Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP)
2010-2012 CBFP Facilitation

"Efficiency in Coordination, Mobilization, Consultation and Communication"

Press Briefing Note

29 February to 2 March - Hotel Sawa, Douala-Cameroon

"10th CBFP Meeting of Partners" - 1st -2nd March 2012

The 10th Meeting of Partners (MoP) of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) will be organized in Douala **from 1st to 2nd March 2012** under the chairmanship of **H. E. Ngole Philip Ngwese,** Cameroon's Minister of Forestry and Wildlife and **H. E. Hele Pierre,** Minister of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development. **This meeting of CBFP Partners is organized with the technical support of several CBFP Partners as well as the technical and financial support of the Canadian Government.**

The opening ceremony of the 10th Meeting of Partners (MoP) will be chaired by the **Minister of Environment, Conservation of Nature and Tourism of the Democratic Republic of Congo**, current Chairperson of the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC), His Excellency José Endundo Bononge.

This opening ceremony will be graced by the effective presence of the Ambassadors of CBFP Ex-Facilitator countries: the Ambassador of the United States of America to Cameroon, His Excellency Robert P Jackson; the Ambassador of the United States of America to Gabon, His Excellency Eric Benjaminson; the French Ambassador to Cameroon, His Excellency Bruno Gain and the Canadian High Commissioner to Cameroon, His Excellency Benoît-Pierre Laramée.

For Canada, this meeting is one of the official activities within the framework of **the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of bilateral relations between Canada and Cameroon**.

Jointly chaired by the Minister of Environment, Conservation of Nature and Tourism of the Democratic Republic of Congo, **His Excellency José Endundo Bononge and Gaston Grenier,** CBFP Facilitator, with the support of CBFP Ex-Facilitator countries**,** this statutory CBFP meeting will examine, among other things, the implementation status of the **CBFP Facilitation 2010-2012 Roadmap** on new contributions by partners in the implementation of the Convergence Plan of the Forest Commission of Central African.

It will also be an opportunity for strategic reflections on the **efforts by COMIFAC and it partners** in the face of new challenges and opportunities in a fast changing socio-economic environment. Participants will be

urged to review and/or define their CBFP action priorities and facilitation depending on the opportunities and difficulties.

One of the highlights of this Douala meeting will be on the joint statement of intent on the initiative on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation Forest Degradation and Conservation (REDD+) in the Congo Basin adopted in Durban during the COP 17 on climate. It involves promoting appropriation of the declaration by COMIFAC member countries and their partners, speeding up and reinforcing the implementation of REDD+ in the Congo Basin and drawing up a balance sheet of intentions and commitments of technical and financial partners to the declaration and other REDD+ partners.

Overall, the Meeting of partners is aimed at facilitating coordination and harmonization of support from the Congo Basin Forest Partnership members. Emphasis will be placed on open dialogue in order to allow for an in-depth analysis of themes that can facilitate the harmonious implementation of the COMIFAC Convergence Plan and major international Conventions on forest and environment.

Conclusions drawn from these debates, exchanges and presentations during the meeting, will help to support the CBFP Facilitation in its role as manager and coordinator of the activities of the partnership.

"Governance Day and Land-Use Management in the Congo Basin" - 29 February 2012

On 29 February 2012, on the sideline of the CBFP Meeting of partners, the CBFP Facilitation will organize, with the technical support of various partners and technical and financial backing of the Canadian Government, a thematic workshop on the main theme **"Resource governance and land use in the Congo Basin: viewpoints on sub-regional reflections, opportunities, challenges, stakes and dynamics ". The overall goal of this workshop is to enhance the efficiency of support from partners towards the reinforcement of forest ecosystem governance in the Congo Basin. This goal is broken down** into two specific objectives: (1) contributing to strategic reflection and prospects on governance of forest ecosystems and land-use, including overlapping of rights and uses in space; (2) contributing in harmonizing existing and emerging initiatives on forest ecosystem governance in the Congo Basin.

"Field Trip" - 2nd March 2012

On 2nd March 2012, the CBFP Facilitation in collaboration with Cameroon's Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife will invite participants for a half-day excursion to the Douala Autonomous Port and Douala Mangrove area.

(i) **At the Douala Autonomous Port,** discussions will be held with stakeholders in the sector on export procedures at the Douala Port and an appraisal will be made, notably of the handling procedure (itinerary) of timber (including timber from countries of the Economic Community of Central African States –CEMAC- on transit in Cameroon).

(ii) **In the Douala mangrove area, with the support of the Regional Delegation for Forestry and Wildlife and the Cameroon Wildlife Conservation Society (CWCS),** issues on relations between EIA, Climate Change, Food self-sufficiency and land use within the suburban context will be examined: Mangrove.

Sub-Regional Workshop on Forest Research – 27-28 February 2012

On 27 and 28 February 2011 - The CBFP Meeting of partners will be preceded by a workshop on forest research. This meeting will be organized by the **Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC)** in collaboration with **research partners such as CIFOR, IRD, CIRAD** and support from the CBFP Facilitation.

This workshop will support in the implementation of **Objective 8 of the COMIFAC Convergence Plan** and is intended to discuss thematic priorities on forest ecosystem research with key stakeholders in sustainable forest management. This will specifically comprise, during the workshop, identifying major forest research orientations for the next decade, strengthening partnerships between national research institutes in Central African States and international research organizations that are active in the Congo Basin and exploring research funding opportunities.

CBFP Ex-Facilitation Meeting - 28 February 2012 from 14:00 to 18:30

28 February 2012 from 14:00 to 18:30 - The CBFP ex-Facilitation meeting is intended to discuss CBFP priority and strategic issues among CBFP ex-facilitations. It will be an opportunity to brief Ex-Facilitation partners on various important and strategic issues, examine all possible options to resolve urgent problems and prepare proposals for the Meeting of Partners.

Presentation Workshop on Project Objectives and Activities - FORAFAMA Project - 28 February from 14:00 to 16:30

28 February 2012 from 14:00-16:30 - A Presentation Workshop on Project Objectives and Activities will be organized. - FORAFAMA Project (**Support for Sustainable Management of the Congo Basin and the Amazonian and Brazilian Forests**). This workshop will examine five points: (1) evaluation of the economic benefits related to the different methods of developing forest zones in Cameroon (2) Evaluation of existing knowledge in terms of impact on carbon storage from sustainable forest management activities (3) Development of suitable tools and methods for spatial monitoring of forest degradation in the Congo Basin (4) Reflections on future REDD /forest management and implementation projects (5) Draft brochure for forest concession holders.

Context

The CBFP Meeting of Partners was created in 2005 in Brazzaville by CBFP members, to hold periodically. Its objectives include: i) promoting better communication between CBFP members, ii) ensuring regular follow up of activities conducted within the CBFP, iii) playing a regular advisory role to the CBFP Facilitator. Since its creation in 2005, this Meeting of partners (ex-Regional Advisory Committee meeting) has met nine times with the ultimate goal of enabling partners to make an update of their activities in the sub-region and facilitating direct communication in order to guarantee maximum efficiency in the joint support provided by Partnership members to the COMIFAC Convergence Plan.

Created in September 2002 during the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, the Congo Basin Forest Partnership currently brings together more than 63 members representing: countries (including six from the COMIFAC zone), about a dozen bilateral technical and financial partners, international and non-governmental organisations as well as representatives from the private sector and research organizations who agreed to harmonize their support for the efficient implementation of the COMIFAC Convergence Plan. This is considered as a type II partnership compared to the type I for intergovernmental partnerships such as COMIFAC. CBFP is often described as a platform, a network, freely agreed upon between governments, private sector, civil society organizations and development partners. It is mainly aimed at "**enhancing the efficiency of technical and financial contributions for conservation, sustainable management of forest ecosystems and poverty alleviation in Central African countries".** It is specifically involved in: (1) implementing the calendar adopted by the WSSD on promoting development, sustainable management and conservation of forest ecosystems in Central Africa, (2) supporting the implementation of the Yaoundé Declaration formulated by Heads of State of Central Africa in March 1999, (3) supporting the implementation of the COMIFAC Convergence Plan and (4) sharing information in view of a better coordination of their activities.

A cooperation framework was set up in February 2005 in Brazzaville, during the second summit of Central African Heads of State, which each CBFP member is urged to respect. This confirms the will to strive for more transparency and better coordination as possible between technical and financial partners and CBFP members, and especially promotion of the development of synergies between their present and future projects and programs.

CBFP has adopted a steering governance structure based on a « facilitation », which is run by a member with a two-year mandate. The Facilitation is characterized by a flexible structure that promotes communication and oversees dialogue between partners. The mission of the Facilitation is not to provide financial support to partners or their projects or programs. Its resources are devoted to supporting collaboration between the various partners, designing a working program geared at orienting the interventions of partner members towards the objectives of the COMIFAC Convergence Plan, and

representing the partnership at the sub-regional and international levels. The Canada CBFP Facilitation is currently at work, following Germany (2008-2010), France (2005-2007), and the United States (2003-2004).

The legal foundation of COMIFAC was laid in 1999 by the Yaoundé Declaration, which recognizes the conservation of forest ecosystems in the Congo Basin. It constitutes an integral part of the development process and reaffirms the commitment of Central African States to work in collaboration in order to promote the sustainable use of forest ecosystems in the Congo Basin. **It is the policy, technical orientation, coordination, harmonisation and decision-making institution on forest conservation** and sustainable management of forest and savannah ecosystems in Central Africa. It ensures follow up of the Yaoundé Declaration as well as the implementation of international conventions and forest development initiatives in Central Africa. The legal framework of COMIFAC is founded on the treaty of February 2005 christened "Treaty on Conservation and Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa, creating the Forest Commission of Central Africa". **The COMIFAC Convergence Plan adopted by Central African Heads of State in 2005,** defines the joint intervention strategies of States and development partners of Central Africa on forest conservation and sustainable management of forest and savannah ecosystems. It is the reference document for all activities in the Congo Basin region geared at promoting forest conservation and sustainable management of forest ecosystems. COMIFAC is the specialized **sub-regional organisation of the Community of Central African States (CEEAC)** in charge of orientation, harmonisation and monitoring of forest policies. (http://www.comifac.org/).

For more information, please visit the website: http://www.CBFP-cbfp.org/accueil.html or contact the CBFP Facilitation directly: Mr. Gaston Grenier – CBFP Facilitator (gaston.grenier@CBFP-cbfp.org).