**Region: Congo Basin**

Countries included: Cameroon, Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and the Republic of the Congo

**Threats to Biodiversity, Environment, and IPLC Regional Context:**

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| Country | Threats to biodiversity and environment | Threats to IPLCs, and Root Causes |
| Cameroon | * Direct drivers of biodiversity loss are identified as: ecosystem degradation, unsustainable resource exploitation (e.g. itinerant slash-and-burn agriculture, poaching of large mammals); an economic system that is reliant on natural resources; land use changes (forest conversion); among others. Drivers of change at the ecosystem level differ according to biodiversity products and sometimes also according to ecological conditions.[[1]](#footnote-0) * From 2001 to 2018, Cameroon lost 1.20Mha of tree cover, equivalent to a 3.8 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 473Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Cameroon, the top 4 regions were responsible for 60 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Extrême-Nord had the most relative tree cover loss at 18 percent compared to an average of 5.3 percent. | * Cameroon is ranked 11th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). It has been progressively worsening along most social, political and cohesion indicators since 2012-2013.. * According to Global Witness, at least 1 land defender was killed in Cameroon between 2016-2018. |
| Central African Republic | * The main causes of ecosystem degradation are the lack of biodiversity management planning; inefficient management of regulatory measures and economic measures for biodiversity valuation; absence of technical measures for efficient management; lack of awareness regarding the sustainable use of biodiversity. The principal threats to biological resources are deforestation and forest degradation; large-scale poaching; uncontrolled border transhumance; uncontrolled exploitation of biological resources; lack of a national inventory of biological resources and a taxonomic referral center; uncontrolled introduction of invasive alien species; loss of agro-biodiversity genetic resources; lack of a climate change warning system; armed conflicts.[[2]](#footnote-1) * From 2001 to 2018, Central African Republic lost 739kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 1.6 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 244Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Central African Republic, the top 8 regions were responsible for 58 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Bangui had the most relative tree cover loss at 3.7 percent compared to an average of 1.9 percent. | * The Central African Republic is ranked 6th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). From a very low-ranking baseline, it has been improving on some cohesion and political indicators since 2015 while flatlining or slightly improving along economic and social indicators. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| DR Congo | * Direct and indirect pressures on biodiversity are numerous, and primarily anthropogenic in nature. Deforestation is exacerbated by factors such as the population’s strong dependence on wood energy, extensive slash and burn farming practices, anarchic establishment of mining quarries. Other threats to biodiversity are poaching, including large mammals (sometimes in protected areas); commercialization of bushmeat; extensive and uncontrolled exploitation of water resources, particularly in regard to fishing activities (subsistence and commercial); pollution of water resources as a result of petroleum exploitation in the hydrocarbon sector; mismanagement of protected areas and ex situ conservation areas; inadequate taxonomic inventories; introduction of invasive alien species; genetic erosion of agrobiodiversity; inadequate legislation and use of EIA; absence of an emergency plan and national rapid alert system; armed conflicts of 1996 and 1998, financing of military activities through the exploitation of natural resources such as diamonds, gold, coltan; misappropriation of funds for conservation activities.[[3]](#footnote-2) * From 2001 to 2018, Democratic Republic of the Congo lost 13.4Mha of tree cover, equivalent to a 6.7 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 5.49Gt of CO₂ emissions. * In Democratic Republic of the Congo, the top 11 regions were responsible for 47 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Kasaï-Oriental had the most relative tree cover loss at 18 percent compared to an average of 8.1 percent. | * The DR Congo is ranked 5th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). It has sharply worsened on social and political indicators since 2015-2016 and mostly flatlining on economic indicators. * According to Global Witness, at least 31 land defenders were killed in the DR Congo between 2016-2018. |
| Equatorial Guinea | * The main pressures on biodiversity relate to: overhunting, particularly associated with the bushmeat trade, especially on Bioko Island; reduction in forest cover; forest operations which provide easy access to resources for poachers; and problems related to the control, monitoring and evaluation of fisheries activities.[[4]](#footnote-3) * From 2001 to 2018, Equatorial Guinea lost 108kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 4.1 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 48.7Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Equatorial Guinea, the top 3 regions were responsible for 53 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Bioko Norte had the most relative tree cover loss at 6.6 percent compared to an average of 4.3 percent. | * Equatorial Guinea is ranked 45th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). While it has been gradually improving on economic indicators, it is either worsening or flatlined on most social and political indicators. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Gabon | * From 2001 to 2018, Gabon lost 407kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 1.7 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 176Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Gabon, the top 5 regions were responsible for 62 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Estuaire had the most relative tree cover loss at 2.5 percent compared to an average of 1.7 percent. | * Gabon is ranked 90th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). It has been gradually improving on economic indicators, and improving unevenly on political indicators, it appears to be mostly flat on social and cohesion indicators. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Rep. of Congo | * Main threats are anthropogenic, climatic and motivated by various factors such as: people’s need for food and energy, industrial development, illegal wildlife trade and hunting trophies, epidemics and viral diseases, as well as socio-political troubles experienced by the country in the 1990s. Deforestation and the uncontrolled harvesting of non-timber forest products, shifting cultivation, and bushfires are the main pressures on forest ecosystems. The non-existence of adequate monitoring mechanisms for vegetation worsens the situation.[[5]](#footnote-4) * From 2001 to 2018, Republic of Congo lost 712kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 2.7 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 271Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In the Republic of Congo, the top 8 regions were responsible for 57 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Pointe Noire had the most relative tree cover loss at 22 percent compared to an average of 5.4 percent. | * The Republic of the Congo is ranked 25th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). It has been sharply worsening on group grievances, security sector, and economic inequality in recent years, while remaining flat or making uneven progress on political and social indicators. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |

1. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=cm#facts> [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=cf#facts> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=cd#facts [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=gq#facts> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=cg#facts> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)