

URGENT

**THE VOICE OF CIVIL SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION
OF THE THREE BASINS - AN APPEAL TO ACTION DURING
THE SUMMIT OF THE 3 BASINS IN CONGO BRAZZAVILLE**

As actors of civil society, we have a unique opportunity and a heavy responsibility to make our voice heard during the upcoming Summit of the Three Basins that will be held in Congo Brazzaville. This summit plays a crucial role as a platform for discussing environmental challenges and innovative solutions aimed at preserving the precious ecosystems of the three basins.

As representatives of various civil society organizations committed to biodiversity conservation and environmental protection, we want to seize this opportunity to make a call for ambitious and concerted action.

The Three Basins – the Congo Basin, the Amazon Basin, and the Mekong Basin – host unparalleled biodiversity and play a crucial role in global climate regulation. However, these unique ecosystems face severe threats such as deforestation, unsustainable exploitation of natural resources, the introduction of invasive species harmful to native species, pollution, among others, exacerbating the phenomenon of climate change.

Recently, we have become aware of concerning practices on the Bateke Plantation plateau in Congo, where a global multi-energy company is involved in the production and supply of hydrocarbons and other energy sources. These practices aim to conceal the environmental damages caused by their activities, which is unacceptable and must be strongly condemned. We demand that this company puts an end to these disastrous practices and fully takes responsibility for the environment.

These threats are largely caused by human activity. We also denounce the "greenwashing" practices of a company that exploits mineral resources on the Bateke Plantation plateau in Congo. This strategy of clandestinely concealing resource exploitation must be prohibited, as it has devastating consequences on the forest ecosystem and poses a direct threat to ecological functions.

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In the face of this concerning situation and the environmental challenges that threaten the three Basins, we believe that the time for speeches is over. We must take action with determination and a spirit of collaboration and genuine commitment to protect these natural gems that are essential for the future of our planet.

Together, we need to develop strategies and policies for biodiversity conservation that promote sustainable resource management and limit the impact of human activity on the ecosystems of the three Basins. We must also enhance awareness and education about the importance of these ecosystems and encourage international cooperation for their protection.



Call

To

Action

Civil

Society



OUR CALL TO ACTION IS BASED ON FIVE FUNDAMENTAL PILLARS, WHICH HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED BY BRINGING TOGETHER DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES AND TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE OPINIONS OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS :



CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION
OF BIODIVERSITY

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND
GREEN ECONOMY

ENHANCEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL
COOPERATION

INVOLVEMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE
PRESERVATION OF THE BASINS

PRESERVATION AND VALORIZATION OF FOREST SCHOOLS:
RESPECTING THE KNOWLEDGE OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES TO
PRESERVE FOREST ECOSYSTEMS.



CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OF BIODIVERSITY :

The preservation of biodiversity in the three key basins - the Congo Basin, the Amazon Basin, and the Mekong Basin - is of paramount importance for ensuring the environmental health of our planet. These basins host rich and diverse ecosystems, including tropical forests that are among the largest and most valuable biodiversity reserves in the world. However, faced with anthropogenic pressures and illegal activities such as deforestation, unsustainable logging, and poaching, it is crucial to intensify conservation and restoration efforts in these unique habitats.

To ensure the protection and survival of this invaluable global biodiversity, we call on national governments and international partners to strengthen conservation measures in the basins. This requires several key actions: firstly, improving the management system and governance of protected areas in the existing basins by revising strategic plans or actions and harmonizing national legislation. Secondly, creating and expanding transboundary protected areas to promote ecological connectivity between habitats and enable species to freely move. Thirdly, providing training and capacity-building for legal environmental actors, as well as natural and artificial guardians of protected areas.

It is also crucial to combat illegal activities that threaten biodiversity, such as deforestation, mining, and poaching. This requires strict enforcement of regulations and honest and objective cooperation among intra- and intergovernmental institutions. By ensuring that these illegal activities are controlled and prevented, we can preserve ecosystems that are vital for the survival of the human race and maintain essential ecosystem services.



Additionally, it is essential to promote ecological connectivity between protected areas by developing biological corridors and preserving key landscapes for biodiversity. These measures allow species to move freely, maintain stable and genetically diverse populations, and enhance ecosystem services such as crop pollination and climate regulation. This connectivity strengthens the sustainability and resilience of ecosystems in the face of anthropogenic pressures and environmental changes.

Furthermore, there is an urgent need to actively support ecological restoration initiatives aimed at rehabilitating degraded areas in the basins. This can be achieved through the implementation of reforestation projects, assisted natural regeneration, and rehabilitation of damaged ecosystems. Restoring ecological functions and reintroducing key species will help restore the balance of ecosystems and enhance their resilience to anthropogenic pressures.

Finally, we specifically call upon the company operating in some of the mentioned basins to take concrete measures to compensate for the environmental damages caused by the Bateke plantation. We encourage this company to actively engage in environmentally friendly oil production practices and support conservation and restoration actions in the regions where it operates.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND GREEN ECONOMY :

The transition towards sustainable development and a green economy is an urgent necessity in the three key basins: the Congo Basin, the Amazon Basin, and the Mekong Basin. These biodiversity-rich ecosystems are facing increasing pressures from resource exploitation, deforestation, intensive agriculture, and climate change. It is crucial to implement concrete policies and measures to promote environmentally-friendly economic activities in order to preserve these ecosystems and ensure the sustainability of resources for future generations.

Promoting sustainable forestry lies at the heart of the transition towards a green economy in the three basins. It is essential to establish responsible and sustainable management mechanisms to prevent illegal deforestation, overexploitation of forest resources, and the destruction of natural habitats. This can be achieved by strengthening the enforcement of forest regulations, encouraging sustainable forest certifications, and supporting local communities in their practices of sustainable forest management. By protecting forests, we also preserve essential ecosystem services such as climate regulation, carbon storage, and biodiversity protection.

Ecologically-smart agriculture is another key component of sustainable development in the basins. It is imperative to promote agricultural models that minimize environmental impacts while ensuring food security for local communities. This can be achieved by encouraging the adoption of agroecological practices such as agroforestry, crop rotation, soil conservation, and responsible water resource use. By supporting local farmers in transitioning to sustainable practices, we can strengthen the resilience of agricultural systems, preserve soil fertility, and reduce environmental degradation.



THE GLOBAL GOALS

Sustainable construction also plays a crucial role in the transition towards a green economy in the Basins. It is essential to promote environmentally-friendly construction practices, such as the use of sustainable, recycled, and low-carbon footprint materials, as well as the implementation of bioclimatic design techniques. Sustainable construction helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions, minimize construction waste, improve energy efficiency in buildings, and create healthy and sustainable living spaces. By encouraging the adoption of sustainable construction standards and supporting research and development of innovative solutions, we can facilitate the transition towards a more environmentally-responsible construction economy.

Promoting social protection to enhance resilience and protect populations from the impact of economic and environmental crises is also a crucial aspect of sustainable development in the Basins. Social policy measures should be integrated into national climate change policies. All economic policies should incorporate measures to support sustainable development. Environmental tax reform could help finance compensations for those affected by the transition through investments in new green jobs and increased innovation.



ENHANCEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION :

Preserving the three basins is of crucial importance in ensuring a sustainable future. Therefore, it is essential to strengthen international cooperation among riparian countries and regional and international organizations. Such strengthening would enable knowledge sharing, resource exchange, and concerted actions to support initiatives aimed at protecting these basins.

Riparian countries need to work closely together to preserve the three basins as they share common ecosystems and face similar environmental challenges. By enhancing their cooperation, these countries can coordinate their conservation efforts, establish common policies, and share best practices. This would involve the creation of mechanisms for regular dialogue and collaboration to ensure sustainable management of natural resources in the basins.

Coordination with regional and international organizations is crucial to ensuring the preservation of the three basins. These organizations possess resources, expertise, and a global perspective on environmental protection. By collaborating with these entities, riparian countries can benefit from additional support, technical advice, and participation in basin preservation and management projects. Close coordination would also optimize efforts and maximize the impact of actions taken.

Mobilizing financial and technological resources is crucial for the preservation of the three basins. It is imperative to secure sufficient funding and make appropriate technological resources available to support preservation initiatives. This can be achieved through public-private partnerships, international financing programs, as well as exploring green funding options. By encouraging the mobilization of these resources, we can develop concrete preservation projects and strengthen the effectiveness of undertaken efforts.

In conclusion, international cooperation is essential for preserving the three basins. By strengthening collaboration among riparian countries and coordinating actions with regional and international organizations, we can ensure sustainable management of these precious ecosystems. Mobilizing adequate financial and technological resources will support basin protection and conservation initiatives. It is urgent to act now to ensure a viable future for the basins and preserve these natural treasures for future generations.

INVOLVEMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE PRESERVATION OF THE BASINS :



The participation of civil society is crucial in the transition towards sustainable development and a green economy in the three basins. As actors of civil society, we recognize our responsibility to support these efforts by working closely with all stakeholders, including governments, businesses, and local communities. The effective participation of individuals, whether they are political actors, administrative officials, members of civil society, or representatives of organizations, is essential in this transition towards sustainable development. We commit to working hand in hand with all stakeholders to promote a sustainable development approach and support initiatives that benefit the environment and local communities. By uniting our efforts, we can create a positive momentum and foster a successful transition towards a more sustainable future in the three basins.

It is crucial for the leaders present at the Summit of the Three Basins to listen attentively to our concerns. By recognizing that we are the ears, eyes, and direct voice of the ground, they can fully understand the importance of our recommendations and the challenges we face. By granting us greater esteem, actively listening to our concerns, and considering our recommendations, they will be able to make informed decisions and commit resolutely to the path of inclusive environmental preservation. By working together and valuing the participation of all actors, we can ensure fair and sustainable decision-making to preserve the three basins and secure a better future for our planet and future generations.

Civil society plays an essential role in raising awareness and mobilizing citizens, as well as monitoring and evaluating sustainable development initiatives. With our in-depth understanding of local environmental issues, we are able to identify the needs of communities and find opportunities for collaboration.

It is crucial for all actors involved in the Congo, Amazon, and Mekong basins to work together to develop policies and projects that incorporate the needs of local populations while preserving biodiversity and promoting sustainable economic development. Collaboration between governments, businesses, and civil society is essential to ensure the effective implementation of sustainable development policies and projects. By combining our strengths, we can enhance our collective capacity for action and create strong partnerships based on mutual trust.

To ensure active participation of local communities, it is necessary to involve them from the early stages of planning and establish mechanisms for participatory governance. By giving a voice to local communities, we can ensure that their specific interests and needs are taken into account in sustainable development policies and projects. This will also strengthen their sense of ownership and promote the long-term success of these initiatives.

It is also crucial to promote transparency and dialogue among all actors involved, including businesses operating in these basins. By fostering open dialogue and sharing key information with civil society and local communities, businesses can better understand the concerns and expectations of these stakeholders. This would enable addressing any potential negative impacts of their activities and implementing corrective measures to contribute to preservation efforts.

PRESERVING AND ENHANCING THE FOREST SCHOOL: RESPECTING THE KNOWLEDGE OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES TO PRESERVE FOREST ECOSYSTEMS :



The preservation of forest ecosystems is essential for ensuring the sustainability of our planet. In this pursuit, it is crucial to recognize and value the ancestral knowledge of indigenous peoples. These communities have developed a true "forest school," a valuable knowledge passed down from generation to generation. This article highlights the importance of preserving and valuing this forest school to ensure the preservation of forest ecosystems.

- Indigenous knowledge and the forest school:

Indigenous peoples have had a harmonious relationship with nature for millennia. Their traditional knowledge takes into account the interconnections between species, natural cycles, and resources available in forest ecosystems. It is this in-depth understanding that forms the foundation of their forest school. Respecting and preserving this ancestral wisdom are essential for preserving forest ecosystems.

- Preserving forest ecosystems through the forest school:

The forest school of indigenous peoples offers sustainable methods for managing forest ecosystems. Their expertise enables the respectful use of natural resources, avoiding overexploitation and habitat destruction. They know how to identify threatened species, preserve sacred areas, and maintain the balance between different forms of life present in the forest. By recognizing and valuing this knowledge, we can preserve the biodiversity of forest ecosystems.

Trees play a vital role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. By storing CO₂, they prevent its release into the atmosphere, thereby contributing to the fight against climate change. According to the director of Planète Urgence, the release of stored CO₂ contributes to the overall amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

In its synthesis report published on March 20, 2023, the IPCC emphasizes the importance of carbon dioxide removal techniques in the atmosphere to limit global warming to 1.5°C. Among these techniques, tree planting is considered essential for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and achieving the set objectives.

At the local level, it is crucial to involve indigenous populations in the preservation of forest ecosystems. Their ancestral knowledge of sustainable natural resource management is invaluable. After years of raising awareness, mobilizing local collectives, training, and launching initiatives, it is time to collectively rethink our relationship with nature and invent new ways of living in society, including every individual. It is essential to give everyone the opportunity to take action and participate in these trajectory changes, even if it is often perceived as utopian. This is how we give deep meaning to the phrase "do our part."

- The importance of collaboration with indigenous peoples:

Preserving forest ecosystems cannot be done without the active participation of indigenous peoples. Their local knowledge is essential for sustainable forest resource management. By working closely with indigenous communities, we can learn from their forest school and implement conservation initiatives that are adapted and respectful of nature.

CONCLUSION

This call to action highlights the urgency of preserving the three basins of the Congo, Amazon, and Mekong, which are home to exceptional forest ecosystems and unique biodiversity. Through the various themes addressed, we have emphasized the importance of international cooperation, mobilization of financial and technological resources, participation of civil society, and the valuation of traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples.

International cooperation among riparian countries, regional and international organizations is essential for the sustainable management of natural resources in the three basins. By working together, they can coordinate protection efforts, establish common policies, and share best practices.

Mobilizing sufficient financial and technological resources is imperative to support basin preservation initiatives. Public-private partnerships, international financing programs, and green financing can play a crucial role in this mobilization, to develop concrete preservation projects and enhance the effectiveness of the actions taken.

The participation of civil society is of crucial importance in the transition to sustainable development. By collaborating with governments, businesses, and local communities, civil society can raise awareness, mobilize, and monitor sustainable development initiatives. By actively involving local communities and fostering transparency and dialogue, we can ensure that their interests and needs are taken into account in the policies and projects for basin preservation.

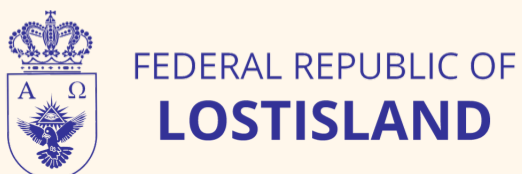
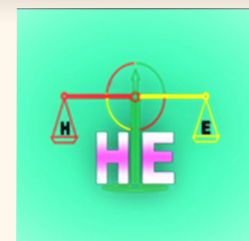
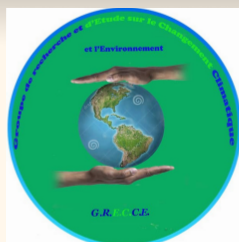
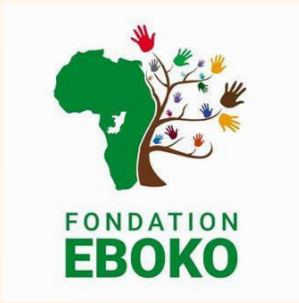
Lastly, the valorization and respect for the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples are fundamental to sustainable management of natural resources. Their profound understanding of these ecosystems passed down through generations offers valuable tools for effective biodiversity preservation and the promotion of a sustainable future.

In conclusion, this call to action highlights the urgency of collectively acting to preserve the Congo, Amazon, and Mekong basins. By strengthening international cooperation, mobilizing necessary resources, encouraging the participation of civil society, and valuing traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples, we can build a sustainable future by preserving these unique ecosystems and ensuring the conservation of biodiversity for future generations.

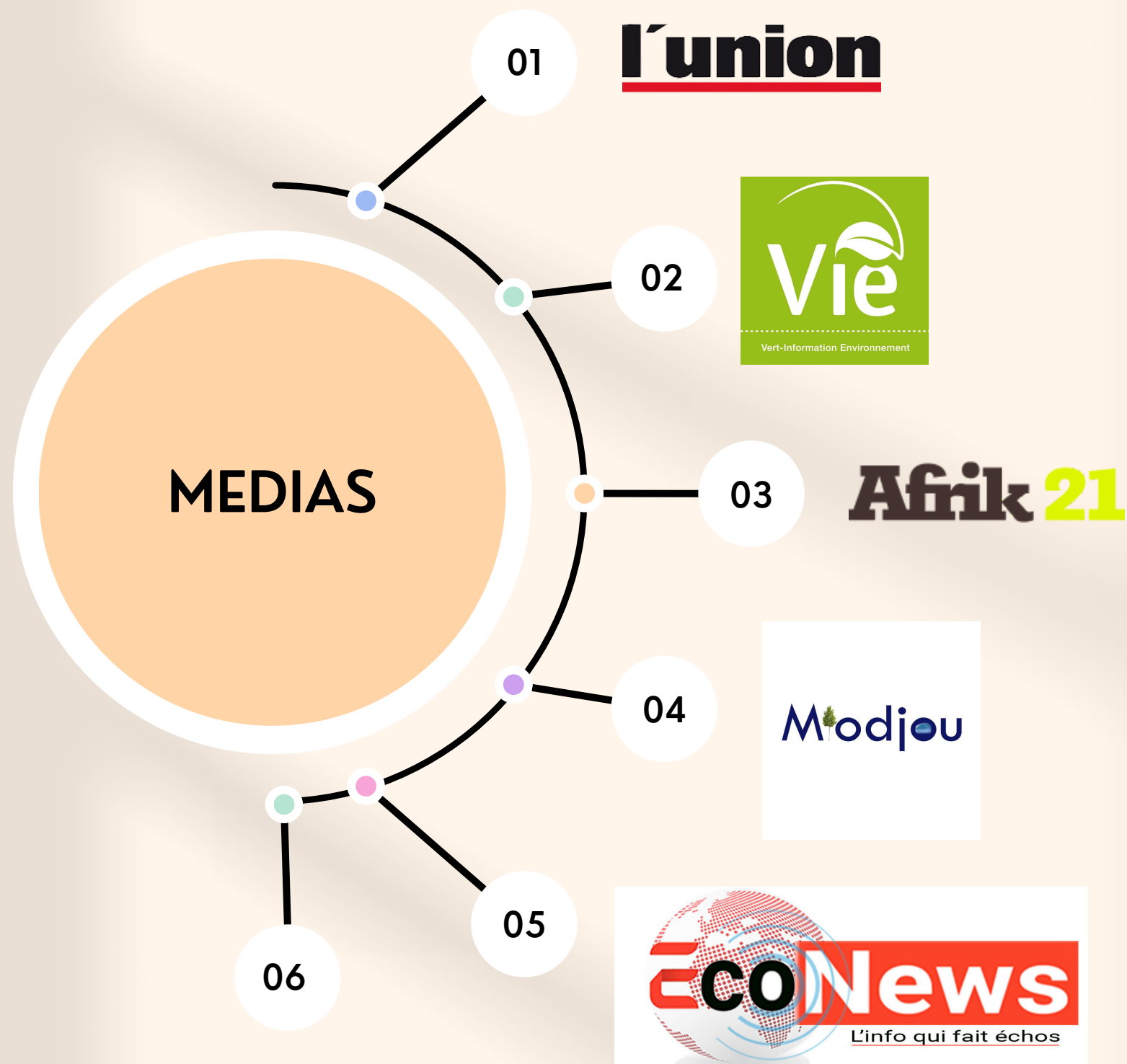


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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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