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# MAIKO-TAYNA-KAHUZI-BIEGA LANDSCAPE



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO – 2015: One of the ten rivers that finds its source in Kahuzi-Biega National Park. Photo by WVCS for USAID

## THE LANDSCAPE

The Maiko-Tayna-Kahuzi-Biega landscape, one of the largest of CARPE's nine landscapes, includes a cluster of three major protected areas in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Covering more than 10 million hectares – about the size of Virginia – the landscape extends from the mountainous east along the rim of the Albertine Rift near the borders of Rwanda and Burundi down to the flat lowlands near the Congo River more than 200 kilometers to the west and nearly 3,000 meters lower in elevation.

With more than 80 percent of its area covered by primary forest, the landscape represents one of the largest expanses of intact forest in Central Africa. The forest not only helps regulate the local climate and protection of soils, it is the source of 10 rivers that are important regional watershed catchments. The vast forest is also a huge store of important carbon reserves.

Maiko-Tayna-Kahuzi-Biega contains some of Central Africa's highest levels of biodiversity and the highest number of endemic species, including the most important population of eastern lowland gorillas, 13 other primate species, endangered forest elephants, giant pangolin, leopards and Congo peafowl, along with nearly 350 other bird and 1,200 plant species.

**Area:** 106,000 km<sup>2</sup>

### Protected areas:

- Maiko National Park
- Kahuzi-Biega National Park
- Tayna Nature Reserve
- Itombwe Nature Reserve
- Kisimba Ikobo Primate Reserve

### Main biodiversity threats:

- Deforestation due to slash and burn agriculture
- Illegal activities, such as elephant poaching, wood exploitation, bushmeat hunting and small-scale mining
- Conflict, insecurity and political instability

### Intervention strategies:

- Developing and promoting sustainable agricultural activities
- Improving protected area management
- Educating communities in biodiversity conservation
- Strengthening natural resource management
- Reducing conflict through dialogue and boundary delineations

### Partners:

Wildlife Conservation Society (lead),  
Union of Associations for Gorilla  
Conservation and Community Development,  
World Wildlife Fund,  
The Jane Goodall Institute, local  
non-governmental organizations,  
government partners

# THREATS

In contrast to the landscape's natural richness, most of the people living in Maiko-Tayna-Kahuzi-Biega are poor, depending on subsistence agriculture and forest resources for their daily needs. As the population continues to grow, particularly in the east, deforestation due to the ever-increasing demand for farming land is depleting the forest at an alarming rate.

Significant portions of the landscape have been set aside as national parks, nature reserves and community-managed areas. But the combination of growing population pressure, few economic alternatives and a lack of institutional capacity to stem the threats are taking an increasingly heavy toll. Illegal hunting for bushmeat, ivory poaching and small-scale mining for gold, coltan and cassiterite are fueling forest and biodiversity loss. These problems are compounded by political instability, corruption and continued armed conflict as different groups attempt to control the area's valuable mineral and forest resources.

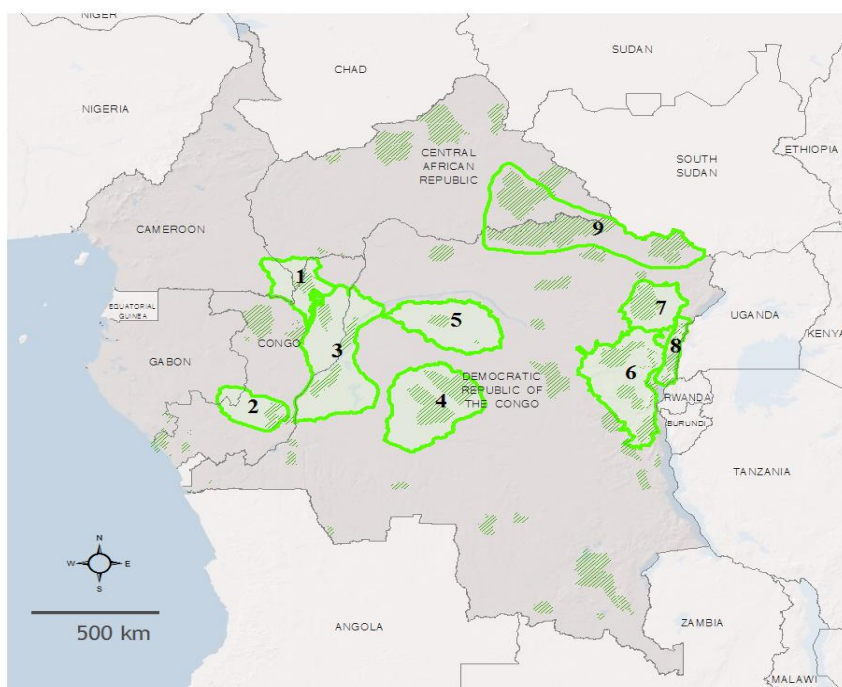
The elephant population has shrunk dramatically since the mid-1980s, and it is thought only small, isolated populations remain. The eastern gorilla population has plummeted from 25,000 to as few as 5,000. The other primates are under heavy pressure from hunting in certain areas, particularly the two types of red colobus monkeys, Hamlyn's monkey and other guenon monkeys, as bushmeat poachers take advantage of the lucrative trade with urban markets.

## CAFEC at a glance

USAID's Central Africa Forest Ecosystems Conservation (CAFEC) program focuses on sustainable forest management, wildlife conservation and REDD+ activities in nine carbon rich, biologically sensitive and diverse natural forest landscapes covering 32 million hectares of land; spread of covering four country, especially the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Congo, the Central Africa Republic and the Rwanda.

CAFEC and the Environmental Monitoring and Policy Support (EMAPS) program, which improves environmental policies and regulations, builds capacity of public and private institutions to support conservation of forest and biodiversity, and boosts the quality and scope of conservation management, climate change mitigation efforts, and data collection to maintain the ecological integrity of the humid forest ecosystem of the Congo Basin..

The CAFEC and EMAPS program are interdependent. The information collected and shared through the local efforts of CAFEC informs national and regional policy work, while improved policies supported under EMAPS allows for better conservation efforts and land use management at the local landscape level. These programs align with and contribute to the Presidential Initiative on Global Climate Change and the National Strategy for Combatting Wildlife Trafficking (CWT).



### MAP KEY

- Protected Area
- CARPE Priority Area

### USAID Supported Landscapes

- 1 - Tri-National Sangha
- 2 - Léconi-Batéké-Léfini
- 3 - Lac Télé-Lac Tumba
- 4 - Salonga-Lukenie-Sankuru
- 5 - Maringa-Lopori-Wamba
- 6 - Maiko-Tayna-Kahuzi-Biega
- 7 - Ituri-Epulu-Aru
- 8 - Virunga
- 9 - Garamba-Chinko



# INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

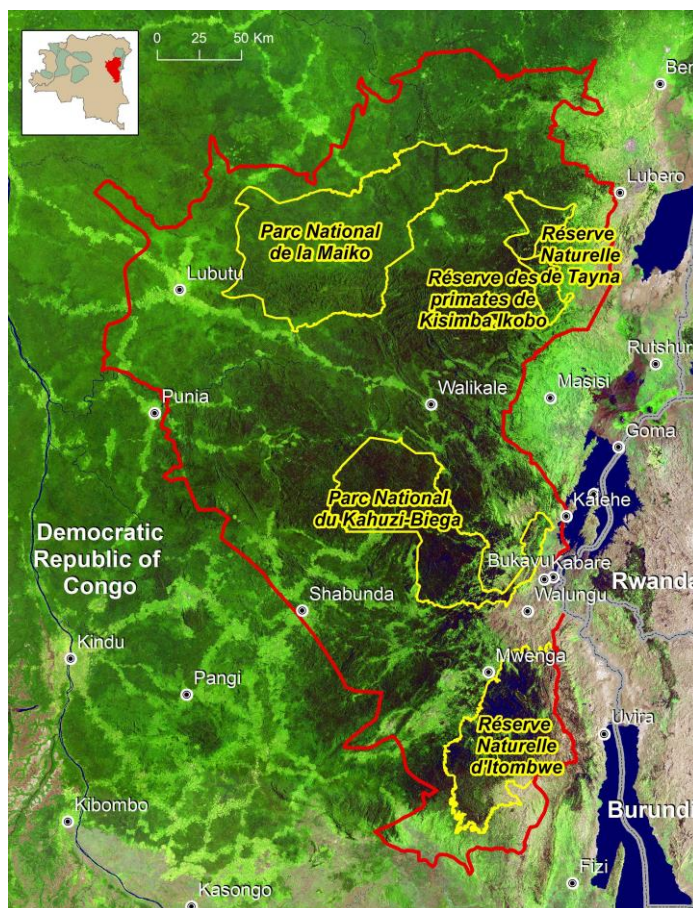
USAID's CARPE implementing partners work with the people of Maiko-Tayna-Kahuzi-Biega to develop conservation approaches that meet their needs and aspirations while at the same time protecting the landscape's rich biodiversity and important carbon stocks.

Community awareness of biodiversity conservation and natural resource management has increased through environmental awareness campaigns, including billboards, radio spots and printed pamphlets. The campaign also includes literacy training and developing and distributing materials designed to improve knowledge of existing environmental laws and the rights of local communities and resource users, with a special focus on engaging women and disadvantaged groups.

Local communities' dependence on forest resources has been reduced through improved farming and livestock practices that curb the need for forest to be cut for slash and burn agriculture, and by promoting tourism to increase food security and generate additional income. Micro-loans help develop economic activities, such as small-scale trading, motorbike taxis and sustainable charcoal production, that provide alternatives to forest exploitation.

To complement these community conservation efforts, the introduction of SMART<sup>1</sup> technology is making a significant difference in the way wildlife officials protect forest resources, allowing them to intervene in areas where illegal poaching and logging are taking place and bring offenders to justice.

To help reduce natural resource-related disputes, partnerships with mining companies and better defined



Landsat composite image courtesy of the University of Maryland

boundary lines are reconciling differences between traditional customs and formal laws governing resource access and use.



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO – 2015: Forest expanse in the Kahuzi-Biega National Park. Photo by WCS for USAID

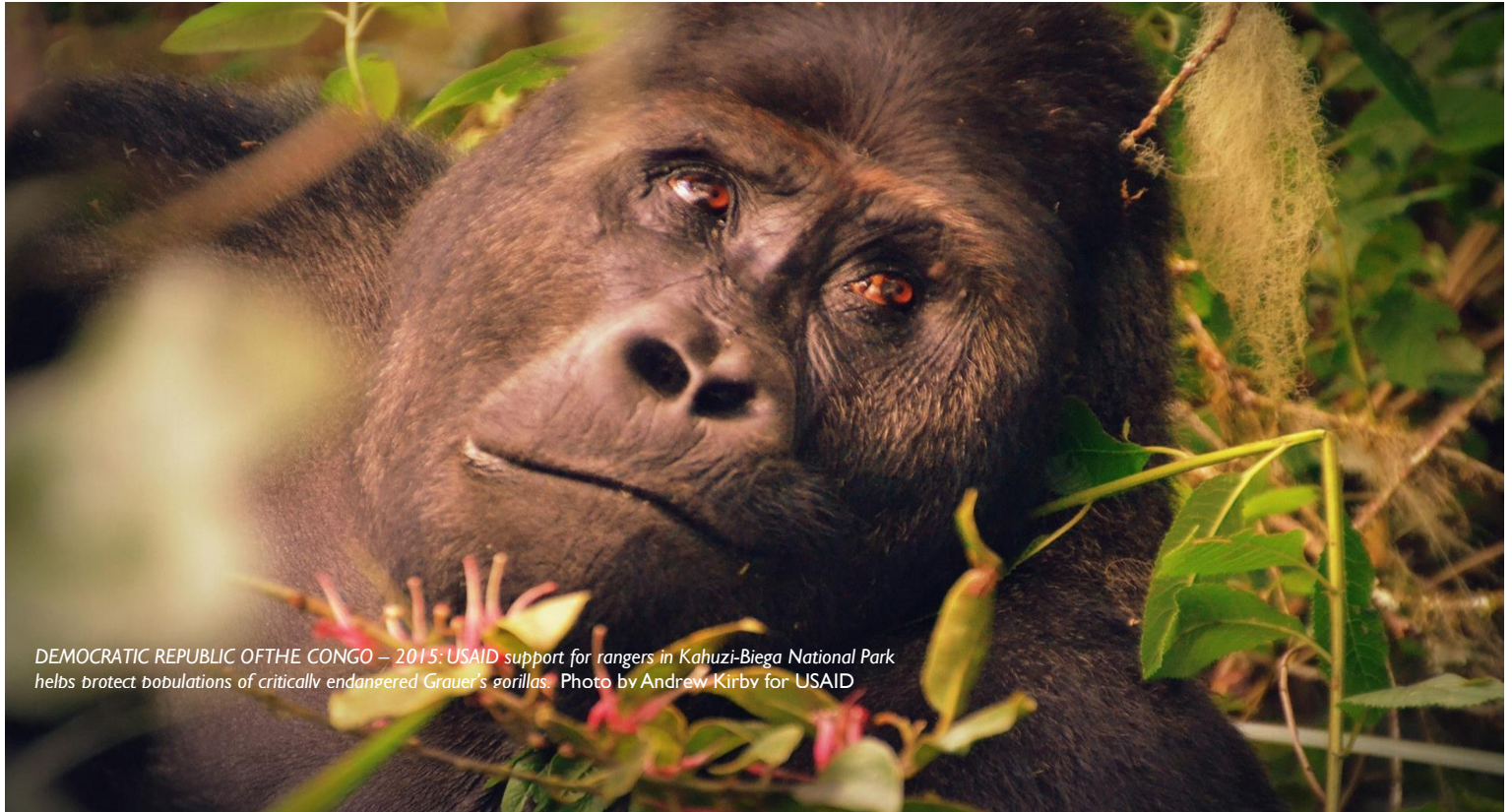




DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO – 2015: U.S. Ambassador and USAID/DRC Mission Director met with micro-credit recipients in a visit to the landscape. Photo by Alastair McNeillage for USAID

## Select FY 2017 Accomplishments

- 236 Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) staff and local conservation organizations trained in the use of SMART to monitor biodiversity and human activities;
- 1234 people trained in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation including 374 women in 2017
- 974 people trained in global climate change including 290 women in 2017
- The Grauer's gorilla populations has been increased by 18% in the Tshivanga sector (high altitude area of Kahuzi-Biega National Park) since 2010 due to the best application;
- The Itombwe Nature Reserve officially gazetted at the Province level in 2016;
- More than 1,400 project funded through the micro-credit and improved livestock practices, reducing community impact on forest resources through implementing sustainable, revenue-generating livelihood activities;
- 15 staff from partner conservation NGOs and ICCN trained in developing and disseminating environmental films in target areas, and in behavioral change and social marketing



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO – 2015: USAID support for rangers in Kahuzi-Biega National Park helps protect populations of critically endangered Grauer's gorillas. Photo by Andrew Kirby for USAID

### For more information:

[www.usaid.gov/central-africa-regional](http://www.usaid.gov/central-africa-regional)  
[cod.forest-atlas.org](http://cod.forest-atlas.org)  
[CARPEManagement@usaid.gov](mailto:CARPEManagement@usaid.gov)



Norad