

Issues and potentials for synergies between adaptation and mitigation in the Congo Basin

COBAM

Introduction

Some strategies to limit the negative impacts of climate change can also participate in deforestation reduction and carbon sequestration. Although these approaches may create substantial benefits, their real effectiveness still needs to be demonstrated on the ground. The COBAM project is working in five different landscapes in the Congo Basin, in order to develop appropriate reaction to vulnerability stemming from climate change, promoting at the same time reduction of carbon emissions from the forests.

Vulnerability context

In Congo Basin landscapes, vulnerability to climate hazards is reinforced by degradation of forest resources.

Tableau 1: Main perceived impacts of climate variability in the different landscapes in the Congo Basin

Landscape	Main perceived climate hazards	Main impacts	Elements of vulnerability linked to forest degradation
Tri-national de la Sangha	Dry spells during the rainy season	Decrease of the production (groundnut, maize) Decrease in harvesting NTFP (caterpillar)	Increased pressure on forest resources, limiting their availability
Maiko-taina-Kahuzi-Biega	Uncertainties about the beginning of the cropping season	Loss of seedlings and decrease of the agricultural production (groundnut, maize, beans)	Decreasingly fertile lands Demographic growth limiting access to land
Virunga (Volcanoes National Park)	Torrential rains during the rainy season	Destruction of housing (flooding) Destruction of fields and crops	Deforestation of the slopes of the volcano, increasing erosion

Conclusion

- Need to link deforestation and degradation issues to the impacts of climate variability and to other pressures on natural resources
- The search for win-win solutions should be achieved through integrative management of natural resources, combining individual practice, collective management adapted to local conflicts and preservation of ecosystems

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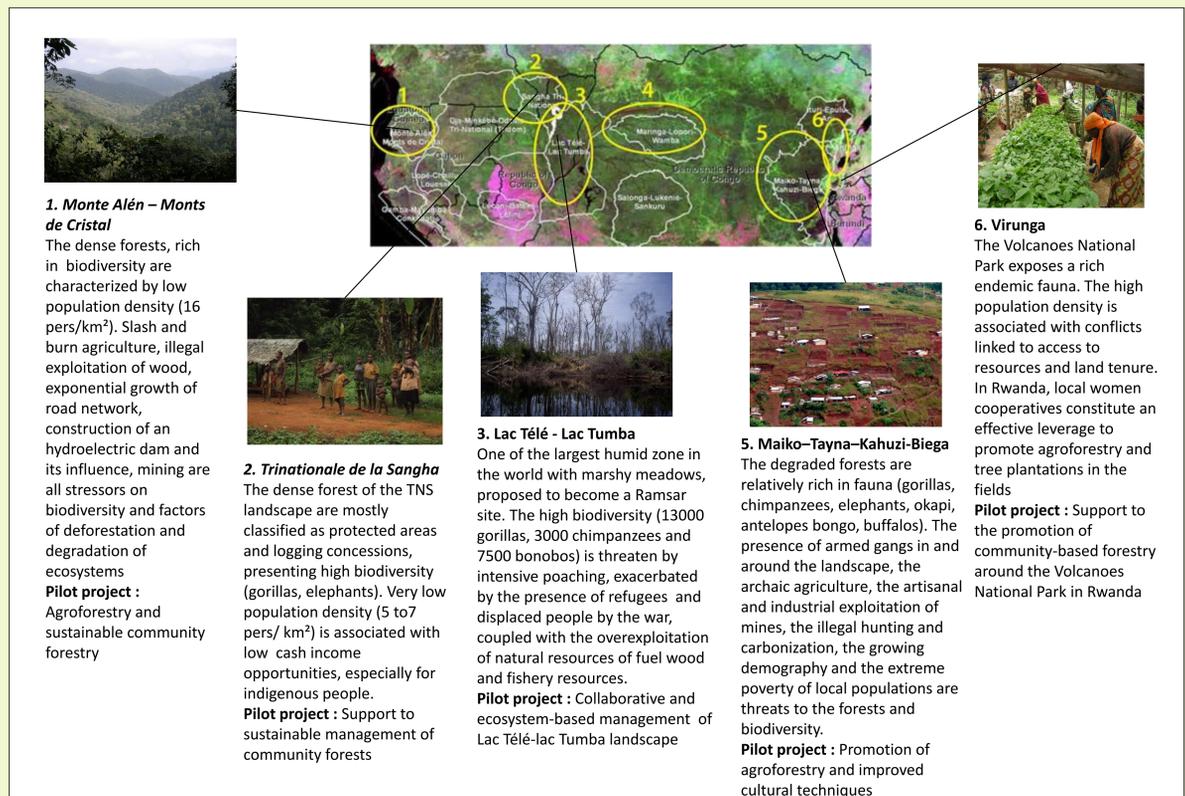


Figure 1: Main pressures on forests in high conservation value landscapes of Pacebco and objectives of pilot projects supported by COBAM

Table 2: Planned strategies for natural resources management and synergies between adaptation and mitigation to climate change

Potential activities	Benefits	Synergies between adaptation and mitigation
Adoption of new practices and more efficient technologies with regard to the use of resources. -Agroforestry and improved sedentary techniques in fallow - Improved seeds, improved woodstoves -Domestication of NTFP, production of honey	- Improvement of the fertility and the production - Food security -Development of local entrepreneurship - Job and revenues opportunities	-Sequestration of carbon or reduction of pressures on natural resources (avoided degradation and deforestation) - Economic alternatives and more resilient activities with regard to climate change.
Management approach - Setting up effective multi-actor concertation processes, for a sustainable and integrated landscape management strategy. - Community approach in the management of plantations et nurseries - Sustainable management of community forests. - Integration of gender and minorities. - Individual plantations in farms in the conflict areas.	- Improvement of the governance and the management of natural resources at the local level. -Better appropriation by the communities. -Integration of most vulnerable groups. -Conflicts management	- Long term and large scale management framework for natural resources. -Securing natural resources - Strengthening of the capacities of project holders at the local and community level (increased adaptative capacity)
Restoration and protection of ecosystems and habitats -Reforestation of degraded soils and stabilisation of soils (plantations, terrace cultivation) - Valorisation of laying fallows. - Better securing and management of spawning areas in order to increase fish production.	- Fight against erosion, stabilisation of soils. - Improvement of the fertility or the production, reconstitution of stocks.	-Sequestration of carbon and improvement of other ecosystem services useful for adaptation. -Better resistance or resilience of natural resources to external pressures and external hazards.

