



Langoué Bai, Ivindo National Park, Gabon.
Photo David Greyo / courtesy of WCS and ANPN

KEVIN NJABO

In this chapter ecologist Kevin Njabo from Cameroon tells about the value and the state of the Congo Basin rainforest, the largest rainforest in the world after the Amazon. He describes its megabiodiversity and the functions of animals and plants in the forest ecosystem. Njabo is Adjunct Assistant Professor at the Institute of the Environment and Sustainability and the Department of Environmental Health Sciences at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). He is also Associate Director and Africa Director at the UCLA Center for Tropical Research and teaches in the US, Cameroon and in Rwanda.

Megabiodiversity in the Congo Basin rainforest

by Kevin Yana Njabo

The Congo Basin is the world's second largest rainforest after the Amazon and makes up one of the most important wilderness areas left on earth. With its 228,000,000 hectares, the Congo Basin represents 70% of the African continent's plant cover and shelters approximately 26% of the planet's rain forests and a wealth of biodiversity.

The Congo Basin rainforest contributes to the collective 30 percent of the world's oxygen supplied by rainforests. While nine countries (Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia) have part of their territory in the Congo Basin, only six countries (Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon)¹ are conventionally associated with the Congo Basin in general.

¹ Atyi RE, Devers D, de Wasseige C et Maisels F. 2009. État des forêts d'Afrique centrale: synthèse sous-régionale, In C. de Wasseige, Devers D, de Marcken P, Eba'a Atyi R, Nasi R et Mayaux P, eds. Les forêts du Bassin du Congo – État des forêts 2008. Luxembourg: Office des publications de l'Union européenne. 17–44. ISBN 978-92-79-132 11- 7. doi: 10.2788 /32456

