Deforestation trends in the Congo Basin

Reconciling economic growth and forest protection

Many partners





Strong involvement of all six Congo Basin countries:

Cameroon Central African Republic Gabon Democratic Republic of Congo Equatorial Guinea Republic of Congo

Major Partners



In-depth sectoral studies (agriculture, transport, energy, mining, logging) with a focus on potential impacts on forests Agriculture

Macro-economic modeling (GLOBIOM): Prospective approach & consultation with national experts → Test "policy shocks" (endogenous/exogenous)



Provide decision-makers with robust analysis of impacts of economic activities on forest cover. Based on a better understanding of deforestation dynamics, help them make informed policy choices

So far, Congo Basin's contribution to deforestation has been minimal

Contribution to tropical forest loss





Changes in Forest Area in Africa, 1990 - 2010



Source: Authors, derived from FAO, 2011



Source: Authors, derived from de Wasseige et al., 2012

Forest transition curve



However this may change...

Annual deforestation/forest degradation rates 1990-2000 and 2000-2005

Main Findings – Demography

Deforestation/Forest degradation are directly related to **population density** and mostly concentrated around urban centers and along the roads.



Forest loss around Kisangani, DRC between 2000-2010



Population in Congo Basin countries (in million)

Responding to growing demand for food and energy, particularly from urban centers, will require **an integrated, multiuse approach in peri-urban areas**.

Source: de Wasseige et al., 2012

Main Findings - Agriculture

Agriculture remains by far the region's largest employer, is also a significant contributor to GDP. However, has been neglected and is **largely under-performing**.

However, **potential is huge**: land availability and suitability for major crops, water abundance and potential to close yield gap with other tropical regions. Congo Basin.

> Congo Basin ranks amongst areas with the highest potential agricultural value for the majors crops (maize, oil palm. Soybean and sugar cane) in the world.



Source: IIASA, 2010

\$1,598 - \$1,881 \$1.882 - \$2.729 "Increase in agriculture productivity is good but not enough to protect the forests."

There is a need for a good land-use planning

Availability of suitable lands for agriculture - a large portion outside forested areas



Source: Authors, from IIASA, 2010

Main Findings – Transport

The Congo Basin is amongst the **most poorly networked area in terms of transport infrastructure** in the world (low quality and high price).

Major barrier to economic development → passive preservation of forests.



Source: AICD, World Bank, 2010



Improved transportation: a #1 priority in most Congo Basin countries.

By far, the most robust predictor of tropical deforestation

→ Need to rationalize transportation development (corridors, multi-modal)

Main Findings – Energy

Unsurprisingly a **major threat on forests**, particularly in more densely populated areas



Source: World Energy Outlook 2010, (*) World Energy Outlook 2006



The supply chain is currently highly inefficient (rent-seeking behavior, traditional carbonization techniques ,underpriced resources , inappropriate regulations, ...).

Fuelwood value chain needs to be profoundly "transformed".

Recommendations on "No regrets" measures

Just broad indications – need further discussions at the country level



	Sector	Recommendations
	Cross-cutting Issues	Invest in participatory land use planning Improve land tenure schemes Strengthen institutions
	Agriculture	 Prioritize agricultural expansion on non-forested areas Ernpower smallholder farmers Reinvigorate R&D towards sustainable productivity increase Prornote a sustainable large-scale agribusiness industry Foster win-win partnerships between large-scale operators and smallholders
	Wood-Based Biomass Energy	Put woodfuel energy higher on the political agenda Optimize the fuelwood/charcoal value chain Diversify supplies Foster community involvement through devolution of rights and capacity building Respond to growing urban needs in terms of both food and energy
	Transportation	Improve transportation planning at local, national, and regional levels Foster multi-modal transport networks Properly assess the impacts of transportation investments before they occur
	Logging	 Pursue progress on sustainable forest management Formalize the informal timber sector Modernize processing capacities Foster the involvement of communities in forest management
	Mining	Properly assess and monitor impacts of mining activities Learn from international best practices and foster risk mitigation Upgrade the artisanal and small-scale mining sector Promote innovative mechanisms to offset negative impacts of mining operations!

Congo Basin are not yet locked into a development path. They have the opportunity to embark on development pathways that "**leapfrog**" severe deforestation.

REDD+ can help Congo Basin countries define a new path toward "forest-friendly" growth



Thanks for your attention