



FSC®
**CONGO
BASIN AND
WEST AFRICA**
SUB-REGIONAL PRIORITIES
2023

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**FORESTS
FOR ALL
FOREVER**

The Congo Basin cover more than 200 million hectares of tropical rainforest, the second largest after the Amazon. However, they continue to disappear, and this remains one of the most pressing issues for the region.

In the Congo Basin, FSC is delivering its global strategy working to establish and support the functioning of public-private-partnership mechanisms for responsible forest management in view of achieving least 15 million hectares of certified forest under the FSC label by the 2030 horizon, with the intermediary target of 10 million hectares by 2026 – that is at the end of the current 2021-2026 programme cycle. Achieving 15 million hectares of certified forest will increase to 30% the proportion of the Congo Basin Forest that is responsibly managed under FSC certification.

Currently, production forests (forests assigned for commercial management under logging concessions) represent a potential of 50 million hectares in the Congo Basin. Only 25 million hectares of these production forests are already operating under approved management plans. FSC-certified forests represent about 11% (5.8 million hectares) of the total surface area of Congo Basin's production forests, all located in Republic of Congo (2.9 million hectares), Gabon (2.2 million hectares) and Cameroon (0.69 million hectares).

TO ACHIEVE THIS AMBITION, WE FOCUS ON:

- 1 Accelerating Forest Management Certification Growth in the Congo Basin.** There is mounting evidence that forest certification encourages responsible forest management, nature protection and the improvement of livelihoods.
- 2 Embedding and Leveraging FSC through Partnerships.** We want to develop at least two joint actions plans under implementation with strategic partners and like-minded organizations and institutions.
- 3 Strengthening Congo Basin – China Collaboration.** As the demand for timber grows in Asian economies, there is increased pressure on Central Africa's forests. In the Congo Basin, we are engaging Chinese companies and offering training to help them manage the forest concessions allocated to them sustainably.
- 4 Achieve higher impact on Government Engagement:** All the forests in Africa the Congo Basin are government owned. We are intensifying our collaboration with governments, especially Gabon, that made FSC certification a key part of its responsible forest management agenda. We will continue strengthening government institutions and technical staff to understand how to drive our certification process and its benefits to the nations.
- 5 Develop Technical Capacity in the Region:** To cover the skills gap in the forest sector in the Congo Basin, FSC will focus on schools that train African forest experts and expand the knowledge of local experts on certification. In Universities, FSC will support studies that improve knowledge on certification and provide local experts training on the FSC certification process.

Besides the five priorities, FSC Congo Basin will expand FSC's reach to Western Africa implementing natural rubber and small holder certification projects in Côte D'Ivoire, Ghana and Liberia. By increasing our brand power and relevance with governments, we hope to strengthen our ability to deliver good forest management solutions and build resilience against climate change. We will equally work with our membership to accelerate the implementation of the Forest Stewardship Council® Global Strategy 2021–2026 in the sub-region.

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ABOUT FSC IN THE CONGO BASIN

In the Congo Basin, FSC promotes economic, social, and environmental sustainability in forest management. In the Congo Basin, FSC has 132 members spread across 14 countries in West and Central Africa. It has its subregional office in Gabon, a country office in the Republic of Congo and is present in Cameroon.

FSC VISION

Meeting the rights and needs of the present generation without compromising those of future generations.

- **Social:** respectful and supportive
- **Ecological:** sustainable & biologically diverse
- **Economic:** responsible and profitable

FSC MISSION

FSC will promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.

CONGO BASIN 2026 OBJECTIVE

The value and benefits of forest stewardship will be demonstrated in 10 million hectares of FSC-certified additional area including national parks and community managed forests in the Congo Basin.

