



To the representatives of the governments of: Belgium, France, Germany, Norway, the United Kingdom, the United States

To members of the Central Africa Forest Initiative (CAFI)

To the CBFP, EU, FAO, UNDP, World Bank

7th March 2018

RE: DR Congo's proposed lifting of the moratorium on new industrial logging concessions

Dear colleagues,

It is with great alarm that we alert you to plans to imminently lift the moratorium on new logging concessions in the DRC. These plans have become clear over the last few days and have been confirmed by the Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development, Amy Ambatobe. Simultaneously, a revision of the country's Forest Code, understood to now be at an advanced stage, has been secretly underway without the involvement of key stakeholders, including NGOs, and is likely to see a weakening of the controls over future logging activities.

We believe that these plans, which appear to be linked to political manoeuvring amidst the worsening turmoil of the country, will have catastrophic environmental, social and climatic impacts, particularly in a context where forest governance remains chronically weak or non-existent.

They particularly threaten to undermine many international forest protection efforts in the country, including the Central African Forest Initiative, (CAFI), the Carbon Fund Mai Ndombe jurisdictional REDD programme, the Forest Investment Programme, the USAID-backed CARPE programme, and the integrity of protected areas' programmes run by GIZ and KfW. It would be incompatible with several pillars of the National REDD+ Strategy, and the National REDD+ Investment plan. It is very likely that globally important peatswamps beneath forests will be threatened.

Minister Ambatobe, apparently motivated by narrow political and economic interests, has recently awarded three concessions covering 6,500 square kilometres, in breach of the moratorium.

We thus call on you to:

- a. Immediately suspend all funding through your respective programmes to DRC government agencies for forestry and forest conservation;
- b. Inform the DRC government that such funds will remain suspended until the current non-transparent & non-inclusive process of revision of the Forest Code is halted and a clear commitment is made not to consider the lifting of the moratorium until the government can credibly guarantee the legality and proper governance of the sector.

We very much hope you will take our recommendations into consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Jo Blackman, Campaign Leader - Global Witness
Simon Counsell, Executive Director - Rainforest Foundation UK
Lars Løvold, Director - Rainforest Foundation Norway

Victorine Che Thoener, Project Leader Congo Basin Forests - Greenpeace
Jean-Marie Nkanda, Acting Coordinator - Réseau Ressources Naturelles
Julien Kabalako, Coordinator– Groupe de Travail REDD Rénové sur le Climat en RDC
Andrey Laletin, Chair - Russian NGO Friends of the Siberian Forests
Angela Meder - The Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe
Anja Bakken Risse, Leader - The Future in our Hands
CEO is Catherine Bryan – Synchronicity Earth
Chris Redston, Executive Director - Rainforest Trust UK
Christian Steel, Secretary General - SABIMA - The Norwegian Council for Biodiversity
Coenraad Krijger, Director - IUCN National Committee of the Netherlands (IUCN NL)
Colleen Corrigan - University of Queensland
Dan Brockington, Director - The Sheffield Institute for International Development
Danielle van Oijen, - Vereniging Milieudedefensie - Friends of the Earth Netherlands
Dr. Grazia Borrini-Feyerabend, Global Coordinator - The ICCA Consortium
Ernest Mpararo, Secrétaire Exécutif - Ligue Congolaise de lutte contre la Corruption/DRC
Esben Marcussen, Project Leader - Greenpeace
Eva Filzmoser, Executive Director - Carbon Market Watch
Evelyn Schönheit & Jupp Trauth - Forum Ökologie & Papier
Gabriel Thoumi, Director Capital Markets - CFA, FRM Climate Advisers
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Peg Putt, CEO - Markets For Change
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Reinhard Behrend, CEO - Regenwald.org
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Sandra Altherr, Co-founder - Pro Wildlife
Saskia Ozinga, Director, FERN
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Stephen Corry- Director – Survival International
Susanne Breitung - Environmental Investigation Agency

Suzanne Pelletier, Executive Director - Rainforest Fondation US

Tim Keating, Director - Rainforest Relief

Tom Griffiths, Director- Forest Peoples Programmes

Vance Martin, President - Wild Foundation

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Virginia Young, Director International Forests and Climate Program - The Australian Rainforest Conservation Society

William F. Laurance, Director - Alliance of Leading Environmental Researchers & Thinkers

Wolfgang Kuhlmann – ARA