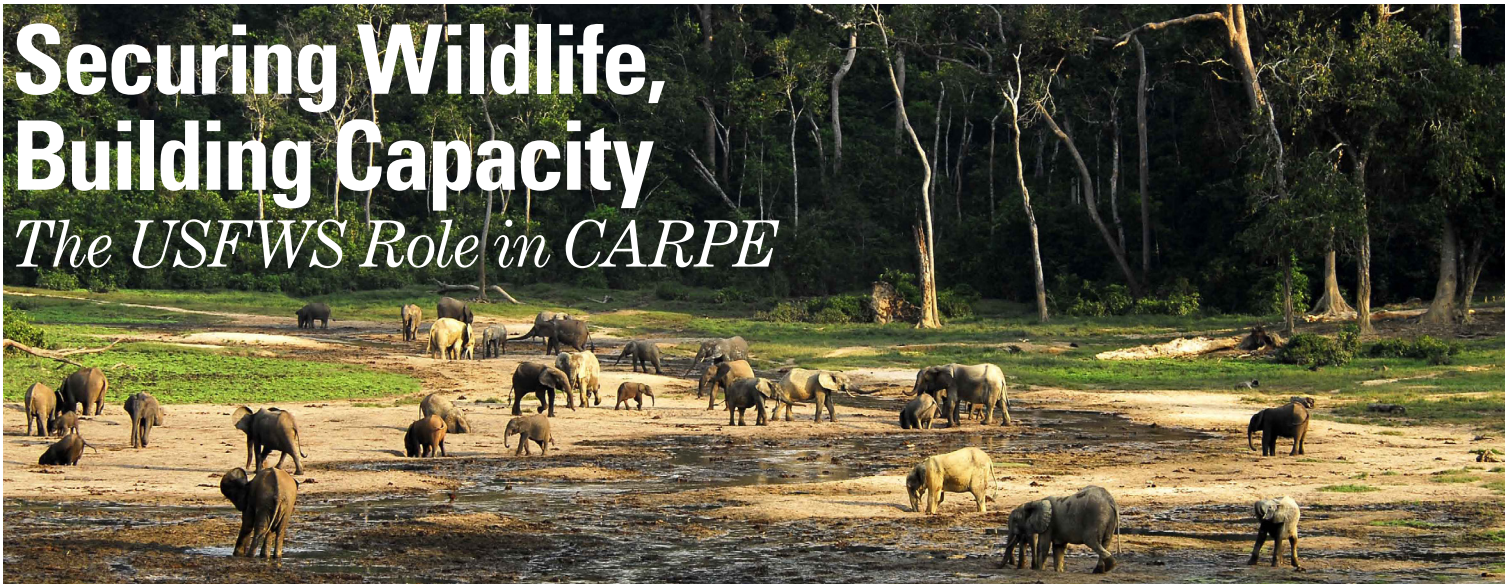


Securing Wildlife, Building Capacity

The USFWS Role in CARPE



A herd of forest elephants at Dzanga Bai, Central African Republic. Credit: Richard Ruggiero / USFWS

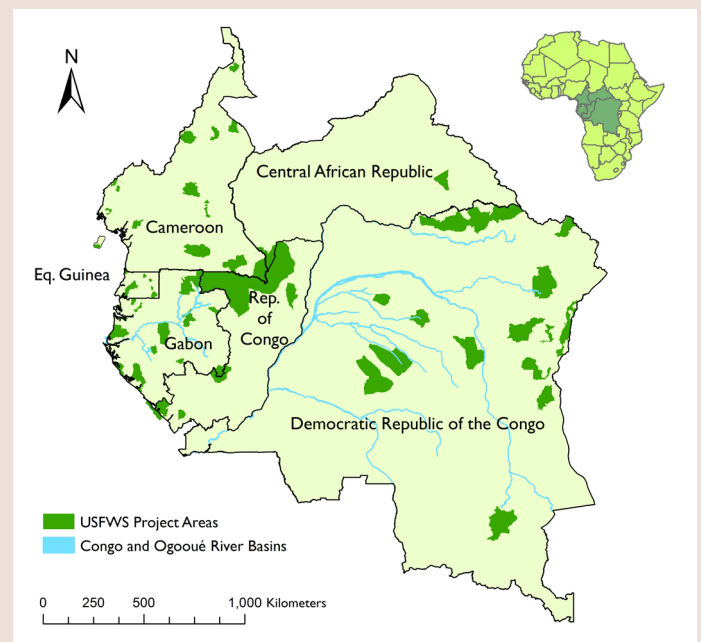
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Africa Regional Program conserves some of the world's most iconic species: forest elephants, gorillas, and chimpanzees. Together with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), USFWS works with a range of partners in the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) to secure wildlife and build capacity for better wildlife management.

USFWS provides financial and technical support to meet the complex and demanding tasks required to conserve Central African wildlife and habitats. Our major CARPE initiatives are located in:

- Gabon's network of 13 national parks, home to more than 50 percent of Africa's remaining population of forest elephants, and a new network of 10 marine protected areas.
- The Sangha TriNational and Northern Congo landscape, a vast tropical forest providing critical habitat for elephants and great apes that encompasses national parks in Cameroon, Central African Republic and the Republic of Congo.
- Virunga National Park in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), home to the endangered mountain gorilla and besieged by militia groups.
- The Tshuapa-Lomami-Lualaba (TL2) landscape in DRC, home to the endangered bonobo ape and Africa's most recently discovered monkey, the lesula.
- Conkouati National Park, Congo's most ecologically diverse park and home to increasing populations of forest elephants and sea turtles, a demonstration that recovery is possible with the right actions.

Program Highlights

- For 2014 and 2015, USFWS received \$35 million in CARPE appropriations to conserve wildlife in Central Africa.
- USFWS-CARPE investments build on more than 25 years of USFWS work in Central Africa to conserve African elephants, great apes and marine turtles, as mandated through Acts of Congress.
- USFWS leverages its expertise in law enforcement and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) to strengthen the capacity of governments and non-governmental organization (NGO) partners to fight wildlife trafficking in Central Africa.



Above: Project areas in the Congo Basin supported by USFWS since 2010. Credit: William Kanapaux / USFWS

Through CARPE, USFWS works to achieve conservation success with governments, non-governmental organizations and communities, building on a 25-year legacy in Central Africa.



Central chimpanzee.

Credit: Ian Nichols / National Geographic

Threats to Central African Wildlife

Elephant poaching

The ivory trade poses the single biggest threat to the survival of the African elephant. The number of forest elephants in Central Africa fell 62 percent between 2002 and 2011.

Commercial bushmeat trade

Commercial demand for bushmeat poses the single greatest threat to the majority of forest animals in Central Africa. A thriving commercial trade often emerges around logging concessions and other work camps.

Extractive industries

Logging, mining and oil exploration that are unregulated and unmanaged threaten wildlife by destroying and degrading habitats. These industries also create roads that attract poachers and new human settlements.

Marine turtle mortality

Commercial and artisanal fishing operations threaten marine turtles through direct and incidental capture. During nesting season, poachers also capture females and raid nests for eggs.

Disease

Ebola and other infectious diseases are a major cause of decline in African great ape populations. Ebola's mortality rate is higher for chimpanzees and gorillas (up to 95%) than for humans (50 to 80%).

The pet trade

Live capture of animals for the pet trade threatens many species, including great apes. Many adult apes are killed while defending infants during live capture.

Strategic Objectives

CARPE's primary objective is to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss and forest degradation in the Congo Basin by increasing capacity for natural resource management at local, national and regional levels. USAID initiated CARPE in 1995. USFWS has been a major CARPE partner since 2006, when the U.S. Congress first allocated a portion of CARPE funding directly to the wildlife agency.

USFWS works with a range of CARPE partners. In addition to USAID, these include Central African government and NGO partners, as well as the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Department of State, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, U.S. and Central African universities, and international NGOs with an established presence in the Congo and Ogooué Basins.

On-the-Ground Investments

For 2015, USFWS received \$17.5 million in CARPE funding, leveraged by a nearly equal amount in additional matching funds, to support programs for threatened and endangered wildlife populations in the Congo and Ogooué Basins. USFWS applies a two-pronged strategy: 1) small, competitive grants for on-the-ground projects that respond to immediate threats, and 2) long-term investments that focus on building in-country institutional capacity for effectively managing wildlife populations and their habitats. This combined approach allows USFWS to support quick responses to near-term threats while providing support and technical assistance to achieve long-lasting results.

Achievements

The USFWS role in CARPE has resulted in a number of achievements including:

- Elimination of elephant poaching in Wonga-Wongué Presidential Reserve in a single year (in partnership with Gabon's national parks agency, ANPN);
- Significant reduction in illegal commercial and artisanal fishing in Gabon's coastal waters and lagoons (in partnership with ANPN);
- Support for the training of 200 new rangers in DRC's Virunga National Park, increasing the total number to 500 (in partnership with the Virunga Fund);
- A doubling in forest elephant numbers in Conkouati Douli National Park in Congo over 10 years by making the park a refuge from poaching (in partnership with the Wildlife Conservation Society);
- Establishment of the first joint patrols with the DRC government in Lomami National Park to control criminal activity of a militia group engaged in elephant poaching and violence against local communities (in partnership with the TL2 Project); and
- Creation of a regional network to combat wildlife trafficking that has already led to more than 1,200 arrests and 900 convictions of wildlife traffickers in nine countries in Central and West Africa (in partnership with the EAGLE (Eco Activists for Governance and Law Enforcement) network).

USFWS has also developed monitoring guidance to compare success across USFWS-funded conservation projects and a results-based vision document for achieving conservation success in Central Africa. The monitoring guidance will help USFWS and its partners better monitor, assess and report on performance and learn from other projects implementing similar actions. The vision document describes the threats to wildlife species in Central Africa and strategies for addressing those threats. For more details, please see the USFWS website to download [Standard Measures of Effectiveness and Threats for Wildlife Conservation in Central Africa](#) and [A Results-Based Vision for Conservation in Central Africa](#).



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