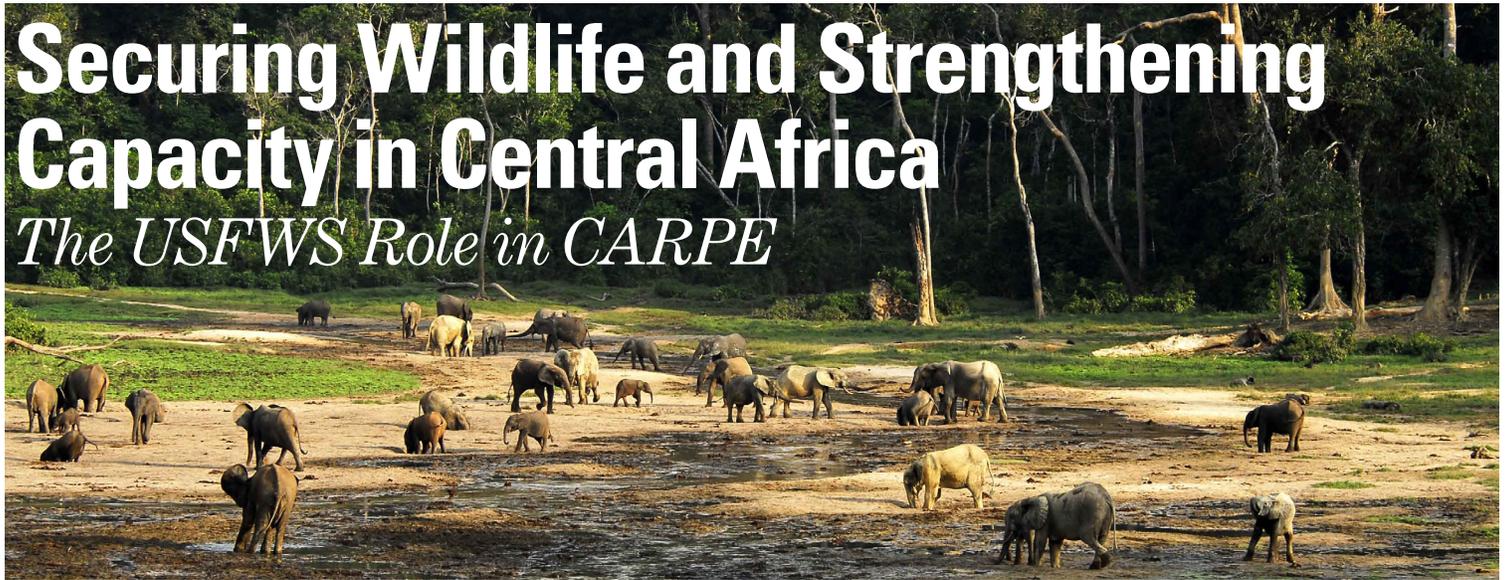


Securing Wildlife and Strengthening Capacity in Central Africa

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) works in Central Africa to conserve some of the world's most iconic species, including forest elephants, gorillas, chimpanzees, and marine turtles. 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 strengthen capacity for better wildlife management.

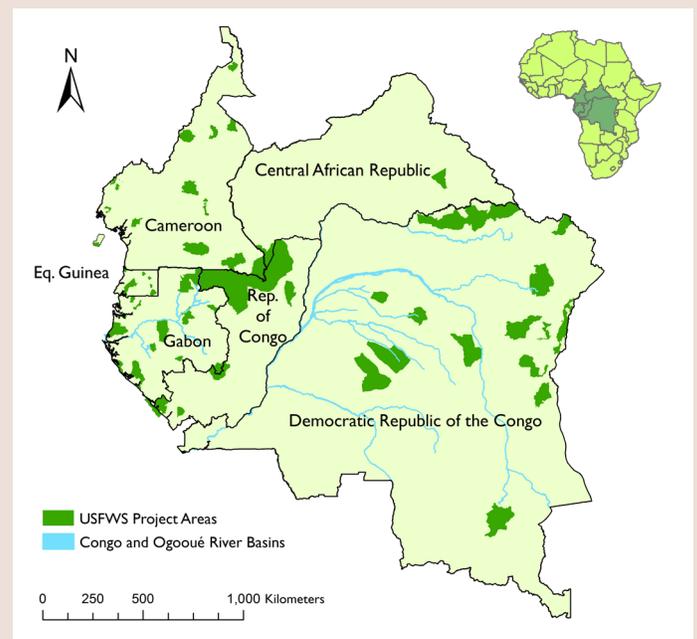
USFWS provides financial and technical support to meet the complex and demanding tasks required to conserve Central Africa's wildlife and habitats. Some of our major CARPE initiatives are located in:

- 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 covering 23 percent of the country's territorial waters.
- The Sangha Tri-National and Northern Congo landscape, a vast tropical forest and stronghold for elephants and great apes. It includes national parks in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, and the Republic of the Congo (Congo).
- Virunga National Park in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), an area besieged by militia groups and home to the endangered mountain gorilla.
- The Tshuapa-Lomami-Lualaba (TL2) landscape in DRC, providing habitat to the endangered bonobo and Africa's most recently discovered monkey, the lesula, and the site of the country's first new national park in more than 40 years.
- Conkouati National Park, Congo's most ecologically diverse park and home to increasing populations of forest elephants and sea turtles. It demonstrates that recovery is possible with the right actions.

Demand for bushmeat and poaching for ivory is devastating forest elephants, gorillas, chimpanzees, pangolins, and other iconic species across Central Africa.

Program Highlights

- 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 has developed a network of key projects and trusted implementing partners based on wildlife priorities for the region.
- 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



Central chimpanzee.

Credit: Ian Nichols / National Geographic

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 2016, USFWS received \$17.5 million in CARPE funding, leveraged by more than \$25.1 million in additional matching funds, to support 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 capacity for effectively managing wildlife populations and their habitats. This combined approach allows USFWS to support quick responses to immediate threats while providing support and technical assistance to achieve long-lasting results.

Achievements

- 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 Lomami National Park, the first new national park in the DRC in more than 40 years (in partnership with the TL2 Project). As the country's first protected area that was established in a participatory manner involving all levels of the community and administration, this marks an important milestone for wildlife as well as local communities, and may serve as a model for the region at large.
- Creation of a regional network, currently active in 10 countries across Africa, to combat wildlife trafficking that has resulted in more than 1,000 significant wildlife traffickers jailed to date (in partnership with the EAGLE Network).
- New transboundary collaboration in the Garamba-Chinko landscape in the DRC and Central African Republic to achieve a higher standard of park management and successfully restore and conserve key wildlife species, while also establishing a foothold for governance, security, and stability throughout the region (in partnership with the African Parks Foundation).

For more details on the USFWS results-based vision for conservation in Central Africa and guidance to enhance project effectiveness, please see the USFWS website to download [A Results-Based Vision for Conservation in Central Africa](#) and [Standard Measures of Effectiveness and Threats for Wildlife Conservation in Central Africa](#).

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 main 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 Africa's 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.



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