

# eMag on Climate Action in Africa

#4 Climate-Biodiversity in Africa

Thursday 4 July 2024



In partnership with **Afrik 21**

# The Observatory's Lens: The climate-biodiversity convergence through ecological connectivity

Mélaine Assè-Wassa Sama, Climate Chance



Mélaine Assè-Wassa Sama, Project Officer for Climate Action in Africa at Climate Chance, presents some theoretical concepts on climate-biodiversity convergence and ecological connectivity in Africa.

The 1992 Rio Conventions established the link between climate, biodiversity and desertification:

- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- The UN Convention to Combat Desertification

There is a strong link between these 3 issues:

- The work of the 3 agendas is increasingly overlapping.
- The challenges of climate change, desertification and biodiversity loss are multiplying.



**We need to focus on cross-cutting approaches, including climate, biodiversity and desertification issues.**

**Ecological connectivity is a cross-cutting approach at the heart of the 3 Rio Conventions:**

Ecological connectivity is the degree to which different natural environments within a landscape are linked in terms of their components, spatial distribution and ecological functions. It is an approach that advocates the reconnection of natural environments.

**What is a biodiversity corridor.**

It is a clearly defined geographical area that is governed and managed over the long term with the aim of maintaining or restoring effective ecological connectivity.

**The importance of ecological connectivity as a tool for convergence between the 3 Conventions is increasingly recognised.**

**1. At the national level:**

The introduction of policies and legislation that incorporate both biodiversity and climate issues (Nature Restoration Laws, CDNs, etc.). There is also a growing number of programmes to create biodiversity corridors and restore degraded or deforested landscapes.

**2. At the regional level:**

Beyond the national level, many initiatives are being taken at the regional level. For example, the "PAPBio\_C1-Mangroves" project to manage mangrove forests from Senegal to Benin.

**Climate Chance's call for the 3 issues to be brought together: The International Coalition of Biodiversity Corridors, launched in 2022.**



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# Press Review

## Noemi Amelynck, Climate Chance

Afrik21

Noemi Amelynck, Africa/Europe Network Intern at Climate Chance, presents three articles written and selected by Afrik21 on climate-biodiversity convergence in Africa.

### **Rampant threat: climate crisis is accelerating the proliferation of venomous snakes**

The first article looks at how climate change is accelerating the migration of venomous snakes and increasing their presence in Africa. According to Lancet Planetary Health, the range of venomous snakes could expand by 250% by 2070, affecting countries such as Niger and Namibia. The degradation of tropical and subtropical ecosystems is contributing to this spread, creating a major public health problem with millions of bites each year. The World Health Organization (WHO) highlights the urgent need for action to improve the prevention and management of envenomations, stressing the need to strengthen health systems and raise public awareness of these increased risks.



### **Massive deforestation in Cameroon: an urgent call for international action**

The second article highlights the alarming rate of deforestation in Cameroon, which is threatening biodiversity and the rights of local communities. An open letter from a number of environmental and human rights organisations calls for urgent international action to combat illegal deforestation, particularly in vulnerable areas. These activities, mainly for agribusiness and logging, destroy vital habitats and violate the rights of indigenous peoples.

The signatories call on governments and international institutions to honour their commitments to combat deforestation and protect human rights. The situation could also affect Cameroon's trade relations with the EU and other markets, damaging the country's image and efforts to support small farmers.



### **Rising water levels threaten Africa's pink flamingos in the Great Lakes region**

Finally, the last article reports on a recent study by King's College London, which shows that rising water levels in the Great Lakes region of East Africa, caused by climate change, are threatening flamingos. Over 23 years, rising water levels have reduced phytoplankton biomass, the birds' main food source. This reduction is due to the dilution of the chemical composition of the soda lakes, leading to a shortage of food. Flamingos may be forced to migrate to unprotected areas, increasing their vulnerability. Researchers are calling for coordinated action and sustainable land management to protect these iconic species and their fragile habitats.



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# Governance of ecological connectivity in Gabon

Clémence Tranchand, Legal Counsel, Panthera Gabon



Clémence Tranchand reviews Gabon's work on the governance of the country's ecological connectivity and the case studies currently being implemented.

## Gabon is committed to aligning its national strategies with international conservation agreements:

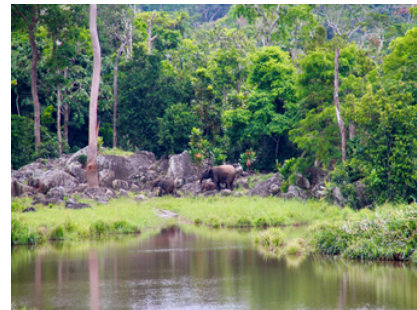
- In 1999, Gabon adopted a national biodiversity strategy and action plan.
- In 2001, 2014 and 2005, the country passed several conservation laws.
- In terms of governance, Gabon is in line with Aichi objective 18, "Participatory planning". As part of this, the country is introducing participatory mapping with local communities.

## Ecological connectivity is currently being recognised in Gabonese law:

The government is currently reviewing the [Forestry Code](#). Several elements are part of this revision; for example, in terms of ecological networks, new types of protected areas are being developed, biodiversity corridors are being set up and Other Effective Conservation Measures are being implemented. In addition, new types of governance are emerging: community, shared and private governance.

## Case study: the Baï of Momba

The aim is to link Mwagna and Ivindo National Parks by creating a protected area and biodiversity corridors. Several species are fully protected (leopards, elephants, gorillas, etc.).



## Climate-biodiversity Convergence

- Climate change poses a number of risks: loss of species, increased human-wildlife conflicts, zoonoses, droughts, etc.
- Local communities play an essential role: they maintain biodiversity thanks to their ancestral knowledge and cultural traditions, use medicinal plants, etc.
- Protected areas and AMCEZs provide ecosystem services such as water filtration, food and oxygen.



**Local communities play a key role because they are the real 'managers' of the ecosystems in which they live and therefore have a major impact on them.**



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# Ecological corridors and climate change: Sui River Landscape in Ghana

**Kwame Osei, Senior Director - Global Programs,  
Rainforest Alliance**



Kwame Osei talks about the challenges and opportunities in Ghana's Sui River landscape.

## What are the main features of the Sui River landscape in Ghana?

- Part of the Guinean West African Forest biodiversity hotspot in northwestern Ghana
- Important for biodiversity connectivity across the West African hotspot
- Characterised by several types of areas of high conservation value, including important watersheds and rivers, hill sanctuaries and forest reserves
- Connects other surrounding landscapes inside and outside Ghana; the Krokosua Hills, Bia National Park, Boin National Park, interspersed with cocoa fields and other crops.
- The Rainforest Alliance implements the Integrated Landscape Management (ILM) model, which contributes to the 1000 Landscapes for 1 Billion People initiative.

## What is being done in the River Sui landscape to counter the climate and biodiversity crises?

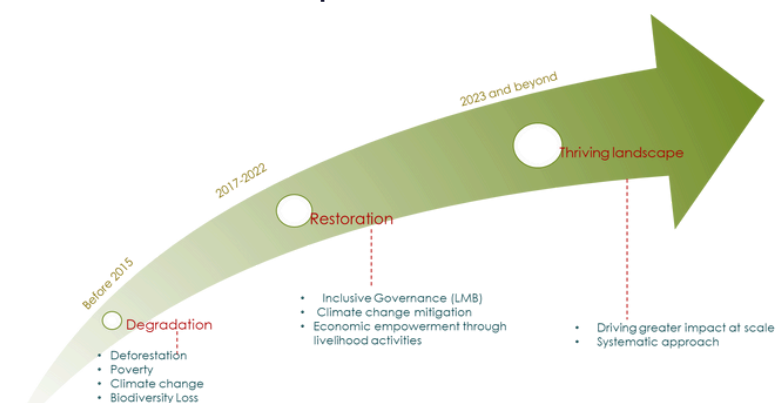
- Pioneering Integrated Landscape Management (ILM) solutions to optimise ecosystem functions and services.
- Sustainable agricultural practices to promote long-term sustainable food production systems, particularly cocoa.
- Restoring forest ecosystems by improving conditions in degraded forests

## Opportunities to reinforce the ecological corridors:

- Effective governance has been put in place to promote transformative change.
- Multi-stakeholder involvement of state and non-state actors



## The Sui River Roadmap:



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# The SONEYA 2 project: Implementing a regional environment-climate strategy

Facinet Sylla, Coordination for Guinea, Guinée 44



Facinet Sylla reports on Guinée44's SONEYA 2 project in Kindia, Guinea.



The aim of the project is to support the implementation of a regional environmental and climate strategy in the Greater Kindia area (4 municipalities, 240,000 inhabitants).

- Reforestation of the most degraded watercourses and headwaters: 20,000 trees and 8 watercourses
- Raising environmental awareness: 8 schools, 4,000 children, parent-teacher groups
- Dissemination of 3,000 energy-saving cookers: support for cooker manufacturers, training for trainers
- Support for environmental governance: training for elected officials and technicians, organisation of a consultation framework

## What is SONEYA 2's vision and approach?

- Systemic approach: Addressing the root causes of ecosystem degradation, restoring degraded ecosystems and changing energy practices.
- Long-term approach: Working closely with local authorities, elected representatives and technical departments of local authorities to sustainably strengthen their capacity for ecological land management.
- Sustainable methodology: Strengthening the production capacity of wood-saving stoves in the region, an efficient reforestation method through the introduction of performance-based payments (a bonus paid 12 and 24 months after planting to encourage reforestation committees to maintain the trees).

## Guinea44 carbon credits from the SONEYA 2 project

Since 2010, Guinée44 has been running projects to promote eco-friendly cooking among vulnerable populations in Lower Guinea.

**IMPACT :** Using an energy-efficient wood-burning stove in Guinea avoids 2.5 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per year and halves wood consumption, saving a family €200. Since 2014, 42,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> have been avoided and €170,000 in carbon credits have been generated and reinvested in the project.

Guinea44 is a key partner in the International Coalition of Biodiversity Corridors' first demonstration project in Guinea.

Guinée44 has been awarded the Gold Standard label for improved cookers. This international label is one of the most demanding to obtain!



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# Next Events

## eMag of Adaptation in Europe

Join us on Thursday, 11th July 2024 from 3PM to 4:15PM (CEST) for the eMag on Water Resilience in Europe.

[Register here](#)

## eMag of Climate Action in Africa

Join us on Thursday, 26th September 2024 from 3PM to 4:15PM (CEST) for the eMag on Sustainable Waste Management in Africa.

[Register here](#)



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# Next Events

See you in Bordeaux  
on September 27 !



**African/European  
perspectives – Connecting  
development, climate and  
conservation actors**

Bordeaux, France



Register by scanning the  
QR code!



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