

Central Africa Regional

The Development Challenge: Central Africa contains the second largest area of contiguous moist tropical forest in the world. The nine countries of the Central Africa Congo Basin include Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda and Sao Tome/Principe. More than 60 million people living in the region depend on the rich forests and other biotic resources for their livelihoods and economic development. Prudent use and conservation of the environmental resources in the Congo Basin will support broad-based economic development and promote good governance. The challenge, however, is how to use and conserve environmental resources without jeopardizing either the future of the human population or the biodiversity of the ecosystem in which they live. These forests form the catchment basin of the Congo River, a watershed of local, regional and global significance. The Congo Basin forests provide valuable ecological services by absorbing and storing excess carbon dioxide released from the burning of fossil fuels, thereby helping to slow the rate of global climate warming. In addition, the Congo Basin forests also contain valuable natural resources. It is in the U.S. national interest to promote sustainable management of these natural resources to protect global bio-diversity, to address global climate warming concerns, and to foster good governance at the regional, national and local levels.

The USAID Program: The Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) has a single strategic objective that is managed by USAID/Kinshasa. CARPE's principal goal is to reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national, and regional natural resource management. Activities supporting this objective take place across the region, both within the nine Congo Basin countries and in trans-border areas. Secretary Powell launched the Congo Basin Forest Partnership at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg on September 4, 2002. CARPE is the principal U.S. vehicle to achieve the goals of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) Presidential Initiative: promote economic development, alleviate poverty, improve governance and natural resources conservation through a network of national parks and protected areas, well-managed forestry concessions, and assistance to communities. Achieving these goals depends upon the conservation of the forest and wildlife resources of 11 key landscapes in six Central African countries. Landscapes are ecologically significant areas, some of which have been designated as national parks. Areas where important species of plants or animal habitats occur are being identified and mapped, management plans are being developed and staff trained. Key activities include protected area management, natural resources management planning, improved logging policies, sustainable forest use by local inhabitants, and development of alternative livelihoods where necessary to ensure stability, and improved environmental governance.

In CARPE Phase I (FY 1995 - FY 2002), the program's primary objectives were to increase the knowledge of Central African forests and biodiversity and to build institutional and human resource capacities. In CARPE Phase II, the focus of the program has shifted. During Phase II, CARPE partners aim to apply "lessons learned" and implement sustainable natural resource management practices in the field, improve environmental governance in the region, and strengthen natural resources monitoring capacity. In order to facilitate this programmatic shift a decision was made to move the management of CARPE from the Africa Bureau at USAID/Washington to USAID/Democratic Republic of the Congo based in Kinshasa. A new Strategic Plan was approved in January 2003 and placed under the authority of USAID/Kinshasa. CARPE now operates as the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment, Strategic Objective 605-001. For the first three months of FY 2003, CARPE was implemented under AFR/SD's SO 17 with the primary outcome being the design of the new SO and the recruitment of the field manager.

Other Program Elements: As the CARPE program is focused on the Congo Basin where only two USAID missions are present, it is heavily dependent upon collaboration among a large number of U.S. private voluntary organizations (PVOs), other U.S. federal agencies and U.S. embassies in the region. Activities in non-presence countries (NPCs) of the Congo Basin are coordinated by USAID/Kinshasa, but actual implementation relies heavily upon the U.S. PVOs and their relationships with the governments

and societies of these NPCs. The EGAT pillar bureau provides support to gorilla conservation in several sites in the Congo basin which is highly complementary to CARPE.

Other Donors: USAID's strategy in the Congo Basin has consistently been to integrate and coordinate with other donors. Now with the CBFP as an organizing framework to help coordinate 29 CBFP organizations, CARPE will play an even more integral role in linking donors to achieve common conservation objectives. Key donor CBFP partners active in the region and/or CBFP include the European Union, World Bank, Global Environment Facility (GEF), The French Fund for the World Environment, German Development Cooperation, DGIS (Netherlands), Government of Japan, British AID (DFID) and the International Tropical Timber Organization, among others.

Data Sheet

USAID Mission:	Central Africa Regional
Program Title:	Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP)
Pillar:	Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade
Strategic Objective:	605-001
Proposed FY 2004 Obligation:	\$15,000,000 DA
Prior Year Unobligated:	\$750,000 DA; \$50,000 ESF
Proposed FY 2005 Obligation:	\$15,000,000 DA
Year of Initial Obligation:	FY 2004
Year of Final Obligation:	FY 2010

Summary: USAID's program increases African management capacity to reduce the rate of forest degradation and biodiversity loss by strengthening sustainable forest and biodiversity management practices, improving the governance of forests and other natural resources through improved policies and resources monitoring throughout the Congo Basin.

Inputs, Outputs, Activities:

FY 2004 Program:

Reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national, and regional natural resource management (\$15,000,000 DA; \$750,000 prior year DA; \$50,000 prior year ESF). Building on Phase I of the CARPE activity, as well as the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) Presidential Initiative, FY 2004 resources will be devoted to a range of conservation activities within Central Africa. CARPE resources will: support development of landscape-scale conservation plans, which will encompass millions of hectares of protected areas, logging concessions and village common lands; promote forest-based livelihood opportunities; provide technical assistance on sustainable forestry practices; control bushmeat harvesting; establish ecological and socio-economic monitoring systems in selected landscapes; and monitor logging activity, deforestation and forest access using remote sensing and ground-based methods. CARPE will also compile and disseminate information in forms usable by decision-makers and advocacy organizations; develop national land use and conservation policies and laws for protected areas, community-based natural resources management and logging concession management; and strengthen civil society and non-governmental sectors, specifically through a small grants program to advocate for sustainable natural resources management. It is also important to note that the CBFP, which supports conservation within 11 selected areas across CBFP designated countries, also includes matching funds from the CBFP's principal implementing partners. The \$750,000 of FY 2003 carryover DA funds will be used to support a program of remote sensing and image accessibility through an internet-enabled web site.

FY 2005 Program:

Reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national, and regional natural resource management (\$15,000,000 DA). CARPE will continue to expand support for the implementation of large, landscape-scale conservation management plans across the Congo Basin. Activities in 2005 will build on the management plans established in FY 2004 and will move to greater focus on full implementation of landscape management plans. Principal management activities will: promote forest-based livelihood opportunities; improve sustainable forestry practices; control bushmeat harvesting; establish and operate ecological and socio-economic monitoring systems in selected landscapes; and monitor logging activity, deforestation and forest access using remote sensing. Work will not proceed at the same pace on all landscapes or protected areas but will build on previous accomplishments according to progress and opportunities.

Performance and Results: CARPE Phase I began in 1995. Its purpose was to coordinate work on identifying and establishing the conditions and practices required to reduce deforestation and loss of

biological diversity in Central Africa. CARPE worked across the nine countries of the Congo Basin with U.S. private and voluntary organizations and other U.S. partners which have collaborated with African NGOs, research and education organizations, government agencies and private-sector consultants to evaluate threats to forests and biodiversity in Central Africa and identify opportunities for sustainable forest management. During this initial phase, African capacity has been enhanced: African institutions supported and African civil society strengthened. This groundwork has created the conditions for more intensive Department of State and USAID support. After seven years of operation, CARPE therefore shifted its strategic focus and moved its management functions from Washington to Central Africa.

The experience and results gained from the first phase of CARPE led to the U.S. decision to create the CBFP and to focus on the selected landscapes in the six Congo Basin countries. A CARPE series was published called "Lessons Learned." Two thousand French language copies were distributed in the Congo Basin to decision makers, NGO leaders and other persons involved with environmental issues. These "Lessons Learned" papers are credited with creating a policy and political environment favorable for Phase II. During FY 2003, USAID established CARPE management in Kinshasa and awarded a series of cooperative agreements to five U.S. international NGO consortia to implement the field program (led respectively by Africa Wildlife Foundation, Conservation International, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wildlife Fund, and World Resources Institute). Additionally, interagency agreements were signed with five federal agencies to provide specialized technical support to CARPE partners (NASA, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Peace Corps and the Smithsonian Institution).

CARPE continued African capacity-building initiatives through support for an African regional forum to discuss environmental issues affecting the dense, humid forest region of the Congo Basin. This regional forum has combined with another African initiative by the regional Ministers of Environment to form the basis of a coordination mechanism for Africans to actively participate in the CBFP. CARPE's small grants program was considered by an external evaluation to be a principal factor for increasing the capacity of indigenous environmental non-governmental organizations. Therefore, this program was expanded in FY 2003.

By the end of this strategic objective, the rate of forest degradation in the eleven landscapes will be less than or equal to its current state and will serve as a proxy for biodiversity health. This will be accomplished through increased African capacity to manage both the landscape and the biodiversity therein.

Central Africa Regional PROGRAM SUMMARY

(in thousands of dollars)

Accounts	FY 2002 Actual	FY 2003 Actual	FY 2004 Current	FY 2005 Request
Development Assistance	0	15,000	15,000	15,000
Economic Support Fund	0	1,250	0	0
Total Program Funds	0	16,250	15,000	15,000

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE SUMMARY				
605-001 Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP)				
DA	0	15,000	15,000	15,000
ESF	0	1,250	0	0

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