masisi (Mumba, Ngunga and Humule), Shabunda and Punia.⁶³ The following example is typical. In the territory of Bunyakiri (South Kivu), some villages were completely destroyed in 1999 and 2000 to enable coltan production, and Hutu prisoners have been brought over periodically. Two eyewitnesses told of some 150 Hutu prisoners (wearing military uniforms) being brought into the area on 8 June 2002 to work the land around place called Mubuku for gold and coltan deposits. It was at this location that the Hutu prisoners were reported to have harassed the local population, while the RPA and RCD did nothing to intervene.⁶⁴

Local sources reported that the Rwandan army has flown out minerals directly from the DRC to Rwanda (Kigali or Kanembe). Indeed, airports and aerodromes were taken over by the armed forces of the RPA and RCD and in some cases by militias, such as the Mai-Mai at Nzovu (see box 3). According to local business people, until recently flights of troops and equipment were arriving from Rwanda, while minerals and other loot departed on the return journey in the same plane.

⁵⁹ Congo Holding Development Company: Memorandum of Agreement. Obtained in Goma, August 2002.

⁶⁰ Similar allegations were made in confidential interviews in Goma and Bukavu, August 2002.

⁶¹ Interviews held in Goma and Bukavu, August 2002.

⁶² Confidential interviews held with business people, aid workers, teachers and clergy in Goma and Masisi, 17-22 August, and in Bukavu, 23-26 August, provided substantial oral testimony, and eye-witness accounts, that there was a policy of bringing in Hutu prisoners by the Rwandan army during the past couple of years. Interviewees confirmed that they had witnessed the arrival (and departure) of Hutu prisoners, and on a few occasions had spoken to such people working in the mines. Further confirmation was provided by at least five international observers during the same period, and by reports received from local human rights organisations and in the final UN Panel of Experts report (S/2002/1146).

⁶³ Interviews with local people in Bukavu and Goma, and by international sources, August 2002.

⁶⁴ Interviews with local sources, Bukavu, August 2002.

Box 3:	Aerodromes used by military for transport of resources⁶⁵
Mwenga Shabunda	Mwenga, Kabukungu, Kakongale/Lugushwa, Nyamibungu/Kitutu, Kazuza/Kitutu Nyabukungu, Chamombe/Rulungu, Kachungu, Lulingu, Nzovu/Kigulube (the latter is occupied by the Mai-Mai)
Maniema	Kama/Pangi, Kampere/Pangi, Namoya/Salamabila, Kasongo, Kikungwa/Kalima, Kalombe Nyama/Punia, Nyabasenge, Kasese, Lubutu
Walikale	Kinunda, Mubi
Fizi	Kilembwe, Minembwe

This method of transportation has avoided any payment of taxes or customs duties in the DRC. The potential amount of unpaid taxes is staggering, though it is impossible to calculate as it goes unrecorded. This may go some way to explaining how the Rwandan army operation in the DRC has been financed.⁶⁶ Within the Rwandan government, it is understood that its Congo desk has controlled much of the revenue coming from mineral exploitation and that this has been used to finance the activities of the RPA in eastern DRC.⁶⁷

As in the case of Uganda, there have been noticeable increases in production and export figures for certain minerals that are not found in large quantities in Rwanda. The argument for this is that it is official and legitimate business between Rwandan and Congolese companies, and that the RCD has the legitimacy to do business and trade with whom it chooses.⁶⁸ However, the figures (table 2) show that the production of gold, cassiterite, coltan and diamonds has accelerated rapidly since 1996. This leads to questions about the use of minerals for sustainable development. Even if the resource exploitation is regarded as legitimate, little of the revenue appears to be going back into the development of the people of the region. Moreover, these figures represent only a proportion of the overall export volumes of minerals. One estimate is that only one third of the total amount of coltan exported is recorded by the RCD authorities.⁶⁹

Year	Gold production (kg)	Cassiterite production (tons)	Coltan production (tons)	Diamond exports (US\$)
1995	1	247	54	-
1996	1	330	97	-
1997	10	327	224	\$720,425
1998	17	330	224	\$16,606
1999	10	309	122	\$439,347
2000	10	437	83	\$1,888,036
2001				\$1,245,000

Sources: Coltan, cassiterite and gold figures from Rwandan Official Statistics; diamond figures from the Diamond High Council (all figures appeared in the UN Panel of Inquiry Report April 2001, except for 2001 diamond figures, which appeared in Dietrich, Christian (2002)).

⁶⁵ Based on information supplied by local business people familiar to the locations, as reported in August 2002.

⁶⁶ The official Rwandan defence budget is US\$63m while the annual cost for maintaining its 25,000-odd troops in the DRC is estimated to be about \$56.1 million. Jackson, Stephen (forthcoming), *Fortunes of War*, ODI Political Economy of War Project, ODI, London.

⁶⁷ Interviews with (and reports obtained from) international observers, in August 2002. Confirmed in final report of UN Panel of Experts report (S/2002/1146).

⁶⁸ In response to the allegations about illegal resource exploitation, Maître Ruberwa of the RCD told the APPG in October 2002: "It is industrial in the west, but artisanal and legal in the east."

⁶⁹ Research document obtained from Bukavu, September 2002. Not attributable until published later this year.

4.6 The role of foreign companies

This report does not focus on the illegal activities of foreign companies in the DRC, but rather seeks to highlight the ways in which they are involved economically in the DRC and the responsibilities and obligations which they carry out as a result of this involvement.

The DRC's links with the global economy are based primarily on the export of natural resources. In many instances, multinational companies which have decided to operate in the country have forged relationships with those who lack legitimacy and accountability to the population and who systematically engage in human rights abuses. These may be governments or armed groups, all of whom have battled for control of resource-rich areas. It is often these business relationships that provide them with some form of legitimacy. In the absence of a transparent and effective international regulation system, many foreign commercial operations have been able to conduct business with a near total disregard for human rights, long-term development or ecological sustainability in the DRC.⁷⁰

Since the late 1990s, numerous foreign companies have signed contracts with the different civilian and military authorities. With a lack of strong local, national and international regulatory bodies in the DRC, certain foreign companies have paid little or no regard to the rights and concerns of local communities. Northern governments have a vital role to play in ensuring that they are not furthering conflict by allowing illegal or unethical exploitation of natural resources through companies which operate from their jurisdictions. They should put pressure on companies to ensure that those involved in their business operations on the ground do not exacerbate or cause conflict. A commitment should be made that their operations will be managed in full respect of international human rights and humanitarian standards.

The UN Panel of Experts has provided detailed information of the involvement of a range of African, European and North American businesses in illegal or illicit exploitation. These include companies working in mining, transportation and logistics, and companies providing financial capital. As a result of the first UN report, a number of American and European NGOs carried out further research into the activities of these companies and the chains of exploitation. Belgian NGOs launched their own campaign to stop coltan exploitation in the eastern DRC, called 'No Blood on My Mobile'. The International Peace and Information Service in Brussels has also looked into the activities of Belgian, Dutch and other European companies involved in the coltan trade in eastern DRC.⁷¹

There have been some reactions to the issue of illegal exploitation by foreign businesses, particularly those involved with coltan. Partly due to lobbying by Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney in 2001, the US government agreed to ban the importation of all coltan from the DRC. In Europe, also in 2001, the airlines Sabena and Swiss Air announced a ban on their aircraft being used to ship Colombo tantalite (or coltan).

This report argues that foreign investment, and the involvement of foreign companies, is essential for the development of the economy of the DRC and the region. A number of companies have been reluctant to invest in the country due to the political instability and the systems of corruption and criminal networks. Based in the UK, Fauna & Flora International has been working with the mobile phone industry, through the UN Global e-Sustainability Initiative, to address issues of corporate responsibility and the management of the coltan supply chain. This 'investment in peace' initiative is investigating the possibility of regulated coltan mining supporting livelihoods rather than contributing to exploitation.⁷²

⁷⁰ See UN Panel of Experts report (2002).

⁷¹ IPIS (Jan 2002), Supporting the War Economy in the DRC: Euro Companies, and IPIS (July 2002, draft), Coltan and Congo: the implication of the private sector.

⁷² Fauna & Flora International (Jan 2002), 'Coltan Mining in the Democratic Republic of Congo: the implications and opportunities for the telecommunications industry'.

In the diamond sector too there are moves to improve the regulatory system, with negotiations taking place with the DRC government to become party to the Kimberley Process. Some of the major diamond mining companies are playing an active role in this process, which is welcomed. Discussions are also taking place on the definition of 'conflict timber', with significant progress being made at the recent World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg. However, as commendable as all these efforts are, they are not enough. An international framework is essential to address the issue of war economies. Without it, those involved in illicit and unscrupulous business activities in the DRC and elsewhere will continue to exploit resources, causing further conflict, which will continue to prevent the economic and political development of the DRC and the Great Lakes Region.

The involvement of UK business in the DRC appears to be limited to a handful of companies. A recent UN Panel of Experts report on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo named twelve business enterprises, which were considered to be in violation of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. These were Afrimex, A Knight International Ltd, A & M Minerals and Metals Ltd, Alex Stewart (Assayers) Ltd, Amalgamated Metal Corporation Plc, Anglo American Plc, Arctic Investment, Barclays Bank, DAS Air, De Beers, Euromet, and Mineral Afrika Limited

It should be stressed that it was not within the confines of our research to investigate into the activities of the companies mentioned in the UN Panel of Experts report. Neither is it alleged in this report that any of these companies are involved in illegal practices. However, it is recognised that further investigation is required to verify the level of their involvement in business activities in the DRC. If they are involved, then the UK government should review their corporate practices and responsibilities.

Finally, there has been some investigation into financial flows and transportation networks, which have used the UK as a conduit or even as a base. According to one recent report, the UK is one of the main transport bases for the movement of minerals into Europe, together with Holland and Belgium.⁷³ Furthermore, there is evidence that financial transactions are also being channelled through the UK.⁷⁴

In recent years, there has been a plethora of initiatives in response to unethical business activities in conflict areas which are relevant to the situation in the DRC. The majority of these initiatives are voluntary and have no effective enforcement or monitoring mechanisms. Yet some have great potential, such as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Companies and the work of the UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, which recently drafted the Fundamental Human Rights Principles for Business Enterprises. However, they need political will to be made effective. Governments and multinational companies need to take active steps to ensure full respect for international human rights and humanitarian standards by those involved in business operations in Africa. This can only be done through a clear international framework.

We urge the UK government to carry out a review of all of the UK companies and individuals named in the report of the UN Panel of Experts. We recommend that the UK government contacts these companies to remind them of their corporate responsibilities in the DRC and the need to implement the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

⁷³ IPIS report (July 2002), Coltan and Congo: the implication of the private sector.

⁷⁴ Final report of UN Panel of Experts (S/2002/1146).

5. IMPACT OF THE EXPLOITATION

5.1 General overview

The population of the DRC has suffered decades of exploitation and neglect by the state and foreign actors, and as a consequence has developed a range of alternative livelihood strategies. Since the outbreak of the second war in 1998, however, the opportunities for people to make a living have been severely restricted. In some parts of the country, especially in the eastern provinces, different livelihood strategies have all but disappeared. Having experienced the loss of jobs, local businesses, petty trading, livestock and crops, people have resorted to their last remaining asset, their labour. A desperate situation has developed whereby young and old men, especially in areas of ongoing insecurity, are relying increasingly on what work they can get in the mines or as porters and soldiers for the armies and militias. Some women and girls are forced into prostitution in order to earn a little cash.⁷⁵

While the current system of exploitation is allowed to continue, people's livelihood strategies will remain bleak. The violence and insecurity that is associated with these systems will continue to result in displacements and food shortages, which in turn will lead to calls for more humanitarian aid. While relief aid is needed, it is also vital that development opportunities are sought and supported. People have the right to such opportunities wherever they may live. International and national NGOs should be encouraged to work with rural and urban communities to identify ways in which alternative livelihoods can be made viable, such as micro-credit, agricultural development, small-scale marketing, and manufacturing. Despite the devastation caused by the conflict and the exploitation, development initiatives have continued in even the most affected regions.

It is recognised that the exploitation of mineral resources has provided employment and money for some. Despite the harsh working conditions and low rewards, miners who have been interviewed have said there is some benefit. However, overall, when taking into account the impact on services, families and other livelihood opportunities, the net benefit has been negative. The following are examples of the disastrous effect the current systems of exploitation have had on the local population. In most cases, the options for people to build their lives have been very limited.

5.2 The impact of diamond mining (Mbuji Mayi)

Despite sitting on one of the richest deposits of diamonds in the world, the city of Mbuji Mayi remains very poor. For the majority of the estimated two million people living in and around the city, life is simply a matter of survival. It is astonishing to see thousands of people searching for water, every morning and evening. There is a lack of medicines and medical equipment as witnessed in two of the main hospitals, Saint Jean Baptiste and Tud 1 Kolela. Likewise, the education sector has suffered from a lack of investment: only an estimated 13 per cent of girls attend school.

The main economic activity is focused around the diamond concessions, which have been managed by the Congolese state company, MIBA. Around the concession area (the polygon) are numerous 'unofficial' or 'artisan' mining sites. Here men and boys, some as young as 14 or 15, search for diamonds. Finding an expensive diamond is said to be a very rare occurrence but this does not deter people from taking their chances. On the roadsides near the

⁷⁵ In Mwenga, South Kivu, it was indicated that a Rwandan or RCD soldier would only have to pay about 50 (US) cents for a night with a woman.

mining sites are a number of negotiators who buy diamonds from the artisans and sell them to a diamond business in the city. A visit to one site, called Mbala, confirmed that a significant number of the miners were young boys working in teams of up to ten.⁷⁷

The MIBA diamond concessions

MIBA, the Congolese state mining company, has provided employment for an estimated 6,000 workers. It has built a hospital, schools and other facilities for its employees and their families. However, in recent years, MIBA has cut back its funding of education and health services. The company had also financed several development projects in the region, including a major water-drilling project, which was targeting five rural villages at a total cost of US\$640,000. Funding for the project was suddenly cut off in 1999. MIBA explained to a local NGO that it was ordered to divert the funds to the war effort.⁷⁸

There are reports of human rights violations carried out in the MIBA concessions. Several human rights organisations have reported that miners and their families have been harassed, injured and even killed in areas in and around the MIBA polygon. MIBA security guards (known as *Blondo*) have carried out most of these violations, although it is alleged that the Congolese army and police force have also been involved on occasions.⁷⁹ Interviews with lawyers, journalists and development workers confirmed the allegations made in a recent Amnesty International report which documents a whole series of human rights violations in the MIBA concessions, including extrajudicial killings which according to witnesses has led to dozens of deaths each year.⁸⁰

On several occasions, development workers and religious leaders expressed a deep concern about the impact of children going into mining areas to search for diamonds. This has brought about a further decline in school attendance, the harassment and killing of children who may have entered the 'official' mining concessions, and prostitution of young women around the mines. In one artisan mine, called Kabwa, it is reported that children as young as 12 years old are now working.⁸¹

The Sengamines diamond concessions

The human impact of the diamond concessions managed by the partly Zimbabwean-owned company Sengamines has been equally devastating. In its exploitation of two of the most lucrative diamond concessions, local sources reported that armed soldiers have displaced people from their homes. It was alleged that the villages such as Senga Senga and Chibwe, were emptied by Zimbabwean troops who forcibly evicted the people living there, many of whom were artisan miners and their families. In March 2002, another source said that at one of these sites (Chibwe), the Zimbabwean soldiers were responsible for the deaths of two young men who were diamond mining.⁸² The forced evictions have continued 2002 (see box 4).

⁷⁷ The site, some 30 minutes from the centre of Mbuji Mayi, takes its name from the current governor.

⁷⁸ Conversation with an official of one of the local NGOs involved in the projects, 12 August 2002.

⁷⁹ Discussed with two local human rights organisations, and confirmed in reports by Amnesty International (2002), 'Making a Killing', and the Centre d'Etude et de Formation Populaires (Oct 2001), 'Rapport sur des Violations des Droits de l'Homme Liées à l'Exploitation du Diamant du Kasai Oriental'. Attempts were made to interview officials from MIBA during the visit, 11-13 August 2002, but they failed to turn up to a pre-arranged meeting.

⁸⁰ Interviews with village elder and human rights organisations. See also Amnesty International (2002), 'Making a Killing – the diamond trade in government-controlled DRC'.

⁸¹ As reported by a local journalist, on 12 August 2002.

⁸² As reported by local inhabitants, at Miabi, on 13 August 2002.

Box 4: Mbuji Mayi – Zimbabwean army helps to evict Congolese farmers

In the last year, there has been an expansion of the diamond concessions into new areas around Mbuji Mayi. In some cases, such as in Bene Kalonji, community leaders have resisted the efforts. However, in other areas, there are reports that people have been forcibly evicted from their lands. In an interview with several displaced farmers near the village of Miabi, in the territory of Boya, it was claimed that the armed forces of Zimbabwe and the DRC had been involved.

One farmer, with nine children of school age, had owned farmland in an area he called Puilayi since 1959, growing pineapples, avocados and manioc. About seven years ago, he found diamonds on his land and made an agreement with some artisan miners to exploit them. However, one morning in January 2002, some 14 or 15 Zimbabwean and Congolese soldiers arrived to evict, by force, his family, together with some 27 other farming households. Although no one was killed, they have been removed from their land with no compensation and no apparent recourse to justice (the farmers have written letters of protest to the authorities, but to no avail). Other displaced farmers claim that the soldiers were accompanied by a truck which transported sacks of gravel (possibly containing diamonds) from the land. The farmer had some 85 sacks on his land at the time. With his children no longer attending school, he is now living in Bena Mukendi, near to Miabi, relying upon the good will of his hosts.

5.3 The impact of timber exploitation, cobalt and copper mining (Katanga)

The scope of the research did not allow for an in-depth look into these issues, but the impact on the environment and the livelihoods of people of recent logging concessions to companies with links to the Zimbabwean military is a further concern.⁸³ Although it is uncertain whether these logging concessions will be taken up, the issue remains that a foreign army has an economic agenda for its involvement in the DRC conflict, and that this may be fuelling the conflict. The role of the Zimbabwean regime in the company Gecamines, which is responsible for cobalt and copper mining, has already been mentioned.

The RCD and RPA have had a presence in northern Katanga, although it has recently been reported that the RPA has pulled out some of its troops from this region. At a mining site called Manono, it was reported by two separate sources that the mines were under the direct control of the Rwandan army, who were charging miners a fee of US\$4 per day for access to the sites. It was also reported that whole families, including children, were working in the mines in intolerable conditions.⁸⁴

5.4 The impact of timber, gold and oil exploitation (Ituri/Bunia)

A serious escalation in a longstanding conflict between the Hema and Lendu ethnic groups has led to the temporary withdrawal of several of the international NGOs based in Bunia. Other ethnic groups have also become involved as local leaderships attempt to control or maintain economic and political power in a mineral-rich area. The Ugandan army has failed to protect civilians in this conflict, and has even been complicit in the violence, lending its support to one group or another. The financial interests of certain individual officers of the Ugandan army should not be underestimated, as they have used certain groups to facilitate their exploitation of resources.

According to sources, areas of mineral exploitation, such as the mining zone around Lumbala (including Mongbwalu Mabanga), appear to be inaccessible to humanitarian agencies. In the past few years, it has been suggested that population displacements in Ituri have been the result of armed factions clearing the territory for gold exploitation.

⁸³ Global Witness (February 2002), 'Branching Out: Zimbabwe's Resource Colonialism in Democratic Republic of Congo'.

⁸⁴ It was also reported by one of the sources that the plane of Viktor Bout, one of the most notorious arms dealers in the region, was seen on at least one occasion at the airfield for Manono.

Box 5: NGOs call for immediate action on the violence in Ituri

In October 2002, two of the main international human rights organisations – Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch – issued statements calling on the UN to act upon the serious escalation in the conflict between the Hema and the Lendu, which is said to be reaching genocidal proportions. Amnesty International has called for the full implementation of a MONUC force and its mandate, as well as support for a properly resourced civilian police force to be employed.⁸⁵

5.5 The impact of coltan mining and exploitation of other resources (Kivus and Maniema)

The suffering of the population in the Kivus and Maniema has partly resulted from the conflict over natural resources. With the rule of law subjugated, the different warring factions have completely destroyed the socio-economic system in the region. It has become a matter of survival for the majority. Prices of even the basic items have risen considerably over the last four years. Local people, especially women, described their own plight as one of “misery”. The impact of the exploitation appears to have become more brutal.

It is worth highlighting the ‘coltan boom’ as a phenomenon that has received widespread attention.⁸⁶ The main areas of exploitation are in the three territories of Masisi, Walikale and Kalehe.⁸⁷ In 2000, the world price of tantalum rocketed and coltan mining in the Kivus took on the appearance of a ‘gold rush’. Thousands of people left their homes and fields to go to the coltan sites in the desperate hope of making a fortune. At the height of the boom, 1kg of good-quality coltan would sell for US\$200, or more according to some estimates.⁸⁸ In terms of alternative livelihoods, it did offer some people the opportunity to get out of the ‘poverty trap’. However, interviews with people at Matanda, and in Goma, confirmed reports that only a minority benefited, as the boom was short-lived.⁸⁹

In a matter of months, the price plummeted to a maximum of US\$20 or US\$10 per kilo as the world market demand for tantalum fell rapidly. Some observers have argued that the coltan story is an old story. However, coltan mining has left many people even more destitute than before as some abandoned, sold or lost their lands and livelihoods. Furthermore, while some of the major commercial operators have pulled out, coltan mining has very much continued. It remains very important in the context of the conflict in the Kivus, attracting armies and militia groups to actively control mining sites. This is unsurprising, given that the coltan reserves are likely to be strategically important in the future.⁹⁰

It is not only coltan that has been exploited, but also other minerals such as cassiterite and diamonds, as well as livestock, crops, money, school and hospital equipment and labour. The example of Masisi in South Kivu demonstrates what happened across the whole region, *before* the withdrawal of the Rwandan army.

⁸⁵ Amnesty International points out that the current mandate of MONUC states that “acting under chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council also decided that MONUC may take the necessary action, in areas of deployment of its infantry battalions and as it deems it within its capabilities, to protect United Nations and co-located JMC [Joint Military Committee] personnel, facilities, installations and equipment, ensure the security and freedom of movement of its personnel, and protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence”. Amnesty International, press release, 17 October 2002.

⁸⁶ Coltan is the local name for tantalum.

⁸⁷ Reference: Jackson, Stephen (forthcoming), *Fortunes of War*, ODI Political Economy of War Project, ODI, London.

⁸⁸ The figures given varied greatly during the visit in August 2002, although most people claim that the maximum amount was above US\$100 per kilo.

⁸⁹ Société Civile Goma (April 2001), ‘Coltan: comptoirs, sites et implications de l’APR dans les territoires de Masisi, Walikale et Goma’; Pole Institute (2001), ‘The Coltan Phenomenon: How a rare mineral has changed the life of the population of war-torn North Kivu province in the East of the Democratic Republic of Congo’; IPIS (Jan 2002), ‘Supporting the War Economy in the DRC: European Companies and the Coltan Trade’.

⁹⁰ Fauna & Flora International (Jan 2002), ‘Coltan Mining in the Democratic Republic of Congo: the implications and opportunities for the telecommunications industry’; Roskill (2002), ‘The Economics of Tantalum’.

Box 6: Masisi: a population terrorised by armed factions

Exploitation in the past has been described as an anarchic system of mining, especially of cassiterite and coltan, coupled with small-scale smuggling and bribery. The difference today is that it appears to be “exploitation by force” of not only mineral resources but also livestock, crops and labour. Local people, all of whom wished to remain anonymous, reported that the main mining sites have been controlled by companies associated with the RPA and their RCD allies, or by the RPA itself. These include mines such as Mumba, Rugeshe and Koweit, which are located near to Rubaya in the Matanda area.⁹¹

The working conditions in the mines are said to be intolerable. Extraction is carried out in the cheapest way possible, and there is no investment in industrial mining. With many inexperienced workers, deaths occur quite regularly. One highlighted case was at Bibatama, in January 2002, where more than 30 people were buried alive.⁹²

In some of the surrounding villages, it was alleged that the RPA/RCD had based itself in mining areas, such as Mumba, Humule, Bibatama and Ngunga. In these locations, soldiers have been accused of theft and of demanding a range of taxes and labour from the local villagers. In some places, there has been the use of forced labour. Villagers reported that they have received little, if anything, in the form of payment.

According to local sources, RPA commanders entered some villages to demand specific quantities of coltan or other minerals. It is alleged that this happened in the villages of Kahurizi, at the start of 2002, and in Kashovu, in early August, just before the withdrawal of troops. In Kashovu, people reported that soldiers (both RPA and RCD) demanded coltan and money from specific households. However, local people claimed that at the time of the occupation of these villages, the Interahamwe were more than 50km away. There have however been reports of attacks by the Mai-Mai and Interahamwe on other villages in the area over the last two years.

The impact of the continuing conflict on young people is one of the main worries of community leaders. In just one year, from September 2001, the number of students attending the Catholic schools in the area of Matanda declined from 9,871 to 8,760 (a fall of over 11 per cent). Increasing poverty has meant that families have not been able to afford to send their children to school, while working in the mines can be seen as an attraction to others.

It is not only the young who have been affected – men of all ages have left their land to seek riches in mining. This has had a disastrous affect on the ability of populations to feed themselves in Masisi. While it is recognised that mining has brought some benefits for the local population (such as building homes and purchasing goods), for the majority the working conditions, payment and security of employment in the mining areas are very poor.

The negative impact on the population has been seen across a range of areas:

(a) Food insecurity

In North and South Kivu, it is widely reported that food insecurity has increased as farmers and sometimes their families have left their lands and crops to work in the coltan mines. Such accounts were provided on visits to Masisi. However, food insecurity has also been exacerbated by population displacements caused by the ongoing conflict, as well as by poor harvests. During the four years of the conflict, some farmers have been forced to eat or sell their livestock, or have had them stolen. Also, there have been reports of armies and militias raiding villages at times of harvest in order to feed their troops, or at least demanding a percentage of the crop.

⁹¹ Based on interviews with local inhabitants of Masisi, 19 and 21 August 2002, and confirmed in human rights reports received in Goma.

⁹² BBC World Service report, 15 January 2002.

(b) Looting and theft

The population of the Kivus has experienced theft at the hands of all the armed factions. People talked about night raids by armed men. Besides minerals and food crops, people have reported that livestock, market produce, household items, money, equipment from schools and hospitals, and even people themselves have become “resources for exploitation”. This systematic pillaging has had devastating effects on rural livelihoods and rural development projects (see boxes 6 and 7). Moreover, at the outset of the war, hospitals, schools, factories and banks became primary targets for looting, especially in the areas in and around Uvira in the southern part of the Kivus. This looting has continued, with the educational and health facilities provided by the former mining company, SOMINKI, among the targets.

Box 7: Loss of livestock in South Kivu

One local development agency working in South Kivu, in the zones of Walungu, Kabira and Bunyakira (which have an estimated population of 180,000) reported that since 1999, their co-operatives had lost, due to theft or killing, the following: 6,555 cows, 17,984 goats, 6,213 sheep, 13,220 rabbits, 22,048 chickens. This only accounts for the livestock, and not for the crops, which have been stolen or destroyed by various militia groups, especially the Interahamwe, as well as by the RPA and RCD.

(c) Local taxation

The local population in the Kivus and Maniema have had to endure a variety of taxes imposed on them by the RCD authorities and the RPA. While there is no evidence that any of the revenue made from the official exportation of minerals is going back into the local economy, the people themselves are faced with an irregular system of taxation that differs vastly according to location. Taxes are imposed at roadblocks, on people and on livestock, and there is a ‘security tax’, which is sometimes imposed by either the RCD or the RPA.⁹⁴

(d) Employment and forced labour

The example of Masisi demonstrates that some local people have found employment in the mines but the rewards are limited and it is not without risks.. It is said that miners receive little pay for the coltan they produce, and that prices have been fixed at the sites by the *négociants* who act as intermediaries to the trading companies. At some mining sites where there is direct military control, the population has been forced to work in the mines. It is even reported that child labour has been used.⁹⁵

(e) Population displacement

It was also reported that the activities of RPA and RCD soldiers have led to the displacement of villages as the armies have moved into areas in order to ‘secure’ a mining site. Numerous cases were mentioned by local sources in North and South Kivu. There are also reports from Masisi, Walikale and Maniema that the Mai-Mai and the Interahamwe have forcibly moved people out of rural areas where they want to be involved in mining and exploiting other resources. For example, it was reported that the Mai-Mai took control of the gold and coltan area of Kampene (Maniema) in May 2002. As they have taken control of villages near to mining sites, the population has fled, which in turn has sometimes attracted the RPA and RCD to try to take the villages themselves. Displacement has led to population movement into other villages, towns and forests, which has increased malnutrition and food insecurity and exerted pressure on depleted health and education services.

⁹⁴ Interviews with civil society representatives in Goma and Bukavu, August 2002. Confirmed in reports by the UN Panel of Experts (2002).

⁹⁵ Interviews with individuals in Bukavu, August 2002.

Box 8: Mwenga: different ways of dispersing the population

According to eyewitnesses, the Rwandan army has on a few occasions engaged in ‘false battles’ with the Interahamwe in various regions, including Masisi, Walikale, Fizi and Mwenga. Local people told of two cases which occurred in the area of Mwenga in August 2002. On 15 August 2002, at Kyanzovu, where there is gold and cassiterite, it was alleged that such a ‘battle’ took place when the RPA made out that it was entering the area to fight an Interahamwe group – which in reality was some of its own soldiers. This led to the evacuation of the village by its Congolese inhabitants. Another witness, from the village of Iribo (Irangi), said that there was a different kind of action by the RPA on 8 August 2002. Alerted to the presence of an Interahamwe militia near a gold site in the forest, the RPA arrived in force – not to attack the militia, but to use them to exploit the resources there. The local inhabitants, numbering some 200-300, were displaced to the forest, to Mwenga town or to Ilangi, while the RPA cordoned off the area. Barricades were set up on the roads to prevent the inhabitants from returning.

(f) Destruction of health and education facilities

The impact on the already poor education and health systems has been disastrous. The stories from Masisi (box 6) and Punia (box 9) are just a couple of examples. In most cases, it is the grinding poverty that has forced young people to leave school. However, it has also been reported that schools and clinics have been looted by the militias, as well as by the RPA and RCD. Moreover, those companies that took over from the state mining company SOMINKI had no obligation to provide any kind of social service for the local communities. With no state provision for education and health facilities during the Mobutu years, SOMINKI at least provided some public services for the population of the Kivus. However, since its demise after 1995, the new companies have not had to invest in the local population. Sources also reported that the facilities provided by SOMINKI have been left to deteriorate or have been looted.

(g) Human rights violations

One of the most striking aspects of the discussions with people in the Kivus was the level of violence associated with resource exploitation. The civilian population has been the focus of this violence, and is often caught in the middle, sometimes accused of collusion with one side or the other. The aggressors act with a high degree of impunity. There are some exceptional cases amongst the numerous stories of violence associated with the exploitation of resources in eastern DRC. Shabunda, in North Kivu, has been called “the forgotten Kosovo”⁹⁶ where stories of rape, by the Mai-Mai in particular, have been reported.⁹⁷ The intensity of the violence here could be due to the reported presence of rich deposits of gold and coltan in the surrounding areas. Sadly, it is not only Shabunda that appears to have been forgotten. Other mineral-rich areas appear to be suffering just as badly, such as the town of Punia and its surrounding areas (see box 9).

Box 9: Punia and Lubutu: forgotten areas?⁹⁸

Punia and Lubutu lie in the north of Maniema province, in a mineral-rich area that contains coltan, cassiterite and diamonds. For the past four years, there has been a significant presence of RCD and RPA troops as well as some Mai-Mai groups. Security concerns have severely limited access to international aid agencies and MONUC. However, local sources provided a picture of what has occurred in the area. One individual said: “We live in a zone of exploitation...[not] of security”.

⁹⁶ From the ODI’s Humanitarian Practice Network Report, 3 April 2002.

⁹⁷ See reports by Héritiers de la Justice (Sept 2001), ‘Exploitation du Coltan et Ses Implications Dans la Continuation de la Guerre et les Souffrances Humaines qui en Découlent: Cas du Territoire de Shabunda’, and by Human Rights Watch (2002), ‘The War Within the War: Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls in Eastern Congo’.

⁹⁸ Four separate meetings were held between 24 and 26 August 2002, with a religious leader, a *commerçant*, and a businesswoman and a development worker, all of whom were residents of or had businesses in Punia.

The RPA and the RCD established battalions and platoons at various locations in the town of Punia and its surrounding areas, including Lubutu and Kasese. The army appeared to have secured control of most of the mining sites, such as Solia, Cambila, Kasese, Chamaka, and Balipi. Some of the mines were managed by Rwandan comptoirs employing local labour while others were managed directly by the RPA/RCD. It was alleged that the RCD authorities fixed a rigid system of prices in favour of the companies, and controlled the means of verifying the quality and quantity of minerals. Minerals were flown out of Punia to Rwanda on a regular basis.

As with other areas, it was alleged that Hutu prisoners have been used to work in the mines, with groups of them arriving in March 2001 and in early August 2002. It was also reported that there have been no Interahamwe attacks in Punia over the last two years (although the Mai-Mai have attacked villages). Local people believed that the Rwandan army was located in the area because of mineral resources and not because of military threats.

One woman who comes from Punia talked about several cases of rape and of women being used as sex slaves. The education and health systems have also suffered. In the past, the former mining company, SOMINKI, provided some support to the hospital and health centre at Punia. While the structures remain, there is a severe lack of medicines and staff (the two doctors have both left). Fortunately, one international agency, Merlin, has been able to provide some medical relief support to the hospital.

(h) Sexual violence

The most disturbing aspect of the violence is how it has affected the lives of women and girls. During confidential interviews in North and South Kivu, women and men related horrific stories of sex slavery, gang rape, genital mutilation and murder of women and girls living in or near to mining zones. It is evident that all sides in the conflict have been responsible for these gross human rights violations, and it is clear also that it is an impact of the military movements in or towards mineral-rich areas. In some instances, it appears that sexual violence is systematically used as a weapon of war. The despair and misery is incalculable. Recently, Human Rights Watch published a damning report on sexual violence in the Kivus.⁹⁹

The impact of HIV/AIDS on the population of eastern DRC is one of the most disturbing features of the conflict. While the lack of health education, breakdown in family and community structures, non-availability of contraception, dislocation of communities, and general economic desperation are all factors contributing to the spread of the disease, the role of the armed factions leads to greater risks of infection. A significant number of soldiers in the different armed factions are believed to be HIV+. Even if there is a large-scale withdrawal of troops from the region, the challenge of HIV/AIDS will be immense. As one person from Punia commented,

“If there is a peace, the war against AIDS will then take over.”

(i) Environmental impact

DRC contains by far the largest extent of relatively undisturbed forest on the African continent. Its rich diversity of vegetation supports a greater plant and animal diversity than any other central African country and includes several large mammals that exist only in the DRC. This exceptional plant and animal diversity has been recognised by the international community through the establishment of five natural World Heritage Sites, more than in any other African country. However, these sites have been devastated during the years of conflict.

Until the mid-1990s, the national parks of Virunga and Kahuzi-Biega were relatively well protected, although there was still some deforestation and hunting of wildlife and theft of rare species of plants. However, the outbreak of the second war in 1998 accentuated the pressures

⁹⁹ Human Rights Watch (2002) ‘The War Within the War’.

on the park authorities. Within two years, park officials in Kahuzi-Biega claimed to have control of only 5-10 per cent of the park area.¹⁰⁰ The discovery of coltan in the park resulted in encroachment by over 3,000 Congolese families, many regarding the wildlife as bushmeat. With no alternative livelihood strategies, the surrounding populations have been forced into the parks.

Moreover, the presence of Interahamwe militias in particular has led to the destruction of wildlife and the forests, as they have also sought out mineral deposits in the park areas, especially coltan. This has led to increased military activity in the zones as the RPA and RCD have entered to track down both the Interahamwe and the coltan. The impact on protected species has been catastrophic. It is estimated that all of the 3,700 elephants and most of the 8,000 eastern lowland gorillas in the Kahuzi-Biega National Park have been slaughtered. The Okapi Wildlife Reserve, northeast of Kisangani, is also said to have suffered a similar impact.

Box 10:	Impact on the environment (in the National Park Authorities)
Direct impacts:	Poaching wildlife Deforestation Resettlement of IDPs/refugees on land Destruction of natural resource base for local population
Indirect impacts:	Breakdown of economy Health deterioration Commercial exploitation Military/militias search for minerals (especially coltan) Declining tourism, loss of revenue, lack of protection Anarchic exploitation of resources

6. IMPACT ON UK POLICIES

The exploitation of resources in the DRC has had a devastating on the country's population and environment, and this has to be fully considered in the policy-making of donor governments. The UK government is a major player in the Great Lakes Region. There is a real opportunity for the UK government to consider the economic dimension of the conflict with the publication of the report of the UN Panel of Experts.

We urge the UK government to make a statement in the House of Commons on how it plans to act upon the findings of the report of the UN Panel of Experts on Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The UK government should use its powers to ensure that the main findings are acted upon in the UN Security Council and the Council of Ministers of the European Union, and ensure that a set of agreements on reconstruction and sustainable development are drawn up to address the economic dimension of the regional peace process.

6.1 UK policy on Zimbabwe

It is unlikely that the UK Government will be able to exert any significant influence on the involvement of the Zimbabwean government in the DRC. However, it is recommended that the UK government steps up its pressure within the European Community, the United Nations

¹⁰⁰ Fauna & Flora International (Feb 2002), 'Coltan Mining in the Democratic Republic of Congo: the implications and opportunities for the telecommunications industry'.

and the World Bank to ensure that the Zimbabwean government phases out its military activities in the DRC, including military commercialism. In the meantime, pressure should also be placed on the DRC government to uphold the security of the people living in the zones occupied by the Zimbabwean army.

6.2 UK policy on the Great Lakes Region

The UK government has shown a commitment to peace and development in the Great Lakes Region. Financial and diplomatic support has been provided to the regional and national peace processes of Lusaka (for the DRC) and of Arusha (for Burundi). Within the countries of the region, the Department for International Development (DFID) has also funded peace-building and conflict resolution initiatives through civil society organisations.

Nevertheless, UK government policy on the region focuses heavily on its country programmes in Rwanda and Uganda. This has an advantage in that the UK government is in a unique position to use its close relationship to positively influence the policies and practices of these governments and their armies in the DRC. However, there is a need for an overarching regional strategy. The success of the UK's aid programmes in Rwanda and Uganda will depend upon the achievement of a sustainable peace in the wider region. The political and economic causes of the conflict in the DRC (and the opportunities for regional economic development) need to be fully considered within these country programmes. The UK government has demonstrated its commitment to tackle the political causes of the conflict, but has not fully considered the economic causes. If these are not addressed at the same time, then the progress made in the Rwanda and Uganda country programmes could be seriously undermined in the long term, as the regional conflict would remain unresolved.

The role played by the Rwandan and Ugandan armies in the DRC, and its effect on the population and the environment, have to be given the highest attention. While recognising that the security of Rwanda and Uganda is a primary concern for both countries, the involvement of their armies in the DRC has clearly contributed to a humanitarian crisis of enormous proportions. The development of a regional policy by the UK government could incorporate individual country programmes while at the same time putting the security and development needs of all of the people across the region at the heart of a regional strategy. This would encourage a better understanding of the problems and opportunities for the use of the natural resources in the region as a whole. It could also help to revive the idea of a regional economic union, attracting direct investment and promoting trade amongst the different peoples.

We urge the UK government to produce a Regional Strategy Paper on the Great Lakes Region, which incorporates all existing country programmes. This should be jointly led by the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and in consultation with the Department for Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Defence.

We urge the UK government to produce a proposal around a Regional Conference on the Great Lakes to take place within the next six months, covering key issues for the region including a regional security framework and a regional economic plan.

There are some regional initiatives that deserve closer attention and support, such as the tripartite agreement between the national park authorities of Rwanda, Uganda and the DRC. The recent dialogue meetings of the Catholic Church, where the Church signed a declaration for peace in the region, should also be commended. Both these initiatives have recognised the importance of resource exploitation for the sustainable development of the region.

6.3 UK assistance to Uganda

The UK government has a significant aid programme in Uganda, as encapsulated in its Country Strategy Paper (CSP). DFID is the largest bilateral donor in the country and has demonstrated substantial progress in its support to key areas of poverty reduction, debt relief, education and health (including HIV/AIDS). However, the 1999 CSP flagged up serious internal and external security concerns affecting the country, as well as the issue of military spending.¹⁰¹ The role of Uganda in the DRC conflict has continued to be a concern. It is to be welcomed that DFID is carrying out a defence spending review. Allegations about the Ugandan army's role in resource exploitation and human rights violations, especially in the Ituri region, need to be fully appraised in measuring the success of the DFID country programme.

We urge the UK government to commission an evaluation on the implications of Uganda's intervention in the DRC on DFID's country programme in Uganda. The findings of the defence spending review and the Porter Commission should be taken into consideration as part of the evaluation.

6.4 UK assistance to Rwanda

A Rwanda-UK Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was originally agreed for a three-year period from 1998/99 to 2000/01. The UK government's commitment was to provide support to key areas of Rwanda's National Development Vision 2020 as well as new, additional flexible assistance, including £10 million per annum for budgetary support. The Rwandan government committed itself to a number of areas on national unity and reconciliation, conflict resolution, good governance, poverty reduction, sustainable macro-economic stability, and human resource development. The concern of this report is whether the Rwandan government has upheld its commitments on conflict resolution and how this has impacted upon UK policy-making.

Box 12: Government of Rwanda commitments on conflict resolution

- The Government of Rwanda recognises the linkages between conflict and poverty and will work with others towards the aim of peaceful resolution of disputes and the restoration of regional stability.
- The Government of Rwanda will work towards a negotiated settlement of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo which will respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries in the region, protect the interests of people and which will take account of the legitimate security concerns of all these countries.
- In pursuance of national reconciliation policies, over 10,000 ex-FAR (former Rwandan army) soldiers were absorbed into the regular army in 1998. The demobilisation programme has been extended over four phases to cover the period up to the year 2002.

Source: Understanding on the Development Partnership Between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the Republic of Rwanda, September 1999.

While the MoU has established a number of commitments by the Rwandan government to regional conflict resolution, there are serious weaknesses. The MoU continues to fail to acknowledge any role that the Rwandan army, or individual officers, are alleged to have played in the exploitation of resources. More importantly, the commitment towards the security and human rights of the Congolese people in the zones of Rwandan influence is weak and ambiguous. During its occupation, the Rwandan army has clearly failed to protect the interests of the Congolese people in the provinces of the Kivus and Maniema.

¹⁰¹ The DFID Annual Plan and Performance Review on Uganda (Nov 2000) comments: "Uganda appears to have kept military spending below the level agreed with donors in 1999/2000, and to be committed to keeping spending below 2% of GDP into the medium term. But questions remain, particularly on the procurement front."

Reviews of the MoU have been commissioned by DFID but have largely failed to take account of the economic dimension of the conflict in the DRC and its impact on the population.¹⁰² On conflict resolution, the first review report commented that the government of Rwanda continued to have a legitimate security interest in the DRC, although it also stated that *“it is difficult to square many aspects of Rwanda’s DRC involvement with the commitment under this Memorandum to resolve disputes peacefully and to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other states”*.

The second review indicated that there had been an improvement in the commitments of the Rwandan government on conflict resolution, commenting that the military presence had been reduced, there were no repeated clashes with the Ugandan army, and that the Rwandan army had successfully contained a military incursion in the northwest. The report also stated that donors remain concerned over allegations of off-budget mining revenue and military expenditure in the DRC.

A revision of the MoU in February 2002 missed the opportunity to strengthen the commitments of the Rwandan government to the security of the people in the DRC and has not tackled the allegations of human rights abuses and illegal resource exploitation. Instead, the amendment to the UK government’s commitment was *“to move to the high case funding scenario described in the DFID Rwanda Country Strategy Paper, thereby increasing its level of project and flexible budget resources to respond to Rwanda’s development needs”*.¹⁰³ The only addition made to the Rwandan government’s commitment on conflict resolution was that it should work towards peace *“within the Lusaka Agreement framework”*.

The MoU would be strengthened if it were encapsulated within a wider regional strategy that took into account the impact of the conflict on Rwanda’s own development programme, and considered the implications of Rwanda’s military and economic involvement in the DRC on the prospects for a lasting regional peace. Despite the recent troop withdrawals, it is crucial that the MoU is revised accordingly in order to avoid a recurrence of human rights violations and illegal economic exploitation of natural resources in the DRC by the Rwandan army.

In light of the contradictions in the Memorandum of Understanding with the Rwandan government, and the Rwandan government’s activities in the DRC, we urge the UK government to commission an evaluation on the implications of Rwanda’s intervention in the DRC on DFID’s aid programme. The MoU should be strengthened in the area of conflict resolution to cover human rights and resource exploitation. The UK government should also support a defence spending review and encourage the Rwandan government to establish its own national commission on resource exploitation in the DRC (similar to that established by the Ugandan government).

6.5 UK assistance to the Democratic Republic of Congo

The current UK assistance to the DRC is to be commended, although the APPG has continued to recommend a substantial increase in humanitarian aid and support to development work. Examples of projects supported by DFID include the demobilisation of child soldiers in North and South Kivu (Save the Children), health and nutrition assistance in Kisangani (MSF), the co-ordination of emergency humanitarian interventions (OCHA), human rights monitoring (OHCHR), establishing access to essential referral health services in Kindu (Merlin), and peace and reconciliation initiatives in North and South Kivu (CAFOD/Christian Aid).

¹⁰² The reports, by independent consultants, cover the periods April 1999 to September 2000, and October 2000 to September 2001.

¹⁰³ Understanding on the Development Partnership Between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the Republic of Rwanda; 2001-2002 update.

These projects are crucial interventions. However, at the same time, they are the result of or are affected by the insecurity and suffering which has continued to take place partly as a result of army and militia actions focused on areas of natural resources. While it has been reported that the RCD has complied with pressure to agree to demobilise child soldiers, the alternative livelihood opportunities for young people remain so limited that young men in particular could return to fighting. The conflict that is taking place in various parts of eastern DRC, especially around areas of mineral resources, is leading to population displacements that increase the level of humanitarian need. The difficulties involved in reaching certain locations, such as Shabunda, Walikale and Punia in eastern DRC, have restricted the ability of international aid agencies to assist. This has also affected the UN's human rights monitoring programme (OHCHR). Finally, the need to support peace-building efforts in eastern DRC, which include all ethnic groups, is vital. At the same time, however, these efforts are being undermined by the continued violence in the countryside that has restricted the access of local organisations to schools, churches and meeting places in order to hold peace and reconciliation workshops.

The UK government's position has been only to provide assistance to humanitarian relief and peace-building and reconciliation initiatives until peace has been established in the DRC through the Lusaka accords. This position is weakened by the argument that resource exploitation is fuelling the conflict and leading to insecurity, especially in eastern DRC. It is recognised that there are other factors behind the conflict, but the UK government needs to acknowledge the fact that resource exploitation is having an impact on its own assistance to humanitarian aid in the DRC, and take action on the issue.

While challenging those governments engaged in resource exploitation, the UK government should identify opportunities to support alternative livelihood strategies, including those relevant to populations living around national park sites. Such support should recognise the value of responsible resource management of the environment. It is also encouraging to learn that DFID is looking to establish a civil society fund in the DRC. At the same time, the DRC government has to show measurable commitment to engage in the disarmament of the 'negative forces' in eastern DRC.

We urge the UK government to expand its current bilateral and multilateral aid programme to the DRC to target alternative livelihood strategies, particularly for populations living in and around areas of natural resources (including the national parks), while continuing to support humanitarian relief and peace building.

The problem concerning the destination of mineral resources is an area that is being tackled by the UN and by Western and African governments. As the DRC government has shown its willingness to comply with the Kimberley Process, the UK government should support the process through the European Union and press for other resources, such as timber, gold and coltan, to go through a similar process. At the same time, it is necessary for those governments that are engaged in resource exploitation to also comply with the certification processes.

We urge the UK government to support the DRC government's compliance with the Kimberley Process for the certification of diamonds, and pressure other governments in the Region to comply. We recommend the introduction of similar certification schemes for timber and other materials.

6.6 UK support to the New African Partnership for Development (NEPAD)

The UK government should be commended for its strong support for NEPAD. This initiative was launched by a number of prominent Africa leaders in October 2001 and endorsed in June 2002. The Prime Minister has been a vocal advocate for the G8 action plan for Africa, which supported the NEPAD initiative. Not without criticisms, NEPAD does represent a major new initiative for the development of Africa.

One of the main assumptions behind NEPAD is that Africa needs to achieve an annual growth rate of about 7 per cent of its GDP in order to meet the International Development Goals (IDGs), particularly the goal of reducing by half the proportion of Africans living in poverty by 2015. There are a whole series of proposals which, if implemented, could assist Africa in achieving such a goal. If fully implemented, the Peace, Security and Governance Initiative could alter the way that conflict prevention and resolution has been carried out on the continent.

However, this initiative needs to be strengthened to address the economic causes of conflict. It is encouraging that African finance ministers recently agreed “*on the overall vision for Africa’s development as enshrined in NEPAD: to bring the continent into a new age of peace, security, stability, economic growth, and prosperity.....[and] setting the stage for growth through regional integration, by putting in place sound macro-economic policies, and attracting more foreign capital*”¹⁰⁴ While this is very commendable, the linkages between resource exploitation and conflict need to be addressed in order for it to be achieved.

On the environment, the strategy document states that “*African resources include rain forests, the virtually carbon dioxide-free atmosphere above the continent and the minimal presence of toxic effluents in the rivers and soils that interact with the Atlantic and Indian Oceans and the Mediterranean and Red Seas. The New Partnership for Africa’s Development will contain a strategy for nurturing these resources and using them for the development of the African continent, while at the same time preserving them for all humanity*”.¹⁰⁵

On the issue of mining, the strategy has three objectives:

- (i) to improve the quality of mineral resource information,
- (ii) to create a regulatory framework conducive to the development of the mining sector, and
- (iii) to establish best practices that will ensure efficient extraction of natural resources and minerals of high quality.

In the context of the DRC, the government, the rebel authorities, and the occupying armies have failed to protect the environment or develop the mining sector. In fact, there has been de-investment in the mining sector with companies simply extracting minerals with no industrial or social investment.

We urge the UK government to ensure that the NEPAD process addresses the connection between resource exploitation and conflict. The use and extraction of natural resources should be in the interests of promoting sustainable economic development.

¹⁰⁴ IRIN (21 Oct 2002), ‘Time for Action on NEPAD, finance ministers’.

¹⁰⁵ NEPAD strategy document, 2002.

Appendix 1

Recommendations of the APPG report on their visit to the DRC, 2nd – 6th August 2001

In this report, the MPs made four recommendations that specifically referred to the exploitation of natural resources:

- We urge the UK government to respond publicly to the findings of the UN's report of the Expert Panel on the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth in the Democratic Republic of Congo (S/2001/357), and the addendum report, when it is published.
- We recommend that British and European bilateral aid policies demonstrate balance and transparency. Aid should be linked to the cessation of illegal exploitation of natural resources and implementation of the Lusaka Accords.
- The All Party Parliamentary Group welcomes the UN initiative to introduce certification schemes detailing the country of origin for diamonds. We recommend similar certification schemes, where appropriate, to address the exploitation of other precious resources.
- An even-handed approach must be taken with all parties involved in the illegal exploitation of resources. Appropriate pressure must be brought to bear to end the suffering that has escalated around mineral-rich areas.

The MPs on the visit to the DRC were Ms Oona King, Mr Andrew Robathan, Mr David Lammy and Mr Eric Joyce.

Appendix 2

APPG Research Project on the Exploitation of Resources in the DRC

Terms of Reference

The *overall aim* of the research is to look at how the exploitation of natural resources in the DRC is having an impact on the lives of ordinary people, and how this exploitation is an obstacle to sustainable peace and stability in the region.

There were five specific *objectives*:

1. Present case studies illustrating the effect of this resource exploitation on the lives of ordinary people (such as farmers and small businessmen).
2. Investigate the involvement of British companies in the exploitation of natural resources.
3. Explore the significance and scale of foreign economic interests in disputed areas of the DRC, including evidence of the self-financing nature of the war.
4. Investigate the link between the humanitarian situation, the continued violence, and the exploitation of natural resources.
5. To analyse what is happening 'on the ground' and to interpret that into recommendations that will influence UK government policy.

Appendix 3

Research considerations

Holistic Approach

Although an emphasis is placed on mineral resources, this report also pays attention to the exploitation of other types of resources such as hospitals, factories, crops, livestock and labour. The report considers how urban and rural livelihoods have been affected by the different systems of exploitation.

Legality and Illegality

The research is less concerned with the issue of what is legal and what is illegal exploitation in the DRC, which has tended to dominate arguments over the report of the first Panel of Experts. Instead, the research has been more concerned with how the war economy has worsened the living conditions in the country, and the role, if any, that armies and militias have played in this. The report also looks at the relationship between the conflict, the humanitarian disaster and resource exploitation.

Propaganda

During the research, it was clear that there were very strong views on the issue of resource exploitation. Some individuals expounded views that presented a very one-sided view of the conflict, while others were prepared to fabricate stories that were clearly prejudicial and false. Propaganda has been used by civil society organisations, governments and rebel groups involved in the conflict. All sides have accused each other of human rights violations, supplying arms to rebels and militias, and pillage of resources. Since 2000, the governments of Rwanda and Uganda have turned on each other with accusations of breaking ceasefires and supporting different ethnic or political groups at the expense of another. Some western journalists and diplomats can also be accused of believing in or even propagating stories of one side of the conflict.

Anonymity and Fear

It was clear that during the visit, a number of people were afraid to talk about the subject of exploitation of resources. Therefore, it was agreed that most interviews would be confidential and the sources would remain anonymous. There have been cases reported where people were killed for providing information on the activities of foreign troops and companies in mining areas.

Denial and Ignorance

The denial about what is happening to the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo is extremely disturbing. This includes certain members of civil society, especially in Kinshasa and Kigali who deny the reality of what is happening on the ground. It is highly likely that this will be the reaction of several governments involved in the conflict whose armies are reported to have taken control of mining sites, transported goods back to their countries or have engaged in the theft from villages and schools and carried out human rights abuses. Western government officials have also tended to ignore or even deny reports on the illegal exploitation of resources, human rights abuses and even the extent of the humanitarian crisis. It is ironic that some of the information on human rights abuses and the humanitarian situation comes from the very same organisations that are being funded in their humanitarian work by the western governments.

Ethnic Hatred

Some individuals in the DRC, including from international agencies, are prepared to speak openly about their fears and hatred of other ethnic groups, aimed specifically at the Tutsi population. It should be stressed that they are very much in the minority although the ferocity of their language was deeply worrying. It is also depressing to hear some individuals declare that there has never been any ethnic tension between non-Tutsi and non-Hutu ethnic groups in the region (despite the evidence of history suggesting otherwise). The increasing hatred between the Lendu and the Hema in the north-eastern regions is alarming, with evidence that the Ugandan army has not played a constructive role in reducing the tension.

Place names

Care has been taken to use the correct spelling of names of villages and mining sites. However, it is clear that some locations have different spellings, and even different names are used. Some of the names are shown in 'official' documents which may not correspond with those used in the street and in the fields.

DRC Affected Populations by Province Internally Displaced (July 2002)



The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

Prepared by OCHA Regional Support Office - CEA, Nairobi

Appendix 5

List of Acronyms

AFDL	Alliance des forces democratiques pour la liberation du Congo
AliR	Armee de Liberation du Rwanda
APPG	All Party Parliamentary Group (on the Great Lakes and Genocide Prevention)
CSP	Country Strategy Paper (DFID)
DDRRR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration, Resettlement and Rehabilitation
DFID	Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
Ex-FAR	Former Government of Rwanda Army (up to 1994)
FAC	Forces Armees Congolaises
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FDD	Forces de defense pour la democratie
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network (UN)
MIBA	La Societe Miniere de Bakwanga
MLC	Mouvement pour la liberation du Congo
MONUC	United Nations Observer Mission in the Congo
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding (DFID)
NEPAD	New African Partnership for Development
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aid (UN)
OHCHR	Office of the High Commission for Human Rights (UN)
OSLEG	Operation Sovereign Legitimacy
RCD	Rassemblement Congolais pour la democratie
RCD-K-ML	Rassemblement Congolais pour la democratie-Kisangani-Mouvement pour la liberation

RPA	Rwandan Patriotic Army
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SOCEBO	Societe Congolaise d'exploitation du bois
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UPC	Union des Patriotes Congolais
UPDF	Uganda People's Defence Force

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ANNEX 5.11

**All Party Parliamentary Group on the Great Lakes Region and Genocide Prevention,
*Visit to Democratic Republic of Congo 2nd - 6th August 2001***

ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON THE GREAT LAKES AND GENOCIDE PREVENTION

Visit to Democratic Republic of Congo 2nd - 6th August 2001



Facilitated by Oxfam GB, Christian Aid, Save the Children,
Tearfund and International Alert

PARTICIPANTS OF THE VISIT

MPs from the three main parties were approached to take part in the visit. The four MPs able to participate were:

Ms Oona King MP (Chair),	Labour, Bethnal Green and Bow
Mr Andrew Robathan MP,	Conservative, Blaby
Mr David Lammy MP,	Labour, Tottenham
Mr Eric Joyce MP,	Labour, Falkirk West

Accompanied by:

Mr Jamie Balfour-Paul, Regional Policy Adviser Oxfam GB, and representative on the trip for funding agencies Oxfam GB, Christian Aid, Save the Children, Tearfund and International Alert.

Ms Anya Bensberg, Co-ordinator, All Party Parliamentary Group

For the full itinerary, see Appendix 1

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The members of the All Party Parliamentary Group who took part in the visit gratefully acknowledge all the individuals and organisations we met in the Great Lakes Region, including rural and urban community groups, government officials, local NGOs, churches, ambassadors, UN officials, and international NGOs.

In particular, we would like to thank Oxfam GB, Christian Aid, Save the Children, Tearfund and International Alert for funding the trip, and for the facilitation and support provided by their staff and partners in the field and in the UK. Without their help this visit would not have taken place.

This report has been commissioned and published by the All Party Parliamentary Group as a contribution to greater understanding of the Great Lakes region. The text and views of the individual authors do not necessarily represent, in every detail and aspect, the collective view of the All Party Parliamentary Group.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A humanitarian disaster in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is unfolding on a vast scale. Since 1998 the conflict has claimed the lives of 2.5 million people¹. A further 18 million people have no access to services of any kind. **We urge the UK Government to broker a substantially increased aid package to provide basic healthcare, nutrition, shelter and education for DRC, via NGOs and UN agencies.**

Peace in DRC has been frustrated by a cycle of violence involving several domestic militias and six neighbouring armies. Internal civil conflict in the countries of the Great Lakes Region² has become enmeshed with external cross-border conflict. It is impossible to resolve conflict in one of these countries without looking at the causes and implications of conflict in the others. A regional approach must be taken. **We recommend that the UK government produce a Regional Strategy Paper on the Great Lakes Region.**

The demobilisation and resettlement of armed groups is critical to the success of the Lusaka Peace process. Without demobilisation, insecurity in the East and along DRC's borders will persist. If the UN is to fulfil its Lusaka commitment to 'track down and disarm armed groups', then the UN mission (MONUC) must be expanded. Given the vast size of DRC, if the UN deployed the same density of troops-to-land as it did in Kosovo, it would require 10 million UN peacekeepers! Whilst this is wildly unrealistic, so too is the proposed deployment of 5,000 UN soldiers.

We urge the UK government to push for:

- i) **an expansion of personnel and resources available to MONUC.**
- ii) **faster demobilisation and resettlement (in line with the UK Quick Start programme).**
- iii) **a UN embargo on arms exports into the Region.**
- iv) **a credible study of the threat posed by armed groups operating in DRC.**

The inter-Congolese dialogue presents key groups, including political and civil society figures, with an important opportunity to make their voices heard. These groups face the huge challenge of agreeing a new political settlement for the country.

We recommend that greater support is given to the office of the ICD facilitator, Sir Ketumile Maisire.

Attacks on Rwanda between 1995-1998 by Interahamwe and ex-FAR militias based in Eastern DRC, and the failure of the DRC Government to prevent them, justified Rwanda's initial intervention in DRC. However, Rwanda's security justification is now in doubt. Rwanda's military bases – in common with all other foreign armies in DRC – appear to be more closely linked to the positioning of mineral mines than rebel forces. **British and European bilateral aid policy in the Great Lakes Region must be linked to cessation of illegal exploitation of natural resources and implementation of the Lusaka Accords. Certification schemes should be introduced, where appropriate, to address the exploitation of natural resources.**

2. RATIONALE

The visit to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in August 2001, was planned jointly by the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on the Great Lakes and Genocide Prevention and Oxfam GB, Christian Aid, Save the Children, Tearfund and International Alert. For the purposes of this report, the Great Lakes region refers to DRC, Rwanda and Burundi.

The objective of the visit was to facilitate a fact-finding mission by British MPs to evaluate the response to conflict in DRC. This involved investigating the political and humanitarian aspects of the crisis, specifically:

- how the Lusaka Peace Agreement is being implemented on the ground.
- progress and participation in the inter-Congolese dialogue.
- exploitation of mineral resources.
- the humanitarian situation and levels of funding.
- Department of International Development (DFID) and Foreign and Commonwealth (FCO) funded projects, including civil society and peace-building.

The All Party Group has been encouraged by the Prime Minister's mention of three million conflict-related deaths in Congo at his Party Conference speech on October 2nd 2001. If the deaths of 7,000 innocent civilians in America warrant the enormous response of the international community in the military and economic sphere – and they do – then surely the deaths of 2.5 million civilians in the Congo warrant an equally vigorous response.

ISSUES OF CONCERN

3.1 THE CONFLICT

3.1.1 Recent background (1998-2001)

The war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is Africa's most complex conflict. It involves six foreign armies from neighbouring countries and several domestic militias, and has been described as Africa's First World War. Its roots are embedded in the history, both recent and distant, of the Great Lakes Region. Whilst we cannot do justice to that history in the confines of this report, a brief chronology of DRC's history is outlined in appendix 2.

Current conflict in DRC stems from the wave of violence and mass-displacement unleashed by the Rwandan genocide in 1994. Over 2 million Rwandans, predominantly Hutu, sought refuge in DRC (then Zaire), Burundi and Tanzania. Among the refugees were members of the armed groups responsible for genocide – the Hutu militias, known as the Interahamwe, and the former Rwandan army (ex-FAR). Between 1995-97 the 'genocidaires' launched renewed attacks from Eastern DRC on Rwanda. Rebels supported by the Sudanese National Islamic Front regime also attacked Uganda from Eastern Zaire. In 1996 Rwanda and Uganda backed a Tutsi-led rebellion to overthrow Zaire's dictator, Mobutu Sese Seko, and install Laurent Kabila.

Following the deterioration of relations between Laurent Kabila and his former allies, Rwanda and Uganda occupied parts of DRC and backed rebel attempts in August 1998 to overthrow the Kabila regime. The DRC Government called on troops from Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola to repel the attack. The Rwandan and Ugandan-backed rebels were halted, but all the countries involved retain troops in DRC. In Eastern DRC, the post-1994 influx of Rwandan refugees has stretched local economies to breaking point and exacerbated long-standing ethnic tensions³. The conflict since 1998 has precipitated a humanitarian disaster estimated to have claimed 2.5 million lives⁴.

3.1.2 Who controls where?

The DRC is split into three zones of control (see map below). The DRC government, recognised by the UN, controls one third of the country, including parts of western, central and southern DRC and is backed by Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia. The Rwandan sponsored RCD⁵ in the East is led by Adolphe Onusumba. The RCD-Goma⁶ forces control parts of North and South Kivu, Maniema, Orientale, and Katanga provinces, and most major towns in parts of eastern, central and south-eastern DRC. The allied Congolese armed opposition groups (the RCD-MLC⁷ and the FLC⁸) control much of north-eastern and north-western DRC. This movement, known as the FLC/MLC, is led by Jean Pierre Bemba and backed by Uganda.



3.1.3 Rebel groups

Within Congo's territory a myriad of local armed groups operate freely, such as the Mayi Mayi, Ugandan rebels⁹ and the Interahamwe/ex FAR and Burundian rebels FDD¹⁰. Rwandan Hutu fighters in Eastern DRC include members of the former Rwandan armed forces (ex-FAR) and the Interahamwe. Others were recruited from the refugee camps set up in Zaire after the genocide or during and after the 1997-98 insurgency in the Northwest of Rwanda. It is thought some Congolese Hutu have now been recruited.

Despite increased ethnic conflict, Congolese nationalism is evident. In both Eastern and Western DRC people share an overriding sense of being Congolese, although the territory of Congo covers

a landmass equal to the size of Western Europe. The distance from Kinshasa to Goma is the same as London to Sarajevo.

Medame Hasa, Chief of the Mantanda Community Health Network, Masisi:

"Before the war Hutu and Tutsi lived together in harmony. Politicians from Goma and Kinshasa created this division. They divided tribes and made each one have a political allegiance. Now there are Tutsi and Hutu parties, and even armed movements such as the Hundo and Mayi Mayi. Problems started in 1994, when Rwandan refugees arrived. They destroyed our cattle and sold weapons to local tribes."

3.1.4 The political players

3.1.4a DRC government

Since the death of President Laurent Desire Kabila on 16 January 2001, and the instalment of his son Joseph 10 days later, there has been a significant shift in the political landscape. President Joseph Kabila immediately stated his commitment to peace through the Lusaka Accords, which were signed in July 1999 and pledged all main combatants to a cease-fire. He has accepted Sir Ketumile Masire as facilitator of the inter-Congolese dialogue.

In April 2001 Joseph Kabila dissolved his father's cabinet, largely made up of family members. Many of the old regime's strongmen were ejected from government, and only five ministers retained their posts. Many of the new cabinet have been recruited from the Congolese Diaspora and are respected technocrats with expertise in their fields. Addressing his cabinet in May, Kabila called for openness and an end to the era of nepotism. He has embraced talk of trade liberalisation and an end to state monopolies, opened dialogue with the IMF and World Bank, and invited humanitarian agencies to assess the situation in the Congo. Kabila faces the unenviable task of presiding over an enormous country riven with regional and ethnic rivalries. Kinshasa is effectively a city state, situated in the far west of a country largely covered in

jungle, and so neglected that few roads have been built since the 1960s.

Despite Joseph Kabila's positive tone, it is alleged that the DRC government in Kinshasa has provided financial and military support to various rebel groups in the east such as the Interahamwe. Moreover, notwithstanding his democratic language, government critics continue to be detained without charge. Staff of Kinshasa's satirical newspaper, "L'Avenir" are routinely harassed. The editor, Diana Gikupa, was held in jail for several days after publishing an article critical of the president's Cabinet Director.

The DRC Government issued a statement on 20/7/01 reaffirming that the ban on political activity had been lifted. However, the Government stipulates that parties notify the Interior Ministry of opposition activity in writing. A major opposition rally was broken up shortly before our visit. The President told us this was because the opposition failed to give the authorities due notice of the demonstration. The opposition vigorously denied this and insisted the Government used administrative requirements as a pretext to stifle dissent. **We urge President Kabila to show good faith and boost his democratic credentials by lifting restrictions on political opposition activity in DRC.**

Domar Jun (Partie du Change) "Our government measures its popularity in terms of the opinion of the international community. Political parties were legalised when the UN Security Council delegation came to Kinshasa in May but after they had left, the law was suddenly given a new interpretation. When the UN Human Rights Rapporteur came here last week the law was reinterpreted again and we were allowed to operate."

President Kabila, meeting on 2nd August 2001

President Kabila met us in his presidential palace in Kinshasa. In an hour-long meeting, he outlined his desire to rebuild the DRC, saying that peace must come before everything else.

The President wants Western support to hold elections within two years. For him the necessary prerequisites are a census (since the government does not know the size of the Congolese population), broad-based political parties (e.g. national not ethnic) and improved infrastructure so that rural inhabitants can vote.

He felt that the inter-Congolese dialogue is moving too slowly "because the suffering of the Congolese people is continuing with no end in sight. I think the problem of DRC is so simple that people cannot see the wood for the trees. All foreign armies must leave."

3.1.4b MLC/FLC

Jean-Pierre Bemba, leader of the MLC/FLC, is a charismatic political figure in DRC's Equateur region. His rebel movement comprises the Ugandan-supported wing of the RCD (MLC) and the MLC, which merged to become the FLC. This movement controls Northeastern DRC. An autocrat, Bemba has faced several challenges from intellectuals within his ranks. The FLC are accused of mineral exploitation, and stirring up ethnic conflict. However, they are involved in fewer allegations of human rights abuses, and are said to make greater investment in social services than their counterparts in Rwandan-controlled territory. Bemba has declared his commitment to the Lusaka Accords, but is said to be anxious about his role following the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.

3.1.4c RCD-Goma

RCD-Goma was created in August 1998 and is led by Adolphe Onusumba, who became president in October 2000.

The RCD-Goma has complied with parts of the Lusaka Agreement by removing its troops from the front lines and accepting the presence of MONUC troops and observers on its territory. Despite advances in the peace process there is still widespread insecurity in the areas under RCD Goma/Rwandan control. This is largely due to the presence of a number of non-state armed groups. None of the militias in Eastern DRC can claim popular support amongst the people living in the region. This includes the Mayi Mayi, who are generally seen as victimising the people, although some regard them as "freedom fighters".

The RCD movement has changed leadership several times and suffered various splits. It is unpopular locally (viewed as a Rwandan-controlled organisation), has

been unable to establish itself as a credible political force, and has failed to provide support to the local population in key areas of health and education.

Mr Adolphe Onusumba, meeting on August 4th, 2001

Mr Onusumba met us in the former residence of the late President Mobutu. He told us: "We want to be parliamentarians, not warlords. We want to fight with ideas, not weapons. Fighting a war is not a pleasure. We would like to be like you, so we could go and discuss our problems and help our country realise its potential."

He went on to say that RCD-Goma were looking forward to engaging in the inter-Congolese Dialogue, as it was important for all Congolese to sit down and discuss the future of the country. "I believe we can agree a new political order. We can give the country a new constitution and new political institutions."

3.1.5. A regional approach

"Solving conflict in the Congo is the key to solving conflict in Africa"

Joseph Kabila, March 10 2001¹¹.

"We all want to move the peace process forward, but the international community must respond to security threats in the region"

Paul Kagame, September 3rd 2001¹²

It is clear that conflict in the DRC cannot be resolved without national and international agencies taking a regional approach. Good governance must be promoted across the region to encourage politicians to tackle problems of accountability, legitimacy and human rights abuses. Politics in this region is inherently tied to the current problems of war and ethnicity. Politicians in the Great Lakes Region face interrelated problems which will only be solved in the long-term with collective solutions.

The economies of DRC, Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi are inextricably linked. The vast size of DRC means that products made in Goma will always be more easily exported to Kigali or Bujumbura. Once peace is achieved, integration into a regional economic union will facilitate the economic development of the region.

We recommend that, in line with the proactive approach Britain has already taken in the Great Lakes, the UK government produces a Regional Strategy paper, similar to current national strategy papers; this should be a collaborative initiative between the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, in consultation with interested parties.

VIEWPOINTS:**DRC Government view:**

The Democratic Republic of Congo has been occupied by foreign armies for over three years. Rwanda and Uganda must withdraw before peace can be achieved. Rwanda could neutralise the Interahamwe threat if it wanted, but instead it uses it as a pretext for mineral exploitation. Uganda is equally guilty of mineral exploitation. The case is different for Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia, as they have been legally invited in by the recognised Government of DRC. Although security problems may exist in Eastern DRC, they do not justify occupation. Attention on the Great Lakes Region focuses on Rwanda, while the Congo is forgotten.

Rwandan Government view:

Following the genocide of one million Rwandans, most of them Tutsi, those responsible sought refuge in the DRC. These genocidaires continued to attack Rwanda from Eastern DRC, and still do. If the DRC Government is unable to prevent these groups operating inside its borders, then Rwanda must act to protect itself. Rwanda will not allow those who committed genocide to finish the job. Rwanda cannot rely on the UN to prevent bloodshed: the 1994 genocide represented the worst UN failure to date. Moreover, when the current Rwandan government stopped the slaughter and drove the genocidaires out, it was the UN that inadvertently supplied them with humanitarian aid in the DRC camps and allowed them to regroup. Rwanda is not responsible for mineral exploitation – although minerals might be sold in Rwanda, that does not mean they are imported by the Rwandan Government or military.

Ugandan Government view:

Instability in the DRC threatens internal security. Uganda's military presence in DRC is an act of self-defence against territorial support the DRC has given Sudanese-linked terrorist groups. Rebels backed by the National Islamic Front regime in Khartoum, Sudan, have launched attacks into Western Uganda. Uganda put security forces into DRC from 1996. They increased deployment after Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia, and later Chad and Sudan became involved in 1998.

Burundi Government view:

Burundi's army became more involved after Laurent Kabila began assisting the Burundian rebel movement, the FDD. Many of the FDD fighters served with the Congolese armed forces. In 1998 Burundi deployed troops to Kalemie, on the Congolese shore of Lake Tanganyika. They were used to prevent rebels establishing bases in DRC to launch attacks on Burundi, and also to protect Lake Tanganyika trade against rebel piracy. This is an act of self-defence.

3.2 PEACE PROCESS AND OBSTACLES TO PROGRESS**LUSAKA ACCORDS**

The Lusaka Accords were brokered in the Zambian Capital in July 1999. The Accords were signed by the governments of Angola, DRC, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe and the rebel movements RCD-Goma and MLC. Although not signatories, other militias such as the Interahamwe and the Mayi Mayi agreed to the contents of the agreement.

The Accords pledged the signatories to:

- an immediate cease-fire.
- demobilise and disarm all armed groups in DRC such as the Interahamwe.
- accept monitors from a Joint Military Commission.

The Accords also provided for:

- a UN observer mission in Congo (MONUC). Chapter 9 of the Lusaka Agreement states "The Joint Military Commission with the assistance of the UN/OAU shall work out mechanisms for the tracking, disarming, cantoning and documenting of all armed groups in the DRC, including the ex-FAR, ADF, LRA, UNRFII, Interahamwe, FUNA, FDD, WNBF, UNITA."
- an "internal dialogue" between the DRC government, the rebel groups, the political opposition and civil society, known as the inter-Congolese dialogue.

The UN Security Council approved deployment of up to 5,537 personnel, including 500 military observers, protected by 5,000 soldiers. There are currently approximately 2,500 UN personnel in DRC.

MONUC, in co-operation with the joint Military Commission (JMC), has the following mandate:

- To monitor the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement and investigate violations of the ceasefire.
- To establish and maintain continuous liaison with the headquarters of all parties military forces.
- To develop an action plan for implementation of the Cease-fire Agreement by all concerned, with particular emphasis on: the collection and verification of military information on the parties forces, the maintenance of the cessation of hostilities and the disengagement and redeployment of the parties forces, the comprehensive disarmament, demobilisation, resettlement and reintegration of all members of all armed groups, and the withdrawal of all foreign forces.
- To work with the parties to obtain the release of all prisoners of war, and military captives.
- To supervise and verify disengagement and redeployment of the parties forces.
- To monitor compliance with the provision of the ceasefire agreement on the supply of ammunition and weaponry and other war related material in the field.
- To facilitate humanitarian assistance and human rights monitoring, with particular assistance to vulnerable groups.
- To cooperate closely with the Facilitator of the National Dialogue, providing support and technical assistance to him.
- To assess the scope of the mine and unexploded ordnance problems and carry out emergency mine action activities.

3.2.1 The role of the UN force – MONUC

The key obstacle to peace is the disarmament of armed groups in DRC. The process, known as disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration and rehabilitation (DDRR) is subject to continual delay. There is confusion over the UN's role in securing disarmament. The Lusaka Accords envisage disarmament, and MONUC is mandated under Lusaka to 'track down and disarm armed groups' (see box on previous page). Yet MONUC's mission statement instructs the UN force to merely 'separate' warring groups (see box on previous page). Separating warring groups and supervising voluntary disarmament, is quite different to tracking them down and disarming them. Voluntary disarmament neither tackles the hard core nor appeases the security concerns that are a major reason for continuation of the war.

We urge the UK Government to raise at the UN the contradiction between the Lusaka Agreement (which stipulates disarmament) and MONUC's mission of separating the warring groups and supervising voluntary disarmament; and to identify the increased capacity MONUC will require to carry out its role specified in the Lusaka Agreement.

MONUC deployment has three phases. In phase one MONUC supervised a disengagement of troops from the front lines (March 2001). In phase two, parties to the cease-fire agreement, working with MONUC, prepared and adopted a plan for the orderly withdrawal of foreign troops (April-May 2001). Phase three entails the drawing up and implementation of plans for disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration and resettlement of armed groups (May 2001-).

Our visit fell between phases two and three. During phase two the MONUC mission expanded to the cities of Kisangani, Mbandaka, Kalemie and Kananga. Disengagement proceeded to 100km from the front lines, although this is not far in a country the size of Western Europe. Given the confusion around MONUC's role (outlined above) there is concern over the mechanisms for demobilisation, and the delay in implementation of phase three.

The DRC government told us that the Interahamwe and ex-FAR were ready for demobilisation in Katanga and Bas-Congo, but that no DDRR programmes had been implemented. The MONUC Force Commander, General Diallo, confirmed the delay: "We hear they have regrouped four thousand people, but we are still waiting to be invited in." We urge all parties to accelerate DDRR. However, despite delay, clear opportunities remain to support a disarming and demobilisation programme. We welcome the UK government's pledge of £5m for a "Quick Start" programme aimed at disarming, demobilising and re-integrating the armed groups that have not signed the Lusaka Accords.

A central problem for MONUC in fulfilling its objective to track down and disarm groups such as the Interahamwe, is that no accurate assessment exists of these groups' location or size. Most people on the ground insist that a lack of reliable information renders estimates of the Interahamwe meaningless. However, estimates range from 5,000 to 40,000¹³. Whatever their number, it is clear that the UN does not have the capacity to bring about a sustainable peace in large sections of Eastern DRC without a substantial increase in its force. A comparison with the numbers of UN troops in Kosovo highlights the problem posed by the sheer size of DRC: if the UN deployed the same density of troops-to-land as it has in Kosovo, it would need 10 million UN peacekeepers!¹⁴

If Rwanda and Uganda are to continue withdrawal, they must see evidence that DDRR is taking place. An increased MONUC force is also necessary to fill the power vacuum they leave.

We commend the UK Government on its "Quick Start" demobilisation programme, and urge its expansion.

We recommend that MONUC is expanded. Disarmament of armed groups must be accelerated. The provisions for disarmament laid out in the Lusaka Agreement will only be feasible if an expansion in personnel and resources is made available to MONUC.

We urge the UN to facilitate a study of how many Interahamwe and ex-FAR forces currently operate on the ground. A credible study must determine the scale of the threat posed by the Interahamwe.

3.2.2 The current situation

Although there has been less fighting along the front line since Laurent Kabila's death in January 2001, violations of the cease-fire continue. For example, on October 1st 2001, there was fighting in Eastern DRC after DRC government troops, the FDD and the Mayi Mayi attacked RCD troops stationed at Fizi, on the shores on Lake Tanganyika.

In February the UN announced that the parties involved had agreed to withdraw 15 kilometres from the frontlines, and reached an agreement to disarm the Hutu militias operating in northeastern DRC. At UN Security Council meetings in May and June all sides committed to withdraw troops 100 kilometres, leaving vacated areas under the administrative control of the party previously occupying it. Rwanda alleges that although it has fulfilled its side of the bargain by withdrawing 100 kilometres, the DRC Government has breached the Lusaka Agreement by immediately occupying this area (see box 'Rwandan Government View').

The key to disarming militias in Eastern DRC could be a political settlement that garners support from the leaders of the armed groups. This could be brokered by a high-profile figure able to attract the international attention the conflict deserves. Suggestions include Mary Robinson and Bill Clinton. Such a figure could

pressure all sides: the DRC government must withdraw any support of any nature to militias in the East, and help break their command structure; the Rwandan and Ugandan governments must withdraw from DRC and work towards peaceful disarmament. The UN must ensure that withdrawal from DRC does not compromise Rwanda or Uganda's security.

3.2.3. Arms control

Even if disarmament and demobilisation are partially successful, the uncontrolled proliferation of weapons in the DRC remains a major threat to peace and stability. The EU has developed a "Code of Conduct" for arms exports to the region, but this has not been implemented successfully. There is an EU arms embargo to the DRC, but no similar embargo on neighbouring countries supplying arms or participating in the conflict¹⁵. If the peace process is to have a realistic chance of success, the arms flows that continue to pour into the region through legal and illegal channels must end.

We urge the UK government to ensure, with its European partners, that the EU embargo on arms imports into the region by all parties in the DRC conflict is made legally binding; and that a similar embargo is imposed by the UN.

3.3 INTER-CONGOLESE DIALOGUE – PARTICIPATION AND PROGRESS

3.3.1 Governance and elections

Political leaders throughout the Great Lakes Region face huge problems of legitimacy. None of the three authorities in DRC have a democratically elected government or parliament.

The APPG met with President Kabila and President of the RCD, Mr Onusumba. Both share a sense of shame that conflict and political failure have reduced their people to destitution. Both appear to want peace, and both appealed to the international community for assistance to achieve this. However, the gap between their intentions and their achievements remains great. Human rights organisations document allegations of intimidation, wrongful imprisonment, theft, corruption and extra-judicial killings in all three DRC authorities¹⁶. Rumours abound about the true power structures within these governments, and some argue that these men are merely an acceptable face to the international community.

Critics of the DRC Government argue that the international community should resist engaging in bilateral and multilateral aid programmes until the Kabila Government turns some of its positive words into action; they fear a 'new Mobuto' scenario. Others argue that unless help is given to the Kabila Government now, at this critical time, a significant opportunity may be lost.

3.3.2 Inter-Congolese dialogue (ICD) & Civil Society

The inter-Congolese dialogue is a crucial part of the Lusaka Peace Process, committing all the main parties and unarmed opposition groups within DRC to a political dialogue on the country's future. It is facilitated by the former Botswanan President, Sir Ketumile Masire, who has encouraged negotiations between the DRC government, RCD, the MLC and members of civil society. After the preliminary meeting in Gaborone, the ICD takes place in Addis Ababa as this report goes to print on October 15th 2001.

The dialogue involves four commissions comprising:

- 1) military and security issues;
- 2) the constitution;
- 3) humanitarian and development issues;
- 4) an electoral commission.

The dialogue presents Congolese civil society representatives with an important opportunity to make their voices heard. The weakness of state institutions in the Congo has created strong and vocal civil society groups.

The civil society representatives we met were enraged at what they see as a foreign war being fought on their territory. They believe that some western powers maintain the war, and they fear that the UN wants to partition their country. None of the representatives we met seemed able or willing to appreciate Rwanda's security concerns. At a meeting with civil society in Kinshasa we caused uproar by suggesting that the DRC Government is unable to police its borders with Rwanda and Uganda. We view this as a self-evident fact. However, civil society representatives view it as another attempt to undermine the integrity of the DRC as a nation state.

3.3.3 Citizenship

Participants in the dialogue must carefully consider issues of citizenship and ethnicity, including issues such as whether the DRC Government should extend citizenship to all Congolese citizens (e.g. the Banyamulenge). In conjunction with the UNHCR, the DRC and Rwandan Governments must also address the status of non-Congolese citizens currently resident in DRC. The story of 16 year old Baraka is a sobering example of the scale of the problem facing refugees without a state

Project visit to CAJED transit centre in Goma:

Baraka (16 years old.)

"I left Rwanda in 1994. My family were moderate Hutus, but they were sympathising with the Tutsis. My aunt was a Tutsi, so we hid my aunt's family. I fled to DRC with my parents, but they died after we arrived. The Red Cross registered me and I went back to Rwanda. From an orphanage in Rwanda I was taken to Gisenyi. A member of my family was there but they chased me away, because they didn't want to look after me. So after that I went back to Masisi in DRC. One time I was in the market selling potatoes and the military (RCD) came and kidnapped me, they conscripted me. They took me to their military position, but I escaped. After that I was taken back to Rwanda, but the border-guards wouldn't let me enter because I have no family there anymore who will take me. Now I am back in DRC, but they don't want me here either. I ask you to find me country of exile where I can live. That's all."

A successful Inter Congolese Dialogue, addressing issues of citizenship, would be a crucial milestone in the peace-process. It is vital that the parties involved develop a clearly defined working relationship to tackle the difficult questions ahead.

Greater support should be given to the office of the ICD facilitator, Sir Ketumile Masire. The UK government currently provides financial support (£43,000 in 2001) and a technical expert to the facilitator. We urge the Government to double this.

3.4 EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The war in DRC is currently motivated by both security and economic concerns. Throughout the visit people expressed strongly held views that security issues were a pretext for mineral exploitation. The Congo is renowned for its natural resources, and has 8% of the world's diamond reserves.¹⁷ There are plentiful supplies

of copper, cobalt, coltan (columbo-tantalite¹⁸) gold and zinc. Mining previously accounted for 3/4 of export revenue and 1/4 of GDP.¹⁹ Rwanda and Uganda both cite security concerns as their reason for military involvement in DRC.

Senior International Observer: "It is important to make the distinction between trade happening between Kigali and the Kivus a decade ago and the situation now. The previous governor of Kivu built roads and schools. The RCD is raping the country. They are unaccountable and have done nothing for the people."

Congolese citizen, Kinshasa: "I don't care what the government says. Zimbabwe's reasons for being here are in the first place economic."

We believe – as does the British Government – that attacks on Rwanda between 1995-1998 by Interahamwe and ex-FAR militias based in Eastern DRC, and the failure of the DRC Government to prevent their activity, justified Rwanda's initial intervention in DRC. However, Rwanda's security justification is now in doubt: Rwanda's military bases – in common with those of other foreign governments in DRC - are more closely linked to the positioning of mineral mines than rebel forces.

The table overleaf shows how Ugandan and Rwandan troops are stationed next to mineral or timber resources. We received reports that Uganda is responsible for exploiting timber in 800 sq. km of rainforest²⁰. It is also alleged that the Mayi Mayi are involved in exploiting natural resources, especially coltan, for their own self-gain²¹. A correlation is also visible for Zimbabwe between deployment and mineral resources.

3.4.1 Location of troop deployment and existence of natural resources²²

POSITION OF UPDF and FLC*	RESOURCE	POSITION OF RPA and RCD	RESOURCE
Province Orientale/Ituri		Maniema	
Mongwalu	Gold	Punia	Coltan, gold
Nioka	Timber	Kalima	Cassiterite, gold, coltan
Bunia	Gold, coffee	Lubutu	Diamonds, gold
Watsa	Gold	Kindu	Timber
Durba	Gold	Lokando	Gold
Mambasa	Timber, diamonds, very good coltan	Kailo	Gold, cassiterite
		Kama	Coltan, gold
		Kasese	Gold
Bambou mine	Gold	Wamaza	Gold
Kil Moto	Gold	Saramabila	Gold, coltan
Bafwasende	Gold and diamonds, coltan		
		S.Kivu	
Buta	Gold and diamonds	Shabunda	Coltan, gold
Banalia (FLC only)	Gold and diamonds	Lulingu	Gold and coltan
Isiro	Gold, coffee, palm oil	Fizi	Gold
		Baraka	Gold
N.Kivu		Ninja	Coltan, gold
Beni	Timber, palm oil	Kalehe (Numbi)	Tourmaline, emerald, coltan, niobium
Butembo	Gold, coffee, timber		
		Walungu	Gold, coltan
Equateur		Kamituga	Gold, cassiterite, tourmaline
Gabadolite	Some coffee, timber	Kitutu	Gold, palm oil
		Walikale	Gold, timber, coltan
		Bunyakire	Coltan
		N. Kivu	
		Masisi	Coltan
		Walikale	Coltan, diamonds
		Rutshuru	Pyrochlore (niobium)
		Lubutu	Coltan, gold
		Myanga	Coltan
		Kibabi	Coltan
		Pinga	Coltan
		Province Orientale	
		Road to Banalia	Diamonds
		Kisangani town	Diamonds

POSITION OF RPA and RCD	RESOURCE
Kasai Orientale	
Lodja	Diamonds
Lusambo	Diamonds
Katanga Province	
Manono	Cassit./coltan, copper, pewter,
Vyura	Gold
Kabongo	Gold

ZIMBABWE ARMY	RESOURCE	ANGOLAN ARMY	RESOURCE
Katanga (Shaba)		Kasai Orientale	
Lubumbashi	Cobalt, copper	Mbuji Mayi	Diamonds
Kolwezi	Copper	Bas Congo	Petroleum
Shinkolobwe	Uranium	Mbazangungu	Timber
Mitwaba	Gold	Inga Dam	Hydropower
Kisenge	Manganese		
		Katanga	
Kasai Occidentale		Kolwezi	Copper
Kananga	Diamonds	Lubumbashi	Cobalt, copper
Tchikapa	Diamonds		
Equateur		Kinshasa	-
Ikele	Timber, diamonds		
Mbandaka	Timber, diamonds		
Kasai Orientale			
Mbuji Mai	Diamonds		
Lusambo	Diamonds		
Kamina	Diamonds, copper		
Kinshasa	-		

More attention must be directed at all countries involved in resource exploitation in the DRC. A controversial UN report on the illegal exploitation of precious minerals in DRC, published in April 2001, was heavily critical of Rwanda, Uganda and the rebel movements.

The report accused the Rwandan-backed RCD and the Ugandan-backed FLC²³ of systematically looting gold, diamonds, coffee, wood, coltan and other resources in areas under their control. However, the report was widely attacked for being insufficiently rigorous. As a result, the UN Security Council has called for more research. Whilst we agree that the report was unbalanced and flawed in some areas, during the course of our visit we heard numerous eyewitness reports which confirmed that the broad findings were credible.

We heard reports that the RCD fix local coltan prices by commissioning civilians to purchase coltan from miners. The process starts in the middle of the mines, where the military influence miners to sell coltan to intermediaries in the local markets such as Rubaya or Kibabi. The military own some mines, and bring over prisoners from Rwanda's jails to mine them²⁸. The RPA and RCD steal minerals from local miners and force local Congolese to mine at gun-point. Military helicopters fly to Walikali airstrip from Kigali about five times a week to deposit arms and other ammunitions at various locations and carry back coltan.

Large sums of money from the DRC mineral trade flow through Rwanda and Uganda. Approximate estimates for the value of trade in minerals leaving the Kivus are around US \$100m annually²⁴. Last year, Uganda made nearly as much money from gold exports as from coffee, despite having hardly any reserves at home²⁵. Similarly, Rwanda produced 83 tons of coltan, but exported 603 tons²⁶. The discrepancy between the domestic production and the export volume of coltan from Rwanda is 520 tons. Almost certainly, the balance comes from mining in the DRC. Whilst foreign exchange data merely shows where produce was sold, and not by whom (eg the Rwandan / Ugandan Governments, or private companies and individuals), the implication is clear.

In Goma, several reliable sources alleged²⁷ that the RPA and the RCD monopolise mineral trade by controlling the mining areas and the Rwandan border crossing. We were told that the RCD Department of Mining and Energy is linked to individual brokers buying and selling minerals. People are afraid to take high value goods to Kigali as they are easy targets for the military who pick them off as members of the Interahamwe.

In Western Congo, Zimbabwe²⁹, Angola, and Namibia are engaged in similar activity. Whilst their activity is arguably more "legal", as they have been invited in by the DRC Government, it is no less exploitative.

Angola controls DRC-Kinshasa's petrol distribution and has positioned itself to control future exploration in Kinshasa's offshore territorial Congo basin. Namibia was given a stake in the Miba Diamond Company, which gave them an extra incentive to defend Mbuji Mayi diamond centre. The Namibian ministry of defence has also been given a diamond concession in Western Kasai. Senga Mines of DRC has a joint venture with Commiminex of Zimbabwe, and with Oryx Zimcam. Both were granted diamond concessions belonging to the Union Minere de Bakwanga in Kasai. Zimbabwe received copper and cobalt concessions in Katanga and Zimbabwean banks operate in Kinshasa to facilitate the financing of mineral developments.

Wherever, and by whomever mineral exploitation takes place, it results in capital flight out of DRC at the expense of the country's own development. Insecurity has distorted local economies in rebel held territory, making the mining of minerals an attractive livelihood for local people. It is argued that this has had a negative effect on sustainable development because local people no longer cultivate land in rural areas. For example, people have been attracted to mining coltan and selling it in local towns to buy food. A dependency on coltan is erratic and dangerous. Local people in DRC told us that one kilogram of coltan only fetched \$0.50 as opposed to \$70 a year ago³⁰.

The commercialisation of military activity by all sides in DRC raises serious concerns, as traditional exit strategies, such as the return of stability or achievement of a strategic foreign policy objective are less relevant if the occupying army participates

in commercial enterprise. If forces are essentially self-funding, the financial constraints of deployment become marginalised. While semi-commercial criteria can create an incentive for entering a conflict, establishment of entrepreneurial schemes by military commanders and political elites provides a strong disincentive for troop withdrawal.

An even handed approach must be taken with all parties involved in the illegal exploitation of resources. Appropriate pressure must be brought to bear to end the suffering that has escalated around mineral rich areas.

We urge the UK government to respond publicly to the findings of the UN's report of the External Panel on Illegal Exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth in the Democratic Republic of Congo (S/2001/357), and to the addendum report, when it is published.

The APPG is deeply concerned about war profiteering in DRC. Individuals, companies and governments are making huge financial gains from the mineral trade. There is little evidence that the exploitation is funding any core social services or boosting the local economy. We feel that illegal exploitation is now fuelling the conflict. The international community should consider how best to monitor this. Recent campaigns show that consumers and business alike will boycott goods originating from war-zones.

The APPG welcomes the UN initiative to introduce certification schemes detailing the country of origin for diamonds. We recommend similar certification schemes, where appropriate, to address the exploitation of other precious resources.

3.5 HUMANITARIAN SITUATION AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

3.5.1 Current humanitarian crisis

The humanitarian crisis in the DRC has been described as one of the worst in the world. The fighting has led to appalling levels of hunger, disease and death, and countless abuses of human rights. It is estimated that 18 million people currently have no access to services of any kind. There are currently two million displaced people in DRC and 340,000 refugees in neighbouring countries³¹.

UN agencies and NGOs require more financial support to extend basic assistance to remote areas. The current OCHA appeal has not yet reached half of the total requested, falling far short of the need. Responses are mostly in-kind contributions and are not addressing crucial areas like health and education. For assistance to be extended to remote areas, the DRC government and the warring parties must ensure access. This continues to be a sticking point: all political leaders publicly declare their willingness to grant access, yet virtually every humanitarian organisation gives examples of being prevented from carrying out their work.

For successful implementation of the Lusaka Accord substantial aid commitments will be required for rehabilitation and development work. Aid should be channelled through the UN system and NGOs, and tied to milestones in the peace process. Key areas for assistance are food security, shelter, education and health. It is also important that NGOs, UN and donors adopt a more co-ordinated approach.

The UK and the EU should substantially increase humanitarian assistance to the DRC through the UN and NGOs. Assistance must be extended in the areas of health, nutrition and education. These areas have been least addressed by the partial response to the OCHA appeal to date.

PEOPLE UNABLE TO MEET BASIC NEEDS

1) Street Children, Orphans and Widows Project, Kinshasa town

16-year-old boy: "There is peace in Kinshasa now. Why can't you help me now? We can't even wash. We want to go to school. We want to understand things in the world. We want to be clean like other children we see. When we are sick we pour water over our heads and then we sleep. We've never seen a doctor, ever. No money, no doctor".

2) AIDS project, Foundation Femme Plus at Njere Njere, Kinshasa

20-year-old woman: "Women who haven't eaten for days sometimes offer themselves to soldiers for a few biscuits. The soldiers get sex and the women get AIDS. In time the women will infect more soldiers, who go home and infect their wives and their girlfriends."

Humanitarian Assistance to IDPs, Kababi in Masisi, Eastern DRC

NGO Worker: "Armed militias will attack any areas where people start cultivating crops. The local population has been forced to run away from their crops. They often lack the seeds and tools to start cultivating in the displaced areas. ECHO is funding packs for displaced families. Each family receives a pack containing kitchen tools, two blankets, two plates, four cups and a gerrycan. There is never enough to go around".

Head of Displaced Peoples Committee: "We come from a town called Katoyi, about 100kms from here. The Interahamwe and Mayi Mayi drove us out in 1998. Its impossible to identify how many of us there are. Most of us fled with nothing. Now we work doing tasks for families in the area in exchange for food."

The European Union:

The European Commission has spent over €200m (£125m) in the last decade on NGO-run rehabilitation programmes. This year €35m (£22m) was committed to providing minimal healthcare and malnutrition relief. In March the Commission adopted an €28m (£17m) programme of support to administer justice, and other measures designed to restore the rule of law. The Commission has also financing (around €2m or £1.2m) for the work of Sir Ketumile Maisire and his facilitation of the inter-Congolese dialogue.

The European Council adopted a common position in January concerning European Union support for implementation of the Lusaka agreement and the peace process in DRC. During July the European Parliament adopted a resolution expressing concern at the illegal exploitation of natural resources in the DRC.

3.5.2 Development opportunities and access to services

Poor access to services leads to great suffering in the Great Lakes region. Long-term development aid is essential if further bloodshed is to be avoided. In the DRC it is possible to undertake carefully considered development projects. Wherever they live, people have the right to development. In secure areas such as Goma and Kinshasa, opportunities to support development work should be explored.

3.5.2a Education

The importance of education to the development of DRC and the Great Lakes region cannot be overemphasised. In some peripheral areas of Kinshasa, up to half of all children do not attend primary school because their parents cannot afford the fees. School buildings often offer no protection against the elements. Many children lack books or pens. Without education, the region will be left with an unskilled workforce unable to develop its own economy. Formal education programmes are vital not

only for development, but also for prospects of peace building and promotion of civil society. Without universal education women will not benefit, whatever education is available.

Education helps to raise awareness of issues such as justice and human rights. The work of local NGOs and international NGOs providing formal and informal education should be given greater support.

Primary School - Kabibi in Masisi, Eastern DRC

The school is concrete with a tin roof. Inside it is very dark, but there is a blackboard and some benches. The school is designed for 200-400 but serves around 600 pupils. There are 140 girls and 337 boys in this school. It costs \$10 per year to attend this school and many children drop out during the year because their parents cannot pay the fees. Most children learn to write by watching the lucky few who can afford writing materials. Primary school teachers are paid \$2.50 per month.

3.5.2b Health

FOOD AND WATER

There is scope for increasing aid to vulnerable populations in secure areas.

- Only 45 per cent of people have access to clean drinking water. In Kinshasa, 30 per cent of diseases registered by the health authorities in 1998 were water related³².
- A survey conducted by Save the Children UK in the poorest parts of Commune Kimbanseke (Kinshasa) in April 2001 found that 42 per cent of children were chronically malnourished. In rebel held areas, malnutrition among children under five has reached 41 per cent³³.

At least 37 per cent of the population, over 18 million people, have no access to any form of healthcare³⁴. DRC has, arguably, one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. Infant mortality rates in the East of the country have reached 41 per cent per year³⁵.

Many hospitals lack medical equipment, sanitation and water. In rebel-held areas medical facilities have been looted or damaged and have little or no essential equipment. Malnutrition rates in Eastern Congo have reached a staggering 41%³⁶. The biggest killer in DRC is Malaria and basic protection from this disease is desperately needed. The lack of healthcare and poor living conditions have resulted in the return of previously eradicated diseases (bubonic plague, whooping cough), and epidemics (cholera, measles, meningitis).

Health Centre, Bihambwe in Masisi, Eastern DRC

There is no hospital in the vicinity, so the community started building a clinic with the help of missionaries and later from Save the Children. It covers 6,547 people. There is one nurse. The health centre is small and dark, consisting of three small dark rooms. In the treatment room there is very limited equipment: scissors, a bowl and some disinfectant. The fridge for vaccinations is broken, so the nurse travels to another town to get them. The journey wastes a lot of his time and exposure to the heat ruins the vaccine's effectiveness. There is one bed in the clinic. On the day of the visit a woman occupies the bed. She has a breach birth. "They can't operate on her here. Someone has been sent to find her family. Unless she goes to hospital today she will probably die. We can't send her to hospital on her own because she needs someone to look after her and feed her. The hospital has no food to feed patients, so they must bring their own."

3.5.2c HIV/AIDS

The greatest long-term health problem is HIV/AIDS. Statistics in DRC are notoriously unreliable, but the Congolese Ministry of Health estimates a rate of around 10 per cent in Western Congo. Rates in the East are thought to be higher. The presence of troops from countries known to have a high rate of HIV/AIDS infection such as Uganda, Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Angola will have a detrimental effect on women and their families throughout DRC.

The increase in the prevalence of HIV/AIDS amongst the Congolese population is a time bomb. As observed in other parts of sub-Saharan Africa, it is likely to have a profound effect on the country's future. Given that the 15-49 year old age group is the most vulnerable to infection, the productivity of the workforce will be severely affected and expenditure on healthcare will place an even greater strain on family incomes. Children will be born with the virus as others are left as orphans.

3.5.2d Grassroots peacebuilding

Community-based peace initiatives are vital in solving conflict, and must work in tandem with external peace processes. People want peace, but the challenge for politicians and civil society representatives is to build a feeling of ownership amongst the population. People must feel part of the process, and believe that leaders are negotiating on their behalf.

Efforts should be made to support projects promoting reconciliation and justice in DRC. As in Rwanda and Burundi, projects to build peace at the community level deserve more funding. There have been massive human rights abuses on all sides of the conflict, which have reinforced the corruption and sense of impunity inherited from the Mobutu era. At a street-children project in Kinshasa we were told "*every child here has their money stolen by a soldier at some point.*"

Oxfam funded project, Society Civile du Nord Kivu

"We try and reunite tribes that have been divided by the conflict. We encourage people to campaign towards peace. We hope our peace projects help as we believe that ethnic conflict will disappear as civil society develops. It is important that organisations such as our own give people hope and work towards lasting development."

The All Party Group welcomes the recent initiative of DFID to support peace-building efforts in eastern DRC. The Africa Conflict Fund should be expanded to assist grassroots peacebuilding projects across the country.

Development aid is vital if the country is to recover from years of war and devastation. As we have seen in Rwanda and Uganda, the provision of aid has helped both countries in their progress towards development after a catastrophic genocide in the former, and dictatorship in the latter. However, aid should be conditional on governments reducing their military expenditure and implementing poverty reduction programmes.

We recommend that British and European bilateral aid demonstrates balance and transparency. Aid should be linked to cessation of illegal exploitation of natural resources and implementation of the Lusaka Accords.

Recommendations

REGIONAL APPROACH

1. We recommend that, in line with the proactive approach Britain has already taken in the Great Lakes, the UK government produces a Regional Strategy paper, similar to current national strategy papers; this should be a collaborative initiative between the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, in consultation with interested parties.

PEACE PROCESS

The international community must demonstrate greater commitment to resolving key problems in the peace process; specifically:

2. We urge the UK Government to raise at the UN the contradiction between the Lusaka Agreement (which stipulates disarmament) and MONUC's mission of separating the warring groups and supervising voluntary disarmament; and to identify the increased capacity MONUC will require to carry out its role specified in the Lusaka Agreement.
3. We recommend that MONUC is expanded. Disarmament of armed groups must be accelerated. The provisions for disarmament laid out in the Lusaka Agreement will only be feasible if an expansion in personnel and resources is made available to MONUC.
4. We commend the UK Government on its 'Quick Start' demobilisation programme, and urge for its expansion.
5. We urge the UN to facilitate a study of how many Interahamwe and ex-FAR forces currently operate on the ground. A credible study must determine the scale of the threat posed by the Interahamwe.
6. We urge the UK government to ensure, with its European partners, that the EU embargo on arms imports into the region by all parties in the DRC conflict is made legally binding; and that a similar embargo is imposed by the UN.

INTER-CONGOLESE DIALOGUE

7. Greater support should be given to the office of the ICD facilitator, Sir Ketumile Masire. The UK government currently provides financial support (£43,000 in 2001) and a technical expert to the facilitator. We urge for the government to double this.

EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

8. An even-handed approach must be taken with all parties involved in the illegal exploitation of resources. Appropriate pressure must be brought to bear to end the suffering that has escalated around mineral-rich areas.
9. We urge the UK government to respond publicly to the findings of the UN's report of the External Panel on the Illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth in the Democratic Republic of Congo (S/2001/357), and the addendum report, when it is published.
10. The All Party Group welcomes the UN initiative to introduce certification schemes detailing the country of origin for diamonds. We recommend similar certification schemes, where appropriate, to address the exploitation of other precious resources.

AID

11. The UK government and the EU should substantially increase humanitarian assistance to the DRC through the UN and NGOs. Assistance must be extended in the areas of health, nutrition and education, that have been least addressed by the partial response to the OCHA appeal to date.
12. The APG welcomes the recent initiative of DFID to support peace promotion efforts in eastern DRC. We urge DfID to expand the Africa Conflict Fund to assist peace-building projects across the country.
13. We recommend that British and European bilateral aid policy demonstrates balance and transparency. Aid should be linked to the cessation of illegal exploitation of natural resources and implementation of the Lusaka Accords.

APPENDIX 1

ITINERARY 1ST AUGUST - 7TH AUGUST 2001

2nd August	Arrive Kinshasa @10:00 13:30 Briefing on DRC and security issues 15:00 Meeting with Foreign Minister, She Okitundu 16:30 Meeting with President Joseph Kabila 19:00 Dinner with Michel Kassa, Head of OCHA
3rd August	AM Project visits * Public health and education project (Oxfam) * Market Gardening Project (Save the Children) * Street children, orphans and widows (Christian Aid) 14:00 Meeting with Civil Society representatives. 15:45 Meeting with opposition politicians 20:00 Dinner at the British Embassy
4th August	AM Fly to Goma, Eastern DRC, with WFP 14:00 Briefing on Eastern DRC and security issues 16:00 Meet with RCD President Onusumba 17:00 Meet with Civil Society and local peace NGOs 19:00 Reception with international humanitarian actors
5th August	Day visit to see reality in a war touched area School – Kibabi, Masisi Health centre – Bihambwe, Masisi Community network – Matanda, Masisi CAJED transit centre – Goma
6th August	AM Meeting with local researchers Discussion of issues on Ugandan held territory of Ituri 11:30 Fly to Nairobi, Kenya, with Save the Children 19:30 Press briefing 23:40 Depart Nairobi

APPENDIX 2

CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS: 1870 - 2001

1870s	Belgian King Leopold II sets up a private venture to colonise Congo.
1874-77	British explorer Henry Stanley navigates Congo river to the Atlantic Ocean.
1879-87	Leopold commissions Stanley to establish the King's authority in the Congo basin.
1885	Leopold announces the establishment of the Congo Free State, headed by himself.
1885-1910	Up to ten million Congolese are estimated to have died as a result of King Leopold's genocidal regime ³⁷ .
1891-92	Belgians conquer Katanga.
1892-94	Control of Eastern Congo wrested from East African Arab and Swahili speaking traders.
1908	Belgian State annexes Congo in the wake of Leopold's debts to the state and growing condemnation of widespread human rights abuses.
1955	Belgian Professor Antoin van Bilsen publishes a "30 year plan" granting the Congo increased self-government.
1959	Belgium begins to lose control following serious nationalist riots in Leopoldville (now Kinshasa.)
1960 June	Congo gains independence. Patrice Lumumba is elected Prime Minister. Joseph Kasavubu is President.
1960 July	Following a mutiny by the Congolese army and the declaration of independence by Katanga province (lead by Moise Tshombe), the UN Security Council votes to send in troops. This is the first time in the UN's history that peacekeepers are dispatched.
1960 Sept	Kasavbu dismisses Lumumba as Prime Minister.
1961 Feb	Lumumba murdered, reportedly with US and Belgian complicity.
1961 Aug	UN troops begin disarming Katangese soldiers.
1963	Tshombe agrees to end Katanga's secession.
1964	President Kasavubu appoints Tshombe as Prime Minister.
1965	Kasavubu and Tshombe ousted in a coup led by Joseph Mobutu.
1971	Joseph Mobutu renames the country Zaire and himself Mobutu Sese Seko.
1973-74	Mobutu nationalises foreign firms and expels Europeans.
1977	Mobutu invites foreign investors back. French, Belgian and Moroccan troops help repulse attack on Katanga by Angolan based rebels.
1989	Zaire defaults on loans from Belgium; aid programmes are cancelled and the economy deteriorates.
1990	Mobutu agrees to end the ban on multiparty politics and appoints transitional government, but retains substantial powers.
1991	Following riots in Kinshasa by unpaid soldiers, Mobutu agrees to coalition government with opposition leaders, but retains control of the security apparatus and key ministries.
1993	Rival pro and anti-Mobutu political parties created.
1994	Mobutu agrees to appointment of Kengo Wa Dondo, an advocate for austerity and free market reforms, as prime minister.
1994	After genocide in Rwanda, Rwandan refugees and Interahamwe arrive in Eastern DRC. The UN sets up refugee camps to cope with the influx.
1996-7	Tutsi rebels capture much of eastern Zaire while Mobutu is abroad for medical treatment.
1997 May	Tutsi and other anti-Mobutu rebels, backed by Rwanda and Uganda, capture Kinshasa; Zaire is renamed the Democratic Republic of Congo; Laurent Kabila becomes president.
1998 Aug	Rebel forces, backed by Ugandan and Rwandan troops, advance towards the capital, Kinshasa; intervention of troops from Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola turns the tide and the rebels are pushed back.

1998 Sept	Kinshasa comes close to running out of food, while rebels face defeat in the west and thousands of rebels who narrowly failed to reach Kinshasa are captured. Despite this the rebels in the east continue fighting.
1998 Oct	Rebels capture the government stronghold of Kindu in the east as more peacetalks break down, this time in the Zambian capital, Lusaka.
1999 Feb	Civilians flee fighting following major rebel offensives in North and Southeast.
1999 July	Fighting breaks out in Kisangani between former allies, Rwanda and Uganda.
1999 Aug	All rebel groups sign a peace agreement in the Zambian capital, Lusaka.
1999 Oct	Amid allegations of cease-fire violations, rebels reject President Laurent Kabila's invitation to take part in a national dialogue on reconciliation.
2000 Feb	Ethnic fighting erupts between communities in the rebel held east. The UN Security Council authorises a 5,500 strong UN force to monitor the cease-fire.
2000 Aug	Leaders of the countries involved in the Congolese civil war - Rwanda, Uganda, Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe - as well as President Kabila - assess implementation of the Lusaka Agreement.
2001-16 Jan	President Laurent Kabila is shot dead by one of his bodyguards.
2001-26 Jan	Joseph Kabila sworn in as president.
2001-31 Jan	Kabila visits France en route to the US; tells French President Jacques Chirac he is ready for talks with the rebels without preconditions.
2001- 1 Feb	Kabila meets Rwandan President Paul Kagame - a key backer of the rebels in DRC - in Washington.
2001- 3 Feb	Kabila urges all warring sides in DRC to hold roundtable peace talks with him. Addressing a meeting of the UN Security Council, he called for a precise timetable for the deployment of troops in DRC and the withdrawal of foreign troops.
2001-28 Feb	Ugandan and Rwandan troops begin pulling troops back from the DRC frontline.
2001 3 Apr	Zimbabwean troops begin withdrawing from DRC.
2001 20 Apr	UN troops deployed in the rebel held town of Kisangani.
2001 May	President Kabila lifts ban on all parties that were in operation under former president Mobutu Sese Seko.

APPENDIX 4

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APPENDIX 5

ACRONYMS AND NAMES

AFDL	Alliance des forces democratiques pour la liberation du Congo. Kabila's rebel group in 1996-1997.	Kabila, Joseph	DRC President and former top commander in the FAC.
AliR	Armee de Liberation du Rwanda. A Hutu rebel group composed of ex-FAR, Interahamwe and new recruits.	Kabila, Laurent	Former President of the DRC.
APPG	All Party Parliamentary Group.	Lendu	Eastern Congo ethnic group that has been embroiled in bloodletting against the Hema.
Banyamulenge	Ethnic Tutsis who have lived in South Kivu since the 1900's. Their rights to Congolese citizenship are questioned by many, and their communities are under assault from rival ethnic groups.	Lusaka Agreement	Cease-fire agreement signed by the DRC war combatants – five foreign states, Congo's government and rebels – in July and August 1999.
Bemba, Jean Pierre	Leader of the Equateur-based MLC.	Mayi Mayi	Traditional militias found in Eastern DRC.
DDRR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, Resettlement and Re-integration.	Maisire, Ketumile	Former president of Botswana and OAU appointed Inter-Congolese Dialogue Neutral Facilitator.
DFID	UK Department for International Development.	MLC	Mouvement pour la liberation du Congo, Jean Pierre Bemba's Equateur-based guerrilla group.
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo.	MONUC	United Nations Mission in DRC.
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office.	OAU	Organisation of African Unity.
Ex-FAR	Former Government of Rwanda Army (up to 1994).	OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aid (UN).
FAC	Forces Armees Congolaises or Congolese armed forces. The military force of the Kinshasa government.	Okitundu, Leonard	DRC Foreign Minister.
FCO	UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office.	RCD-Goma	Rassemblement Congolais pour la democratie or Congolese Rally for Democracy, Goma wing.
FDD	A Burundian Hutu rebel group lead by Jean-Bosco Ndayikengurukiye.	RCD-ML	Faction of RCD that followed Wamba dia Wamba when he split from the Goma-based RCD in March 1999.
FLC	Rassemblement congolais pour la democratie - Mouvement de liberation du Congo.	RPA	Rwandan Patriotic Army. Current Rwandan Government, lead by President Paul Kagame.
Hema	Eastern DRC-based ethnic group with powerful land and business interests.	UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola.
IDP	Internally Displaced Person.	WFP	World Food Programme.
Interahamwe	Extremist Hutu militia group that committed the bulk of Rwanda's 1994 genocide. Now known as the AliR.		
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network (UN)		
JMC	Joint Military Commission. A body composed of two officers picked from each of Lusaka's signatory armies, appointed to plan and implement the cease-fire and force's disengagement with the help of the UN and OAU.		

5.5 MAP OF DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO



5.6 MAP OF AFRICA



ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON THE GREAT LAKES REGION AND GENOCIDE PREVENTION

Chair: Oona King MP
 Vice-Chair: Dr Jenny Tonge MP

PURPOSE OF THE GROUP

- To raise awareness about the ongoing crisis in Rwanda and the Great Lakes region.
- To use parliamentary channels to press for greater British Government assistance to Rwanda and the Great Lakes Region.
- To work with international agencies and NGOs to ensure early warning signals of conflict in the region are brought to the attention of the British Government.
- To consider issues raised by Rwanda and the Great Lakes region: e.g. conflict resolution, reconciliation, displaced persons, children in conflict and child-headed households; capacity building across all sectors; the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative (HIPC) and debt restructuring.
- To consider reform of intervention in conflict and pre-genocide situations and the role of the UN and International Agencies.
- To provide a campaigning forum for NGOs and other interested groups to network more effectively.
- To support the dialogue between NGOs, interested groups and governments.

If you are able to support the work of the APPG, please make a cheque payable to "All Party Parliamentary Group, Great Lakes" and send to Oona King MP, House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA.

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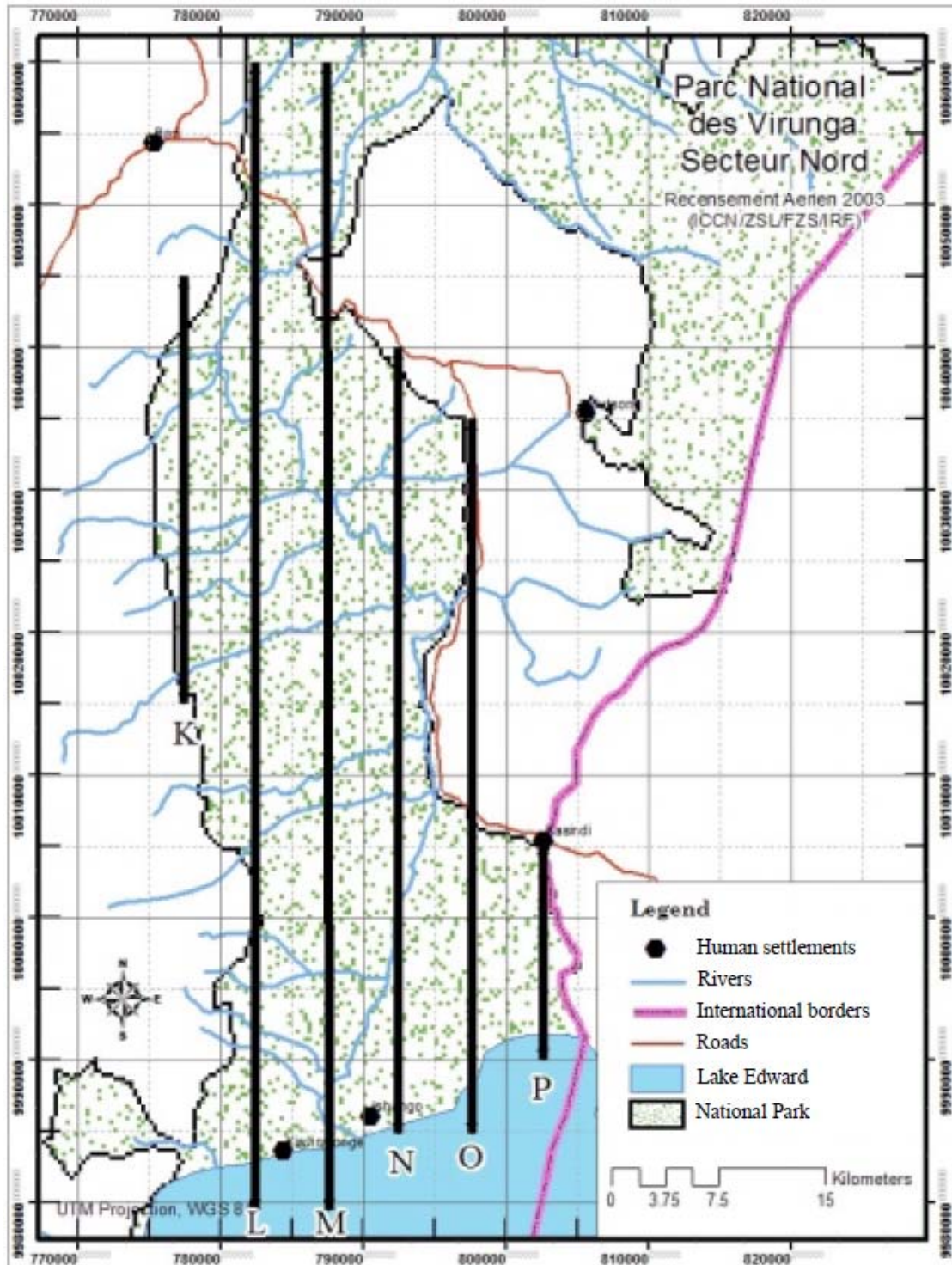
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- 8 Front pour la liberation du Congo (FLC).
- 9 The ADF- Allied Democratic Forces.
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- 11 Interview with Collette Brackemen, Le Soir, March 6th 2001.
- 12 Interview with Agence France-Presse, September 3rd 2001.
- 13 DfID estimates Interahamwe numbers at 10,000-15,000. International Crisis Group (December 2000), and Amnesty International (June 2001) estimate up to 40,000.
- 14 Conversation with Kamel Morjane, political advisor to MONUC, 3/8/01
- 15 See "Under Fire: The Human Costs of Small Arms in Northeast DRC, Oxfam 2001."
- 16 "Rwandese Controlled East: Devastating death toll, Amnesty International 2001, Reluctant Recruits: Children and Adults Forcibly Recruited For Military Service in North Kivu, Human Rights Watch 2001, "Torture: a weapon of war against unarmed civilians, Amnesty International 2001, "Killing Human Decency", Amnesty International 2001.
- 17 Special Report: The deadly scramble for diamonds in Africa, Financial Times, 10 July 2000
- 18 Coltan is a compound metal essential in the manufacture of playstations and mobile phones, found in Eastern DRC, Canada and Australia.
- 19 "Through the eye of a needle", Jubilee 2000 coalition p15
- 20 Confirmed by local people, August 5th 2001.
- 21 "A people persecuted by killers on all sides of a bloody war," The Guardian, July 31st 2001
- 22 * Information dates from the time of the visit.
* This is a best estimate drawn from local sources.
* No distinction is made between deployment of rebel troops and occupying troops as they are (unless indicated) commonly considered in the same location; even if this were not the case, rebel forces are seen as accountable to occupying forces.
* Positions of 'negative forces' are not included.
* There is also gas in Lake Kivu and oil in the tropical forest.
- 23 The FLC merged of the Mouvement de liberation du Congo and the Ugandan backed faction of the RCD.
- 24 "Criminalised economies of rumour and war in the Kivus, D.R. Congo, Stephen Jackson, 2000 p5.
- 25 See "Vultures flock to feast on the rich carcass of the Congo as Africa's "Great War" rumbles on," Independent, Thursday 18th January 2001.
- 26 Letter from the National Bank of Rwanda, sent to freelance journalist Bjorn Willum and posted on the Africa-website www.willum.com.
- 27 Interviews with local people and independent field research, August 2001.
- 28 UN Report of the Panel of Experts on Illegal Exploitation of Precious Minerals and Other Forms of Wealth in DRC, 2001.
- 29 Branching Out: Zimbabwe's Resource Colonialism in the DRC, Global Witness, 2001 and Africa Confidential (Vol 41 No 11, Vol 42 No 9).
- 30 Conversations with local people in Massisi, Eastern DRC, August 4th 2001.
- 31 No End in Sight: The human tragedy of the conflict in Democratic Republic of Congo, August 2001
- 32 No End in Sight: The human tragedy of the conflict in Democratic Republic of Congo, August 2001
- 33 No End in Sight: The human tragedy of the conflict in Democratic Republic of Congo, August 2001
- 34 No End in Sight: The human tragedy of the conflict in Democratic Republic of Congo, August 2001
- 35 No End in Sight: The human tragedy of the conflict in Democratic Republic of Congo, August 2001
- 36 No End in Sight: The human tragedy of the conflict in Democratic Republic of Congo, August 2001
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A. K. Kes Hillman Smith, Emmanuel de Merode, Fraser Smith, Amube Ndey,
Norbert Mushenzi and Guy Mboma, Virunga National Park — North —
March 2003 aerial counts

[Translation]

Virunga National Park, northern sector
2003 aerial census



Introduction

Two aerial censuses were carried out between 24 and 28 March 2003 in the savannah zone of the Virunga National Park North. The first was a systematic sampling flight, and the second a specific hippopotamus count of the northern lake and Semliki River.

The purpose of the flights was to:

- evaluate and quantify the condition of the park's flora and fauna following the effects of the war;
- quantify and assess the distribution of threats and trampling damage in the park;
- count hippopotamuses, a key species and long-term indicator for the park.

The team comprised staff from the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation (ICCN) led by Director Mushenzi, the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and the International Rhino Foundation (IRF), with a plane supplied by the Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) and funding from the USFWS.

It was planned to conduct a census of the northern and southern savannah, but because of security problems in the south, the census in that sector was postponed until July.

Counting method

The counting method involved a **systematic reconnaissance flight** or **SRF**, using parallel transect sampling as described by **Norton Griffiths** (1978) and the Count Manual for Garamba National Park (Hillman Smith *et al.*, 1994, and Watkin and Hillman Smith, 1995). This method is widely used in aerial censuses of fauna and livestock.

A UTM (**Universal Transverse Mercator**) co-ordinate system was used for the transects and sub-units, the same as is used for monitoring law enforcement in Virunga National Park. A GPS (**Garmin Global Positioning System**) was used to locate the positions of the transects and sub-units.

The data were analysed using the **Jolly 2** method (**Norton Griffiths**, 1978) in Quattro Pro (Borland) and Microsoft Excel, and the vegetation map was produced using Idrisi and, on some occasions, **ARC/INFO**.

Census area:

Virunga National Park, northern sector, non-forested (1,550 km²).

Landing strip

Ishango

Plane:

Cessna 206 9Q-CBR, provided by the Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS)

Equipment:

Radar altimeter, Garmin GPS (Global Positioning System), markers, cassette recorder per person, cassettes and batteries, chronometer, digital video, observation forms, computer for analyses.

Team members and their duties:

Pilot: Fraser Smith

Pilots plane, navigates along and at the end of each transect using GPS, announces start of transects and sub-units.

Front seat observer: Dr Kes Smith

Records the start and end of each transect. In each sub-unit notes the height AGL using the altimeter and habitat factors as defined below (FSO data form attached).

Middle seat observers: Amube Ndey and Dr. Emmanuel de Merode

Count and tape-record all the animal species and signs of human occupation observed in the transects, as shown in the "Species Codes" table. After each flight, the observations are transcribed onto RSO data forms (example attached). The more experienced observers also note the different types of habitat in which the animals were observed during the flight.

Rear seat observers: Director Norbert Mushenzi and conservation officer Guy Mboma

These observers were in the rear seats, since, as park managers, they were interested in having a broader overview of the condition of the park. They recorded overall data on all the fauna observed and on the condition of the park.

Sampling intensity:

Ten per cent. The transects were 5 km apart. The target height was 350 ft above ground level. At 350 ft the width of the two observation strips was around 500 m. The sampling scale averaged ten per cent.

Transects:

The transects were at 5 km intervals, oriented north-south, as shown on the "**transect line projections**" map. The co-ordinates of the starting and finishing points for each transect, alternating north/south, are shown on the "**GPS waypoints**" map.

Transect widths:

The transects widths were determined in advance by attaching metal rods to the plane's wing struts at distances calculated according to **Norton Griffiths** (*op. cit.*), as follows:

With the plane in the flying position (props were used to raise the base of the rudder) the observer is sitting in a comfortable position for counting. The height (**h**) of the observer's eyes above ground is then measured. An internal rod is attached to the framework, parallel to the plane's central axis, ensuring that the line of sight is not obstructed by the wheel (**a**). A mark (**A**) is made on the ground from that line of sight. A second mark (**B**) is also made on the ground at a distance (**w**) from **A** which is calculated as follows:

$$w = W \cdot h / H$$

where **h** is the height of the observer's eyes above ground level

W = the width of the transect or route

H = flying altitude

h and **H** are expressed in the same units, as are **w** and **W**.

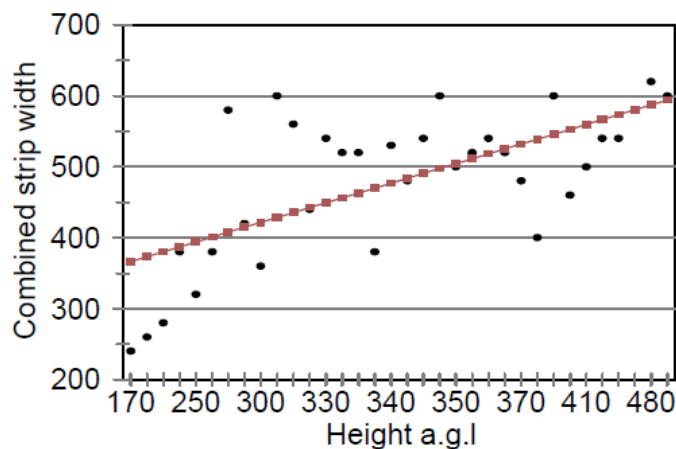
An external rod (**b**) is then attached to the wing strut on the line of sight with **B**.

Calibration:

The transect widths were calibrated by flying at different altitudes over areas marked on the route at 20 m and 100 m intervals. The observers counted the number of areas and the sections between points marked width wise across the strip, so that the number of widths counted could subsequently be calculated. The height of each flight over the route was recorded by radar altimeter. These flights had to be made during preparation, before the start of the actual counting, at the start and end of each count flight. The totals of the transect widths added together for each pair of observers (middle and rear seat observers) were entered in a Quattro Pro file at the same time as the height above ground level (**AGL**), as shown in the "**analysis of calibration data**". The result of the subsequent analyses, combined with the height AGL/sub-unit, was used to calculate the strip width for each transect and sub-unit.

PNVi-N March 2003

Calibrations



Positioning:

The transects were divided into sub-units at 5 km intervals. The GPS was programmed from the outset to locate the start and end of each transect. The limits of the sub-units were determined by being 5 km from the end of the transect or by waypoints if it was a GPS with a memory.

Species:

The animal species counted by both the middle and rear seat observers were recorded using the codes in the “**Species Codes**” table. Signs of human occupation and land use were also recorded. The carcasses of elephants and other species were classified as follows:

1. fresh with flesh attached;
2. recent bones with decomposed elements present;
3. white bones with no decomposed elements;
4. old grey bones.

(Douglas-Hamilton & Hillman, 1981)

Habitat factors:

In each sub-unit, the front seat observer noted the height AGL measured by the radar altimeter and also estimated in per cent the habitat parameters given below, in units of ten per cent intervals.

Tree cover as per cent of each sub-unit

Tree foliage as per cent of trees present

Bush cover, as above

Bush foliage, as above

Grass cover, as above

Green grass, as above

Old long grass as per cent of grass present

Burnt areas as per cent for each sub-unit

Water availability

0 = none

1 = available for humans and livestock

2 = limited availability

3 = unlimited availability

4 = running water

5 = mud

Farming as per cent of each sub-unit

Areas of vegetation.

Analysis

The analysis was carried out in Quattro Pro using the method described by **Watkin *et al.*** (1995) and **Hillman Smith *et al.*** (1995). The method involved entering the animal and habitat observations and the altitudes for each sub-unit in two separate versions of a spreadsheet, the table being viewed as a map of the census area with each cell representing one sub-unit. The spreadsheet was printed directly in order both to map the distribution of the animal observations and, after conversion, the density distribution. The habitat data were processed in the same way but reproduced in a greyscale map shaded according to density of cover.

A graph of the calibrations for the strip was created in Quattro Pro and the resulting regression was applied to the altitude map for each sub-unit. That meant that the width of the transect for each sub-unit could be corrected, as opposed to applying an average to all the transects. Placing this alongside a map of animal observations gave the densities. In the spreadsheet map, the transect and totals for the layers were added together and the data were transposed to a second spreadsheet drawn up using the formula by **Jolly** (1969) and **Norton Griffiths** (1978) to calculate the population estimates and confidence limits. The results were printed directly with details of the numbers observed, the estimated stratified numbers and the confidence limits.

[Not translated: detailed breakdown of aerial census carried out in March 2003]

ANNEX 5.12

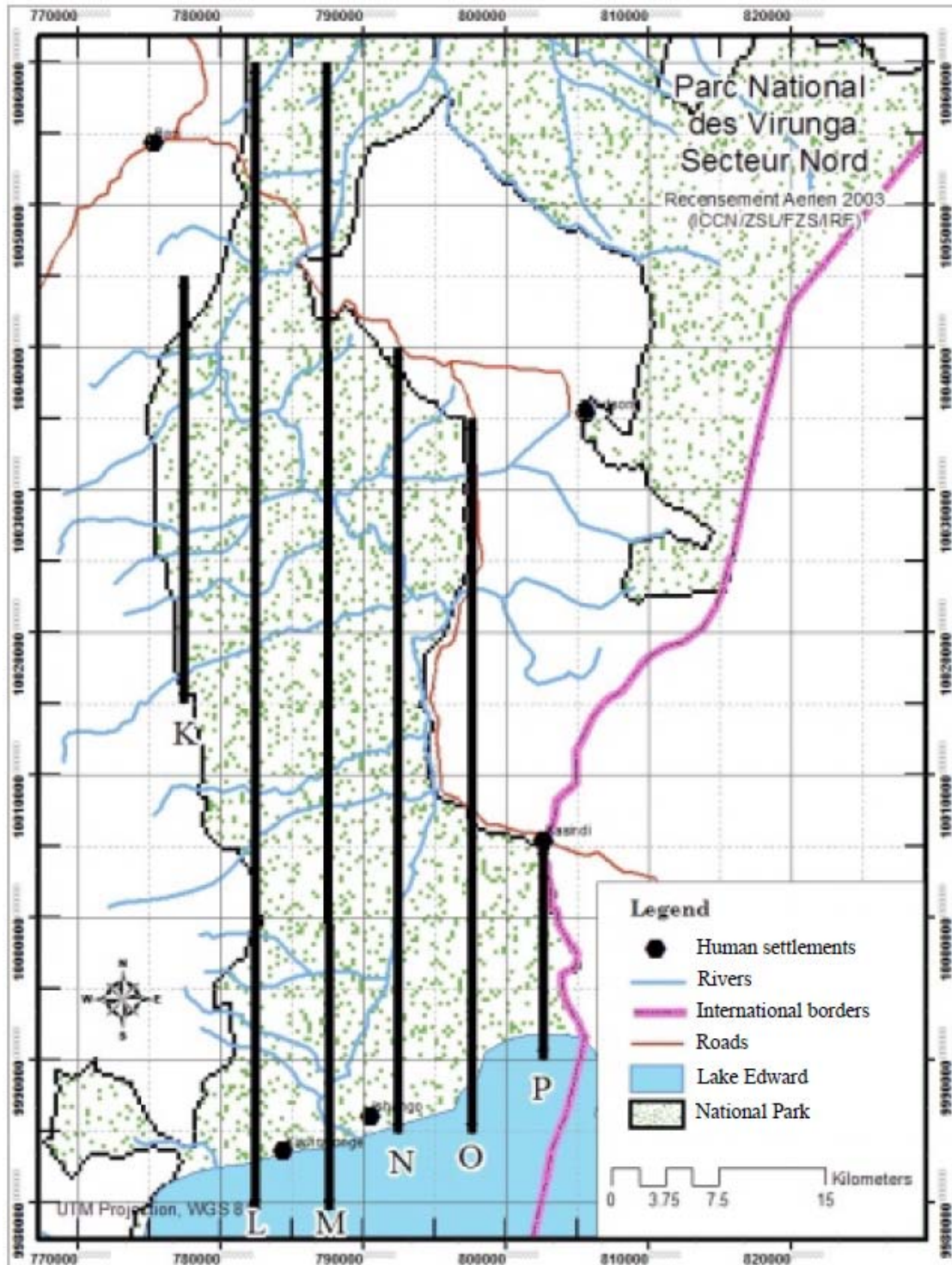
**A. K. Kes Hillman Smith, Emmanuel de Merode, Fraser Smith, Amube Ndey,
Norbert Mushenzi and Guy Mboma, *Virunga National Park — North —
March 2003 aerial counts***

[Relevant extracts only]

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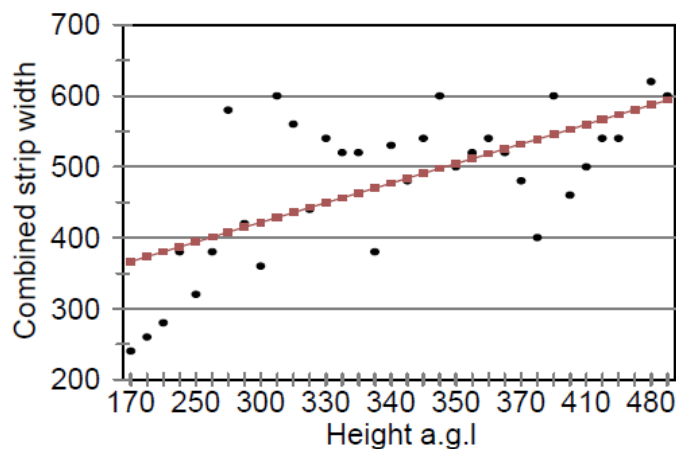
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PNVi-N March 2003

Calibrations



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[Not translated: detailed breakdown of aerial census carried out in March 2003]

ANNEX 5.13

DRC national consultant, *Evaluation of the damage caused to Congolese fauna by Uganda between 1998 and 2003*, September 2016

[Relevant extracts only]

DRC national consultant, *Evaluation of the damage caused to Congolese fauna by Uganda between 1998 and 2003, September 2016*

[Translation]

A. Description of the problem

The Ugandan army's invasion of the DRC between 1998 and 2003 also caused considerable environmental damage. Protected species were killed or transported to Uganda, and entire forests were destroyed.

When the Ugandan occupation ended, it was found that certain species had disappeared altogether, while for others just a few animals survived in various parks and protected areas.

The destruction of fauna had thus reached worrying proportions, with the loss of flagship species such as okapi, northern white rhino, elephants, etc.

Napalm bombs had devastated huge areas of burnt forest. Even the earth had been systematically plundered by artisanal miners and those mining valuable raw materials such as gold, diamonds and coltan, resulting in the decimation of both flora and fauna.

Studies conducted by the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation (ICCN) show the following reductions in the numbers of animals in the various national parks where the Ugandan army operated (Annex I).

I. Virunga National Park (Northern Sector)

- Hippopotamuses are seriously endangered. At least 107 were lost during the war;
- Rwindi plains antelope have become rare: 20,000 have been recorded as lost;
- buffalo lost: 9,048;
- elephants lost: 1,229;
- western kob lost: 160;
- waterbuck lost: 39;
- warthogs lost: 67;
- bushbucks lost: 19;
- baboons lost: 96;
- mongooses lost: 77;
- crocodiles lost: 72;
- deforestation:
 - Virunga National Park zone: 63 km²;
 - Mikeno zone: 15 km².

II. Garamba National Park

- Elephants lost: 5,000;
- giraffes lost: 92;
- antelope lost: 5,000;
- white rhino lost: 21;
- waterbucks lost: 808;
- warthogs lost: 3,905;
- bushbucks lost: 135;
- Lichtenstein's hartebeest lost: 17.

III. Okapi Wildlife Reserve

- Elephants lost: 2,000;
- tusks removed;
- antelope lost: 1,000;
- okapi lost: 1,000;
- chimpanzees lost: 2,000.

IV. Maiko National Park

- Elephants lost: 2,000;
- tusks removed;
- antelope lost: 1,000.

B. Evaluation of damage

It is not easy to put a value on protected species. It must first be determined what is to be evaluated and then how it can be evaluated.

We have therefore focused on biological capital, the value of which depends on the species' status according to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). CITES categorizes species as follows:

- fully protected species (CITES Appendix I);
- partly protected species subject to annual export quotas (CITES Appendix II); and
- species with no special protection (CITES Appendix III).

However, if a species listed in Appendices II or III of CITES comes under such serious human pressure that it becomes vulnerable, the country can move it to CITES Appendix I.

Thus, if a species is listed in Appendix I, its sale is strictly prohibited. Black market prices can be found in certain sources, but publication of these figures is generally avoided in order not to encourage poaching. Species in Appendices II and III, on the other hand, can be sold on the local or international market. Similar species should have the same financial value. The price of an orangutan on the black market can be applied to gorillas and chimpanzees.

I. Purpose of the evaluation

The slaughter of protected species has an impact not just in terms of the extermination of rare, critically endangered species in protected areas and parks (several of which are UNESCO World Heritage Sites), but also on their natural reproduction. The offspring which the animal species concerned would have had must therefore also be evaluated.

On the basis of the literature on the species' sex ratio¹ and their rate of reproduction, the situation is as shown in Table A below:

Table A: Species' sex ratio and rate of reproduction

No.	Species	Sex ratio ¹ (%)		Rate of reproduction	Bibliographical references
		Female	Male		
1	Elephant	50	50	1 baby per year	Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller, (1985), p. 104 F. Bourlière, (1961), pp. 467-471
2	Hippopotamus	50	50	1 baby per year	Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller, (1985), pp. 13-14 F. Bourlière, (1961), pp. 467-471
3	Antelope	69.5	30.5	2 babies per year	Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller, (1985), pp. 29-31 F. Bourlière, (1961), pp. 467-471
4	Western kob	62.9	37.1	3 babies per year	F. Bourlière, (1961), pp. 467-471
5	Bushbuck	58	42	2 babies per year	Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller, (1985), pp. 40-41
6	Waterbuck	69.5	30.5	1 baby per year	Michaux J-F. (2002), p. 85 F. Bourlière, (1961), pp. 467-471
7	Lichtenstein's hartebeest	60	40	1 baby per year	Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller, (1985), p. 62
8	Gorilla	60	40	2 babies in 5 years	Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller, (1985), p. 293
9	Buffalo	54.3	45.7	1 baby per year	Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller, (1985), pp. 90-91

¹Sex ratio means the ratio of females to males for a species in equilibrium.

10	Giraffe	50	50	4 babies in 5 years	Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller, (1985), pp. F. Bourlière, (1961), pp. 467–471
11	Rhinoceros	50	50	2 babies in 5 years	Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller, (1985), p. 104
12	Crocodile	50	50	50 babies per year	www.acces.ens-lyon.fr/biotic/determin/html:determinisme du sexe chez les reptiles
13	Warthog	63.3	36.7	16 babies per year	Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller, (1985), pp. 12-13 F. Bourlière, (1961), pp. 467–471
14	Baboon	50	50	2 babies in 5 years	Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller, (1985), pp. 19-20
15	Mongoose	40	60	12 babies per year	Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller, (1985), pp. 19-20
16	Chimpanzee	60	40	2 babies in 5 years	Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller, (1985), p. 297
17	Okapi	50	50	4 babies in 5 years	Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller, (1985), pp. 19-20

Sources:

- Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller (1985), “Mammifères d’Afrique et de Madagascar”, Delachaux and Niestlé (eds.), Paris, p. 397.
- F. Bourlière (1984), Sex-ratio de la Girafe, *Mammalia* (ed.), Vol. 25, Issue 4, pp. 467-471, ISSN (online) 1864-1547, ISSN (print) 0025-1461, DOI: 10.1515/mamm.1961.25.4.467, October 2009.
- Barbara M. Leuthold and Walter Leuthold (1978), “Ecology of the giraffe in Tsavo East National Park”, Kenya, *African Journal of Ecology*, Vol. 16, No. 1, p. 1. DOI: 10.1111/j.1365-2028.1978.tb00419.x.
- Michaux J-F. (2002), Aménagement du territoire villageois et gestion des relations populations humaines/éléphants au Ranch de Gibier de Nazinga (Burkina Faso), *FUSAGx*, 75p.
- [www.acces.ens-lyon.fr/biotic/determin/html:determinisme du sexe chez les reptiles](http://www.acces.ens-lyon.fr/biotic/determin/html:determinisme%20du%20sexe%20chez%20les%20reptiles)

Extracts from the works by Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller and F. Bourlière are annexed (Annex 2).

The young which would have been born under normal conditions are thus added to the original populations of the decimated species.

The species distribution for each site is as follows:

Table No 1: Summary of decimated species

Species/parks	GARAMBA	VIRUNGA	MAIKO	WILDLIFE RESERVE	Total
Antelope	5,000	20,000	1,000	1,000	27,000
Elephants	5,000	1,229	2,000	2,000	10,229
Hippopotamuses		107			107
Buffalo		9,048			9,048
Giraffes	92				92
Okapis				1,000	1,000
Rhinoceroses	21				21
Warthogs	3,905	67			3,972
Baboons		96			96
Mongoose		77			77
Crocodiles		72			72
Lichtenstein's hartebeests	17				17
Western kob		160			160
Waterbucks	808	39			847
Bushbucks	135	19			154
Chimpanzees				2,000	2,000

In order to evaluate the damage sustained by the protected species, we took account of the sex ratio and the rate of reproduction of each species according to the information in Table A above. Table No. 1 can therefore be transformed as follows (Tables 2 and 3).

Table No. 2 gives the numbers of males and females making up each population in each park.

Table No 2. Male/female distribution

[Table not reproduced]

Table No 3. Total animals including offspring

[Table not reproduced]

The offspring numbers have been calculated conservatively. They take account only of animals which might have been born during the war, and not those born afterwards. For some species, animals which should have been born during the war might themselves have given birth to young even before the war ended.

II. Evaluation method

The species listed above helped to maintain biodiversity in equilibrium, but they were also a major source of finance — and one that was set to grow considerably — in terms of attracting local and foreign tourists (accommodation, restaurants, transport, visits, etc.).

In order to come up with an objective valuation, we used the financial value of the protected species when trafficked. Our basis for determining these market values was the CRS Report for Congress on “International Illegal Trade in Wildlife: Threats and US Policy”, which established

the trafficked value of various species killed illegally². This document gives prices for animal species comparable to those killed in the DRC’s national parks. For example, the report mentions a price for an orangutan, which we have used in the present study for other endangered great apes such as gorillas and chimpanzees.

Where that approach was not practical, we looked at the prices paid on international markets for live animals, or alternatively for hunting these animals. Where necessary, the amounts were adjusted to take account of the animals’ protection status in the DRC. For example, southern white rhinos can be hunted in South Africa because they are in CITES Appendix II. Northern white rhinos, which live in the DRC, are seriously endangered and are in CITES Appendix I. They are therefore more valuable.

When considering market value, account must also be taken of the fact that some species are killed not just for their meat, but also to sell their horns, bones, tusks in the case of elephants, skins, canines (teeth), beaks, etc., mainly for use in traditional medicines in certain countries (cultures). Hence the need to evaluate not just the species killed but also the other tradable elements involved and any ecotourism products, particularly trophies. However, where the available prices reflected the value of the animal including its horns, the value of the horns was not counted separately. The only items counted separately, because of their huge trafficked value, were rhino horns and elephant tusks.

The prices applied for each species distinguish between adults and young. The following table shows the prices used for each species and the (comparative) price which the present report took as a basis. The sources and, where appropriate, how the averages were calculated are shown in [Annex 3](#).

Table 4: List of prices of protected species which are illegally poached

Species	Type	PRICE	References
Antelope	Adult	US\$2,488.00	Average of prices in South Africa for live sable antelope and impala. See Annex 3.a.
	Young	US\$1,244.00	
Bushbuck	Adult	US\$1,028.00	Price of live animals in South Africa. See Annex 3.b.
	Young	US\$524.00	
Lichtenstein’s hartebeest	Adult	US\$9,494.00	Price of live animals in South Africa. See Annex 3.c.
	Young	US\$4,747.00	
Waterbuck	Adult	US\$2,451.00	Price of a hunt in South Africa. See Annex 3.d.
	Young	US\$1,225.00	
Western kob	Adult	US\$8,344.00	Price of live animals in South Africa. See Annex 3.e.
	Young	US\$4,172.00	
Crocodile	Adult	US\$15,000.00	Value of a Chinese alligator, CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, p. 7. See Annex 3.f.
	Young	US\$3,750.00	
Baboon	Adult	US\$2,000.00	International market price for live animals. See Annex 3.g.
	Young	US\$1,000.00	
Mongoose	Adult	US\$2,000.00	Same price as baboon. See Annex 3.h.
	Young	US\$1,000.00	
Warthog	Adult	US\$5,500.00	International market price for baby warthogs. See Annex 3.i.
	Young	US\$5,500.00	
	Young	US\$25,000.00	

²Liana Sun Wyler and Pervaze A. Sheikh, (3 March 2008), “International Illegal Trade in Wildlife: Threats and US Policy”, CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service.

Chimpanzee	Adult	US\$50,000.00	In the great apes category (like orang-utan and bonobo) at US\$50,000; CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, p.7. See Annexes 3.j and 3.f.
	Young	US\$25,000.00	
Elephant	Adult	US\$50,000.00	Price of a hunt in South Africa, adjusted to take account of the classification of the DRC's elephants in CITES Appendix I. For ivory, http://www.havocscope.com/price-of-a-kilogram-of-ivory-for-sale-in-asia . See Annex 3.k.
	Young	US\$20,000.00	
	Ivory/kg	US\$850.00	
Hippopotamus	Adult	US\$3,775.00	Price of live animals in South Africa. See Annex 3.l.
	Young	US\$1,887.50	
Giraffe	Adult	US\$50,000.00	Sub-species Giraffa Camelopardalis congoensis severely endangered. Application of black market price for great apes. See Annex 3.m.
	Young	US\$25,000.00	
Okapi	Adult	US\$50,000.00	This species is unique and only exists in the DRC; same simulation as giraffe, value estimated at US\$50,000. See Annex 3.n.
	Young	US\$25,000.00	
Rhinoceros	Adult	US\$50,000.00	Northern white rhino in CITES Appendix I; adjusted price of live animals in South Africa (CITES Appendix II). Average price of horn US\$25,000/kg: CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, p.7. Weight of white rhino horns 4 kg, http://www.poachingfacts.com/faces-of-the-poachers/buyers-of-rhino-horn . See Annex 3.o and for the CRS Report for Congress, Annex 3.f.
	Young	US\$25,000.00	
	Rhino horn/kg	US\$25,000.00	

[Not translated: tables showing the values of animals lost in the various national parks, based on the figures in table above.]

E. Total

Adding together the figures for all the national parks concerned produces the following results.

Table 5: Evaluation of ecological damage to fauna for each national park (1998-2003) (in US\$)

Species/parks	GARAMBA	VIRUNGA	MAIKO	WILDLIFE RESERVE	Total
ANTELOPE	55,669,000.00	222,676,000.00	11,133,800.00	11,133,800.00	300,612,600.00
GORILLAS					
ELEPHANTS	987,500,000.00	242,790,000.00	395,000,000.00	395,000,000.00	2,020,290,000.00
HIPPOPOTAMUSES		913,550.00			913,550.00
BUFFALO		422,722,560.00			422,722,560.00
GIRAFFES	9,200,000.00				9,200,000.00
OKAPIS				100,000,000.00	100,000,000.00
RHINOCEROSES	4,750,000.00				4,750,000.00
WARTHOGS	1,109,158,242.50	18,846,239.50			1,128,004,482.00
BABOONS		288,000.00			288,000.00
MONGOUSES		2,014,400.00			2,014,400.00
CROCODILES		34,830,000.00			34,830,000.00
LICHTENSTEIN'S HARTEBEESTS	396,849.20				396,849.20
WESTERN KOB		7,658,623.84			7,658,623.84
WATERBUCKS	5,425,141.44	261,031.50			5,686,172.94
BUSHBUCKS	539,391.60	76,051.44			615,443.04
CHIMPANZEES				160,000,000.00	160,000,000.00
Total	2,172,638,624.74	953,076,456.28	406,133,800.00	666,133,800.00	4,197,982,681.02

The ecological damage to fauna is evaluated at US\$4,197,982,681.02.

This does not include damage to flora (deforestation) and other types of material damage in the parks and protected areas.

Even for the fauna, this evaluation is very conservative. For example, the rhinoceroses and hippopotamuses in Virunga Park are severely endangered. The ecological damage far exceeds the sums calculated above.

[Authors: Justin Okana N'siawi Lebun, Professor of Economics at the University of Kinshasa; Dieudonné Musibon Eyul'anki, Professor of the Environment at the University of Kinshasa; Gastonfils Lonzo Lubu, Doctoral Student in Economics at the University of Kinshasa.]

Annexes

1. ICCN's estimate of losses
2. Extracts from works by F. Bourlière and Th. Haltenorth & H. Diller.
3. Value of animals: sources and calculations.

[Annexes not translated]

ANNEX 5.14

UNESCO, *Promoting and Preserving Congolese Heritage: Linking biological and cultural diversity*, proceedings of the conference and workshops, 13-17 September 2004

World Heritage

papers

17



Promouvoir et préserver le patrimoine congolais
Lier diversité biologique et culturelle

Promoting and Preserving Congolese Heritage
Linking biological and cultural diversity

Avec le soutien de la Fondation des Nations Unies, des gouvernements japonais et belge
With the support of the United Nations Foundation and the Governments of Japan and Belgium

Actes de la conférence et des ateliers
Proceedings of the conference and workshops
UNESCO, 13-17 septembre 2004



Actes de la conférence et des ateliers

Conference and workshops proceedings

Promouvoir et préserver le patrimoine congolais (RDC)

Lier diversité biologique et culturelle

Une conférence internationale des bailleurs de fonds organisée par le Centre du patrimoine mondial et le Secteur des sciences exactes et naturelles de l'UNESCO

Avec le soutien de la Fondation des Nations Unies (FNU), des gouvernements belge et japonais

Promoting and Preserving Congolese (DRC) Heritage

Linking biological and cultural diversity

An International Donors' Conference organized by UNESCO's World Heritage Centre and Natural Sciences Sector

With the support of the United Nations Foundation (UNF) and the Governments of Belgium and Japan

Siège de l'UNESCO, Paris, 13-17 septembre 2004
UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 13-17 September 2004

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Préfaces

A l'heure où la République démocratique du Congo retrouve, non sans quelques heurts, le chemin de la paix et de la réconciliation nationale, son Peuple n'oublie pas qu'il est dépositaire d'une richesse d'une valeur universelle exceptionnelle : sa diversité biologique. Un trésor inestimable, mis à mal par un conflit qui a secoué le pays, faisant se dresser les populations les unes contre les autres qui, jusqu'à là vivaient en harmonie. Ce conflit a aussi affaibli une économie déjà exsangue.

Abriter sur son territoire une partie du patrimoine mondial de l'humanité implique des responsabilités face auxquelles il n'est pas permis de se défausser. Mon Gouvernement a décidé de relever le formidable défi de la préservation des sites du patrimoine mondial de la République démocratique du Congo.

Les parcs nationaux de la Garamba, de Kahuzi-Biega, de la Salonga, de Virunga et la réserve de faune à Okapis, sont autant de joyaux qui ornent la parure du deuxième poumon de la planète, après l'Amazonie. Le bonobo, le rhinocéros blanc du Nord, l'okapi sont autant d'espèces rares qu'on ne rencontre que sur le sol congolais. Mais pour combien de temps encore ?

La conférence internationale pour la sauvegarde des sites du patrimoine mondial de la République démocratique du Congo tenue à Paris en septembre 2004, nous a rappelé que ces sites sont en danger, qu'ils peuvent disparaître dans un avenir proche si nous ne nous mobilisons pas pour les préserver.

Le projet initié par l'UNESCO et ses partenaires, avec le soutien financier de la Fondation des Nations Unies et du Gouvernement belge, aura permis que ces sites survivent au conflit qui a embrasé la région des Grands Lacs. Mais après la survie, la convalescence et la vie, ils doivent reprendre leurs droits.

La communauté internationale s'est engagée, auprès de l'Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature et de ses partenaires, à préserver l'intégrité des sites du patrimoine mondial. Il appartient désormais à la République démocratique du Congo, avec l'aide des organisations de conservation de la nature, des pays amis et du secteur privé, d'œuvrer pour le retrait de ces sites de la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril.

Malgré la faiblesse actuelle de ses moyens, le Gouvernement de la République démocratique du Congo entend pleinement assumer ses responsabilités envers les personnes œuvrant dans les parcs, qui se sont battues, au péril de leur vie, pour leur conservation. Il entend également prendre les mesures nécessaires pour faciliter le travail des organisations de conservation de la nature dans les sites du patrimoine mondial et les aires protégées.

En présentant, une fois de plus, mes sincères remerciements aux organisateurs de la Conférence de Paris et à tous les partenaires de la République démocratique du Congo en matière de conservation de la nature, j'espère que cet ouvrage permettra à un large public de prendre conscience que la paix, le développement et la protection de l'environnement sont interdépendants et indissociables.

Joseph Kabila
Président de la République démocratique du Congo

La République démocratique du Congo (RDC) a été l'un des premiers pays à ratifier en 1974 la Convention pour la protection du patrimoine mondial, culturel et naturel, adoptée par la Conférence générale de l'UNESCO en 1972. Cinq ans plus tard, le Parc national des Virunga – le premier parc national africain – fut inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Depuis, les Parcs nationaux de la Garamba (1980), du Kahuzi-Biega (1980), de la Salonga (1984), ainsi que la Réserve de faune à okapis (1996) ont également été déclarés sites du patrimoine mondial.

Cependant, à la suite d'années d'instabilité marquées notamment par le conflit des Grands Lacs et la guerre qui éclata en 1996, ces cinq sites ont progressivement rejoint la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril sur laquelle ils figurent encore aujourd'hui. Malgré ce contexte difficile, l'UNESCO a néanmoins tenu à maintenir une présence pendant toute la durée du conflit et à poursuivre son travail pour la préservation de ce patrimoine naturel exceptionnel. Dès l'an 2000, l'Organisation a lancé un programme ambitieux sur quatre années intitulé « Conservation de la biodiversité en zones de conflit armé : préserver les sites du patrimoine en RDC ». Je tiens à rendre hommage à la Fondation des Nations Unies et au gouvernement de la Belgique qui, par leur soutien moral et financier intervenu à un moment crucial où la plupart des bailleurs de fonds n'étaient pas en mesure de manifester leur générosité, nous ont permis de subvenir à des besoins spécifiques en RDC. Je tiens également à féliciter les organisations de conservation intervenues sur le terrain, démontrant ainsi leur engagement réel en faveur de ce patrimoine, ainsi que le personnel de l'Institut congolais pour la conservation de la nature, gestionnaire des sites, sans lequel ce projet n'aurait pu être mené à bien.

Manifester un intérêt majeur pour la sauvegarde des grands singes ou de la forêt tropicale humide dans une région où des êtres humains sont massacrés, des enfants sont enrôlés comme soldats, des femmes sont violées et des blessés manquent de soins élémentaires peut sembler hors de propos, voire provocateur. Pourtant, la disparition graduelle, mais irréversible, d'un écosystème fragile à l'Est de la RDC constitue une menace insidieuse mais effrayante pour les populations de ce pays et pour l'humanité tout entière. L'écosystème présent en RDC est en effet considéré comme un élément-clé du « second poumon de la planète » après la forêt amazonienne. Les questions posées à l'échelle planétaire par la pollution atmosphérique ou les troubles climatiques ne peuvent être considérées indépendamment de la forêt congolaise, qui produit une grande partie de notre oxygène et constitue un élément essentiel de l'équilibre climatique. Cette forêt ne peut elle-même survivre que si la chaîne subtile de la biodiversité est intégralement respectée, à commencer par les espèces animales endémiques qui la peuplent.

La Conférence internationale, qui s'est tenue du 13 au 17 septembre 2004, marque le terme de la première phase de l'exécution du projet, 2000-2004. Elle a apporté l'espoir de voir ces sites continuer à exister grâce à la forte mobilisation de nombreux acteurs de terrain et au soutien de la communauté internationale. Elle a été l'occasion de rappeler à tous qu'il était vital de mobiliser des ressources pour consolider et développer les niveaux actuels d'aide financière et d'expertise technique et administrative, afin de gérer ces sites de façon satisfaisante.

Il appartient désormais à l'UNESCO et au Centre du patrimoine mondial de renforcer les partenariats existants ainsi que d'en développer de nouveaux afin d'ancrer le projet dans une prise de conscience large et durable. Une nécessité en temps de paix et un impératif absolument vital en temps de guerre.

Koïchiro Matsuura
Directeur général de l'UNESCO

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Comptes rendus des sessions thématiques



Promouvoir
et préserver
le patrimoine
congolais

1

1

Conférence internationale pour la sauvegarde et la promotion du patrimoine congolais

Walter Erdelen, Sous-directeur général de l'UNESCO pour les sciences exactes et naturelles,

a présidé cette première session de la Conférence internationale en faveur des sites du patrimoine mondial de la République démocratique du Congo (RDC). Dans son introduction, il a rappelé que le projet de 3.5 millions de dollars « *Conservation de la biodiversité dans les zones de conflit armé : préserver les sites du patrimoine mondial en République démocratique du Congo* », objet de la conférence, n'aurait certainement pas vu le jour sans le généreux soutien financier de la Fondation des Nations Unies et du Gouvernement belge et sans la mobilisation de la Coopération technique allemande (GTZ) et de nombreuses ONG de conservation. En effet, toutes – le Programme International de Conservation des Gorilles (PICG), le Fonds Mondial pour la Nature (WWF), la Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), l'International Rhino Foundation (IRF), Fauna and Flora International (FFI), l'African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), la Gilman International Conservation (GIC), la Société Zoologique de Milwaukee (ZSM) et la Société Zoologique de Londres (SZL) – ont répondu présentes à l'appel lancé par l'UNESCO en faveur des cinq sites du patrimoine mondial de la RDC. Il a par ailleurs rappelé que l'ensemble de ces sites faisait également l'objet d'une inscription sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril.

Renforcer la mobilisation des fonds en faveur de la sauvegarde de la diversité culturelle et naturelle de la RDC après la fin, le 31 décembre 2004, de la phase I du projet et réaffirmer le besoin de renforcer les compétences des gestionnaires de sites, en favorisant la redistribution équitable des bénéfices aux populations vivant autour des sites dans le partage des bénéfices engendrés par le projet, tels étaient les deux principaux objectifs fixés à la Conférence.

Le choix du titre « *Promouvoir et préserver le patrimoine congolais : lier diversité biologique et culturelle* » pour illustrer la célébration par l'UNESCO du patrimoine congolais a été motivé par la volonté de souligner les liens entre diversité culturelle et biologique comme des éléments importants tant pour la conservation que pour le développement durable. C'est à travers ses recommandations et outils normatifs (Convention du patrimoine mondial, programme Man and Biosphère) et ses programmes d'action dans les systèmes insulaires que l'UNESCO encourage les Etats à adopter des stratégies pour la sauvegarde de la diversité biologique et culturelle en cohérence avec les *Objectifs du millénaire pour le développement*, en particulier l'élimination de la pauvreté et la gouvernance environnementale.

Dans une présentation éclairant les interdépendances entre le bien-être économique, les avancées sociales et le développement durable intitulée « *Sauvegarde de la biodiversité : une préoccupation partagée* », **Claude Martin, Directeur général de WWF international**, fait référence à la Conférence des Nations Unies sur l'Environnement et

le Développement, qui en 1992, avait appelé à un développement durable « *pour assurer un développement économique socialement responsable tout en protégeant les ressources premières et l'environnement pour le bénéfice des générations futures* ». Plus de dix ans ont passé depuis Rio et on décèle au sein des gouvernements, des institutions des Nations Unies et des agences de développement, une forte tendance à surtout insister sur le bien-être économique en se focalisant sur l'élimination de la pauvreté comme moyen optimal pour parvenir au développement durable. Une telle approche peut être préjudiciable au traitement des questions de développement social et d'environnement durable en leur faisant courir le risque d'être tout simplement oubliées.

Les changements intervenus sur le plan économique se sont produits avec une extrême rapidité. Ils proviennent en majeure partie, de l'impact produit par les puissances du marché sur les politiques économiques nationales. La globalisation de l'économie née de la libéralisation des marchés a eu pour effet de favoriser l'interdépendance économique entre les pays et d'éroder la souveraineté économique au niveau national. Dans le même temps, on assiste à une augmentation de la disparité entre riches et pauvres. Basée sur le court terme, la course au développement et à la réalisation du bien-être économique est fondée sur une exploitation non durable des ressources naturelles et à l'affaiblissement des systèmes d'aide sociale. Source de bénéfices immédiats pour quelques-uns, ce mode d'exploitation des ressources représente à court et à long terme, pour les autres, un coût à payer. « Ces autres » les plus pauvres, qui sont les premiers à dépendre des ressources naturelles et par conséquent, du maintien de la diversité biologique. Il apparaît dès lors que les stratégies de réduction de la pauvreté exclusivement fondées sur l'approche économique entraînent la dégradation du tissu social et la perte des bienfaits environnementaux.

La Conférence des Nations Unies sur l'Environnement et le Développement, suivie sur ce point par la Banque mondiale et le Comité d'assistance au développement de l'OCDE, a largement admis que les indicateurs actuels en matière d'utilisation des ressources et de dégradation de l'environnement faisaient état de sérieuses menaces à l'accomplissement du développement durable. La biodiversité constitue un indicateur essentiel de la qualité des ressources premières et de l'évaluation de leurs potentiels immédiats et à venir. Ces éléments permettant d'anticiper et de faire face aux atteintes dont souffre de plus en plus notre environnement.

L'appauvrissement continu de la biodiversité, le déclin de la forêt, des réserves en eau douce, des ressources de la pêche et de la terre, le changement climatique, la réduction de la couche d'ozone et l'accumulation des substances toxiques, constituent autant de menaces sur les produits et les services de l'environnement, desquels dépend toute vie humaine pour la nourriture, la production vivrière, et les autres innombrables besoins. A titre

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d'exemple, la population mondiale a déjà consommé plus de la moitié des réserves en eau douce disponibles de la planète et risque d'en utiliser près des 2/3 aux environs de 2025. Plus d'1.1 milliards de personnes n'ont déjà plus accès à l'eau potable et, si le mode de consommation actuel se poursuit, pas moins de 3.5 milliards de personnes devront vivre dans des bassins versants surexploités dans à peine 20 ans. Par ailleurs, la contamination empêcherait 3.3 milliards d'individus d'avoir accès à une eau saine et 2.4 milliards de personnes ne disposeraient d'aucun service d'assainissement d'eau. Chaque année, on dénombrerait environ 250 millions de cas de maladies liées à l'eau responsables de 5 millions de morts.

Des pressions croissantes pèsent sur les forêts, dont 1.6 milliards de personnes dépendent pour vivre. D'après une étude de la Banque mondiale, 60 millions de communautés autochtones vivaient dans les forêts pluviales d'Amérique latine, d'Asie du Sud-est et d'Afrique centrale et dépendraient fortement des forêts pluviales ; 350 millions d'individus vivant dans, ou à côté des forêts denses dépendraient d'elles pour leur subsistance ou leurs revenus ; et dans les pays en développement, 1.2 milliards de personnes utiliseraient les arbres de leurs exploitations arboricoles pour se nourrir et se procurer des revenus.

Les avantages que les populations locales retirent de la gestion durable des ressources forestières sont à la fois directs et indirects. La forêt leur procure de la nourriture, un refuge et des revenus. Dans le même temps, les populations rurales pauvres subissent de plein fouet les effets de l'appauvrissement de la biodiversité. En aval du bassin du fleuve Mékong les poissons d'eau douce constituent la principale source de protéine et de calcium pour 55.3 millions d'individus, qui consomment une moyenne de 56.6 kg de poissons par personne et par an. Ces réserves de poissons sont menacées par la déforestation, le développement des infrastructures et les déviations des cours d'eau en amont. La dégradation continue de la forêt et de la couverture végétale a privé les millions de personnes habitant dans la forêt de leurs moyens de subsistance et des ressources naturelles leur permettant de se nourrir, se soigner et se loger. Les femmes, les communautés locales et les groupes marginalisés sont généralement les plus touchés par la dégradation environnementale des bassins fluviaux et des bassins versants.

A propos de la RDC, le Président de WWF international a évoqué les récents bouleversements sociaux, politiques et économiques qui ont secoué le pays. Il a néanmoins tenu à préciser que la RDC restait malgré tout le pays qui abrite la deuxième forêt tropicale intacte au monde, ce qui est considéré depuis quelques décennies comme un atout d'une importance mondiale inestimable.

Il y a trente ans, la RDC était déjà signataire de la Convention du patrimoine mondial et aujourd'hui, cinq de ses aires protégées, les parcs nationaux des Virunga,

de la Garamba, du Kahuzi-Biega, de la Salonga et la Réserve de faune à Okapis, figurent sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Malheureusement, ils font désormais tous l'objet d'une inscription sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril.

C'est grâce à un petit nombre d'organisations de conservation comme l'UICN, le WCS, le FZS, et FFI rejointes plus récemment par la Fondation des Nations Unies, la GTZ et le Gouvernement belge, que ces sites n'ont pas subi de dommages irrémédiables. Ces organisations ont maintenu leur soutien aux sites et à l'ICCN y compris pendant les périodes difficiles.

Pour sa part, le Fonds Mondial pour la Nature pourrait être considéré comme un vétéran de la conservation en RDC puisque ses activités, qui se poursuivent encore aujourd'hui, dans les cinq sites du patrimoine mondial remontent, pour certaines d'entre elles, aux débuts des années 70. Pour le seul Parc national des Virunga, où il est actif depuis 1987, le WWF a engagé des millions de dollars au départ pour l'éducation environnementale et plus tard pour les projets de gestion et de développement communautaires. C'est cette expérience qui a convaincu le WWF de la nécessité de maintenir son soutien aux institutions nationales chargées de la gestion de ces aires protégées y compris en période de guerres et de troubles politiques, alors quand la majorité des bailleurs et de gouvernement se sont retirés.

Renforcer les liens entre la conservation des aires naturelles, comme les cinq sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC, et les moyens de subsistance des communautés locales représente un grand défi, d'autant plus que les communautés locales ne tirent que peu de bénéfices de l'exploitation de ces aires protégées, à l'exception notable du Parc national des Virunga. Pour autant, la situation inverse – des paysages dépouillés et dégradés – a souvent laissé les populations locales sans aucune perspective économique et ceci, même à la suite d'une période de gains à court terme.

Pauvreté et dégradation des ressources naturelles en milieu rural vont souvent de paire. La dégradation de l'environnement a d'autant plus de conséquences qu'un milieu naturel sain est crucial pour les économies non-matérielles et agit comme une « sécurité sociale » pour de nombreux individus. Les populations pauvres en milieu rural sont souvent les premières victimes de la faillite de ces systèmes. Les citoyens les plus isolés ne sont pas pour autant épargnés. Quand les fonctions productives des milieux ruraux sains se dégradent ou lorsque les gens n'ont plus accès à ces environnements productifs, les migrations vers les villes et vers d'autres pays s'intensifient, à la recherche de moyens de subsistances alternatifs, exacerbent la pauvreté et les tensions sociales dans les villes. Par conséquent, la dégradation de l'environnement met non seulement en faillite une

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utilisation durable des ressources et touche les populations rurales – en affectant leur santé, leurs moyens de subsistance et leur sécurité – mais aggrave également la pauvreté et les tensions sociales dans des milieux urbains déjà soumis à de nombreuses pressions.

De fait, un environnement sain ne peut effectivement pas réduire à lui seul la pauvreté mais s'attaquer à la question de la réduction de la pauvreté en l'isolant de celle de la conservation de l'environnement ne peut, tôt ou tard, que déboucher sur un échec.

Au XX^e siècle, le développement ne saurait être durable sans être économiquement viable, socialement acceptable et sain du point de vue de l'environnement. L'urgence est donc à la mise en place d'une synergie sur le long terme, à travers notamment des changements dans les pratiques commerciales et dans les modes de vie, ainsi que l'adoption de standards environnementaux et sociaux permettant de rester dans les limites de l'utilisation durable des ressources. Des changements et des choix seront nécessaires pour garantir les ressources premières nécessaires au bien être de tous.

Themba P. Wakashe, Président du Comité du patrimoine mondial, a proposé un aperçu de la *Convention du patrimoine mondial*. Outil normatif adopté en 1972, dont le postulat de départ reposait sur la reconnaissance d'une valeur universelle exceptionnelle à certains lieux qui, de ce fait, constituaient une part du patrimoine de l'ensemble de l'humanité que la communauté internationale devait identifier, protéger et dont elle devait être la gardienne pour les générations présentes et futures. La Convention est unique en ce qu'elle lie sites culturels et naturels d'une valeur universelle exceptionnelle sans négliger la préservation et le développement. Avec à son actif la ratification par 178 pays, la Convention couvre presque la totalité de la planète. A ce jour, 788 sites ont été inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial, 611 sites culturels, 134 sites naturels et 23 sites mixtes à travers 134 pays.

L'inscription sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial ne représente qu'une partie d'un long processus de conservation que chaque pays (ou l'Etat partie) abritant un site potentiel doit accomplir. Un Etat souhaitant proposer un site pour inscription sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial doit préalablement avoir développé des standards nationaux garantissant la protection d'un futur site. Il doit avoir identifié les valeurs culturelles ou naturelles du site et ses limites ; avoir développé une stratégie de gestion et alloué des fonds et d'autres ressources pour assurer le maintien de l'intégrité du site.

Le travail de la Convention s'étend bien au-delà de l'inscription de sites sur la prestigieuse liste, elle veille également à leur conservation. Chaque année le Comité du patrimoine mondial discute de l'état de conservation d'un certain nombre de sites et rend, sur la base des avis rendus par les experts de ses organes consultatifs et du Centre du

patrimoine mondial, des recommandations aux Etats parties concernés en vue d'améliorer leur conservation.

D'autre part, les Etats parties ont pour obligation de fournir tous les cinq ans un rapport périodique sur la mise en œuvre de la Convention et l'état de conservation des sites. Quand un site est sévèrement menacé, le Comité du patrimoine mondial peut décider de l'inscrire sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril appelant ainsi l'Etat partie en cause et les autres parties à prendre les mesures nécessaires pour arrêter la dégradation. La Convention définit comme patrimoine naturel: les monuments naturels constitués par des formations physiques ou biologiques d'une valeur universelle exceptionnelle d'un point de vue esthétique ou scientifique ; des formations géologiques et biologiques ; et des sites naturels d'une valeur universelle exceptionnelle pour la science, la conservation et l'esthétique. De tels sites peuvent être inscrits sous quatre critères différents. Les critères (i) et (iii) concernent spécifiquement les sites géologiques ou les sites d'une beauté naturelle exceptionnelle. Les critères (ii) et (iv) concernent la conservation des écosystèmes et de la diversité biologique. Les exemples éminemment représentatifs des écosystèmes terrestres, d'eau douce, côtiers ou marins sont inscrits sous le critère (ii) et sont, le plus souvent, des parcs nationaux ou d'autres formes d'aires protégées, des grandes étendues d'habitats préservés, à l'exemple du Parc national de la Salonga en RDC, qui recouvre 36,000 km² d'une forêt pluviale quasi intacte. Le critère (iv) s'applique aux sites abritant les habitats naturels les plus représentatifs et les plus importants pour la conservation in situ de la diversité biologique, et plus spécialement les espèces les plus menacées. Un autre exemple de la RDC est le Parc national des Virunga, un site inscrit à la fois sous les critères iv, ii, et iii et qui abrite l'une des dernières populations au monde de gorilles de montagne.

Indéniablement, la Convention du patrimoine mondial est un instrument qui confère une reconnaissance internationale à certaines des aires protégées les plus précieuses, représentatives de quelques-uns des écosystèmes les plus remarquables au monde abritant des espèces très menacées et une diversité biologique exceptionnelle. Pour appréhender son importance en termes de couverture biogéographique, on peut comparer la Liste du patrimoine mondial au système mondial des 200 régions écologiques *Global 200* de WWF. Par le biais de cet exercice d'établissement de priorités, quelque 200 régions écologiques, représentatives des principaux types d'habitats naturels dans le monde, ont été identifiées comme prioritaires pour la conservation. Actuellement, 65% des écorégions terrestres prioritaires, 57% des écorégions d'eau douce prioritaires et 58% des écorégions marines prioritaires sont représentées sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial.

Un exercice similaire d'établissement de priorités entrepris par Conservation International avait identifié 25 points

névralgiques (*hotspots*) en matière de biodiversité, des aires d'une biodiversité extrêmement élevée et sévèrement menacée : 44% de l'ensemble des plantes sur la planète et 38% des oiseaux, mammifères, reptiles et amphibiens se trouveraient dans ces régions, bien qu'elles ne recouvrent que 2% de l'ensemble de l'écosystème terrestre. Actuellement, 21 de ces 25 points névralgiques sont représentés sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial à travers des sites du patrimoine mondial.

Ces chiffres démontrent clairement que la Liste du patrimoine mondial représente « les joyaux de la couronne » de la biodiversité. Des lacunes importantes demeurent cependant et l'on tente de les combler en invitant les Etats parties à proposer de nouveaux des sites.

Les cinq sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC, objets de l'attention particulière de la conférence, figurent actuellement sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril. Ils ont été, en un sens, un cas pratique qui aura permis de montrer que la Convention peut aussi fonctionner comme un outil de conservation.

Le Président du Comité du patrimoine mondial a conclu son intervention en indiquant que la conférence exposerait ce qui avait été réalisé en termes d'arrêt des dégradations des sites à travers la mobilisation de divers cercles de partenaires. Il a également exprimé le vœu que les donateurs présents répondent positivement à l'appel de l'UNESCO et de ses partenaires en faveur de la mobilisation des ressources nécessaires pour continuer le travail entrepris, dans un esprit de solidarité internationale.

Francisco Komlavi Seddoh, Président du Groupe de travail intersectoriel de l'UNESCO pour la reconstruction de la RDC, a rappelé que l'action de l'UNESCO en faveur de la sauvegarde du patrimoine mondial naturel de la République démocratique du Congo s'inscrit dans le cadre plus large d'une Stratégie par l'UNESCO et la RDC pour la reconstruction de ce pays en situation de post-conflit.

Il a exposé les raisons qui ont présidées à l'élaboration de la stratégie de coopération avec la RDC au nombre desquelles figurent « les grandes étapes de l'évolution récente du pays ». M. Seddoh a ajouté qu'il s'agissait également pour l'Organisation de répondre, en tant qu'agence des Nations Unies, à la recommandation de la mission du Conseil de sécurité en direction des acteurs multilatéraux et bilatéraux d'apporter leur appui au processus de reconstruction de la RDC.

L'approche adoptée pour l'élaboration de la stratégie de coopération a été présentée en détail ainsi que ses grandes orientations. Les chantiers auxquels l'UNESCO a décidé de s'atteler, en concertation avec les autorités congolaises, sont les suivants :

L'éducation avec, notamment, un appui à la reconstruction du système éducatif qui comprend sa réforme et sa modernisation, le renforcement des capacités institutionnelles, la reconstruction et l'équipement des écoles et des établissements de formation et de recherche, la prévention du VIH/SIDA, sans oublier l'éducation des femmes et des jeunes filles. L'aide à une **gestion intégrée de l'environnement pour le développement** constitue également une priorité, en particulier en matière de gestion rationnelle des ressources en eau, une question qui est au cœur de plusieurs projets développés par l'UNESCO. Il s'agit également de développer les ressources humaines dans le domaine des sciences, en encourageant le renforcement des centres d'excellence existants telle que l'Ecole Régionale d'Aménagement et de gestion Intégrée des Aires Tropicales (ERAIFT). L'appui à la mise en œuvre des conventions environnementales et l'encouragement à participer aux initiatives en cours dans la sous-région, comme le *Partenariat pour les forêts du Bassin du Congo*, constituent également des actions prioritaires de l'UNESCO en faveur d'une gestion intégrée de l'environnement pour le développement, ce qui passe nécessairement par un renforcement des capacités de l'Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN). La revalorisation et la promotion du patrimoine culturel à travers la mise en place d'une politique pour le développement et l'encouragement à la promotion des arts vivants font, de même, partie intégrante de l'action que l'UNESCO et la RDC souhaitent mener dans le domaine du **patrimoine culturel** (dialogue, sauvegarde, protection).

Enfin, la **sauvegarde du patrimoine mondial**, la **promotion de la sécurité humaine** avec notamment, entre autres projets, la création d'un espace de dialogue au niveau régional, sous-régional et international, la **promotion de la société de l'information** à travers le soutien au développement de médias libres et indépendants comptent aussi au nombre des priorités de l'UNESCO et des autorités congolaises.

Après avoir présenté les grands axes de la stratégie, M. Seddoh a donné des indications sur les actions déjà entreprises dans différents domaines. Dans le cadre de son programme ordinaire, l'UNESCO finance des projets dans les domaines de l'éducation (avant-projet PNA/EPT, formation en évaluation et suivi des acquis scolaires, préparation de la Table Ronde sur l'éducation, etc.) et de la culture - avec l'appui apporté au ministère de la Culture pour la finalisation de projets relatifs à la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel, de la communication et des sciences. Des actions sont également menées dans les domaines du partenariat et de la mobilisation de fonds extrabudgétaires. Le partenariat avec la Banque Africaine de Développement (BAD) pour appuyer le secteur de l'éducation en RDC en est un exemple.

En conclusion, M. Seddoh a indiqué que la reconstruction constituait un facteur essentiel de la restauration de la paix et a rappelé le sens de l'engagement de l'UNESCO.

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S'exprimant à la fois en sa qualité de nouveau **Secrétaire exécutif de la Convention sur les espèces migratoires (CMS)** et d'ancien Directeur du Projet pour la survie des Grands Singes (GRASP), M. **Robert Hepworth** a insisté sur « l'extrême importance » de la RDC pour les objectifs à la fois de la *Convention sur les espèces migratoires* et de GRASP. La RDC représente une occasion inespérée pour créer une synergie entre les deux, en fournissant une « double protection » aux gorilles de montagne également identifiés comme espèce emblématique par la Convention sur les espèces migratoires. M. Hepworth a indiqué que la RDC et l'Ouganda avaient déjà ratifié la *Convention sur les espèces migratoires* et que le Rwanda s'appêtait à le faire. Cet engagement est susceptible de permettre la promotion et la préservation des espèces migratoires et la construction de passerelles politiques entre les trois pays concernés.

Table Ronde : Le rôle du savoir local dans la préservation du patrimoine congolais

En introduction des discussions **Shaje wa Tshiluiluila, Directrice générale de l'Institut des Musées Nationaux, Kinshasa, RDC**, a rappelé combien les collectivités autochtones avaient de tous temps développé des connaissances importantes en matière de conservation.

Chacun des experts présents a été invité à s'exprimer sur sa vision du « rôle du savoir local dans la préservation du patrimoine congolais ».

Guido Gryseels, Directeur du Musée Royal de l'Afrique centrale de Tervuren, Belgique, a commencé par insister sur la nécessité d'appréhender la langue en tant que dépositaire des connaissances en plus de sa fonction d'outil de transmission.

La RDC avec ses 246 langues parlées, constitue en cela une parfaite illustration de ce postulat. En effet chacune des langues recensées s'avère être un réel vecteur de la connaissance détaillée de la nature et de l'environnement entourant les communautés locales. A ce titre, la langue doit être considérée comme la courroie de transmission de la culture immatérielle de génération en génération.

M. Gryseels a fait remarquer à quel point il était frappant de constater que les communautés locales recouraient à toute une gamme de proverbes pour illustrer l'environnement et transmettre des informations de premier plan sur certaines plantes (leurs composantes, leurs dérivées, etc.) qu'elles utilisent.

M. Gryseels a attiré l'attention du public sur l'importance particulière accordée aux langues dans l'exposition « *CONGO – Nature et culture en République démocratique du Congo* » en soulignant aussi leur rôle prépondérant dans la gestion de la biodiversité tout comme dans le chant de chasse qui se pratiquait autrefois chez les Luba pendant la chasse au gibier.

Par le biais de la langue, ce sont les savoirs locaux qui sont conservés et gérés. Chaque fois qu'une langue disparaît, c'est une connaissance du patrimoine naturel et culturel qui risque également de s'éteindre.

M. Gryseels a déploré que le manque de moyens accordés à la recherche linguistique dans de nombreux pays conduise, à moyen ou à long terme, à la disparition de ces savoirs locaux fondamentaux. Il a tout de même indiqué que le Musée Royal de l'Afrique centrale de Tervuren tentait de lutter, dans la mesure de ses moyens, contre cette menace pour que l'extinction de ces langues et des savoirs qu'elles véhiculent ne devienne pas une fatalité.

Camille Kuyu, Professeur de Droit à Université de Panthéon – Sorbonne, Paris, France, a débuté son intervention par un postulat : la préservation du patrimoine naturel suppose un cadre juridique adéquat.

La RDC à l'instar des autres Etats africains dispose de ce cadre juridique bien que les relations entre l'homme négro-africain et son environnement se passent généralement en dehors du « Droit de l'environnement », pensé à partir de logiques et de représentations exogènes et étroitement dépendantes des sciences et de la technologie.

Les peuples d'Afrique, notamment les ruraux, ne se sentent pas concernés par ce « Droit de l'environnement », qui n'intègre pas leurs préoccupations environnementales. Ces peuples continuent par conséquent à s'inscrire dans des cadres régulateurs propres et endogènes et donc dans des registres de légitimité propres. Ces registres sont ceux des savoirs locaux qui seraient, avant toute chose, coutumiers. Tous les peuples d'Afrique ont hérité de leurs ancêtres des manières de faire qui leur ont permis de vivre et de se reproduire en communion avec leur environnement et qu'ils transmettent à leur tour aux générations futures. Les différentes normes coutumières concernent tous les domaines considérés comme vitaux par les populations : activités champêtres, relations sexuelles, santé, etc.

Les savoirs locaux ne sont pas seulement ancestraux, ils englobent aussi des pratiques et techniques relevant de la logique de l'entre-deux et qui témoignent de l'inventivité des populations africaines.

En conclusion le Professeur Kuyu a fait part de son sentiment selon lequel l'ineffectivité actuelle du Droit de l'environnement ne signifiait pas son refus. Bien au contraire, le besoin d'un Droit de l'environnement est réel en Afrique, mais ce droit doit néanmoins prendre en compte les savoirs locaux, les préoccupations environnementales et les représentations des populations locales.

Théodore Trefon, Consultant indépendant et chercheur au Brussels Centre for African Studies, Belgique, a mené des recherches en RDC sur les relations

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société-Etat, l'anthropologie urbaine et la gouvernance environnementale.

Le Professeur Trefon a proposé une présentation axée sur les menaces urbaines pesant sur la biodiversité de la RDC, avec un accent particulier sur ce qu'il a appelé le « paradoxe de Kinshasa ».

En effet, comme l'a rappelé le Professeur Trefon, les populations urbaines jouent un rôle non négligeable dans la gestion des ressources naturelles. Il convient par conséquent d'intégrer le fait que l'avenir de la forêt tropicale se joue en ville du fait de l'impact qu'ont les villes et les

populations urbaines sur la dégradation du milieu forestier. Cet impact aurait pour origine l'urbanisation, la crise économique, la pauvreté, les contraintes institutionnelles, l'attachement culturel et les perceptions.

Le Professeur Trefon a poursuivi son exposé par la présentation de son ouvrage « *Ordre et désordre à Kinshasa, réponses populaires à la faillite de l'Etat* » qui tend à démontrer que si le « mayélé »¹ des kinois facilite la survie élémentaire des individus et des ménages, les trésors d'inventivité ne sont pas pour autant assimilables à des outils de développement et encore moins de développement durable tel que le prônent les experts occidentaux.

¹. Inventivité, débrouille



Protéger
la biodiversité du
bassin du Congo

2

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Dans son introduction à la session, le Président de la séance, **Kalemani Mulongoy, Responsable des questions scientifique, technique et technologique au Secrétariat** de la *Convention sur la diversité biologique*, a souhaité que les différentes présentations participent à la compréhension de la nécessité de protéger particulièrement la biodiversité du Bassin du Congo et surtout, des modalités de cette protection. Il a fait référence aux institutions sous-régionales qui œuvrent pour la protection du Bassin du Congo : la CEFDHAC (Conférence sur les écosystèmes des forêts humides d'Afrique centrale) et la COMIFAC (Conférence des ministres des forêts d'Afrique centrale).

M. Mulongoy a ensuite précisé le mode de fonctionnement de la *Convention sur la diversité biologique*, son plan stratégique, ses objectifs pour 2010, et a expliqué le mécanisme financier mis en place pour la réalisation de ses activités. M. Mulongoy a brièvement énuméré les différentes questions qui seraient abordées au cours de la session.

Premier intervenant, **Olivier Langrand, Vice-président Senior de Conservation International** (CI) en charge de l'Afrique et de Madagascar, a axé sa présentation sur les impératifs de protection des forêts du Bassin du Congo et sur les défis auxquels sont confrontés les acteurs de la conservation dans leur combat pour la gestion pérenne des ressources naturelles.

Il a choisi comme point de départ le concept de *hotspot* de la biodiversité créé par le biologiste britannique Norman Myers et présenté pour la première fois en 1988. Sont qualifiés d'*hotspots* les zones abritant les plus grandes concentrations de biodiversité et soumises à de sérieuses menaces d'extinction. Une analyse conduite par une centaine de spécialistes, et dont Conservation International a assuré la coordination, a permis d'identifier 25 *hotspots* dans le domaine biologique terrestre dont six en Afrique sub-saharienne et à Madagascar. Après une mise à jour effectuée peu après, le nombre d'*hotspots* identifiés est passé à 34 dont huit en Afrique sub-saharienne et à Madagascar.

Le concept d'*hotspot* a donné aux acteurs de la conservation une direction à suivre en matière de conservation des ressources biologiques. Il leur permet en particulier, de concentrer leurs efforts techniques, financiers et humains. Pour mesurer la fragilité de ces espaces, le vice-président de CI rappelle qu'à l'origine, l'ensemble des 25 *hotspots* recouvrait 11,8% de la surface émergée de la planète alors qu'aujourd'hui ces deux millions de Km² représentent tout juste 1,4% de cette surface. En dépit de cela, c'est tout de même plus de 130 000 espèces de plantes vasculaires représentant 44% de la flore connue du monde entier, 9 681 espèces de vertébrés représentant 35,5% de tous les vertébrés que l'on trouve dans les *hotspots*. Pour les plantes aussi bien que pour les vertébrés, le taux d'endémisme constaté est particulièrement élevé.

En dehors des *hotspots*, l'identification des grands espaces sauvages de la planète constitue l'autre grande priorité des acteurs de la conservation. Les critères applicables à la sélection des grands espaces sont, leur intégrité, leur superficie et la densité de la population humaine. A ce jour, 37 zones ont pu être qualifiées sur la base de ces critères. Elles recouvrent 81 millions de km², représentent 54.2% de la surface émergée de la planète et abritent seulement 5,2% de la population humaine mondiale. Parmi ces zones, cinq sont considérées comme des espaces sauvages de haute biodiversité. Deux de ces espaces, les forêts du Bassin du Congo et la forêt du Miombo Mopane, sont localisés sur le continent africain.

Les forêts du Bassin du Congo, qui s'étendent sur 1.7 millions de km², abritent une diversité biologique impressionnante : 9 750 espèces de plantes dont 3 300 à 4 000 sont endémiques, 270 espèces de mammifères dont 39 sont endémiques, 708 espèces d'oiseaux, dont 10 sont endémiques. Le fleuve Congo, troisième fleuve au monde par son débit après l'Amazone et le Rio Negro, abrite également une biodiversité exceptionnelle. Enfin les forêts du Bassin du Congo abritent 17 genres de primates et 43 espèces endémiques.

Selon M. Langrand, l'impact de l'homme sur la nature peut être divisée en deux catégories : immédiat et à long terme. Le grand danger qui menace le capital de biodiversité de l'Afrique centrale vient de l'inévitable destruction de l'habitat naturel pour satisfaire les besoins des populations fortement dépendantes de l'agriculture de subsistance. Ce recours aux ressources naturelles associé aux changements climatiques a pour conséquence l'érosion, sur le long terme, du capital de biodiversité de l'Afrique centrale. Si l'on prend en compte le fait que la population humaine de la région devrait doubler d'ici 25 ans, on comprend pourquoi une politique de gestion durable des ressources est plus que jamais nécessaire.

Au nombre des autres maux qui frappent le Bassin du Congo, figurent également le commerce illégal de la viande de brousse et l'exploitation forestière illégale. La quantité de viande de brousse consommée dans les zones forestières et urbaines d'Afrique centrale dépasse le million de mètres cubes par an.

C'est surtout ces dernières années que la communauté internationale s'est intéressée, comme jamais auparavant, aux forêts du Bassin du Congo. L'engagement des gouvernements des pays d'Afrique centrale exprimé dans la *Déclaration de Yaoundé* et relayé par la COMIFAC, le processus de paix initié en RDC et le travail d'information réalisé par les organisations de conservation ont été décisifs dans l'initiation d'actions en faveur de la conservation durable des ressources uniques du Bassin du Congo.

Le Partenariat pour les forêts du Bassin du Congo, une autre initiative internationale importante en faveur de la

conservation de la biodiversité de cette région, apporte quant à lui, une réponse concrète aux besoins en matière de conservation des forêts de ce bassin sans oublier le développement économique durable de l'Afrique centrale. Grâce au soutien du gouvernement américain, à travers son programme USAID-CARPE, des équipes d'ONG locales, nationales et internationales travaillent ensemble sur douze paysages de conservation répartis dans six pays d'Afrique centrale. Deux des sites, sur lesquels CI intervient, se trouvent en RDC.

Les communautés locales sont désormais impliquées dans les activités de conservation. Par exemple, elles développent actuellement un réseau de réserves communautaires qui devrait, avec les Parcs nationaux de Maiko et de Kahuzi-Biega, déboucher sur la conservation de presque 90% de l'aire de distribution du gorille de plaine de l'Est. Pour sa part, CI assure le leadership d'une équipe incluant le Diane Fossey Gorilla Fund International, WWF et WCS qui collabore avec l'ICCN à la mise en œuvre d'une stratégie de conservation à long terme de ce « terroir ».

Au terme de sa présentation, M. Langrand a exprimé le souhait de voir la stratégie forestière nationale de la RDC faire de la conservation un élément clé. Il a invité le gouvernement congolais à défendre les zones identifiées comme prioritaires pour la conservation et à assurer une bonne gestion des aires protégées existantes. Le gouvernement congolais devrait par ailleurs, selon lui, éviter d'attribuer de larges concessions forestières avant l'adoption d'un véritable plan de conservation de la biodiversité.

La communauté internationale est pour sa part, invitée à poursuivre son soutien financier et technique à la RDC et aux autres pays d'Afrique centrale. Le soutien financier devra atteindre un niveau sans précédent pour assurer la formation des ressources humaines locales nécessaires en Afrique centrale pour la mise en œuvre de programmes de conservation de la biodiversité et assurer leur viabilité sur le long terme.

Daniel Ngantou de l'UICN a proposé une présentation sur la *Conférence sur les écosystèmes des forêts humides d'Afrique centrale* (CEFDHAC). Il a signalé que la RDC faisait partie des priorités de la plupart des initiatives techniques et politiques en Afrique centrale, et que la CEFDHAC figurait au nombre de ces initiatives et s'était, à ce titre, vu assigner pour principale mission l'animation du débat.

Avec ses 217 millions d'hectares et ses 200 millions d'habitants, l'Afrique centrale représente à elle seule une sous-région à l'impact écologique et socio-économique considérable. La fonction première de la CEFDHAC est d'être une plate-forme de concertation et d'échange d'expériences dans le domaine des écosystèmes et d'orientation - à travers l'articulation de tous les groupes d'acteurs intervenant en Afrique centrale. Elle peut être définie comme la concrétisation de la volonté politique des

Etats de la sous-région de parvenir à une vision commune en matière de conservation et d'utilisation durable des écosystèmes des forêts denses et humides d'Afrique centrale.

La CEFDHAC, qui compte à son actif dix pays membres (Burundi, Cameroun, Congo, République démocratique du Congo, Gabon, Guinée Equatoriale, République Centrafricaine, Rwanda, Sao Tomé et Príncipe, Tchad), s'est vue assigner pour objectif global d'encourager les acteurs concernés par la gestion des forêts dans les pays d'Afrique centrale à conserver les écosystèmes forestiers et à veiller à une utilisation durable et équitable des ressources qu'ils recèlent. Ses objectifs spécifiques consistent essentiellement à :

- Favoriser la cohérence des interventions dans les écosystèmes forestiers ;
- Proposer des programmes et initiatives régionaux cohérents en matière de conservation des ressources forestières ;
- Organiser des forums écologiques sous-régionaux et nationaux et les ouvrir à tous les acteurs concernés ou intéressés par la conservation de la biodiversité ;
- Mener une réflexion sur la sécurité écologique, notamment la gestion des conflits transfrontaliers et nationaux axés sur les ressources biologiques de la région, y compris la gestion des parcs pour la paix ;
- Animer les débats sur l'intégration, dans les processus régionaux de gestion des ressources forestières, des éléments de base pour l'harmonisation des politiques et législations forestières et le développement des aires protégées transfrontalières ;
- Participer à l'élaboration et à la vulgarisation des lois nationales et/ou transfrontalières pouvant contribuer à réglementer la bonne gestion des écosystèmes forestiers nationaux et/ou transfrontaliers.

En conclusion, M. Ngantou a, à son tour, appelé au soutien financier du Partenariat pour les forêts du Bassin du Congo et au soutien des actions de la COMIFAC.

Ministre de l'Economie forestière de la République du Congo et ancien Président de la COMIFAC, **S. Exc. M. Henri Djombo** a axé sa présentation sur la question de l'engagement des gouvernements d'Afrique centrale en faveur de la préservation de la biodiversité dans leur région. Pour illustrer son propos, il a choisi de présenter la *Déclaration de Yaoundé* et d'expliquer les raisons qui ont conduit à la création de la COMIFAC. Adoptée le 12 mars 1999 à l'issue de la réunion des chefs d'Etats d'Afrique centrale à Yaoundé (Cameroun), cette Déclaration consacre la reconnaissance des Chefs d'Etats des pays concernés de la nécessité de conserver la biodiversité et de gérer durablement les écosystèmes forestiers de leur région. A travers cette Déclaration, les chefs d'Etat réaffirment également le droit de leurs peuples à compter sur les ressources forestières pour soutenir leurs efforts de développement économique et social en conciliant les impératifs de ce développement avec la conservation de

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la diversité biologique dans le cadre d'une coopération sous-régionale et internationale.

Cette initiative a été saluée par l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies par l'adoption, au cours de sa 54^e session, de la résolution n°54/214 du 1^{er} février 2000. Cette résolution invite la communauté internationale à soutenir les pays d'Afrique centrale dans leur effort de développement durable forestier en leur fournissant une assistance technique et financière sur une base régionale. Elle encourage par ailleurs, le Fonds mondial pour l'environnement (GEF) et le Forum des Nations Unies sur les forêts (UNFF) à tenir compte des forêts de la région lors de l'examen des moyens à mettre en œuvre pour assurer la conservation et la gestion durable de tous les types de forêts et prie le Secrétaire général de lui rendre compte de l'application de la Résolution.

C'est pour faciliter la mise en œuvre et assurer le suivi de cette Déclaration qu'est née la *Conférence des ministres chargés des forêts d'Afrique centrale* dont sont signataires le Cameroun, le Congo, le Gabon, la Guinée équatoriale, la République Centrafricaine, la République démocratique du Congo et le Tchad².

La Conférence ordinaire de la COMIFAC qui s'est tenue à Libreville, en juillet 2003 a été l'occasion de faire un premier bilan et de mesurer ainsi les avancées réalisées et les obstacles restant à franchir pour atteindre les objectifs fixés. Au nombre des progrès, M. Djombo cite :

- L'adoption du Plan de convergence sous-régional qui définit les axes stratégiques prioritaires nationaux et sous-régionaux à mettre en œuvre pour atteindre les objectifs de conservation et de gestion durable des forêts d'Afrique centrale ;
- La reconnaissance de la COMIFAC comme unique organisation politique d'orientation et de décision pour tout ce qui touche aux forêts d'Afrique centrale et du Plan de convergence sous-régional comme unique base de référence pour les actions à mener en faveur de la gestion et de la conservation de ce patrimoine ;
- La présentation du Plan de convergence aux différents partenaires ;
- L'élargissement du Partenariat pour les forêts du Bassin du Congo aux organismes des Nations Unies ;
- La préparation d'un traité sur la gestion durable des écosystèmes forestiers d'Afrique centrale qui sera soumis à la signature des Chefs d'Etats à l'occasion du Sommet de Brazzaville de février 2005 ;
- La création de deux aires protégées transfrontalières: les aires tri-nationales de la Sangha (TNS) entre le Cameroun, le Congo et la République centrafricaine et du Dja-Odzala-Minkébé entre le Cameroun, le Congo et le Gabon.

Au nombre des obstacles à surmonter, M. Djombo cite :

- La modestie des ressources mobilisées en faveur du Bassin du Congo ;
- La faiblesse des capacités nationales ;
- Les conflits armés et l'instabilité politique ;
- La faible maîtrise des procédures et mécanismes de mobilisation et de gestion des fonds de coopération ;
- La faible implication des communautés, des populations et du secteur privé ;

En conclusion, M. Djombo invite tous ceux des partenaires potentiels qui hésitent à apporter leur soutien à la République démocratique du Congo, à s'engager afin de gagner le pari de la gestion durable des écosystèmes des forêts d'Afrique centrale. Il a félicité la FAO, le PNUD, le PNUE et l'UNESCO pour leur adhésion au *Partenariat pour les forêts du Bassin du Congo*. Enfin il a demandé à l'Union européenne de tout mettre en œuvre pour assurer le bouclage du financement et le démarrage de la quatrième phase du programme ECOFAC pour la préservation des forêts de la RDC en cette période de reconstruction.

En introduction de sa présentation sur *Partenariat pour les forêts du Bassin du Congo* (PFBC), **David Kaeuper**, Ambassadeur et facilitateur de l'initiative, a d'abord tenu à rendre hommage à l'action de M. Henri Djombo à la tête de la COMIFAC. Il a rappelé que la RDC détenait plus de 50% des forêts du Bassin du Congo et abritait de nombreuses espèces de faune et de flore endémiques d'une importance capitale pour les gens vivant dans ces régions comme pour l'ensemble de la planète. Beaucoup de ces espèces sont menacées de dégradation ou d'extinction si rien n'est fait pour endiguer le niveau de destruction des forêts humides.

M. Kaeuper a poursuivi par une description des activités du PFBC en faveur de la sauvegarde de la biodiversité et des sites du patrimoine mondial.

Le PFBC est un forum dont la principale ambition est de faciliter les discussions, la coopération et la collaboration sur les forêts et la biodiversité dans la région du Bassin du Congo.

La mission première du PFBC est de promouvoir la gestion durable des forêts du Bassin du Congo ainsi que de sa faune et de sa flore pour améliorer les conditions de vie des habitants de ce bassin.

C'est le fait que les forêts du Bassin du Congo, contrairement aux nombreuses autres forêts tropicales, soient largement préservées qui a conduit les partenaires du PFBC et les pays concernés à s'engager pour les garder intactes à travers des actions concertées et durables.

Conscients des menaces spécifiques pesant sur les écosystèmes comme sur la faune et la flore du Bassin du Congo,

². Depuis février 2005, le Burundi, le Rwanda et Sao Tome et Principe comptent au nombre des signataires

les partenaires du PFBC mettent tout en œuvre pour lutter contre la pauvreté, la mauvaise gouvernance, les occupations illégales et le braconnage, les mauvaises pratiques agricoles, l'instabilité politique et la violence, autant de menaces à la préservation de la biodiversité de cette région.

Le PFBC s'inscrit dans la droite ligne de l'engagement politique pris, deux ans avant sa création, par les pays du Bassin du Congo pour gérer durablement leurs forêts et leur faune.

Ne disposant ni de personnel, ni de Secrétariat et n'ayant pas vocation à financer ou à mettre en œuvre des projets, le PFBC se présente comme un forum transparent, non hiérarchique au sein duquel les partenaires ou toute partie intéressée peut discuter ou exprimer ses préoccupations ou projets pour la région. Le PFBC aspire à aider les pays du Bassin du Congo et la COMIFAC en facilitant la communication et la coopération entre tous les partenaires. Il leur offre également l'opportunité d'évaluer l'accomplissement de leurs objectifs. La qualité des moyens de communication que fournit le PFBC permet d'éviter la duplication des projets et de détecter les failles dans les besoins en programmes et en financement.

Le Partenariat travaille actuellement à l'amélioration des projets de coopération et de collaboration sur le terrain. Il coopère notamment avec la COMIFAC qui a invité de nombreux partenaires à participer à ses réunions, comme l'ont fait l'USAID avec son programme pour l'environnement en Afrique centrale (CARPE) et ECOFAC. Cette coopération s'étend aux ONG qui développent et exécutent des projets avec les gouvernements du Bassin du Congo et aux autres organisations sous-régionales sans oublier les ONG locales et la société civile.

La valeur symbolique du PFBC ne devrait pas être sous-estimée. Il a par exemple contribué à ce que le Congrès américain engage en faveur de la région, à travers le programme CARPE, plus de 45 millions de dollars sur trois ans. Avec les autres sources de financement, le montant engagé atteint les 53 millions de dollars. Ces contributions ont permis de lever des fonds supplémentaires d'un montant d'environ 20 millions de dollars auprès du secteur privé, des donateurs multilatéraux et d'ONG.

Au sein du partenariat, l'Allemagne collabore étroitement avec les pays de la COMIFAC pour renforcer les capacités de cette dernière et l'aide à mettre en place des bases légales et institutionnelles pour une coopération plus efficace dans la région et avec les bailleurs de fonds. Elle fournit également un soutien direct à la conservation de la biodiversité dans les sites du patrimoine mondial.

Evoquant la Commission européenne, M. Kaeuper a signalé l'élaboration de la quatrième phase du programme ECOFAC et sa très prochaine mise en œuvre. Ce quatrième volet mettra plus particulièrement l'accent sur les aires protégées et les zones tampons.

Autre partenaire, la France intervient en faveur des aires protégées régionales en ciblant son action sur la recherche, la gestion durable des produits forestiers non-ligneux. Son action se traduit notamment par l'attribution de prêts aux industries pour la promotion de la gestion durable de la forêt.

Dans le Bassin du Congo, le programme CARPE concerne essentiellement « des paysages écologiques ». Il s'agit d'une approche générale de la gestion de l'utilisation des terres pour la conservation qui prend en compte le contexte économique, social et culturel des paysages. Le Programme paysage de CARPE est mis en œuvre par quatre ONG internationales basées aux Etats-Unies : Africa Wildlife Foundation, Conservation International, Wildlife Conservation Society et la World Wildlife Foundation. Chacune de ces ONG est le « Landscape Leader » d'un ou plusieurs des onze paysages CARPE qui existent à travers l'Afrique centrale. Le Programme dépend de la participation des gouvernements régionaux. Les « Landscape Leaders » ont par ailleurs mis sur pied, un réseau de partenaires regroupant le secteur privé, les ONG locales, les fondations, les institutions d'aide bi et multilatérale, etc.

Les sites du patrimoine mondial sont inclus dans les paysages CARPE en RDC. La forte corrélation entre le PFBC/CARPE en matière de paysage et les sites du patrimoine mondial tient au souci des partenaires du PFBC d'enrayer le processus d'extinction des espèces et donc la perte de la biodiversité, tout en assurant la promotion de la croissance économique et du bien être social. En 2003/2004, le gouvernement américain a dépensé sept millions de dollars (exclusion faite des fonds additionnels) pour ces paysages qui englobent quatre des cinq sites du patrimoine mondial (Réserve de faune à okapis, Salonga-Lukenie- Sankuru, Maiko – Lutunguru-Tayna Kahuzi-Biega et Virunga).

M. Kaeuper a rappelé que les programmes actuellement mis en œuvre en RDC fonctionnaient malgré des conditions difficiles et avaient réussi le formidable pari de maintenir en vie les sites du patrimoine mondial. Ce succès doit beaucoup à l'engagement international qui doit se poursuivre sur le long terme pour que les résultats obtenus se pérennisent.

Il est par ailleurs possible que la mobilisation d'un important financement en faveur des projets de conservation incite les factions locales et les gouvernements régionaux à respecter, dans ces zones, les conventions internationales sur la biodiversité y compris en période de crise.

Les actions diplomatiques de l'UNESCO en faveur des sites du patrimoine mondial ont rencontré un certain succès et l'on peut en retirer quelques leçons pour de futures mobilisations politiques et diplomatiques pour la conservation. C'est notamment grâce à la médiation diplomatique internationale que la crise intervenue dans le secteur de Mikeno (Parc national des Virunga) a été résolue.



Le patrimoine mondial
de la République
démocratique du Congo :
le cœur du bassin
du Congo

3

Conférence internationale pour la sauvegarde et la promotion du patrimoine congolais

La présidence de cette session était assurée par M. **Natajaran Ishwaran, Directeur de la Division des Sciences écologiques de l'UNESCO** et ancien Directeur adjoint du Centre du patrimoine mondial.

Le président de Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Steven Sanderson est intervenu sur l'importance de la République démocratique du Congo pour la biodiversité du Bassin du Congo. Selon lui, la situation politique actuelle du pays pourrait, vu la place particulière qu'occupe la RDC, déterminer le futur de la biodiversité dans la région.

La République démocratique du Congo peut s'enorgueillir de son histoire déjà longue et ancienne en matière de gestion et de création d'aires protégées. Néanmoins, une importante partie des aires protégées existantes – en particulier dans le Rift d'Albertine – est soumise à d'importants, quoique peu connus, changements démographiques, à une énorme pression agricole, aux déplacements humains et aux troubles politiques, le commerce de viande de brousse y particulièrement rependu. Aucun recensement démographique digne de ce nom ni aucune estimation fiable de la population vivant dans ces aires protégées ou économiquement actives dans l'extraction des ressources n'est disponible pour évaluer l'impact de ces activités sur ces espaces essentiels à la conservation. Il en va de même pour les études de fond sur la biodiversité qui, lorsqu'elles existent, sont trop anciennes.

Tout en reconnaissant qu'il ne pouvait que modestement contribuer à l'effort du gouvernement de la RDC et de la communauté internationale pour élaborer une stratégie pour la conservation dans la région et répondre dans le même temps aux besoins urgents de la population congolaise, M. Sanderson a fait part de quelques-unes de ses observations qui, recoupent certaines des préoccupations évoquées par d'autres intervenants. Il s'agit notamment :

- du maintien du soutien extérieur : les ONG doivent obtenir l'appui des secteurs privé et public et se faire les porte-parole de la cause de la conservation en RDC à l'extérieur celle-ci ;
- de l'importance des bailleurs de fonds bi et multilatéraux pour soutenir l'action des agences congolaises sur le terrain ;
- du besoin en formation des partenaires et collègues congolais ;

Pour l'ensemble des cinq sites du patrimoine mondial, il est impératif de poursuivre les inventaires, déterminer la population de base des espèces phares des paysages, préserver l'intégrité de l'écosystème et former le personnel d'encadrement.

Il reste primordial :

- d'assurer l'intégrité des aires protégées existantes face à l'extraction minière et au braconnage par un appui

aux gardes et un contrôle de l'accès aux aires protégées ;

- d'établir un lien entre les sites du patrimoine mondial et des aires importantes pour la biodiversité qui jouissent d'une moindre protection à cause de l'absence d'ONG et de la faiblesse de données disponibles ;
- d'intégrer la biodiversité dans le processus de développement national.

Ce dernier point revient à survivre à la paix après avoir survécu à la guerre. Cela implique un Plan national pour la forêt et la biodiversité clairement holistique qui inclut le développement rural, l'augmentation des infrastructures, l'utilisation des ressources et la préservation de ces ressources. L'ensemble du processus est profondément politisé, pas uniquement en RDC mais également au sein de la communauté internationale dans sa globalité. La croissance économique n'est pas suffisante si les populations pauvres qui vivent dans les zones clés pour la conservation n'en tirent aucun profit. Elle s'avère tout aussi insuffisante sans la mise en place de systèmes de permis et de contrôle des exploitations minières, forestières, et agricoles. Le concept très prometteur de « zone d'éco développement » pourrait être utilement utilisé en la matière. Le recours au zonage pour la conservation et le développement représente un véritable défi presque partout ailleurs, la RDC ne fait pas exception.

Le temps presse, la situation politique de la RDC peut changer, les donateurs sont engagés mais inconstants. Comme partout ailleurs dans le monde, les progrès réalisés en RDC restent fragiles. Le formidable potentiel ressenti par tous peut rapidement diminuer et pourrait certainement s'évanouir avec le temps.

C'est pour cette raison que la communauté internationale doit s'engager plus largement à soutenir la reconstruction des capacités en RDC à tous les niveaux et veiller à ce que les espoirs de conservation et de développement de la RDC conservent leur visibilité dans un agenda mondial très disputé. La *diplomatie de conservation* peut fournir cet engagement mais uniquement avec un formidable effort à travers le *Partenariat pour les forêts du Bassin du Congo*, la *Convention du patrimoine mondial*, la Fondation des Nations Unies avec ses ressources et sa visibilité auprès de l'opinion publique internationale, ainsi que la collaboration des ONG qui se préoccupent véritablement du futur de la RDC.

Son **Exc. M. Anselme Enerunga, ministre de l'Environnement, de la conservation de la nature, des eaux et forêts de la République démocratique du Congo**, a pris la suite de M. Sanderson pour s'exprimer sur les moyens mis en œuvre par la RDC, pour préserver sa biodiversité via l'adoption d'une politique d'approche intégrée des forêts. En introduction de sa présentation, le ministre de l'Environnement a fait une brève présentation de la RDC rappelant sa situation géographique, l'étendue de son territoire et ses neuf frontières, et la richesse de sa

diversité culturelle et naturelle, qui constitue un potentiel sans commune mesure avec les autres nations du continent africain.

Un autre des atouts de la RDC est son plan d'eau intérieur qui occupe 3,5% de l'étendue du territoire national et représente plus de 50% des réserves en eau douce du continent.

Dans le Bassin du Congo, les forêts de la RDC occupent une place particulière. En effet, à elle seule la RDC détient 56% du massif forestier du Bassin du Congo loin devant l'Angola, le Cameroun, la République Centrafricaine, la République du Congo et la Guinée équatoriale. A ce titre, le gouvernement congolais reconnaît qu'il a la responsabilité morale de gérer de façon durable ce patrimoine de l'humanité.

La végétation de la RDC recouvre sept types physiologiques allant de la forêt dense humide sempervirente à la forêt dense humide semi décidue, aux forêts de montagne, aux formations forestières édaphiques, à la forêt sèche, à la forêt claire et aux savanes. Les estimations récentes laissent à penser que ces forêts couvrent environ 55% du territoire national.

La RDC s'efforce de préserver des échantillons représentatifs de cette exceptionnelle biodiversité à travers un réseau d'aires protégées dont font notamment parties les cinq sites du patrimoine mondial.

L'extrême diversité des ressources fauniques constitue également une particularité de la RDC. Selon les chiffres fournis par le ministre, le pays abriterait plus de 352 espèces de reptiles, 168 espèces batraciens, 1086 espèces d'oiseaux, 412 espèces de mammifères, 1596 espèces d'invertébrés aquatiques dont 1423 d'eau douce et 183 marines, 544 espèces d'invertébrés terrestres et 1606 espèces de vertébrés aquatiques. La faune ichthyologique compterait, quant à elle, une quarantaine de familles représentant plus de 1 000 espèces dont approximativement 800 vivraient dans le système du fleuve Congo. La RDC compterait aussi plus d'espèces de primates que partout ailleurs dans le monde.

Le fait que la RDC soit probablement l'un des pays les mieux nantis en matière de forêt, avec ses 138 millions d'hectares, a conduit le gouvernement congolais à accorder une attention particulière à la gestion des ressources forestières. C'est le ministère de l'Environnement, de la conservation de la nature, des eaux et forêts (créé en 1975) qui est compétent en la matière. Pour remplir sa mission, il s'appuie sur une Direction de gestion forestière et sur plusieurs services spécialisés dont le SPIAF (Service permanent d'inventaire et d'aménagement forestiers). L'Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) *in situ* et à l'Institut des Jardins Zoologiques et Botaniques du Congo (IJZBC) *ex-situ* interviennent, pour leur part, au niveau de la conservation.

Avec le soutien de la Banque mondiale et de celui de la FAO, la RDC a entrepris depuis 2000 un travail important pour améliorer la gestion des ressources forestières. En 2002, un code forestier comportant de nombreuses innovations en matière de gestion forestière a vu le jour. Par ailleurs, un agenda prioritaire de relance du secteur forestier a été élaboré. Il doit permettre de planifier les différentes interventions dans le secteur forestier.

Dans le domaine de la formation, le ministre fait état de l'initiative de l'UNESCO qui a abouti à la création de l'ERAIFT, une institution à vocation régionale destinée à former « des cadres dotés d'une vision systémique de gestion des espaces naturels ».

En conclusion, M. Enerunga a réitéré la volonté du gouvernement congolais de respecter ses engagements internationaux et d'encourager des concertations à travers des plates-formes nationales, sous-régionales, régionales et internationales pour définir des axes stratégiques et harmoniser les vues en termes de gestion durable des ressources forestières. Il a indiqué qu'au niveau sous-régional, la RDC était déjà partie à la *Conférence des ministres en charge des forêts d'Afrique* (COMIFAC), la *Conférence sur les écosystèmes des forêts denses et humides d'Afrique centrale* (CEFDHAC) et de l'Organisation Africaine du Bois (OAB).

Il a encouragé l'initiative du NEPAD qui constitue à ses yeux tout à la fois un facteur d'intégration économique et social des pays africains et de lutte contre la pauvreté.

Jacques Verschuren, ancien Directeur général des parcs nationaux du Congo (1969-1975), qui n'a pas pu intervenir à la conférence avait demandé à **Samy Mankoto, Spécialiste du programme à la Division des Sciences écologiques de l'UNESCO et ancien Directeur général de l'ICCN**, de le représenter pour évoquer l'histoire de la conservation en RDC à travers celle de ses parcs nationaux.

C'est en 1948 que Jacques Verschuren découvre les parcs de ce qui est encore le Congo belge. C'est à partir de cette époque qu'il considérera, comme la majorité des chercheurs et spécialistes de la conservation, que « les parcs du Congo sont les plus beaux et les plus intéressants de la planète ».

L'histoire des parcs du Congo a véritablement commencé en 1925 avec la création, au Nord-Est du pays, en bordure des 300 kilomètres de frontière avec l'Ouganda et le Rwanda, du Parc national des Virunga. Il s'agissait, pour les autorités belges, d'assurer la sauvegarde du fameux gorille de montagne. A la fin des années cinquante, Jacques Verschuren fut, avec l'Américain Schaller et le Congolais Senkwekwe, l'un des premiers humains à observer le gorille de montagne.

Alors baptisé Parc Albert, le Parc national des Virunga pouvait être qualifié de véritable microcosme du conti-

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ment africain protégeant tous types de biotopes, de la forêt équatoriale aux neiges du Rwenzori. Suivit, en 1938, la création du Parc national de la Garamba, à l'extrême Nord-Est du pays dans l'Uélé, dont l'ambition était de protéger le déjà rare rhinocéros blanc du Nord.

En 1960, la RDC compte déjà trois grandes réserves, toutes créées avec l'accord des communautés locales dont certaines perçoivent une indemnisation.

Le but de la création de ces réserves est avant tout de mettre en place un système de conservation intégrale dans lequel le tourisme occupe une portion congrue. Les parcs nationaux du Congo deviennent ainsi « un joyau de la recherche biologique mondiale »

A de nombreuses reprises, Jacques Verschuren insiste sur le dévouement des gardes. Il cite les conservateurs Kajuga, Mushenzi et Jobogo et rappelle que sans le courage de ces conservateurs et des gardes entre 1960-1963, les parcs du Congo auraient sans doute disparu.

Devenu Directeur général de l'Institut des parcs congolais en 1969, Jacques Verschuren accompagne le mouvement de création de nouvelles zones de conservation. Il se montre particulièrement fier de la naissance du Parc national de la Salonga, à 100 Km au Sud de Boende entre Kinshasa et Kisangani, « qui assure la protection d'une forêt primaire concurrençant celle de l'Amazonie ». Le Parc national de la Salonga est également le sanctuaire du bonobo ou chimpanzé nain, le primate le plus proche de l'homme. Il participe, de même, aux délimitations du terrain qui fera place à la Réserve de faune à okapis, « exclusivité de la République démocratique du Congo ».

Selon M. Verschuren, la RDC a toujours été à l'avant-garde de la conservation de la nature. En conclusion, M. Verschuren exprime le souhait de voir, grâce à la coopération de tous, les sites du patrimoine mondial retirés de la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril et forme le vœu de voir inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial le Parc national de l'Upemba, joyau de la province du Katanga.

L'intervention d'**Eulalie Bashige, Administrateur délégué général de l'Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN)** est venue clore la session consacrée à la place du patrimoine mondial de la RDC dans le Bassin du Congo. Elle s'est exprimée sur l'état de conservation des sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC.

En préambule, elle a rappelé que la RDC a ratifié la *Convention du patrimoine mondial* en 1974 et a indiqué sur quels critères les sites ont été inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Elle a en outre donné les raisons pour lesquelles ces sites avaient été déclarés patrimoine mondial en péril. Elle a poursuivi par la présentation d'une carte des sites en RDC et d'un tableau décrivant les cinq sites du patrimoine mondial avec leur année d'inscription

sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial et celle de leur inscription sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril. S'en est suivie pour chacun des sites une présentation de leurs atouts et des menaces qui pèsent sur eux (*voir insert couleur*).

Les atouts dont jouit chacun des sites sont ceux qui ont prévalu à leur inscription sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Les principales menaces qui pèsent sur les sites sont : l'insécurité due à la présence de militaires ou de bandes armées et à la prolifération des armes, la pression démographique, le braconnage commercial à grande échelle, les exploitations minières, le défaut de matérialisation des limites pour certains des sites et parfois les conflits avec les communautés locales.

Mme Bashige a également présenté un état des lieux des principales difficultés dues à la guerre. Le bilan est lourd : plus de 100 cadres et gardes ont été tués, la population des hippopotames des Virunga est passée de 20 000 à 1 300, les éléphants du secteur de basse altitude de Kahuzi-Biega qui constitue 90% du parc ont été décimés, plusieurs parties des Virunga sont occupées par des populations locales et l'on assiste à une véritable inflation du braconnage dans les parcs nationaux des Virunga, Garamba, Salonga et dans la Réserve de faune à okapis.

Selon l'ICCN, les perspectives pour le futur résident principalement dans l'engagement pris par le gouvernement congolais d'apporter son appui à la conservation des sites du patrimoine mondial. Elle compte aussi sur la poursuite du soutien financier des bailleurs pour la mise en œuvre de la phase II du projet « *Conservation de la biodiversité dans les zones de conflit armé : préserver le patrimoine mondial de la RDC* ». Enfin, le retour à la paix et à l'unité nationale devrait permettre de s'atteler à la réhabilitation des aires protégées avec, comme perspective, la promotion du tourisme et le développement des communautés riveraines.

En conclusion le Président de la session, M. Ishwaran, a rappelé que le moment était désormais venu de faire quelque chose pour restaurer des conditions de travail dignes de ce nom. Le temps était également venu pour la conservation de devenir une priorité majeure pour la RDC, et ce malgré l'énorme défi posé par la pauvreté et les besoins de développement. Se référant à l'intervention du Ministre Enerunga au sujet du développement intégré des forêts, il a ajouté qu'il fallait associer conservation et développement, ce qui était plus facile à dire qu'à faire, même si certains exemples probants existent ailleurs. Il faudra trouver quels aspects du développement et de la conservation sont compatibles dans un paysage donné. Des mécanismes aussi bien légaux que de coopérations devront impérativement être mis en place. La RDC peut bénéficier des expériences d'autres pays où l'intégration n'a peut-être pas très bien marché mais a néanmoins permis de tirer certaines leçons. Le Secrétariat de la *Convention sur la diversité biologique* collecte, sur cette question, des données qui pourront être utilisées.

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M. Ishwaran est revenu sur l'importance du rôle des gardes sans lesquels les parcs n'auraient jamais survécus. L'espoir est tout de même permis. En effet, quand il était spécialiste principal de programme pour le patrimoine mondial, à la fin des années 80, Garamba a été inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril, avec une population de rhinocéros blancs s'élevant à 15 individus. Cinq ans après, elle a grimpé à 31 individus et en 1992, le site était retiré de la Liste. En 1996,

il était de nouveau inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril.

Avant de remercier les intervenants et l'audience M. Ishwaran a déclaré que le passé regorgeait d'exemples de réussites et qu'il fallait garder confiance car les choses finissent par arriver. La communauté internationale doit aider le gouvernement de la RDC à assurer la pérennité de ces biens de valeur exceptionnelle.



4

Conserver la biodiversité
du patrimoine mondial
en période de conflit

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Noureini Tidjani-Serpos, Sous-directeur général du Département Afrique de l'UNESCO a introduit cette session consacrée aux événements qui se sont produits sur les sites du patrimoine mondial de la RDC après le conflit. Il a ajouté que les liens existant entre la vie humaine et l'environnement n'étaient pas encore totalement compris et méritaient, en ce sens, d'être plus étudiés.

Jean-Pierre d'Huart, Consultant et responsable de l'évaluation du projet « *Conservation de la biodiversité dans les zones de conflit armé : préserver les sites du patrimoine mondial en République démocratique du Congo* », a débuté sa présentation en donnant un aperçu du projet et des enseignements tirés de sa première phase de réalisation.

Novateur et atypique, ce projet est à l'origine d'un partenariat unique entre les bailleurs de fonds (Fondation des Nations Unies, gouvernement belge), le Centre du patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO, l'ICCN, un groupe d'ONG internationales de conservation et la Coopération technique allemande (GTZ). Hormis les donateurs, tous ont pour point commun une longue expérience sur le terrain et en particulier dans les cinq sites du patrimoine mondial où ils ont toujours été très actifs.

C'est à une ultime tentative commune de sauvegarde de l'intégrité des sites du patrimoine mondial, gravement menacés pendant les conflits qui ont secoué la région, que ce partenariat doit le jour. En effet, alors qu'en général la guerre est source de division, son effet a été tout autre parmi les spécialistes de la conservation intervenant en RDC. C'est elle qui les a poussés à s'unir pour développer de nouvelles synergies, plus efficaces, entre l'ICCN et ses partenaires gouvernementaux et non-gouvernementaux.

Les quatre objectifs spécifiques du projet, à savoir (1) l'appui direct aux sites, (2) le renforcement des capacités, (3) le support politique et diplomatique et (4) le financement durable ont été précisés par l'évaluateur.

Fournir un **appui direct à l'échelle des cinq sites** menacés constituait, dans le cadre du projet, l'axe principal d'intervention, le but étant d'assurer la poursuite des activités de conservation malgré les conditions de conflit et de guerre. Chose exceptionnelle, 60% du budget global du projet ont été affectés au paiement de primes aux gardes des parcs. En pratique, ces primes remplaçaient les salaires depuis longtemps impayés ou versés de façon sporadique. Cette action a été un élément décisif dans la limitation des atteintes portées aux sites. Une autre initiative du projet a été d'introduire un système permettant de lier le versement de la prime aux performances réalisées dans le cadre des activités de conservation. Bien qu'elle se soit heurtée à des problèmes pratiques dans certains sites, cette initiative a

tout de même contribué à l'apparition d'une nouvelle éthique de travail chez le personnel des parcs.

M. d'Huart note que les procédures administratives de l'UNESCO, trop complexes, se sont révélées peu adaptées dans les situations où il fallait apporter une assistance financière d'urgence sur le terrain. Combinées avec la difficulté de faire acheminer – dans des conditions de guerre - des fonds dans les régions éloignées, ces contraintes administratives ont causé de nombreux retards dans le versement des salaires provoquant, ainsi, de la frustration chez les gardes qui devaient poursuivre leur travail dans des conditions extrêmement difficiles.

M. d'Huart a insisté sur le fait que l'amélioration de l'efficacité du travail et de la synergie devait beaucoup à la mise en place, entre les différents partenaires du projet, de structures de coordination destinées à faciliter son exécution. Ceci aussi bien au niveau des sites, à travers les Comités de coordination des sites (CoCoSi), qu'au niveau national via le Coregroup. Ce sont ces résultats positifs qui ont convaincu l'ICCN de pérenniser les CoCosi et par la même occasion de l'élargir à tout le réseau des aires protégées. En s'appuyant sur les leçons tirées du Coregroup, l'ICCN a également pris la décision d'établir la « Coalition de conservation au Congo » (CoCoCongo), un forum de coordination entre tous les partenaires et bailleurs de l'Institut.

Pour le volet renforcement des capacités, la priorité a été donnée aux formations pratiques et *in situ* du personnel de terrain, avec un accent particulier sur les techniques de surveillance, l'application de la loi et le monitoring. Avec la normalisation de la situation politique du pays, il est prévu de développer une véritable stratégie de formation principalement axée sur la formation systématique des agents de terrain de l'ICCN en techniques de conservation.

Toujours en matière de renforcement des capacités, un important travail a été initié sur l'amélioration du monitoring écologique dans les sites. Il s'est traduit par la mise en place, au sein de l'ICCN, d'une structure destinée à la gestion des informations écologiques (SYGIAP) et par le développement – dans le cadre d'une coopération avec le Service Fédéral belge de Science et l'Agence spatiale européenne (ESA) – de cartes de bases pour les cinq sites à partir d'images satellites.

Dans le domaine de la conservation communautaire et de l'amélioration des relations avec les populations communautaires, des projets pilotes bénéficiant également d'un financement de la Belgique ont pu être initiés malgré la situation d'urgence. Les résultats de ces projets pilotes ont démontré qu'il est possible de trouver des solutions, à travers notamment le recours aux techniques de réduction des conflits, pour régler certains conflits entre les intérêts des sites et ceux des populations riveraines.

L'exercice d'évaluation a démontré que les activités de conservation communautaire devaient être intégrées, sous le leadership de l'ICCN, dans tous les programmes de conservation destinés aux sites.

Le support politique et diplomatique en faveur de la conservation des sites constitue une autre caractéristique particulièrement novatrice du projet. En effet, le projet a tout mis en œuvre pour obtenir la coopération des différentes parties engagées dans le conflit, y compris les militaires et les différents groupes rebelles, pour la sauvegarde de ce patrimoine de l'humanité que sont les sites du patrimoine mondial de la RDC. Cette diplomatie de conservation s'est avérée être un outil très utile grâce notamment au rôle clé joué par le Centre du patrimoine mondial. Cependant, le manque de capacités en ressources humaines du Centre du patrimoine mondial n'a pas permis d'assurer le suivi nécessaire des interventions engagées et a de fait, réduit l'efficacité des actions menées. Ces actions auraient sans doute rempli tous leurs objectifs si le mandat de l'UNESCO pour opérer dans les zones sous contrôle rebelle avait été plus flexible. M. d'Huart a regretté l'absence d'un accord formel entre l'UNESCO, la MONUC et les autres agences des nations unies actives en RDC qui auraient pu, selon lui, donner d'excellents résultats pour la conservation.

La *diplomatie de la conservation* a malgré tout permis d'obtenir la coopération des militaires et des autorités rebelles. L'appui des militaires a été obtenu grâce à des contacts réguliers et à des opérations conjointes bien planifiées. Au moment de la planification du projet, il avait été espéré que l'appui politique et diplomatique déboucherait sur une Déclaration internationale sur le statut de neutralité du personnel des sites du patrimoine mondial. Malheureusement, l'obtention d'une telle déclaration demandait un travail préparatoire considérable qui n'a pu être fourni à temps. Il est apparu par la suite, qu'elle aurait plus sa place dans une nouvelle Convention sur les aires protégées en temps de conflit, comparable à celle déjà en vigueur pour les sites culturels.

Pour le volet recherche de financement durable, le principal défi était d'explorer les opportunités de financement additionnel pour la mise en œuvre de la seconde phase du projet. L'implication active de l'UNESCO et la crédibilité du projet ont permis de générer un soutien financier complémentaire significatif de la part de l'Union Européenne, de la Banque mondiale/GEF, du gouvernement belge, de l'Agence spatiale européenne, du gouvernement italien et d'ONG. Le projet a, pour sa part, développé un concept pour la création d'un fonds fiduciaire destiné à financer sur le long terme les frais de fonctionnement des sites. L'instabilité politique a empêché la concrétisation de ce projet.

Les sites du patrimoine mondial de la RDC sont affaiblis mais en vie. La mobilisation des ressources pour le projet a été exemplaire, mais les fonds disponibles ont uniquement permis de financer le fonctionnement à *minima* et se sont avérés insuffisants pour faire face à tous les défis en matière de conservation auxquels les sites du patrimoine mondial se sont retrouvés confrontés pendant la crise. La structure du projet et l'originalité du partenariat sont pour beaucoup dans l'impact positif qu'il a eu. A l'instar d'autres collaborateurs du projet, son évaluateur a tenu à rendre hommage au courage et à la loyauté du personnel de l'ICCN.

M. d'Huart a déclaré qu'en dépit de la normalisation progressive de la situation politique dans le pays, les cinq sites du patrimoine mondial continuaient à être sérieusement menacés du fait de l'insécurité toujours présente dans certaines régions, de la présence de groupes armés, de la prolifération des armes dans et autour des sites. Tous ces facteurs tendant à favoriser une exploitation non contrôlée et souvent illicite des ressources naturelles. Il place néanmoins ses espoirs dans l'engagement pris par le Vice-Président d'apporter son soutien à la résolution de certains de ces problèmes. Pour l'avenir, il a fourni quelques pistes sur lesquelles il faudrait se concentrer : formation, élaboration de plans d'urgence, mise en place de la surveillance continue, maintien de la coordination, poursuite de la communication et de la sensibilisation.

Dans une émouvante présentation sur le travail des gardes **Jean-Pierre Jobogo Mirindi, conservateur du Parc national des Virunga** (PNVi)/Lulimbi, a rendu un vibrant hommage au dévouement héroïque de ceux de ses collègues que leur passion pour la conservation a conduit à faire l'ultime sacrifice, leur vie, dans l'accomplissement de leur travail.

M. Mirindi a poursuivi son exposé en énumérant quelques-uns des résultats obtenus par les gardes : accroissement de la population de gorilles qui est passée de 325 à 380 individus, amélioration de l'efficacité des patrouilles, récupération des terres envahies.

Les conditions de travail des gardes sont extrêmement difficiles en raison notamment du manque de moyens logistiques. Par ailleurs, la non reconnaissance pendant la guerre de la neutralité des gardes a coûté la vie à nombre d'entre eux, 100 gardes ont trouvé la mort entre 1996 et 2004.

Avant la guerre, l'autorité de l'ICCN reposait en grande partie sur le soutien de la présidence de la République, le personnel des sites était bien équipé et motivé et les relations avec les chefs coutumiers étaient excellentes. C'est à partir de 1990 que la situation a commencé à se dégrader avec pour conséquence l'affaiblissement de l'autorité de l'ICCN, qui s'est matérialisée notamment

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par le recrutement désordonné de nouvelles unités, la rupture de la chaîne de commandement et la démotivation du personnel.

L'action de l'UNESCO et des ONG partenaires a eu un effet bénéfique sur les personnels des sites. La prime UNESCO-UNF, l'espoir de voir les parcs retrouver leur intégrité et l'implication des autorités locales ont aidé à remonter le moral des gardes.

M. Mirindi a tenu à évoquer la question des difficultés d'acheminements des fonds destinés au paiement des salaires et des primes des gardes : système bancaire non opérationnel, missions des agents payeurs non sécurisées, impact de l'instabilité monétaire sur la vie quotidienne des gardes.

En conclusion, il a indiqué que les gardes gardaient espoir en l'avenir. Il demande cependant au gouvernement de démilitariser le parc, de réinstaller les militaires dans leurs casernes et de veiller à une stricte application de la loi en matière de conservation. Au nom de tous les gardes, il réclame à l'ICCN des moyens logistiques adéquats pour assurer la surveillance sur le terrain, la régularisation avec l'appui du gouvernement des salaires et des indemnités de pension et un soutien aux veuves des gardes décédés dans l'exercice de leurs fonctions.

Robert Mwinyihali de la Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) est intervenu sur la délicate question du statut de la faune dans les cinq sites du patrimoine mondial. Il a brièvement présenté la carte du *Réseau des aires protégées et sites du patrimoine mondial* qui regroupe sept Parcs nationaux, 16 Réserves de faune et domaines de chasse parmi lesquels on trouve les cinq sites du patrimoine mondial. Il a indiqué les zones bénéficiant d'une coopération bilatérale et multilatérale et évoqué l'existence d'un réseau des ONG de conservation.

Entre 1996 et 2003, la République démocratique du Congo a été en proie à de très graves conflits armés qui ont eu un impact sur la faune des sites du patrimoine mondial. La prolifération des armes légères a eu pour conséquence la recrudescence des assassinats des gardes des Parcs nationaux des Virunga et de la Garamba, ainsi que l'accroissement du braconnage et des activités illégales dans l'ensemble des sites du patrimoine mondial. A l'instar de M. Mirindi, M. Mwinyihali est revenu sur la question de l'occupation des sites du patrimoine par les troupes rebelles, les réfugiés, les déplacés de guerre et les populations locales avec pour corollaire le braconnage des espèces protégées ou menacées d'extinction, l'installation d'exploitations agricoles, forestières, minières, etc.

Pour chacun des sites du patrimoine mondial, M. Mwinyihali a brossé un tableau de ses espèces phares,

de la situation de la faune avant, pendant et après la guerre et des observations que l'ICCN et ses partenaires ont pu en tirer. Il a indiqué que les informations fournies avaient été obtenues grâce aux inventaires biologiques menés dans les cinq sites du patrimoine mondial et que les objectifs à atteindre avaient été fixés en fonction de la période à laquelle ces inventaires avaient été menés.

Avant la guerre, il s'agissait essentiellement de connaître le statut, la distribution de la faune et l'impact des activités humaines sur cette faune. Pendant la guerre, l'urgence était de mettre en place un suivi de la faune permettant d'évaluer les dégâts causés aux parcs par les différentes troupes de combattants. Après la guerre, il fallait impérativement mesurer son impact sur la faune et constituer une base de données pour le suivi biologique de celle-ci. M. Mwinyihali a également fourni des précisions sur les lieux où les inventaires avaient été réalisés à ces différentes périodes et sur ce qui, selon WCS, restait à faire au niveau de chaque site.

En conclusion, Robert Mwinyihali a évoqué le futur en reprenant les priorités identifiées par les intervenants précédents : *Renforcement du monitoring biologique* (inventaires/recensements biologique et suivi de la faune et de la flore) et *Renforcement de la surveillance* (paiements des salaires et des primes des gardes, provision en équipement de brousse, formation du personnel, etc.)

Paulin Tshikaya, chef du Parc national de la Garamba, a consacré sa présentation à cette question. Il a commencé par poser le contexte, celui de la partition du pays pendant les guerres successives de 1996 et 1998 qui a conduit à la perte de contrôle de certains sites du patrimoine mondial par la Direction de l'ICCN, avec les conséquences déjà évoquées par M. Mirindi.

Le projet UNESCO - UNF a permis d'apporter des solutions à ce problème de partition en rétablissant les liens entre la Direction de l'ICCN et les sites et en réinstaurant l'appui à ces derniers. L'appui fourni par le projet UNESCO-UNF a consisté à la mise en place d'une stratégie à deux niveaux : fournir un soutien direct aux équipes de l'ICCN basées dans les sites d'une part, et d'autre part initier une diplomatie de conservation pour sensibiliser toutes les parties impliquées dans le conflit sur la nécessité de préserver les sites du patrimoine mondial.

La conduite de missions diplomatiques auprès de tous les belligérants, l'organisation de réunions tripartites, les missions ponctuelles dans les sites et le contact individuel avec les hautes instances étaient les approches privilégiées dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre de la *diplomatie de conservation*.

Globalement, le recours à la diplomatie de conservation a eu des résultats positifs. M. Tshikaya en tire les leçons suivantes : dans une période de conflit armé, la *diplomatie de conservation* utilisée avec le label des Nations Unies constitue un outil efficace de protection des sites du patrimoine mondial ; le flux d'information des sites vers l'UNESCO a permis aux missions diplomatiques d'attirer l'attention des bailleurs de fonds et de certains hommes politiques sur la nécessité de les protéger. Bien que quatre des cinq sites se soient trouvés en territoires rebelles, le message de la conservation a été entendu par la majorité des décideurs. M. Tshikaya a également évoqué la nécessité d'un suivi régulier des résultats des interventions diplomatiques pour assurer leur efficacité sur le long terme.

Au cours du panel de discussion sur l'avenir du patrimoine mondial de la RDC dans la prochaine décennie, six panélistes ont été invités à s'exprimer sur leur vision de la situation des sites du patrimoine mondial dans dix ans. Selon la vision de Mme Bashige (ICCN), les aires protégées fonctionneraient toutes en ayant recours à la gestion et aux plans opérationnels et bénéficieraient de nouveaux équipements et des infrastructures élémentaires. Les communautés voisines seraient impliquées dans la gestion des parcs et l'écotourisme serait florissant. Pour M. Biala (ministère de l'Environnement), le nouveau Code forestier serait correctement appliqué et l'exploitation forestière se ferait de manière durable à partir du zonage des blocs forestiers tenant compte de

leurs fonctions écologiques, sociales et économiques. Le président de RAPAC, M. Mankoto, espère quant à lui que le modèle du CoCoSi sera dupliqué dans d'autres pays de la sous-région et que les échanges d'informations et d'expertises seront plus nombreux. Il espère aussi que l'écotourisme produira un modèle de résolution des conflits. Pour Mme Lanjouw (IGCP), l'ICCN serait de nouveau unifiée et réorganisée et le CoCoCongo serait une plate-forme unique, totalement opérationnelle. Les gestionnaires de sites auraient acquis les compétences pour s'occuper des initiatives de conservation communautaire. M. Lukas (GIC et IRF) a déclaré que la RDC aurait renoué avec la paix et la stabilité et que le travail de conservation n'aurait plus à se faire dans une situation d'urgence. Le Gouvernement congolais aurait amélioré le financement des parcs et des gardes et l'ICCN aurait gagné une grande autonomie en termes de compétences techniques. M. Debonnet (Centre du patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO) espère que les sites du patrimoine mondial de RDC auront quitté la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril mais craint qu'à moins qu'une aide d'urgence ne soit rapidement fournie, certains sites courent le risque d'être retirés de la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Selon lui ce qui a été réalisé jusqu'ici doit être consolidé et l'alliance doit être renforcée via l'accueil de nouveaux partenaires (y compris le secteur privé). Il lance un appel pour un nouveau soutien politique diplomatique et souhaite un renforcement de l'efficacité de l'ICCN.

Etat de la faune dans les cinq sites du patrimoine mondial de la RDC

Parc national des Virunga				
Espèces	Avant 1996	Pendant la guerre	Après 2000	Observations
Gorille (<i>G.berengei berengei</i>)	324	359	384 (oct 2003)	Braconnage pour les petits gorilles, coupe de bambous, pacage...
Eléphant Secteur central	470	486	265	Braconnage pour ivoire et viande
Hippopotame	29 000 (Plaines du Nord et Sud)		1 309 (2003)	Braconnage pour viande et commerce
Buffle	9 700 (1981)		2 240 (nov 2003)	Braconnage pour viande et commerce

Parc national de la Garamba				
	Avant la guerre (1996)	Pendant la guerre	Après la guerre	Observations
Rhinocéros	29	26 (1998) 30 (2002)	14-20 (juil. 2004)	50% des bêtes braconnées pour les cornes
Giraffe	178	144 (1998) 118 (2000)	62	Braconnage pour les trophées
Eléphant	11 175	5 878 (1998) 5 983 (2000)	6 848	Braconnage armé (viande/ ivoire)
Buffle	25 242	7 772 (1998) 13 281 (2002)	14 480	Diminution du braconnage des rhinos, éléphants et giraffes
Hippopotame	3601	786 (1998)	3 036	Diminution du braconnage des rhinos, éléphants et giraffes

Réserve de faune à okapis			
Espèces	<1996	Pendant la guerre	>2000
Okapi	3 900-6 350	3 900-6350	Inventaire en cours
Eléphant	4 750-6 000	3 800	Inventaire en cours
Chimpanzé	7 500-12 000	6 000-10 000	Inventaire en cours

Parc national de la Salonga			
Espèces	Avant 1996	Pendant la guerre	Après 2000
Eléphant	Pas d'inventaires	Pas d'inventaires	Premiers inventaires par MIKE&WCS
Bonobo	Pas d'inventaires	Inventaires partiels	Premiers inventaires par MIKE&WCS
Hippopotame	Pas d'inventaires	Pas d'inventaires	
Paon Congolais	Statut non connu	Statut non connu	Statut non connu

Parc national de Kahuzi-Biega (secteurs de haute et basse altitude)				
Espèces	Avant 1996	Pendant la guerre	Après 2002	Observations
Gorille (<i>G. Graueri</i>)	250 (haute altitude)	130 (haute altitude)	78 (haute altitude)	Braconnage
	3 000 (basse altitude)	Pas de données (basse altitude)	Pas de données (basse altitude)	
Eléphant	800 (haute altitude)	25	7	Braconnage armé
	8 000 (basse altitude)	Pas de données (basse altitude)	Pas de données (basse altitude)	



Partenaires pour
le patrimoine mondial
en République
démocratique du Congo

5

Conférence internationale pour la sauvegarde et la promotion du patrimoine congolais

« Cette conférence représente un tournant décisif en ce qu'elle a permis de réunir la communauté internationale, lui offrant ainsi l'opportunité de réaffirmer son engagement en faveur de la protection et de la préservation des sites du patrimoine mondial de la République démocratique du Congo ». C'est par ces mots que le **directeur du Centre du patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO, Francesco Bandarin**, a introduit cette dernière session de la conférence qui donne la parole aux représentants gouvernementaux et non-gouvernementaux et leur permet de préciser la nature de leur engagement dans ce processus.

Son Exc. M. Anselme Enerunga, ministre de l'Environnement de la République démocratique du Congo a été le premier à prendre la parole.

Il a tenu à exprimer, au nom du Gouvernement de la RDC, sa reconnaissance et sa plus profonde gratitude aux gouvernements belge et japonais, à la Fondation des Nations Unies et à l'UNESCO pour leur rôle dans la tenue de cette première manifestation internationale de soutien au patrimoine mondial en péril de la RDC.

Il a rappelé que l'importance de la biodiversité de la RDC était liée à la viabilité des climats et des habitats ainsi qu'au caractère endémique de nombreuses espèces de faune et de flore présentes sur le territoire congolais. Il a évoqué les cinq sites du patrimoine mondial dont la valeur scientifique, écologique, culturelle, économique et sociale demeure inestimable pour les générations futures et a fait référence à la conscience écologique traditionnelle de la RDC qui s'est développée au fil du temps pour aboutir à la création des aires protégées. M. Enerunga a déclaré que la RDC était fière d'assumer la responsabilité de la conservation durable de ces sites et aires protégées.

Le ministre a donné acte aux ONG de conservation intervenant en RDC en déclarant que son pays avait conscience du fait que la conservation durable des ressources naturelles ne pouvait être assurée que grâce à la solidarité et à la coopération internationales. C'est pour cette raison que la RDC a ratifié plusieurs Conventions internationales relatives à l'environnement et à la conservation de la nature. Il a cité pour exemple la *Convention du patrimoine mondial*, la *Convention sur la Diversité biologique*, la *Convention sur la lutte contre la désertification*, la *Convention sur le commerce international des espèces en danger* et la *Convention sur les changements climatiques*.

Par la voix de son ministre, la RDC a également reconnu le caractère dévastateur sur les ressources naturelles du pays des fortes pressions humaines - dues en grande partie aux conflits armés et aux agressions contre la RDC - exercées sur les sites du patrimoine mondial et l'importance de sauvegarder la diversité biologique de la RDC en dépit d'une conjoncture particulièrement difficile.

En réponse à la mobilisation de la communauté internationale en faveur de la sauvegarde des sites du patrimoine

mondial, le représentant du gouvernement congolais a déclaré solennellement que la RDC s'engageait sur les objectifs suivants :

1. Promouvoir la conservation de la biodiversité sur l'ensemble du territoire national et plus spécifiquement dans les sites du patrimoine mondial ;
2. Garantir les conditions de sécurité et de promotion des investissements destinés à la reconstruction et au développement national en focalisant l'attention sur l'exécution des Stratégies et Plans d'Action en matière de conservation de la nature à travers, notamment la mise en œuvre du Programme Multisectoriel d'Urgence, de Réhabilitation et de Reconstruction (PMURR) ;
3. Intensifier la lutte contre le braconnage en associant les forces armées congolaises au travail héroïque accompli par les gardes des parcs nationaux de l'institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature ;
4. Promouvoir la mise en œuvre de programmes de développement intégré en faveur des communautés riveraines aux aires protégées, en vue de lutter contre la dégradation de la biodiversité d'une part et d'assurer le bien-être des populations cibles d'autre part ;
5. Récupérer et sécuriser l'intégrité des sites du patrimoine mondial.

En conclusion, M. Enerunga a lancé un appel solennel en direction des partenaires privés et publics pour qu'ils soutiennent les efforts de la République démocratique du Congo pour la préservation et la promotion du patrimoine mondial dans son pays.

Intervenant à la suite du ministre congolais de l'Environnement, le représentant de la Belgique, **Eric Duchêne, Ambassadeur, Directeur général adjoint de la Coopération au Développement**, a exprimé les remerciements de son pays à tous ceux qui ont contribué à l'organisation de l'ensemble de la manifestation de soutien au patrimoine remarquable de la République démocratique du Congo. Il a poursuivi son allocution en indiquant qu'en dépit des circonstances difficiles prévalant en RDC, la reconstruction du pays demeurerait pour la Coopération belge un élément prioritaire de sa stratégie pour un développement durable. Il a précisé que la protection de l'environnement et en particulier celle de la biodiversité occupait une place privilégiée dans la politique belge de l'aide au développement.

La Belgique a toujours été convaincue que la renommée universelle de la *Convention concernant la protection du patrimoine mondial, culturel et naturel* de 1972 faisait de celle-ci l'instrument le plus pertinent pour la protection du patrimoine naturel. En conséquence, la décision a été prise de concentrer les fonds extrabudgétaires mis à la disposition de l'UNESCO sur les activités du Centre du patrimoine mondial et du Secteur des sciences exactes et naturelles en matière de sauvegarde de la biodiversité en Afrique centrale et plus spécifiquement en RDC. Par ail-

leurs, un spécialiste en conservation a été mis à la disposition du Centre du patrimoine mondial.

L'assistance bilatérale et multilatérale de la Belgique en faveur de la promotion et de la sauvegarde du patrimoine congolais va se poursuivre. Pour la période 2004-2007, elle prévoit une contribution à l'UNESCO d'un montant de 1.6 millions d'euros en faveur des programmes de soutien aux collectivités locales en vue de promouvoir la biodiversité dans les sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC (1.1 million d'euros) et d'appui à l'ERAIFT à Kinshasa (500 000 euros).

Enfin, M. Duchêne a indiqué que sous réserve de l'approbation du budget 2005, une contribution additionnelle de 300 000 euros serait consentie dès l'année prochaine au programme Biodiversité à raison de 100 000 euros par an.

En conclusion, M. Duchêne a annoncé qu'une enveloppe de près de 300 000 euros sera allouée à l'UNESCO pour la création, au sein de l'ICCN, d'une cellule de gestion de l'information chargée de capitaliser les acquis des programmes mentionnés ci-dessus afin de développer le secteur des sciences écologiques axé sur la protection du patrimoine naturel en RDC.

Le représentant allemand, Andreas Pfeil, a débuté son allocution en remerciant l'UNESCO pour son engagement en faveur de la sauvegarde des sites du patrimoine mondial naturel de la RDC. Son intervention a surtout porté sur la question de la protection du Bassin du Congo qui constitue, à ses yeux, un défi pour la communauté internationale.

M. Pfeil a rappelé que le soutien au Gouvernement de transition en place en RDC constituait, pour l'Allemagne, un élément vital dans la phase de processus de paix que connaît actuellement le pays. Il n'y a pas d'autre alternative. Le retour à la paix, la réduction de la pauvreté et la protection des ressources naturelles forment un tout, ce qui explique, depuis 1998, le soutien du gouvernement allemand à l'ICCN. Bien avant cela, il a encouragé « une approche intégrée » permettant d'améliorer les moyens de subsistance des populations habitant à la périphérie du parc et de protéger la faune et la flore.

La conservation et la protection des forêts tropicales sont des priorités pour le gouvernement allemand qui s'est fixé pour objectif de débloquer 125 millions d'euros par an pour la protection des forêts tropicales à travers le monde. Pour ce qui est de l'Afrique centrale, l'Allemagne est membre du Partenariat pour les Forêts du Bassin du Congo au sein duquel sa contribution financière atteint 20 millions d'euros au titre de la coopération bilatérale avec les pays partenaires et 5 millions d'euros au titre de l'aide à la COMIFAC.

M. Pfeil a également indiqué que son pays poursuivrait ses efforts sur un plan national, en RDC, via l'amélioration

du cadre général mis en place pour la protection de l'environnement et de la mise en œuvre de la législation sur les forêts, révisée en 2002. Cette mise en œuvre doit s'effectuer de manière participative, sur la base de consultations avec les communautés locales concernées et en prenant en compte les capacités de l'Administration congolaise. Au niveau local, l'Allemagne continuera à soutenir le Parc national de Kahuzi-Biega et va reprendre à sa charge le paiement de la prime de risque et d'équipement pour les gardes du parc versée jusqu'à ce jour par l'UNESCO.

En conclusion, le représentant allemand a rendu hommage aux organisations internationales qui ont soutenu les activités de la coopération technique allemande dans le Parc national de Kahuzi-Biega depuis 1985 et aux partenaires congolais de l'Allemagne.

Carlos Schuler, Conseiller technique et coordinateur de Programme de la GTZ (Coopération allemande) sur le site du Kahuzi-Biega a pris la parole pour donner un aperçu de la situation actuelle du site du patrimoine mondial. Il a fourni une brève description du parc national de Kahuzi-Biega.

Depuis 20 ans, le Parc bénéficie de l'appui de la Coopération allemande qui privilégie la préservation de l'écosystème, avec le concours de la population locale, et la promotion des activités de développement dans la région du parc. L'objectif de cette approche intégrée est de fournir à la population une alternative économique à la consommation des ressources du parc. L'appui global fourni par l'Allemagne depuis 1985 est évalué à environ 15 millions d'euros.

Avant la crise politique qui a frappé la région des Grands Lacs, le tourisme constituait un facteur économique important pour ce site du patrimoine mondial ainsi que pour l'ensemble de la région. En 1990, plus de 300 000 touristes ont visité le parc générant ainsi plus de 260 000 dollars de recettes pour l'ICCN.

Depuis l'arrivée des réfugiés du Rwanda en 1994, la situation du parc et de ses environs s'est sérieusement détériorée. Plus de 300 000 réfugiés ont été regroupés dans des camps, à la frontière Est du parc, entraînant une énorme pression sur les ressources naturelles de la région. En réponse, la GTZ a tenté de mettre en place des mécanismes, comme l'approvisionnement des réfugiés en bois de chauffe ou l'aide à la population congolaise locale qui n'était pas admise à recevoir celle destinée aux réfugiés, pour atténuer cette pression.

Ces actions de la GTZ ont permis d'éviter que des dommages très importants ne soient causés au Parc national de Kahuzi-Biega d'une part, et de soulager les tensions avec les populations impliquées d'autre part.

Les affrontements armés de 1996 et de 1998 et les troubles qu'ils ont créés – troubles qui n'ont pas cessés depuis

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– ont transformé le parc en un refuge pour des milliers de Congolais fuyant les attaques et les menaces des rebelles. Le parc est aussi devenu une base arrière pour différents groupes rebelles et milices étrangères, ce qui a favorisé l'apparition, dans les basses altitudes, de nombreuses exploitations minières illégales où, aujourd'hui encore, entre 10 000 et 20 000 personnes exploitent l'or, la cassitérite et le coltan. Cette situation crée d'énormes problèmes d'insécurité pour les populations locales. Chaque jour, des centaines de femmes sont violées et depuis le début de la crise plus de trois millions de personnes ont perdu leur vie dans cette région.

Les gardes du parc n'ont pas été épargnés. Sans armes depuis longtemps, ils ont dû travailler dans des conditions extrêmement difficiles et dangereuses. Quant à la faune, elle a aussi été fortement touchée. Sur plus de 5 000 éléphants recensés avant la crise, il n'en reste plus que la moitié aujourd'hui. Il en va de même pour la population de gorilles qui a été également fortement décimée. L'infrastructure du parc a été détruite à trois reprises.

Malgré une insécurité généralisée, la GTZ a poursuivi ses activités dans le Parc national de Kahuzi-Biega menant, chaque fois que cela a été possible, des négociations avec les parties belligérantes destinées à limiter au maximum l'atteinte à l'intégrité du site du patrimoine mondial et à améliorer la sécurité et les conditions de travail des gardes et du personnel.

La GTZ a continué à prodiguer de l'aide à la population en lui fournissant des vivres et des semences et en l'associant plus étroitement à la gestion du parc via l'instauration de comités locaux pour la protection de la nature. Parallèlement, un travail de sensibilisation de la population de la région, des décideurs politiques et traditionnels, des ONG locales et internationales et des médias à la situation du parc a été régulièrement mené.

En dépit de ressources financières limitées, une étroite collaboration avec des organisations comme l'UNESCO, le WCS, le WWF et le programme alimentaire mondial a néanmoins permis d'obtenir des fonds supplémentaires pour la protection du parc et l'appui à la population locale.

Ces cinq dernières années, le nombre de gorilles est resté stable en altitude et ceci malgré l'implantation de nombreux militaires autour de leur habitat naturel. Les récents incendies déclenchés dans le parc par des occupants illicites rwandais, des miliciens et des interahamwes pour s'accaparer de nouvelles terres ont été maîtrisés avec l'aide de la population.

En conclusion, M. Schuler a reconnu que les sites du patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO en RDC avaient beaucoup souffert mais que l'écosystème gardait sa faculté à se régénérer. Par ailleurs, des perspectives de développement pour les populations locales demeuraient. Il a de

même affirmé que sans les efforts de la Coopération allemande, de l'UNESCO et des autres partenaires, le Parc n'existerait plus. Pour autant, a-t-il précisé, le développement de la région et la conservation du Parc ne seront possibles que si la paix est rétablie et ce facteur essentiel échappe très largement à l'influence du projet et de l'administration du Parc. Il appartient donc aux décideurs et acteurs politiques, aux Nations Unies, aux bailleurs de fonds internationaux de se mobiliser pour la poursuite du processus de paix.

Par la voix de leur représentante **Anne Carson, Premier Secrétaire de la Délégation permanente des Etats-Unis auprès de l'UNESCO**, les Etats Unies ont fait part de leur soutien à la Convention du patrimoine mondial. Mme Carson a rappelé que son pays avait encouragé avec enthousiasme le développement de la *Convention concernant la protection du patrimoine culturel et naturel* et qu'il en avait même été le premier signataire, le 7 décembre 1973.

Selon Mme Carson il a été plus d'une fois démontré, au cours de ces trente dernières années, que la *Convention du patrimoine mondial* et son Secrétariat, le Centre du patrimoine mondial, ont joué un rôle fondamental dans la sauvegarde de parts essentielles de nos traditions et de nos histoires communes. Cette Conférence, en attirant l'attention sur les sites en péril du patrimoine mondial dans le Bassin du Congo, s'inscrit également dans cette tradition. Elle témoigne du travail formidable que l'UNESCO peut accomplir quand elle est poussée par une compréhension commune des objectifs que nous partageons, un calendrier précis et une action ciblée.

Mme Carson a rappelé le vif intérêt que le secrétaire d'Etat Colin L. Powell a toujours manifesté pour les questions relatives au développement raisonné des ressources du continent africain. Cet intérêt a été à l'origine de l'annonce, au Sommet mondial pour le développement durable de Johannesburg en 2002, de la création du *Programme de Partenariat pour les forêts du Bassin du Congo*.

Le Partenariat rassemble 29 organisations gouvernementales et non gouvernementales travaillant ensemble pour une gestion durable des écosystèmes forestiers du Bassin du Congo et une amélioration des conditions de vie de ses populations.

La contribution prévue des Etats-Unis à ce Partenariat totalise environ 53 millions de dollars, principalement destinés à l'appui et à la conservation des onze paysages du Bassin du Congo écologiquement importants dont font partie les cinq sites du patrimoine mondial. Depuis l'annonce du Projet du Bassin du Congo, le gouvernement américain a contribué aux différentes activités réalisées dans le Bassin du Congo pour un montant avoisinant les 36 millions de dollars. Pour 2005, un financement additionnel de 15 millions de dollars a été demandé.

Seule une action continue et concertée pourra permettre au Bassin du Congo et à ses habitants d'accéder au futur qu'ils méritent. Les Etats-Unis sont déterminés à poursuivre le rôle de leader dans ce domaine a conclu Mme Carson.

La France représentée par **Bérengère Quincy, Directrice de la Coopération technique à la Direction générale de la coopération internationale et du développement**, a exposé ses actions en matière d'environnement dans le Bassin du Congo.

Mme Quincy a déclaré que la France était très présente dans le Bassin du Congo et qu'elle avait la volonté de s'engager plus, dans les prochains mois, en République démocratique du Congo en particulier dans le domaine de l'aide au développement.

Dans sa présentation Mme Quincy a indiqué que la France avait opté pour une approche régionale du Bassin du Congo qui inclue de facto, la République démocratique du Congo.

L'intérêt d'une telle approche réside dans ce qu'elle accompagne les autres interventions et financements mis en place par la France et permet ainsi une synergie entre les projets bi et multilatéraux par le biais de la complémentarité et de la concertation avec les différents partenaires opérant dans la région.

C'est pour cette raison que la France s'est associée au *Partenariat pour les Forêts du Bassin du Congo*, dont l'un des objectifs fondamentaux, en plus de la conservation, est la réduction de la pauvreté et des inégalités pour les populations locales des pays de la région.

L'approche française s'articule autour de **trois axes** : **la conservation** qui sous-entend l'appui aux aires protégées pour une gestion durable et un développement économique – à travers l'écotourisme, le renforcement des capacités des gestionnaires des parcs, le développement de plans de gestion concertés avec les communautés locales – et la protection de certaines espèces menacées comme le Bonobo en République démocratique du Congo. L'implication des populations locales constitue également un élément important. La Coopération française est de même très impliquée dans le Programme ECOFAC de l'Union européenne qui intervient notamment dans l'appui au réseau RAPAC (Réseau des aires protégées d'Afrique centrale) et le projet CAWHFI (Central Africa World Heritage Forest Initiative) coordonné par l'UNESCO avec le concours de nombreux partenaires.

La valorisation constitue le deuxième axe d'intervention de la Coopération française en faveur de la diversité des écosystèmes du Bassin du Congo. Il s'agit de proposer aux populations des alternatives économiques en vue de réconcilier l'utilisation et la conservation des ressources par et pour les populations. Pour ce faire, plusieurs pro-

jets pilotes ont été mis en place. Ils tendent à valoriser les produits forestiers non-ligneux (plantes alimentaires, racines, fruits, etc.) dans le but de permettre aux populations détentrices de ces ressources un développement effectif et durable. Ces produits génèrent habituellement des ressources monétaires pour les populations rurales et répondent à une forte demande des populations urbaines de la région. Mme Quincy a donné l'exemple du projet *biodivalor* qui porte sur la valorisation durable de la diversité des forêts gabonaises par la collecte et la commercialisation d'échantillons de plantes utilisables à des fins pharmaceutiques, cosmétiques ou aromatiques. Ce type de projet pourrait être étendu, selon Mme Quincy, à l'ensemble des pays de la région. Par ailleurs, la coopération française s'intéresse aussi aux aménagements forestiers durables et plus précisément à la gestion durable des ressources naturelles dans les exploitations forestières. Les actions sont principalement initiées par le FFEM à travers, notamment, la réalisation d'inventaires dans le cadre de l'élaboration de plans de gestion et d'aménagement durable des concessions forestières avec l'appui de l'Agence française de développement.

La connaissance et l'information constituent le troisième axe de l'intervention française. Il s'agit de promouvoir la recherche en participant, par exemple, au développement de la gestion de l'information et des connaissances environnementales en Afrique centrale à travers des projets comme le Projet régional de gestion de l'information environnementale (PRGIE) qui regroupe plusieurs partenaires financiers et est géré par l'Association pour le développement de l'information environnementale (ADIE) dont le siège se trouve au Gabon. La formation des acteurs locaux dont l'ambition est d'amorcer une dynamique régionale et multi bailleurs en développant d'une part les capacités régionales grâce à la formation de techniciens, de cadres et de chercheurs et en soutenant la recherche. Il s'agit d'autre part, d'aider les bénéficiaires dans le processus de recherche de financements complémentaires auprès des institutions ou de programmes opérant dans ce secteur.

En conclusion, Mme Quincy a déploré le fait que la gestion de l'information soit à l'heure actuelle l'un des maillons faibles de la chaîne du développement durable en Afrique centrale. Pour y remédier, la coopération française préconise de mettre à la disposition des décideurs et acteurs une information fiable sur la gestion des ressources en utilisant des techniques comme les systèmes d'informations géographiques (SIG).

Intervenant après la représentante française, **Roberto Tortoli, Secrétaire d'Etat italien pour l'environnement** s'est exprimé sur l'appui que son gouvernement a apporté à la RDC au cours de ces dernières années. La coopération italienne a articulé son action en RDC autour de trois axes majeurs : la résolution des conflits, l'annulation de la dette et l'aide au développement en concentrant ses efforts sur l'urgence et l'aide alimentaire.

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Une attention particulière a été accordée au *dialogue inter-congolais*, les négociations entre les divers mouvements congolais ont atteint leur point d'orgue en juin 2003 avec la formation du Gouvernement de transition. C'est pour cette raison que l'Italie a activement participé à la Conférence internationale pour la paix, la sécurité, la démocratie et le développement dans la Région des Grands Lacs qui s'est tenue sous les auspices des Nations Unies et de l'Union Africaine.

Le représentant italien a indiqué que l'Italie a toujours accordé une grande importance à la sauvegarde du patrimoine mondial - un éternel témoin du passé et une garantie essentielle pour le futur - ainsi qu'aux régions en situation de post-conflit. L'Italie était convaincue que l'UNESCO pouvait et devait jouer un rôle crucial dans ce domaine. Dans le cadre des discussions sur le budget de l'UNESCO par la 32^e session de la Conférence générale, l'Italie avait choisi de rejoindre le camp de ceux qui souhaitent faire un effort pour protéger le second plus important « poumon vert » du monde. C'est ce qui l'a amené à faire une contribution de 300 000 euros au projet « *Promouvoir et préserver le patrimoine mondial congolais* ». Le représentant italien a déclaré que son Gouvernement était fier de compter parmi les amis sincères de la République démocratique du Congo et de son peuple.

Première agence intergouvernementale à s'exprimer après les représentants gouvernementaux, c'est par la voix de son **Directeur des opérations pour la RDC, Emmanuel Mbi**, que la Banque mondiale a présenté son action en RDC.

M. Mbi a débuté son intervention en adressant les remerciements de la Banque mondiale à l'UNESCO pour l'avoir invitée à prendre la parole pendant la conférence.

A l'instar des autres intervenants, il a réaffirmé la richesse et l'importance de la biodiversité de la RDC qui constitue un patrimoine unique et irremplaçable. Il a ajouté que le patrimoine biologique de la RDC constituait la seule source de revenus possibles pour beaucoup de Congolais qui comptent au nombre des populations les plus pauvres de la planète.

Pour M. Mbi, la question qui préoccupe tout le monde est bien la menace qui pèse sur ce patrimoine et la manière dont il pourrait être préservé. Il tire de cela trois constats.

L'urgence qu'il y a à agir pour préserver le patrimoine congolais gravement menacé avec notamment le risque d'extinction des rhinocéros blancs de la Garamba, les pertes en hommes et en moyens des institutions environnementales. En effet, malgré le retour de la paix, il faudra encore des années pour que les structures institutionnelles nécessaires à la protection de l'environnement soient remises en place et retrouvent toute leur efficacité. Emmanuel Mbi préconise de recréer, moderniser et ren-

forcer les structures institutionnelles concernées et de travailler à l'amélioration des conditions de vie des Congolais pour assurer, à moyen terme, une bonne gestion des ressources naturelles.

Une bonne solution aujourd'hui valant mieux qu'une meilleure solution demain il faudrait, toujours selon M. Mbi, accepter le caractère imparfait et peut-être rudimentaire des instruments mis en place pendant la période transitoire que connaît actuellement la RDC. Il recommande de faire preuve de pragmatisme et d'aider, avant toute chose, le gouvernement congolais à définir des priorités et un phasage des actions à entreprendre. Il convient ensuite d'intégrer les préoccupations environnementales dans une stratégie globale de relance. Il faut entendre par là la nécessité d'incorporer les actions de conservation de la nature dans le cadre global de la reconstruction du pays. La conservation de la nature pourrait ainsi représenter une contribution importante au processus de stabilisation de la RDC. Une meilleure gestion des ressources naturelles pourrait aider à consolider la paix, ce qui est la condition sine qua non de la conservation de la nature. Sans paix ni sécurité, on ne peut espérer appliquer la politique environnementale ce qui conduit M. Mbi à encourager le déploiement des forces de maintien de la paix et la relance économique.

Revenant sur la contribution que pourrait faire la Banque mondiale, M. Mbi a indiqué que depuis son réengagement en 2001, la Banque a étroitement travaillé avec le gouvernement congolais et les autres partenaires dans la perspective d'apporter des réponses aux urgences environnementales. Au cours de ces trois dernières années, elle a privilégié les coopérations et les synergies. C'est ainsi que la Banque mondiale a pu étroitement collaborer avec la FAO sur les questions de code forestier, avec l'UNESCO sur les parcs nationaux et avec de nombreux autres bailleurs et ONG sur la définition d'un cadre stratégique pour les forêts congolaises, sans oublier les Congolais dont M. Mbi a salué les louables efforts.

Sur le plan des actions concrètes, la Banque mondiale a notamment soutenu le gouvernement congolais lorsqu'il a adopté des mesures destinées à « libérer » une partie du foncier frauduleusement détenu par certains concessionnaires et a décidé d'instituer un moratoire sur l'attribution de nouvelles concessions. Aujourd'hui, ces efforts se poursuivent à travers, notamment, le financement de la révision de l'ensemble des contrats de concession ainsi que la préparation d'un zonage forestier auquel les populations locales potentiellement concernées seront associées.

En conclusion, M. Mbi a annoncé la préparation d'un nouveau projet de financement de 10 millions de dollars du Fonds mondial pour l'environnement (GEF) en appui aux parcs nationaux de la RDC. Deux sites du patrimoine mondial seraient concernés, les Parcs nationaux de la Garamba et celui des Virunga. Il a de nouveau insisté sur

le fait que les actions environnementales ne pouvaient en aucune sorte être menées de façon isolée et c'est pourquoi l'amélioration du niveau de vie des Congolais se trouvait être l'autre ambition la Banque mondiale.

Gilles Fontaine, membre de la Délégation permanente de la Commission européenne auprès de l'UNESCO, s'est exprimé sur les activités de cette Organisation en RDC. A cette occasion, il est brièvement revenu sur le scepticisme qui régnait lors du lancement du projet UNESCO - UNF pour la sauvegarde des sites du patrimoine mondial en République démocratique du Congo. La Commission européenne faisait partie, avec l'ICCN, les ONG internationales de conservations partenaires, les agences bilatérales belge, française, italienne et quelques agences des Nations Unies, du petit nombre qui croyait à la réussite d'un tel projet.

Pour autant, l'engagement de la Commission européenne en faveur des sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC ne date pas de cette période. C'est en effet, depuis près de 20 ans que la Commission européenne apporte son soutien à ces sites et en particulier aux Parcs nationaux des Virunga – dans le cadre du programme Kivu - et de la Salonga, dans le cadre du programme régional ECOFAC.

La fin de la phase actuelle du projet UNESCO-UNF en République démocratique du Congo a coïncidé avec le redémarrage, après dix ans d'arrêt, de la coopération entre l'Union européenne et la RDC.

Selon M. Fontaine, l'une des plus grandes réussites à porter au crédit du projet UNESCO-UNF a été la création d'une communauté d'intervenants dans le domaine de la conservation de la nature, détenteurs à la fois d'une compétence unique et d'une longue expérience du terrain, désireux de travailler de façon concertée et en synergie. Cette nouvelle façon de travailler rend désormais possible la réalisation de programmes de grande ampleur dans le secteur des ressources naturelles. Le projet de « *Renforcement des capacités de gestion et réhabilitation des aires protégées en RDC* » en fait partie. Financé, en janvier 2004, par le Fonds européen de développement pour un montant de cinq millions d'euros, ce projet s'inscrit non seulement dans une politique de préservation de l'environnement mais aussi et surtout dans l'effort global de reconstruction des institutions de la RDC et de renforcement de ses capacités de gestion.

Les principaux objectifs de ce projet sont :

- le renforcement durable des capacités de l'ICCN et de l'Institut des Jardins Zoologiques et Botaniques Congolais (IJBZ) ;
- la réhabilitation et la gestion des parcs nationaux, notamment ceux des Virunga et de la Salonga.

M. Fontaine a précisé que la RDC bénéficiait par ailleurs d'une autre enveloppe complémentaire d'également cinq

millions d'euros. Ce financement sera affecté aux activités d'appui institutionnel à l'ICCN et d'appui à l'ERAIFT.

La réouverture du programme régional ECOFAC sur la RDC a été annoncée pour 2005. Ce programme inclut un appui au Parc national de la Salonga ainsi que plusieurs autres programmes thématiques.

M. Fontaine a reconnu que la situation demeurait néanmoins critique, surtout du point de vue de la sécurité et de la restauration de l'autorité de l'Etat sur l'ensemble du territoire. Les meurtres du personnel de l'ICCN du Parc national d'Upemba, l'occupation de l'habitat des gorilles du Parc national des Virunga et l'élimination de la moitié de la population des rhinocéros blancs de la Garamba sont, à ses yeux, de sérieux rappels sur le fait que la bataille pour la sauvegarde du patrimoine congolais est loin d'être gagnée. Une partie des ressources du FED sera, d'ailleurs, directement affecté à l'appui de la sauvegarde des rhinocéros blancs de la Garamba.

En conclusion, M. Fontaine a rappelé la participation de la Commission européenne, aux côtés d'autres partenaires, au rétablissement de l'Etat de droit dans le secteur des gorilles des Virunga en juillet et août 2004 et que cette opération avait démontré que la volonté politique associée à une capacité de réponse rapide et courageuse sur le terrain pouvait être couronnée de succès, en dépit de la gravité du problème y compris dans une région aussi sensible que le Kivu.

Le coordinateur régional du PNUD/GEF pour la biodiversité en Afrique centrale, Abdoulaye Ndiaye, a indiqué que les activités du PNUD/GEF se concentraient principalement sur les questions de changement climatique, de biodiversité, des eaux internationales, de protection de la couche d'ozone avec deux nouvelles priorités : la dégradation terrestre (désertification et déforestation) et les pollutions organiques résistantes (ou POPs). Il a rappelé que la région Afrique de l'ouest/centrale avait trois types d'écosystèmes : forestier, sahélien, côtier et marin et que le Bassin du Congo était considéré comme la deuxième forêt continue au monde et l'une des deux plus importantes régions en Afrique en terme de diversité biologique.

Il y a environ six initiatives PNUD/GEF actuellement en cours dans le Bassin du Congo. Dans le budget GEF déjà approuvé, elles totalisent un montant d'environ 48.5 millions de dollars.

Dans ce portfolio, on trouve le projet de réhabilitation de 16 aires protégées en RDC, qui comprend les Parcs nationaux des Virunga, Garamba, Kahuzi-Biega et Salonga. Il est prévu pour quatre ans et s'élèvera à 18.5 millions de dollars (6 millions du GEF et 12.5 millions cofinancés par le PNUD, la RDC, la GTZ, l'UNESCO, l'UNF, la Belgique, la Fondation Mac Arthur et le WWF). Au niveau national, les partenaires du projet sont les ministères de

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l'Environnement, de la conservation de la nature et du Tourisme et l'ICCN.

Le principal objectif du projet sera d'établir une base structurelle et fonctionnelle pour gérer les aires protégées en RDC. Les résultats attendus sont :

1. L'élaboration d'un environnement politique, législatif, institutionnel et social favorable à la conservation des aires protégées ;
2. La restructuration de l'ICCN et la mise en place d'un système de gestion décentralisé ;
3. Le développement et la mise en œuvre d'un système de planification et de gestion ;
4. La reprise des opérations de base à travers le recrutement du personnel, le financement et la fourniture d'équipement ;
5. La définition, sur la base de l'expérience et des analyses entreprises dans les cinq sites pilotes, d'une approche participative, encourageant la gestion par les communautés.

S'exprimant au nom de l'Agence spatiale européenne (ESA), **Mario Hernandez, Spécialiste principal du programme à l'UNESCO**, a indiqué que c'est en 2001 qu'avaient débuté les discussions sur un partenariat entre le Centre du patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO et l'ESA. L'idée était d'utiliser les technologies d'observation spatiale pour créer des outils d'aide au suivi de l'état de conservation des sites du patrimoine mondial, en particulier dans les pays en développement. C'est ainsi que l'ESA et l'UNESCO ont mis sur pied un projet destiné à l'observation de l'habitat des gorilles dans les sites du patrimoine mondial. Ce projet concerne non seulement la RDC mais aussi l'Ouganda et le Rwanda. Parallèlement, l'ESA a aidé l'UNESCO à mettre en place une unité d'observation satellitaire au service des pays en développement.

Les résultats obtenus ont démontré à quel point l'observation spatiale était un outil extrêmement utile pour la conservation en République démocratique du Congo où les aires protégées sont difficilement accessibles. Par ailleurs l'imposante superficie de certains des parcs fait de l'imagerie satellitaire le meilleur outil pour appréhender leur immensité. Le recours aux moyens satellitaires aura notamment permis de créer les bases d'une cartographie appropriée. Avec le concours financier du gouvernement belge, l'UNESCO aidera la RDC à renforcer les capacités requises. Les agences spatiales associées ont exprimé leur souhait de poursuivre leur partenariat avec l'UNESCO.

Selon Mario Hernandez, la conférence a permis de réunir les plus importants bailleurs de la RDC. Si un projet destiné à renforcer la conservation de la biodiversité en RDC est susceptible de trouver un financement et dans la mesure où l'observation satellitaire peut lui être utile, les agences spatiales sont toutes disposées à soutenir l'unité

chargée de l'observation satellitaire au sein de l'UNESCO en lui fournissant l'espace, l'équipement et l'expertise nécessaires.

Les initiatives du **Centre international pour la recherche forestière (CIFOR)** représenté par **Chimane Diaw** ont deux composantes majeures : l'appui scientifique lié à la reprise et à la construction d'une politique forestière et l'intégration des expériences internationales au système forestier d'une part et de la bonne gouvernance des milieux naturels d'autre part.

Selon M. Diaw, certains des défis stratégiques les plus importants à définir concernent le passage de la conservation de crise ou de diplomatie à une conservation en rapport avec les populations vivant à l'intérieur ou à la périphérie des aires protégées et la réactivation de l'industrie du bois. Il a conclu qu'il importait d'optimiser les différentes valeurs de la forêt.

En introduction de son intervention, **David Carter, Vice-président chargé des finances à la Fondation des Nations Unies (FNU)**, a déclaré que réunir les gouvernements, les organisations internationales et les plus importantes ONG pour protéger les trésors de la biodiversité des sites du patrimoine mondial de la RDC, comme l'a fait l'UNESCO, était exactement le type de partenariat mondial que Ted Turner voulait encourager en faisant un don exceptionnel de 1 milliard de dollars aux Nations Unies.

Le partenariat de la FNU avec le Centre du patrimoine mondial, la République démocratique du Congo, le Gouvernement belge, la Coopération allemande et les ONG a été novateur à la fois au niveau de la mise en place de l'équipe du projet que de ses efforts pour protéger le patrimoine naturel dans les régions de conflit armé.

M. Carter a souhaité, au nom de la FNU, remercier ses partenaires gouvernementaux et non-gouvernementaux, l'UNESCO et en particulier le Centre du patrimoine mondial et son directeur, M. Francesco Bandarin, pour avoir permis à son organisation d'explorer de nouvelles pistes en matière de financement durable de ses projets. L'adoption de cette approche partenariale pour assurer un financement durable à la sauvegarde du patrimoine mondial en RDC s'est révélée être, pour le projet, un élément aussi important que les fonds accordés par la FNU. D'un montant d'environ 4 millions de dollars, le financement de la FNU aura permis, selon David Carter, de lever des millions supplémentaires pour l'effort de conservation des sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC.

Par ailleurs, M. Carter a annoncé l'approbation par le Conseil d'Administration de la FNU d'un nouveau partenariat avec la Wildlife Conservation Society et le Centre du patrimoine mondial. Dans le cadre de ce partenariat, une somme de 1.2 millions de dollars supplémentaires sera allouée au financement de la phase II du projet pour la sauvegarde des sites du patrimoine mondial de la RDC.

la FNU souhaite poursuivre sa collaboration avec ses partenaires gouvernementaux et non-gouvernementaux. Elle entend également continuer à aider le Centre du patrimoine mondial à renforcer ses effectifs pour faire face à l'inflation des demandes. M. Carter a indiqué, à ce propos, que la FNU collaborait avec le Centre du patrimoine mondial à la recherche de pistes pour faire plus largement connaître l'histoire du patrimoine mondial à travers le monde et promouvoir l'effet bénéfique d'un tourisme durable dans les sites du patrimoine mondial.

En conclusion, M. Carter a salué la déclaration de la République démocratique du Congo sur son engagement politique en faveur de la sauvegarde de ses sites du patrimoine mondial en péril.

Intervenant en tant que porte-parole des ONG partenaires, **Annette Lanjouw, conseiller technique auprès du Programme International pour la Conservation des Gorilles (PICG)**, a indiqué que les équipes des dix ONG de conservation travaillaient actuellement dans les cinq sites du patrimoine mondial. Elle a rappelé que la conservation était un investissement sur le long terme et a cité, pour illustrer son propos, des exemples d'ONG et de particuliers présents en RDC depuis des décennies. La contribution financière annuelle de ces ONG en faveur des sites du patrimoine mondial, est estimée à environ de 2 millions de dollars.

Mme Lanjouw a rappelé que ces ONG avaient continué à travailler sur le terrain malgré la guerre. Elle a par ailleurs souligné que les activités de l'ensemble de ces ONG avaient été réalisées avec le concours du gouvernement, et en particulier celui de l'ICCN dont elle a tenu à saluer le courage et l'engagement. A présent, l'application de la loi sur le terrain, le suivi des inventaires biologiques, la coopération avec les communautés locales et la sensibilisation des autorités concernées s'avèrent indispensables pour développer les capacités du pays dans le domaine de la conservation.

Mme Lanjouw préconise de veiller à ce que la conservation contribue également à la réduction de la pauvreté dans l'ensemble du pays et non seulement dans les sites isolés. Selon elle, le développement durable se ferait alors par le biais de la participation dans le domaine de la gestion des forêts, des mines, des infrastructures, etc.

Elle a invité le gouvernement congolais à soutenir les structures et les parcs par tous les moyens et à assurer également l'intégrité des limites des parcs et leur protection sur le long terme.

En ce qui concerne les Nations Unies et la communauté internationale, elle souhaite que la conservation de la nature soit intégrée dans leur programme d'intervention en reconnaissant son rôle dans la réduction de la pauvreté.

En conclusion de la session « *Les partenaires pour le patrimoine mondial en République démocratique du Congo* », le doyen de la faculté de Droit de Kinshasa et Président de la Commission économique et financière de l'Assemblée Nationale de la RDC, **Grégoire Bakandeja wa Mpungu**, est revenu sur l'importance de la conférence qui a éclairé les participants sur l'état de la biodiversité de la République démocratique du Congo.

Il a rappelé que la population congolaise, aujourd'hui estimée à 60 millions, avait de grandes chances de doubler dans les 30 ans à venir et que, celle-ci dépendant des ressources naturelles, cet élément ne devrait pas être négligé au risque de faire échouer toute tentative de conservation de la diversité biologique. A l'instar des autres intervenants, il a insisté sur le besoin d'un développement global dans tous les domaines y compris dans l'ensemble des secteurs industriels et de restaurer la sécurité. Il a rappelé le vœu des partenaires de la RDC de voir le gouvernement congolais s'engager à assurer les conditions de sécurité dans les parcs nationaux et les aires protégées qui pourraient, selon lui, former les bases d'une industrie touristique vigoureuse.

Evoquant la participation et la présence du secteur privé, le Doyen Bakandeja a indiqué qu'une vingtaine d'entreprises - du secteur minier, forestier, pétrolier, touristique et financier - avait accepté l'invitation de l'UNESCO. Les entreprises représentées ont eu le loisir de s'exprimer sur les difficultés auxquelles elles étaient confrontées dans l'exercice de leurs activités mais elles ont aussi reconnu l'importance de préserver le patrimoine mondial de la RDC. Le Doyen Bakandeja a insisté sur la priorité absolue pour les entreprises d'adopter des principes et des pratiques de responsabilité sociale et environnementale. Selon lui les exemples de bonnes pratiques existent, mais beaucoup reste à faire.

En conclusion, le Doyen Bakandeja est revenu sur les propos du représentant du PNUD/GEF lors du forum consacré au partenariat avec le secteur privé, Abdoulaye Ndiaye, appelant à la capitalisation des opportunités offertes par cette rencontre avec le secteur privé par la création d'un Comité de suivi. L'objectif assigné à ce comité serait d'explorer de nouvelles voies pour la protection et la conservation du patrimoine naturel et culturel de la RDC, bien commun de l'ensemble de l'humanité.

Comptes rendus des ateliers



Assurer la protection
des sites en RDC :
Un atelier d'experts

Conférence internationale pour la sauvegarde et la promotion du patrimoine congolais

Au cours de cet atelier qui a précédé l'ouverture de la *Conférence internationale des bailleurs de fonds pour la promotion et la sauvegarde du patrimoine congolais*, les experts ont été invités à s'exprimer sur quatre thèmes:

- A. L'évaluation de la première phase du projet UNESCO-UNF ;
- B. Le recours aux technologies satellitaires pour le suivi des sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC ;
- C. L'importance des sites du patrimoine mondial de la RDC pour la sauvegarde des grands singes ;
- D. Les enjeux et les défis de l'implication des communautés locales dans la conservation des sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC.

Une session d'une demi-journée était consacrée à chacun des quatre thèmes abordés. Pour une meilleure lisibilité, le vocable *atelier* sera substitué à celui de session et la présentation des ateliers se fera selon le plan ci-dessous indiqué :

- Présentation générale de l'atelier
- Objectifs de l'atelier
- Résumé des principales questions abordées et conclusions

A. Evaluation de la première phase du projet UNESCO-FNU

Présentation générale de l'atelier

Initié en 2000 par l'UNESCO avec le soutien financier de la Fondation des Nations Unies (FNU), le projet « *Conservation de la biodiversité en zones de conflit armé : préserver les sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC* », financé pour quatre ans, avait pour ambition de venir en aide à une RDC engluée dans le conflit des Grands Lacs après avoir subi de plein fouet, dans sa partie Est, les conséquences du génocide rwandais. L'urgence était à la préservation de l'intégrité des cinq sites du patrimoine mondial dans un pays en guerre et en particulier des quatre sites situés à l'est du pays et isolés de la Direction à Kinshasa.

C'est avec le concours de nombreuses ONG de conservation et de la GTZ - toutes déjà actives dans les cinq sites – et grâce à un financement supplémentaire de la Coopération belge au développement ainsi qu'à une assistance technique de l'Agence spatiale européenne dans le domaine de l'utilisation de la télédétection que le projet a pu être concrétisé sur le terrain, et ce en étroite collaboration avec l'ICCN. L'Office de la politique scientifique belge a également contribué à la réalisation du projet.

L'atelier a exploré les enseignements de ce travail « pionnier » de conservation en zones de conflits armés et identifié les priorités pour une continuation du projet.

Objectifs de l'atelier

- (i) Présenter les résultats obtenus et les enseignements au terme de la première phase du projet ;
- (ii) Fixer les priorités pour la mise en œuvre de la phase II.

En introduction, Jean-Pierre d'Huart, l'évaluateur du projet, a brièvement présenté le projet en insistant sur son caractère à la fois novateur et atypique. La singularité de ce projet repose principalement sur le fait qu'il a été

élaboré et mis en œuvre par une coalition réunissant la Fondation des Nations Unies, l'UNESCO, la Coopération allemande (GTZ), neuf ONG³ internationales de conservation et l'autorité congolaise chargée de la gestion des Parcs (ICCN).

L'atelier a débuté par l'exposé de quatre problématiques traitées par les experts John Hart (WCS), Bernard Iyomi-Iyatshi (ICCN), Annette Lanjouw (PICG), Norbert Mushenzi (ICCN), Eulalie Bashige (ICCN), Terese Hart (WCS), Conrad Aveling (Consultant) et Henri-Paul Eloma (ICCN). Une discussion était également programmée.

Principales problématiques abordées

Les sites du patrimoine mondial sévèrement appauvris constituent-ils encore une priorité pour la conservation en RDC ?

Invités à s'exprimer sur cette question, John Hart et Bernard Iyomi-Iyatshi estiment qu'en dépit du succès du projet, les menaces qui pesaient sur les sites du patrimoine mondial n'ont pas disparu. Ils rappellent que tout au long du conflit, les sites ont été utilisés comme bases de replis pour les militaires avec pour conséquence une forte progression du braconnage, celui-ci devenant une source de financement des activités des bandes armées. Selon les deux experts, cette surexploitation des ressources pourrait avoir conduit à la fragilisation de la situation des espèces les plus sensibles. A titre d'exemple, six tonnes d'ivoire ont pu être sorties d'un parc grâce à la complicité des militaires et d'autres groupes armés.

³. Programme International de Conservation des Gorilles (PICG), Fonds Mondiale pour la Nature (WWF), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), International Rhino Foundation (IRF), Fauna and Flora International (FFI), African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), Gilman International Conservation (GIC), Société Zoologique de Milwaukee (ZSM), Société Zoologique de Londres (SZL).

La forte pression démographique est également l'une des plus importantes menaces exercées sur les sites du patrimoine mondial. Dans la province du Kivu, de nombreux sites doivent faire face à de très fortes pressions démographiques qui s'exercent à leur périphérie immédiate. Les populations qui se sont implantées dans ces zones veulent accéder aux ressources naturelles et prendre possession de nouveaux espaces agricoles. Les exemples des Parcs Nationaux des Virunga et du Kahuzi-Biega illustrent parfaitement les inquiétudes exprimées par les experts. Ces sites ont été particulièrement touchés par les occupations illégales dont ils ont fait l'objet ainsi que par les activités d'extraction incontrôlées pratiquées dans leurs enceintes même. Par ailleurs, la faiblesse des moyens de l'ICCN a eu pour conséquence d'augmenter l'insécurité en dépit du succès des opérations de lutte contre la pratique d'activités illicites dans les parcs menées avec les militaires.

La forte coalition entre l'ICCN et les ONG générée par la guerre doit survivre en temps de paix

Annette Lanjouw et Norbert Mushenzi ont rappelé qu'au début du conflit, l'ICCN était pratiquement seul à mener le combat pour la conservation des sites du patrimoine mondial. Son personnel était sans ressources, désorienté et désorganisé. C'est d'abord avec l'aide d'un petit nombre d'ONG de conservation qu'il a pu lancer un appel à l'aide internationale. Pour être en mesure de conserver son influence sur les aires protégées, l'ICCN devait impérativement :

- Collecter des informations au niveau de chaque site et comprendre sa situation ;
- Adopter une stratégie globale pour être en mesure de coordonner ses activités ;
- Poursuivre les activités de terrain y compris la rémunération de son personnel ;
- Lancer une grande campagne de collecte de fonds ;
- Faire circuler l'information sur l'évolution de la situation sur le terrain et sur les enseignements.

Pour mener à bien toutes ces actions, une équipe spéciale chargée du suivi et du développement du projet UNESCO-UNF a été mise sur pied dans le but d'assurer la protection de l'ensemble des sites. Les questions les plus urgentes à régler étaient celles liées aux fortes pressions exercées sur les sites, à l'isolement des gardes et au versement de leurs salaires ainsi que celles relatives au non respect de la législation nationale sur les sites. La Coopération allemande (GTZ), le Fonds Mondial pour la Nature (WWF), Gilman International Conservation (GIC), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), le Programme International de Conservation des Gorilles (une coalition constituée du Fonds Mondial pour la Nature, African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), Fauna and Flora International (FFI)), l'International Rhino Foundation (IRF), la Zoological Society of Milwaukee (ZSM) et la Zoological Society of London (ZSL) ainsi que l'UNESCO se sont regroupés au sein de cette coalition.

L'esprit d'équipe dont ont fait preuve l'ensemble de ces nouveaux partenaires et la mise en place de mécanismes de coordination ont indéniablement constitué une première dans le monde de la conservation et peuvent, à ce titre, être considérés comme les effets les plus positifs et inattendus de la guerre.

L'adoption, en temps de conflit, d'une approche concertée pour la conservation sur le terrain aura été, malgré les difficultés rencontrées, l'une des réussites du projet.

Les deux intervenants ont par ailleurs rappelé les deux principaux objectifs assignés à la coalition à savoir évaluer la situation globale des cinq sites du patrimoine mondial et tirer de cette mobilisation commune, les enseignements pouvant contribuer à la conservation d'autres sites en période de conflit.

Les résultats de l'évaluation du projet ont démontré que les mécanismes de coordination établis par la coalition constituaient une part importante du succès du projet mais que la coordination, en elle-même, s'avérait coûteuse en temps et en charge de travail. Des structures comme le CoCoSi et le CoCoCongo, toutes les deux mises en place par le projet, ont été officialisées par la l'ICCN, ce qui est considéré comme un autre succès à porter au crédit du projet d'autant plus que la poursuite de l'institutionnalisation de cette coordination entre les organisations, préconisée par l'ensemble des membres de la coalition, est déjà en cours.

Selon les conclusions de l'évaluation du projet, travailler dans le cadre des mécanismes mis en place par l'ICCN et les ONG permet d'éviter la duplication et la compétition entre les organisations de conservation.

La situation de post-conflit engendre un grand nombre de priorités : actions et réactions

Eulalie Bashige et Terese Hart ont estimé ne pas être en mesure de définir ce que l'on entend par « situation de post-conflit ». Le caractère encore incertain de la situation actuelle et la persistance de nombreux empiètements et exploitations illégales des ressources rendent, selon elles, toute tentative de définition hasardeuse.

Elles ont très clairement indiqué que « situation de post-conflit » ne signifiait en aucun cas le retour de la sécurité dans les aires protégées ni le contrôle de l'exploitation des ressources.

Néanmoins ce pessimisme ne doit pas occulter les succès obtenus par la coalition ICCN-UNESCO-ONG dans le combat pour la conservation des sites du patrimoine mondial comme la création - grâce à l'unification des approches des ONG et de l'ICCN- d'une véritable plateforme pour la conservation en RDC. Le défi qui se pose, désormais, est de pérenniser les progrès déjà réalisés. Il convient pour cela, de s'assurer que le CoCoCongo et le CoCocosi

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soient largement reconnus et reçoivent un budget leur permettant d'assurer la poursuite de leur travail.

Selon les deux intervenantes, l'heure est maintenant à la reconstruction. Les leçons tirées de la première phase du projet (élargissement du partenariat et augmentation des ressources) doivent être prises en compte. Par ailleurs, le sort des autres aires protégées – qui ont aussi énormément souffert de la guerre – doit être examiné. Eulalie Bashige et Terese Hart ont également appelé de leurs vœux un engagement politique du gouvernement congolais en faveur de la conservation et un signal de l'importance que les autorités de la RDC accordent à cette question.

Préserver les sites du patrimoine mondial en temps de conflit : les enseignements

L'évaluation du projet UNESCO – FNU menée en mai 2004 a permis aux membres de la coalition de tirer un certain nombre d'enseignements de cette période de conflit.

Au nombre des enseignements les plus importants, Conrad Aveling et Henri-Paul Eloma ont retenu les suivants :

- Contre toute attente, la guerre a renforcé l'alliance des partenaires sous l'égide de l'UNESCO avec pour principaux effets la mise en commun de l'expertise des uns et des autres et la mise en place de mécanismes de coordination cohérents et efficaces ;
- La présence constante de partenaires sur le terrain a permis de poursuivre le paiement des gardes. Malgré tout, les contraintes liées à l'acheminement des fonds destinés à payer les primes des gardes n'ont pas été sans causer quelques problèmes de sécurité. Par ailleurs, le fait que les salaires aient été pris en charge par des donateurs extérieurs ne doit pas, selon les deux experts, dispenser le gouvernement congolais de reprendre le paiement des gardes ;
- Le renforcement des capacités au niveau des équipes de management aurait dû se poursuivre. Son interruption a porté un sérieux coup au moral des gardes. Conrad Aveling et Henri-Paul Eloma ont indiqué que bien que des schémas innovateurs en matière de contrôle de l'application de la loi et de bio monitoring aient été développés et mis en œuvre dans les sites avec succès, le rattachement du versement d'une prime à la réalisation d'une performance individuelle a également fait ses preuves.
- Le projet a réellement donné un sens au concept de conservation communautaire en RDC. L'implication de l'ensemble des décisionnaires a été cruciale pour faire de ce concept un élément important du travail de l'ICCN en matière de conservation ;
- La conduite des missions diplomatiques de l'UNESCO s'est avérée cruciale et a apporté une véritable valeur ajoutée dans la résolution des conflits internes et dans le rétablissement de la communication. Il convient par conséquent de poursuivre ces efforts

aux niveaux local, national et international pour pérenniser les résultats obtenus ;

- La faiblesse des synergies entre les agences des Nations Unies a limité certaines avancées en matière de conservation. L'échec de la tentative d'élaborer une Déclaration sur la neutralité des sites du patrimoine mondial – cruciale en période de conflits- en est une conséquence ;
- La tentative de création, en RDC, d'un fonds en faveur de la conservation a été un échec à cause de la guerre. Sur la question du financement durable, l'implication du Centre du patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO, à travers son rôle de catalyseur de la mobilisation de nouveaux partenaires, s'est tout de même avérée cruciale en dépit de la difficulté à tisser des liens avec les autres programmes des Nations Unies.

Priorités identifiées pour la mise en œuvre de la phase II du projet

- Obtenir, de la part du gouvernement congolais, un engagement politique fort en faveur de la conservation de la biodiversité en RDC ;
- Institutionnaliser le mécanisme de coordination mis en place au niveau des sites (CoCoSi) et à l'échelon national (CoCoCongo) ;
- Trouver de nouveaux partenaires et de nouvelles ressources financières ;
- Elaborer des plans de gestion pour l'ensemble des sites ;
- Mettre en place des activités de conservation communautaire ;
- Développer la formation et renforcer les capacités de l'ICCN ;
- Examiner le sort des autres aires protégées qui ont également souffert de la guerre ;
- Poursuivre les missions diplomatiques.

Au cours de la discussion qui a suivi les présentations, les principaux points abordés ont porté sur :

- La nécessité d'une plus grande implication, aux côtés de l'UNESCO, des autres agences des Nations Unies ;
- La mise en œuvre effective du CoCosi et du CoCoCongo. A ce sujet, John Hart a indiqué que ces deux entités étaient désormais reconnues comme des structures à part entière de l'ICCN ;
- L'organisation d'une conférence de coordination des Nations Unies pour la conservation et l'établissement de systèmes de financement durable ;
- Les rapports du CoCosi et du CoCoCongo avec le secteur privé. Parmi les expériences concluantes de coopération entre le secteur privé, le CoCoSi et le CoCoCongo, la collaboration initiée avec le secteur minier pour protéger les sites a donné des résultats satisfaisants. Ce type d'expérience - qui pourrait s'avérer très utile - dans les zones tam-

pons des sites - est fortement encouragé par les acteurs de terrain ;

- L'implication des autorités et des communautés locales dans la sauvegarde des sites ;
- L'accès facile aux armes qui pose notamment la question de l'insécurité dans les sites. A cette question, la représentante de l'ICCN a répondu que celui-ci était en contact avec une agence chargée de la démobilisation et de la confiscation des armes ainsi qu'avec l'armée, l'objectif recherché étant de coordonner leurs actions respectives ;
- Le maintien des effectifs et du paiement des primes. Le retour à une situation normalisée dans les parcs devrait, selon les experts, apporter une réponse à ces questions. La reprise du tourisme devrait générer des bénéfices qui pourraient être utilisés pour faire face aux frais de personnel et de fonctionnement du parc.

Conclusions

- Le projet a fortement contribué à la conservation des cinq sites du patrimoine mondial grâce en particulier au personnel des parcs, à l'ICCN et aux ONG qui ont pris d'énormes risques en demeurant sur le terrain ;
- L'ICCN et les sites eux-mêmes sont actuellement dans une situation d'appauvrissement alarmante. Sans le soutien des autorités nationales, les efforts déployés au niveau international seront insuffisants ;
- La coalition formée par l'UNESCO, la Fondation des Nations Unies, les ONG et l'assistance bilatérale autour du projet a su inspirer la confiance et attirer de nouveaux partenaires. Il s'agit maintenant d'institutionnaliser les mécanismes de coordination comme le CoCosi et le CoCoCongo ;
- Le projet a été un « gilet de sauvetage », mais le travail entrepris est loin d'être fini, il est désormais impératif de construire sur les fondations que ce travail a permis de bâtir.

Problèmes affectant les sites naturels de la RDC pendant le conflit					
	Garamba	Virunga	Kahuzi-Biega	Okapis	Salonga
Exploitation illégale					
Braconnage espèces phares	Eléphant, rhino	Eléphant, hippo	Eléphant, gorille	Eléphant, okapi	Eléphant
Mines		présent	sévère	sévère	
Coupes bois		sévère	sévère		sévère
Occupation illégale					
Elevage, agriculture		sévère	sévère	présent	
Pêches		sévère			sévère
Insécurité					
Assassinat staff	oui	oui	oui		tentative
Inursions par milices	sévère	sévère	sévère	sévère	

B. Le recours aux technologies satellitaires pour le suivi des sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC

Présentation générale de l'atelier

L'utilisation des technologies spatiales comme outil de suivi de l'état de conservation des aires protégées, et plus spécifiquement des sites du patrimoine mondial et de leur gestion s'avère être extrêmement utile. Les applications sont nombreuses, mais les compétences encore faibles dans la région, qui détient par ailleurs le plus fort taux de sites inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril.

Il s'agissait, dans le cadre de cet atelier, d'évaluer l'expérience acquise dans le domaine de l'utilisation de la technologie de la télédétection appliquée à la conservation des sites du patrimoine mondial naturel en se basant, plus spécifiquement, sur résultats obtenus dans les cinq sites du patrimoine mondial de la RDC.

Objectifs de l'atelier

- Présenter les modalités d'utilisation des technologies spatiales dans le cadre de la conservation de la biodiversité sur la base de l'exemple des sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC ;
- Donner la parole aux premiers aux utilisateurs de ce nouvel outil et recueillir leurs réactions ;
- Proposer des pistes pour la formation des futurs utilisateurs.

Le modérateur de l'atelier, Brigitte Decadt du Bureau fédéral belge pour la politique scientifique, a été à l'origine du partenariat sur l'utilisation des technologies spatiales conclu entre l'UNESCO et le gouvernement belge. En introduction, Mme Decadt a prononcé

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quelques mots sur l'utilisation des technologies spatiales dans le domaine de la conservation et a insisté sur l'importance de renforcer les capacités dans ce domaine pour sensibiliser le plus grand nombre à ces technologies.

Après l'intervention de Mme Decadt, Diego Fernandez Prieto (ESA), Philippe de Maeyer (Université de Gand), John Hart (WCS), Henri-Paul Eloma (ICCN) et Herbert Hansen (Société Keyobs), ainsi que Carlos de Wasseige (Université catholique de Louvain) se sont succédés pour présenter leurs exposés respectifs.

Principales problématiques abordées

Le recours aux technologies satellitaires pour le suivi des sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC

Au départ outil d'observation des planètes et des confins de l'espace, la technologie spatiale permet également d'observer et de surveiller notre planète. Elle trouve des applications dans de nombreux domaines comme la gestion des catastrophes naturelles, l'aide humanitaire, la lutte contre les feux de forêts, la cartographie de la température de la surface de la mer, la surveillance de la couche d'ozone et la cartographie des fonds marins.

Les avantages que procure le recours à l'observation de la planète sont multiples. L'accès à des données collectées sur une base quotidiennement ou déjà archivées est l'un d'entre eux.

L'ESA et l'UNESCO ont débuté leur collaboration à l'occasion du lancement du projet BeGo (Building Environnement for Gorilla) destiné à la surveillance de l'habitat du gorille de montagne en République démocratique du Congo, au Rwanda et en Uganda. Le projet BeGo, dont la dernière phase doit prendre fin au premier trimestre 2005, est principalement ciblé sur les sites du patrimoine mondial dont les Parcs nationaux des Virunga et du Kahuzi-Biega situés en RDC. A terme, il devrait aboutir à la production de cartes, de modèles digitales d'élévation (topographie) et de suivi de changements. Selon Diego Fernandez Prieto, pendant la mise en œuvre du projet, il a fallu faire face à toute une série de difficultés, comme la présence d'une couverture nuageuse ou le difficile accès aux zones isolées pour y collecter les données. Ces difficultés ont finalement été appréhendées comme autant de défis techniques pour l'équipe du projet.

Bénéfices de la cartographie pour les sites du patrimoine mondial

Parallèlement au projet BeGo et grâce au financement du gouvernement belge, une cartographie des autres sites du patrimoine mondial de la RDC -les Parcs nationaux de la Garamba, de la Salonga et la Réserve de faune à okapis- a pu être réalisée. La mise en œuvre du projet

a été compliquée par la pénurie d'informations disponibles sur les systèmes de références géographiques utilisés, la mauvaise qualité des données existantes, ou encore la méthode de collecte. C'est cependant dans le cadre de ce projet que le concept de modèle de carte organisée thématiquement et en fonction du type d'utilisateurs est né. Ces deux initiatives ont permis à la RDC de disposer, pour la première fois et pour chaque site du patrimoine mondial, d'un système de cartographie compatible avec le GPS.

Philippe de Maeyer a insisté sur la nécessité d'aider la RDC à définir un standard cartographique. Il a donné l'exemple de celui utilisé dans le cadre des projets UNESCO. Il a par ailleurs recommandé de fournir à la RDC des cartes imprimées.

Nécessité de disposer d'outils efficaces pour le suivi de la biodiversité dans les sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC

En sa qualité d'utilisateur, John Hart est d'abord revenu sur l'historique des projets menés avec l'UNESCO. Il a insisté sur les efforts déployés pour élaborer une sorte de catalogue des besoins de l'ensemble des utilisateurs ainsi qu'une base de données.

On trouve parmi les demandes émanant des utilisateurs l'accès à des Systèmes d'information géographique (SIG) implantés sur les sites avec une gestion des données reliée à la Direction et la présence d'un personnel formé à l'utilisation de ces outils. La précision des cartes, le renforcement des capacités au niveau des sites comme à celui de la Direction pour assurer l'acquisition des compétences élémentaires et la mise en place de formations continues, ainsi que la maintenance des équipements ont été répertoriés comme autant des priorités.

Selon John Hart, le système de gestion de l'information permet de disposer d'un ensemble de données obtenues à partir des informations contenues dans les rapports de gestion, d'analyses des menaces potentielles et de leur possible évaluation.

Henri-Paul Eloma, autre utilisateur, a axé son intervention sur les efforts de l'ICCN. Il a reconnu les avantages procurés par la cartographie réalisée dans le cadre des projets UNESCO. De son point de vue, disposer au niveau de chaque site d'ordinateurs et de personnel compétent en informatique et capable de procéder au relevé et à la saisie des données pour la cartographie est essentiel. Il en est de même pour la formation des patrouilles dans le maniement du GPS et de logiciels informatiques. Henri-Paul Eloma a par ailleurs présenté le partenariat entre l'ICCN, l'UNESCO, l'ESA et le gouvernement belge sur le projet de cartographie des cinq sites du patrimoine mondial. A ce stade, l'ICCN intervient surtout dans la correction et la validation des projets de cartes dont elle

sera, au final, la principale utilisatrice. Les problèmes techniques rencontrés dans l'utilisation d'un grand nombre de GPS - manque de caméras digitales, nombre insuffisant de cartes imprimées et intermittence de la fourniture en électricité - ont aussi été évoqués.

Le représentant de la société Keyobs, Herbert Hansen, est intervenu sur la question de la rencontre entre haute technologie et développement durable. Il a recommandé de recourir, en matière de développement, à certaines des applications développées pour l'observation de la Terre. Il a cité, à titre d'exemple, la ville de Kinshasa, où cette technologie a été utilisée pour évaluer l'érosion du sol, le potentiel éolien ou la planification routière. Herbert Hansen a indiqué que toutes ces activités, y compris l'achat des équipements, la formation et le transfert de technologie, ont bénéficié d'un financement de la Banque mondiale dans le cadre du PMURR. L'intervenant a également présenté l'idée d'un Atlas géographique de la République démocratique du Congo contenant des données socio-économiques, démographiques, sur les ressources naturelles ou sur les infrastructures. Une partie de ce travail a déjà été réalisée sur des zones comportant des exploitations forestières ou des réserves d'eau potable, ainsi que sur la prévention de la malaria en comparant sa fréquence avec les conditions climatiques d'un site. Une application à l'industrie forestière a également été mise en place. Selon Herbert, la réhabilitation de l'Institut national géographique en RDC est absolument indispensable.

Mise en application de la cartographie obtenue par les images satellitaires pour le bénéfice des sites

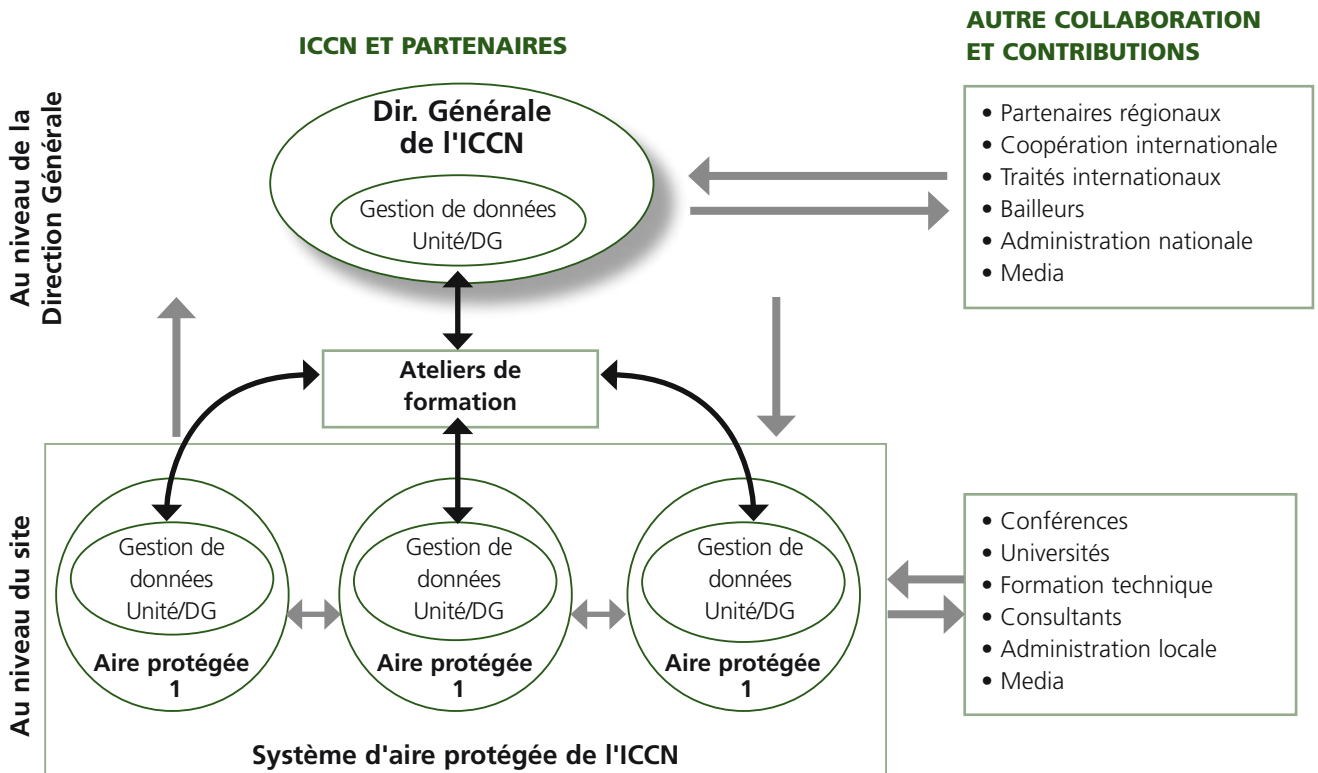
C'est en collaboration avec l'UNESCO que des activités relatives au SIG ont pu être initiées pour le compte de l'ICCN. Ces activités ont été brièvement décrites par Carlos de Wasseige. Il s'agit principalement d'un système opérationnel qui permet de travailler aussi bien au niveau des sites qu'à celui de la Direction, à Kinshasa. En termes de personnel, un chef de site est désigné à l'échelon de chaque site, ainsi qu'un responsable MIKE⁴, un point focal pour l'UGI et un employé CoCoSi (Comité de coordination des sites).

M. de Wasseige a également présenté les procédés développés en matière de saisie de données dans le système. Cette saisie s'accompagne d'une organisation de la documentation, d'une mise à jour des données déjà disponibles, de l'incorporation de nouvelles données, de la réalisation de cartes et de l'analyse des données. Il a aussi évoqué des activités dans le domaine du renforcement des capacités, comme la mise en place d'une unité mobile pour la formation, la création de procédures et la coordination entre le CoCoCongo et le CoCoSi.

⁴ MIKE est l'acronyme en anglais de Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants. C'est à l'origine une idée de la Convention CITES qui s'est transformée en un système complet de suivi de la faune).

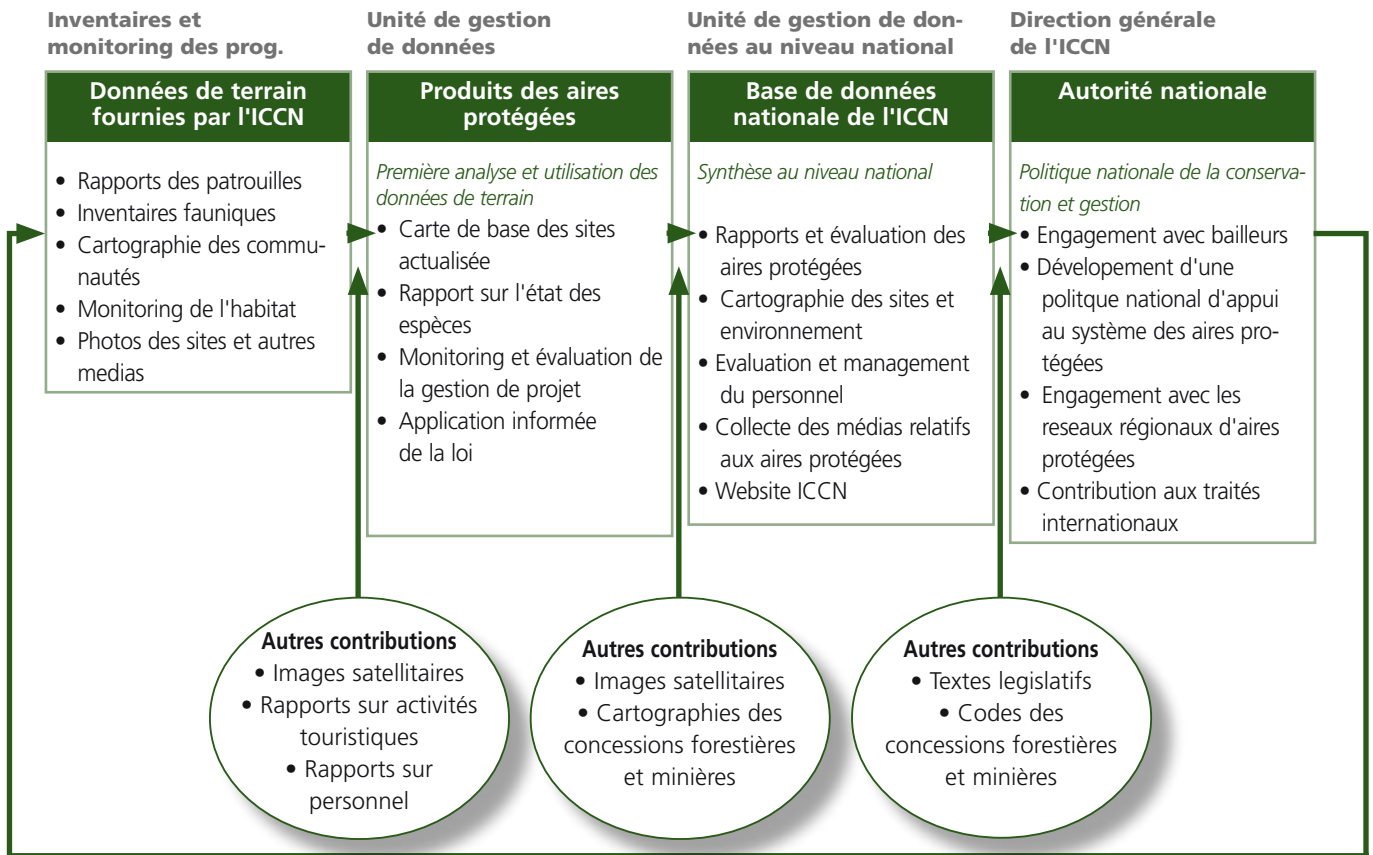
Système de gestion de l'information d'aire protégée

Communication et intégration



Systeme d'information des aires protégées

Entrée des données et résultats



Priorités identifiées pour la mise en œuvre de la phase II du projet

- Fourniture d'équipement;
- Formation du personnel au niveau des sites en matière de collecte et d'analyse des informations.

Au cours de la discussion qui a suivi les présentations, les principaux points abordés ont porté sur :

- La reconnaissance de l'utilité des images satellites qui ne doit pas, pour autant, occulter la nécessité de préserver également le patrimoine culturel de la RDC en associant notamment les populations locales. Ces communautés locales ont par ailleurs un rôle important à jouer ; leurs connaissances sont précieuses en termes de collecte et de documentation sur des données particulièrement pointues. D'autre part, les cartes « de base » peuvent aussi être utilisées pour illustrer les indicateurs socio-économiques ;
- La coopération avec l'ERAIFT comme une organisation éducationnelle pour l'utilisation durable de la forêt ;
- L'importance de compter sur des individus qui peuvent jouer le rôle d'interface (et donc faire circuler l'information) entre les spécialistes de la conservation et leurs communautés ;

- La difficulté de rassembler des données provenant de sources diverses et inégales d'un point de vue qualitatif ;
- La nécessité pour l'ICCN d'assurer le leadership dans l'utilisation des cartes et de devenir un point focal incontournable pour recevoir toutes les données en provenance des sites.

Conclusions

- L'importance du renforcement des capacités et des ressources humaines a été souligné ;
- Le renforcement des capacités doit être appréhendé comme partie intégrante de la stratégie de conservation et, par conséquent, être mieux ciblé ;
- Les efforts déployés en faveur de la conservation doivent être durables et mieux coordonnés ;
- Ces efforts doivent être orientés vers l'autosuffisance durable des autorités responsables des parcs pour leur permettre de créer et de maintenir leur propres processus de surveillance ;
- Enfin, cette rencontre devrait établir des priorités, non des besoins, et utiliser pleinement tous les outils effectivement disponibles.

C. L'importance des sites du patrimoine mondial de la RDC pour la sauvegarde des Grands Singes

Présentation générale de l'atelier

La République démocratique du Congo est connue pour sa biodiversité exceptionnelle. Aux yeux du public, ce sont clairement les grands singes qui représentent la manifestation la plus importante de cette richesse. La RDC compte sur son sol trois des cinq espèces de grands singes qui existent au monde. Parmi elles, on trouve le bonobo qui est endémique dans le pays ainsi qu'une sous-espèce endémique de gorille. La communauté des scientifiques et le monde de la conservation accordent également aux grands singes une place particulière au sein de la biodiversité, ce qui justifie que l'on prête beaucoup d'attention à la question de leur sauvegarde. Cette attention particulière repose non seulement sur le fait qu'ils sont nos voisins les plus proches, d'un point de vue génétique, mais aussi sur leur importance sur le plan culturel. Sans oublier, leur fort potentiel à mobiliser le grand public quand il s'agit de mener des actions en faveur de la conservation de leur habitat.

C'est le souci de conserver l'habitat des grands singes, gravement menacé de part le monde, qui est à l'origine de l'initiative GRASP (Great Apes Survival Project) de l'UNESCO et du PNUE.

L'atelier était présidé par le directeur de l'Ecole Régionale post universitaire d'Aménagement et de gestion Intégrée des Forêts et territoires Tropicaux (ERAIFT), Jean Ngog, assisté de Samy Mankoto, point focal GRASP à l'UNESCO.

Les exposés ont été respectivement présentés par Frédéric Joulian (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales), Annette Lanjouw (PICG), Gay Reinhartz (MZS) et Boniface Mbieme Lokwa (ICCN), Jean Bihini won wa Musiti (UICN-Afrique centrale), Mathieu Ebéké (Réserve d'Odzala, République du Congo), Rachel Fléaux-Mulot (*Sciences et Avenir*).

Objectifs de l'atelier

- (i) Favoriser les échanges d'informations sur les menaces directes et indirectes qui pèsent sur les grands singes ;
- (ii) Echanger les expériences, notamment dans le domaine de l'épidémiologie et du trafic illicite des produits et sous-produits de faune dans la sous-région Afrique pouvant affecter les grands singes ;
- (iii) Formuler des recommandations dans le cadre du Plan d'action à mettre en œuvre pour la phase II du projet UNESCO-UNF « *Conservation de la biodiversité en zones de conflit armé : préserver les sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC* »

Principales problématiques abordées

La perception de la conservation des grands singes dans les différents contextes historiques, politiques et socio-culturels

Invité à présenter ce sujet quelque peu difficile et controversé de l'origine de l'homme et de nos relations de parenté avec les Grands Singes, Frédéric Joulian, promoteur du projet « *Hommes et primates, natures et cultures dans le développement durable* » conçu dans le cadre du Programme de recherches interdisciplinaires « *Evolution, Natures et Cultures* », a tenu à souligner le caractère d'espèce emblématique que représentent les Grands Singes du fait de leur proche parenté avec l'espèce humaine (patrimoine génétique, posture verticale, absence de queue, cerveau plus développé).

Sur le plan éco-éthologique, l'orateur, s'appuyant sur les travaux de Diane Fossey et de Jane Goodall, a étayé son argumentation en développant quelques exemples montrant que les grands singes et plus particulièrement les chimpanzés ont une conception biologique de la culture (e.g. les Chimpanzés du Libéria qui cassent les noix en ateliers, ou la femelle chimpanzé exhibant sa grossesse au chasseur pour ne pas se faire tuer, rôle de messenger, d'intercesseur). M. Joulian a aussi insisté sur la valorisation et la capitalisation des savoir-faire traditionnels et des interdits, souvent détenus par les chasseurs. C'est en travaillant étroitement avec ce corps de métiers que l'on peut beaucoup apprendre sur les comportements des grands singes et sur les interactions « Evolution – Natures – Cultures ».

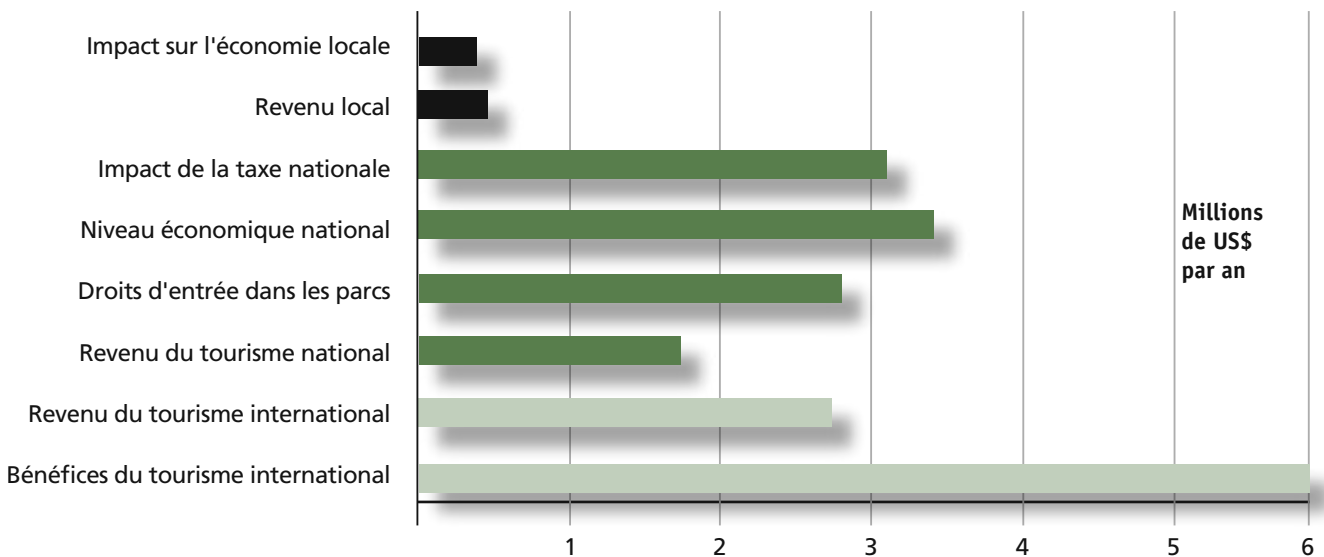
Les Gorilles de montagne au Parc national des Virunga : état de conservation et perspective de développement de l'écotourisme

D'après Annette Lanjouw, le recensement datant de novembre 2003 a montré que, contrairement aux idées reçues, la population des gorilles a connu une croissance totale de 17%, mais en RDC une baisse de 20% depuis 1996. De 1989 à 2003, la population des gorilles est passée de 324 individus à 384. Bien qu'encourageants, ces résultats n'autorisent pas pour autant à baisser la garde. En effet, à l'occasion de ces comptages, il est également apparu que les tailles des familles étaient plus réduites rendant ainsi leurs membres plus vulnérables en RDC, au Rwanda et en Ouganda. Par ailleurs, le taux de croissance a progressé dans les secteurs qui ont été soumis au monitoring pendant la période où les menaces étaient élevées ; ce qui démontre, selon Annette Lanjouw, l'effet bénéfique et positif qu'a eu le projet UNESCO-FNU sur

Inventaire de la population de gorilles de montagne				
Date	Massif du Virunga <i>Rwanda, Ouganda, RDC</i>	Date	Bwindi NP <i>Ouganda</i>	Total
1959-60	~ 450			
1971-73	274			
1976-78	268	1979	95-130	~ 400
1981	254	1981	116	370
1986	293	1985	146	439
1989	324	1987	280	604
		1994	257	
		1997	292	
2003	384	2002	320	704

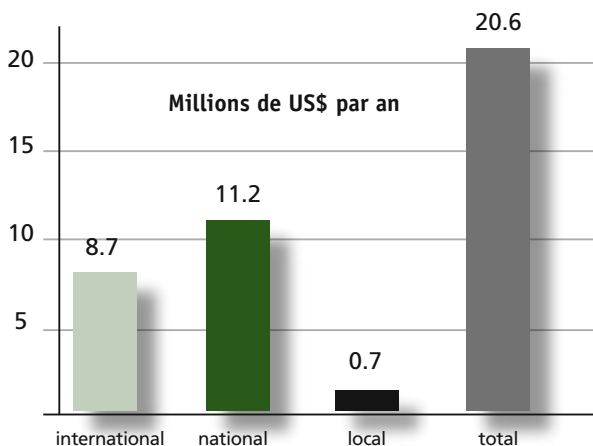
Bénéfices annuels du tourisme de gorilles

Répartition et valeur des bénéfices du tourisme de gorilles (basé sur 2000/2001)



Bénéfices annuels du tourisme de gorilles

(basé sur 2000/2001)



la préservation de l'habitat des gorilles de montagne. Le versement de primes de motivation au personnel de terrain resté en poste (qui constituait un volet important de ce projet) et la poursuite des activités du programme régional PICG ont notablement contribué à stabiliser le secteur Sud des Virunga, refuge de ces gorilles.

Les risques et les menaces sont encore très importants dans cette région des Grands Lacs, néanmoins les opportunités subsistent pour capitaliser le potentiel économique que représentent les gorilles par le biais de l'écotourisme, comme cela fut le cas avant la guerre.

Les Bonobos de la Salonga : perspectives pour la conservation

Prenant la parole, Gay Reinhartz a indiqué que les bonobos ou chimpanzés pygmées, une espèce endémique à la RDC, font actuellement l'objet d'importantes études

scientifiques au Parc national de la Salonga, études menées par la Société Zoologique de Milwaukee (SZM) en collaboration avec les chercheurs de l'ICCN. Ces études portent principalement sur l'évaluation de la population des Bonobos dans le Parc national de la Salonga, l'identification des populations clés, les facteurs écologiques et humains liés à la distribution des bonobos et les moyens de renforcer les mesures de protection et de lutte contre le braconnage. Le recours par la SZM à l'expertise locale (collaboration avec l'Université de Kinshasa pour l'étude des arbres utilisés par les bonobos comme nids et la cartographie des habitats de cette espèce) a été salué par les participants comme un exemple à suivre dans le domaine du renforcement des capacités ainsi que dans celui de la sensibilisation et de l'éducation des populations locales.

Grands singes et trafic de viande de brousse en Afrique centrale : état des lieux et besoin d'une stratégie régionale de coopération

Samuel Bihini a débuté d'emblée son exposé par un constat alarmant qui montre les enjeux du commerce de la viande de brousse et la nécessité d'une vision et d'une stratégie régionales : entre 3 000 et 6 000 grands singes sont tués chaque année par des braconniers. Les défis résident au niveau de la mégadiversité qui caractérise l'Afrique centrale, le niveau de pauvreté et de précarité des populations locales et la porosité des frontières qui favorise les flux des trafiquants. Les estimations suivantes, données à titre d'exemple, montrent l'importance de la viande de brousse dans le commerce illicite: le commerce annuel est évalué à 70-90 tonnes par an à Yaoundé, Cameroun et à 25 millions de dollars (dont 3 millions sur le marché formel) à Libreville, Gabon. L'orateur a poursuivi en insistant sur le fait que le commerce de viande de brousse a dépassé les frontières nationales ; en effet, la demande toujours croissante et le caractère lucratif de ce commerce ont permis la création et le développement de nouveaux circuits très complexes de distribution de la viande de brousse. D'où la nécessité d'une harmonisation de la législation et d'une collaboration régionale, transfrontalière, notamment entre les agents de conservation.

Pour M. Bihini, l'Afrique centrale présente des opportunités permettant le renforcement d'un partenariat et la mise en place de mécanismes de coordination et de suivi, notamment en matière de capitalisation des méthodes de gestion traditionnelle de la faune, de formation en bio-monitoring en s'inspirant de l'excellent exemple du projet UNF/UNESCO/ICCN. L'orateur a proposé comme éléments de stratégie, le recours aux initiatives et institutions déjà existantes dans la sous-région. Il a spécialement mentionné l'intérêt qu'il y avait à tisser des synergies entre le GRASP-PNUE/UNESCO et le Plan de convergence de la COMIFAC, la CEFDHAC, le RAPAC, OCFSA, le Partenariat pour les forêts du Bassin du Congo (PFBC) et le Bureau Régional de l'UICN en Afrique centrale (BRAC) qui coordonne la « Task Force » sur la viande de brousse.

Aspects épidémiologiques : cas de la fièvre Ebola dans la région de la Réserve de Biosphère d'Odzala et moyens de lutte utilisés

Le conservateur de la Réserve de biosphère d'Odzala, Mathieu Ebéké, a fait part aux participants de l'expérience récurrente des épidémies de fièvre hémorragique dues au virus Ebola qui a touché des populations de gorilles dans la région d'Ozala et dans le Sanctuaire de Lossi. Après avoir décrit les aspects cliniques d'Ebola, il a fait part à l'assistance des mesures d'urgence qui ont été prises par le ministère de l'Economie forestière et de l'environnement pour arrêter la propagation de l'épizootie.

D'après M. Ebéké, le réservoir d'Ebola n'étant pas à connu à cette date, il est difficile de faire de la prévention ; il y a lieu de mettre l'accent sur l'éducation sanitaire et la sensibilisation de la population. Il a néanmoins proposé qu'un point focal pour le suivi d'Ebola soit désigné et que les gardes soient formés aux techniques et méthodes de prélèvement et d'analyses. Les gorilles d'Odzala et de la Lossi représentent un grand potentiel pour le développement de l'écotourisme ; à ce titre, a poursuivi Dieudonné Ankara, Point Focal GRASP en République du Congo, ces deux sites naturels ont besoin d'un appui de la communauté internationale, appui qui pourrait s'inscrire dans le cadre du NGASP (National Great Apes Survival Plan) du Congo.

Rôle de la presse dans la sensibilisation pour la conservation des grands singes

Dans son intervention Rachel Fléaux-Mulot a rappelé le rôle de pionnières joué par trois femmes qui, envoyées au départ comme des scientifiques par le professeur Louis Leakey, sont devenues de véritables protectrices des Grands Singes: Jane Goodall (chez les chimpanzés), Diane Fossey (chez les Gorilles) et Birute Galidikas (chez les Orangs-outans). Le lien avec les grands singes est devenu encore plus intime avec les travaux des primatologues comme Frans de Waal qui ont décrit leurs structures et stratégies sociales et avec les études d'ADN qui ont confirmé notre très proche parenté avec les grands singes.

En effet, c'est en constatant le déclin de la population de gorilles que ces femmes ont décidé d'abandonner pour quelque temps leurs recherches pour se consacrer à la sensibilisation du public qu'elles pressentaient être une arme non négligeable pour la sauvegarde des populations de gorilles menacées. Il est indéniable que la Presse a joué un rôle fondamental dans l'adhésion du public international à la cause défendue par ces deux importantes personnalités, Diane Fossey et Jane Goodall. C'est la presse qui les a transformées en passionnaires de la conservation. La journaliste de « Sciences et Avenir » a lancé un appel en disant qu'il est encore temps d'agir; elle a rappelé la sonnette d'alarme tirée par le Programme des Nations Unies pour l'Environnement et l'UNESCO fin novembre 2003 à Paris lors de la réunion d'experts sur GRASP

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« Sans une mobilisation internationale et un budget de 25 millions de dollars, les grands singes disparaîtront dans les trente à cinquante ans à venir ! ». Forte de cette déclaration, Mme Fléaux-Mulot, après une mission de reportage effectuée sur le terrain dans le secteur des gorilles du Parc national des Virunga, a déclaré qu'avec 25 millions de dollars, le prix d'un hélicoptère Apache, « on peut prodiguer aux grands singes les premiers soins d'urgence, aider les communautés humaines qui côtoient les populations de grands singes à sortir de la pauvreté, à développer un mode de vie durable, à promouvoir la reforestation car s'il est minuit moins une pour les grands singes, il est peut-être minuit moins dix pour l'Homme » !

Priorités identifiées pour le futur

- Organiser, à Kinshasa, dans la première semaine de septembre 2005, la réunion intergouvernementale consacrée à l'initiative GRASP ;
- Poursuivre les recherches de suivi-évaluation sur les bonobos à la Salonga et ailleurs afin d'identifier de nouveaux habitats clés pour jeter les bases d'une politique de conservation globale et durable de cette espèce endémique à la RDC ;
- Aider la RDC, en raison de l'importance de sa biodiversité, à jouer un rôle important dans le cadre du Plan de convergence de la COMIFAC et dans le Réseau des Aires Protégées d'Afrique Centrale (RAPAC) ;
- Soutenir les efforts du PICG en maintenant le programme de renforcement des capacités pour une gestion effective et efficace du secteur Sud du Parc national des Virunga.

Au cours de la discussion qui a suivi les présentations, les principaux points abordés ont porté sur :

- Le rôle moteur de l'UNESCO qui, avec son Réseau mondial de 459 Réserves de biosphère établies dans 97 pays dont la RDC et reconnues dans le cadre du Programme intergouvernemental sur l'Homme et la Biosphère (MAB) et ses 177 sites naturels inscrits sur la Liste de la *Convention sur la Protection du patrimoine mondial culturel et naturel*, participe de façon effective à la conservation des grands singes et de leurs habitats ;
- La promotion de la coopération régionale et la reconnaissance du caractère transfrontalier qu'induit la juxtaposition du Parc national des Virunga (RDC) à la Réserve de biosphère des Volcans (Rwanda) au site des Forêts impénétrables du Bwindi (Ouganda). La coopération régionale est d'autant plus nécessaire que le gorille de montagne est considéré comme « espèce migratrice » dans le cadre de la *Convention sur les espèces migratrices*. Cette coopération régionale devrait notamment permettre l'extension du site au Parc des Volcans au Rwanda et au Parc de Magahinga en Ouganda. Ce site couvrirait ainsi l'ensemble des zones de répartition du Gorille de montagne qui deviendrait ainsi la pre-

mière espèce au monde dont toute la population bénéficierait de la protection de la *Convention du patrimoine mondial* ;

- La prise en compte de la situation socio-économique des populations vivant autour du site des Virunga (besoin en charbon de bois, nombre de poulaillers par familles, etc.) pour mieux évaluer la nature et l'ampleur des menaces qui guettent le site et organiser et orienter efficacement les patrouilles ;
- La création d'une banque de données de monitoring permettant de circonscrire le domaine vital des gorilles ;
- Le recours aux outils performants (cartographies digitales) associés aux études socio-économiques pour rechercher des solutions alternatives en faveur des populations locales riveraines du site et lutter contre la pauvreté.

Conclusions

- Parmi les 23 « Range States », la RDC est le seul pays qui abrite sur son territoire les trois espèces de grands singes présentes en Afrique, à savoir : les Gorilles, les chimpanzés et les bonobos ou Chimpanzés nains (*Pan paniscus*), cette dernière espèce étant endémique à la RDC. La dégradation et la fragmentation de leurs habitats ont conduit à la diminution drastique de leur nombre. Dans la région des Grands Lacs, les guerres et conflits armés successifs ont contribué à fragiliser la situation des Gorilles, mais le projet UNESCO-UNF a permis de la stabiliser dans le secteur Sud du Parc national des Virunga ;
- La RDC a été parmi les tout premiers pays africains à élaborer sa stratégie nationale de conservation des Grands Singes qui a été adoptée au cours d'un atelier national organisé par l'ICCN et le ministère de l'Environnement, de la conservation de la nature, des eaux et forêts ;
- La piste du tourisme (écotourisme) pour lutter contre la pauvreté doit malgré tout être explorée. La démonstration de l'ICCN sur le potentiel économique que recèle le « tourisme de gorilles » tend à laisser entrevoir la possibilité de concilier la gestion durable des ressources et la nécessité de répondre aux besoins essentiels des populations locales. Une politique de partage équitable des ressources aurait alors toutes les chances d'être couronnée de succès ;
- La particularité des grands singes réside dans le fait qu'ils sont dotés d'un spectre de caractéristiques qui font d'eux une espèce phare. En termes de patrimoine génétique, les grands singes partagent 96% de leur ADN avec les humains, cette proportion atteint même 98.4% pour les chimpanzés. De ce fait, les grands singes forment un pont unique entre les humains et le monde naturel et constituent, à ce titre, un indicateur-clé pour l'évaluation de l'état de conservation d'autres espèces associées et des écosystèmes en danger tels que les forêts tropicales.

Pourquoi sauver les grands singes ? Il y a d'abord une raison morale, un argument éthique et une notion de responsabilité, puisque si on laisse disparaître des espèces aussi proches de nous, il n'y aura plus aucun frein à la destruction des autres espèces. La deuxième raison, c'est qu'ils représentent des « espèces

phares » : en conservant les grands singes l'homme favorise aussi la conservation d'autres espèces associées et des habitats comme les forêts tropicales, écosystèmes qui jouent un rôle important dans la lutte contre l'effet de serre et les changements climatiques.

D. Les enjeux et défis de l'implication des communautés locales dans la conservation des sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC

Présentation générale de l'atelier et principales problématiques abordées

Ces 20 dernières années ont produit une succession de paradigmes de conservation des aires protégées. Le paradigme de *conservation pour les gens* a établi des parcs nationaux et réserves desquels les communautés locales étaient entièrement exclues et n'avaient aucun mot à dire quant à leur gestion. Dès les années 1980 le concept de *conservation avec les gens* a attiré l'attention des ONG de conservation et des bailleurs de fonds. Ce concept vise à considérer les communautés locales non pas comme des menaces externes aux aires protégées mais bien comme des acteurs potentiels desquels il faut obtenir le soutien. Ce concept a été la base de nombreux projets dits de *Conservation et développement intégrés* (PCDI) qui ont permis, avec des succès très divers, de concilier les préoccupations liées au développement et celles liées à la conservation. C'est au milieu des années 1990 que de nombreuses initiatives se référant au concept de *conservation par les gens* ont vues le jour. L'accent était désormais mis sur la responsabilité ou la coresponsabilité des populations locales dans la gestion des ressources naturelles.

Avec l'appui de nombreux bailleurs de fonds, les codes forestiers ont été modernisés dans le but de favoriser une co-gestion ou gestion participative des ressources, essentiellement ligneuses mais également fauniques et halieutiques.

Avec la remise en question partielle du succès des PCDI, les gestionnaires et acteurs de conservation ont dû, plus que jamais, se pencher sur le rôle des communautés locales dans la gestion des ressources naturelles en RDC. La RDC a ainsi connu différentes expériences d'implication des communautés locales essentiellement menées en périphérie des aires protégées. Ce nouveau rôle reconnu aux populations locales ainsi que le comportement de ces dernières ont eu d'autant plus d'importance, pendant les épisodes de conflits armés, que l'Etat n'était plus en mesure d'assurer ses fonctions de gestionnaire. *De facto*, l'avenir des sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC s'est retrouvé entre les mains des populations riveraines avec

un encadrement plus ou moins prononcé de certaines autorités locales et temporaires.

Si la nécessité d'impliquer les populations riveraines dans la conservation des aires protégées n'est plus guère à démontrer, force est de constater que les approches, par contre, varient beaucoup sans qu'il y ait pour autant de réponse unique. La réponse dépend en effet beaucoup de l'environnement physique et social. Des forêts denses humides de la Salonga et de la Réserve de faune à okapis relativement peu peuplées, en passant par les savanes arbustives de la Garamba ou les zones d'altitude densément peuplées et agricoles des Virunga et du Kahuzi-Biega, la RDC jouit d'une grande variété de situations qui fait de ce pays un terreau incomparable pour tester de nombreuses hypothèses et approches en matière de *conservation communautaire*.

La composante *Conservation communautaire* en temps de conflit a également été intégrée au programme UNESCO-UNF pour les sites du patrimoine mondial en RDC.

Ces initiatives ainsi que d'autres, initiées en temps de paix en RDC, fournissent un ensemble d'expériences qui méritent une attention particulière et aideront à l'établissement de systèmes d'implication des communautés locales dans la protection, voire la gestion des sites du patrimoine mondial et autres aires protégées de la RDC.

Objectifs de l'atelier

- (i) Partager les expériences en conservation communautaire découlant du programme UNESCO-UNF en RDC et d'autres initiatives similaires ;
- (ii) Etudier dans quelle mesure le cadre juridique actuel en RDC favorise ou non les initiatives de conservation communautaire ;
- (iii) Susciter des débats et des échanges d'idées sur l'implication des communautés riveraines des aires protégées dans leur gestion - à travers l'étude de quatre cas pratiques et d'une analyse du cadre juridique - et formuler des recommandations.

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Après quelques remarques introductives le modérateur de la session, Marc Languy, a cédé la parole aux intervenants suivants : Georges Bakongo (Projet PNKB/GTZ de Kahuzi-Biega), Richard Tshombe (WCS), Bisidi Yalolo (WWF) et Léonard Muamba Kanda (ministère de l'environnement de la RDC).

Expériences en conservation communautaire autour du Parc national de Kahuzi-Biega

La présentation de Georges Bakongo sur le Parc national de Kahuzi-Biega tendait à démontrer à quel point le succès du projet de l'ICCN/GTZ devait beaucoup à l'étude approfondie menée sur des catégories d'acteurs préalablement identifiés et sur leur implication dans l'exploitation des ressources naturelles du parc. Cette étude a permis d'arriver à la conclusion selon laquelle les intérêts des groupes cibles étaient plutôt économiques et individuels alors que la plupart des interventions proposées dans le cadre du projet avaient des dimensions sociales et communautaires. L'existence de cette dichotomie a eu pour conséquence, l'augmentation du nombre de revendications d'activités de développement dépassant largement les limites du projet de conservation (construction de route, électrification, pacification, etc.)

Par ailleurs, l'attitude des gestionnaires et du personnel de l'ICCN sur le site s'est révélée être un facteur primordial de la réussite ou de l'échec des activités de conservation communautaire.

Conservation et plan de zonage en zone tampon : le cas de la RFO

Selon Richard Tshombe, c'est grâce à des négociations longues et régulières avec les populations locales que le plan de zonage, préconisé dans le projet WCS/GIC, a pu être mis en place dans la Réserve de faune à okapis. L'appropriation du processus au niveau local et le transfert du pouvoir de décision du gouvernement central aux autorités locales ont également été à l'origine du succès des accords de délimitation conclus avec les communautés locales. Les points forts de ces accords sont qu'ils incluent un procès-verbal de bornage, la réglementation en vigueur dans les zones, ainsi que les droits et obligations de chaque partie. Par ailleurs, chaque accord fait l'objet d'un visa de la part de l'Administrateur de territoire concerné. Une des leçons tirées de cette expérience est que le succès aurait pu être plus large si la période d'exécution des projets n'était pas aussi limitée dans le temps. Les acteurs de terrain recommandent, par conséquent, que de tels projets communautaires soient uniquement initiés sur le long terme. Une autre de leur recommandation importante est de lier fortement un tel exercice de zonage à un plan de zonage national. En effet, en dépit de la participation de l'Administration locale, le projet ne s'insère dans aucun plan d'aménagement local, provincial ou national, ce qui limite largement sa portée.

Démarcation participative des limites du Parc national des Virunga : avec, sans, pour ou contre les communautés

L'exposé de Bisidi Yalolo a porté sur l'expérience de WWF au Parc national des Virunga dans le domaine de démarcation participative des limites. Ici, le point clé de la réussite a été la mise en place de commissions mixtes constituées de représentants du Gouvernorat, du cadastre, des autorités coutumières, de l'ICCN et de WWF et la formalisation des décisions par un procès verbal signé par tous. Un autre élément essentiel de réussite est à chercher dans le fait que le projet ICCN/WWF a été mis en place il y a plus de dix ans avec une importante composante d'éducation à l'environnement. Par ailleurs, la reconnaissance unanime du statut de Parc national a joué un rôle important dans le contexte délicat dans lequel se trouvait le site du patrimoine mondial. Bisidi Yalolo a précisé que les discussions qui ont suivi la démarcation pour négocier le retrait des agriculteurs illégaux ne portaient pas sur le caractère légal ou illégal de leur installation mais plutôt sur les mesures d'accompagnement nécessaires à leur retrait, une fois les limites définies et reconnues de tous. Cet exercice a déjà permis l'évacuation de plusieurs dizaines de milliers de personnes du Parc national des Virunga et laisse espérer un possible retour à l'intégrité du parc d'ici deux à trois ans.

Etablissement de ceintures vertes au Parc national des Virunga par les communautés riveraines : réussites et échecs, coûts et bénéfices

Dans son exposé, Samuel Boendi a expliqué comment les réticences mutuelles des populations locales et de l'ICCN ont pu être surmontées par l'utilisation de WWF PNVi comme interface et garant pour les deux parties. L'objectif était d'établir une relation de type gagnant-gagnant par laquelle l'ICCN gagnerait à voir les limites du PNVi délimitées physiquement et les communautés s'engageraient, en retour, à les respecter. Les populations locales, après s'être organisées en coopératives diverses, se sont vues autoriser l'accès à des terres situées dans la zone tampon du parc. Elles peuvent y cultiver des cultures non pérennes et sont autorisées à planter différentes espèces d'arbres et à conserver les bénéfices générés par cette activité. Les communautés concernées ont intégré le fait que la reconnaissance de leur droit à exploiter les arbres ne signifiait en aucun cas la concession de droits fonciers. Toujours dans le cadre du projet, les communautés riveraines du PNVi ont obtenu le droit de ramasser, certains jours de la semaine et sous le contrôle des gardes de l'ICCN, le bois mort dans l'enceinte même du parc. Tous les accords intervenus entre l'ICCN et les communautés locales ont été formalisés. Dans ce programme qui a abouti à la création de la ceinture verte autour du Parc national des Virunga, une grande partie du succès est due aux longues relations de collaboration qui existent entre le WWF et l'ICCN d'une part le WWF et les populations locales d'autre part.

Cadre légal et institutionnel congolais pour la gestion participative des ressources naturelles en 2004 : analyses et perspectives

Dans le cadre de sa présentation, Léonard Muamba Kanda est brièvement revenu sur la situation qui prévalait dans le domaine forestier avant la promulgation du code du même nom par la loi n°11/2002 du 29 août 2002. Avant cette date, les pouvoirs politiques ne s'étaient pas réellement penchés sur le secteur forestier. Au nombre des grandes nouveautés contenues dans le nouveau code forestier, il faut signaler « la participation et l'implication des acteurs tant publics que privés dans la gestion des forêts ». Par ailleurs, les populations vivant à l'intérieur ou à proximité du domaine forestier qu'il soit classé, protégé ou à production permanente, se voient reconnaître des droits d'usage forestier plus ou moins importants selon la catégorie du domaine forestier concerné.

Le nouveau code forestier intègre ainsi les coutumes et les traditions locales dans la gestion des ressources forestières. Néanmoins, ces coutumes et traditions locales ne sont validées que si elles ne sont pas contraires aux lois et à l'ordre public.

Selon Muamba Kanda, le grand défi sera de rendre le texte opérationnel en soutenant les communautés locales dans le processus administratif et dans les capacités à gérer durablement le massif forestier.

Priorités identifiées pour la mise en œuvre de la phase II du projet

- Bien identifier les acteurs et leurs rôles respectifs dans la politique de gestion des ressources naturelles ;
- Aboutir à une plus forte implication de l'ICCN pour en faire le véritable moteur des activités de conservation communautaire ;
- Mettre en place des partenariats sur 10–15 ans et non pas 3–4 ans ;
- Poursuivre les négociations sur le processus d'interprétation de la loi ;
- Echanger les expériences en matière de participation communautaires avec les pays voisins.

Au cours de la discussion qui a suivi les présentations, les principaux points abordés ont porté sur :

- Les modalités de gestion des ceintures vertes, en particulier les moyens d'encourager les populations locales à participer au reboisement, alors qu'elles ne sont pas reconnues propriétaires des arbres replantés. Pour emporter l'adhésion des populations concernées, il y a l'accès aux ressources et le système de compensation. Pour que les gens plantent, on leur donne en retour de la nourriture ;
- Le phénomène d'occupation dans les sites et les moyens d'y mettre fin : selon les acteurs locaux, une grande partie des terrains illégalement occupés a pu être récupérée. Il est cependant important de

différencier les types d'occupations. On recense, par exemple, les occupations dues à la pêche, aux guerres. La stratégie mise en place par l'ICCN pour lutter contre ce phénomène consiste principalement à définir les limites du parc, à les reconstituer et à les faire accepter à travers, notamment, la constitution de commissions mixtes au sein desquelles le cadastre et les autorités locales sont représentés. Dans certains cas, des zones de migration volontaire peuvent être proposées pour désengorger la périphérie du parc ;

- La volonté de faire des aires protégées un moteur de développement local face à la limitation des ressources écologiques. L'adoption de plans de gestion devrait aider à régler cette question. Par ailleurs, la population locale se voit malgré tout reconnaître le droit d'exploiter quelques ressources et de pratiquer des activités agricoles dans la zone tampon du parc ;
- La lutte contre l'exploitation du coltan dans la RFO.

Conclusions

La conservation communautaire représente un véritable défi dans la mesure où elle exige la mise en place d'un contrat entre adultes dans lequel le paternalisme d'antan n'a plus sa place. L'ensemble des exposés a démontré que les discussions étaient désormais menées avec des groupes ou des comités. Par ailleurs, certaines constantes sont revenues tout au long des présentations. Parmi celles-ci, le modérateur, Marc Languy, a retenu les suivantes :

- L'importance de bien identifier les acteurs et leurs rôles respectifs. Parmi ces acteurs, il faut accorder une attention particulière à ceux qui sont en charge des aires protégées, en l'occurrence l'ICCN et les ONG internationales qui l'appuient, mais aussi les différentes composantes des communautés locales qui se déclinent sous diverses formes, parfois hétérogènes. Les décideurs politiques et militaires ainsi que les opérateurs économiques font également parties de ces acteurs de premiers plan. L'identification de ces derniers et surtout de leur rôle et de leur influence n'est en général pas de la compétence de l'ICCN ou des projets mais nécessite de faire appel à des professionnels du domaine social ;
- L'importance de formaliser - voire dans certains cas de proposer un cadre légal - les comités mis en place avec les communautés et avec lesquels des accords vont être établis. Il faudra néanmoins veiller à ce que cette formalisation des comités ne soit pas purement artificielle ;
- L'institutionnalisation du rôle de l'ICCN, qui doit devenir le véritable acteur des projets en faveur des communautés locales. Les meilleurs projets n'auront pas beaucoup d'impact si les bénéficiaires sont perçus par les populations comme provenant d'un projet « étranger » ou d'une ONG internationale ou locale. L'évaluation des PICD en Ouganda voisin a démontré

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que le contenu des PICD importe relativement peu comparé au lien très fort qui doit être fait entre ces projets et l'aire protégée et les autorités en charge de cette dernière ;

- Les négociations : l'importance de négocier les rôles respectifs, tout en cadrant ces négociations dans un contexte légal qui lui, n'est pas négociable. On ne négocie pas seulement ce qui émane de la loi mais plutôt de son application. Ces négociations doivent se voir accorder le temps nécessaire pour assurer la durabilité mais surtout l'appropriation des accords qui en résultent par chacun des protagonistes ;
- Une image améliorée et/ou des bénéfices tangibles. Les projets de conservation et de développement intégrés peuvent avoir des impacts positifs au travers de deux mécanismes: d'abord et avant tout l'amélioration de l'image des autorités en charge des aires protégées en démontrant leur volonté de prendre en compte les aspirations des populations riveraines. Ceci peut parfois se réaliser par des interventions assez peu coûteuses de relations publiques ou des gestes symboliques. Le deuxième mécanisme se fait au travers de bénéfices économiques (ou environnementaux) tangibles résultant des projets. Pour ce faire cependant, il faut réaliser quel impact économique réel peut avoir un PCDI. Trop souvent, comme dans le cas du Parc national des Virunga, ces bénéfices sont réels mais fortement dilués dans une énorme population humaine, entraînant un impact individuel assez faible. Pour pouvoir se targuer d'avoir un réel impact

sur les conditions de vie des populations locales, les approches de conservation communautaire doivent avoir accès à des budgets plus proches des programmes de développement que ceux généralement moins généreux des programmes de conservation. Ceci vient du fait que la plupart des PCDI sont mis en place par des agences de conservation plutôt que de développement. D'où la nécessité d'établir des partenariats avec des agences de développement si l'on veut atteindre d'une part une excellence technique plus appropriée et d'autre part des budgets et donc des retombées économiques plus importantes.

- Couplage avec l'éducation à l'environnement pour favoriser les changements de comportements des populations riveraines ;
- Le nouveau code forestier de la RDC offre une grande opportunité pour mettre en place des systèmes de gestion participative des ressources naturelles. Certains textes d'application doivent encore être mis au point mais le cadre légal permet désormais d'utiliser les expériences récentes réalisées au Cameroun, en Ouganda, en Tanzanie et dans d'autres pays de la région. Il y aura cependant lieu de lancer un programme ambitieux d'information et de formation pour vulgariser le code et surtout doter les populations locales des capacités à mettre en place des systèmes de foresterie communautaire. Il faut noter que ces principes ne s'appliqueront pas aux sites du patrimoine mondial pour lesquels toute forme d'exploitation physique est officiellement prohibée.



Forum avec le secteur privé

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Présentation générale du forum

Les chiffres des investissements étrangers en RDC – estimés à plus de 2 milliards de dollars dans ce pays encore en situation de post-conflit – illustrent parfaitement la place qu’occupe le secteur privé dans l’économie congolaise et surtout le rôle qu’il est amené à jouer dans la stabilisation politique et sociale du pays. C’est ce constat qui a conduit l’UNESCO à organiser ce forum avec le secteur privé. L’idée était de réunir deux univers a priori antagonistes, celui des opérateurs privés et celui des acteurs de la conservation, pour les amener à échanger leurs points de vue sur la question du positionnement du secteur privé face aux impératifs de la sauvegarde du patrimoine mondial. Les représentants du secteur privé, des gouvernements, des agences intergouvernementales, des ONG et les gestionnaires des sites ont été invités à réfléchir sur les moyens de développer une meilleure coopération entre le monde des Affaires et la communauté des spécialistes de la conservation pour assurer la sauvegarde de l’exceptionnelle diversité biologique de la RDC.

Objectifs du forum

- Informer les entreprises sur les initiatives de l’UNESCO en matière de sauvegarde de la biodiversité et les sensibiliser aux questions de la gestion et de la conservation des sites du patrimoine mondial ;
- Informer les entreprises présentes en RDC sur l’importance des sites du patrimoine mondial pour la sauvegarde de la biodiversité et les inciter à s’engager aux côtés de l’UNESCO et de ses partenaires pour assurer leur protection ;
- Positionner l’ICCN, à la fois comme institution de premier plan pour la protection de la nature en RDC et comme interlocuteur privilégié du secteur privé, de la Banque mondiale et des sociétés financières internationales ;
- Forger des liens entre l’ICCN et la Fédération des Entreprises Congolaises (FEC) pour que soient prises en compte les priorités de chacun pour le bénéfice de tous.

Francesco Bandarin, Directeur du Centre du patrimoine mondial, a donné le ton de la journée en reconnaissant l’ampleur de la tâche à accomplir pour assurer la sauvegarde du patrimoine mondial de République démocratique du Congo. Il a reconnu l’impossibilité, pour l’UNESCO, de relever ce formidable défi sans l’aide d’un réseau de partenaires déterminés à travailler ensemble pour faire face aux défis à venir.

Présentation de la Convention du patrimoine mondial

Comme en écho à l’intervention du Directeur du Centre du patrimoine mondial, le Président du Comité du patrimoine mondial, Themba P. Wakashe, a insisté sur le fait que les biens du patrimoine mondial appartiennent

au patrimoine de l’humanité et que leur protection relevait, de ce fait, de la responsabilité partagée. A ce titre, l’humanité en était dépositaire pour la génération présente et pour celles à venir. En tant que composantes de l’ensemble de l’humanité, les entreprises investissant et opérant en République démocratique du Congo pouvaient légitimement être sollicitées pour prendre part à la sauvegarde de l’exceptionnelle richesse de la biodiversité de ce pays et de ses cinq sites du patrimoine mondial, tous inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril.

L’engagement de la Fondation des Nations Unies

envers la *Convention du patrimoine mondial* est né de la volonté de son fondateur, Ted Turner, d’agir concrètement pour la sauvegarde de la biodiversité. Le Vice-président en charge des finances à la FNU, David Carter, a expliqué le choix de la Fondation de s’engager aux côtés de l’UNESCO par le fait que la Convention du patrimoine mondial offrait à son organisation une plate-forme internationale facilitant ses interventions sur le terrain. Le partenariat formé par l’UNESCO et la FNU a été une formidable opportunité pour le secteur privé de prouver son engagement en faveur de la conservation des sites les plus importants au monde. Selon David Carter cette collaboration peut et doit dépasser le simple financement. Par ailleurs, les capacités de soutien des entreprises en nature, en réflexion et en disponibilité doivent être considérées comme de véritables valeurs ajoutées. Un véritable partenariat ne verra le jour que lorsque le secteur privé mobilisera ses ressources en faveur de la conservation.

Une série de présentations a été proposée aux représentants du secteur privé dont la plupart n’était pas familier de l’action de l’UNESCO et de ses partenaires en RDC. Les deux premières présentations ont porté sur les résultats de l’évaluation du projet UNESCO-FNU et sur le travail de l’ICCN. Les participants ont ainsi pu avoir une idée plus précise des données statistiques sur la faune, la flore et les paysages de la République démocratique du Congo, et en particulier sur les sites du patrimoine mondial et sur les menaces récurrentes qui pèsent sur la survie de nombreuses espèces rares.

Le constat est alarmant. Tout au long du conflit qui a embrasé le pays, les sites du patrimoine mondial ont été utilisés comme bases arrière à partir desquelles les groupes armés ont lancé leurs offensives. Ils se sont dans le même temps transformés en paradis pour commettre toutes sortes d’activités illégales comme l’extraction des ressources, le braconnage commercial, l’exploitation minière, la concession frauduleuse de terres sans oublier la pratique incontrôlée de la chasse, de la production du charbon de bois, de la pêche, etc.

Dans ce contexte, le projet UNESCO-FNU est apparu comme une réponse valable à la crise qui frappait les sites du patrimoine mondial isolés par la guerre et la segmentation de l’ICCN causée par les conflits.

Pour Jean-Pierre d'Huart, l'évaluateur du projet, les objectifs fixés ont été atteints mais le succès reste fragile et le maintien du soutien demeure essentiel. Les sites ne sont pas encore perdus mais la situation est grave.

En ce qui concerne le travail de l'ICCN, ce dernier doit plus que jamais poursuivre la mise en œuvre des priorités identifiées dans le cadre de l'évaluation du projet UNESCO-UNF et assumer ses responsabilités dans la gestion des aires protégées de la République démocratique du Congo. Il est par ailleurs invité à soutenir le développement de la recherche scientifique et de l'écotourisme qui sont également deux facteurs importants de conservation.

La présentation du travail de l'ICCN a permis d'évoquer le courage des gardes qui ont continué à travailler sur le terrain malgré l'extrême insécurité. Certains y ont d'ailleurs laissé leur vie. Eulalie Bashige, Administrateur général de l'ICCN, a rappelé les besoins en formation, en équipement, en armement. La question de la nécessité d'une concertation au niveau politique et militaire a de nouveau été abordée et est considérée comme une priorité. En conclusion, Mme Bashige a salué la forte coalition formée par l'ICCN et les ONG internationales partenaires sans laquelle la mise en œuvre du projet UNESCO-FNU n'aurait pu être réalisée.

Enfin, elle a souligné le caractère déterminant, pour le succès du projet, de la neutralité de la plate-forme internationale fournie par l'UNESCO.

A la présentation de la Convention du patrimoine mondial, du partenariat UNESCO-FNU et du travail de l'ICCN ont succédé des interventions principalement axées sur la relation entre le monde des Affaires et la sauvegarde de l'environnement.

La responsabilité environnementale des sociétés du secteur privé qu'appellent de leurs vœux les ONG de conservation est-elle réalisable ?

Publisher de l'International Herald Tribune (IHT), Michael Golden, en est en tout cas un fervent défenseur. Dans l'exercice de son activité, l'IHT a toujours maintenu le cap qui lui a été fixé à sa création à savoir contribuer à l'amélioration de la société à travers la créativité, le divertissement, la recherche et la diffusion d'une information de qualité. Promouvoir l'actualité et traiter des questions qui touchent au développement durable, participer à la stimulation du débat intersectoriel pour être en mesure de proposer des approches viables et représentatives sont, pour l'IHT, autant de façons de contribuer à l'amélioration de la société.

Par ailleurs, l'IHT, est consciente de sa propre responsabilité environnementale à tel point qu'il a amorcé un certain nombre de changements positifs allant dans le sens du respect de l'environnement. Ces changements se sont

notamment traduits par l'utilisation du papier recyclé et d'encre à base de soja.

En conclusion, Michael Golden a déclaré qu'il ne saurait y avoir de conflit entre le secteur privé et la conservation de la biodiversité quand l'entreprise prend conscience que le travail dans un environnement sain associé au souci de protéger le commerce national apporte une valeur ajoutée à son activité.

La question du financement durable est une autre préoccupation des organisations de conservation. Intervenant sur ce point, Melissa Moye, responsable financier pour le WWF à Washington, est convaincue que le recours à des mécanismes de financement novateurs peut être une solution pour obtenir des fonds en faveur de la conservation à condition de ne pas négliger les intérêts du monde des Affaires. Elle a illustré son propos par quelques exemples tirés des secteurs de la foresterie, de la boisson et même du secteur de la santé. Mme Moye a également cité le recours à l'allègement de la dette comme un moyen de contribuer au développement durable et généralisation de la certification qui, selon elle, joue un rôle très important. Les fonds de l'industrie forestière représentent aussi une source potentielle de financement. Revenant sur le partenariat, la représentante de WWF a énuméré quelques-unes des pistes que les entreprises qui investissent en République démocratique du Congo pourraient explorer si elles souhaitent s'engager dans la conservation. La philanthropie, le marketing ciblé, le sponsoring d'événements, les services pro bono et la diminution de leurs atteintes à l'environnement sont quelques-unes d'entre elles.

Réconcilier la conservation et le développement durable en République démocratique du Congo.

Invité à s'exprimer sur ce sujet Jefferson Hall, Directeur adjoint pour l'Afrique de WCS a commencé son exposé par l'énumération d'un certain nombre d'indicateurs à prendre en compte pour aborder cette question. Le nombre de personnes qui dépendent directement des ressources forestières (bois de chauffe et de construction, pêche, viande, fruits, miel, etc.) et le taux de croissance de la population du pays sont des indications importantes. Il est admis que plus de la moitié des 60 millions de Congolais dépend de la forêt et de ses ressources. Dans les 30 prochaines années, la population du pays devrait doubler avec un impact sur l'environnement plus important du fait de la construction de routes et de l'augmentation des activités industrielles et minières. Selon Jefferson Hall, si la population congolaise à venir devait fortement dépendre des produits de la chasse et du bois de chauffe, la conservation deviendrait tout simplement impossible. L'exposé de M. Hall a permis de prendre la mesure de l'impact direct et indirect de toute une série d'industries sur la conservation et des défis à relever dans la mise en place d'un développement durable en République démocratique du Congo.

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Les exposés présentés ont suscité de nombreuses questions et des discussions sur la place du secteur privé dans la sauvegarde de l'environnement. Kes Hilman-Smith, de l'IRF/ZSL a, par exemple, invité le secteur privé à se concentrer sur les problématiques abordées par M. Carter, en particulier sur l'entrée dans un partenariat qui permettrait aux ONG de conservation de bénéficier du savoir faire des entreprises en matière de gestion et de renforcement des capacités. Abdoulaye Ndiaye du PNUD/GEF a souhaité que les opportunités offertes par ce forum soient capitalisées à travers, notamment, la mise en place d'un Comité de suivi. Ce comité devra se réunir dans les délais les plus brefs pour définir le meilleur moyen d'avancer rapidement vers le partenariat souhaité par tous.

Du côté des entreprises privées, le représentant de Volcanoes Safari a indiqué que son Groupe était disposé à collaborer avec l'ICCN, le gouvernement et les ONG pour développer le potentiel de l'écotourisme de la RDC.

Le président de la Commission économique et financière au Parlement congolais, le Doyen Bakandeja qui avait précédemment évoqué les enjeux et les opportunités attachés à la République démocratique du Congo a précisé son propos en revenant sur les défis que l'ICCN et ses partenaires internationaux ont relevé pour préserver l'intégrité des sites du patrimoine mondial et la difficulté qu'ils ont eu à imposer une vision des choses sur le long terme au moment où la situation du pays exigeait d'apporter une réponse immédiate aux besoins et à la détresse des populations.

Les entreprises aussi ont été amenées à se battre pour créer des emplois, offrir à leurs employés des conditions de travail décentes et poursuivre leurs investissements tout au long de la période d'instabilité qui a touché la RDC. Elles ont malgré tout participé à la reprise économique du pays. Dans cette période troublée elles ont su faire preuve de responsabilité et ont travaillé dans la transparence. Au niveau du gouvernement, l'enjeu a consisté à concilier le respect de l'environnement et les impératifs économiques. A ce titre, l'initiative de l'UNESCO de réunir ces deux mondes pour leur permettre d'échanger leurs points de vue et de réfléchir sur les moyens de travailler ensemble mérite d'être saluée.

Le visage changeant du monde des Affaires congolais laisse entrevoir la possibilité d'un rapprochement entre le monde des Affaires et celui de la conservation. C'est ce que portent à croire les paroles du représentant de la Banque mondiale, Emmanuel Mbi. Selon M. Mbi, l'intérêt du secteur privé pour la RDC ne cesse de se confirmer. Cette tendance s'est accentuée avec la mise en place du Gouvernement de transition qui a permis de mettre fin à l'importante inflation que connaissait le pays et d'adopter de nouveaux codes dans les secteurs miniers et forestiers, deux secteurs qui attirent un grand nombre d'investisseurs. Cette reprise de l'économie congolaise a clairement établi le lien entre stabilité politique

et investissement. Elle démontre par ailleurs que seul le secteur privé est en mesure de générer l'investissement qui agit sur le retour à l'emploi. De ce fait, le secteur privé participe à la sécurisation du processus de paix. Le défi qui se pose dès lors au gouvernement congolais, aux institutions financières internationales et au secteur privé consiste à trouver des solutions pour une meilleure redistribution des produits de l'investissement. De même, l'ensemble de la communauté doit être en mesure de profiter des bénéfices provenant des bonnes pratiques environnementales.

Développer et mettre en pratique une politique de responsabilité des entreprises en RDC. Les industries minière et forestière captent à elles seules, une part importante des investissements effectués dans le pays. Adastra, société londonienne spécialisée dans les activités d'exploitation de bois et de cuivre, se veut un exemple de la pratique de la responsabilité des entreprises. Responsabilité qui passe en premier lieu par la prise en compte, dans l'exercice d'une activité industrielle, de l'environnement humain. Dans la région du Katanga où Adastra exerce son activité, la forte densité humaine est un facteur important de la pression exercée sur les ressources. Convaincue que toute tentative de réhabilitation des sites exploités serait vouée à l'échec si aucune autre mesure d'accompagnement n'était proposée, Adastra a décidé de mettre en place une politique respectueuse de l'environnement couplée d'une politique sociale volontariste. Kate Harcourt, responsable des questions sociales et environnementales à Adastra, a fait une description sincère de l'ampleur des défis auxquels son entreprise a du faire face pour mettre en œuvre cette politique à la fois sur le plan de la gestion des attentes locales et sur celui de la gestion des risques qu'une trop forte implication sociale du groupe pourrait induire.

Intervenant sur la question de l'artisanat minier en RDC, Jacqueline Damon, coordinatrice de l'Initiative pour l'Afrique centrale à l'OCDE, a brossé un tableau sombre de la situation des artisans miniers de l'Est du pays. Ces derniers vivent exposés à une constante insécurité créée par les rebelles, aux risques de vol, et dans un extrême dénuement à la fois alimentaire, médical et éducatif. Jacqueline Damon a insisté sur la nature hautement politique du type de commerce pratiqué dans la région et sur l'activité transfrontalier avec le Rwanda voisin. Elle s'est par ailleurs montrée critique envers le nouveau code minier qu'elle a décrit comme très coûteux et insuffisamment diffusé ce qui tend à démontrer la faiblesse des liens qui existent entre politique nationale et pratique locale.

L'intervention de Victor Kasongo Shomary, Administrateur délégué général du Centre d'évaluation, d'expertise et de certification des minéraux précieux (CEEC), a été l'occasion d'entendre **le point de vue d'un acteur de la communauté congolaise des affaires** opérant dans un secteur clé de l'économie congolaise. M. Kasongo a présenté son insti-

tution comme l'interface commerciale du gouvernement avec l'industrie minière (pour l'or, le diamant, l'améthyste, le saphir et le coltan). Son rôle consiste principalement à estimer les ressources, certifier les produits, évaluer la qualité et le prix du minerai. Il dispose également de pouvoirs réglementaires en matière de commercialisation des minerais. Victor Kasongo a brièvement évoqué les progrès réalisés en matière de commercialisation des minerais grâce à l'adoption du processus de Kimberley et à l'amorce du dialogue sur question de l'exploitation du coltan. Il a en outre insisté sur le nécessaire effort de coopération au niveau international pour mieux appréhender la complexité des questions d'ordre économique, politique, social et environnemental et parvenir à ce que les ressources génèrent des revenus et des bénéfices plutôt que le conflit.

Ne pas reconnaître la qualité d'interlocuteurs privilégiés au millier d'entreprises d'abatage de bois qui opèrent dans le Bassin du Congo est une erreur à ne pas commettre quand l'on traite des questions de conservation. Selon Jean-Jacques Landrot, Président de l'Association Technique Internationale des Bois Tropicaux (ATIBT), ces entreprises ont depuis longtemps intégré les vertus d'une gestion durable de l'abatage des bois tropicaux. Après avoir insisté sur la volonté de l'ATIBT de promouvoir le partenariat entre les entreprises et les ONG, M. Landrot a évoqué certaines difficultés auxquelles est confronté le secteur forestier : la pénurie de personnel qualifié et le niveau important de charges fiscales que doivent acquitter les industries du secteur.

L'ensemble des présentations a suscité de nombreuses questions et généré un vif débat parmi les participants. Filip Verbelen de Greenpeace a évoqué l'abatage illégal qui, selon lui, contribue directement à la poursuite du conflit. Il a proposé trois pistes-clés pour réformer ce secteur :

- L'adoption d'un nouveau cadre institutionnel mettant en place une procédure transparente d'attribution des concessions;
- Le renforcement du contrôle du respect de la réglementation ;
- Le contrôle des revenus provenant de l'industrie forestière. Le but étant de veiller à ce qu'ils intègrent bien l'économie nationale et ne disparaissent pas dans des tractations privées.

Jean-Pierre d'Huart a invité le Groupe Heritage Oil à s'exprimer sur ses prospections et ses investissements dans la zone de Semliki/Virunga. Michael Gulbekian, le président et CEO du groupe, a reconnu que sa société était effectivement active dans la zone et qu'elle avait l'intention d'y développer ses activités. Il a tenu à préciser qu'Heritage Oil agissait dans le strict respect des standards édictés par le gouvernement canadien et que l'entreprise s'est engagée à trouver des solutions pour concilier ses opérations avec la sécurité environnementale.

A l'issue des discussions, un panel intersectoriel a donné son point de vue et a fait part de ses observations. Emmanuel Mbi a indiqué que le fort intérêt suscité par la tenue de cet atelier tout comme sa fréquentation démontrait l'existence d'une volonté commune d'explorer de nouvelles voies de communication entre les deux mondes. En écho, Guy Debonnet, spécialiste du programme au Centre du patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO, a insisté sur le fait que l'ICCN et ses partenaires avaient besoin de canaux pour accéder au monde des Affaires. Eulalie Bashige est revenue sur les rôles respectifs de la Banque mondiale et du gouvernement dans la mise en œuvre des nouveaux codes et sur la nécessité de contrôler les activités illégales. Annette Lanjouw a, quant à elle, prôné une approche holistique des problèmes, plutôt qu'une focalisation sur des questions spécifiques et a souligné le besoin d'assurer la synergie entre les différentes activités et interventions initiées dans le domaine de la conservation.

Dans ses conclusions, Francesco Bandarin a remercié tous les participants pour leurs contributions à une journée riche en exposés et en débats stimulants, dans un forum d'un nouveau genre. Il s'est également félicité de la diversité des points de vue et a reconnu le besoin de trouver entre l'environnement et l'économie un équilibre durable qui permette aux deux entités de prospérer dans un climat de développement durable. Pour Francesco Bandarin, l'UNESCO et l'ensemble des parties concernées doivent rechercher un terrain commun d'entente, explorer les possibilités de collaboration et surtout s'engager en faveur des sites du patrimoine mondial.

Présentation spéciale



Congo : Nature et culture en République démocratique du Congo

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Musée royal de l'Afrique centrale

Conférence internationale pour la sauvegarde et la promotion du patrimoine congolais

Le Musée royal de l'Afrique centrale (MRAC) de Tervuren (Belgique) est un centre de recherche et de documentation consacré au passé et au présent des sociétés et des milieux naturels de l'Afrique et, plus particulièrement, de l'Afrique centrale. Ses collections, ses archives et son expertise scientifique relatives à la République démocratique du Congo ont acquis une renommée mondiale. Dans le cadre de sa mission permanente, il se fixe entre autres pour tâche de sensibiliser l'opinion aux problèmes de l'Afrique centrale et de contribuer au développement durable de cette région du monde. L'Institution compte quatre départements de recherche : « Anthropologie culturelle », « Zoologie africaine », « Géologie et Minéralogie » ainsi que « Histoire et Économie agricole et forestière ». L'ancien « Institut africain/CEDAF », dont les recherches portent sur l'histoire politique et économique de l'Afrique centrale des années cinquante à nos jours, a été intégré au MRAC sous la forme d'une nouvelle « Section d'Histoire du Temps présent ». La structure interne de l'Institution la rend donc particulièrement apte aux approches interdisciplinaires.

Aussi le Musée a-t-il accepté, à l'invitation de l'UNESCO, de mettre sur pied une exposition illustrant la diversité naturelle et culturelle de la RDC et les différentes formes qu'y revêtent les relations entre l'homme et la nature.

L'exposition a été présentée à Paris, au siège de l'UNESCO, à l'occasion de la conférence internationale que cette dernière a organisé les 16 et 17 septembre 2004. Cet événement a pour but de mobiliser des ressources financières pour la protection des cinq sites congolais inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial, à savoir : les parcs nationaux des Virunga, de la Salonga, de Kahuzi-Biega et de la Garamba ainsi que la réserve de faune à okapis. L'exposition a eu lieu à Paris du 9 au 26 septembre 2004 et ensuite à Tervuren, du 23 novembre 2004 au 2 octobre 2005. Elle reposera sur les collections et l'expertise scientifique du MRAC et sera centrée sur les relations dynamiques qu'entretiennent l'homme et la nature. Le fil conducteur en sera constitué de cinq thèmes : les parcs nationaux comme moyen de protection de la biodiversité, l'utilisation économique de cette diversité, la nature comme source de nourriture et de médicaments, la nature dans la culture immatérielle et, enfin, l'utilisation symbolique de la biodiversité¹.

Diversité naturelle et culturelle

La RDC est mondialement connue pour sa biodiversité² exceptionnelle. Aucun autre pays d'Afrique ne présente une profusion comparable d'espèces animales et végétales. Celle-ci s'explique tout d'abord par des facteurs zoogéographiques, tels que l'étendue et la position centrale du pays au sein du continent, ou la présence sur son territoire d'aires ayant constitué des centres d'évolution pour des espèces animales. Elle s'explique aussi par la variété des climats et des environnements : forêt tropicale, forêt claire, savane, mangrove, marécages, le tout parsemé de rivières, de montagnes, de volcans et de lacs. De nombreuses espèces animales y sont endémiques, et certaines sont menacées au niveau mondial.

Toutes vivent sur des territoires exigus et ont de grandes exigences quant à la qualité de leur environnement. Pour ce qui est du règne végétal, certaines parties de la forêt congolaise comptent parmi les derniers témoins au monde de la forêt pluviale équatoriale.

Outre la biodiversité, l'exposition présente aussi les relations originales et très diversifiées que l'homme entretient avec son environnement. L'homme dépend de la nature pour sa survie, mais il en utilise aussi des éléments à des fins symboliques et rituelles. Ces relations multiples débouchent sur une importante hétérogénéité des traits culturels qui marquent toutes les activités humaines. Cette diversité résulte de la créativité individuelle et collective ainsi que de choix qui ne sont contraints ni par les besoins vitaux de l'homme, ni par le milieu naturel.

La conservation et la protection de l'environnement présentent donc autant d'intérêt pour le peuple congolais que pour l'humanité toute entière. Dans la mesure où les populations y puisent des ressources aux fins les plus diverses, les richesses naturelles, en ce compris la biodiversité, représentent un facteur essentiel de développement durable. Seule une utilisation à bon escient peut en garantir la conservation à long terme³. Les conflits d'intérêts qui opposent les organisations protectrices de la nature et les populations vivant dans et aux alentours des Parcs montrent combien il est important que ces dernières soient impliquées dans les actions entreprises en matière de conservation, et que les connaissances qu'elles détiennent sur leur environnement naturel soient utilisées activement. Les autorités belges entendent contribuer à sensibiliser le public à cette problématique en finançant cette exposition qui vise à promouvoir une meilleure connaissance de ce patrimoine unique au monde et, plus particulièrement, des cinq sites de la RDC qui font partie du patrimoine mondial en péril. Leur conservation constitue le thème central de l'événement international qui se tiendra à Paris.

Une diversité multiple

La diversité en RDC est illustrée par douze grandes cartes qui fournissent des informations sur les quelque deux cents langues congolaises locales, les quatre langues nationales, les trente-deux parcs nationaux et réserves et leur végétation, le réseau fluvial, l'extraordinaire diversité des espèces d'oiseaux, le relief et l'utilisation des terres. Présentées sous la forme de mosaïques photographiques, deux de ces cartes reflètent la diversité créative.

Si chacune des cartes révèle un aspect de la richesse naturelle et culturelle de la RDC, la superposition de deux ou plusieurs d'entre elles apporte un niveau supplémentaire d'information. Ceci est rendu possible par la technologie GIS (Geographical Information System)⁴, et est porté sur grand écran.

À travers ses collections, le MRAC dévoile une fraction de ce patrimoine exceptionnel qu'est celui de l'Afrique centrale. Par ailleurs, il a été fait appel à une documentation et une expertise extérieure, le Musée entretenant depuis longtemps

un réseau de relations avec des chercheurs et des institutions du monde entier. Dans le catalogue, on trouvera cinq articles écrits par des membres congolais de ce réseau sur des sujets qui s'inscrivent dans la thématique de l'exposition.

Les parcs nationaux comme moyen de protection de la nature

La simple délimitation des parcs nationaux constitue en soi une intervention culturelle dans la nature. Mais pour beaucoup, c'est le meilleur moyen de préserver la biodiversité menacée par la surexploitation humaine. L'intérêt de cette exceptionnelle biodiversité a été reconnu par le gouvernement de la RDC qui a créé un réseau d'aires protégées couvrant 180 000 km², soit près de 8 % du territoire national. Ces aires, dont font partie les cinq sites inscrits au patrimoine mondial, sont gérées par L'Institut congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN). Mme Eulalie Bashige, administrateur délégué général de l'ICCN, et Guy Debonnet, spécialiste des programmes du patrimoine naturel au Centre du patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO, présentent ces cinq sites qui figurent parmi les plus remarquables au monde. Parmi les espèces animales endémiques de la RDC, citons le paon congolais, l'okapi, le chimpanzé nain Bonobo ainsi que la genette aquatique, moins connue. Mais la biodiversité ne se limite pas aux grands animaux. Elle se manifeste aussi dans la profusion d'espèces de végétaux, de mollusques, d'oiseaux, de poissons, d'insectes, de chenilles, de coléoptères et même de virus et de bactéries⁵. À ce jour, nombre de ces espèces n'ont toujours pas été décrites scientifiquement. L'exposition aborde également l'histoire de ces parcs nationaux, notamment celle du Parc national des Virunga créé dès 1925 sous le nom de « Parc Albert ».

Outre leur richesse naturelle, les sites peuvent aussi receler des témoignages de cultures matérielles et immatérielles. Ainsi a-t-on retrouvé, dans les sédiments des rives de la Semliki, qui coule dans le Parc des Virunga, des traces d'anciennes populations de pêcheurs. C'est non loin de là, dans un site datant de 20 000 ans, que des fouilles ont exhumé l'os gravé d'Ishango que d'aucuns considèrent comme la manifestation la plus ancienne de pensée mathématique⁶.

Dans sa contribution, l'anthropologue Shaje a Tshiluila commente l'existence, dans la région de Kinshasa, de lieux et de bois sacrés que leur valeur spirituelle protège.

Les relations entre l'homme et la nature sont rarement équilibrées. La biodiversité est constamment menacée par une exploitation non durable de la nature, aiguillonnée par des intérêts commerciaux. L'article de Mano Ntayingi aborde le problème crucial du braconnage dans les zones protégées. Lorsque les Parcs ont été délimités, il a été tenu compte du facteur démographique (occupation humaine réduite ou absente) afin de limiter au mieux l'impact humain sur l'environnement. Aujourd'hui, la pression démographique a considérablement augmenté et les réserves de chasse, qui avaient été créées comme zones tampon autour des Parcs, ne remplissent plus leur rôle. L'auteur voit une solution pos-

sible au braconnage dans une gestion participative qui concilierait les intérêts des populations locales, des autorités et des ONG chargées de préserver la nature. Mais, pour réussir, ce type de projet doit nécessairement offrir des alternatives économiques aux populations concernées.

La nature comme source de subsistance et réserve économique

Pour survivre, l'homme a besoin de la nature. Fruits et plantes sauvages, insectes, champignons, miel, gibier et poisson complètent son alimentation quotidienne. Les choix que l'homme opère parmi ces ressources, les techniques de cueillette, de chasse et de pêche, les modes de préparation sont extrêmement divers. En période de crise économique et sociale, les aliments sauvages sont une alternative essentielle à l'alimentation de base, faite de plantes cultivées et d'animaux domestiques. Mais ce que l'homme accepte ou refuse de manger ne dépend pas seulement de ce que son environnement lui offre, mais aussi de préférences déterminées culturellement.

Les plantes médicinales sauvages assurent en outre les soins élémentaires en médecine humaine et vétérinaire. Dans sa contribution, le professeur Penge On'okoko, pharmacologue spécialisé dans les plantes médicinales, décrit l'état de la recherche dans ce domaine en RDC. Il montre notamment comment la diarrhée, une affection endémique, est combattue localement à l'aide de plantes médicinales. L'exposition montre une sélection de ces plantes et le visiteur pourra consulter des recettes de préparation.

L'exploitation du bois tropical en RDC est souvent associée à l'exportation d'essences tropicales pour la construction et l'ébénisterie. Mais les quantités consommées sur place sous forme de bois de chauffage, de sciage ou de charbon de bois sont énormes. Le bois est un matériau renouvelable ; son exploitation durable est cependant possible pour autant qu'on suive un plan de gestion forestière responsable.

Le sous-sol congolais regorge aussi de minerais tels que l'or, le cobalt, l'étain, le coltan, le germanium, le diamant, l'argent, le cuivre etc. Et des matières premières telles que calcaire, silicates, tourmaline, kaolin et granulats sont exploitées à fins industrielles. Au contraire du bois, ces biens ne sont pas renouvelables et leur exploitation dépend fortement du marché. Lorsqu'elle se fait à grande échelle, sans planification et sans respect pour l'environnement, cette exploitation, quel qu'en soit l'intérêt économique, peut entraîner des dégâts catastrophiques pour la nature. Ici encore, seule une gestion responsable peut sauvegarder l'équilibre écologique entre l'homme et la nature.

L'alphabet de la nature

Plus de 200 langues sont parlées en RDC. Mais encore, des recherches plus approfondies comme celle d'André Motingea Mangulu montrent que, dans une région comme la Cuvette centrale, l'unité apparente de l'ensemble linguis-

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tique « Mongo » masque une diversité beaucoup plus grande. Dans un tel milieu multilingue, les 4 langues nationales – le tshiluba, le kikongo, le lingala et le kiswahili – facilitent la communication au niveau national, tant sur le plan administratif que dans l'enseignement. Mais les quelque 200 langues locales véhiculent aussi un immense savoir populaire sur l'environnement. Dans ces langues, les dénominations des plantes et des animaux traduisent une connaissance nuancée et détaillée de l'écologie, de la biologie et de l'utilité des ressources animales et végétales.

Souvent, les savoirs sont transmis oralement. Certains objets matériels témoignent du transfert des connaissances. La « corde à proverbes lega » en est un exemple. Des objets miniatures suspendus à une corde symbolisent chacun un ou plusieurs proverbes qui sont récités sur la place publique où la corde est exposée. Lorsqu'un proverbe est contesté par l'assistance, le récitant doit justifier son interprétation par un conte.

La nature, un répertoire symbolique

L'homme ne se contente pas d'exploiter la nature pour satisfaire ses besoins élémentaires. Il l'utilise aussi pour remplir des fonctions symboliques. Des matières végétales ou animales sont utilisées dans des contextes déterminés pour leur valeur métaphorique qui exprime ou renforce certains concepts essentiels au fonctionnement social et politique.

Dans la société bwami des Lega, l'éléphant, en tant qu'animal grégaire, symbolise l'harmonie sociale. Les objets initiatiques et les emblèmes du plus haut grade de la société sont fabriqués à partir de son ivoire, de son cuir et des crins de sa queue. Dans de nombreuses sociétés d'Afrique centrale, le léopard se voit allouer une valeur particulière. Animal carnivore, il suscite la crainte par sa force et sa vélocité ; chasseur nocturne, il est associé au monde surnaturel. Dès lors, il est un symbole fort de la chefferie et du pouvoir politique. Sa peau, ses dents et ses griffes sont des attributs du chef. Sa fourrure tachetée connote son appartenance ambivalente au monde des vivants et des morts, tout comme le chef assure un rôle de médiateur entre ses sujets, les ancêtres et les esprits.

Chez les Mongo, le métal est la matière première d'ornements attestant la richesse et le prestige de celui qui les porte. Dans la région des lacs Maï-Ndombe et Ntumba, les chefs exhibent dans leurs coiffures de grands disques de cuivre qui témoignent de leur statut élevé. Les plantes aussi ont des valeurs symboliques. Dans le Mayombe, les sculpteurs représentent le chef tenant entre les dents une racine de *mukuisa* (*Costus lucanusianus*). La représentation d'une personne capable de supporter l'amertume de la plante signale les capacités exceptionnelles du chef. Le pouvoir évocateur de ces représentations dépend évidemment des connaissances qu'ont les membres d'un groupe particulier de leur environnement. La valeur symbolique

des ces éléments naturels est illustrée dans l'exposition par des objets sélectionnés au sein des collections du Musée. Certains d'entre eux n'ont qu'une valeur documentaire, mais d'autres sont de véritables œuvres d'art en raison de l'invention, de l'expressivité et de l'habileté technique dont a fait preuve leur créateur, leur conférant une valeur esthétique irréfutable et universelle.

Une rencontre et un nouveau départ

L'exposition a présenté quelques facettes de la biodiversité et de la géodiversité de la RDC, ainsi qu'un aperçu des multiples relations que l'homme entretient avec la nature. Les thèmes abordés se prêtent à une exploration plus approfondie que des activités périphériques ont proposées lors de la présentation de l'exposition à Tervuren. Le grand public a pu avoir accès aux résultats de recherches ainsi qu'à des banques de données. L'information a été complétée par une série de représentations cinématographiques ainsi que par des productions culturelles congolaises. Enfin, le Musée a souhaité organiser à cette occasion des forums de discussion où des groupes, aux intérêts parfois divergents, ont eu l'occasion de débattre de problèmes spécifiques comme la gestion forestière durable. Le MRAC a voulu provoquer au sein de l'opinion publique, locale et internationale, une prise de conscience du caractère irremplaçable du patrimoine congolais. Il a également souhaité plus particulièrement susciter un dialogue constructif entre partenaires belges et congolais. L'apport d'informations nouvelles, la promotion et l'encouragement d'échanges durables entre les différents acteurs devraient permettre au Musée d'assumer un rôle de soutien à la prise de décision politique. Ainsi, l'exposition aura pu être non seulement un lieu de rencontre, mais aussi un nouveau point de départ vers une future et fructueuse coopération.

1. Les cinq thèmes sont présentés, seuls ou combinés, dans une série de modules. Ceux-ci seront au nombre de trente à Paris et d'une vingtaine à Tervuren, avec références aux collections permanentes.

2. Selon l'article 2 de la Convention sur la Biodiversité (Sommet mondial de Rio de Janeiro, 1992), il faut entendre par biodiversité « la variabilité des organismes vivants de toute origine y compris, entre autres, les écosystèmes terrestres, marins et autres écosystèmes aquatiques et les complexes écologiques dont ils font partie ; cela comprend la diversité au sein des espèces et entre espèces ainsi que celle des écosystèmes » (<http://www.biodiv.org/convention/articles.asp>).

3. Selon le même article 2 (v. note 2 ci-dessus), il faut entendre par utilisation durable « l'utilisation des éléments constitutifs de la diversité biologique d'une manière et à un rythme qui n'entraînent pas leur appauvrissement à long terme, et sauvegardent ainsi leur potentiel pour satisfaire les besoins et les aspirations des générations présentes et futures. »

4. Le GIS (Geographical Information System) est un ensemble d'instruments logiciels permettant de porter des données géographiques sur carte et de les combiner.

5. Andy Purvis et Andy Hector, « Getting the Measure of Biodiversity », *Nature* 405 (6783), 11 mai 2000, pp. 212-219.

6. Le montage multimédia que l'on peut voir dans l'exposition a été réalisé par l'Institut royal des Sciences Naturelles de Belgique, Bruxelles. Il livre un aperçu de l'histoire du site, décrit son environnement et présente l'énigme de l'os gravé d'Ishango.

Annexes

Conférence internationale pour la sauvegarde et la promotion du patrimoine congolais

Allocution de S. Exc. M. Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma, Vice-Président de la République démocratique du Congo, 16 septembre 2004

Devant cette auguste assemblée, nous sentons tressailler au plus profond de nous l'écho de la grande espérance qui a toujours habité notre pensée ; l'espérance qu'un jour finira tout de même par venir, où la coalition puissante des forces nationales et internationales de l'esprit, de l'intelligence et de la morale se substituera à cette autre coalition qui, des décennies durant, a cru pouvoir envisager l'avenir de l'humanité sans une partie d'elle-même et dans la mutilation des principes et valeurs qui forgent son unité.

C'est dire en quoi cette Table Ronde est ce message fort, dont notre Pays avait grandement besoin en ce moment fort de son histoire.

Comment ne pas y voir la force de l'espérance qui habite chacun de nous, la marque de solidarité, l'accompagnement de notre peuple dans ses efforts de reconstruction et, par-dessus tout, de réarmement moral. Ces voix congolaises éteintes, emportées par le monstrueux ; mais ces voix congolaises, écrivant de leur sang, ce serment de liberté de tout un peuple pour que survive la Patrie !

Il est heureux que cette Table Ronde ait lieu ici, à l'UNESCO, la plus belle utopie créatrice que l'homme ait créée, où se concentrent et fleurissent les solidarités intellectuelles et morales de l'humanité.

Excellences Messieurs les Ministres,
Honorables Députés et Sénateurs de la République démocratique du Congo,
Monsieur le Directeur général de l'UNESCO,
Mesdames et Messieurs les Ambassadeurs,
Mesdemoiselles, Mesdames et Messieurs,
Distingués Invités,

C'est avec un réel plaisir que nous avons l'honneur de prendre la parole du haut de cette tribune, au nom de Son Excellence Monsieur le Président de la République démocratique du Congo, le Général Major Joseph Kabila, qui n'eussent été les contraintes liées à ses charges d'Etat, aurait été heureux d'être parmi vous ce jour.

En ce moment crucial, où le peuple congolais vit dans la grisaille de la réflexion plutôt que dans la lumière de la spontanéité, j'aimerais, dès l'abord, saluer ici la présence généreuse de tous ces éminents défenseurs de la nature et de la culture de notre Pays.

Et, c'est l'occasion pour nous de rendre l'hommage de la reconnaissance de la Nation à l'UNESCO, qui a su accompagner notre Pays et le soutenir dès le seuil de son accession à la souveraineté internationale.

La mémoire s'efface pour qu'il faille rappeler quelques faits saillants :

Déjà en 1960, c'est un Pays privé de tout son corps enseignant de l'ex-métropole coloniale, qui n'a eu de salut que grâce au concours de l'UNESCO, qui a mobilisé les compétences nécessaires de par le monde et créé ce qui constitue encore de nos jours l'un des fleurons du Système éducatif du Pays, l'Institut Pédagogique National, « l'IPN », en sigle.

En 1992, les Etats Généraux de l'Education organisés par l'UNESCO à Kinshasa donnèrent au Pays une réflexion renouvelée sur son Système éducatif, en mettant en évidence l'indispensable relation entre le savoir et le savoir-faire.

Dans le domaine qui nous intéresse ici ce jour, ce fut en 1999 la création par l'UNESCO, avec le concours du PNUD, de l'Ecole Régionale post universitaire d'Aménagement et de gestion Intégrés des Forêts et Territoires tropicaux, « ERAIFT », en sigle.

Et dire que toutes ces réalisations se sont faites dans un climat politique et social bien tendu.

L'UNESCO, bien sûr, mais d'autres partenaires en développement aussi, dont le concours ami n'a pas fait défaut à la République : Le Royaume de Belgique, les Etats-Unis d'Amérique, la France, l'Italie, le Japon, la Fondation des Nations Unies et bien d'autres encore.

De même, d'éminentes Organisations faitières, qui ont donné et qui donnent force morale et matérielle à l'Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature, « ICCN », en sigle : le Fonds Mondial pour la Nature (WWF), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), le Programme International de Conservation des Gorilles (PICG), International Rhino Foundation, Gilman International Conservation et la Société Zoologique de Milwaukee.

Voilà qui décline la solidarité internationale de l'humanité au sens le plus profond de l'espoir.

L'Afrique n'y aura pas été absente. Et c'est pour nous un motif de satisfaction de saluer ici la présence de Monsieur Henri Djombo, Ministre de l'Economie Forestière et de l'Environnement du Congo-Brazzaville, mandaté à cette Table Ronde par son collègue du Gabon, Président de la Conférence des Ministres en charge des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale, « COMIFAC », en sigle.

Sa présence, comme celle de Monsieur Themba P. Wakashe, Président du Comité du patrimoine mondial, confère au sujet sa dimension éminemment africaine.

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A eux tous, nous exprimons l'amitié et la fraternité du peuple Congolais.

Excellences,
Mesdames et Messieurs,

Le titre même de cette Conférence Internationale, à savoir : « *Promouvoir le Patrimoine congolais : lier diversité biologique et culturelle* » souligne tous les enjeux de cette Table Ronde pour un Pays riche en diversités biologiques et culturelles.

S'agissant de la diversité biologique, la République démocratique du Congo abrite le plus important massif forestier d'Afrique, avec près de 10.000 espèces végétales, et regorge d'espèces animales emblématiques et phares comme les Eléphants, les Gorilles de montagne et de basse altitude, les Chimpanzés, les Bonobos et les Okapis, ces deux dernières espèces y étant totalement endémiques.

Il y a lieu de souligner que le développement de la conscience écologique traditionnelle de la République démocratique du Congo l'a amenée à participer, déjà dès les années 70, au Réseau Mondial des réserves de biosphère du Programme de l'UNESCO sur l'Homme et la Biosphère, pour avoir créé trois Réserves de Biosphère, à savoir : Luki, au Bas Congo ; Yangambi, à la Province Orientale et Lufira, au Katanga.

En outre, il sied de rappeler que la République démocratique du Congo est l'un des premiers Pays membres de l'UNESCO à avoir adhéré à la Convention sur la protection du patrimoine mondial culturel et naturel, en l'ayant ratifiée déjà en 1974, après son adoption par la Conférence générale de l'UNESCO à sa 17^e Session tenue à Paris en Novembre 1972.

A ce jour, au titre de sa participation à l'effort mondial de conservation de la diversité biologique, la République démocratique du Congo a inscrit cinq sites sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial naturel et culturel, à savoir : les parcs des Virunga, de Garamba, de Kahuzi –Biega et de la Salonga, ainsi que la Réserve de faune à okapis.

En dépit de la forte dégradation de l'environnement de la République démocratique du Congo à cause des guerres qu'elle a connues et des mouvements subséquents des populations, ces sites gardent encore l'essentiel de leur capital écologique et cela, en grande partie grâce aux efforts, déjà salués, de l'UNESCO et des partenaires en développement, à travers divers projets sur la conservation de la biodiversité en période des conflits en République démocratique du Congo.

Voilà pourquoi, l'enjeu majeur de cette Conférence est de « mobiliser les esprits » en vue de lancer une vaste coalition, un véritable réseau impliquant les différents partenaires ici présents, à qui nous lançons un vibrant appel afin de se joindre aux efforts de l'UNESCO, de la Belgique, de la France, du Japon et de la Fondation des

Nations Unies pour la préservation du patrimoine naturel et culturel congolais.

La diversité culturelle n'est pas en reste : quatre cent cinquante ethnies, qui sont autant de minorités ethniques confèrent à la République son harmonie, sa créativité et son inventivité culturelles.

La République démocratique du Congo pourra ainsi constituer un cas d'école en matière de stratégie à suivre pour la sauvegarde et la réhabilitation de la diversité culturelle et biologique en situation de post-conflit.

Excellences
Mesdames et Messieurs,

Pour relever ce défi, la République démocratique du Congo suggère aux partenaires qui vont se joindre tous, nous l'espérons, à l'UNESCO et aux autres partenaires en développement, les axes d'actions prioritaires à mener ci-après :

1. Le renforcement des capacités, notamment des gestionnaires des sites.

Dans ce domaine, l'Ecole Régionale post-universitaire d'Aménagement et de gestion Intégrés des Forêts et Territoires tropicaux, « ERAIFT », en sigle, mérite d'être soutenue davantage, comme un Centre d'excellence, notamment dans le cadre du NEPAD. En effet, cette Ecole, qui forme des hauts cadres Africains « in situ », suivant une approche systémique et multidisciplinaire, reconnue par le MAB, répond parfaitement aux besoins de l'Afrique de disposer d'un nouveau type de spécialistes capables d'une vision globale et intégrée des problèmes de développement et familiarisés à l'utilisation des outils d'aide à la décision.

Cette école, faut-il le souligner, a été inscrite au Budget annexe et bénéficie du soutien du Gouvernement et ce, malgré la modicité de nos ressources budgétaires.

Il y a aussi l'élargissement de la participation des jeunes à la promotion et à la préservation du patrimoine mondial, dans le cadre du projet éducatif des Ecoles associées de l'UNESCO, projet auquel la République démocratique du Congo participe activement depuis 1994.

2. La diversification du Réseau des sites du patrimoine mondial en République démocratique du Congo.

La République dispose des sites culturels d'une valeur universelle exceptionnelle, au même titre que les sites naturels qui font l'objet de la présente Table Ronde. Nous citerons, par exemple : les grandes réalisations artistiques et architecturales ainsi que de nombreux lieux de mémoire ci-après : le Palais Royal Kuba, la ville historique de Boma, les marchés d'esclaves à Nyangwe et à Kasongo, les sites

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préhistoriques de Buru et Matupi ainsi que les Grottes de Mbanza-Ngungu.

Voilà pourquoi nous invitons l'UNESCO à poursuivre les efforts amorcés, il y a quelques années, en vue d'aider notre Pays à préparer les dossiers d'inscription de ces sites culturels sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial.

Nous en appelons également à l'assistance du Centre du patrimoine mondial, pour la réalisation d'une étude visant à identifier d'autres sites culturels d'une grande valeur universelle.

3. L'organisation d'un Forum National sur la mise en œuvre des principes fondamentaux de la diversité culturelle

Il s'agit, en réalité de la consolidation de la paix et de l'unité nationale, pour laquelle le soutien de l'UNESCO et d'autres partenaires en développement est requis. Par ailleurs, un autre projet important s'inscrit dans ce cadre. Il s'agit de la construction d'un grand Palais de la Culture en vue de porter plus haut la flamme culturelle de notre Pays, la République démocratique du Congo.

4. La création de nouveaux sites du patrimoine mondial naturel et de nouvelles Réserves de Biosphère

En effet, outre les cinq sites du patrimoine existant actuellement en République démocratique du Congo, il y a lieu d'attirer l'attention de Communauté internationale sur les Parcs nationaux de l'Upemba et de Kundelungu, au Katanga, qui font figure de « parents pauvres », alors qu'ils renferment de merveilleux écosystèmes de forêt claire à *Brachystégia laurentii* et l'extraordinaire Chute de la Lofoi, de 347 mètres d'un seul tenant, une vraie merveille géologique !

Nous sommes convaincus que ces sites méritent leurs places dans le Réseau Mondial des Réserves de Biosphère et sur la Liste des sites du patrimoine mondial naturel. En outre, la Réserve de faune à okapis, avec ses refuges du Pléistocène et l'existence des « Mbuti », qui ont accumulé un savoir-faire traditionnel dans la relation : mode de vie - mode de production - milieux, mérite bien le statut de Site mixte culturel et naturel.

5. La création de la « Fondation Internationale du Parc national de la Salonga », figurant dans les recommandations du Séminaire organisé conjointement par l'UNESCO/MAB, la FAO, l'ACCT et l'ICCN en 1989 à Iyonda, en République démocratique du Congo.

Cette Fondation aura pour mission essentielle de pérenniser, au bénéfice de la Communauté internationale, ce vaste écosystème forestier dense et humide de 3.600.000 hectares.

6. Il doit enfin être envisagé la réponse urgente à la menace d'extinction qui pèse sérieusement sur les Rhinocéros blancs du Nord de la République démocratique du Congo

En effet, le nombre de ces animaux préhistoriques, qui ne vivent plus que dans le Parc national de la Garamba sur cette planète, baisse continuellement et cela, après tant d'efforts fournis dès 1985 par le Consortium ICCN/UNESCO/WWF/UICN/Société Zoologique de Frankfort qui ont permis leur remontée biologique.

A cet égard, nous nous félicitons d'ores et déjà des contacts que le Réseau des Aires Protégées d'Afrique Centrale, « RAPAC », en sigle, a pris avec l'Union Européenne pour mobiliser des Fonds extra -budgétaires afin de répondre tant soit peu à l'appel pressant de l'Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature, « ICCN », en sigle.

Excellences,
Mesdames et Messieurs,

Nous venons de retracer, à l'intention de cette Table Ronde des Bailleurs de Fonds que vous constituez, les principaux axes d'actions prioritaires en faveur des sites du patrimoine mondial que notre Pays abrite aujourd'hui.

Ce faisant, quelles que puissent être nos difficultés, ce n'est point un Pays à genoux qui s'adresse à vous, mais un Pays réellement debout.

Nous pouvons donc vous rassurer de l'engagement fort de notre Pays sur le chemin de la stabilité et de la démocratie, facteurs indispensables à l'œuvre de reconstruction nationale, dont fait partie intégrante la réhabilitation des sites du patrimoine mondial naturel et culturel de notre Pays.

Voilà pourquoi nous nous engageons solennellement :

1. à constituer un Fonds fiduciaire pour la réhabilitation des sites, dont la hauteur sera déterminée dans le cadre de l'élaboration du Budget 2005 ;
2. à agir activement pour l'évacuation des troupes en armes et autres populations qui envahissent les parcs et contribuent à leur destruction;
3. à contribuer à la préservation et à la restauration de l'intégrité des sites du patrimoine mondial dans notre Pays;
4. à assurer le paiement des salaires des agents qui travaillent dans ces sites ;
5. à faciliter le fonctionnement des institutions publiques de gestion des sites, comme l'Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature "ICCN", en sigle;
6. à faire respecter l'intégrité des sites et à tenir compte des préoccupations des populations riveraines des aires protégées à travers les projets de développement et de reconstruction du Pays, qui doivent connaître leur pleine participation;

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7. à répartir équitablement les retombées financières de l'écotourisme en faveur des populations riveraines des aires protégées.

Nous sommes heureux d'annoncer ici et solennellement l'organisation à Kinshasa, au premier semestre 2005, d'un grand événement à portée internationale, qui concerne la première Réunion Inter Gouvernementale sur le Partenariat pour la Sauvegarde des Grands Singes, « GRASP », en sigle, un projet conjoint PNUE/UNESCO.

Nous manquerions d'élégance vis-à-vis du Gouvernement ougandais, qui avait aussi souhaité abriter ces assises, sans le remercier chaleureusement d'avoir retiré sa candidature, au profit de notre Pays, qu'il a fermement soutenue.

Voilà pourquoi, nous invitons solennellement l'Ouganda à bien vouloir se joindre à nous dans le Comité préparatoire de cette grande Rencontre.

Excellences,
Mesdames et Messieurs,

Des hommes et des femmes amoureux de la nature et de la culture ont apporté à la science leur connaissance de la préservation de ces sites du patrimoine mondial.

Nous citerions en premier lieu le Docteur Jacques Verschuren de l'Institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles de Belgique, premier Directeur général de l'Institut des Parcs Nationaux du Congo, de 1969 à 1975.

Dès le lendemain de l'accession de notre Pays à la souveraineté internationale en 60, alors que l'autorité coloniale s'en allait, ce héros de la conservation de la nature, biologiste des Parcs nationaux de l'époque, resta en poste à la station de Rutshuru au Parc des Virunga, où il continua à former les Congolais.

En 1968, il tint une conférence de presse à Bruxelles, appuyé de son célèbre livre « Mourir pour les Eléphants », qui fit autorité en la matière et mobilisa la Communauté internationale ainsi que les autorités congolaises, au point que ces dernières créèrent aussitôt l'Institut des Parcs Nationaux du Congo, dont il fut le premier Directeur général.

Aujourd'hui, quelques-uns de ses collaborateurs qu'il a formés sont devenus de grands responsables à l'Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature et sont même présents dans cette salle. Il s'agit particulièrement des Directeurs Kajuga Binyeri et Mushenzi Lusenge.

Il y a, en outre ceux qui nous ont quittés, dont la vie était intimement liée à l'histoire de la conservation de la nature dans notre Pays et à qui nous rendons un vibrant hommage.

Il s'agit, notamment, de :

Monsieur Anicet Mburanumwe Chiri Wa Rutezo, premier Conservateur en Chef des Parcs nationaux ;
Madame Diane Fossey, quoique tragiquement assassinée hors de notre Pays ;
Madame Batechi, épouse du Conservateur Batechi, prise en otage et assassinée par les braconniers il y a à peine quelques mois, lors d'une attaque de la station de Lusinga au Parc national de l'Upemba.

Tous les vaillants Gardes tombés sur le champ d'honneur de la Conservation.

En mémoire de ces illustres personnalités, nous invitons cette auguste assemblée à se lever et à observer une minute de silence.

Excellences,

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Distingués Invités,

Pour conclure notre propos, nous voudrions très sincèrement renouveler nos vifs remerciements ainsi que ceux de notre Gouvernement et de l'ensemble du peuple Congolais aux organisateurs de cette Table Ronde sur le patrimoine naturel et culturel de notre Pays.

Votre participation à ce Forum constitue pour nous un motif d'aspiration et un sujet d'espérance.

Nous espérons que les Bailleurs des Fonds et tous les pays amis ici présents apporteront à la République démocratique du Congo toute l'assistance voulue et nécessaire à la préservation des sites d'un patrimoine qui a cessé d'être national pour devenir mondial, un héritage commun de toute l'humanité.

Avec ces convictions communes,

Excellences,
Mesdames et Messieurs,

Nous vous remercions de votre bienveillante attention.

Conférence internationale pour la sauvegarde et la promotion du patrimoine congolais

Allocution de M. Koïchiro Matsuura, Directeur général de l'UNESCO, 16 septembre 2004

Monsieur le Vice-Président,
Messieurs les Ministres,
Excellences,
Mesdames et Messieurs,

C'est avec grand plaisir que j'accueille aujourd'hui, à l'UNESCO, la première Conférence internationale des bailleurs de fonds pour la sauvegarde et la promotion du patrimoine congolais.

Je me réjouis que ce soit aux côtés de M. Zahidi N'Goma, Vice-Président de la République démocratique du Congo, que m'en soit donnée l'occasion. En tant que Vice-Président de son pays, mais aussi en tant que fidèle allié de l'UNESCO, pour y avoir travaillé pendant près de vingt ans, il peut apprécier le chemin parcouru et les liens de confiance que notre Organisation et son pays ont su tisser au cours de la période trouble qu'il vient de traverser. J'ai pu me rendre dans son pays en août 2003, quelques semaines seulement après la mise en place du Gouvernement de réconciliation, où j'ai eu le plaisir de rencontrer le Président Kabila avec lequel j'ai signé un communiqué conjoint décrivant les domaines prioritaires dans lesquels nous pouvions collaborer. A la lumière de l'urgence qu'il y avait à accompagner le nouveau gouvernement dans les immenses défis à relever, en particulier dans le domaine de l'éducation, l'UNESCO a élaboré au cours de l'année 2003 une stratégie d'aide globale, afin que, dans tous ses domaines de compétences que sont l'éducation, la science, la culture et la communication, notre Organisation puisse constituer un partenaire fiable pour la RDC. Ce document, élaboré en étroite coordination avec les autorités congolaises, constitue désormais le document de référence pour notre coopération. Mais l'UNESCO, qui a tenu à maintenir sa présence et à poursuivre son travail dans le pays pendant toute la durée du conflit qui a embrasé la RDC au milieu des années 90, a beaucoup travaillé à la préservation du patrimoine naturel, et en particulier des cinq sites inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial.

Dès 2000, elle a lancé un programme ambitieux sur quatre années intitulé « *Conservation de la biodiversité en zones de conflit armé : préserver les sites du patrimoine en RDC* ».

Je tiens aujourd'hui à rendre hommage à la Fondation des Nations Unies et au gouvernement de la Belgique qui, par leur soutien financier intervenu à un moment crucial où la plupart des bailleurs de fonds n'étaient pas en mesure d'intervenir dans ce pays, nous ont permis d'intervenir en RDC malgré le contexte difficile.

Je tiens également à féliciter les organisations de conservation intervenues sur le terrain, démontrant ainsi leur

engagement réel pour la conservation de ce patrimoine, ainsi que le personnel de l'Institut congolais pour la conservation de la nature, gestionnaire des sites, sans lequel ce projet n'aurait pu être mené à bien. Toutes ces organisations, tous ces hommes et femmes, se sont retrouvés autour d'un même objectif : sauvegarder les parcs nationaux de la Garamba, du Kahuzi-Biega, de la Salonga et des Virunga, ainsi que la Réserve de faune à Okapis, inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial mais aussi sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril du fait de l'impact négatif des conflits sur leur intégrité.

M. Le Vice-Président,
Mesdames, Messieurs,

Manifester un intérêt majeur pour la sauvegarde des grands singes ou de la forêt tropicale humide dans une région où des êtres humains sont massacrés, des enfants sont enrôlés comme soldats, des femmes sont violées et des blessés manquent de soins élémentaires peut sembler hors de propos, voire provocateur. Pourtant, la disparition graduelle, mais irréversible, d'un écosystème fragile à l'Est de la République démocratique du Congo (RDC) constitue une menace tout aussi terrible et effrayante pour les populations de ce pays et pour l'humanité tout entière.

L'écosystème présent en RDC est en effet considéré comme un élément-clé du «second poumon de la planète» après la forêt amazonienne. Or les questions posées à l'échelle planétaire par la pollution atmosphérique ou les troubles climatiques ne peuvent être considérées indépendamment de la forêt congolaise, qui produit une grande partie de notre oxygène et constitue un élément essentiel de l'équilibre climatique. Cette forêt ne peut elle-même survivre que si la chaîne subtile de la biodiversité est intégralement respectée, à commencer par les espèces animales endémiques qui la peuplent. Cette forêt abrite également des peuples implantés depuis des millénaires, qui ont une connaissance inégalée de cet environnement, notamment en matière de pharmacopée, et qui savent l'exploiter de manière durable. Plus de 200 langues sont parlées sur le territoire congolais, qui sont autant de manières de décrire et de comprendre cette extraordinaire complexité.

Ecotourisme, agriculture, extraction des minéraux, exploitation du bois pour la production d'énergie, l'ébénisterie ou la construction, sans parler de la pharmacopée et du formidable réservoir de gènes qu'elle constitue pour les biotechnologies, la forêt congolaise et ses habitants sont une richesse qui peut faire la prospérité du peuple congolais si elle est exploitée de manière raisonnée et durable.

La stratégie novatrice mise en oeuvre par l'UNESCO et ses partenaires démontre qu'il est possible d'agir pour la préservation du patrimoine même en période de conflit. Les témoignages que vous entendrez tout au long de cette conférence viendront, je l'espère, vous en convaincre. Mais une véritable sauvegarde implique de grands moyens, que ce soit pour la surveillance par satellite, le suivi aérien des écosystèmes ou la formation des gardes et des patrouilles, sans parler de l'implication des communautés locales dans la gestion des réserves.

A l'heure où l'espoir d'une paix durable est permis, les résultats obtenus au cours des quatre années d'exécution du projet doivent être pérennisés. Ils nécessitent, bien entendu, un engagement ferme du Gouvernement congolais de juguler les pillages par la restauration de l'Etat de droit. La présence du Vice-Président Z'Ahidi Ngoma à nos côtés en témoigne. Mais l'appui des bailleurs de fonds et des donateurs privés sera également décisif. Notre action a jusqu'alors permis de limiter les dégâts. Le moment est désormais venu de réhabiliter les sites, de reconstruire les infrastructures, de rééquiper et de former de nouveaux gardes. Votre réponse enthousiaste à notre invitation d'aujourd'hui nous rend confiants dans le soutien que vous êtes prêts à apporter.

La conférence qui nous rassemble aujourd'hui, ainsi que toutes les manifestations prévues dans le cadre de cet événement exceptionnel, constituent une occasion unique de sensibiliser la communauté internationale à la valeur universelle exceptionnelle du patrimoine culturel et naturel de la RDC.

Les ateliers techniques qui ont lancé les travaux de la présente conférence, notamment ceux relatifs à la conservation des grands singes dans le contexte du projet UNEP/UNESCO-GRASP et à l'implication des commu-

tés locales dans la conservation des sites du patrimoine mondial, ont montré les limites d'une conception trop restrictive de la protection de la nature. Il nous faut promouvoir une stratégie d'implication des populations locales dans la gestion des ressources naturelles et une politique de partage équitable des bénéfices.

Les travaux des experts ont par ailleurs souligné une fois de plus le rôle important du renforcement des capacités pour une gestion durable et effective des sites. Je me réjouis de savoir que l'Ecole régionale post-universitaire d'aménagement et de gestion intégrée des forêts et territoires tropicaux (ERAIFT) lancée par l'UNESCO avec l'appui du PNUD au campus universitaire de Kinshasa et que j'avais visitée en août 2003 a fait des progrès considérables dans la formation des jeunes cadres africains. Je remercie la Belgique et la Commission européenne qui soutiennent cette institution régionale de formation des gestionnaires de haut niveau qui, à mes yeux, est appelée à jouer un rôle primordial comme centre d'excellence dans le cadre du NEPAD.

M. le Vice-Président, Mesdames, Messieurs,

Je souhaiterais, une fois encore, remercier la Fondation des Nations Unies, la Belgique et le Japon qui ont rendu possible la tenue de cette première manifestation en faveur de la sauvegarde et de la promotion du patrimoine mondial de la RDC, ainsi que l'Italie qui a déjà mobilisé des fonds pour la prochaine phase du projet. C'est un engagement dans une vision à long terme pour la RDC qui se manifeste ainsi, pour que le processus de paix soit le fruit non seulement d'accords politiques, mais aussi et surtout d'une conscience partagée par tout un peuple de la richesse exceptionnelle dont il est l'héritier, et qui peut lui assurer un avenir prospère. Car la paix en RDC passe aussi, j'en suis convaincu, par la protection des patrimoines.

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Allocution de S. Exc. M. Eric Duchêne, Ambassadeur, Directeur général Adjoint de la Coopération au Développement (Belgique), 16 septembre 2004

Monsieur le Vice-Président de la République démocratique de Congo,
Monsieur le Directeur général de l'UNESCO,
Excellences,
Mesdames, Messieurs,

Je souhaite tout d'abord vous prier d'excuser l'absence du Ministre belge de la Coopération au développement, M. Armand De Decker, qui avait aménagé son agenda pour être présent parmi nous aujourd'hui mais a malheureusement dû y renoncer du fait d'une semaine politique chargée en Belgique. Comme il l'a fait la semaine dernière en participant à l'inauguration de l'exposition du Musée Royal de l'Afrique centrale en compagnie de S.A.R. le Prince Philippe de Belgique, le Ministre De Decker aurait souhaité témoigner ici de toute l'importance que le Gouvernement belge attache à ces manifestations consacrées à la République démocratique du Congo dont l'UNESCO a eu l'heureuse initiative.

Excellences,
Mesdames, Messieurs,

L'Afrique en général, et l'Afrique centrale en particulier, est une priorité pour la Belgique et pour la coopération belge. De même, le développement durable est de par la loi l'un des objectifs prioritaires de notre coopération internationale. Dans la mise en œuvre de cet objectif, l'environnement a été retenu comme l'un des critères de relevance de nos interventions : nous avons développé une stratégie environnement, qui a été soumise au Parlement et qui prévoit, dans le cadre de l'accroissement de notre aide, des efforts supplémentaires en faveur de l'environnement et, notamment, des forêts et de la biodiversité.

C'est donc tout naturellement que, lorsque nous avons décidé de faire de l'UNESCO une organisation partenaire de notre coopération, nous avons commencé à nous intéresser aux activités du Centre du patrimoine mondial en faveur des parcs naturels du Congo. Et tout aussi naturellement, nous avons décidé de financer un premier projet en soutien des activités exemplaires menées par le Centre avec la coopération, de la Fondation des Nations Unies à laquelle je tiens à marquer toute notre appréciation. Ce premier projet répondant à nos attentes, nous avons décidé de mettre à la disposition du Centre du patrimoine mondial un expert en patrimoine naturel pour une période de quatre ans et d'élargir notre coopération au Secteur des sciences naturelles de l'UNESCO en soutenant l'Ecole régionale d'aménagement et de gestion des forêts et territoires tropicaux à Kinshasa. Dans le même temps, la Politique scientifique fédérale belge a également conclu un accord avec le Centre du patrimoine mondial qui a permis la mise en place d'un réseau d'experts issu des Universités belges et du Musée royal de l'Afrique centrale afin de soutenir les efforts de conservation et de gestion

de l'Institut congolais pour la conservation de la nature. Ce projet, qui a été présenté lors d'un atelier cette semaine, vise à développer, à l'aide de technologies avancées, un système de cartographie, de monitoring et d'informations en soutien à la gestion des sites de la République démocratique du Congo.

Excellences,
Mesdames, Messieurs,

L'expérience de notre coopération avec l'UNESCO a été extrêmement positive et unanimement appréciée par les scientifiques qui y ont été impliqués. Nous n'avons donc pas hésité un seul instant à contribuer aux manifestations qui se tiennent en ce moment, notamment par l'exposition que vous avez pu voir et qui, grâce à son retentissement nous apparaît une excellente manière de toucher un large public tout en valorisant les connaissances acquises.

Les bons résultats obtenus dans nos projets, dans des circonstances quelquefois difficiles, nous ont également convaincus de poursuivre dans la voie tracée : nous avons informé l'UNESCO de notre intention de concentrer dorénavant les moyens que nous mettons à sa disposition sur la poursuite et le renforcement de ses efforts en matière de préservation de la biodiversité en Afrique centrale, que ce soit par le Centre du patrimoine mondial ou par le Secteur des Sciences naturelles.

Pour l'avenir, et je serai plus précis demain, nous envisageons avec intérêt une relance de nos activités :

- en Belgique d'abord, où, grâce aux coopérations engagées pour ces projets et pour ces manifestations, nous devrions pouvoir renforcer encore les synergies entre la Coopération au développement, la Politique scientifique et les milieux académiques et scientifiques, de façon à apporter à l'UNESCO une offre d'expertise plus forte et cohérente ;
- et au Congo, surtout, où, par l'intermédiaire de l'UNESCO, mais aussi par notre coopération bilatérale, nous voulons venir en soutien de ceux qui se sont mobilisés pour la préservation de leur patrimoine qui est aussi celui de l'humanité.

Excellences,
Mesdames, Messieurs,

Nous sommes fiers d'avoir, aux côtés de l'UNESCO et de la Fondation des Nations Unies et grâce à la précieuse et active collaboration de toutes les instances congolaises concernées, pu contribuer à une grande cause et nous lançons un appel à de nouveaux partenaires à nous rejoindre.

Je vous remercie de votre attention.

**Allocution de Son Exc. M. Denis Gauer,
Ambassadeur itinérant à l'environnement, Facilitateur,
ministère des Affaires étrangères (France),
16 septembre 2004**

M. le Directeur général (de l'UNESCO)

M. le Vice-Président (de la RDC)

M. l'Ambassadeur

Mesdames et Messieurs

Il me revient l'honneur de saluer chaleureusement, au nom du Président de la République et du gouvernement français, l'initiative prise par l'UNESCO et les autorités de la République démocratique du Congo d'organiser cette conférence sur la promotion et la préservation du patrimoine congolais. M. Darcos, Ministre délégué à la Coopération et à la Francophonie, qui avait manifesté son intérêt personnel et son souhait d'être présent aujourd'hui, a malheureusement été retenu par d'autres obligations.

La RDC est passée, au cours des années écoulées, à travers bien des épreuves. Des guerres, des affrontements, avec leur lot de souffrance pour la population et des destructions, des infrastructures économiques comme du patrimoine naturel. L'essentiel, en ce dernier domaine, a toutefois pu être préservé. Les cinq parcs nationaux, par l'établissement desquels le pays avait joué un rôle de précurseur, restent aujourd'hui inscrits sur la Liste du mondial en péril, mais on subsiste. Grâce au dévouement et à l'engagement des personnels locaux qui ont poursuivi leur travail en dépit des difficultés et des menaces sur leurs vies et leurs biens, et grâce aussi au soutien des partenaires internationaux.

Aujourd'hui où, nous l'espérons tous, l'horizon s'éclaircit et la RDC peut envisager le retour à la stabilité politique et au progrès économique et social pour ses populations, il faut aussi se pencher sur les perspectives de son patrimoine naturel et culturel. Il faut évaluer la situation, recenser les besoins les plus urgents pour préserver les sites du patrimoine mondial, mais aussi élaborer une stratégie pour le plus long terme et unir les efforts de tous les acteurs. C'est l'objectif de cette conférence, qui vient à point nommé.

La France pour sa part, sous l'impulsion personnelle du Président Chirac qui avait exprimé avec force ses convictions au sommet de Johannesburg, entend s'engager activement dans les efforts pour la préservation du patrimoine mondial et la biodiversité, partout dans le monde et en particulier dans le bassin du Congo.

Nous avons annoncé à Johannesburg notre intention d'organiser une vaste conférence scientifique sur ce thème. Elle aura lieu en ces mêmes locaux de l'UNESCO, du 24 au 28 janvier prochain. Nous espérons réunir un mil-

lier de participants – scientifiques mais aussi des acteurs économiques, politiques, et représentants de la société civile – pour cinq jours de débats sur toutes les dimensions de la recherche et de la gouvernance de la biodiversité. La réduction de l'érosion de la biodiversité de façon significative d'ici 2010 – objectif sur lequel la communauté internationale s'est engagée – ne sera possible que si nous parvenons à établir l'état des savoirs, à informer et à sensibiliser les opinions publiques et à mobiliser les milieux politiques et décisionnaires. Et nous veillerons à ce que les représentants des pays du Sud, et notamment du bassin du Congo et de la RDC, soient présents en janvier prochain et puissent exposer leurs préoccupations.

Nous sommes de même résolus à accroître notre implication dans le partenariat pour les forêts du bassin du Congo, qui nous apparaît comme cadre approprié pour agir. La coordination régionale et l'élaboration d'un plan de convergence au sein de la Conférence des Ministres des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale (COMIFAC) expriment une volonté politique réelle et fournissent un cadre de référence essentiel. La formule du partenariat permet pour sa part de faire converger les activités de tous les acteurs, y compris du secteur privé et des organisations non gouvernementales. C'est ainsi que nous parviendront à engager cet immense massif forestier, inestimable réservoir de biodiversité, dans la voie d'une gestion réellement durable assurant à la fois la conservation sur le long terme du patrimoine naturel et le développement économique et social des populations qui vivent dans la forêt.

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Vous représentez les Etats, les institutions internationales, les ONG, les entreprises privées qui se sont tenus aux côtés de la RDC dans les temps difficiles et qui veulent aujourd'hui l'aider dans cette tâche fondamentale de promotion et de préservation de son patrimoine. C'est un geste louable envers le peuple congolais. Mais c'est toute la communauté humaine qui vous sera également redevable pour le sauvetage d'une partie aussi essentielle du patrimoine mondial. Et en agissant ensemble, avec aussi l'appui effectif de toutes les forces politiques de la RDC pour la concorde nationale et une meilleure gouvernance, nous pouvons réussir.

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Allocution de son Exc. M. Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma, Vice-Président de la République démocratique du Congo, 17 septembre 2004

Que dire à la fin de cette Conférence internationale des bailleurs des fonds pour la sauvegarde du patrimoine naturel et culturel de la République démocratique du Congo, mon pays !

Que dire si ce n'est prononcer les deux mots fétiches, « satisfaction et merci » !

Excellences Messieurs les Ministres,
Honorables Députés et Sénateurs de la République démocratique du Congo,
Monsieur le Directeur Général de l'UNESCO,
Mesdames et Messieurs les Ambassadeurs,
Mesdemoiselles, Mesdames et Messieurs,
Distingués Invités,

« Satisfaction » parce que cette conférence, avec la participation d'éminents experts venus de tous les horizons et celle des hommes de terrain, a été un haut lieu d'échange d'expériences. Elle a abouti à des résultats positifs après une semaine d'intenses travaux sur le thème central : « *Congo : un patrimoine en danger. Protéger les merveilles de la République démocratique du Congo* » et les 32 thèmes spécifiques.

« Satisfaction » toujours à cause des leçons que nous avons pu tirer de cette Conférence, à savoir :

1. Nous avons tous compris que la RDC, dans le cadre du Bassin du Congo, est un épicode comme l'a déclaré Son Excellence Monsieur l'Ambassadeur des Etats-Unis, la gachette du pistolet africain de Frantz Fanon. A ce titre, elle est le cœur au niveau de l'Afrique centrale et si le cœur va bien, le reste du corps ne peut qu'aller mieux.
2. Nous avons retenu que l'UNESCO n'est pas un bailleur de fonds, mais dispose d'une grande expertise et d'une audience auprès de la communauté internationale, d'où la nécessité de sa présence dans les concertations avec d'autres agences et organismes chargés de la défense de la nature.
3. Nous nous réjouissons de la poursuite du renforcement des capacités des gardes de l'Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature, ICCN, par le canal de l'Ecole régionale post-universitaire d'Aménagement et de gestion Intégrés des Forêts et Territoires tropicaux, « ERAIFT », en sigle, avec l'appui de l'UNESCO et de ses partenaires que sont la Belgique et le Système de gestion d'information des aires protégées (SYGIAP).
4. La nécessité de poursuivre des contacts entre militaires et gardes des sites en assurant la formation des uns et des autres par des séminaires, en développant le dialogue entre les différents acteurs sur le terrain dans les sites et les aires protégées. De même l'implication des populations riveraines locales.

5. La poursuite du financement des sites s'avère indispensable. Aussi, sommes-nous heureux de l'exploitation de l'idée lancée dans notre allocution d'ouverture qui a décidé la France à soutenir le Central Africa World Heritage Forest Initiative « CAWHFI », ce dont je l'en remercie.
6. Comme nouveau mode de financement des écosystèmes forestiers, nous appuyons la possibilité évoquée par le Ministre Henri Jombo de la République du Congo de créer un mécanisme de conversion dette-nature ainsi que cela se fait dans les pays latino-américains, le PPT et le fonds judiciaire dans le cadre de la mise en place des aires protégées transfrontalières.
7. Tout ceci s'insère dans la stratégie de coopération UNESCO-RDC lancée par le DG en août 2003, et appelée à capitaliser les synergies de tous les secteurs des programmes de l'UNESCO dans le domaine de la conservation du patrimoine mondial : concertation sur le patrimoine mondiale, programme MAB, l'homme et la biosphère, Programme Hydraulique internationale (PHI), Sciences sociales et humaines, Education pour tous, Culture et communication.

« Merci », disions nous :

- merci à l'Union Européenne pour son appui au Parc de la Garamba ;
- merci la France pour son soutien du Réseau Africain des Protections des Aires Protégées de l'Afrique Centrale ;
- merci à Monsieur Jacques Verschuren dont nous avons reçu cinq sur cinq le message sur la discipline des gardes des sites du patrimoine mondial et des aires protégées, lui-même ayant prêché par l'exemple. A ce titre l'appel émouvant lancé par le garde Jean Pierre Jobogo, nous citons « *Nous ne voulons pas que les gardes deviennent une espèce en voie d'extinction, nous espérons continuer de l'aide de la Communauté internationale* », trouve ici sa place.

Dans ce cadre, nous rappelons les engagements pris par la RDC, avant même la tenue de la présente conférence, particulièrement le partage avec la population locale des revenus générés par l'écotourisme, moyen efficace non seulement de contribuer à l'amélioration de leur condition de vie, mais surtout d'avoir l'assurance de leur implication dans la défense des aires protégées.

Quant aux étapes à venir, nous rappellerions les activités suivantes :

- Le Concert de bienfaisance dont les bénéficiaires seront versés au Centre du patrimoine Mondial pour la conservation de la nature, qui aura lieu le 23 septembre

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2004. Je vous invite tous à y prendre part et à goûter la rumba congolaise.

- L'organisation par la France de la première conférence internationale sur la biodiversité en janvier 2005.
- Le Sommet des Chefs d'Etat pour l'adoption d'un traité sur la gestion durable des écosystèmes forestiers dans le cadre du partenariat pour les forêts du bassin du Congo à Brazzaville en février 2005.
- La réunion intergouvernementale sur la conservation des grands singes qui sera organisé à Kinshasa au cours du premier semestre de l'année prochaine.

Distingués invités,

Nous avons le plaisir de vous informer qu'à notre retour au pays, nous allons proposer au Gouvernement de Transition, d'instituer à l'instar d'autres pays, une journée consacrée au patrimoine naturel et culturel, pourquoi pas le 17 septembre de chaque année pour pérenniser cette date.

Excellences Messieurs les Ministres,
Honorables Députés et Sénateurs de la République démocratique du Congo,
Monsieur le Directeur Général de l'UNESCO,
Mesdames et Messieurs les Ambassadeurs,
Mesdemoiselles, Mesdames et Messieurs,
Distingués Invités,

Nous ne pouvons terminer notre propos de ce jour sans, de nouveau, remercier le Musée de Tervuren pour la belle exposition qu'il a organisée en marge de la présente Conférence qui s'achève aujourd'hui. Cette exposition va continuer jusqu'au 26 courant. Nous vous invitons à y amener vos proches pour découvrir les merveilles de la nature et de la culture congolaises.

Nous vous remercions de votre aimable attention.

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**Discours de M. Marcio Barbosa,
Directeur général adjoint de l'UNESCO,
17 septembre 2004**

Monsieur le Vice-Président de la République démocratique du Congo,
Excellences
Mesdames, Messieurs

Au terme de cette conférence internationale de soutien au patrimoine culturel et naturel de la République démocratique du Congo, j'aimerais, au nom du Directeur général, Koïchiro Matsuura, vous remercier d'avoir répondu si nombreux à notre appel.

Les travaux effectués au sein des ateliers techniques ainsi que les débats et les échanges qui ont nourri cette semaine nous ont démontré que les mots solidarité et mobilisation n'étaient pas vides de sens.

La conférence qui vient de s'achever apporte en effet de nouvelles et très précieuses perspectives d'actions aux efforts engagés dans ce domaine depuis quatre ans par l'UNESCO, avec l'appui de l'Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature, du gouvernement belge, de la Fondation des Nations Unies et des organisations de conservation.

Ces efforts, vous le savez, ont notamment permis, en dépit des conflits qui ont embrasé la région, de limiter les dommages subis par les cinq sites du patrimoine mondial que compte la RDC. L'intégrité durable de ces sites n'est cependant pas acquise, et nombre d'entre eux attendent encore une pleine et entière protection.

Dans ce contexte, la volonté exprimée par les ONG, de la Banque Mondiale, de l'Union Européenne, du Programme des Nations Unies pour l'Environnement, ainsi que des gouvernements belge, italien, français, allemand, pour renforcer l'action coordonnée de la communauté internationale en faveur du patrimoine congolais comme de la biodiversité en Afrique centrale, est extrêmement encourageante.

De même, nous sommes particulièrement heureux des différents engagements pris par la RDC, par la voix de son Vice – Président, M. Z'Ahidi Ngoma, pour lancer une

politique active et ambitieuse de réforme des modes de conservation du patrimoine national congolais. En particulier, je retiendrai les différentes mesures annoncées concernant les mécanismes de gestion des sites, de rémunération des personnels ou de participation des populations au développement et à la sauvegarde des aires concernées, ce dont nous nous réjouissons tout particulièrement.

Nous voici donc en quelque sorte à la croisée des chemins.

Après le succès du projet conjoint UNESCO-Fondation des Nations Unies intitulé « sauvegarde de la biodiversité en zone de conflit armé : préserver les sites du patrimoine mondial de la RDC », après avoir gagné la confiance du gouvernement belge et celle des autres bailleurs, il nous faut à présent entamer, sur la base des différentes mesures envisagées et nous fonds obtenus, une nouvelle phase d'action.

La communauté internationale s'est mobilisée pour cette phase II car elle sait bien que se joue ici la question même du développement économique et de l'avenir de la diversité biologique et culturelle de tout un pays.

Le sort du patrimoine de la RDC nous concerne tous, sachons donc unir nos efforts et nos capacités de mobilisation. Mais au-delà, faisons en sorte que les communautés locales s'engagent à leur tour, de façon durable, dans la gestion et la promotion d'un patrimoine qui est à la fois leur force et leur avenir.

M. le Vice – Président, Excellences, Mesdames, Messieurs, je vous remercie très vivement du temps que vous avez bien voulu consacrer aux travaux de cette semaine et vous donne, je l'espère, bientôt rendez-vous pour rendre compte des résultats de cette nouvelle phase de mobilisation internationale en faveur de la sauvegarde du patrimoine naturel et culturel de la RDC.

Je vous remercie de votre attention.

Acronymes

ADIE	Association pour le développement de l'information environnementale	MAB	Man and Biosphere
AIIF	Association technique internationale des bois tropicaux	MIKE	Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants
AOB	Organisation africaine du bois	MONUC	Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en République démocratique du Congo
AWF	African Wildlife Foundation	MRAC	Musée Royal d'Afrique Centrale
BAD	Banque Africaine de Développement	NEPAD	Nouveau Partenariat pour le Développement de l'Afrique
BeGo	Building Environment for Gorilla	OCDE	Organisation de coopération et de développement économique
CAWHFI	Central Africa World Heritage Forest Initiative	OCFSA	Organisation pour la Conservation de la Faune Sauvage d'Afrique
CEEC	Centre d'Évaluation d'Expertise et de Certification des minéraux précieux	PCDI	Projet de Conservation et de Développement Intégrés
CEFDHAC	Conférence sur les Ecosystèmes des Forêts humides d'Afrique Centrale	PFBC	Partenariat pour les Forêts du Bassin du Congo
CI	Conservation International	PNA/EPT	Plan National d'Action/Education Pour Tous
CITES	Convention sur le commerce international des espèces en danger	PICG	Programme international de conservation des gorilles
CoCoCongo	Coalition de conservation du Congo	PMURR	Programme Multisectoriel d'urgence, de réhabilitation et de reconstruction
CoCoSi	Comité de conservation des sites	PNUD	Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement
COMIFAC	Conférence des Ministres des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale	PNUE	Programme des Nations Unies pour l'Environnement
ECOFAC	Conservation et utilisation rationnelle des Ecosystèmes Forestier d'Afrique Centrale	PNVi	Parc national des Virunga
ERAIFT	Ecole Régionale d'Aménagement Intégrée des Aires protégées Tropicaux	PRGIE	Projet régional de gestion de l'information environnementale
ESA	European Space Agency (Agence spatiale européenne)	RAPAC	Réseau des aires protégées d'Afrique centrale
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation (Organisation pour l'agriculture et l'alimentation)	RDC	République démocratique du Congo
FEC	Fédération des Entreprises Congolaises	RFO	Réserve de faune à okapis
FED	Fonds Européen de Développement	SYGIAP	Système de gestion d'informations des aires protégées
FFEM	Fonds français pour l'environnement mondial	UICN	Union internationale pour la conservation de la nature et des ressources naturelles – Union mondiale pour la nature
FFI	Fauna and Flora International	USAID-CARPE	US Agency for International Development – Central Africa Region Programme for Environment
FNU	United Nation Fondation (Fondation des Nations Unies)	VIH/SIDA	Virus de l'Immunodéficience Humaine/ Syndrome Immuno Déficitaire Acquis
FZS	Frankfurt Zoological Society	WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
GIC	Gilman International Conservation	WHC	World Heritage Centre (Centre du patrimoine mondial)
GEF	Global Environment Facility (Fonds pour l'environnement mondial)	WWF	Fonds mondial pour la nature
GRASP	Great Apes Survival Programme	ZSL	Zoological Society of London
GTZ	Coopération technique allemande	ZSM	Zoological Society of Milwaukee
ICCN	Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature		
IHT	International Herald Tribune		
IJZBC	Institut des Jardins Zoologiques et Botaniques du Congo		
IPN	Institut Pédagogique National		
IRF	International Rhino Foundation		

Prefaces

At a time when the Democratic Republic of the Congo is once more, not without some difficulty, on the road to peace and national reconciliation, its people has not forgotten that it is the depositary of a resource of outstanding universal value: its biological diversity. This is an invaluable treasure, damaged by a conflict that shook the country and set against each other communities which had, until then, lived in harmony; a conflict which weakened an already drained economy.

Sheltering part of the world heritage of humanity in one's territory involves responsibilities that cannot be shirked. My Government has decided to take up the formidable challenge of preserving the World Heritage sites in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The National Parks of Garamba, Kahuzi-Biega, Salonga and Virunga and the Okapi Wildlife Reserve are jewels in the setting of the planet's second lung after Amazonia. The bonobo, the northern white rhinoceros and the okapi are all rare species that are found on Congolese soil, but for how much longer?

The international conference for the safeguarding of the World Heritage sites in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, held in Paris in September 2004, reminded us that these sites are endangered, that they could disappear in the near future if we do not rally to preserve them.

The project initiated by UNESCO and its partners, with financial backing from the United Nations Foundation and the Belgian Government, has enabled these sites to survive the conflict that set the Great Lakes region ablaze. But after survival comes convalescence and life begins anew. These sites must recover their rights.

The international community gave an undertaking to the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation and its partners to preserve the integrity of the World Heritage sites. It is now up to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with assistance from nature conservation organizations, friendly countries and the private sector, to work for the removal of the sites from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Despite the current scarcity of its resources, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo fully intends to discharge its responsibilities towards the people working in the Parks, who have put their lives on the line fighting for their conservation. It also intends to take the necessary measures to facilitate the work of nature conservation organizations in world heritage sites and protected areas.

In presenting once more my sincere thanks to the organizers of the Paris conference and all the partners of the Democratic Republic of the Congo as regards nature conservation, I should like to express the hope that this book will enable a wider audience to realize that peace, development and environmental protection are interdependent and inseparable.

Joseph Kabila
President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Democratic Republic of the Congo was one of the first countries to ratify, in 1974, the Convention for the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in 1972. Five years on, Virunga National Park – the first African national park – was inscribed on the World Heritage List.

Since that time, the national parks of Garamba (1980), Kahuzi-Biega (1980) and Salonga (1984), as well as the Okapi Wildlife Reserve (1996) have also been inscribed as World Heritage properties.

However, following years of instability, notably the conflict in the Great Lakes region and the war which broke out in 1996, these five properties have, subsequently, been inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, where they are still listed today. Despite this difficult context, UNESCO has, nevertheless, managed to maintain a presence throughout the duration of the conflict and continued its work for the conservation of this exceptional heritage.

In 2000, UNESCO launched an ambitious four-year programme entitled “Biodiversity Conservation in Regions of Armed Conflict: protecting World Heritage sites in the DRC”. I wish to express my gratitude to the United Nations Foundation and the Belgian Government who, through their moral and financial support, intervened at a crucial time, when the majority of the stakeholders were not in a position to provide substantive assistance, and in this way we were able to address many of the immediate needs of the DRC. I also wish to congratulate the conservation organizations who intervened in the field, demonstrating their true commitment to this unique heritage, as well as that of the staff of the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation, manager of the properties, without whom this project could not have been successfully implemented.

Demonstrating an active interest in the safeguarding of the great apes or the humid tropical forest in a region where human beings are massacred, children are enrolled as soldiers, women raped and the injured have no basic medical care, might seem inappropriate, even provocative. However, the gradual but irreversible disappearance of a fragile ecosystem in the eastern part of the DRC constitutes an insidious and frightening threat for the population of this country and for all humanity. The ecosystem in the DRC today is considered to be a vital element of the “second lung of the Planet” after the Amazonian forest.

The problems caused at the global level by atmospheric pollution or climate change cannot be dealt with independently of the Congolese forest, which produces a large part of our oxygen and constitutes an essential element for climate balance. The survival of this forest will only be possible if the subtle biodiversity chain is fully respected, beginning with the endemic animal species.

The International Conference, which was held from 13 to 17 September 2004, marked the first phase in the execution of the project, 2000-2004. It kindled the hope that these sites could continue to exist thanks to the important mobilisation of many actors in the field and support from the international community. It was the occasion to remind us all of the vital importance of mobilising resources to consolidate and develop both the present funding levels and technical and administrative capabilities in order to manage these properties satisfactorily.

It is now up to UNESCO and the World Heritage Centre to strengthen existing partnerships as well as to develop new ones so as to assure the durability and wide acknowledgement of the project - necessary in times of peace and an utterly vital imperative in times of conflict.

Koïchiro Matsuura
Director-General of UNESCO

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Promoting and
Preserving
Congolese
Heritage

1

Walter Erdelen, Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences at UNESCO, chaired this first session of 'Promoting and Preserving Congolese Heritage: Linking Biological and Cultural Diversity', the International Donors' Conference and workshops held in September 2004 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

In his introduction, he recalled that the US\$3.5 million project: 'Biodiversity Conservation in Regions of Armed Conflict: Protecting World Heritage in the Democratic Republic of the Congo', at the heart of this conference, would not have been realized without the generous financial support of the UN Foundation (UNF) and the Belgian Government, as well as the mobilization of German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and numerous non-governmental organizations, including the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), Fauna & Flora International (FFI), Gilman International Conservation (GIC), the International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP), the International Rhino Foundation (IRF), the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and the Zoological Society of Milwaukee (ZSM), which had all replied favourably to the appeal launched by UNESCO for the five World Heritage sites in the DRC – currently inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The two principal goals set by the conference were to intensify efforts to mobilize funds to continue the safeguarding work for cultural and natural diversity in the DRC after Phase I of the project ended on 31 December 2004, and to reaffirm the need for capacity building of site managers, ensuring that an equal share of the benefits derived from the project went to the indigenous populations settled around the sites.

UNESCO's apt choice of conference title to illustrate the celebration of Congolese heritage was intended to emphasize the existing links between cultural and biological diversity as important elements for both conservation and sustainable development. The special position that UNESCO held in relation to Member States owed much to its worldwide network of World Heritage sites, Biosphere Reserves and its activities in insular systems, where biological and cultural diversity activities converged. UNESCO could thus encourage States Parties to adopt strategies for the safeguarding of the two diversities and, at the same time, respond to the United Nations *Millennium Development Goals*, in particular poverty eradication and environmental sustainability.

In a presentation examining the interdependence between economic welfare, social progress and sustainable development, entitled 'Biodiversity Conservation: a Concern for All', **Claude Martin, Director-General of WWF International**, recalled that the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED or 'The Earth Summit', Rio de Janeiro) had launched an appeal for sustainable development 'to ensure socially responsible eco-

nomie development while protecting the resource base and the environment for the benefit of future generations'. Some ten years later, governments, UN institutions and development agencies were emphasizing economic well-being by targeting poverty reduction as the overriding approach to achieving sustainable development. Such an approach brought with it the risk that social development and environmental sustainability would be forgotten.

Changes in the economy were occurring very rapidly. National economies were being affected by market-based policies throughout the world. Global economic integration accelerated through free trading has encouraged economic interdependence among the nation-states and reduced national economic sovereignty. At the same time, disparities between rich and poor were increasing. In the short term, the race for development and the realization of economic welfare led inevitably to the unsustainable exploitation of the natural resource base and erosion of social support systems. A source of immediate benefits for some, this method of resource exploitation imposed both short- and long-term costs on others. These 'others' were more often than not the poorest of the poor who depended heavily on the natural resource base and consequently the maintenance of its biological diversity. There was evidence that economic-based poverty reduction strategies were being undermined by the breakdown of social fabric and the loss of environmental services.

The World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee, fully acknowledged that the current trends in resource use and environmental decay were major threats to achieving sustainable development. Biodiversity was a fundamental indicator of a healthy resource base, defining many of its immediate and future potentials. These elements helped to cope with and adapt to increasingly adverse impacts on the environment.

The continued impoverishment of biodiversity, the decline of forest, freshwater, fish and soil resources, climate change, loss of stratospheric ozone and the accumulation of toxic substances all threatened the environmental goods and services on which all human life depended for nourishment, fodder, crop production and innumerable other resources. For example, the global population had already consumed more than half of the accessible freshwater reserves of the planet, and may use nearly three-quarters by 2025. More than 1.1 billion people lacked ready access to drinking water and, if current consumption patterns continue, no less than 3.5 billion people will live in water-stressed river basins in barely twenty years' time. Furthermore, contamination denied some 3.3 billion people access to clean water, and 2.4 billion had no water sanitation services. Each year, about 250 million cases of water-related diseases were recorded, with some 5 million deaths.

The pressures being exercised on forests were constantly increasing, with approximately 1.6 billion people heavily dependent on forest resources for their livelihood. According to a World Bank study, 60 million indigenous communities lived in the rainforests of Latin America, South-East Asia and Central Africa and depended on these rainforests; 350 million people lived in, or near to, dense forests and depended on them for their subsistence or income; and in developing countries, 1.2 billion people used the trees on farms to generate food and income.

The benefits that indigenous populations derived from sustainable forest resource management were both direct and indirect. The forest provided them with food, shelter and income. At the same time, poor rural populations could suffer disproportionately from the negative impacts of biodiversity loss. For example, in the lower Mekong River Basin in South-East Asia, freshwater fish were the main source of protein and calcium for 55.3 million people, who consumed on average 56.6 kg of fish per capita per year. These fish stocks were threatened by deforestation, infrastructure development and water divisions. The ever-increasing degradation and reduction of the forest and vegetative cover deprived millions of forest dwellers of their livelihoods and of essential natural resources that provided them with basic necessities such as food, building materials and medicines. Generally, the most affected by the environmental degradation of the river basins and watersheds were women, indigenous peoples and marginalized groups.

With respect to the DRC, Mr Martin noted that despite all the recent social, political and economic upheavals that the country had experienced, it still had the second-largest intact tropical forest in the world. For several decades, this had been recognized as an invaluable asset of global importance.

Thirty years ago, the DRC was already a signatory to the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, and today five of its protected areas, Virunga, Garamba, Kahuzi-Biega and Salonga National Parks and Okapi Wildlife Reserve, were on the World Heritage List. Unfortunately, they were also all on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Thanks to a small number of conservation organizations such as the World Conservation Union (IUCN), WCS, Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) and FFI, joined more recently by the UN Foundation, GTZ and the Belgian Government, these sites had not suffered irreparable damage. These organizations have continued to provide support to the sites and to the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation (ICCN), even through difficult times.

The WWF could be considered as a veteran of conservation in the DRC as its activities at the five World Heritage sites date back to the beginning of the 1970s, and continue today. For Virunga National Park alone, where WWF had been active since 1987, it initially allocated mil-

lions of dollars for environmental education and later for management and community development programmes. Through this experience, WWF was convinced of the need to maintain its support to the national institutions responsible for the management of these protected areas, including in time of war and political unrest when many donors and governments withdrew their support. It is in just such times as these that support was most vital.

Establishing a direct link between the conservation of protected areas, such as the five World Heritage sites in the DRC, with the livelihood of indigenous peoples was not an easy task. A task all the more arduous given that these areas, with the notable exception of Virunga National Park, only provided minimal direct benefits to local communities. However, the inverse situation – barren and degraded landscapes – often left these populations without any economic prospects, even following a period of short-term benefit.

In fact, poverty and degraded rural environments often went hand in hand. Environmental degradation had many consequences, as a natural sound environment sustained the non-monetary economies and acted as ‘social security’ for many people. The rural poor were often the first victims when these systems fail. Not even the most isolated of city dwellers were immune to the effects. When the productive functions of healthy rural environments became degraded, or when people no longer had access to these productive environments, migration to towns and other countries in search of alternative livelihoods aggravated urban poverty and increased social tension. Consequently, environmental degradation not only undermined sustainable livelihoods and impacts on the rural poor – causing disproportionate negative effects on their health, livelihoods and security – but also exacerbated poverty and social tension in already stressed urban environments.

A healthy ecosystem alone may not effectively reduce poverty, but attempts at poverty reduction without relation to the environment will, sooner or later, be undermined.

Development in the twenty-first century will not be sustainable unless it is economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound. Hence, the urgency for a long-term synergy, through change in commercial practices and lifestyles, as well as the adoption of environmental and social standards to stay within the limits of sustainable resource use. Exchanges and choices will be required when the resource base for the well-being of all has to be guaranteed. Only options that truly respond to individual needs should then be retained.

Themba P. Wakashe, Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee, presented an overview of the World Heritage Convention. This international instrument, adopted in 1972, was based on the recognition of outstanding universal value of certain places that con-

stitute part of the heritage of humankind and which the international community should identify and safeguard for present and future generations. The Convention was unique in that it linked cultural and natural sites of outstanding universal value without neglecting preservation and development. Now ratified by 178 countries, the Convention covers most of the planet. To date, 788 sites have been inscribed on the World Heritage List: 611 cultural sites, 154 natural sites and 23 mixed sites in 134 countries.

Inscription on the World Heritage List only represented part of a long process for conservation that each country (or State Party) having a potential site should accomplish. A State Party wishing to propose a site for nomination to the World Heritage List must first have developed national standards guaranteeing the protection of the future site. The cultural or natural values of the site and its boundaries must be identified; a management strategy must be developed and funds and other resources allocated to maintain the integrity of the site.

The work of the Convention extended beyond the inscription of sites on this prestigious List, it was also concerned with their conservation. Each year, the World Heritage Committee discussed the state of conservation of a certain number of sites and made recommendations to the States Parties concerned, based on the expert opinions of its Advisory Bodies and UNESCO's World Heritage Centre, on the manner in which to improve their conservation.

At the same time, the States Parties had an obligation to provide every five years a periodic report on the state of conservation of sites in their territories. When a site was severely threatened, the Committee may decide to inscribe it on the List of World Heritage in Danger. In this way, it called on the State Party concerned, and the other States Parties, to take measures to halt the degradation. The Convention defines natural heritage as: natural features consisting of physical or biological formations of outstanding universal value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view; geological and physiographical formations which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of outstanding universal value; and natural sites of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty. Such sites may be inscribed under four different criteria. Criteria (i) and (iii) concern specifically geological sites, or sites of exceptional natural beauty. Criteria (ii) and (iv) concern the conservation of ecosystems and biological diversity. Outstanding examples of terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems are inscribed under criterion (ii) and are, often, national parks or other types of protected area, vast stretches of preserved habitats, for example Salonga National Park in the DRC, which covers 36,000 km² of relatively intact rainforest. Criterion (iv) applies to the sites containing the most significant natural habitats and the most important for in situ conservation of biological diversity, and more especially the

most threatened species. Another example in the DRC is Virunga National Park, a site inscribed under criteria (ii), (iii) and (iv), which sheltered one of the last populations of mountain gorillas in the world.

Undeniably, the World Heritage Convention was an instrument which conferred international recognition on some of the most precious protected areas, representative of some of the most remarkable ecosystems of the world and containing highly threatened species and outstanding biological diversity. To understand its importance in terms of biogeographical cover, the World Heritage List could be compared to the WWF Global 200 world system of 200 ecological regions. Through the exercise of establishing priorities, some 200 ecological regions, representative of the principal types of natural habitat in the world, were identified as priorities for conservation. At present, 65% of the priority terrestrial ecoregions, 57% of the priority freshwater ecoregions and 58% of the priority marine ecoregions are represented on the World Heritage List.

A similar exercise to establish priorities undertaken by Conservation International identified twenty-five biodiversity hot spots, areas where biodiversity was extremely high and severely threatened: 44% of all the plants on the planet and 38% of the birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians were found in these regions, although they only covered 2% of the whole terrestrial ecosystem. At present, twenty-one of these twenty-five hot spots are represented on the World Heritage List.

These figures clearly illustrated that the World Heritage List represented 'the jewels of the biodiversity crown'. However, there were important gaps, and remedial action was taken by inviting States Parties to propose new sites.

The five World Heritage sites in the DRC are at present on the List of World Heritage in Danger. They may be seen, in a way, as a practical exercise, demonstrating how the Convention can also function as a conservation tool.

In conclusion, Mr Wakashe indicated that the conference would show what had been achieved in terms of halting degradation at the sites through the mobilization of a diverse network of partners. He also expressed the wish that the donors present should respond positively to the appeal by UNESCO and its partners to mobilize the necessary resources to continue this work in the spirit of international solidarity.

Francisco Komlavi Seddoh, President of the UNESCO Intersectoral Working Group for the Reconstruction of the DRC, recalled that UNESCO's action for the safeguarding of natural World Heritage sites of the Democratic Republic of the Congo was set in the wider framework of a strategy between UNESCO and the DRC for the reconstruction of this country in a post-conflict situation.

He indicated the reasons that directed the establishment of the co-operation strategy with the DRC, among which are 'the great advances in the recent evolution of the country'. Mr Seddoh added that, as a United Nations agency, UNESCO should respond to the recommendation of the Security Council Mission concerning multilateral and bilateral actors by assisting in the reconstruction process of the DRC.

The approach adopted for the co-operation strategy was presented in detail, as well as its major guidelines. The projects that UNESCO had decided to support, in concert with the relevant Congolese authorities, were as follows:

Education with, notably, support for the construction of an education system that comprised reform and modernization; institutional capacity building; the reconstruction and equipping of schools and training and research establishments, the prevention of HIV/AIDS, and also included the education of women and young girls. Assistance in **integrated environmental management for development** was also a priority, in particular, in the field of rational management of water resources. This question was at the heart of several projects developed by UNESCO. Human resource development in the science field through strengthening existing centres of excellence, such as the Regional Post-Graduate Training School on Integrated Management of Tropical Forests (ERAIFT), was also a priority. Support for the implementation of environmental conventions and participation in ongoing initiatives in the subregion, such as the Congo Basin Forest Partnership created at the Johannesburg Summit of Central African Heads of States in September 2002, also constituted priority areas for UNESCO in support of an integrated environmental management for development, which necessarily implied capacity building at ICCN. The revalorization and promotion of **cultural heritage** through the establishment of a sustainable development policy, as well as the promotion of the living arts were, as such, an integral part of the activities that UNESCO and the DRC wished to carry out in the field of cultural heritage (dialogue, safeguarding, protection).

Finally, among the many other priorities of UNESCO and the Congolese authorities were the **safeguarding of World Heritage and the promotion of human security**, notable initiatives being the promotion of dialogue at the subregional, regional and international levels; and promotion of a free press through support to independent media.

Having presented the strategy's main lines of action, Mr Seddoh indicated the activities already undertaken in different sectors. In the framework of its Regular Programme, UNESCO had financed projects in the field of education (e.g. draft project PNA/EPT (National Plan on Education for All), evaluation and monitoring training in school skills, preparation of a Round Table on Education); culture – with assistance from the Congolese Ministry of

Culture – for finalizing projects relating to cultural heritage preservation; communication; and science. Actions were already under way in respect to partnerships and the mobilization of extra budgetary funds, such as the partnership with the African Bank for Development (ABD) in assisting the DRC education sector.

In conclusion, Mr Seddoh indicated that reconstruction comprised an essential factor for the restoration of peace and recalled the commitment of UNESCO.

Expressing himself both in his capacity as the new **Executive Secretary of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)**, and former Director of the Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP), **Robert Hepworth** emphasized the 'extreme importance' of the DRC for the goals of both the CMS and GRASP. The DRC represented a fortuitous opportunity for a synergy between the two, by providing 'double protection' to the mountain gorillas, also identified as an icon species by the Convention. Mr Hepworth indicated that the DRC and Uganda had already ratified the Convention and that Rwanda was in the process of doing so. It was thus hoped that this would provide the opportunity to promote both the preservation of migratory species and build political bridges between the three countries concerned.

Round Table: The role of local knowledge in the preservation of Congolese heritage

In introducing the discussions, **Shaje wa Tshiluila, Director-General of the Institute of National Museums, Kinshasa (DRC)**, recalled how the indigenous communities had, through time, developed important knowledge regarding conservation.

Each of the experts present was invited to express their views on the 'role of local knowledge in the preservation of Congolese heritage'.

Guido Gryseels, Director of the Royal Museum for Central Africa, Tervuren (Belgium), began by emphasizing the need to consider language as a depository of knowledge as well as its function as a transmission tool.

The DRC, with its 246 spoken languages, constituted a perfect illustration of this situation. In fact, each of the recognized languages has proved to be a true vector of detailed knowledge of nature and the environment surrounding local communities. Language should thus be considered as a transmission corridor for intangible culture from generation to generation.

Mr Gryseels remarked that he was particularly impressed to note that local communities employed a whole range of proverbs to illustrate the environment and transmit important information concerning certain plants (components, origins, etc.) that they used.

He drew attention to the special importance given to languages in the exhibition curated by the Royal Museum, 'CONGO – Nature and Culture in the Democratic Republic of Congo'. He also underlined its leading role in the management of biodiversity, citing the song practised long ago by the Luba people when hunting game.

Through language, local knowledge is conserved and managed. Each time a language disappeared, the loss of knowledge of natural and cultural heritage was also at risk.

Mr Gryseels deplored the lack of means devoted to linguistic research in numerous countries which led, in the medium or long term, to the disappearance of fundamental local knowledge. However, he indicated that the Royal Museum attempted, as far as possible, to combat this threat so that the extinction of these languages and the knowledge they carry did not become irreversible.

Camille Kuyu, Law Professor at the University of Panthéon-Sorbonne, Paris (France), began his contribution with the premise that the preservation of natural heritage presumed an adequate legal framework.

The DRC, along with other African states, possessed this legal framework, although the relations between black Africans and their environment generally occurred beyond 'environmental law', which was based on exogenous logic and representations, and heavily dependent on science and technology.

The people of Africa, especially the rural population, did not feel concerned by this 'environmental law' which did not incorporate their environmental concerns. These people would, consequently, continue to act within their own regulatory and endogenous frameworks and thus within their own fields of legitimacy, which would, above all, be traditional local knowledge. All African peoples had inherited from their ancestors ways of doing things that allowed them to live and to reproduce in communion with their environment, and which they

transmitted, in their turn, to future generations. The various traditional standards concerned all the domains and activities considered as vital by the populations: pastoral activities, sexual relations, health, etc. Local knowledge was not only ancestral, it also encompassed practices and techniques which bore witness to the African aptitude for invention.

In conclusion, Prof. Kuyu felt that the ineffectiveness of the present environmental law did not signify rejection of the principle. On the contrary, the need for an environmental law was real in Africa, but this law should, as far as possible, take local knowledge and the environmental concerns and practices of the indigenous populations into account.

Théodore Trefon, independent consultant and researcher at the Brussels Centre for African Studies (Belgium), gave a presentation focused on urban threats to the biodiversity of the DRC with particular emphasis on what he called the 'Kinshasa paradox'.

In fact, incongruous as it might appear at first sight, the urban population played a significant role in the management of natural resources. Consequently, due consideration should be given to the fact that the future of the tropical forest was affected by the impact that cities and urban populations have on the degradation of the forest environment, whether arising from urbanization, economic crisis, poverty, institutional constraints, cultural links and perceptions.

Prof. Trefon concluded by mentioning his book, *Order and Disorder in Kinshasa, Popular Answers to the Failure of the State*, which attempted to demonstrate that if the *mayélé* (inventiveness, resourcefulness) of the Kinois facilitates the basic survival of individuals and households, the treasures of inventiveness were not as such comparable to development tools and even less to sustainable development as heralded by Western experts.

2

Protecting the Congo Basin Biodiversity

This session, chaired by **Kalemani Mulongoy, Head of Scientific, Technical and Technological Matters, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity**, examined the concept of 'biological diversity'.

He hoped that the different presentations would help towards comprehending the particular need for protecting the biodiversity of the Congo Basin and especially the manner in which to proceed with this protection. He referred to the subregional institutions that worked for the protection of the Congo Basin: the Conference on Central African Moist Forest Ecosystems (CEFDHAC) and the Conference of Ministers in charge of Forests in Central Africa (COMIFAC).

Olivier Langrand, Senior Vice-President of Conservation International (CI) responsible for Africa and Madagascar, focused his presentation on the reasons why it was imperative to protect the forests of the Congo Basin and the challenges being faced by conservationists in their fight for long-term management of natural resources.

The concept of biodiversity hot spots had been formulated by the British biologist, Norman Myers, and first presented in 1988. Hot spots were identified as the areas with the highest concentration of biodiversity and suffering from serious threat of extinction. An analysis carried out by about one hundred specialists, and for which Conservation International ensured the co-ordination, identified twenty-five hot spots in the biological terrestrial domain, six of them in sub-Saharan Africa and Madagascar. Following an update carried out shortly afterwards, the number of hot spots identified rose to thirty-four, of which eight were in sub-Saharan Africa and Madagascar.

The hot spot concept gave conservationists a direction to follow with regard to the conservation of biological resources. In particular, it concentrated their technical, financial and human efforts on these hot spots.

To gauge the fragility of these areas, Mr Langrand recalled that the original twenty-five hot spots covered 11.8% of the planet's land surface, whereas today these 2 million km² represent only 1.4% of this surface. Despite this, more than 130,000 species of vascular plants representing 44% of known world flora, and 9,681 vertebrate species representing 35.5% of all vertebrates, were found in the hot spots. For both plants and vertebrates, the level of endemism noted was particularly high.

Other than the hot spots, the identification of vast wilderness areas of the planet constituted the other major priority of conservationists. The criteria used for the selection of the vast areas were based on integrity, surface area and human population density. Today, thirty-seven areas have qualified based on these criteria. They covered 81 million km², represented 54.2% of the land surface

of the planet and contained only 5.2% of the human population. Among these areas, five were considered as wilderness areas of high biodiversity. Two of them, the Congo Basin forests and the Miombo Mopane Forest, were located on the African continent.

The Congo Basin forests, which extended over 1.7 million km², contained an impressive biological diversity: 9,750 plant species of which 3,300 to 4,000 were endemic; 270 mammal species of which 39 were endemic; and 708 bird species of which 10 were endemic. The Congo River, third largest in the world in respect of its water flow, after the Amazon and the Rio Negro, also contained outstanding biodiversity. Finally, the forests of the Congo Basin contained 17 types of primate and 43 endemic species.

The impact of man on nature could be divided into two categories: immediate and long-term. The major danger threatening the biodiversity capital of Central Africa derived from the inevitable destruction of the natural habitat to satisfy the needs of populations heavily dependent on subsistence agriculture. The consequence of this recourse to natural resources associated with climatic changes was the erosion, over the long-term, of the famous biodiversity capital of Central Africa. Taking into consideration the fact that the human population of the region could double in twenty-five years, it was understandable that a policy for the sustainable management of resources was more than ever necessary.

Other negative aspects affecting the Congo Basin concerned the illegal bushmeat trade and illegal forest exploitation. The amount of bushmeat consumed in the forest and urban areas of Central Africa exceeded a million cubic metres a year.

The international community had paid particular attention to the Congo Basin forests over recent years. The commitment of governments of the countries of Central Africa expressed in the Yaoundé Declaration (1999) and taken up by COMIFAC, the peace process initiated in the DRC and the dissemination of information carried out by conservation organizations have all been decisive in the initiation of actions for the sustainable conservation of the unique resources of the Congo Basin.

Another important international initiative for biodiversity conservation in this region, the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, brought a concrete response to the need for the conservation of forests in the region, without forgetting sustainable economic development for Central Africa. Thanks to support from the United States Government through the USAID Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE), teams from local, national and international NGOs worked together on eleven conservation landscapes spread over six Central African countries. Two of the sites, in which CI intervenes, were in the DRC.

Local communities were now involved in conservation activities. For example, they were currently developing a network for communal reserves which should, with Maiko and Kahuzi-Biega National Parks, lead to the conservation of nearly 90% of the area containing the lowland gorilla in the east. For its part, CI ensured the leadership of a team including the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International, WWF and WCS who collaborated with ICCN in the implementation of a long-term conservation strategy for this Earth.

In concluding, Mr Langrand expressed the wish to see the national forest strategy of the DRC make conservation a key element. He invited the Congolese Government to defend the areas identified as priority for conservation and to ensure good management of existing protected areas. Furthermore, the Congolese Government should avoid granting vast forestry concessions before the adoption of a viable plan for biodiversity conservation.

The international community was invited to continue its financial and technical support to the DRC and other Central African countries. Financial support should reach an unprecedented level to ensure the training of the local human resources needed in Central Africa to implement the biodiversity conservation programmes and ensure their long-term viability.

Daniel Ngantou, Director of IUCN Central Africa Office, made a presentation on the Conference on Central African Moist Forest Ecosystems (CEFDHAC), indicating that the DRC was a priority for most of the technical and political initiatives in Central Africa.

With its 217 million hectares and its 200 million inhabitants, Central Africa alone was a subregion with a considerable ecological and socio-economic impact. The main function of CEFDHAC was to be a platform for concertation and exchange of experiences in the field of ecosystems and orientation – through the interaction of all the groups of actors intervening in Central Africa. It could be described as a consolidation of the political will of the states of the subregion to agree on a common vision with regard to conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems of the moist tropical forests of Central Africa.

CEFDHAC, comprising ten member countries (Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe), had the global goal of encouraging conservation of the forest ecosystems by those concerned with forest management, as well as the balanced and sustainable use of the resources of these forests. Its specific goals were to:

- promote coherence of interventions in forest ecosystems;
- propose coherent regional programmes and initiatives for conservation of forest resources;
- organize subregional and national ecological forums

open to all those concerned or interested in biodiversity conservation;

- carry out a reflection on ecological security, especially management of transboundary and national conflicts focused on the biological resources of the region, including the management of parks for peace;
- examine the integration of basic elements into forest resource management at regional level, harmonize forest policies and laws and develop transboundary protected areas; and
- participate in the preparation and popularization of national and/or transboundary laws contributing to achieving good management of national and/or transboundary forest ecosystems.

In concluding, Mr Ngantou made a plea for financial assistance for the Congo Basin Forest Partnership in support of the work of COMIFAC.

The Minister for Forest Economics and Environment of the Republic of the Congo and former President of COMIFAC, H.E. Mr Henri Djombo, focused his presentation on the question of the commitment of Central African governments to the preservation of biodiversity in their region. To illustrate his words, he chose to present the Yaoundé Declaration and explain the reasons that had led to the creation of the Conference of Ministers in charge of Forests in Central Africa (COMIFAC). Adopted in March 1999 following the summit of Central African Heads of State in Yaoundé (Cameroon), this Declaration declared the recognition by the Heads of State of the countries concerned of the need to conserve biodiversity and manage the forest ecosystems of their region in a sustainable manner. Through this Declaration, the Heads of State also reaffirmed the right of their peoples to depend on the forest resources in support of their efforts with regard to economic and social development, reconciling the demands of this development with biological diversity conservation, in the framework of international and subregional co-operation.

This initiative was welcomed by the General Assembly of the United Nations by the adoption, during its 54th session, of Resolution No. 54/214 of 1 February 2000. This Resolution invited the international community to support the countries of Central Africa in their efforts of sustainable forest development by providing them with technical and financial assistance on a regional basis. Furthermore, it encouraged the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), when considering ways and means of achieving the conservation and sustainable management of all types of forests, to take into account the forests of the region, and requested the UN Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the Resolution.

The Conference of Ministers in charge of Forests in Central Africa (COMIFAC) the present signatories of which are Cameroon, the Central African Republic,

Chad, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon, was created to facilitate the implementation and ensure the monitoring of this Declaration.

The ordinary meeting of COMIFAC held in Libreville (Gabon) in July 2003 provided the opportunity to make a first assessment and thus measure the progress made and the obstacles remaining to attain the goals fixed.

By way of progress, Mr Djombo indicated:

- recognition of COMIFAC as the unique policy and decision-oriented body for all that concerns the Central African forests, and the subregional strategic action plan (*Plan de Convergence*) as a unique baseline reference for actions concerning the management and conservation of this heritage;
- adoption of this Convergence Plan, which defines the priority national and subregional strategic axes to be implemented to attain the goals of conservation and sustainable management of the Central African forests;
- presentation of the Convergence Plan to the different partners;
- extension of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership to include United Nations agencies;
- preparation of a treaty on sustainable management of forest ecosystems of Central Africa, which will be submitted for signature by the Heads of State at the Brazzaville/Congo Summit in February 2005; and
- creation of two transborder protected areas: the Sangha Tri-National between Cameroon, the Congo and the Central African Republic, and the Dja-Odzala-Minkébé Tri-National between Cameroon, the Congo and Gabon.

He then enumerated the obstacles to be overcome:

- meagre level of resources mobilized for the Congo Basin;
- insufficient national capacities;
- armed conflicts and political instability;
- insufficient knowledge of procedures and mechanisms for the mobilization and management of co-operation funds; and
- low level of involvement of populations and private sector.

In conclusion, Mr Djombo invited all those potential partners currently hesitant about supporting the Democratic Republic of the Congo to make a commitment to achieving the sustainable management of the forest ecosystems of Central Africa. He congratulated FAO, UNDP, UNEP and UNESCO for their adhesion to the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. Finally, he requested the European Union to make every effort to ensure funding and the launch of the fourth phase of the EU Programme for Conservation and Rational Utilization of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa (ECOFAC) for the conservation of the DRC forests during the reconstruction period.

In his contribution on the **Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP)**, H.E. Mr David Kaeuper, Ambassador and Facilitator of the initiative, first paid tribute to Mr Henri Djombo's work at the head of COMIFAC. He recalled that the DRC held more than 50% of the Congo Basin forests and was host to numerous endemic fauna and flora, unique or of great significance to the people living in these regions as well as to the whole planet. Many of these species were threatened with degradation or extinction unless the rate of rainforest destruction was slowed immediately.

Mr Kaeuper continued with a description of CBFP activities for the conservation of biodiversity and the World Heritage sites. The principal ambition of the CBFP forum was to facilitate discussions, co-operation and collaboration on forests and biodiversity in the Congo Basin region. Its primary mission was to promote sustainable management of the Congo Basin forests as well as its fauna and flora and thereby ensure the welfare of the inhabitants of the region.

As the forests of the Congo Basin were largely preserved, unlike numerous other tropical forests, the CBFP partners and the countries concerned had been led to make a commitment to maintain them intact through concerted and sustainable actions.

Aware of the specific threats that endanger the ecosystems and the fauna and flora of the Congo Basin, the partners were working to contain and if possible eliminate these threats. Poverty, bad governance, illegal activities and poaching, poor agricultural practices, political instability and violence were considered as so many threats to the conservation of biodiversity of this region.

The CBFP was underwritten by the political commitment undertaken, two years prior to its creation, by the countries of the Congo Basin, to sustainably manage their forests and wildlife.

Having no staff or Secretariat and no funding or programme implementation capacities, the CBFP offered itself as a transparent, non-hierarchical forum where partners and other interested parties may discuss or express their concerns or projects for the region. The CBFP aimed to assist Congo Basin countries and COMIFAC by facilitating communication and co-operation among all partners. It also provided them with an opportunity to assess whether their objectives were being met. Good communication provided by the CBFP helped to avoid programme duplication and to address gaps in programming and funding requirements.

The partnership was improving programme co-operation and collaboration on the ground. It was co-operating with COMIFAC, which had invited many partners to attend its meetings, as did USAID-CARPE and ECOFAC. This co-operation had been extended to include NGOs

developing and implementing programmes with Congo Basin governments and other subregional organizations, including local NGOs and civil society.

The value of CBFP as a symbol should not be underestimated. For example, based on its commitments, the US Congress committed at least US\$45 million over three years to the region through CARPE. With other funding resources the amount committed is about US\$53 million. These contributions leveraged additional pledges of some US\$20 million from private industry, multilateral donors and international NGOs.

Within the partnership, Germany was working closely with COMIFAC countries to build capacity and to help establish the legal and institutional foundations for more effective co-operation within the region and with donors. Germany was also providing direct support for biodiversity conservation in World Heritage sites.

Concerning the European Commission, Mr Kaeuper indicated that the fourth stage of the ECOFAC programme had been designed and would be implemented in the near future with a strong focus on protected areas and buffer zones.

France was also supporting regional protected areas, focusing on research and sustainable management for non-timber forest products, and providing loans to the industry for the promotion of sustainable forest management.

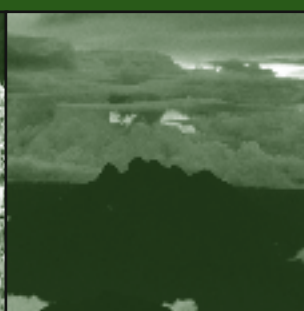
In the Congo Basin, the CARPE Programme mainly concerned 'ecological landscapes'. It was a broad land-use management approach to conservation which took into account the economic, social and cultural context of landscapes. CARPE's Landscape Programme was being implemented by four US-based international NGOs:

AWF, CI, WCS and WWW. Each of these NGOs was a CARPE 'Landscape Leader' for one or more of the eleven CARPE landscapes across Central Africa. The programme depended on participation by regional governments. The 'Landscape Leaders' have also created an interlocking set of partners – private industry, local NGOs, foundations, multilateral and bilateral donor institutions, etc.

This framework applied to World Heritage sites which fell within the CARPE landscapes in the DRC. The strong correlation between these CBFP/CARPE-related landscapes and World Heritage sites was in the shared interest of CBFP partners in reducing the accelerating rate of extinction of species, and associated loss of biological diversity, while at the same time promoting economic growth and social welfare. In 2003/2004, the United States Government expended about US\$7 million (not counting matching funds) for these landscapes, including the four World Heritage sites (Okapi Wildlife Reserve, Salonga-Lukenie Sankuru, Maiko-Lutunguru-Tayna, Kahuzi-Biega and Virunga), functioning under very difficult conditions and achieving remarkable results in keeping the World Heritage sites alive. This success owed much to international commitment and support, which must continue in the long term to maintain these results.

It was also possible that major funding for conservation projects could encourage local parties and regional governments to respect, in these areas, international conventions on biodiversity, including in times of conflict.

UNESCO's diplomatic initiatives for the World Heritage sites had met with some success and provided useful lessons for future political and diplomatic mobilization for conservation. It was thanks to international diplomatic mediation that the crisis in the Mikeno sector of Virunga National Park had been resolved.



3

World Heritage of the DRC: Heart of the Congo Basin

Steven Sanderson, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS),

spoke on the importance of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the biodiversity of the Congo Basin. In his opinion, the present political situation in the country could, in view of the special place that the DRC occupies, determine the future of biodiversity in the region.

The country had a long and proud history of protected area creation and management. Nevertheless, an important part of the existing protected areas – especially in the Albertine Rift – coexisted with enormous but somewhat unknown demographic change, huge agricultural pressures, bushmeat trade, human dislocation and political unrest. There was no reliable demographic census of populations living in protected areas or economically active in resource extraction in areas critical to conservation. Similarly, fundamental baseline studies of biodiversity were lacking or outdated.

While recognizing that he could only modestly contribute towards the efforts of the DRC Government and the international community in elaborating a strategy for conservation in the region which at the same time responded to the urgent human needs of the Congolese people, Mr Sanderson made several observations covering some concerns evoked by other speakers. These were, notably:

- the maintenance of outside support. NGOs must secure support from the private and public sectors and represent DRC conservation to the outside world;
- the importance of multilateral and bilateral donors to buoy the work of the Congolese agencies in the field;
- the need for training of Congolese partners and colleagues.

For each of the five World Heritage sites it would be crucial to continue inventorying and determine the baseline population of ‘flagship’ species, as well as the integrity of the ecosystem and to train staff for leadership roles. Essential points were to:

- secure the integrity of existing protected areas against mining and poaching through support for park guards and control on access to protected areas;
- establish a link with other areas of biodiversity importance which had much less protection due to the lack of available data;
- mainstream biodiversity in the process of national development.

This last point amounted to biodiversity surviving the peace after having survived the war. This involved a National Forestry and Biodiversity Plan that was explicitly holistic, incorporating rural development, infrastructure growth, resource use and conservation. This entire process was profoundly politicized, not just in the DRC but in the international community as a whole. Economic growth was not enough if the poor populations living in the key conservation areas derived no benefits. It was also

insufficient without systems to control mining, forestry and agricultural activities. The very promising concept of ‘eco-development zones’ may provide a useful tool for this purpose. The use of zoning for conservation and development was a real challenge almost everywhere and the DRC is no exception.

Time was running out. The political situation in the DRC may change. Donors were committed but fickle. Threats to success were as great as elsewhere in the world. The present great potential could diminish quickly, and certainly evaporate over time.

For this reason the international community must commit itself to a grand scale of support to rebuild capacity at all levels in the DRC, and to ensure that the country’s conservation and development hopes maintain visibility on the highly contested global agenda. Conservation diplomacy can deliver this commitment but only with great effort through the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, the World Heritage Convention, the UNF – with its resources and international public visibility – and the collaboration of NGOs who really care about the future of the DRC.

H.E. Mr Anselme Enerunga, Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Water and Forests of the Democratic Republic of the Congo,

spoke of the means made available by the DRC to preserve its biodiversity through the adoption of an integrated forest policy approach. In introducing his presentation, Mr Enerunga gave a brief summary of the country’s geographical situation, the extent of its territory and its nine frontiers.

He noted the wealth of cultural and natural diversity of the DRC, which enjoyed an unequalled potential in comparison to the other nations of the African continent. Another advantage was the inland water area, which occupied 3.5% of the whole national territory, representing more than 50% of the freshwater reserves of the continent.

The forests of the DRC occupied a special place in the Congo Basin. In fact, 56% of the forest area of the Congo Basin belonged to the DRC alone, far more than Angola, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Republic of the Congo and Equatorial Guinea. As such, the Congolese Government recognized that it had the moral responsibility for the sustainable management of this heritage of humankind.

The country’s vegetation comprised seven physiognomic types: dense humid evergreen forest, dense humid semi-deciduous forest, mountain forest; edaphic forest formation, dry deciduous forest, open forest and savannah woodlands. Recent estimations indicated that these forests covered about 55% of national heritage.

The DRC was attempting to conserve representative examples of this outstanding biodiversity through the establishment of a network of protected areas, of which the five World Heritage sites were part.

The exceptional diversity of animal resources were also characteristic of the DRC. According to figures provided by the Minister, the country hosts more than 352 species of reptiles; 168 batrachian species; 1,086 bird species; 412 mammal species; 1,596 aquatic invertebrate species, of which 1,423 are freshwater and 183 marine; 544 terrestrial invertebrate species and 1,606 aquatic vertebrate species. There are ichthyological fauna – about forty families representing more than 1,000 species, of which approximately 800 live in the Congo River drainage system. The DRC also has more primate species than anywhere else in the world.

The fact that the DRC is probably one of the best-endowed countries with regard to forests, with its 138 million hectares, had led the Congolese Government to pay particular attention to the management of forest resources. The Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation, Water and Forests (created in 1975) had competence in this field. To fulfil its mission, a Directorate for Forest Management and several specialized services, including the Permanent Service for Inventory and Forest Development (PSIFD), provided support. The Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation was concerned with preservation in situ and the Institute for Zoological and Botanical Gardens of the Congo with preservation ex situ.

With support from the World Bank and FAO, the DRC had undertaken, since 2000, an major exercise to improve the management of forest resources. In 2002, a Forest Code comprising numerous innovations with regard to forest management was promulgated which should facilitate planning for the different interventions in the forestry sector.

Concerning training, the minister spoke of the UNESCO initiative which resulted in the creation of ERAIFT, an institution with a regional vocation for the training of ‘practitioners with a systemic vision for the management of natural areas’.

In conclusion, Mr Enerunga reiterated the Congolese Government’s will to respect its international commitments and to encourage concertation through the use of national, subregional, regional and international platforms to define the strategic courses of action and harmonize viewpoints with regard to sustainable management of forest resources. He indicated that, at subregional level, the DRC was already party to the Conference on Central African Moist Forest Ecosystems and the African Wood Organization.

He encouraged the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) initiative that constituted, in his

view, both a factor of economic and social integration of African countries and a tool in combating poverty.

Samy Mankoto, Programme Specialist, Division of Ecological Sciences, UNESCO, and former ICCN Director-General, represented **Jacques Verschuren, former Director-General of National Parks of the Congo (1969–75),** who was unable to take part in the conference, and evoked the history of conservation in the DRC through that of the national parks.

In 1948 Jacques Verschuren discovered the parks of what was still the Belgian Congo. From this time on, he considered, as did a majority of researchers and conservationists, that ‘the parks of the Congo were among the most beautiful and most interesting of the planet’.

The history of the parks of the Congo began in 1925 with the creation in the north-east part of the country, bordering the 300 km frontier with Uganda and Rwanda, of Virunga National Park. For the Belgian authorities, the concern was to safeguard the famous mountain gorilla. At the end of the 1950s, Jacques Verschuren was, with the American zoologist George Schaller and the Congolese Senkwekwe, one of the first to observe the gorillas.

Virunga National Park, then known as Albert Park, could be recognized as a true microcosm of the African continent, protecting all types of biotope, from the equatorial forests to the snows of Rwenzori. In 1938, the creation of Garamba National Park, in the far north-east of the country at Uélé, followed with the aim of protecting the already rare northern white rhino.

In 1960, the DRC already counted three vast reserves created with the agreement of the local communities, certain of which received indemnities. The creation of these parks established an integral conservation system in which a small place was given to tourism. The national parks of the Congo thus became ‘jewels of international biological research’.

The commitment of the park guards could not be over-emphasized. It was recalled that, without the courage of the conservators and the guards in 1960–63, the parks of the Congo would almost certainly have disappeared.

Appointed as Director-General of the Institute of Congolese Parks in 1969, Jacques Verschuren was at the forefront of the movement for the creation of new conservation areas. He was particularly proud of the creation of Salonga National Park, 100 km south of Boende, between Kinshasa and Kisangani, ‘which secured the protection of primary forest equal to that of the Amazon’. Salonga is also the sanctuary of the bonobo or pygmy chimpanzee, the primate closest to man. He also participated in the designation of the boundaries for the area which became Okapi Wildlife Reserve, ‘exclusivity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo’.

The DRC had always been in the lead in the field of nature conservation. In conclusion, the hope was expressed on Mr Verschuren's behalf that, through global co-operation, the World Heritage sites would be removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger and that the Upemba National Park, jewel of Katanga Province, would be inscribed on the World Heritage List.

The session devoted to World Heritage in the Congo Basin was closed by **Eulalie Bashige, Director-General of the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation (ICCN)**, who spoke of the state of conservation of these World Heritage sites.

She recalled that the DRC had ratified the World Heritage Convention in 1974 and enumerated the criteria for which the country's sites had been inscribed on the World Heritage List, giving reasons why these sites had been declared World Heritage in Danger. She presented a map of the sites in the DRC and followed with a presentation listing the site values and the threats they were facing (see *color insert*).

The World Heritage values of each of the sites were in fact the very reasons for which the danger listing was applied. The principal threats to these sites were insecurity due to military presence or armed bands and the proliferation of weapons; demographic pressure; large-scale commercial poaching; mining; lack of boundaries for some sites; and occasional conflict with local communities.

Ms Bashige also presented a report on the main difficulties encountered during the war. The toll was heavy: more than 100 officials and guards killed; a fall in the hippo population of Virunga from 20,000 to 1,300; decimation of the elephants of the lowlands of Kahuzi-Biega (90% of the park); occupation of several parts of Virunga by indigenous or refugee populations; and a huge increase in poaching in Virunga, Garamba and Salonga National Parks and Okapi Wildlife Reserve. The prospects for the future lay mainly in the commit-

ment of the Congolese Government to support the conservation of the World Heritage sites. ICCN also counted on the continued financial support of donors for the implementation of Phase II of the 'Biodiversity Conservation in Regions of Armed Conflict' project. With the return to peace and national unity, the rehabilitation of the protected areas, the promotion of tourism and the development of local communities might resume.

In concluding this session, **Natajaran Ishwaran, Director of the Division of Ecological Sciences, UNESCO, and former Deputy Director of the World Heritage Centre**, said that the time had come to take action with regard to the improvement in working conditions. The time was also ripe to make conservation a major priority for the DRC, notwithstanding the tremendous challenges of poverty and development needs. Conservation and development had to be associated. However, this was easier said than done, even if certain cogent examples exist elsewhere. There was a need for research into which aspects of development and conservation were compatible in any given environment. Legal and co-operative mechanisms must be established. The DRC could benefit from the experiences of other countries where integration was perhaps not totally successful, but where nevertheless certain lessons had been learned. Indeed, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity was collecting data on this subject.

Mr Ishwaran reiterated that without the guards the parks would never have survived. For example, at the end of the 1980s, Garamba National Park had been inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger with a population of fifteen white rhino. However, five years later this population had increased to thirty-one individuals and in 1992 the site was removed from the List. Although it was reinscribed in 1996, past examples of success should allow confidence to remain high that it could again be removed in the future. Hope is always alive. The international community should assist the Government of the DRC in safeguarding these properties for perpetuity.

4

Conserving Biodiversity in Times of Conflict

Noureini Tidjani-Serpos, Assistant Director-General, Africa Department, UNESCO, introduced this session devoted to the events that occurred at DRC World Heritage sites following the conflict. He noted that many of the existing links between human life and the environment were not fully understood and merited further study.

Jean-Pierre d'Huart, Consultant and team leader for the evaluation of the UNESCO/UNF 'Biodiversity Conservation in Regions of Armed Conflict' project, gave an overview of lessons learned from the first phase of implementation.

This innovative and atypical project involved a wide range of partners and donors (UN Foundation, Belgian Government), UNESCO's World Heritage Centre, ICCN, a group of international conservation NGOs and German Technical Cooperation (GTZ). Among the partners, all had one point in common: a long field experience and particularly in the five World Heritage sites, where they were still very active.

This partnership originated through a common endeavour to preserve the integrity of the World Heritage sites severely threatened by the conflicts that were raging in the region. Although war was usually a source of division, it had the opposite effect among the conservation specialists intervening in the DRC, causing them to unite and develop new, more effective synergies, between ICCN and its governmental and non-governmental partners.

The project had four specific objectives: (1) direct support to the sites; (2) capacity building; (3) political and diplomatic support; and (4) sustainable financing.

The principal axis for intervention within the framework of the project was to provide **direct support to all five sites** under threat. The goal was to ensure the continuation of conservation activities despite conditions of conflict and war. A particular element of this project was that 60% of its global budget had been allocated to the payment of bonuses for the park guards. In practice, these bonuses replaced the salaries which had either not been paid for some time or paid very sporadically. This was a decisive element in limiting incursions into the sites. Another initiative was the introduction of a system linking the payment of bonuses to the performance achieved in conservation activities. Although this system met with practical problems in certain sites, it had, nonetheless, contributed towards the emergence of a new work ethic among the park staff.

The evaluator had found that UNESCO's very complex administrative procedures were not suited to the need for providing urgent financial assistance to the field. Combined with the difficulty of channelling – in war conditions – funds to outlying regions, these administrative constraints had caused delays in the payment of salaries, consequently causing frustration among the guards who

had to carry out their work under extremely difficult conditions.

The efficiency and synergy of the work had much improved, thanks to the setting up of co-ordination structures between the different partners of the project to facilitate implementation. This was also reflected at site level through the Site Coordination Committees (CoCoSi), as at the national level through the Coregroup. These positive results had convinced ICCN to prolong the CoCoSi and at the same time to extend them to the whole protected area network. Based on the lessons learned from the Coregroup, ICCN has also decided to establish the 'Congo Conservation Coalition' (CoCoCongo), a forum for co-ordination among all the partners and donors of the Institute.

Capacity building. Priority had been given to practical and *in situ* training of field staff, with particular emphasis on surveillance techniques, law enforcement and monitoring. With the return to normal of the country's political situation, a viable training strategy was foreseen with strong focus on the systematic training of ICCN field staff in the domain of conservation.

To further strengthen capacity building, a major effort had been embarked on to improve ecological monitoring at the sites. It included the setting up of a structure, within ICCN, for the management of ecological information (SYGIAP) and the development – in the framework of co-operation with the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office and the European Space Agency (ESA) – from satellite imagery, of baseline maps for the five sites.

Pilot projects on community conservation and improvement of relations with indigenous populations, also benefiting from Belgian funding, had been initiated despite the emergency situation. The results of these projects have demonstrated that it is possible to find solutions, particularly employing conflict reduction techniques, to settle certain differences between the interests of the sites and those of the local people.

The evaluation exercise had shown that community conservation activities should be integrated, under ICCN leadership, into all the conservation programmes for the sites.

Political and diplomatic support for site conservation constituted another particularly innovative characteristic of the project. A major effort had been made to obtain the co-operation of the different parties engaged in the conflict, including the military and the different rebel groups, for the preservation of the World Heritage sites of the DRC. This conservation diplomacy had proved to be a very useful tool thanks, in particular, to the key role played by the World Heritage Centre. However, the lack of human resources at the World Heritage Centre meant that it had not been possible to ensure monitoring of the interventions which, consequently, had been less

effective. These actions would no doubt have attained their objectives had UNESCO's mandate to operate in rebel-controlled areas been more flexible. The absence of an official agreement between UNESCO, the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) and the other UN agencies active in the DRC was regretted. Such an agreement could have achieved excellent results for conservation.

Nevertheless, *conservation diplomacy* had obtained the co-operation of the army and rebel authorities for conservation. The support of the military had been obtained thanks to regular communication and well-planned joint operations. At the planning stage of the project, it was hoped that political and diplomatic support would lead to an International Declaration on the Statute of Neutrality of the staff of the World Heritage sites. Unfortunately, the securing of such a declaration required considerable preparatory work and could not be provided in time. It transpired that it would be better catered for in a new Convention on Protected Areas in Times of Conflict, similar to that already in force for cultural sites.

Sustainable funding. The principal challenge had been to explore additional financial sources for the implementation of the second phase of the project. The active involvement of UNESCO and the credibility of the project had made it possible to generate significant additional financial support from the EU, the World Bank/GEF, the Belgian Government, ESA, the Italian Government and several NGOs. A concept for the creation of a trust fund destined to finance the long-term running costs of the sites had been developed through the project study, but could not be consolidated due to political instability.

In conclusion, the World Heritage sites in the DRC were weakened but still alive. The mobilization of resources for the project was exemplary, but the funds granted had solely permitted a *minimum* of funding for the functioning of the sites, and were insufficient to meet all the challenges in conservation confronting the World Heritage sites during the crisis. The project's positive impact owed much to its structure and the originality of the partnership and to the courage and loyalty of ICCN staff.

Despite the progressive normalization of the political situation in the country, the five World Heritage sites continued to be seriously threatened by the ever-present insecurity in certain regions, the presence of armed groups, and the proliferation of weapons in and around the sites. All these factors were conducive to uncontrolled and often illegal exploitation of natural resources. The commitment undertaken by Mr Arthur Zahidi N'Goma, Vice-President of the DRC, to support the resolution of some of these problems was very welcome. For the future, it would be well to focus on a few domains: training, emergency planning, setting up of ongoing monitoring, co-ordination, continued communication and awareness-raising.

In a moving presentation on the work of the guards, **Jean-Pierre Jobogo Mirindi, Conservator, Virunga National Park/Lulimbi**, paid a heartfelt tribute to the heroic devotion of those of his colleagues who, through their passion for conservation, had paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

Mr Mirindi continued his presentation by listing some of the results achieved by the guards: increase in the gorilla population from 325 to 380 individuals; improved efficiency of the patrols and the recovery of encroached land.

The work conditions of the guards were extremely difficult owing to the lack of transport. Moreover, during the war, non-recognition of their neutrality had cost many lives. From 1996 to 2004, 100 guards had been killed.

Prior to the war, ICCN depended on support from the President of the Republic. The staff of the sites had been well-equipped and motivated, and relations with the customary chiefs were excellent. The situation had begun to deteriorate in 1990 with the weakening of ICCN authority, chiefly illustrated by the disorganized recruitment of new units, a break in the chain of command and demoralization of staff.

The action of UNESCO and partner NGOs had had a beneficial influence on site staff. The UNESCO/UNF venture, the hope of the return of integrity to the parks and the involvement of local authorities all helped to raise the guards' morale.

Mr Mirindi highlighted some of the difficulties of sending funds for the payment of guards' salaries and bonuses: non-operational bank systems; insecurity for the missions of pay agents; and the impact of monetary instability on the daily life of the guards.

While the guards were optimistic about the future, it was hoped that the government would demilitarize the park, reinstall the guards in their barracks, and enforce a strict application of the law with regard to conservation. In the name of all the guards, Mr Mirindi requested that ICCN provide logistical means to ensure surveillance on the ground; regularize the salaries and pension indemnities with government support, and provide assistance to the widows of guards killed in the line of duty.

Robert Mwinyihali of Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) spoke on the sensitive question of the status of fauna in the five World Heritage sites. Using a map of the Network of World Heritage Protected Areas regrouping the seven national parks and the sixteen wildlife reserves and hunting areas, among which are the five World Heritage sites, he indicated the areas where bilateral and multilateral co-operation existed and referred to the existence of a network of conservation NGOs.

Between 1996 and 2003, the Democratic Republic of the Congo had been prey to serious armed conflicts which had had an impact on the fauna of the World Heritage sites. During this time, a proliferation of light weapons had been noted, leading to the killing of guards at Virunga and Garamba National Parks, as well as an increase in poaching and illegal activities throughout all the sites. Some of the sites were occupied by rebel troops, refugees and others displaced by the war and indigenous populations. This had led to the poaching of species protected or threatened with extinction, and the installation of agricultural, forestry or mining exploitations.

For each of the World Heritage sites, Mr Mirindi spoke of the 'flagship' species, the situation of the fauna before, during and after the war and the observations that ICCN and its partners had made. He indicated that the information provided had been obtained thanks to biological inventories carried out at the five World Heritage sites, and that the goals to be achieved had been set according to the period when these inventories had been carried out.

Before the war, it had been enough to know the status and distribution of the fauna and the impact of human activity on them. During the war, it became urgent to establish a monitoring system to evaluate the damage caused to the parks by the different warring parties. In the aftermath of the war, it was crucial to measure the impact the fighting had had on the fauna and develop a basis for biological monitoring.

Supporting the comments of previous speakers, it was clear that priorities for the future must include: *strengthening of biological monitoring* (inventories and monitoring of fauna and flora) and *strengthening surveillance* (payment of guards' salaries and bonuses, provision of field equipment, staff training, etc.).

Paulin Tshikaya Ngoy, Chief of Garamba National Park, spoke about *conservation diplomacy*.

Mr Tshikaya Ngoy outlined the context of the division of the country during the successive wars of 1996 and 1998, which had led to the loss of control of some World Heritage sites by ICCN headquarters, with the consequences already referred to by Mr Mirindi.

The UNESCO/UNF project re-established the links between ICCN headquarters and the sites and restored support for the latter. A two-level strategy was established: provision of direct support to the ICCN teams based at the sites, on the one hand, and on the other, initiation of *conservation diplomacy* to raise the awareness of all the parties involved in the conflict of the importance of preserving the World Heritage sites.

Privileged actions within the framework of the implementation of conservation diplomacy consisted of diplomatic missions to all the rebel factions, the organization of

tripartite meetings, targeted missions to the sites and individual contacts with high-level authorities.

Globally, the use of conservation diplomacy had had positive results, which could be summarized as follows: during a period of armed conflict, the use of conservation diplomacy under the United Nations label constitutes an efficient tool for the protection of the World Heritage sites. The flow of information from the sites to UNESCO permitted the diplomatic missions to draw the attention of the donors and certain political figures to the need for site protection. Although four of the five sites were in rebel territory, the conservation message was heeded by the majority of decision-makers. He also recalled the need to ensure regular monitoring of the results of diplomatic interventions to secure their long-term effectiveness.

In a discussion on the future of World Heritage in the DRC in the coming decade, the six panellists were invited to express their vision of the situation of the sites in ten years' time. According to **Eulalie Bashige (ICCN)**, the protected areas would function but would require support for management and operational plans, and would benefit from new equipment and elementary infrastructure. The local communities would be involved in park management and ecotourism would expand. For **Jérôme Mabilia ma Khete (SPIAF)** the new Forest Code would be correctly applied and forest exploitation would be carried out in a sustainable manner, based on the zoning of forest areas for different uses, taking into account ecological, social and economic factors. **Samy Mankoto (RAPAC)**, hoped that the CoCoSi model would be duplicated in other countries of the subregion and that the exchange of information and expertise would increase. He also hoped that ecotourism would produce a model for the resolution of conflicts. For **Annette Lanjouw (IGCP)**, ICCN would become unified and reorganized and the CoCoCongo would be a unique, totally operational platform. The site managers would have achieved competences to further community conservation initiatives. **John Lukas (GIC and IRF)**, declared that the DRC would have achieved peace and stability and that the work of conservation would no longer be carried out in an emergency situation. The Congolese Government would have improved funding for the parks and the guards and ICCN would have gained autonomy in terms of technical competences. **Guy Debonnet (UNESCO WHC)** hoped that the World Heritage sites of the DRC would be removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger but feared that unless emergency assistance was provided urgently, some sites ran the risk of being deleted from the World Heritage List. In his view, all that had been achieved to date must be consolidated and the alliance reinforced through the addition of new partners (including the private sector). He made an appeal for new diplomatic and political support and hoped for a highly effective ICCN.

Status of the fauna in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Virunga National Park				
Species	Before 1996	During the war	After 2000	Observations
Gorilla (<i>G.berengei berengei</i>)	324	359	384 (oct 2003)	Small gorillas poaching, bamboo harvesting...
Elephant Central Sector	470	486	265	Poaching for meat and ivory
Hippopotamus	29 000 (Southern and Northern Plains)		1 309 (2003)	Poaching for meat and trade
Buffalo	9 700 (1981)		2 240 (nov 2003)	Poaching for meat and trade

Garamba National Park				
Species	Before the war (1996)	During the war	After the war	Observations
Rhinoceros	29	26 (1998) 30 (2002)	14-20 (Jul. 2004)	50% of animals poached for horns
Girafe	178	144 (1998) 118 (2000)	62	Trophy poaching
Elephant	11 175	5 878 (1998) 5 983 (2000)	6 848	Armed poaching (meat/ivory)
Buffalo	25 242	7 772 (1998) 13 281 (2002)	14 480	Decrease in rhino, elephant and girafe poaching
Hippopotamus	3601	786 (1998)	3 036	Decrease in rhino, elephant and girafe poaching

Okapis Faunal Reserve			
Species	Before 1996	During the war	After 2000
Okapi	3 900-6 350	3 900-6 350	Ongoing inventory
Elephant	4 750-6 000	3 800	Ongoing inventory
Chimpanzee	7 500-12 000	6 000-10 000	Ongoing inventory

Salonga National Park			
Species	Before 1996	During the war	After 2000
Elephant	No inventory	No inventory	First inventories by MIKE&WCS
Bonobo	No inventory	Partial inventories	First inventories by MIKE&WCS
Hippopotamus	No inventory	No inventory	
Congolese peacock	Unknown status	Unknown status	Unknown status

Kahuzi-Biega National Park (high and low altitude sectors)				
Species	Before 1996	During the war	After 2002	Observations
Gorilla (<i>G. Graueri</i>)	250 (highland sector)	130 (highland sector)	78 (highland sector)	Poaching
	3 000 (low altitude)	No Data (lowland sector)	No Data (lowland sector)	
Elephant	800 (highland sector)	25 (highland sector)	7 (highland sector)	Armed poaching
	8 000 (lowland sector)	No Data (lowland sector)	No Data (lowland sector)	



5

Partners for World Heritage in the DRC

In introducing this session, designed to permit the governmental and non-governmental representatives to define the nature of their total commitment, the **Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Francesco Bandarin**, stated that this conference represented a decisive turning point in that it had brought together the international community, offering the opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to the protection and preservation of the World Heritage sites in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

H.E. Mr Anselme Enerunga, speaking for the Congolese Government, acknowledged and expressed his deep gratitude to the Belgian and Japanese Governments, UNF and UNESCO for their roles in convening the first international event in support of World Heritage in Danger in the DRC.

The importance of biodiversity in the DRC was linked to the viability of the climate and habitats as well as to the endemic character of numerous species of fauna and flora present on Congolese territory. The scientific, ecological, cultural, economic and social values of the five World Heritage sites were inestimable for future generations, as was the traditional ecological conscience of the country which had resulted in the creation of the protected areas. Mr Enerunga declared that the DRC was proud to assume the responsibility for the sustainable development of these sites and protected areas.

Acknowledging the work of the conservation NGOs in the DRC, the minister confirmed that his country recognized that without international solidarity and co-operation the sustainable development of its natural resources could not be ensured. For this reason, the DRC had ratified several international conventions relating to the environment and nature conservation, including the World Heritage Convention, Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention to Combat Desertification, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Mr Enerunga also acknowledged the destructive character of heavy human pressure on the natural resources of the country – mainly due to armed conflict and aggressions against the DRC – exercised on the World Heritage sites, and the importance of safeguarding biological diversity despite a particularly difficult situation.

In response to the mobilization of the international community for the safeguarding of World Heritage sites, the Congolese Government declared its commitment to the following goals:

- (1) Promote conservation of biodiversity throughout the national territory and more specifically in the World Heritage sites.
- (2) Guarantee security and promote investment destined for national reconstruction and development, focusing attention on the execution of the strategic action plan (Plan de Convergence) as regards nature conser-

vation, notably the implementation of the Multi-sectoral Emergency Programme for Reconstruction and Rehabilitation (PMURR).

- (3) Reinforce the combat against poaching by associating the Congolese armed forces with the heroic work accomplished by the guards of the national parks of the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation.
- (4) Promote the implementation of integrated development programmes for local communities in protected areas, combating degradation of biodiversity on the one hand, and ensuring the welfare of the targeted populations on the other.
- (5) Restore and ensure the integrity of the World Heritage sites.

In conclusion, Mr Enerunga appealed to private and public partners to support the efforts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the preservation and promotion of World Heritage in his country.

Eric Duchêne, Ambassador, Deputy Director-General of the Belgian Cooperation, expressed the gratitude of his country to all those who had contributed to the organization of the series of events in support of the remarkable heritage of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, indicating that despite the difficult prevailing circumstances, the reconstruction of the country remained for the Belgian Cooperation a priority for its sustainable development strategy. He stated that the protection of the environment, and in particular of biodiversity, held a privileged place in Belgium's policy for development assistance.

Belgium had long been convinced that the universal renown of the 1972 World Heritage Convention made it the most effective instrument for the protection of natural heritage. Consequently, the decision was taken to concentrate extrabudgetary funds placed at the disposal of UNESCO on the activities of the World Heritage Centre and the Natural Sciences Sector and for the safeguarding of the biodiversity of Central Africa, and more specifically the DRC. The services of a conservation specialist had also been made available to the World Heritage Centre.

Belgium's bilateral and multilateral assistance for the promotion and safeguarding of Congolese heritage would continue. For the period 2004–07, a contribution to UNESCO of €1.6 million was foreseen for support programmes to local communities to promote biodiversity in the DRC World Heritage sites (€1.1 million) and to support ERAIFT in Kinshasa (€500,000).

Pending approval of the 2005 budget, an additional contribution of €300,000 would be granted for the Biodiversity Programme at the level of €100,000 per year over three years from 2005.

In addition, some €300,000 would be allocated to UNESCO for the creation, within ICCN, of an informa-

tion management unit responsible for documenting the achievements of the above-mentioned programmes, and to develop the activities of the Division of Ecological Sciences focused on the protection of natural heritage in the DRC.

The German representative, Andreas Pfeil, thanked UNESCO for its commitment to the safeguarding of the natural World Heritage sites of the DRC. His remarks mainly concerned the question of the protection of the Congo Basin which, in his view, constituted a challenge for the international community.

Support to the Transition Government in place in the DRC was, for Germany, a vital element in the peace process. There was no alternative. The return to peace, the eradication of poverty and the protection of natural resources all formed one goal, hence the German Government's support for ICCN since 1998. In fact, long before this, Germany had encouraged an 'integrated approach' to improve the means of subsistence of the populations living in the periphery of the parks and protection of the fauna and flora.

The conservation and protection of tropical forests were priorities for the German Government, which had set as an objective the granting of €125 million per year for the protection of tropical forests throughout the world. As far as Central Africa is concerned, Germany is a member of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership with a financial contribution of €20 million for bilateral co-operation with partner countries and €5 million in assistance to COMIFAC.

Germany would continue its efforts in the DRC on a national scale, through improvement of the general framework for the protection of the environment and the implementation of the revised Forest Code of 2002. Implementation should be carried out in a participatory manner based on consultations with the local communities and taking into account the capacities of the Congolese administration. At local level, Germany would continue to support Kahuzi-Biega National Park and would again assume payment of the bonuses and equipment of the park guards which had, until now, been covered by UNESCO.

Carlos Schuler, GTZ Technical Advisor and Programme Coordinator at the Kahuzi-Biega World Heritage site, gave an overview of the current situation of the site.

For twenty years, the park had enjoyed assistance from the German Cooperation, which gave priority to the preservation of the ecosystem, in co-operation with the indigenous population, and the promotion of development activities in the region of the park. The goal of this integrated approach was to provide the population with an alternative source of income to avoid depleting park resources. The total support

provided by Germany to Kahuzi-Biega since 1985 was approximately €15 million.

Before the recent political crisis, tourism had constituted an important economic factor for the Kahuzi-Biega World Heritage site and for the whole region. In 1990, more than 300,000 tourists had visited the area, providing an income of US\$260,000 for ICCN.

Since the arrival of the refugees from Rwanda in 1994, the situation of the park and its surroundings had greatly deteriorated. More than 300,000 refugees had collected in camps on the eastern border of the park, causing terrific pressure on the natural resources of the region. In response, GTZ had attempted to set up mechanisms to reduce this pressure, such as providing the refugees with firewood or assisting the indigenous Congolese population who did not qualify for the assistance destined for the refugees.

These actions by GTZ both avoided major damage being caused to Kahuzi-Biega National Park and defused the atmosphere with the local people involved.

The armed conflicts of 1996 and 1998 and the problems they created had transformed the park into a refuge for thousands of Congolese fleeing rebel attacks and threats. The park had also been used as a rear base for various rebel groups and foreign militia, contributing to numerous illegal mining exploitations in the lowlands where even now between 10,000 and 20,000 people mined gold, cassiterite and coltan. This caused enormous insecurity problems for the local people. Each day, hundreds of women were raped and since the beginning of the crisis more than 3 million people had been killed.

Park guards had not been spared. Without weapons for a long time, they have had to work in extremely difficult and dangerous conditions. The fauna had also suffered heavily. Of more than 5,000 elephants inventoried before the crisis, only half remained. The gorilla population had also been heavily reduced. The park infrastructure had been destroyed three times.

Despite general insecurity, GTZ had continued its activities in Kahuzi-Biega National Park, whenever possible negotiating with the rebel parties in an attempt to limit to a maximum the negative effects on the integrity of the World Heritage and to improve the security and work conditions of the guards and staff.

GTZ had continued to provide assistance to the population, procuring food and seeds and closely associating them in park management through the establishment of local committees for nature protection. In parallel, awareness-raising exercises on the situation of the park were regularly carried out involving the population of the region, political and traditional decision-makers, local and international NGOs and the media.

In spite of scarce financial resources, close collaboration with organizations such as UNESCO, WCS, WWF and the World Food Programme provided additional funding for the protection of the park and support for the indigenous population.

For the last five years, the number of mountain gorillas had remained stable despite the presence of large numbers of soldiers surrounding their natural habitats. Recent fires in the park started by illegal Rwanda refugees, militia and Interahamwes in an attempt to acquire new land, had been brought under control with assistance from the population.

In conclusion, Mr Schuler recognized that UNESCO World Heritage in the DRC had greatly suffered, but the ecosystem retained its faculty of regeneration. Moreover, development prospects for the indigenous populations still remained. He affirmed that without the efforts of the German Cooperation, UNESCO and other partners, the park would not have survived. The development of the region and the conservation of the park would only be possible once peace was re-established and this essential factor was far beyond the influence of the project and the park administration. Therefore, it was up to the decision-makers and politicians, the United Nations and the international donors to mobilize and pursue the peace process.

Anne Carson, First Secretary of the United States Permanent Delegation to UNESCO, spoke of US support to the World Heritage Convention, recalling that her country had enthusiastically encouraged the development of the World Heritage Convention and was even the first to have ratified it, on 7 December 1973.

The past thirty years had demonstrated that the Convention and its Secretariat, the World Heritage Centre, had played a fundamental role in the safeguarding of vital parts of our common human tradition and history. In drawing attention to the threatened World Heritage sites in the Congo Basin, this conference fitted into this tradition. It was witness to the extraordinary work that UNESCO could accomplish when bound by a common understanding of shared goals, a tight timetable and targeted action.

Secretary of State, Colin Powell, had always shown a keen interest in questions relating to the wise development of the resources of the African continent. This interest was the origin of the announcement, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (2002), of the initiation of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership.

The partnership was an association of twenty-nine governmental and intergovernmental organizations working together for sustainable management of forest ecosystems of the Congo Basin and improvement in the livelihoods of the populations living in the region.

The contribution of the United States to this partnership amounted to approximately US\$53 million, chiefly focused on support and conservation for eleven ecologically significant landscapes in the Congo Basin, including the five World Heritage sites. Since the announcement of the Congo Basin Project, the US Government had contributed about US\$36 million to the various activities being carried out in the Congo Basin. For 2005, an additional amount of US\$15 million had been requested.

Only continuous and concerted work could enable the Congo Basin and its peoples to attain the future they deserve. The United States was determined to continue to play a leadership role in this domain.

Bérengère Quincy, Director of Development and Technical Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (France), spoke of French activities in the environment field in the Congo Basin.

She indicated that France had opted for a regional approach that included de facto the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The advantage of such an approach lay in the fact that it would accompany other French interventions and funding initiatives and thus encourage a synergy between the bilateral and multilateral projects through complementarity and concertation with the different partners operating in the region.

For this reason, France was associated with the Congo Basin Forest Partnership as its fundamental goals include, besides conservation, the eradication of poverty and social inequalities of the local populations.

The French approach focused on **three axes**:

- (1) **Conservation**, which implies support to protected areas for sustainable management and economic development – through ecotourism, capacity building for park managers, the development of concerted management plans with local communities and the protection of certain threatened species, notably the bonobo in the DRC. French Cooperation was also very much involved in the EU ECOFAC Programme which actively supported the Network of Protected Areas of Central Africa (RAPAC) and the Central African World Heritage Forest Initiative (CAWHFI) project coordinated by UNESCO in collaboration with a number of partners.
- (2) **Valorization**. This implied the proposal of economic alternatives in order to reconcile the use and conservation of resources by and for the populations. Several pilot projects had already been initiated, promoting non-ligneous forest products (edible plants, roots, fruits) with the aim of encouraging their efficient and sustainable development by the indigenous populations, as the custodians of these resources. These products usually generated monetary resources for

rural populations and responded to a heavy demand from the urban populations of the region. Ms Quincy gave the example of the Biodivalor project, which concerns the sustainable valorization of the diversity of Gabonese forests through the gathering and trading of plant samples for pharmaceutical, cosmetic or aromalogical use. This type of project could be extended throughout the countries of the region. The French Cooperation was also interested in sustainable forest development, and more particularly the sustainable management of natural resources in forest industries. The activities are mainly initiated by the FFEM (French funding for the global environment) for the establishment of inventories in the framework of sustainable management and development plans for forest concessions, with support from the French Development Agency.

- (3) **Knowledge and information.** This concerned the promotion of research by participating, for example, in the development of information management and environmental knowledge in Central Africa through such projects as the Regional Environmental Information Management Programme (REIMP), which regroups several financial partners and is managed by the Association for the Development of Environmental Information (ADIE) with its headquarters in Gabon.

In conclusion, Ms Quincy deplored the fact that information management was, at present, one of the weak links in the sustainable development chain in Central Africa. To close this gap, the French Cooperation foresaw making available to the decision-makers and partners reliable information for resource management using techniques such as the Geographic Information System (GIS).

Roberto Tortoli, Under-Secretary for Environment (Italy), speaking on behalf of his country, referred to the support the Italian Government had provided to the DRC in past years. Italian Cooperation in the DRC had focused its activities around three main themes: resolution of conflicts, debt cancellation, and assistance to development, concentrating efforts on emergency assistance and food relief.

Particular attention was accorded to *inter-Congolese dialogue*, the negotiations between the diverse Congolese movements having reached their peak in June 2003 with the formation of the Transition Government. For this reason, Italy actively participated in the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region, held in November 2004 in the United Republic of Tanzania under the auspices of the United Nations and the African Union.

Italy had always accorded great importance to the safeguarding of World Heritage – an eternal witness of the past and essential guarantee for the future – as well as to regions in post-conflict situations, and was convinced

that UNESCO could and should play a crucial role in this domain. In the framework of budgetary discussions at the 32nd session of UNESCO's General Conference, Italy had chosen to rejoin the camp of those who wished to make an effort to protect the world's second most important 'green lung'. This had motivated the country to donate US\$300,000 to the 'Promoting and Preserving Congolese Heritage' project.

Emmanuel Mbi, Director of Operations for the DRC at the World Bank, noted that the wealth and importance of DRC biodiversity constituted an unique and irreplaceable heritage. The biological heritage of the DRC also comprised the only possible source of income for the Congolese peoples, who were among the poorest of the planet.

For Mr Mbi, the central question was the threat to the heritage and how it could be preserved. He noted the urgent need to act to preserve the seriously threatened heritage of the DRC, particularly concerning the risk of extinction of the white rhino of Garamba, the loss of human life and environmental institutional infrastructure. In fact, despite a return to peace, it will be many years before the institutions needed for environmental protection can be established and regain their efficiency. Mr Mbi urged reconstruction, modernization and strengthening of the institutions concerned while improving the standard of living of the Congolese to ensure, in the medium term, the effective management of natural resources.

The pragmatic solution was to accept the imperfect and perhaps crude character of the instruments set up during the transition period that the DRC is experiencing today. Above all, Mr Mbi recommended assisting the Congolese Government to identify the priorities and the sequence of actions to be undertaken. Subsequently, environmental concerns should be integrated into the global strategy for the reconstruction of the country. Nature conservation could thus represent an important contribution to the stabilization process. Better management of natural resources could help in the consolidation of peace, which is an essential prerequisite for nature conservation. Without peace or security, there would be no hope of applying the environmental policy, which led him to favour the use of peacekeeping forces to maintain law and order and relaunch the economy.

Since 2001, the World Bank had been working closely with the Congolese Government and other partners with the aim of providing answers to environmental emergencies. The World Bank, which favoured co-operation and synergies, had been able to collaborate closely with FAO on the Forest Code, with UNESCO on national parks and with numerous other donors and NGOs to define a strategic framework for DRC forests, as well as with the Congolese people.

Specifically, the World Bank had supported the Congolese Government in adopting measures to 'free' part of the land fraudulently held by some companies, and instituting a moratorium on the granting of new land leases. Today, these efforts continued through funding the revision of all land grant contracts, as well as the preparation of forestry zoning plans in concert with the indigenous populations potentially affected by this exercise.

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) was preparing a new US\$10 million funding project in support of DRC national parks. Two World Heritage sites, Garamba and Virunga National Parks, were concerned. In conclusion, Mr Mbi re-emphasized that environmental action could not be carried out in isolation and for this reason the improvement of the standard of living of the Congolese people was another ambition of the World Bank.

Gilles Fontaine, Permanent Delegation of the European Commission to UNESCO and OECD, noted that the Commission, together with ICCN, international conservation NGOs, Belgian, French and Italian bilateral agencies and some UN agencies, had been an early supporter of the UNESCO/UNF project for the preservation of DRC World Heritage sites.

EU commitment to support the World Heritage sites dated back some twenty years or more, in particular to Virunga National Park under the Kivu Programme, and Salonga National Park under the ECOFAC regional programme.

The end of the present phase of the UNESCO/UNF project in the DRC coincided with the resumption of co-operation with the EU after a ten-year hiatus.

One of the biggest successes of EU collaboration with UNESCO/UNF had been the establishment of a community of key actors in nature conservation, possessing both unique competences and long field experience, and willing to work in a synergy-oriented and concerted manner. This new way of working now made the implementation of major natural resource programmes a viable possibility. The 'Capacity Building for the Management and Rehabilitation of Protected Areas of the DRC' project was part of this programme. Financed by the European Development Fund, in January 2004, to the sum of €5 million, this project has as its objective a preservation policy for the environment, particularly the global reconstruction of DRC institutions and management capacity building.

The main objectives of this project are:

- sustainable capacity building of the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation and the Institute for Zoological and Botanical Gardens of the Congo, and
- rehabilitation and management of national parks, notably those of Virunga and Salonga.

The DRC would benefit from an additional €5 million. This funding would be allocated to institutional support activities for ICCN and support to ERAIFT.

The revival of the ECOFAC regional programme in the DRC, which included support for Salonga National Park, was announced for 2005.

The situation remained critical, especially as regards security and the restoration of state authority throughout the territory. The murders of ICCN staff of Upemba National Park, the occupation of the gorilla habitat of Virunga National Park and the elimination of half of the white rhino population were serious reminders that the battle for safeguarding Congolese heritage was far from being won. Part of EU resources would, however, be directly allocated to support the safeguarding of the white rhino of Garamba National Park.

The participation of the EU, together with other partners, in the re-establishment of law and order in the sector of the gorillas in Virunga National Park, in July and August 2004, had demonstrated that political will associated with a capacity for rapid and courageous response in the field could be successful, despite the gravity of the problem, even in a region as sensitive as Kivu Province.

Abdoulaye Ndiaye, UNDP/GEF Regional Coordinator for Biodiversity in West/Central Africa, indicated that UNDP/GEF activities were particularly concentrated on the questions of climate change, biodiversity, international waters, and protection of the ozone layer, with two new priorities: land degradation (desertification and deforestation) and persistent organic pollutants (POPS). He recalled that the region of West/Central Africa had three types of ecosystem – forest, sahelian, coastal and marine – and that the Congo Basin was considered as the second most important forest area in the world and one of the two most important in Africa in terms of biological diversity.

Some six UNDP/GEF initiatives, valued at approximately US\$48.5 million, were currently being implemented in the Congo Basin. These included the rehabilitation project for sixteen protected areas in the DRC, comprising the Virunga, Garamba, Kahuzi-Biega and Salonga National Parks. This four-year project will cost US\$18.5 million (US\$6 million from GEF and US\$12.5 million co-financed by UNDP, DRC, GTZ, UNESCO, UNF, Belgian Government, MacArthur Foundation and WWF). At the national level, partners are the Congolese Ministries of the Environment and of Tourism, and ICCN.

The principal goal of the project was to establish a structural and functional basis to manage the protected areas of the DRC. The expected results include:

- elaboration of an environmental, legal, institutional and social policy for the conservation of the protected areas;

- restructuration of ICCN and establishment of a decentralized management system;
- development and implementation of a planning and management system;
- resumption of basic operations through the recruitment of personnel, funding and provision of equipment;
- based on experience and analyses undertaken in the five pilot sites, identification of a participative approach and community management.

Speaking on behalf of the European Space Agency, Mr **Mario Hernandez, Senior Programme Specialist, UNESCO**, indicated that the partnership between the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and ESA had begun in 2001, focused on using space observation technologies as tools to assist in monitoring the state of conservation of World Heritage sites, particularly in developing countries. ESA and UNESCO consequently initiated a project to observe gorilla habitats in World Heritage sites, known as BeGo (Build Environment for Gorilla), which concerned Uganda and Rwanda as well as the DRC. In parallel, ESA had assisted UNESCO in setting up a satellite observation unit to serve developing countries.

The results obtained to date have illustrated to what extent space observation is an extremely useful tool for conservation in the DRC, where the protected areas were not easily accessible. Furthermore, the extensive area of some of the parks meant that satellite imagery was the best tool to apprehend their vastness. Satellite imagery provided the basis for appropriate mapping. With financial aid from the Belgian Government, UNESCO would assist the DRC in the required capacity building.

The space agencies were willing to support the unit responsible for satellite observation within UNESCO by providing office space, equipment and necessary expertise, if a project for biodiversity conservation in the DRC could be financed and to the extent that satellite observation could be useful to the project.

The initiatives of the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), represented by Chimane Diaw, were presented as comprising two major components: scientific support linked to the recovery and construction of a forestry policy and the integration of international experience into the forestry system; and good governance of natural areas.

Some of the most important strategic challenges to be defined concerned the ways in which to transfer from crisis or diplomatic conservation to conservation relating to the populations living inside or on the periphery of the protected areas, as well as how to reactivate the timber industry. It was important to optimize the different values of the forest.

David Carter, Vice-President for Finance, Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer of the UN Foundation, began his presentation by stating that bringing togeth-

er governments, international organizations and major NGOs to protect the biodiversity of World Heritage sites in the DRC, as UNESCO had done, was exactly the kind of global partnership that Ted Turner had wished to encourage in making his exceptional gift of US\$1 billion to the United Nations.

The UNF partnership with the World Heritage Centre, the DRC, the Belgian Government, German Technical Cooperation and the NGOs had been groundbreaking, both in the team approach it had launched and in its efforts to protect natural heritage in regions of armed conflict.

UNF wished to thank its governmental and non-governmental partners, UNESCO and in particular the World Heritage Centre and its Director, Francesco Bandarin, for having allowed his organization to explore new ways of providing sustainable funding for its projects. The adoption of this partnership approach to ensure sustainable funding for the preservation of World Heritage in the DRC had turned out to be equally as important for the project as the funds granted by the Foundation. UNF funding of approximately US\$4 million had permitted the leveraging of additional millions of dollars for the conservation effort for World Heritage sites in the DRC.

The UNF Board had recently approved a new partnership with the Wildlife Conservation Society and the World Heritage Centre, within which an additional amount of US\$1.2 million would be allocated to funding Phase II of the project for safeguarding the World Heritage sites in the DRC. The Foundation wished to continue its collaboration with its governmental and non-governmental partners. It also intended to continue to assist the World Heritage Centre to strengthen its capacities to face increasing demands. In this respect, it was working with the Centre to seek ways of making the World Heritage story more widely known throughout the world and to promote the beneficial effect of sustainable tourism in World Heritage sites.

In conclusion, Mr Carter commended the Declaration of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on its political commitment for the safeguarding of its World Heritage sites in danger.

As spokesperson for the NGO partners, **Annette Lanjouw, Technical Counsellor to the International Gorilla Conservation Programme** indicated that ten NGO conservation teams were currently working in the five World Heritage sites. The annual financial contribution for these sites is estimated at about US\$2 million. Conservation was a long-term investment and many of these NGOs and individuals had been present in the DRC for decades, continuing to work in the field despite the war. She also emphasized that the activities of all the NGOs had been carried out with the approval of the

government, in particular ICCN, the courage and commitment of which she wished to commend.

The enforcement of law and order, the monitoring of biological inventories, co-operation with local communities and awareness-raising of the authorities concerned were all indispensable for the development of the country's capacities in the field of conservation.

Ms Lanjouw recommended that attention should be given to ensure that conservation also contributed to poverty reduction throughout the country and not only in isolated sites. Sustainable development would occur through participation in the management of forests, mines, infrastructures, etc.

The Congolese Government was urged to support the infrastructures and the parks by every means and to secure the integrity of the park borders and their long-term protection.

The NGOs hoped that the United Nations and the international community would integrate nature conservation into their intervention programme, recognizing its role in poverty eradication.

In concluding the session on Partners for World Heritage, **Grégoire Bakandeja wa Mpungu**, Dean of the Faculty of Law of the University of Kinshasa and President of the Economic and Financial Commission of the Congolese Parliament, spoke of the important role of the conference in providing participants with clarification on the state of biodiversity in the country.

The Congolese population today, estimated at 60 million, would probably double in the coming thirty years, and dependence on the country's natural resources should not be neglected at the risk of endangering all initiatives for the conservation of biological diversity. Like earlier speakers, Mr Bakendeja emphasized the need for global development in all areas, including the industrial sector, as well as the restoration of security. He recalled the wish of the partners of the DRC to see the government commit itself to ensuring security in the national parks and protected areas that could form the basis for a vigorous tourist industry.

Invoking the participation of the private sector, Mr Bakendeja indicated that about twenty companies – from the mining, forestry, oil, tourism and financial sectors – had accepted UNESCO's invitation to participate in the forum with the private sector on September 15. The companies represented had had the opportunity to make known the difficulties with which they were confronted in the exercise of their activities, but had also recognized the importance of preserving the World Heritage of the DRC. He highlighted their essential priority to adopt responsible social and environmental principals and practices. Examples of good practice existed but much remained to be done.

In conclusion, Mr Bakandeja referred to the call by the UNDP/GEF representative, Abdoulaye Ndiaye, to capitalize on the opportunity offered by this encounter with the sectors through the creation of a Monitoring Committee, which would be required to explore new ways for the protection and conservation of natural and cultural heritage of the DRC as heritage common to all humanity.

Ensuring the Protection of Sites in the DRC: Expert Workshop

During this workshop, which preceded the International Donors' Conference for Promoting and Preserving Congolese Heritage, experts were invited to make presentations on the following four themes:

- A. Evaluation of the first phase of the UNESCO/UNF project
- B. Assisting with remote sensing tools for monitoring World Heritage sites in the DRC
- C. Importance of DRC World Heritage sites for the conservation of great apes

- D. Implication of local communities in the conservation of World Heritage sites in the DRC: lessons learned and future perspectives

A half-day session was devoted to each of the four themes. The report of each session is organized into:

- General presentation of the workshop
- Goals
- Problems encountered
- Main points of discussion
- Conclusions

A. Evaluation of the first phase of the UNESCO/UNF project

General presentation of the workshop

Jean-Pierre d'Huart, the project evaluator, briefly presented the 'Biodiversity Conservation in Regions of Armed Conflict' project, underlining its innovative and atypical character, which lay mainly in the fact that it was elaborated and implemented by a coalition which brought together the UN Foundation, UNESCO, German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), nine international conservation NGOs and the Congolese authority responsible for park management (ICCN).

Another particularity of this project was that 62% of the funds allocated for its execution had been used to pay the salaries of park guards.

The workshop had been organized to encourage exchanges between the public and the experts who came to share their field experience – and indicate what, in their view, were the priorities for the implementation of Phase II of the project.

The goal of the project, initiated in 2000 by UNESCO with financial support from UNF and now in its fourth and final year, was assistance to the DRC, a country enmeshed in the Great Lakes conflict following the full force and consequences of the Rwandan genocide in its eastern region. The preservation of the integrity of the five World Heritage sites in this war-torn country was urgent, particularly for the four sites situated in the eastern part of the country and isolated from the Kinshasa headquarters.

This project had been made possible thanks to the support of numerous conservation NGOs, UNF, the Belgian Development Cooperation, ESA and the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office, in close collaboration with ICCN.

Goals

- Present the results obtained and the lessons learned in the first phase of the project.
- Establish priorities for the implementation of Phase II.

The session began with the presentation of a number of problems by the following experts: John Hart (WCS), Bernard Iyomi-Lyatshi (ICCN), Annette Lanjouw (IGCP),

Norbert Mushenzi (ICCN), Eulalie Bashige (ICCN), Terese Hart (WCS), Conrad Aveling (Consultant) and Henri-Paul Eloma (ICCN). A discussion followed.

Problems discussed

Are severely impoverished World Heritage sites still conservation priorities in the DRC?

John Hart and Bernard Iyomi-Lyatshi estimated that, despite the overall success of the project, the dangers that threatened the World Heritage sites had not disappeared. Throughout the conflict, the sites had been used as base camps for the military leading to a significant increase in poaching, the proceeds of which were a source of income to finance the activities of the armed bands. This overexploitation of the resources could have led to the vulnerable situation of the most sensitive species. For example, six tonnes of ivory had been removed from the Okapi Wildlife Reserve with the complicity of the armed forces.

Strong demographic pressure was another of the most important threats faced by the World Heritage sites. In Kivu Province, numerous sites faced very heavy demographic pressure on their immediate periphery. The populations who had settled in these areas wanted access to the natural resources and to acquire new agricultural land. The cases of Virunga and Kahuzi-Biega National Parks illustrated these concerns. This site was heavily affected by illegal occupation and by uncontrolled mining activities carried out within its boundaries. Furthermore, ICCN's lack of means had led to increased insecurity, despite a certain success in operations against the exercise of illicit activities in the park carried out with the military.

The strong coalition between ICCN and NGOs generated by the war must survive in time of peace

Annette Lanjouw and Norbert Mushenzi recalled that at the outset of the conflict, ICCN had been practically alone in working for the conservation of the World Heritage sites. Its staff were without resources, disoriented and disorganized. However, with the help of a small number of conservation NGOs, it had been able to launch an appeal

for international aid. In order for ICCN to maintain its influence in protected areas, it had to:

- gather information for each site and understand its situation;
- adopt a global strategy in order to be in a position to co-ordinate its activities;
- pursue activities in the field, including the remuneration of its staff;
- launch a major fund-raising campaign;
- disseminate information on the evolution of the situation and lessons learnt.

To carry out all these actions successfully, a special team responsible for the development and monitoring of the UNESCO/UNF project had been mobilized with the aim of ensuring the protection of all the World Heritage sites. The most pressing matters related to the heavy pressure exercised on the sites, the isolation of the guards and the payment of their salaries, as well as the question of non-respect of national laws within the sites.

The establishment of co-ordination mechanisms in the framework of the project by UNESCO and the coalition of NGOs certainly constituted a first in the world of conservation and could, in this respect, be considered as a positive and unexpected effect of the war. The adoption in wartime of a concerted approach for conservation in the field had been one of the successes of the project.

The two main goals assigned to the coalition had been to evaluate the global situation of the five World Heritage sites and draw on the lessons and conclusions from this common mobilization that could serve towards the conservation of the sites in times of conflict.

The evaluation had shown that the co-ordination mechanisms established by the coalition constituted an important element in the success of the project and helped to avoid duplication and competition between conservation organizations, but that the co-ordination itself proved to be costly in time and workload. Structures such as the Site Coordination Committees (CoCoSi) and the Congo Conservation Coalition (CoCoCongo), both set up by the project, had been rendered official by ICCN, which was considered to be an additional success, all the more so as the institutionalization of this co-ordination between the organizations was already under way.

The post-conflict situation leaves many priorities for action and reaction

Eulalie Bashige and Terese Hart felt unable to define what was meant by 'post-conflict' situation. The still uncertain character of the current situation and the persistent and numerous encroachments and illegal exploitation of resources made it hazardous to venture a definition. It was however clear that the 'post-conflict' situation did not in any way signify the return to security in the protected areas, nor control of the exploitation of resources.

Nevertheless, this pessimism should not overshadow the successes obtained by the ICCN-UNESCO-NGO coalition in the fight for the conservation of the World Heritage sites through their unifying approaches to the creation of a real platform for conservation in the DRC. The challenge now being faced was to secure the progress already achieved. To accomplish this, CoCoCongo and CoCoSi must be widely recognized and adequately budgeted for the continuation of their work.

The time had come for reconstruction. The lessons learned from the first phase of the project (expanding the partnership and increasing resources) must be taken into consideration. Moreover, the fate of the other protected areas that had also greatly suffered from the war must also be examined. The Congolese Government should make a commitment to conservation as an indication of the importance the DRC authorities assigned to this matter.

Preserving the World Heritage sites in times of conflict: lessons learned

The evaluation of the UNESCO/UNF project carried out in May 2004 had allowed members of the coalition to draw on a certain amount of information concerning this period of the conflict.

Conrad Aveling and Henri-Paul Eloma emphasized the following important points from the information obtained:

- Contrary to all expectations, the war had reinforced the alliance of the partners under the umbrella of UNESCO with, as main results, the sharing of expertise and the establishment of coherent and efficient co-ordination mechanisms.
- The continual presence of partners on the ground had permitted the regular remuneration of the guards. However, the constraints linked to the channelling of funds for the payment of their bonuses caused certain security problems. The fact that the salaries had been covered by external donors should not dispense the Congolese Government from recommencing the remuneration of the guards.
- Capacity building at the level of management teams should have been continued. Its interruption had seriously undermined the morale of the guards. Although innovative plans to control law enforcement and bio-monitoring had been developed and implemented in the sites with success, the attachment to a bonus for the realization of individual performance had also stood the test of time.
- The need to strengthen the community conservation concept in the DRC. The involvement of all decision-makers was crucial to make this concept an important conservation tool for ICCN.
- UNESCO's diplomatic missions proved crucial and brought true added value to the resolution of internal conflicts and the re-establishment of communication. Consequently, efforts should continue to be made locally, nationally and internationally to maintain these results over the long term.
- The weak synergies between United Nations agencies had

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led to the loss of certain crucial opportunities to make progress in conservation: for example, the failure of the attempt to elaborate a Declaration on the Neutrality of World Heritage Sites.

- The attempt to create, in the DRC, a fund for conservation was a failure because of the war. With regard to sustainable financing, the involvement of UNESCO's World Heritage Centre, through its catalysing role for the mobilization of new partners, had proved vital, despite the difficulty in making links with other UN programmes.
- The commitment of UNESCO had proved decisive in the mobilization of new partners.

Priorities identified for the implementation of Phase II of the project

- Obtain a strong political commitment from the Congolese Government for biodiversity conservation of the DRC.
- Institutionalize the co-ordination mechanism at site level (CoCoSi) and national level (CoCoCongo).
- Seek new partners and new financial resources.
- Establish management plans for all the sites.
- Set up community conservation activities.
- Develop training programmes and capacity building for ICCN.
- Examine the state of other protected areas which have also suffered from the war.
- Pursue diplomatic missions.

Main points of discussion

- The need for greater involvement of other United Nations agencies together with UNESCO.
- The effective implementation of CoCoSi and CoCoCongo. In this respect, John Hart indicated that these two bodies were now recognized as structures of ICCN in their own right.
- The organization of a United Nations Co-ordination Conference for conservation and the establishment of sustainable funding systems.

- The relationship of CoCoSi and CoCoCongo with the private sector. Among the conclusive experiences for co-operation between the private sector, CoCoSi and CoCoCongo, satisfactory results had been achieved through collaboration initiated with the mining sector to protect the sites. This type of experience, which could prove to be very useful in the buffer zones of the sites, was strongly encouraged by workers in the field.
- The participation of the authorities and the local communities in the conservation of the sites.
- The easy access to weapons, which causes a particular problem of insecurity at the sites. The ICCN representative responded that ICCN was in contact with an agency responsible for the demobilization and confiscation of arms, as well as with the army. The objective was to co-ordinate their actions.
- The maintenance of staff and the payment of bonuses. The return to a normal situation in the parks should resolve these questions. The return of tourism should generate profits which could be used to meet park staff and functioning costs.

Conclusions

- The project had made a valuable contribution to the conservation of the five World Heritage sites, thanks notably to the park staff, ICCN and the NGOs who had taken enormous risks in staying in the field.
- ICCN and the sites themselves were at present in an alarmingly destitute situation. Without support of the national authorities, the efforts employed at the international level would be insufficient.
- The coalition formed around the project by UNESCO, UNF, the NGOs and bilateral assistance had inspired confidence and attracted new partners. It was now time to institutionalize the co-ordination mechanisms such as CoCoSi and CoCoCongo.
- The project was a 'lifebelt' but the task was not finished. It was now imperative to build on the basis of what this work had accomplished.

Problems affecting DRC natural sites during the conflict					
	Garamba	Virunga	Kahuzi-Biega	Okapi	Salonga
Illegal exploitation					
Flagship species poaching	Elephant, rhino	Elephant, hippo	Elephant, gorillas	Elephant, okapi	Elephant
Mines		present	acute	acute	
Wood cutting		acute	acute		acute
Illegal settling					
Breeding/agriculture		acute	acute	present	
Fishing		acute			acute
Lack of safety					
Staff murdering	yes	yes	yes		attempted
Militia incursions	acute	acute	acute	acute	

B. Assisting with remote sensing tools for monitoring World Heritage sites in the DRC

General presentation of the workshop

The use of space technologies as a tool in monitoring the state of conservation of protected areas, and more specifically World Heritage sites, and their management, was proving to be extremely useful. The applications were numerous but competences were still weak in the region, which had the highest number of sites inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The workshop sought to evaluate the experience of the use of remote sensing technology for the conservation of natural World Heritage sites, based on the example of the five DRC sites.

Goals

- Present modalities for the use of space technologies in the framework of biodiversity conservation, for example in World Heritage sites in the DRC.
- Give priority to those primarily concerned by this new tool, the users.
- Make proposals for the training of future users.

In introducing this session, the moderator, Brigitte Decadt, of the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office, spoke of the use of space technologies in the field of conservation and emphasized the importance of strengthening capabilities to raise awareness of these technologies.

Diego Fernández Prieto (ESA), Philippe de Maeyer (University of Ghent, Belgium), John Hart (WCS), Henri-Paul Eloma (ICCN), Herbert Hansen (Keyobs company) and Carlos de Wasseige (Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium), presented their respective papers.

Problems discussed

Use of remote sensing tools for monitoring World Heritage sites in the DRC

Diego Fernández Prieto of ESA commented that space technology was a useful tool in the observation and monitoring of the planet. Space technology had applications in numerous fields such as management of natural catastrophes, human aid, combating forest fires, mapping the surface temperature of the sea, monitoring the ozone layer and mapping the underwater terrestrial crust.

There were multiple advantages to be gained from the observation of the planet, including access to data collected on a daily basis or already archived.

Collaboration between ESA and UNESCO had begun with the launching of the BeGo project for monitoring

the habitat of the mountain gorilla in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda. The BeGo project, the last phase of which terminated in the first quarter of 2005, was mainly aimed at the Virunga and Kahuzi-Biega World Heritage sites in the DRC. On completion, it should result in the production of maps, digital altitude models (topography) and monitoring of changes. During the implementation of the project, a series of difficulties had to be overcome, such as the presence of cloud cover or difficulty in accessing isolated areas for the collection of ground data.

Benefits of cartography for World Heritage sites

Philippe de Maeyer recalled that in parallel to the BeGo project and thanks to funding from the Belgian Government, the World Heritage sites of Garamba and Salonga National Parks and Okapi Wildlife Reserve had been mapped. However, the implementation of this project had been complicated due to lack of available information on the geographical reference systems used, the poor quality of data available, or again the collection method used. It was nevertheless in the framework of this project that the concept was born of a thematically organized model map adapted to type of user. These two initiatives allowed the DRC, for the first time and for each of the World Heritage sites, to have access to a mapping system compatible with global positioning system (GPS) ground points.

Need for good tools to monitor biodiversity in DRC World Heritage sites

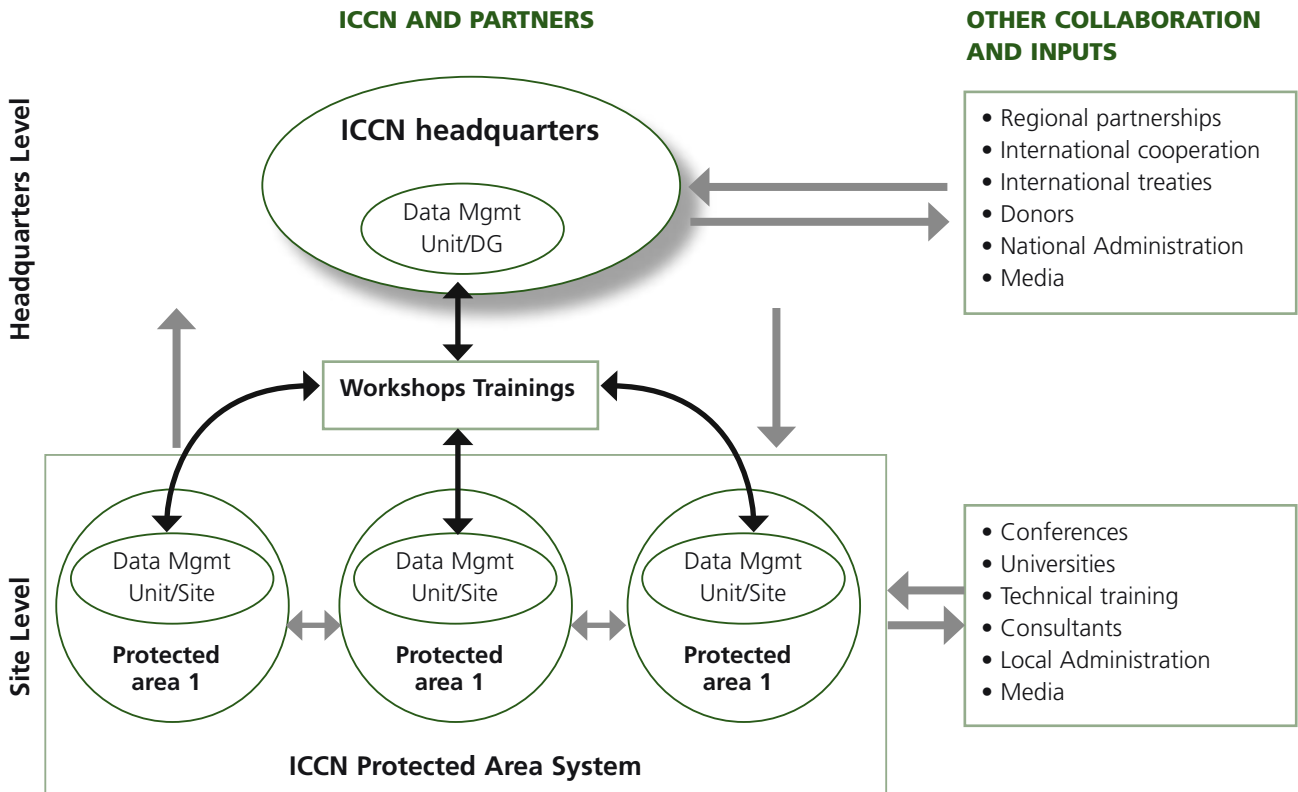
John Hart provided background to the projects carried out with UNESCO. He emphasized the efforts made by the the project to establish a catalogue of the needs of all users, as well as a database.

Requests from users included access to the geographic information system (GIS) installed at the sites with data management linked to headquarters and the presence of staff trained in the use of these tools. The accuracy of maps, capacity building at site level as well as at headquarters in Kinshasa to ensure the acquisition of elementary competences and the establishment of ongoing training, as well as maintenance of the equipment, had all been identified as priorities. The GIS provided access to a wide range of data obtained from management reports for the analysis and evaluation of potential threats.

Henri-Paul Eloma focused his remarks on the efforts of ICCN. He recognized the advantages gained by a map-

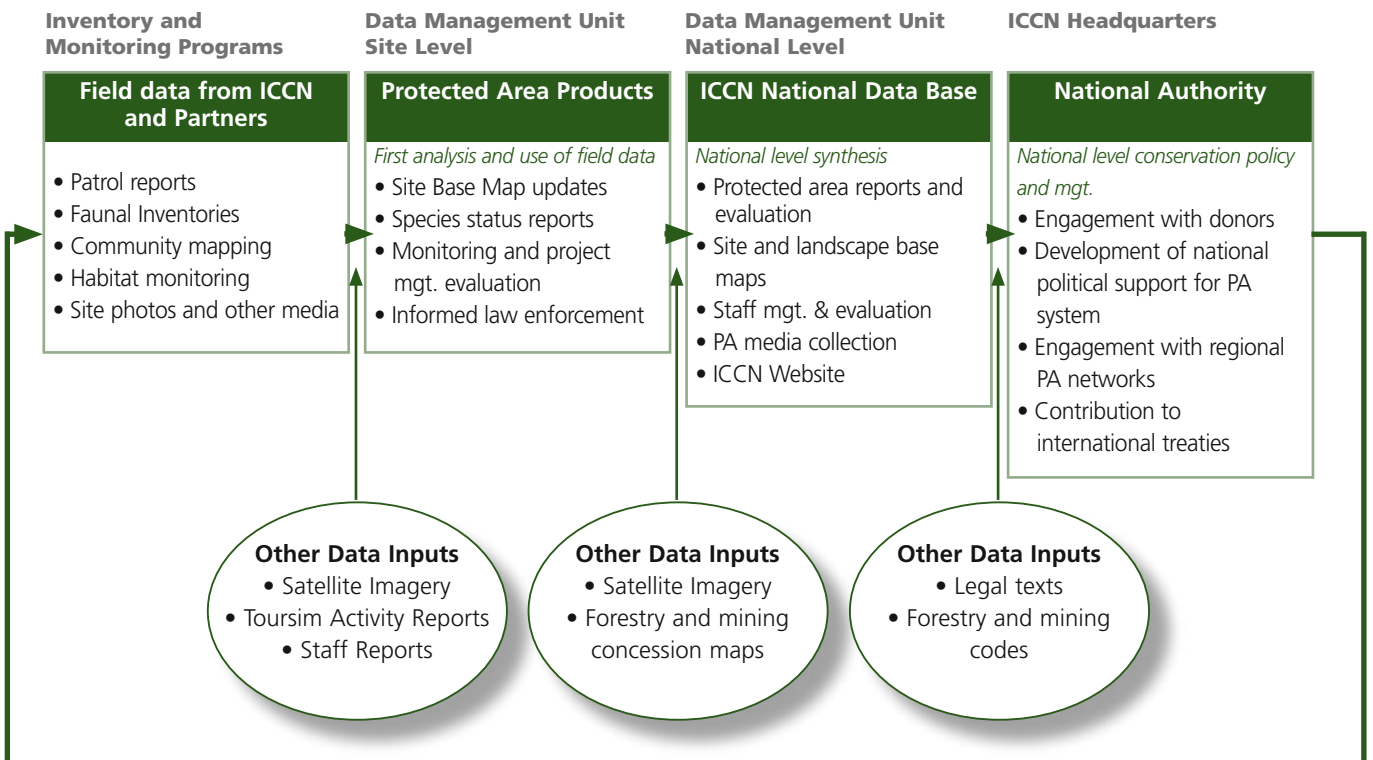
Protected Area Information Management System

Communication and Integration



Protected Area Information Management System

Data Inputs and Products



ping system achieved in the framework of the UNESCO projects. From this standpoint, computers and staff competent in computer sciences available at each site, capable of recording and entering data for basic mapping, were essential. This also applied to the training of guards in the use of the GIS and its computer programmes. Mr Eloma furthermore presented the partnership between ICCN, UNESCO, ESA and the Belgian Government on the mapping project for the five World Heritage sites. ICCN was specifically involved with regard to the correction and verification of the mapping projects and would be the chief user of these maps. The technical problems encountered in the use of GIS – lack of digital cameras, insufficient number of printed maps and interruptions in power supply – were also raised.

Herbert Hansen, the representative of Keyobs, spoke about the encounter between high technology and sustainable development, with recourse to some applications developed for the observation of the Earth. As an example, he cited the city of Kinshasa where such technology had been applied to evaluate soil erosion, wind potential or the planning of road infrastructure. Mr Hansen indicated that all these activities, including the purchase of equipment, training and technology transfer, had benefited from World Bank funding in the framework of the Multi-sectoral Emergency Programme for Reconstruction and Rehabilitation (PMURR). He also presented the idea of a geographical atlas of the DRC containing socio-economic, demographic, natural resource or infrastructural data. Part of this work had already been carried out in areas where there is logging, drinking water, and malaria prevention, comparing their frequency with the climatic conditions of a site. Application to the forestry industry had also been established. The rehabilitation of the Geographical Institute in the DRC was absolutely indispensable.

Use of satellite mapping for the benefit of sites

Carlos de Wasseige briefly described the activities relating to the information management system that ICCN was able to carry out through collaboration with UNESCO. This system operated both at site level and at the Kinshasa headquarters. In staff terms, a chief was designated for each site, as well as focal points for MIKE (Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants, now a general wildlife monitoring system), the International Geographical Union and CoCoSi.

Mr de Wasseige also presented the procedures developed for entering data into the system. These began with the organization of documentation, the updating of data already available, the incorporation of new data, the production of maps and data analysis. He also described capacity building activities, including the setting up of a mobile training unit and of co-ordination between CoCoCongo and CoCoSi.

Priorities for the implementation of Phase II of the project

- provision of equipment;
- training of staff at site level in data collection and analysis.

Main points of discussion

- Recognition of the use of satellite images should not overshadow the need to preserve the cultural heritage of the DRC, particularly through the involvement of local populations. These local communities had an important role to play; their knowledge was precious in terms of collection and documentation of refined data. Furthermore, the baseline maps might also be used to illustrate socio-economic indicators.
- Co-operation with ERAIFT for education and training was essential for the sustainable use of the forest.
- The importance of counting on individuals who could act as an interface (and disseminate information) between conservation specialists and their communities.
- The difficulty in putting together data from different sources of unequal quality.
- The need for ICCN to play a leadership role in the use of maps and to become an accepted focal point to receive all data from the sites.

Conclusions

- Capacity building should be considered as an integral part of the conservation strategy, and consequently, be better catered for.
- The efforts made for conservation should be sustainable and better co-ordinated.
- These efforts should be oriented towards the sustainable auto-sufficiency of the park authorities in order to create and maintain their own monitoring procedures.
- Finally, this encounter should set priorities, not needs, and use effectively and fully the tools available.

C. Importance of DRC World Heritage sites for the conservation of great apes

General presentation of the workshop

The Democratic Republic of the Congo was known for its outstanding biodiversity. For the general public, the great apes were the most evident proof of this wealth. The DRC hosted three of the five species of great apes in the world, of which the bonobo was endemic, as was a (sub)species of gorilla. But recognition was growing in the scientific and conservation world of the special place of the great apes in biodiversity and the particular attention that should be paid to their conservation, not only because genetically they were man's closest neighbours, but also because of their cultural importance and their potential for increasing public support for the conservation of their habitats. This concern lay at the heart of the GRASP (Great Apes Survival Project) initiative of UNESCO and UNEP.

Goals

- Encourage the exchange of information regarding direct and indirect threats to the great apes.
- Exchange experiences, notably in the fields of epidemiology and illicit traffic in wildlife products and subproducts in the African subregion, which might affect the great apes.
- Formulate recommendations in the framework of an action plan to be implemented for Phase II of the UNESCO/UNF project 'Biodiversity Conservation in Regions of Armed Conflict: Protecting World Heritage in the Democratic Republic of the Congo'.

The workshop was chaired by **Jean Ngog Nje**, Director of the Regional Post-Graduate Training School on Integrated Management of Tropical Forests (ERAIFT), assisted by **Samy Mankoto**, GRASP focal point for UNESCO.

Presentations were made by Frédéric Joulian (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, France), Annette Lanjouw (IGCP), Gay Reinhartz (ZSM) and Boniface Mbieme Lokwa (ICCN), Jean Bihini won wa Musiti (IUCN Regional Office for Central Africa), Mathieu Ebéké (Odzala Biosphere Reserve, Congo), Dieudonné Ankara (GRASP, Congo) and Rachel Fléaux-Mulot (journalist, *Sciences et Avenir*).

Problems discussed

Perception of great ape conservation in the different historical, political and socio-cultural contexts

Frédéric Joulian, promoter of the project 'Man and primates, Nature and Culture in sustainable development'

conceived in the framework of the interdisciplinary research programme 'Evolution, Nature and Culture', presented this somewhat difficult and controversial subject on the origins of man and our parentage with the great apes, emphasizing the iconic value of the great apes as the closest relatives to the human race (heritage, genetics, vertical posture, lack of tail, more developed brain ...).

On the eco-ethnological level, Mr Joulian supported his argument with some examples based on the works of Dian Fossey and Jane Goodall, demonstrating that the great apes, and more particularly the chimpanzees, possessed certain behavioural characteristics. He also emphasized the valorization and capitalization of the traditional knowledge and taboos often held by the hunters. Working closely with this trade, much can be learnt about the behaviour of the great apes and the 'evolution–nature–culture' interaction.

Mountain gorillas in Virunga National Park: state of conservation and ecotourism

According to Annette Lanjouw, the mountain gorilla count taken in November 2003 showed that the total population in the Virunga mountains had increased by 17%, but in the DRC there had been a decrease of 20% since 1996. From 1989 to 2003, the gorilla population in the Virungas increased from 324 individuals to 364. Although encouraging, these results did not mean less vigilance. In fact, the inventory also revealed that gorilla families were smaller in the DRC, Rwanda and Uganda, thus rendering members more vulnerable. Furthermore, the animals' growth rate had progressed in the sectors that were monitored during the period of high threats, demonstrating the beneficial and positive effect that the UNESCO/UNF project had had on the preservation of habitat. The payment of bonuses to field staff at the sites (who constituted an important component of this project) together with the activities of the IGCP regional programme had also greatly contributed to stabilizing the southern sector of Virunga, the refuge of the gorillas.

The risks and threats were still very serious in this region of the Great Lakes. However, the possibility remained of capitalizing on the economic potential that the gorillas represented through ecotourism, as was the case prior to the war.

Bonobos in Salonga National Park: prospects for conservation

Gay Reinhartz indicated that the bonobos or pygmy chimpanzees, a species endemic to the DRC, were currently the subject of important scientific studies at Salonga National Park by ZSM in collaboration with ICCN researchers.

These studies mainly concerned the evaluation of the bonobo population in the park, the identification of key populations, the ecological and human factors linked to their distribution and the means of strengthening protective measures and combating poaching. ZSM's recourse to local expertise (collaboration with Kinshasa University to study trees used by the bonobos as nests and the mapping of their habitats) was welcomed by participants as exemplary in the field of capacity building as well as of awareness-raising and education of local populations.

Great apes and bushmeat trade in Central Africa: current situation and need for a regional co-operation strategy

Jean Bihini began his presentation with an alarming statistic illustrating the stakes in the bushmeat trade and the need for a regional vision and strategy: between 3,000 and 6,000 great apes were killed each year by poachers. The challenges resided in the megadiversity that characterized Central Africa, the level of poverty and precarity of the local populations, on the one hand, and the porous frontiers that favoured the flow of traffickers, on the other. The following estimations were given as an example of the importance of the illicit bushmeat trade: Yaoundé (Cameroon): 70–90 tonnes per year; Libreville (Gabon): annual trade evaluated at US\$25 million, of which US\$3 million on the legal market.

Mr Bihini noted that the bushmeat trade had gone beyond the national boundaries; in fact, the ever-increasing demand and the lucrative character of this trade had permitted the creation and development of new, very complex distribution networks, hence the need for harmonization of the law and regional and transboundary collaboration, especially between conservation agents.

Central Africa presented opportunities for the reinforcement of partnerships and the establishment of co-ordination and monitoring mechanisms, especially to capitalize on traditional wildlife management methods and training in bio-monitoring, using as an excellent example the UNF/UNESCO/ICCN project. Mr Bihini thought that the best strategy was to rely on initiatives and institutions already existing in the subregion, and mentioned in particular the advantages in weaving synergies between GRASP-UNEP/UNESCO and the Convergence Plan involving COMIFAC, CEFDHAC, RAPAC and CBFP, together with IUCN-BRAC, which co-ordinated the 'Task Force' on bushmeat.

Epidemiological aspects: the case of Ebola fever in the Odzala Biosphere Reserve (and means to combat it)

The Director and Conservator of the Odzala Biosphere Reserve, Mathieu Ebéké, informed participants of the

current outbreak of haemorrhagic fever due to the Ebola virus that had affected gorilla populations in the Ozala region and the Lossi Sanctuary. Describing the clinical aspects of Ebola, he outlined the urgent measures undertaken by the Congo's Ministry of Forestry, Economy and Environment to halt the spreading of the epizootic disease.

It was difficult to take preventive measures as the source of the outbreak is not yet known; so emphasis was placed on hygiene education and awareness-raising among the population. Nevertheless, there should be a focal point to monitor Ebola and eco-guards should be trained in the techniques and methods of sample-taking and analysis. The gorillas of Odzala and Lossi were an important factor in the development of ecotourism; in this respect, continued Dieudonné Ankara, GRASP focal point for the Congo, these two natural sites required support from the international community, and such support could be incorporated into the framework of the National Great Ape Survival Plan (NGASP) of the Congo.

Role of the media in raising awareness for great ape conservation

Rachel Fléaux-Mulot, a journalist at *Sciences et Avenir*, recalled the pioneering role played by three women scientist. Initially associated with Prof. Louis Leakey., they became the true protectors of the great apes: Jane Goodall (chimpanzees), Dian Fossey (gorillas) and Birute Galidikas (orang-utans). The link with the great apes had become even more intimate with the work of primatologists such as Frans de Waal, who had described their social structures and strategies, and with DNA studies which had confirmed the very close links between humans and great apes.

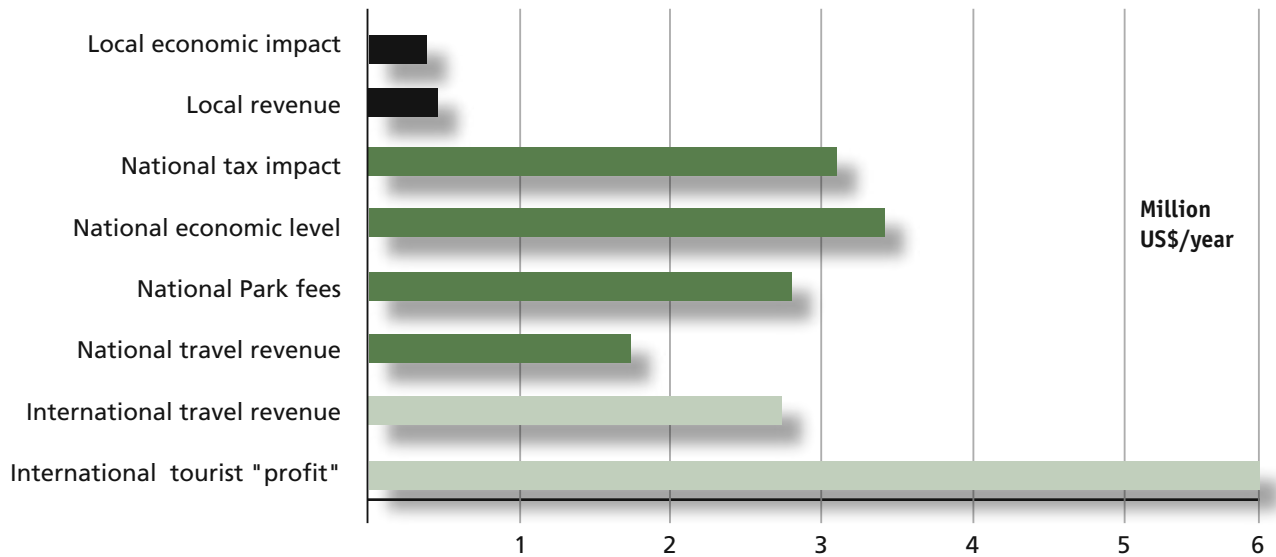
Noting the decline of the gorilla population, these women decided to abandon their research in order to devote time to heightening public awareness, which they foresaw as a valuable asset for safeguarding the animals. It was undeniable that the media had played a fundamental role in the commitment of the international public to the cause defended by the well-known personalities of Dian Fossey and Jane Goodall, transforming them into impassioned conservationists.

Ms Fléaux-Mulot launched an appeal, stating that there was still time to act. She recalled the alarm bell sounded by UNEP and UNESCO in November 2003 at the Paris meeting of GRASP experts: 'Without international mobilization and a budget of US\$25 million, the great apes would disappear in the coming thirty to fifty years!' Strengthened by this declaration, on returning from a reporting mission to the Virunga gorillas' habitat, she stated that with US\$25 million, the price of an Apache helicopter, '... one could provide the great apes with urgent first aid, relieve the poverty of the

Population census of Mt. Gorillas				
Date	Virunga mountains <i>Rwanda, Uganda, DRC</i>	Date	Bwindi NP <i>Uganda</i>	Total
1959-60	~ 450			
1971-73	274			
1976-78	268	1979	95-130	~ 400
1981	254	1981	116	370
1986	293	1985	146	439
1989	324	1987	280	604
		1994	257	
		1997	292	
2003	384	2002	320	704

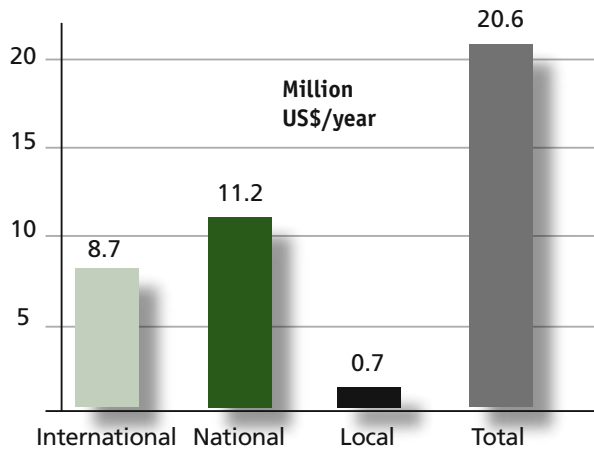
Annual gorilla tourism benefits

Distribution & value of gorilla tourism benefits (based on 2000/2001)



Distribution of annual gorilla benefits

(based on 2000/2001)



human communities who lived adjacent to the great apes, develop a sustainable way of life, begin reforestation ... because if it is one minute to midnight for the great apes, it is perhaps ten minutes to midnight for humanity'!

Future priorities

- Organize, in Kinshasa, during the first week of September 2005, an intergovernmental meeting on the GRASP initiative.
- Pursue monitoring-evaluation research of the bonobos in Salonga and elsewhere to identify new key habitats and build a base for a global and sustainable conservation policy for this species endemic to the DRC.
- Assist the DRC, because of the importance of its biodiversity, to play an important role in the COMIFAC Convergence Plan and in the Network of Protected Areas of Central Africa (RAPAC).
- Support the efforts of the IGCP in maintaining the capacity building programme for effective and efficient management of the southern sector of Virunga National Park.

Main points of discussion

- UNESCO, which with its world network of 459 Biosphere Reserves in 97 countries, including the DRC, in the framework of the Intergovernmental Programme on Man and the Biosphere (MAB), on the one hand, and with the 177 natural properties inscribed on the World Heritage List of the World Heritage Convention, on the other, participated in an effective manner in the conservation of the great apes and their habitats.
- The promotion of regional co-operation and the recognition of the transborder region juxtaposing Virunga National Park (DRC), Volcans Biosphere Reserve (Rwanda) and Bwindi Impenetrable National Park (Uganda). Regional co-operation was all the more necessary as the mountain gorilla was considered as a 'migratory species' by the Convention on Migratory Species. This regional co-operation should specifically permit the extension of Virunga National Park World Heritage site in the DRC towards a transboundary site that would include Volcans Park in Rwanda and Magaranga Park in Uganda. This property would cover the entire habitat of the mountain gorilla, which would most probably be the first species in the world whose entire population would benefit from the protection of the World Heritage Convention.
- Comprehension of the socio-economic situation of the populations living around the Virunga site (need for charcoal, number of henhouses per family, etc.) to better evaluate the nature and extent of the threats to the site and efficiently organize guide patrols.
- Creation of a monitoring databank defining the vital range of the gorillas.

- Utilization of efficient tools (digital mapping) associated with socio-economic studies to seek alternative solutions for local riparian populations and to combat poverty.

Conclusions

- The DRC was the only country among the twenty-three 'Range States' that had in its territory the three species of great ape found in Africa: the gorillas, the chimpanzees and the bonobos or pygmy chimpanzees (*Pan paniscus*), the latter being endemic to the country. The degradation and fragmentation of their habitats had contributed to the drastic decrease in their numbers. Successive wars and armed conflicts in the Great Lakes region had contributed towards the fragile situation of the gorillas but the UNESCO/UNF project had brought stability to the southern sector of Virunga National Park.
- The DRC had been one of the first African countries to elaborate a national conservation strategy for the great apes, which was adopted during a national workshop organized by ICCN and the Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation, Water and Forests.
- The ecotourism aspect to combat poverty must, despite all, be explored. The demonstration by ICCN of the economic potential of 'gorilla tourism' had raised the possibility of reconciling sustainable resource management and the need to respond to the basic requirements of local populations. A policy of equal sharing of resources would thus have every chance of being successful.
- The particularity of the great apes lay in the range of characteristics they possessed which made them a 'flagship' species. Genetically, the great apes shared 96% of their DNA with man, that proportion even reaching 98.4% in the case of chimpanzees. The great apes thus formed a unique bridge between humanity and the natural world and constituted a key indicator for the evaluation of the state of conservation of other associated species and ecosystems in danger, such as tropical forests.
- Why save the great apes? First there was the moral reason, the ethical argument and the notion of responsibility, in that if species that were very close to man were allowed to disappear it would be difficult to halt the destruction of other species. The second reason was that the conservation of a 'flagship' species also favoured the conservation of associated species and habitats such as the tropical forests, ecosystems which played an important role in the combat against the greenhouse effect and climate change.

D. Implication of local communities in the conservation of World Heritage sites in the DRC: lessons learned and future perspectives

General presentation of the workshop and main points

The last twenty years had produced a succession of paradigms for the conservation of protected areas. The paradigm of **conservation for the people** was established for national parks and reserves from which the local communities were totally excluded with no say in their management. By 1980, the concept of **conservation with the people** had caught the attention of conservation NGOs and donors. This concept considered local communities as potential actors whose support must be won, rather than external threats to the protected areas. It derived from a range of Integrated Conservation and Development Projects (ICDPs), which, with varying success, had reconciled the concerns linked to development and those linked to conservation. In the 1990s, numerous initiatives relating to the concept of **conservation by the people** emerged. Emphasis was henceforth placed on responsibility or co-responsibility of local populations in the management of natural resources. With the support of a number of donors, the Forest Code had been modernized to promote co-management or participatory management of resources, essentially ligneous, but also faunistic and halieutic.

In questioning the partial success of the ICDP, conservation managers and workers had, more than ever, to examine the role of local communities in the management of natural resources in the DRC. The country has had various experiences of local community involvement, essentially peripheral to the protected areas. This newly recognized role of local communities was all the more important during episodes of armed conflict when the state was unable to ensure the management task. The future of the DRC World Heritage sites fell de facto into the hands of local populations, with a more or less visible framework of local and temporary authorities.

If the need to involve local communities in the conservation of protected areas was no longer in question, the methods were very varied and lacked an accepted framework. The response depended on the physical and social environment. From the thinly populated dense, humid forests of Salonga and Okapi Wildlife Reserve, to the tree-clad savannahs of Garamba or the densely populated, agricultural altitude zones of Virunga and Kahuzi-Biega, the DRC encompassed a wide variety of environments – an incomparable terrain to test numerous hypotheses and approaches in the field of community conservation. The community conservation component in times of conflict had also been integrated into the UNESCO/UNF programme for World Heritage sites and other protected areas in the DRC.

The session was moderated by Marc Languy, with contributions by Georges Bakongo (ICCN/GTZ project at Kahuzi-Biega), Richard Tshombe (WCS), Bisidi Yalolo (WWF) and Samuel Boendi (ICCN) and Léonard Muamba Kanda, Secretary-General of the Ministry for Environment of the DRC.

Goals

- Share experiences in community conservation resulting from the UNESCO/UNF project in the DRC and other similar initiatives.
- Study to what extent the existing legal framework in the DRC favoured community conservation initiatives.
- Encourage debate and exchange of ideas concerning the involvement of local communities in protected areas and their management – through study of the four practical cases and analysis of the legal framework – and formulate recommendations.

Experiences with community conservation around Kahuzi-Biega National Park

Georges Bakongo's presentation on Kahuzi-Biega National Park illustrated the extent to which the success of the ICCN/GTZ project was due to the baseline study carried out on previously identified categories of actors and their involvement in the exploitation of the park's natural resources. This study helped to show that the interest of the target groups was more economic and individual, whereas most of the interventions proposed in the project framework were of a social and communal nature. This dichotomy led to an increase in the number of claims for development activities, well beyond the financial means of the conservation project (road construction, power lines, etc.).

Furthermore, the attitude of the managers and ICCN staff at the site proved to be a crucial element in the success or failure of community conservation activities.

Conservation and zoning plan in the buffer zone: the case study of Okapi Wildlife Reserve

According to Richard Tshombe of WCS, it was thanks to long and regular negotiations with local populations that the zoning plan foreseen in the WCS/GIC project could be established in Okapi Wildlife Reserve. The use of this procedure at local level and the transfer of decision-making from central government to local authorities was also successful due to boundary agreements concluded with local communities. The strong points of the agreement were that they included an official report of the demarcation

and the laws in force in the zones, as well as each party's rights and obligations. Furthermore, each agreement was visaed by the administrator of the territory concerned. One of the lessons learned from this exercise was it would have been more successful if allowed more time. The field workers recommended that only long-term community projects should be undertaken. Another important recommendation was to strongly link this kind of zoning exercise to a national zoning plan. In fact, despite the participation of the local administration, the project was not included in any local, provincial or national development plan, greatly limiting its effectiveness.

Participatory boundary demarcation in Virunga National Park: in favour of, or against, the local communities

The presentation of Bisidi Yalolo concerned the experience of WWF in Virunga National Park concerning participatory demarcation of boundaries. Here, the key points for success were the establishment of mixed commissions comprising representatives of the governorate, the land registry, customary authorities, ICCN and WWF and a requirement that discussions be officially recorded and signed by all. Another key point was the fact that the ICCN/WWF project was begun ten years ago incorporating an important environmental education component. Furthermore, unanimous recognition of the statute of the National Park as a World Heritage site had played an important role. Mr Yalolo indicated that negotiations with illegal farmers following the demarcation concerned the modalities of their withdrawal once the final boundaries were defined and recognized by all, rather than the legality of their installation. This exercise had already seen the evacuation of several tens of thousands of people from Virunga National Park and raised the hope that the integrity of the park would be restored in two or three years.

Establishment of green belts by local communities in Virunga National Park: successes and failures, costs and benefits

Samuel Boendi explained how constraints between the local population and ICCN were overcome through the good offices of WWF Virunga as interface and guarantor for the two parties. The aim was to establish a win-win relationship by which ICCN would see the boundaries of the park physically defined and the communities, for their part, would undertake to respect them. They could cultivate annual crops and were authorized to plant different types of trees and keep the profits generated by this activity. The communities concerned had accepted that recognition of their exploitation of the trees did not in any way signify owner rights. Local communities had also obtained the right to collect, on certain days of the week and under the control of ICCN guards, the dead wood in the park itself. All these agreements between ICCN and local communities were recognized by the authorities. In this programme, which resulted in the creation of a green

belt around Virunga National Park, much of the success was due to the long-term collaborative relations existing between WWF and ICCN on the one hand, and WWF and the local populations on the other.

Legal and institutional framework for participatory management of natural resources in the DRC 2004: analysis and perspectives

Léonard Muamba Kanda of the Environment Ministry briefly referred to the situation that existed in the forestry domain prior to the promulgation of the new Forest Code (Law No. 11/2002 of 29 August 2002). Before that date, the government authorities had not seriously examined forestry matters. Among the many innovations contained in the new forestry law, the following should be noted: 'the participation and involvement of the actors, both public and private, in the management of the forests'. Furthermore, the rights of the populations living inside or near to the forestry domain, whether it be listed, protected or for permanent production, were recognized as **forestry user rights**, more or less extensive according to the category of the forestry domain.

The new Forest Code thus integrated local customs and traditions into the management of forestry resources. Nevertheless, these customs and traditions were only valid so long as they did not contravene the laws and public order. The main challenge would be to implement the text concerning the involvement of local communities in the administrative process and in the sustainable management of the forest.

Priorities for the implementation of Phase II of the project

- Clearly identify the actors and their respective roles in the natural resource management policy.
- Achieve closer involvement of ICCN so that it can encourage community conservation activities.
- Establish partnerships over periods of 10–15 years rather than 3–4 years.
- Pursue negotiations in the process of interpreting the law.
- Exchange community participation experiences with neighbouring countries.

Main points of discussion

- Management modalities of the green belt, in particular how to motivate the indigenous populations to participate in reforestation, although they are not recognized as owners of the replanted trees. To gain the support of the people, access to the resources and compensation is offered. For example, in return for tree planting they would receive food.
- The phenomenon of site occupation and the means to end it. According to site workers, a large part of illegally occupied land had been recovered. It was,

however, important to differentiate between types of occupation, whether due to fishing or war, for example. The ICCN strategy to combat this phenomenon mainly comprised defining and re-establishing park boundaries, and their acceptance through, notably, the constitution of mixed commissions including representatives of land and local authorities. In certain instances, migratory zones could be proposed to relieve pressure in the periphery of the park.

- The wish to make the protected areas an engine for local development in the face of limited ecological resources. The adoption of management plans should help to settle this question. Moreover, the rights of the indigenous populations to exploit some resources and to carry out agricultural activities in the buffer zone of the park were recognized.
- Combating the mining of coltan (a metallic ore) in Okapi Wildlife Reserve.

Conclusions

Community conservation represented a real challenge in that it demanded the establishment of a contract between adults in which former paternalism no longer had its place. All the presentations had illustrated that discussions were now carried out within groups and committees. Furthermore, certain invariables had been repeated throughout the presentations, among which the moderator, Marc Languy, retained the following:

- The importance of clearly identifying the actors and their respective roles. Particular attention should be given to those in charge of protected areas, namely ICCN and the international NGOs that support it, but also the diverse components of local communities. The policy and military decision-makers as well as economic operators were also among these protagonists. The identification of these people and especially of their role and influence was, in general, not within the competence of either ICCN or the project, but called for professionals in the social domain.
- The importance of official recognition of the committees – use of a legal framework for some – set up with the communities and with which agreements were to be established. Nevertheless, care should be taken that the official recognition of such committees was not purely artificial, in response to the need to create a project with its latent benefits.
- ICCN involvement. ICCN should become the main focus of the projects for local communities. Even the best projects would have little impact if people saw the benefits as coming from a ‘foreign’ project or from an international or local NGO. The evaluation of the Integrated Conservation and Development Project

in neighbouring Uganda had shown that the content of the projects carried little weight in comparison with the strong links which should be made between the projects and the protected area and the authorities in charge of it.

- Negotiations. The importance of negotiating the respective roles, while keeping these negotiations within a legal context which itself was not negotiable. Not only legal points were negotiated, but their application. These negotiations should be allowed sufficient time to ensure sustainability, especially the approval of resulting agreements by all protagonists.
- An improved image and/or tangible benefits. Integrated Conservation and Development Projects could have positive impacts through two mechanisms: first, improving the image of the authorities responsible for protected areas by showing their willingness to take into consideration the wishes of indigenous populations. This could sometimes be achieved through low-cost public relations interventions or symbolic actions. The second mechanism was the tangible economic (or environmental) benefits resulting from an ICDP. For this, however, the true economic impact of the project should be evaluated. Too often, as in the case of Virunga National Park, these benefits were real but greatly diffused among an enormous population, resulting in a very low individual impact. In order to achieve a real impact on the standard of living of indigenous populations, community conservation actions should have access to budgets more closely related to development programmes rather than to conservation programmes, usually less generous. Most ICDPs were promulgated by conservation agencies rather than development agencies, hence the need to establish partnerships with development agencies to attain more appropriate high technology as well as larger budgets – and thus quantitative impacts.
- Links with environmental education to encourage changes in behaviour among indigenous populations.
- The new Forest Code of the DRC offered a great opportunity to establish systems of participatory management of natural resources. Certain application texts had yet to be refined, but the legal framework had taken into consideration recent experiences in Cameroon, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and other countries in the region. However, there was a need to launch an ambitious information and training programme to disseminate the code and especially to provide indigenous populations with the capacities to set up community forestry systems. It was noted that these principles did not apply to World Heritage sites, in which all form of physical exploitation was officially prohibited.

Forum with the private sector

General presentation of the forum

The figures for foreign investment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo – more than US\$2 billion in a country still in a post-conflict situation – gave a clear idea of the role that the private sector played in the economy – erstwhile moribund – as well as in the political and social stabilization of the country.

It was interesting to note that UNESCO wished to bring together two worlds a priori antagonistic during this forum for Partners for Heritage. The principal aim of the forum was to provide a meeting and discussion platform for the decision-makers involved in the reconstruction process of the DRC, to bring them together to exchange points of view and further develop the level of co-operation already existing between the business world and the community of protectors of nature, to safeguard the exceptional biodiversity of the country.

Forum goals

- Inform enterprises of UNESCO initiatives and raise awareness concerning questions of management and conservation of World Heritage sites.
- Inform enterprises present in the DRC of the importance of these sites and the possibilities offered to those who wish to make a commitment to support their protection.
- Assist ICCN in becoming the foremost institution for nature protection in the DRC and privileged partner for the private sector, the World Bank and other international financial bodies.
- Encourage links between ICCN and the Federation of Congolese Enterprises so that mutual priorities could be taken into consideration for the benefit of all.

The Director of the World Heritage Centre, **Francesco Bandarin**, set the tone by recognizing the enormity of the task represented by the safeguarding of DRC World Heritage. This incredible challenge could not be taken up by one organization working in isolation and it was indispensable to organize a solid network of partners determined to join forces in facing future challenges.

Introduction to the World Heritage Convention

Echoing the words of Mr Bandarin, the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee, **Themba P. Wakashe**, underlined the fact that World Heritage properties were part of the heritage of humanity and therefore their protection was a shared responsibility. On these grounds, humanity was the depositary for the present generation and for future generations. As part of humanity, enterprises investing and operating in the DRC could legitimately be solicited to take part in safeguarding the country's outstanding wealth of biodiversity and the five World Heritage sites, all inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The UN Foundation's commitment to the World Heritage Convention was born from the desire of its founder, Ted Turner, to act specifically for the preservation of biodiversity. Vice-President **David Carter** explained that his organization had chosen to make a commitment, together with UNESCO, as the World Heritage Convention offered an international platform rendering possible UNF interventions on the ground. The partnership formed by UNESCO and UNF was an extraordinary opportunity for the private sector to prove its commitment to the conservation of the most important sites in the world. This collaboration could and should go beyond simple funding: capacity building by companies in kind, reflection and availability should be considered as true added values. When the private sector mobilized its resources for conservation a real partnership would emerge.

As most of the private-sector representatives present at the forum were not familiar with the action of UNESCO and its partners in the DRC, a series of presentations was made. The first two presented the results of the evaluation of the UNESCO/UNF project and the work of ICCN. Participants were thus provided with an overview of statistical data on the country's fauna, flora and ecosystem, principally at the World Heritage sites, as well as the recurring dangers that threatened the survival of numerous rare species.

The facts were alarming. Throughout the conflict that ravaged the country, the World Heritage sites were used as rear bases from which armed groups launched their offensives. They had consequently been transformed into a haven for the exercise of all kinds of illegal activity, such as exploiting resources, commercial poaching, mining, fraudulent land concessions, as well as uncontrolled hunting, production of charcoal, fishing, etc.

In this context, the UNESCO/UNF project was seen to be a viable response to the crisis faced by the World Heritage sites isolated by the war and the difficulties of ICCN, also a result of the conflict.

For the evaluator of the project, **Jean-Pierre d'Huart**, the goals were achieved but success remained fragile and continued support remained essential. So far, the sites were not lost but the situation was serious.

Concerning the work of ICCN, it should strongly adhere to the implementation of the priorities identified in the evaluation of the UNESCO/UNF project, and assume its responsibilities in the management of protected areas. Furthermore, it was encouraged to support the development of scientific research and ecotourism, both of which were important elements in conservation.

The courage of the guards who continued their work in the field despite the extremely insecure situation was emphasized during the presentation of ICCN's work. Some lost their lives in the line of duty. **Eulalie Bashige**,

ICCN Director-General, recalled the need for training, equipment and provision of arms. The need for concertation at the political and military level was once again noted as a priority. In conclusion, Ms Bashige applauded the strong coalition formed by ICCN and its international NGO partners, without which the implementation of the UNESCO/UNF project would have been heavily compromised.

Finally, for the success of the project, she emphasized the determining character of neutrality and the international platform provided by UNESCO.

Following background on the World Heritage Convention, the UNESCO/UNF partnership and the work of ICCN, further presentations were made focusing mainly on the relationship between the business world and the safeguarding of the environment.

Corporate environmental responsibility: does it matter?

Michael Golden, publisher of the *International Herald Tribune* (IHT), was an avid believer in this way of thinking. The IHT had always followed the course that had been set at its creation: to contribute towards improving society through creativity, research and dissemination of high quality, entertaining information. News dissemination, questions of sustainable development, and efforts to stimulate transectoral debate for viable and representative approaches also formed part of the contribution of his newspaper towards a better society.

Moreover, the IHT was aware of its own environmental responsibility in that it had introduced a certain number of positive changes in respect to the environment, such as the use of recycled paper and the introduction of soya-based ink.

In conclusion, Mr Golden declared that there would be no conflict between conservation and the private sector if the latter recognized that a clean and healthy work environment associated with a concern to protect national commerce constituted an added value.

Sustainable finance and private sector partnerships for conservation

Speaking on other concerns of conservation organizations, **Melissa Moye**, Financial Director for WWF-US, demonstrated that recourse to certain new funding mechanisms could be a solution to securing funds for conservation, while taking into account the interests of the business world. She illustrated her proposal with a few examples chosen from the forestry, drink and health sectors. Ms Moye also underlined the possibility of debt reduction in favour of sustainable development, as well as the important role of certification and funds for the forestry industry.

Concerning partnerships, Ms Moye listed some possibilities that companies investing in the DRC might explore if they wished to make a commitment to conservation. These included philanthropy, targeted marketing, sponsoring of events, pro-bono services and a decrease in activities adversely affecting the environment.

Reconciling conservation with economic development in the DRC

Jefferson Hall, WCS Deputy Director for Africa, provided some indicators concerning the number of people directly dependent on forestry resources (timber for construction, coal, fish, meat, fruit, honey, etc.) and the country's population growth rate. It was recognized that more than half of the 60 million Congolese were dependent on forest resources. In the next thirty years, the DRC could see its population double, with a greater toll on the environment due to road construction and increased activity in the industrial and mining sectors. If the future Congolese population had to depend heavily on products from hunting and firewood, conservation would simply become impossible. Mr Hall's presentation measured the extent of the direct and indirect impact of a series of industries on conservation and the challenges involved in the establishment of sustainable development in the DRC.

The presentations raised a number of questions on the role of the private sector in safeguarding the environment. **Kes Hilman-Smith** (IRF/ZSL) invited the private sector to concentrate on the problematic presented by Mr Carter of UNF, in particular the partnership role whereby organizations intervening in conservation would provide skills in business and resource fields. **Abdoulaye Ndiaye** (UNDP/GEF) expressed the hope that the opportunities offered by this type of forum could be capitalized on, notably through the establishment of a Monitoring Committee, which should meet without delay to define the best ways in which to make rapid progress towards the type of partnership unanimously agreed.

On behalf of private enterprise, the representative of Volcanoes Safari indicated that his group was very willing to collaborate with ICCN, the DRC Government and the NGOs to develop the potential of ecotourism.

Grégoire Bakandeja wa Mpungu, President of the Economic and Financial Commission of the Congolese Parliament, listed the challenges and opportunities facing the DRC. He referred to the challenges that ICCN and its international partners had had to face to ensure respect of the integrity of the World Heritage sites and the difficulties of a long-term vision for a country where the situation demanded, first and foremost, a response to the immediate needs and extreme distress of the population.

During this period of instability, companies also had to struggle to find viable solutions to maintain their investments, create employment, offer decent work conditions

for their staff and, despite all, participate in the growth of the Congolese economy, all in a responsible and transparent manner.

At government level, the challenge was to reconcile respect for the environment and economic imperatives. UNESCO's initiative to provide an opportunity for these two worlds to meet, exchange points of view and attempt to find ways in which to make progress together, merits recognition.

Emmanuel Mbi, representative of the World Bank, indicated that the changing face of the Congolese business world provided hope for a reconciliation between the business world and conservation. According to Mr Mbi, the private sector was showing increasing interest in the DRC. This wind of change had occurred since the investiture of the Transition Government which had halted the high inflation experienced by the country and adopted new codes in mining and forestry, two sectors that attracted a large number of investors. This recovery of the Congolese economy had clearly established the link between political stability and investment. Furthermore, it demonstrated that only the private sector was in a position to generate the necessary investment, thus stimulating the return to work and helping to secure the peace process. The challenge now weighing on the Congolese Government, the international funding institutions and the private sector would be to seek solutions to achieve an equal redistribution of investment products. At the same time, the whole community should be able to enjoy the benefits deriving from good environmental practice.

Developing and implementing corporate responsibility policy and practice in the DRC

The mining and forestry industries alone captured an important part of the country's investments. The London-based company, Adastra, specializing in the exploitation of wood and copper, wished to show a practical example of corporate responsibility. First, this responsibility concerned consideration of the human environment in industrial activity. In the region of Katanga where Adastra was active, the substantial working force was an important factor of the pressure placed on resources. Environmental policies were required, but also social ones, without which all attempts to rehabilitate the sites exploited by Adastra would be doomed to failure. **Kate Harcourt**, Social and Environmental Manager at Adastra, gave a candid description of the extent of the challenges faced by the group in implementing their policies, not only in managing local expectations but also in the potential risks that the company would have to assume should the social role prove to be too extensive.

Speaking on the question of **artisanal mining** in the DRC, **Jacqueline Damon**, Coordinator of the OECD Initiative for Central Africa, painted a rather gloomy picture of the situation of the miners in the eastern part

of the country, who lived in constant insecurity due to rebels, the risk of thieving, and the extreme scarcity of food, medicine and education. Ms Damon emphasized the highly political nature of the trade exercised in the region and the transborder activities with neighbouring Rwanda. She also criticized the new Mining Code, which she described as very costly and not widely used, illustrating that the links between national policy and local practice were very weak.

The contribution of **Victor Kasongo Shomary**, Chief Executive of the Centre for Evaluation, Expertise and Certification (CEEC) of minerals and ores, provided an opportunity to hear from the **Congolese business community** operating in a key sector of the economy. Mr Kasongo presented his institution as the commercial interface between the government and the gold, diamond, amethyst, sapphire and coltan mining industry. His primary role was to evaluate resources, certify products, evaluate their quality and the price of ore. He also had regulatory powers for ore trading. He briefly noted the progress achieved in diamond trading thanks to the adoption of the Kimberley process and the dialogue initiated on the exploitation of coltan. He furthermore underlined the need for co-operation at international level to better understand the complexity of economic, political, social and environmental questions and ensure that the resources generated income and benefits rather than conflicts.

According to **Jean-Jacques Landrot**, General Secretary of the Inter-African Forest Industries Association (IFIA), when speaking of conservation it would be a serious error not to acknowledge the privileged character of the over 1,000 official companies involved in timber exploitation operating in the Congo Basin. These companies had long ago integrated the virtues of sustainable management into the exploitation of tropical timber. While emphasizing IFIA's wish to promote the partnership between companies and NGOs, Mr Landrot noted certain difficulties with which the forestry sector was confronted: the lack of qualified forestry personnel and the high level of taxes applied to the industry.

All the presentations raised a number of questions and generated a lively debate among the participants. **Filip Verbelen** of Greenpeace raised the question of illegal timber exploitation which directly contributed to the continuation of the conflict. He proposed three key actions to reform the sector:

- adoption of a new institutional framework setting up a transparent procedure for allotting concessions;
- strengthening control in respect to regulations;
- control of income derived from the forestry industry, with the aim of ensuring that it bolsters the national economy and does not disappear into private deals.

Jean-Pierre d'Huart invited the Heritage Oil Group to talk about its exploitations and investments in the area

of Semliki/Virunga. **Michael Gulbekian**, President and Chief Executive Officer of the group, declared that it was active in the area and intended to develop its activities. He indicated that Heritage Oil respected the standards established by the Canadian Government and undertook to seek solutions to reconcile its operations with environmental security.

At the close of these discussions, a transectoral panel gave its observations. **Emmanuel Mbi** indicated that the strong interest in this workshop and the high level of participation illustrated a common willingness to explore new ways of communication between the two worlds. Echoing this, **Guy Debonnet**, Programme Specialist at the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, emphasized the fact that ICCN and its partners required links to access the business world. **Eulalie Bashige** referred to the role of the World Bank and the DRC Government in the implementation of new codes and on the need to control

illegal activities. **Annette Lanjouw** favoured a holistic approach to the problems rather than focusing on specific questions, and underlined the need to ensure the synergy of different activities and interventions in the field of conservation.

In his conclusions, **Francesco Bandarin** thanked all the participants for their contributions to a day rich in presentations and stimulating debates in a new type of forum. He also welcomed the diversity of opinions expressed and recognized the need to find a sustainable balance between the environment and the economy, a balance that would permit both to prosper in a climate of sustainable development. Finding a common ground was a learning experience for all parties, including UNESCO. Finally, Mr Bandarin invited all potential partners who wished to continue the preliminary dialogue to explore the possibilities for collaboration and to make a commitment to the conservation of the World Heritage sites.

Special presentation



Nature and Culture in the Democratic Republic of Congo

written by

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Royal Museum for Central Africa

As a research and information centre, the Royal Museum for Central Africa (RMCA) in Tervuren, Belgium, studies the past and present of societies and natural environments in Africa, and in Central Africa in particular. The Museum's collections, archives, and scientific expertise on the Democratic Republic of Congo are internationally renowned. Fostering a better understanding and awareness of Central Africa and contributing to its sustainable development are at the heart of the RMCA's mission statement.

The Museum's scientific institution consists of four departments: Cultural Anthropology, African Zoology, Geology and Mineralogy, and History and Agricultural & Forest Economy. The former Africa Institute/ASDOC, which focuses on the political and economic history of Central Africa from the nineteen-fifties to the present day, is now the Contemporary History Section. The structure of the research institution facilitates a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach.

Thus it is no coincidence that the RMCA has been invited by UNESCO to organize an exhibition about the diversity of nature and culture in the DRC and the various dynamic relationships between man and nature. The exhibition coincided with an international UNESCO donor conference held in Paris on 16 and 17 September 2004. The conference's aim was to raise funds for the continuing protection of the five Congolese World Heritage sites: the Virunga, Salonga, Kahuzi-Biega and Garamba national parks, and the Okapi Wildlife Reserve. The exhibition, which is based on the RMCA's collections and scientific expertise, ran from 9 to 26 September 2004 at UNESCO headquarters in Paris and from 23 November 2004 to 2 October 2005 at the RMCA in Tervuren. As regards content, both the Paris and Tervuren exhibitions focused on the links between man and his environment. There was five main themes: the protection of natural diversity through national parks, the economic use of natural diversity, nature as a source of food and medicines, nature as a source of inspiration in immaterial culture, and the symbolic use of natural diversity.¹

Diversity in nature and culture

The DRC is world famous for its rich biodiversity.² No other African country has such a variety of wildlife and plants. This diversity is produced by biogeographical factors such as the country's size and central position in Africa and the existence of core areas for animal evolution during successive climatic changes. It is also the result of the DRC's many different types of climate and land cover, such as tropical forests, dry woodlands, savannas, mangroves, and swamp vegetation, criss-crossed by numerous and often wide rivers. Lakes, mountains, and volcanoes complete the picture. A large number of animal species are endemic to the DRC. They occupy a fairly small area and place high demands on the quality of their environment. The Congolese forest is one of the last extensive continuous rainforests in the world.

In tandem with its focus on biodiversity, the exhibition highlighted the original and diverse relationships between man and this rich environment. Man relies on nature for his essential needs, but also makes use of it for symbolic and ritual purposes. These multifaceted relationships between people and their natural surroundings are evidence of an important cultural diversity. Cultural diversity refers to the diversity of cultural characteristics typical of human activities, whatever the area. These traits are the result of individual and collective human creativity and choices that are not forced upon man by his natural needs or environment.

The protection and preservation of the natural environment is in the interest of the Congolese people and the rest of the world as well. Natural resources in general, including biodiversity, are essential to a country's sustainable development because people use these resources for the most diverse purposes. To guarantee the use of natural resources in the long term, man must manage them in a sustainable way.³ The conflicts of interest between nature conservation organizations and the people who live in and around the national parks make it clear how important it is to involve the latter in conservation activities and to make use of their specific knowledge of their natural environment.

The Belgian government wished to contribute to raising awareness about this issue by funding this exhibition aimed at promoting knowledge of the DRC's unique World Heritage. This includes the four national parks and the wildlife reserve, which are on the list of World Heritage in Danger. Protection of these sites was the keynote subject of the international event in Paris.

Multiple diversities

Visitors to the exhibition received a first impression of the DRC's diversity from twelve large maps that provide information about the more than 200 Congolese languages, the four national languages, the geology, the minerals, the 32 national parks and reserves with their natural vegetation, the river system, the abundance of bird species, the geographic relief, and land use. Two maps convey the country's creative and artistic diversity in the form of a photo mosaic.

Each of these elements showed an aspect of the enormous natural and cultural wealth of the DRC. The use of GIS technology⁴ enabled the simultaneous display of these various facets in complementary layers of information. This was illustrated on a giant video screen that was linking the various maps.

With the collections displayed in the exhibition, the RMCA showed just a tiny fraction of Central Africa's unique heritage. External documentation and expertise had also been called upon, thanks to the RMCA's well-established global network of scientists and institutions.

Five Congolese scientists who are part of this network had each contributed an article on a topic that reflected the content of the exhibition.

National parks as a means of conservation

Opinions are divided about defining the boundaries of national parks. Some think that this is the best way to protect biodiversity from over-exploitation by man. The Congolese government now recognizes the importance of the exceptionally rich biodiversity of the DRC. The Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation (Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature: ICCN) manages a network of protected areas covering a total area of 180,000 square kilometres, or almost eight per cent of the DRC. In this publication, Eulalie Bashige, head of the ICCN, and Guy Debonnet, UNESCO programme specialist in natural heritage, describe the five Congolese World Heritage sites, which are considered to be among the most spectacular in the world. The animals that are unique to the DRC include the Congo peacock, the okapi or forest giraffe, the bonobo or pygmy chimpanzee, and the less well-known water civet. Biodiversity is not confined to large animals, however; it is also manifested in the variations in and between species of plants, shellfish, insects, birds, caterpillars, beetles, fish, and even viruses and bacteria.⁵

Many species have not yet been described by scientists. The national parks module of the exhibit looks in greater depth at the history of the Virunga National Park, which was founded in 1925 as the Albert National Park.

Nature conservation areas with high landscape value can also show traces of immaterial and material culture. Evidence of fishing cultures has been found in sediments along the banks of the Semliki River, which flows through the Virunga National Park. Remains shown to be 20,000 years old include, for example, the Ishango bone⁶ with its engraved markings, believed by some to be the world's oldest mathematical artefact.

Also in this publication, anthropologist Shaje a Tshiluila takes a closer look at sacred sites and holy forests in the Kinshasa area, which are protected for their spiritual value. In the realm of immaterial culture, there are legends associated with springs, rivers, mountains, and volcanoes.

It is all too evident that the relationship between man and nature is not always a balanced one. Biodiversity is seriously threatened by the unsustainable exploitation of nature, usually prompted by commercial interests. Mano Ntayingi's contribution deals with the problem of poaching in protected areas of the DRC. When the original boundaries of the national parks were drawn, it was assumed that there was little or no human habitation in the parks, so that the impact of man on biodiversity would be minimal. Now, however, as a result of growing

demographic pressure, the situation has changed drastically and the hunting reserves that were built around the national parks as buffer zones no longer offer an adequate response. Mano Ntayingi sees a possible solution to poaching in participatory management of the protected areas. This implies the better coordination of the interests of local populations, public authorities, and the NGOs that are trying to protect these areas. Economic initiatives are needed to support this kind of programme.

Utilizing nature for basic and economic needs

Man needs nature to survive. Wild plants and fruits, insects, mushrooms, honey, game, and fish provide daily nourishment. The choice available, the techniques used for gathering, hunting, or fishing, and the methods of preparation are extremely diverse. In times of economic and social instability, game and wild plants form a crucial alternative to man's basic diet, which is usually based on cultivated crops and livestock. What people eat depends not only on what a particular environment has to offer, but also on specific cultural preferences.

Plants that grow in the wild are also used in basic health care. The Congolese professor Penge On'okoko specializes in the pharmacology of medicinal plants. In his contribution he describes how these are studied in the DRC. He illustrates how a common ailment like diarrhoea is treated with medicinal plants. The exhibition includes a selection of medicinal plants and recipes.

The management of forests in the DRC is often associated with the export of tropical wood for the construction industry and furniture making. The amount of wood used in the DRC for a variety of purposes – but particularly for firewood – is enormous. Today there is a growing awareness of the importance of sustainable forest management. Sustainable timber extraction is possible, provided there is a responsible management plan in place to ensure that fewer trees are felled than are planted.

The Congolese subsoil is extremely rich in ores such as gold, cobalt, tin, coltan, germanium, diamond, silver, copper, etc. Industrial raw materials – limestone, silicates, tourmaline, kaolinite, and granulates, for instance – are extracted for use in various industries. Mining operations are greatly determined by supply and demand in international markets. Here, too, responsible extraction is essential to preserve the ecological equilibrium between man and nature.

The ABC of nature

More than 200 languages are spoken in the DRC. Moreover, as André Motingea Mangulu describes in his contribution, research has shown that in some areas, such as the Central Congo Basin, the apparent unity of the Mongo language actually conceals a multitude of languages. At the national level, the four official

languages, Tshiluba, Kikongo, Lingala, and Kiswahili, simplify communication in administration and education in this multilingual country. But it is especially the more than 200 languages that convey the refined local knowledge of the immediate natural environment. Local names for animals and plants indicate a detailed knowledge of ecology and biology and of the use of animal and plant materials. Knowledge is often transmitted orally. Certain material objects testify to this transfer of know-how. The 'proverb rope' of the Lega in eastern DRC consists of a series of miniature objects attached to a rope, each object symbolizing one or more proverbs. These are recited in the village square, where the proverb rope hangs. If there are any doubts about a particular proverb, the speaker has to explain it by telling a story.

Nature as a symbolic repertory

Besides exploiting nature for his basic needs, man also makes use of elements of his natural surroundings for symbolic purposes. Animal and plant materials are used in specific contexts because, as verbal or visual allusions or metaphors, they express or reinforce certain ideas that underpin the workings of social or political institutions. For example, within the *Bwami* initiation society of the Lega, the elephant – being a herd animal – symbolizes harmonious cohabitation. Parts of the elephant, such as the tusks, hide, and tail hairs, are used to make initiation objects and symbols of prestige for the society's highest grade.

Another animal to which exceptional qualities are attributed in Central Africa is the leopard. As a predator, the leopard inspires awe due to its strength and speed, while as a night hunter it is associated with the supernatural. The leopard is a powerful symbol of chieftainship and political power. Its skin, teeth, and claws are incorporated in a chief's attributes. The spotted pattern of the leopard's coat symbolizes the animal's ambiguous status as an inhabitant of both the world of the living and the world of the dead. The chief is also seen as an intermediary between his subjects and the world of the ancestors and spirits.

Among the Mongo peoples, metal is worked into jewellery and insignia that show the wealth and prestige of the wearer. In the Lake Mai Ndombe and Lake Ntomba regions, nkumu headmen wear large copper discs on their headdress, symbolizing their elevated status. Plants are also used for symbolic purposes. In Mayombe, the chief is depicted in wooden sculptures with the root of the *mukhuisa* plant (or *munkwisa*; *Costus lucanusianus*) between his teeth. The image of a man who can endure the bitterness of this plant symbolizes the exceptional abilities of the chief.

The eloquence of these kinds of symbolic representations depends on the cultural knowledge of the natural

environment that is shared within a particular group. The symbolic use of natural elements is illustrated in the exhibition with the help of objects from the ethnographic collections of the RMCA. Some of these rarely leave the reserves, while others have acquired the status of works of art, thanks to the creativity, expressive power, and skill of their makers. Some objects do indeed have an indisputable and universal aesthetic value.

A meeting place, a new beginning

The exhibition displayed various aspects of the biodiversity and geodiversity of nature in the DRC, and highlighted the multitude of relationships that exist between man and nature. The themes of the exhibition invited further exploration. At the RMCA a number of peripheral activities had tempt visitors to do just that. In this context research results and databases were presented to the public at large. This information was supplemented with a series of thematic films and cultural productions from the DRC. Finally, the RMCA aims to provide a forum where various interest groups can discuss specific themes such as sustainable forest management.

The RMCA's aim in mounting this exhibition was to increase public awareness, at both local and international levels, of the unique and irreplaceable nature of the Congolese heritage. In particular, the Museum seeks to initiate a constructive dialogue between Belgian and Congolese partners. By presenting new information and promoting a sustained dialogue between the various partners, the RMCA would like to fulfil a policy support role. In this way the exhibition has served as a meeting place and provided a new impetus for fruitful collaboration in the future.

1. The five themes are covered either alone or in combination with one another as part of a series of topics dealt with in the exhibition. Paris has 30 modules, while Tervuren has 20, with references to the RMCA's permanent exhibition.

2. According to Article 2 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, signed at the 1992 World Summit in Rio de Janeiro, biological diversity means 'the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems' (<http://www.biodiv.org/convention/articles.asp>).

3. According to Article 2 of the above-mentioned Convention, sustainable use means 'the use of components of biological diversity in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of biological diversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations'.

4. GIS (Geographical Information Systems) comprises a whole range of software tools with which geographical data can be plotted and combined on maps.

5. Andy Purvis and Andy Hector, 'Getting the Measure of Biodiversity', *Nature* 405 (6783), 11 May 2000, pp. 212–219.

6. The multimedia presentations in the exhibition are the work of the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences in Brussels. There is a brief account of the history of the excavations in Ishango, a presentation on the environment, and a 'riddle' concerning the Ishango bone with its engraved markings.

Annexes

**Speech of H.E. Mr Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma,
Vice-President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo,
16 September 2004**

As we stand before this august assembly, we feel deep down within us the resonating note of the great hope that has always filled our thoughts, the hope that a day will ultimately come when the powerful coalition of the national and international forces of the mind, intelligence and morality will replace that other coalition which has thought for decades that it could envisage the future of humanity while excluding a section of it and mutilating the principles and values that forge its unity.

This shows how much this round table constitutes that strong message which our country needed so much at that crucial moment in its history.

How can one fail to see in it the strength of the hope that resides in each of us, the mark of solidarity, our people's source of support in their reconstruction and, above all, morale-building efforts. Those Congolese voices silenced, overwhelmed by monstrosity, have nonetheless written with their blood the oath of freedom for an entire people so that the Homeland will survive!

It is most appropriate that the round table is taking place here, at UNESCO, the most beautiful creative Utopia established by human beings, in which intellectual and moral forms of solidarity of humanity come together and blossom.

Excellencies, Distinguished Ministers,
Honourable Deputies and Senators of the Democratic Republic of the Congo,
Mr Director-General of UNESCO,
Distinguished Ambassadors,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Distinguished guests,

It is a real pleasure and honour to speak from this rostrum on behalf of H.E. the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Major-General Joseph Kabila, who would have been happy to be with you today but for the constraints of his State responsibilities.

At this crucial moment, when the Congolese people are living in the gloom of reflection rather than in the light of spontaneity, I should like from the outset to pay tribute to all the eminent defenders of our country's nature and culture who are here in such numbers.

I also take the opportunity to pay tribute to UNESCO for recognizing the nation, having effectively assisted and supported our country ever since it stood on the threshold of accession to international sovereignty.

As events may be forgotten, some outstanding facts must be called to mind.

As early as 1960, the country lost its entire teaching corps from the former colonial metropolitan power and was saved only by assistance from UNESCO, which mobilized the needed expertise throughout the world and established what is still today one of the jewels of the country's education system, namely the Institut Pédagogique National (IPN).

In 1992, the national consultations on education held by UNESCO in Kinshasa gave the country new food for thought on its education system, by highlighting the essential link between knowledge and know-how.

In the area of concern to us here today, it was in 1999 that the Regional Postgraduate Training School on Integrated Management of Tropical Forests (ERAIFT) was established by UNESCO, with the assistance of UNDP.

And this was all achieved in a very tense political and social setting.

UNESCO, of course, and other development partners such as the Kingdom of Belgium, the United States of America, France, Italy, Japan, the United Nations Foundation and many others have not failed the Republic, having assisted it generously.

Similarly, eminent umbrella organizations have provided and are providing moral and material support to strengthen the Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICCN), and they include the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), the International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP), the International Rhino Foundation, Gilman International Conservation and the Zoological Society of Milwaukee.

This represents the international solidarity of humanity, in the deepest sense of hope.

Africa has not been absent from this endeavour. It gives us cause for satisfaction to acknowledge the presence of Mr Henri Djombo, Minister of Forestry and the Environment of the Republic of the Congo, appointed to participate in this round table by his Gabonese colleague, the President of the Conference of Ministers Responsible for Central African Forests (COMIFAC).

His attendance, as that of Mr Themba P. Wakashe, Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee, gives an eminently African dimension to the subject. To all of

them, we convey the friendship and the fraternity of the Congolese people.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The very title of this international conference, namely: "Promoting and Preserving Congolese heritage: linking biological and cultural diversity" highlights all the key issues of this round table for a country rich in biological and cultural diversity.

In regard to biological diversity, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has Africa's most extensive forest, with approximately 10,000 plant species, and abounds in the most emblematic and paradigmatic animal species such as elephants, mountain and lowland gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos and okapis, the last two species being endemic there.

It should be pointed out that, owing to the development of its traditional ecological awareness, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has participated, as from the 1970s, in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme of UNESCO as it has established three biosphere reserves, namely Luki in Bas-Congo, Yangambi in the Eastern Province and Lufira in Katanga.

It should also be recalled that the Democratic Republic of the Congo was one of the first Member States of UNESCO to accede to the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, which it ratified as early as 1974, after its adoption by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 17th session in Paris in November 1972.

As part of its participation in the world effort to conserve biological diversity, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has to date placed five sites on the World Heritage List, namely the Virunga, Garamba, Kahuzi-Biega and Salonga National Parks and the Okapi Wildlife Reserve.

Despite the serious deterioration of the environment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a result of the wars waged there and subsequent population movements, the sites still retain the bulk of their ecological wealth owing largely to the efforts, acknowledged above, of UNESCO and development partners to implement various projects to conserve biodiversity in situations of armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The major challenge facing this conference is therefore to "mobilize minds" in order to set in motion a broad coalition, a genuine network involving the partners here today to whom we make a vibrant appeal to join in the efforts of UNESCO, Belgium, France, Japan and the United Nations Foundation to preserve Congolese natural and cultural heritage.

Its cultural diversity is second to none: 450 ethnic groups, representing as many ethnic minorities, impart to the Republic its cultural harmony, creativity and inventiveness.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo could thus be a model affording a strategy to be followed to safeguard and rehabilitate cultural and biological diversity in post-conflict situations.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

To rise to that challenge, the Democratic Republic of the Congo wishes to suggest that all partners who, we hope, will join in with UNESCO and other development partners, take action along the priority lines that I shall now set out.

1. Capacity-building, in particular for site managers

In this field, the Regional Postgraduate Training School on Integrated Management of Tropical Forests (ERAIPT) merits greater support as a centre of excellence within the NEPAD framework in particular. The school, which trains high-level African managers in situ, using the MAB-approved systematic and multidisciplinary approach, fully meets Africa's need for a new kind of specialist capable of a holistic and integrated vision of development and familiar with decision-making tools.

It must be stressed that the school has been included in the supplementary budget and enjoys Government support, despite our modest budget resources.

Furthermore, young people are participating more widely in the promotion and preservation of the world heritage under the UNESCO Associated Schools Project, in which the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been actively involved since 1994.

2. Diversification of the network of World Heritage sites in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Republic possesses cultural sites of outstanding universal value in addition to the natural sites that are the subject of today's round table. Examples include the major artistic and architectural works and many places of memory such as the Kuba Royal Palace, the historical town of Boma, the Nyangwe and Kasongo slave markets, the prehistoric sites of Buru and Matupi and the Mbanza-Ngungu caves.

We therefore invite UNESCO to pursue the efforts begun some years ago to assist our country in drawing up nomination files for the inscription of these cultural sites on the World Heritage List.

We also call upon the World Heritage Centre to help us to conduct a study aimed at identifying other cultural sites of outstanding universal value.

3. Holding of a national forum on the implementation of the basic principles of cultural diversity

The aim here is to consolidate peace and national unity, for which support is required from UNESCO and other development partners. Another important project within this framework is the construction of a grand Palace of Culture, to carry the flame of culture even higher in our country, the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

4. Establishment of new World Heritage natural sites and new biosphere reserves

In addition to the five World Heritage sites in the Democratic Republic of the Congo at present, I should like to draw the international community's attention to the Upemba and Kundelungu National Parks in Katanga which to all appearances are "poor relations" but contain marvellous *Brachystegia laurentii* woodland ecosystems and the extraordinary Lofoi Falls, a single 347 metre fall, a truly natural wonder!

We are convinced that these sites deserve to be included in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and in the World Heritage List of natural sites. Moreover, the Okapi Wildlife Reserve, which contains Pleistocene refuges and is home to the Mbuti people, who have accumulated traditional skills concerning the relation between lifestyle, mode of production and environment, does indeed merit the status of a mixed cultural and natural site.

5. Establishment of the International Foundation for the Salonga National Park, one of the recommendations of the seminar held jointly by UNESCO/MAB, FAO, ACCT and ICCN in Iyonda, Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Foundation's basic mission will be to preserve, for the benefit of the international community, this enormous 3,600,000 hectare dense and humid forest ecosystem.

6. Finding an urgent response to the serious threat of extinction endangering the white rhinoceros in the northern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The number of these prehistoric animals, which are now endemic only to the Garamba National Park, is falling constantly despite all the efforts made since 1985 by the ICCN/ UNESCO/WWF/IUCN/Frankfurt Zoological Society consortium, which led to the biological recovery of the species.

In that regard, we welcome the contacts that the Network of Central African Protected Zones (RAPAC) has made with the European Union to mobilize extra budgetary funds, however small the contribution, to meet the pressing needs of the Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICCN).

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have just set out for this International Donor Conference the main priority lines of action for the benefit of the World Heritage sites in our country.

Whatever the difficulties we face, we are not speaking to you as a country on its knees, but as a country standing with its head held high.

We can therefore assure you of our country's firm commitment to achieving stability and democracy, factors that are vital to our national reconstruction effort, of which the rehabilitation of our country's natural and cultural World Heritage sites forms an integral part.

We therefore solemnly undertake:

1. to establish a trust fund for the rehabilitation of the sites, in an amount that will be determined when drawing up the 2005 budget;
2. to act positively to remove armed troops and other population groups who move into the parks and contribute to their destruction;
3. to contribute to the preservation and restoration of the integrity of the World Heritage sites in our country;
4. to ensure payment of the salaries of staff working on those sites;
5. to facilitate the operations of public institutions responsible for managing the sites, such as the Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICCN);
6. to ensure respect for the integrity of the sites and to take the concerns of the population groups living around protected areas into account by implementing development and reconstruction projects in which they participate actively;
7. to distribute the profits accruing from ecotourism equitably to the population groups living around protected areas.

We are pleased to announce officially the holding in Kinshasa, in the first half of 2005, of a major international event: the first intergovernmental meeting on the Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP), a joint UNEP/UNESCO project.

We would be lacking in courtesy to the Ugandan Government, which had also hoped to host the meeting, if we did not thank it sincerely for withdrawing its candidature in favour of our country, to which it gave full support.

We therefore formally invite Uganda to join us on the preparatory committee for that important meeting.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Men and women who loved nature and culture have contributed their knowledge about the preservation of these World Heritage sites to science. Noteworthy among them is Dr Jacques Verschuren of the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, the first Director-General of the Congolese National Parks Institute, serving from 1969 to 1975.

Immediately after our country acceded to international sovereignty in 1960, while the colonial authorities were packing their bags, this champion of nature conservation, a National Parks biologist at the time, remained at his post at the Rutshuru station in Virunga Park where he continued to train the Congolese.

In 1968, he held a press conference in Brussels, drawing on his celebrated work *Mourir pour les Eléphants*, which became the authoritative reference on the subject and mobilized the international community and the Congolese authorities to such an extent that the latter immediately set up the Congolese National Parks Institute, of which he was the first Director-General.

Some of the staff trained by Dr Verschuren are now senior officials at the Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature, and they include Kajuga Binyeri and Mushenzi Lusenge, both directors, who are here with us today.

Then there are those, no longer of this world, whose lives were closely linked to the history of nature conservation in our country, and to whom we pay a heartfelt tribute.

They were:

Mr Anicet Mburanumwe Chiri Wa Rutezo, first Chief Conservationist of the National Parks;
Ms Dian Fossey, tragically murdered outside our country;
Ms Batechi, wife of Mr Batechi, conservationist, taken hostage and murdered by poachers just a few months ago, during an attack on the Lusinga station in Upemba National Park.

All the courageous wardens killed while defending the cause of conservation.

In memory of these illustrious personalities, we invite this august assembly to rise and observe one minute of silence.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Distinguished guests,

To conclude, we should like once again to express our sincere thanks as well as those of our Government and all the Congolese people to the organizers of this round table on the natural and cultural heritage of our country. Your participation in this forum raises our aspirations and our hopes.

We hope that the donors and all the friendly countries here today will provide the Democratic Republic of the Congo with the assistance that it desires and needs in order to preserve sites that hold a heritage that has become universal rather than national, the common heritage of all humanity.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
With these shared convictions, we thank you for your kind attention.

Speech of Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, 16 September 2004

Mr Vice-President,
Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies, Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome today in UNESCO, the first International Donors' Conference for Promoting and Preserving Congolese Heritage.

I am delighted to have by my side Mr Zahidi N'Goma, Vice-President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As Vice-President of his country, but also as a loyal friend of UNESCO, having worked here for nearly twenty years, he can appreciate the ground covered and the links of confidence that our Organization and his country have woven during recent, troubled, times. I visited his country in August 2003, a few weeks after the installation of the Transition (Reconciliation) Government, where I had the pleasure of meeting President Kabila with whom I signed a joint communique describing the priority areas where we could collaborate. In view of the urgency there was to support the new government in its immense challenge, in particular in the field of education, UNESCO elaborated during 2003, a strategy for global assistance, so that, in all the fields education, science, culture and communication, our Organization may constitute a reliable partner for the DRC. This document, prepared in close coordination with the Congolese authorities, now constitutes the reference for our cooperation. But UNESCO, wishing to maintain its presence and continue its work in the country throughout the time of conflict that reigned in the DRC in the mid-90s, has worked hard for the preservation of the natural heritage, and in particular the five properties inscribed on the World Heritage List.

As early as 2000, it launched an ambitious programme for a duration of four years, entitled : "Biodiversity Conservation in Regions of Armed Conflict: Preserving World Heritage Sites in the Democratic Republic of the Congo".

Today, I would like to pay tribute to the United Nations Foundation and to the Belgian Government who, through their financial support, allowed us to intervene in the DRC despite the difficult context.

I would also like to congratulate the conservation organizations whose work in the field has demonstrated their strong commitment to the preservation of this heritage, as well as the staff of the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation, manager of the sites, without whom this project would not have succeeded. All these organiza-

tions, all these men and women, united around a same goal : preserving the National Parks of Garamba, Kahuzi-Biega, Salonga and Virunga, as well as the Okapi Wildlife Reserve, inscribed on the World Heritage List, but also on the List of World Heritage in Danger because of the negative impact of the conflicts on their integrity.

Mr Vice-President,
Ladies, Gentlemen,

To express a strong interest in the safeguarding of the great apes or the humid tropical forest in a region where human beings are massacred, children are enrolled as soldiers, women are raped and the wounded lack the most elementary care, may appear out of place, even shocking. Nevertheless, the gradual but irreversible disappearance of a fragile ecosystem to the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) constitutes just as terrible and frightening a threat for the populations of this country and for all of humanity.

The ecosystem in the DRC is in fact considered as a key element of the "second lung of the Planet". So the questions raised at the planetary level by atmospheric pollution or climate change cannot be considered independently of the Congolese forest, which produces a large part of our oxygen and constitutes an essential element of climate balance. This forest can only survive if the tenuous chain of biodiversity is fully respected, beginning with the endemic animal species which live there. This forest also shelters peoples, settled there for thousands of years, who have an unequalled knowledge of this environment, notably in the field of pharmacopoeia, and who know how to use it in a sustainable way. More than 200 languages are spoken in the Congolese territory, which are as many ways of describing and understanding this extraordinary complexity.

The Congolese forest and its inhabitants, with ecotourism, agriculture, mining, logging for energy production, cabinet-making or construction, not to mention the pharmacopoeia and the amazing deposit of genes that it constitutes for biotechnologies, are a wealth which can bring prosperity to the Congolese people if exploited in a sensible and sustainable manner.

The innovative strategy implemented by UNESCO and its partners demonstrates that it is possible to act for the preservation of heritage even in times of conflict. The testimonies that you will listen to during this Conference will, I hope, convince you of this. But a lasting safeguarding action implies important resources, be it for satellite surveillance, aerial monitoring of ecosystems, or

the training of guards and patrols, not to mention the involvement of local communities in the management of the reserves.

At a time when hope for a lasting peace is feasible, the achievements of the four years of project execution must be prolonged. This requires a firm commitment on the part of the Congolese Government to suppress the looting through law enforcement. The presence of the Vice-President Zahidi N'Goma here today bears witness. But support from other stakeholders and private donors will also be decisive. So far our action has limited the damage. The time has now come to rehabilitate the sites, reconstruct the infrastructures, re-equip and train new guards. Your enthusiastic response to our invitation today gives us confidence that you are willing to provide support.

The Conference that brings us together today, as well as all the activities foreseen in the framework of this exceptional event, constitutes a unique opportunity to raise awareness in the international community of the outstanding universal value of the cultural and natural heritage of the DRC.

The technical workshops that launched the work of this Conference, notably those related to the conservation of great apes in the context of the UNEP/UNESCO-GRASP project and the involvement of local communities in the conservation of the World Heritage sites, have shown the limits of a too restrictive concept for nature protection. We need to promote a strategy for the involvement of

local populations in the management of natural resources and an equal sharing policy of the profits.

The work of the experts has, furthermore, emphasized once again the important role of capacity building for a sustainable and effective management of the sites. I am delighted to learn that the Regional Postgraduate School for the Integrated Management of Tropical Forests and Territories (ERAIFT) launched by UNESCO with the support of UNDP at Kinshasa University campus has made considerable progress in the training of young Africans. I thank Belgium and the European Commission for their support to this regional training institute for high-level managers which, in my view, is called upon to play a primordial role as a centre of excellence in the framework of NEPAD.

Mr Vice-President, Ladies, Gentlemen,

I wish once again, to thank the United Nations Foundation, Belgium and Japan who made it possible to hold this first event to promote and preserve World Heritage in the DRC. I also wish to thank Italy who has already mobilised funds for the next phase of the project. It is a long-term commitment for the DRC that is being pledged here, so that the peace process is the fruit not only of political accords, but also and most importantly is a consciousness shared by a whole nation of the outstanding wealth of which it is the inheritor, and which can ensure its prosperity in the future. Because peace in the DRC is, I am convinced, dependent on heritage protection.

Speech of Mr Duchêne, Deputy Director General, Ministry for Development Cooperation (Belgium), 16 September 2004

Mr Vice-President of the Democratic Republic of Congo,
Mr Director-General of UNESCO
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

May I first apologise for the absence of the Belgian Minister for Development Cooperation, Mr Armand De Decker, who had organized his agenda to be with us today but unfortunately had to cancel his visit due to a very demanding political week in Belgium. Last week, when participating in the inauguration of the exhibition at the Royal Museum for Central Africa in the company of HRH Prince Philippe of Belgium, Minister De Decker indicated the high importance that the Belgian Government assigns to these events dedicated to the Democratic Republic of Congo, and for which UNESCO had the happy initiative, and he would have wished to reiterate this declaration again today.

Excellencies,
Ladies, Gentlemen,

Africa in general, and Central Africa in particular, is a priority for Belgium and for the Belgian Cooperation, as is sustainable development, which, by law, is one of the priority objectives of our international cooperation. In implementing this objective, the environment was considered as one of the criteria of relevance for our activities: we have developed an environmental strategy which has been submitted to Parliament and which foresees additional efforts in the framework of our increased assistance for the environment and, notably the forests and biodiversity.

Thus, it is very natural that, when we decided to make UNESCO a partner organization for our cooperation, we began to be interested in the activities of the World Heritage Centre in favour of the Congo's natural parks. And just as naturally, we decided to finance an initial project in support of the exemplary activities carried out by the Centre in cooperation with the United Nations Foundation, to which I would like to express our appreciation. With the success of this first project, we decided to place at the disposal of the World Heritage Centre an expert in natural heritage for a period of four years and to extend our cooperation with the UNESCO Science Sector by supporting the Regional School for the Development and Management of Tropical Forests and Territories in Kinshasa. At the same time, the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office also concluded an agreement with the World Heritage Centre for the establishment of a network of experts from Belgian Universities and the Royal Museum for Central Africa to

promote the conservation and management efforts of the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation. This project, presented during a workshop this week, using advanced technologies, a cartography system, monitoring and information, aimed to strengthen the management of the sites of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Excellencies
Ladies, Gentlemen,

The experience of our cooperation with UNESCO has proved extremely positive and has been unanimously appreciated by the scientists involved in the activities. We therefore did not hesitate an instant to contribute towards the recent series of events, and in particular to funding the exhibition which seems to be an excellent way both of reaching out to the public at large and presenting the acquired knowledge.

The excellent results achieved by our projects, sometimes under difficult circumstances, have convinced us to continue along the same lines: we have informed UNESCO of our intention in the future to concentrate the support we are providing them with on continued reinforcement and preservation of biodiversity in Central Africa, be it through the World Heritage Centre or the Science Sector.

In the future, and I shall be more precise tomorrow, we envisage a follow-up of our activities :

- in Belgium first, where, thanks to cooperation connected with these projects and these events, we should be able to further strengthen the synergies between the Development Cooperation, Science Policy and the academic and scientific milieu, so as to bring to UNESCO a stronger and more coherent expertise;
- and in the Congo, especially, where, through the intermediary of UNESCO, but also through our bilateral cooperation, we wish to support those persons mobilized for the preservation of their heritage, which belongs to all humanity.

Excellencies
Ladies, Gentlemen,

We are proud to have contributed, together with UNESCO and the United Nations Foundation, and thanks to the precious and active collaboration of all the Congolese actors concerned, towards the noble cause and we launch an appeal for new partners to join us.

Thank you.

**Speech of Mr Denis Gauer,
Roving Ambassador for Environment, Facilitator, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (France),
16 September 2004**

Mr Director-General
Mr Vice – President
Mr Ambassador
Ladies, Gentlemen

In the name of the President and the Government of the Republic of France, it gives me great pleasure to warmly welcome the initiative taken by UNESCO and the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to organize this Conference for Promoting and Preserving Congolese Heritage. Mr Darcos, Minister Delegate for Cooperation and Francophonie, who had expressed his personal interest and his wish to be present today, has unfortunately been detained by other obligations.

The DRC has experienced tears of trials and tribulations – wars and conflicts have brought unwarranted suffering for the population and destruction of economic infrastructures and its natural heritage. However, in this last area, the essential has at least been preserved. Although the five national parks are today inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, they do still exist. This is thanks to the diligence and the commitment of the local personnel who have continued their work in spite of the difficulties and threats to their lives and their homes, and thanks also to the support of the international partners.

Today when, we all hope that the horizon is becoming lighter and the DRC may envisage a return to political stability and economic and social progress for its populations, consideration must also be given to the outlook for its natural and cultural heritage. We need to evaluate the situation, to identify the most urgent needs to preserve the World Heritage sites and elaborate a long-term strategy to unite the efforts of all the actors. This is the objective of this Conference.

France, under the personal instigation of President Chirac, who had strongly expressed his convictions at the 2002 Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development, intends to be actively involved in the efforts for the preservation of World Heritage and biodiversity globally and in particular in the Congo Basin.

At the Summit, France announced its intention to organize a major scientific conference on this theme. This will be

held at UNESCO from 24 to 28 January 2005, and bring together about a thousand participants – scientists, but also economic and political actors, and representatives of civil society – for five days of discussion on all dimensions of research and governance of the biodiversity. The significant reduction in the erosion of the biodiversity by the year 2010 – a commitment set by the international community - will only be possible if we manage to establish a state-of-the-art of knowledge, inform and raise awareness of the public at large and mobilize the political and decision-making environments. And we shall ensure that representatives of the countries of the south, and notably the Congo Basin and the DRC, are present and have the opportunity to voice their concerns.

We are firm in our resolution to increase our involvement in the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, which we feel is an appropriate area for action. During the Conference of Ministers in Charge of Central African Forests (COMIFAC), regional coordination and a concerted plan of action was elaborated, expressing a strong political will and providing an essential reference framework. The partnership formula favours the convergence of activities by all the stakeholders, including the private sector and non-governmental organizations. It is by these means that we shall succeed in guiding this vast forest area, priceless depository of biodiversity, towards truly sustainable management, ensuring both the long-term conservation of the natural heritage and the economic and social development of the populations who live in the forest.

Ladies, Gentlemen,

You represent the States, international institutions, the NGOs, the private companies who have stood together with the DRC during the difficult times and who wish today to help it in this fundamental task of promotion and presentation of its heritage. It is a noble gesture towards the Congolese people. But it is the whole of humanity who will be beholden to you for the safeguarding of such an essential part of World Heritage. And by acting together, with the effective support of all the political parties of the DRC for national concordance and better governance, we can succeed.

Thank you.

Speech of H.E. Mr Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma, Vice-President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 17 September 2004

What can be expressed at the end of this International Donors' Conference for promoting and preserving the natural and cultural heritage of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, my country, except for those two simple words, « satisfaction and thank you » !

Excellencies Ministers,
Honourable Deputies and Senators of the Democratic Republic of the Congo,
Mr Director-General of UNESCO,
Ambassadors,
Ladies, Gentlemen,
Distinguished Guests,

This Conference has been an exceptional opportunity for the exchange of experiences on 32 specific themes around the central theme : « Congo : Heritage in danger. Protecting the wonders of the Democratic Republic of the Congo », with experts from the field and many different parts of the world .

We have learned many lessons from this Conference, such as :

1. We have all understood that in the framework of the Congo Basin, the DRC is the epicentre heart of Central Africa and if the heart is healthy the rest of the body will surely flourish.
2. We acknowledge the need for the continued involvement of UNESCO and its network of partnerships in the international community in our work to protect our natural heritage.
3. We are happy about the continued strengthening of the capacities of the Congolese Institute for Nature Protection, ICCN, through the Regional Postgraduate Training School on Integrated Management of Tropical Forests and Territories, « ERAIFT », with the support of UNESCO and its partners, Belgium and the Information Management System for Protected Areas (SYGIAP).
4. The need to pursue contacts between the military and the guards at the sites and ensure training for all concerned through seminars, developing the dialogue between the different actors on the ground at the sites and the protected areas. The same goes for the local resident populations.
5. Continued funding for the sites is indispensable. Thus, we are happy about the capitlization of the idea launched in our opening speech which decided France to support the Central Africa World Heritage Forest Initiative « CAWHFI », and for which I warmly thank it.

6. As a new method to finance forest ecosystems, we support the possibility evoked by Minister Henri Jombo of the Congo Republic to create a mechanism of debt-for-nature conversion similar to that in Latin American countries, the PPTTE, and the legal funds in the establishment of transboundary protected areas.
7. All this fits in with the UNESCO-DRC cooperation strategy launched by the Director-General in August 2003, and capitalizes the synergies of all the UNESCO programme sectors in the field of World Heritage conservation: concertation on World Heritage, the MAB Programme, Man and the Biosphere, the International Hydrology Programme (IHP), Social and Human Sciences, Education for all, Culture and Communication.

We say « Thank you »:

- Thank you to the European Union for its support to Garamba Park;
- Thank you to France for its support for the African Network for the Protection of Protected Areas of Central Africa;
- Thank you to Mr Jacques Verschuren, we have received the message loud and clear regarding the guards for the World Heritage and protected area sites, drawn from his own experience. In this context, the moving appeal made by the guard Jean Pierre Jobogo, who said that 'We do not want the guards to become a dying species, we hope that assistance will continue from the international community' finds its place here.

In this framework, we recall the commitments undertaken by the DRC before the holding of this Conference, particularly that of sharing with the local population the income generated by ecotourism, an efficient means not only of contributing towards the improvement of their living standards, but more importantly to ensure their involvement in the defence of protected areas.

With regard to future steps, we recall the following activities :

- The Charity Concert, the profits of which to be paid to the World Heritage Centre in favour of nature conservation, which will be held on 23 September 2004. I invite you all to participate and experience the Congolese rumba.
- The first International Conference on Biodiversity in January 2005, organised by France.
- The Summit of Heads of State for the adoption of a treaty on the sustainable management of forest ecosystems in the framework of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership in Brazzaville in February 2005.

International Conference for Promoting and Preserving Congolese Heritage

- The intergovernmental meeting on the conservation of the great apes which will be organised in Kinshasa during the first half of next year.

Distinguished guests,

We take pleasure in informing you that we will propose to the Transition Government to institute, as other countries have, a day devoted to natural and cultural heritage, and why not 17 September each year to immortalize this date.

Excellencies, Ministers,
Honourable Deputies and Senators of the Democratic Republic of the Congo,

Mr Director-General of UNESCO,
Ambassadors,
Ladies, Gentlemen,
Distinguished Guests,

We cannot close our intervention today without, once again, thanking the Tervuren Museum for the magnificent exhibition that it organized in connection with this Conference. This exhibition runs until 26 September. We invite you to go with your family and friends and discover the natural and cultural wonders of the Congo.

Thank you.

Speech of Mr Marcio Barbosa, Deputy Director-General of UNESCO, 17 September 2004

Mr Vice-President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo,
Excellencies
Ladies, Gentlemen

At the close of this international conference in support of the cultural and natural heritage of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I would like, in the name of the Director-General, Koïchiro Matsuura, to thank you for having responded in such great numbers to our appeal.

The work carried out in the technical workshops as well as the discussions and exchanges which have fueled this week have shown us that the words solidarity and mobilization are not empty of sense.

The Conference which is drawing to a close has provided new and very precious perspectives of the actions and the efforts undertaken in this domain over the last four years by UNESCO, with the support of the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation, the Belgian Government, the United Nations Foundation and conservation organizations.

Despite the conflicts which have caused an upheaval in the region, these efforts have limited the damage suffered by the five World Heritage sites of the DRC. However, the sustainable integrity of these sites is not assured and some of them are still lacking full and overall protection.

In this context, the will expressed by the NGOs, The World Bank, the European Union, the United Nations Environment Programme, as well as the Governments of Belgium, Italy, France, and Germany to reinforce the coordinated action of the international community for the Congolese heritage as well as for biodiversity in Central Africa, is extremely encouraging.

Furthermore, we are reassured by the commitment made by the DRC, through its Vice-President, Mr Z'Ahidi Ngoma, to launch an active and ambitious policy to

reform the conservation of the national Congolese heritage. In particular, I recall the different measures announced concerning the management mechanisms for the sites, the remuneration of the personnel or the participation of the populations in the development and preservation of the areas concerned. These are most encouraging.

We are, in a sense, at a cross road.

After the success of the joint UNESCO-United Nations Foundation project entitled « Biodiversity Conservation in Regions of Armed Conflict: Preserving World Heritage Sites in the Democratic Republic of the Congo », after having gained the confidence of the Belgian Government and that of other donors, we now have to embark upon a new phase of action, based on different perspectives once funds have been secured.

The international community has mobilized itself for Phase II in full recognition that it is here and now that the question of economic development and the future of biological and cultural diversity of one entire country is being enacted.

The future of heritage in the DRC is a concern for all. Let us unite our efforts and our mobilization capacities. But beyond this, let us make it possible for the local communities to become involved, in the long-term, in the management and the promotion of a heritage which is both their strength and their future.

Mr Vice-President, Excellencies, Ladies, Gentlemen, I thank you most warmly for the time you have devoted to the work during this week and I look forward to announcing a future meeting to report on the results of this new phase of international mobilization for the safeguarding of the natural and cultural heritage in the DRC.

Thank you.

Acronyms

ABD	African Bank for Development	IPGC	International Programme for Gorilla Conservation
AWF	African Wildlife Conservation	IRF	International Rhino Foundation
BRAC	African Wood Organization	IUCN	The World Conservation Union
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	MAB	Man and Biosphere Programme
CARPE	Central African Program for the Environment	PMURR	Multi-sectoral Emergency Programme for Reconstruction and Rehabilitation
CAWHFI	Central African World Heritage Forest Initiative	MIKE	Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants
CBFP	Congo Basin Initiative Partnership	MONUC	United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
CEEC	Centre for Evaluation, Expertise and Certification of Precious Minerals	NGASP	National Great Apes Survival Plan
CEFDHAC	Conference of Ministers on the Central African Moist Forest Ecosystems	NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
CI	Conservation International	NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
CIFOR	Centre for International Forest Research	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species	PNA/EPT	National Plan on Education/Education for All
CIZBG	Congolese Institute for Zoological and Botanical Gardens	POPs	Persistent organic pollutants
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species	PSIFD	Permanent Service for Inventory and Forest Development
COMIFAC	Conference of Minister of Central African Forests	RAPAC	Network of Protected Areas for Central Africa
CoCoSi	Site Coordination Committee	REIMP	Regional Environmental Information Programme
CoCoCongo	Congo Conservation Coalition	RMCA	Royal Museum for Central Africa
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo	STN	Sangha Tri-national
ECOFAC	EU Programme for Conservation and Rational Utilization of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa	SYGIAP	Protected areas management system
ERAIFT	Regional Postgraduate Training School on Integrated Management of Tropical Areas	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ESA	European Space Agency	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
FCE	Federation of Congolese Enterprises	UNF	United Nations Foundation
FFI	Fauna and Flora International	UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
FZS	Frankfurt Zoological Society	USAID	US Agency for International Development
GEF	Global Environmental Facility	WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
GIC	Gilman International Conservation	WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature
GIS	Geographic Information System	ZSL	Zoological Society of London
GPS	Geographic Information System	ZSM	Zoological Society of Milwaukee
GRASP	Great Apes Survival Project		
GTZ	German Technical Conservation		
IAFI	Interafrican Forest Industries		
ICCN	Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation		
ICDPs	Integrated Conservation and Development Projects		
IHT	International Herald Tribune		

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