

Wednesday 31 May 2017

13.30 – 17.00 hrs

The Hague, the Netherlands

VNO-NCW and MKB

Nederland Building

Bezuidenhoutseweg 12

International Conference on the future of Central African Forests and its People

& book launch

“Central African Forests Forever”

Discover what is going on in the
second largest rainforest on Earth,
and join the debate with experts
from Central Africa and the world

Register at: www.goo.gl/VyuR96

For more information visit: www.tropenbos.org



Development Cooperation
Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Global Compact Network
Netherlands



Congo Basin forests are of great significance to Africa and to the world. They make up the second largest contiguous tropical forest on Earth. Tens of millions of people depend on them directly for their livelihood, hundreds of millions more depend on them indirectly. And these Central African forests are one of the last large wilderness areas on earth, supporting what is now called megabiodiversity.

"It is time to recognize the value of the great and rich biodiversity in the Congo Basin forest as a real economic asset." Chief Robinson, *Secretary General of the Pan African Council of Traditional and Native Authorities (PACTNA/CPATC) in Central African Forests Forever*

This conference brings together participants from government, business, civil society, knowledge and media organizations, and offers a space for exchange and networking.

Fast facts on Central Africa forests



240
million ha of forests



A carbon sink equivalent to **6** years of global emissions

Home to



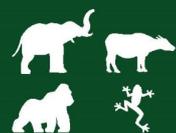
60
million people inside or in the direct vicinity

Feed



40
million in urban centres close to forests

Home to rare and endangered species



8,000
plant species are endemic

Source: www.cafi.org

Aims of the conference

- Take stock of different trends in the region and their effects on people and the forest.
- Launch the new and inspiring book about this topic: **"Central African Forests Forever"**
- Highlight examples where current practice leads to concrete and sustainable results.
- Provide possible solutions for the following key questions:
 1. *What can be done to put forests at the heart of the region's development?*
 2. *What do Central African countries want to do with their forests and will their visions and strategies deliver the desired results?*
 3. *What can European countries like the Netherlands do to leverage the business case for sustainable forestry and smart land use, and ensure that economic development is sustainable and inclusive and provides for equitable long term benefits?*

What is happening?

Deforestation has increased greatly in recent decades, and some 800,000 hectares of forest now disappear every year. The causes? Conversion to unsustainable agriculture that does not even meet the growing needs of the region's population, as well as legal and illegal logging for timber and charcoal for Africa's growing urban populations. Large scale production of palm oil and rubber is increasing too, and will if unchecked, have devastating effects on forests and forest peoples' livelihoods. Roads, mining and other developments all also take their toll on Congo Basins forests.

'If alternative ways to efficiently produce more food per hectare are not found, forests will continue to shrink.' Emmanuel Ze Meka, former Executive Director of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), in *Central African Forests Forever*

The region faces major challenges - poverty, inequality and food insecurity, poor economic growth and poor business climate. And weaknesses in governance, institutions and infrastructure make it difficult to successfully address these challenges. However, several countries in the Central Africa region are seeking to become emerging economies, and are at a turning point. They must decide how much of the required growth will be achieved at the expense of forests and other natural resources, or how to enhance the value of the region's standing forests.

'Tropical forest? Use it or lose it!' Ted van der Put, Executive Advisor to IDH, The Sustainable Trade Initiative, in *Central African Forests Forever*

International book launch: Central African Forests Forever

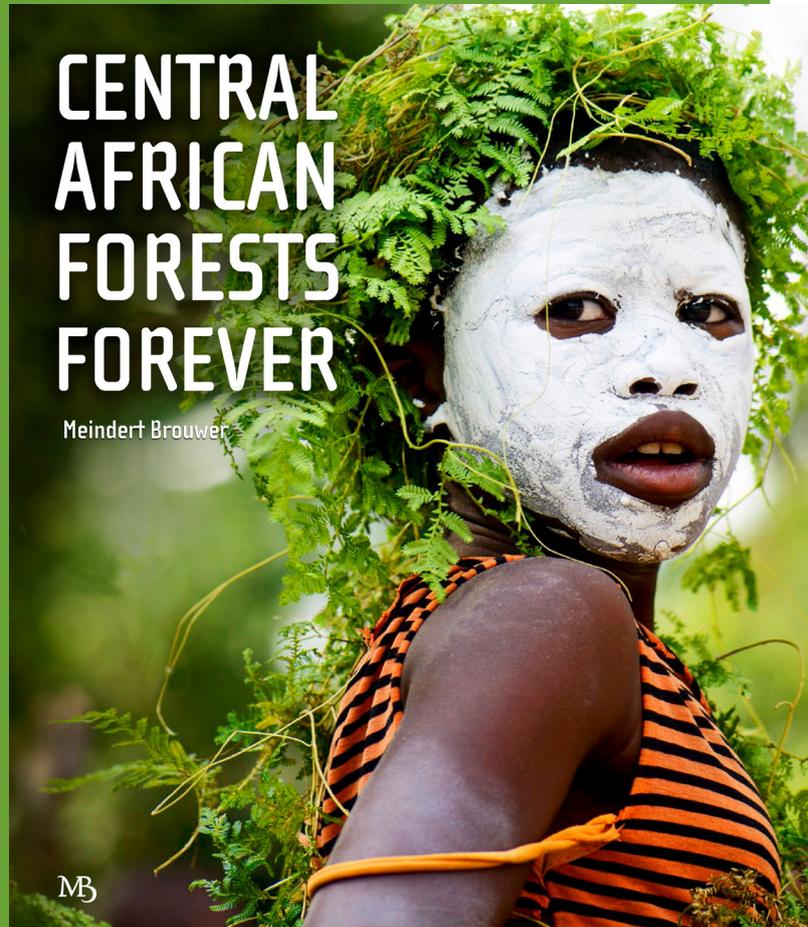
Meindert Brouwer's much-awaited book offers an inspiring overview of opportunities and solutions to preserve Congo Basin forests and their megabiodiversity. A mix of eyewitness reports, interviews and opinions of experts, most native to Central Africa, it is an eye-opener to everyone interested in knowing more about this exceptional and beautiful part of the world.

There is also a French edition:
Les forêts d'Afrique centrale pour toujours

A preview of the book can be found at
www.centralafricanforests.org

"Securing women's rights is essential for forest preservation." Cécile Ndjebet, president of the African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests (REFACOF), in Central African Forests Forever

"Good governance means true democracy in which leaders are accountable for what they do or don't do." Alphonse Maindo, professor in political sciences and Programme Director of Tropenbos International DRC, in Central African Forests Forever



Registration and venue

Attendance to the conference is free of charge, but you **must register** through the following web link:
www.goo.gl/VyuR96.

Date: Wednesday 31 May 2017

Time: 13.30 - 17.00 hrs

Venue: VNO-NCW and MKB Nederland building
Bezuidenhoutseweg 12, The Hague Netherlands
Near The Hague Central station. For a route description see: <https://www.vno-ncw.nl/contact>

For information, contact:

Herman Savenije, Tropenbos International (herman.savenije@tropenbos.org, +31 317 702024)

Programme

12.30 Welcome and coffee

13.30 Setting the scene

Introduction

Seminar Chair: **René Boot**,
Director Tropenbos International

Why care for the Central African forest and its people. A business and policy perspective

André van Heemstra – Chairman NL Global Compact Network
Ardi Stoiosbraken – Deputy director IGG, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (tbc)

13.45 Voices from the forest

Congo Basin forests - importance, trends and developments

Verina Ingram - Wageningen University
Henk Hoefsloot - Tropenbos International

Women and forest – and the impacts, roles, prospects and needs of rural people

Cécile Ndjebet – President, African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests (REFACOF)

From illegal loggers to tax-paying forest managers. The Tropenbos experience in DRC.

Alphonse Maindo - Director Tropenbos DR Congo

14.45 Break

15.15 The Repatriation of the White Cube; at the Lusanga International Research Centre for Art and Economic Inequality (LIRCAEI) in DRC.

Renzo Martens - Institute for Human Activity, Amsterdam with Cercle d'Art des Travailleurs de Plantation Congolaise.

15.30 Panel debate: What can we do? Moderator: René Boot

Cécile Ndjebet - REFACOF

Alphonse Maindo - Tropenbos DR Congo

Jaap van der Waarde - WWF Netherlands

Hans Beeckman - Koninklijk Museum voor Midden Afrika, Tervuren

Leslie Ouarzazi - CAFI Secretariat, UNDP

16.15 Next steps

16.25 International book launch: Central African Forests Forever by Meindert Brouwer

16.45 Closure and drinks

The conference is co-hosted by:

Global Compact Network Netherlands (GCNL) is an initiative of Dutch business leaders to further the contribution of private business within its sphere of influence towards the Sustainable Development Goals, stimulating collaborative actions and dialogue between companies and other actors in the Netherlands and with counterparts in developing countries. GCNL is a partner in the Central African Forests Forever Initiative

The Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs is committed to strengthening international action on climate change mitigation and adaptation. Halting deforestation constitutes an important part of this work, encompassing three focus areas: strengthening forest governance, supporting sustainable landscapes and fostering deforestation-free supply chains.

Tropenbos International (TBI) is a non-governmental, non-profit knowledge network working on improving tropical forest governance and management as a means to contribute to the sustainable development agenda. Created in 1986 it has presence through partner programmes in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Indonesia, Viet Nam, Colombia and Suriname, and projects in Liberia, Nigeria, Uganda, Philippines, Bolivia and Honduras.