Global Peatlands Initiative Third Meeting of Partners

Meeting Report

Ledger Plaza Maya Maya Hotel

Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

21–23 March 2018

Dr. Amy Ambatobe Nyongolo, Dr. Siti Nurbaya, Arlette Soudan-Nonault and Erik Solheim celebrate the signing of the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands on March 22 (photo courtesy of Hans Joosten).

Objectives and Outcomes of the meeting

The Third Partners Meeting of the Global Peatlands Initiative had four main **objectives**:

- Increase awareness of the importance of peatlands globally and more specifically, the Cuvette Centrale Peatlands of the Republic of Congo and the Democratic of Republic of Congo;
- Hold a Ministerial level dialogue between the Ministers of the Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo and Republic of Indonesia;
- Share knowledge between Global Peatlands Initiative experts and key tropical peatland countries, through a structured exchange of experiences, approaches and technologies for conservation, restoration and sustainable management of peatlands;
- Discuss the findings and launch DE LA FUMÉE SUR L'EAU – LUTTER CONTRE LES MENACES MONDIAL LIÉES À LA DESTRUCTION ET À LA DEGRADATION DES TOURBIÈRES - the French version of the Rapid Response Assessment - Smoke on Water – Countering Global Threats from Peatland Loss and Degradation.

The **Outcomes** of the meeting were as follows:

- Discussed main issues and threats to peatlands and the opportunity for their protection, conservation and sustainable management amongst policy makers, technical experts and partners of the region.
- Discussed and agreed on the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands committing the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Congo and Indonesia, with the support of the international community and the Global Peatlands Initiative, to work together to protect peatlands including those in the Cuvette Centrale of the Congo Basin from unregulated land use, drainage and degradation;
- Increased capacity of experts and partner countries to conserve peatland ecosystems, restore, and manage them sustainably through a south south and triangular exchange of experience and best practice approaches;
- Stronger and more coordinated network of stakeholders and partners, including within the Congos working on peatlands while linked to global experts of the Global Peatlands Initiative.
- Increased awareness of the importance of peatlands through outreach, including media coverage and the significance of conserving, restoring and using peatlands sustainably globally and for the Congos, Indonesia and Peru;
- The findings of DE LA FUMÉE SUR L'EAU – LUTTER CONTRE LES MENACES MONDIAL LIÉES À LA DESTRUCTION ET À LA DEGRADATION DES TOURBIÈRES - the French version of the Rapid Response Assessment - SMOKE ON WATER – COUNTERING GLOBAL THREATS FROM PEATLAND LOSS AND DEGRADATION launched, and discussed, amongst stakeholders and complemented by the paper on Carbon, Biodiversity and Land-use in the Central Congo Basin Peatlands.

Prime Minister of the Republic of Congo Clément Mouamba receives DE LA FUMÉE SUR L'EAU – LUTTER CONTRE LES MENACES MONDIAL LIÉES À LA DESTRUCTION ET À LA DEGRADATION DES TOURBIÈRES the French version of SMOKE ON WATER from Erik Solheim and Arlette Soudan-Nonault launched and discussed during the meeting.

Summary of Proceedings

The **3rd Meeting of the partners of the Global Peatlands Initiative led to an unprecedented commitment by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Congo and Indonesia to work together with the support of the Global Peatlands Initiative partners to protect the Cuvette Centrale peatlands of the Congo Basin from unregulated land use, drainage and degradation as outlined in the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands** (signed on March 22, 2018).

<u>The Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands further articulates the following:</u>

The governments of the Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Indonesia:

- ✓ called upon the **international community,** including UN Environment, through the **Global Peatlands Initiative, to bring their support to both Congo's in their efforts to sustainably manage the Cuvette Centrale peatlands;**
- ✓ reaffirmed their commitment **to preserve the right of local communities to use natural resources in areas covered by peatlands;**
- ✓ called upon the international community to **fund research programmes** that enable countries to better understand the state and extent of peatlands;

- ✓ called upon the international community to **review existing international mechanisms**, such as the National Determined Contributions, the REDD+ program and nationally appropriate mitigation measures adopted under the UNFCCC, for the integration of sustainable peatlands management activities into relevant policies.

The governments of the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo:

- ✓ **committed to set up multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary national frameworks to manage peatlands in the Central Basin of the Congo Basin;**
- ✓ **committed to finalize land-use plans that promote the conservation and protection of peatlands and prevent their drainage and degradation**. Plus announce the establishment of a transboundary collaboration agreement to preserve the future of these valuable natural peatlands and their ecosystem services;
- ✓ committed t**o promote best management practices in peatland areas covered by economic activities, so that they are managed in a sustainable and climate-smart way, in such a way that are neither drained, nor degraded;**
- ✓ committed to act without delay to set up an Observatory for the collection, monitoring and dissemination of multi-purpose data by decision-makers, scientists, journalists and all other stakeholders interested in Congo Basin peatland issues and challenges;
- ✓ committed to work without delay on the creation of a Center of Excellence for Training, Research and Innovation to develop a pool of competent and qualified human resources to steer and promote green growth in Lac Télé/Lac Tumba peatlands;
- ✓ called upon the technical and financial partners to support them in the process of **facilitating the establishment of a finance facility** inspired by Indonesia's private sector Tropical Landscape Finance Facility set up by UN Environment, World Agroforestry Centre, ADM Capital and BNP Paribas;
- ✓ **welcomed the South-South Cooperation offer made by the government** of Indonesia to share knowledge, management tools and lessons learned in peatland management.

Dr. Amy Ambatobe Nyongolo, Siti Nurbaya, and Arlette Soudan-Nonault sign the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands on March 22 (photo courtesy of Hans Joosten).

Selected summaries organized by Global Peatlands Initiative priority areas of intervention:

1. Know where peatlands are and how they are changing:

Regional Context

- ✓ None of the RAMSAR sites in the two Congos have an active management plan, and the current wetland **inventory is incomplete**;

- ✓ **Capacity building on monitoring threats and trends in peatland health** at all levels from community to government level is needed;
- ✓ Funds from carbon finance, multilateral and bilateral sources are needed to support the development and implementation of peatlands management plans;
- ✓ **Funds are needed** to support the development of suitable economic activities to improve the livelihoods of local communities living around the peatlands area while avoiding degradation and drainage.

Data, tools and approaches for assessing the existence and extent of peatlands, and tools and best practice approaches for their monitoring are urgently needed locally and globally

- ✓ The Central Congo peatlands **are the second largest wetland in the tropics (360,000 km^2),** comprising mostly of swamp forest.
- ✓ **Satellites cannot detect peat**, but instead, other computer programs can be used to monitor them, including Landsat (optical) for swamp forest, ALOS (radar) for year-round water-logging and SRTM (radar) for DEM, excluding steep slopes.
- ✓ Measurement of the water table depth against the daily rainfall for one year, from April 2013 until March 2014, **showed that the peat is rainwater-fed, not river-fed**.
- ✓ **The Cuvette Centrale is the most extensive peatland complex in the tropics**. Peatland covers 5.4% of DRC and ROC, but store as much carbon as in the vegetation of the entire two countries, **and 24% of the world's carbon in tropical peat is in the central Congo**.
- ✓ The **Cuvette Centrale peatlands contain 30Gts of carbon – equivalent to one year of global fossil fuel emissions or 15-20 years of emissions from the United States of America.**
- ✓ The Congo peatlands carbon stores are currently intact, but they are under direct threat from plans for oil and gas exploration, industrial logging, infrastructure and agricultural conversion to oil palm plantations. **With increased investments into understanding how the peatlands function, and careful management and monitoring of their use including, by the people who live and depend on these peatlands for their livelihoods, cultural and spiritual well-being, the peatlands can be protected to benefit people locally, nationally and globally**.
- ✓ **Peatland countries need to develop capacities and systems to measure, monitor and report their peatlands**. Two examples of existing monitoring systems: "Sepal" and "Collect Earth Online". "Sepal" is an easy-to-use platform for processing and interpreting satellite data using cloud-based supercomputers. This method overcomes the barriers of power internet connections and low computer power or storage space on local computers.

2. Productive Use and Drainage-free livelihoods:

The Importance of Peatlands Ecosystem Services:

- ✓ Intact **peatlands provide many important ecosystem services**, including climate regulation through carbon sequestration and storage, water regulation, recreation opportunities, as well as provision of habitats for nationally and internationally important wildlife;
- ✓ Degraded peatlands pose a high risk and, ultimately, these high costs will be transferred to local and regional societies;
- ✓ **There are real opportunities to invest in peatlands assets globally**, through:
    - Stimulation of private investment for peatlands restoration where peatlands are already degraded and/or drained;
    - Market-based incentives from Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) to carbon markets, agro-forestry and agri-environment schemes;
    - Public-private partnerships including food and drink, tourism and hospitality industry, water quality and quantity, carbon capture and benefits of restoration.

3. Financial solutions, Financial Instruments and Investment options

Financial instrument and investment options to ensure the sustainable management of peatlands include:

- ✓ **Existing sources of funding** for protecting the environment and sustaining natural resources including bilateral and multilateral donors such as: GEF, GCF, International Climate Initiative of Germany, European Union, USAID, CAFI, etc.

- ✓ **Government regulation** using economic instruments to develop mechanisms for financing activities to protect and manage the environment
- ✓ The **Scottish Government has established an £8m fund to help restore Scotland's peatlands** with the aim to help reduce the country's greenhouse gas emissions as part of meeting the country's climate change targets. The scheme will enable the restoration of 20,000ha of Scotland's 1.7million hectares of peatlands.
- ✓ President Joko Widodo of **Indonesia set an ambitious goal to restore 2 million hectares** of burnt and/or degraded peatland within five years. Indonesia also issued a moratorium on the conversion of peatlands regulating activities and making activities that degrade the hydrological functions of peat illegal.

Lessons learned from South East Asia that can inform Congo Basin peatlands management include:

- ✓ Recognition of the **high value of peatlands for climate and water resource management and risks to economy and society if peatlands are poorly managed** – from loss of land and water quality, to loss of iconic species for tourism and biodiversity, loss of life and increasing health costs due to peat fires following their degradation and drainage,
- ✓ **Avoid the future development of the peatlands for intensive forestry and agriculture** purposes as this requires drainage and degradation,
- ✓ Enhance the **engagement and benefits for local communities in peatland areas, building on their traditional knowledge** on potential sustainable management and use of peatlands,
- ✓ Develop **national and regional action plans and strategies that area multi-sectoral and include full cost accounting**, establish regional and international cooperation mechanisms and facilitate partnerships with multiple sectors so that joint peatlands management is pursued for the benefit of all.

Specific calls from Congo Basin countries to the International Community and Global Peatlands Initiative partners:

- ✓ to **establish a fund** that would enable Congo countries to set up a **consultative framework to bring together all sectors and stakeholders** including indigenous peoples, local communities.
- ✓ to **accelerate scientific research** to understand the dynamics of peatlands as unique and important ecosystems.
- ✓ to mobilize funds from **carbon finance** and/or from multilateral/bilateral sources to support **development and implementation of peatlands management plans.**
- ✓ to moblize funds to support the development of **suitable economic activities to improve the livelihoods** of local communities living around the peatlands area.
- ✓ for **technical and financial partners** to support them to establish a **finance facility** for the protection of the peatlands (inspired by Indonesia's private sector Tropical Landscapes Finance Facility).

4. Policy/Legal/Institutional Frameworks

Key summary outcomes of the Ministerial High-Level Dialogue

- ✓ **Indonesian Minister shared several of their lessons learned** from their experience of dealing with degraded and drained peatlands.
- ✓ **Indonesia** has **developed good practice approaches** for the restoration, management and conservation of peatlands.
- ✓ **Indonesia has passed and enforced very important laws** that provide protection for peatlands including moratoria
- ✓ **Indonesian government and private sector collaboration** on peatland restoration and protection has also been important for their protection, restoration and sustainable use.
- ✓ **Lessons learned from Indonesia could inform** the development of a sustainable pathway for **peatlands management in the Congo Basin** by taking note of the need for multi-sectoral harmonized landscape level planning and decision making informed by science.
- ✓ The **Democratic Republic of Congo Minister** noted that "**prevention is better than to cure"** calling for the need for an **Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)** and the application of **the precautionary principle** for decisions affecting the peatlands as unique and fragile ecosystems.
- ✓ Examples of **polices and measures taken by the Indonesian government** after experiencing the negative impacts of unsustainable use of peatlands include:
    - **Suspension of permit issuance for Primary Forests and Peatlands use**;

- Enacting **new guidelines for restoration of peat ecosystems to promote better timber management within peatland in production Forests**;
- **Shifting new oil palm, rubber and other plantations away from peat areas**;
- Launching several **joint initiatives** with provincial government in the fire prone areas **to mitigate forest fires** including capacity building, **development of innovative technologies on forest monitoring** and peat fire **early warning and control**.
- Design and implementation of **law enforcement operations** to support policies and regulations developed for governing Indonesian peatland management, to discourage non-compliance, and to **improve public trust** in environmental law enforcement in Indonesia.
- Promoting the **use of community customary practices and traditional knowledge** in managing and understanding peatlands.
- Provide **support to civil society to use innovative community-based approaches** like Desa Peduli Gambut, that ensure that peat domes are managed through a stable water level as a key scientific principle.

✓ **Indonesia announced their plans to establish an international Tropical Peatlands Research Centre** to continue to develop peatland expertise and share experiences and approaches with other peatland countries through south-south and triangular collaboration.

✓ The **Global Peatlands Initiative will provide peatlands expertise and collect and share best practice approaches to support south-south cooperation** between Indonesia, the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Peru, and others, to support sustainable peatlands management, protection and restoration.

✓ **Peatlands management is a cross-cutting issue and it requires the establishment of concerted legal and governance frameworks**.

✓ For any sound peatlands management, the **water source that keeps the water flowing to the peatlands must be known and mapped**. **Any decisions made that may affect the water source, its quality and availability of the water that feed peatlands must be carefully considered by decision makers.** For example, if the water sources feeding the Cuvette Centrale peatlands are impacted negatively by development decisions, these peatlands may dry out and the land may subside, sediment may be release and this will have big impacts on the quality and quantity of water in the Congo River.

✓ **Preserving Congo peatlands is about preserving the Congo River.**

✓ A prerequisite to steer the peatlands issue towards a sustainable path is that beyond existing legal and regulatory frameworks in the two Congos, there is a **need to design and put in place policy and strategies, including consultative frameworks that bring together all sectors**, including those depending on the peatlands for their livelihoods, cultural and spiritual wellbeing such as indigenous peoples and local communities.

✓ **If peatlands are destroyed by uncontrolled agriculture, deforestation or any other resource extraction** that is not implementing best practices on peatland management, the two **Congos will experience** similar events as occurred in Indonesia, such as **repeated and frequent toxic fires, economic impoverishment of these regions, loss of unique biodiversity and income from tourism, and considerable impacts on climate**.

✓ **Any peatland management decisions must be informed by the latest scientific and technical studies and must be preceded by and consistent with results from Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA).**

Summary of the Meeting Proceedings

Day 1 - Wednesday, 21st March 2018

Opening Ceremony of the meeting of Technical Experts

Minister of Tourism and Environment **Arlette Soudan-Nonault** of the Republic of Congo and **Dr. Amy Ambatobe Nyongolo**, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Democratic Republic of the Congo opened the meeting together with **Adamou Buhari**, representing the UN Environment Regional Director for Africa, **Gervais Ludovic Itsoua Madzous**, Deputy Executive Secretary, Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC) and **Anthony Kwaku Ohemeng-Boamah**, UNDP Resident Representative and UN Resident Coordinator for the Republic of Congo, **Mrs. Suze Percy Filippini**, Republic of Congo FAO Representative.

Opening remarks for the technical segment of the meeting were delivered by:

- **Dr. Amy Ambatobe Nyongolo, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, who stressed the importance of peatlands for climate change mitigation.** He emphasized the importance of ensuring that the management of the peatlands also contributes to livelihoods and poverty reduction of local communities and indigenous peoples, while contributing to the national economy.

Dr. Amy Ambatobe Nyongolo, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, calling for a precautionary approach for managing peatlands, and stressing that lessons learned from Indonesian experiences tell us that: "prevention is better than to cure"

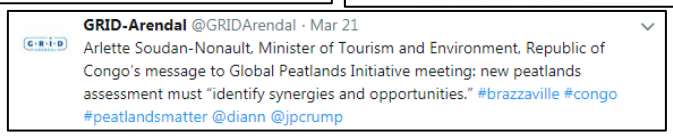
- **Adamou Buhari, representing the Africa UN Environment Regional Director**, thanked the Governments of the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo for their collaboration and success in co-hosting the 3rd Meeting of the Partners of the Global Peatlands Initiative (GPI). He stressed that UN Environment and the GPI partners are committed to helping peatland countries fill knowledge gaps and learn from others to ensure protection, restoration and wise use of peatlands as globally significant and unique ecosystems.

Arlette Soudan-Nonault, Minister of Tourism and Environment of the Republic of Congo, thanks the experts for sharing their knowledge, and notes the global importance of the hydrology, biodiversity and those threats – we need an analysis of the Cuvette Centrale.

- **Gervais Ludovic Itsoua Madzous, Deputy Executive Secretary, Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC)**, welcomed the opportunity to exchange with the experts at the partners meeting, and emphasized the importance of the outcome of the meeting and the contributions on COMIFAC's regional action plan (Convergence plan) – Axis 4 on Climate Change and the importance of the knowledge sharing on peatlands as carbon stores.

- **Arlette Soudan-Nonault, Minister of Tourism and Environment of the Republic of Congo, shared that climate change is one of the most significant developmental challenges of our lifetime.** She stressed that the atmospheric release of the 30 billion tonnes of carbon currently stored in the Cuvette Centrale Congo peatlands, as a result of uncontrolled deforestation, would be a dramatic attack on

the objectives of the Paris Agreement. She advocated for conserving natural carbon stores in relation to economic and social development. She welcomed the opportunity offered by the GPI 3rd meeting to discuss lessons learned from each other in terms of conservation, sustainable management and peatland restoration. **Noting that such lessons and knowledge from experts will assist the Congo countries to define an ambitious and innovative sustainable development pathway for the Central Congo basin peatlands landscape.**



The Ministers and distinguished guests welcomed the international, regional and local experts to the meeting appreciating their commitment to transferring their knowledge and experience to the stakeholders of the Cuvette Centrale and Congo Basin. They handed over the floor to the moderator who invited the experts to launch into the Technical Day which was dedicated to sharing knowledge, tools and approaches on peatlands conservation, restoration and management. The Congolese Ministers participated in the technical sessions by raising questions from the floor and sharing their own insights and institutional set up and governance frameworks.

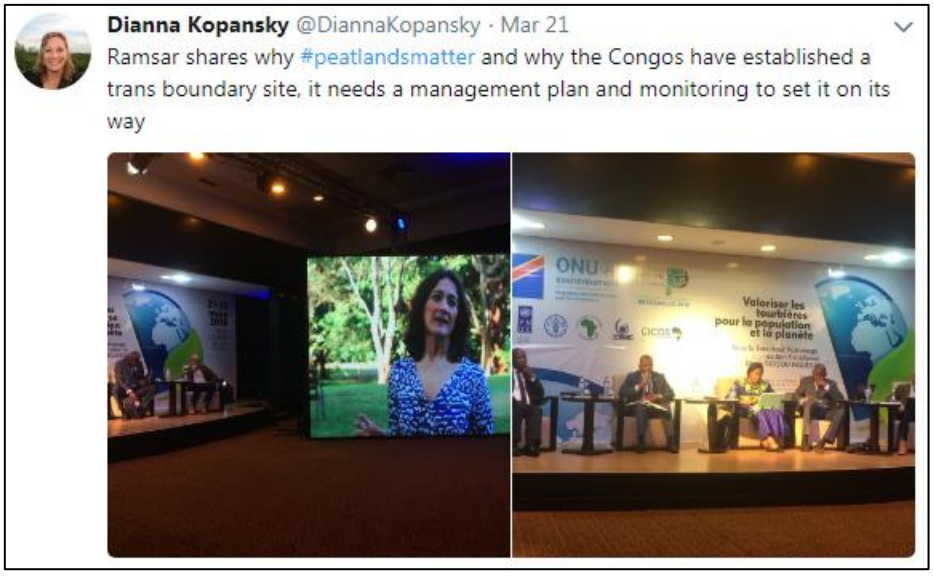
Selected Representatives on Day 1, from left to right: UN Resident Coordinator for Republic of Congo (Anthony Kwaku Ohemeng-Boamah), DRC Environment Minister (Dr. Amy Ambatobe Nyongolo), RoC Minister of Toursim and Environment (Arlette Soudan-Nonault), RoC FAO Representative (Mrs. Suzy Filippini), and UN Environment Regional (Dr. Juliette Biao Koudenoukpo)

Session 2 Regional Context – Status update by Congolese Government and local experts

A panel discussion took place between representatives from DRC, RoC and ECCAS which gave an overview of the existing and planned programmes and work ongoing in the Cuvette Centrale peatlands. The session was moderated by **Andre Toham** from UN Environment, and representatives included: **Roséline Blanche Akenze**, neé Ognimba, Head of Aquatic Ecosystems Department, Ministry of Tourism and Environment, Republic of Congo; **Rubin Rashidi Bukanga**, Director of Cabinet of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and National REDD Coordinator, Democratic Republic of the Congo; **Gervais Ludovic ITSOUA MADZOUS**, Deputy Executive Secretary, COMIFAC– overview of trans-boundary conservation areas related to the Cuvette Centrale peatland; **Georges Claver Bouzanga**, National Coordinator REDD+, Republic of Congo; **Honore Tabuna**, Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Expert – overview of economic issues related to protected areas; and **Jay Aldous**, Ramsar Secretariat – overview of international agreements and conventions applicable to the Cuvette Centrale peatland.

Some of the **highlights of the discussion** that followed included:

- ✓ Although some key protected areas have been created in the central Congo basin peatland region, **there is a need to identify new and/or expanded areas for designation as RAMSAR sites**;
- ✓ One of the most important tools within the RAMSAR Convention is the designation of **Sites of International Importance**. The transboundary site co-managed by DRC and RoC that includes three existing RAMSAR sites, Lac Télé - Grands Affluents - Lac Tumba, covering 129,000 square kilometres is the **largest transboundary RAMSAR site in the world – and of global significance**.
- ✓ Despite the importance of these RAMSAR sites, **none of them have an active management plan**, and the current wetland inventory is incomplete.
- ✓ Capacity building on monitoring and analysis of trends at all levels from community to government level is needed. There is also a need to build capacities and inform different stakeholders about the value of the peatlands and share with them ways in which their management can be transformed into successful models of sustainable community livelihoods.
- ✓ The Republic of Congo is implementing an Emission Reduction Program (ER-Program) in the Departments of Sangha and Likouala that can be of interest to stakeholders.
- ✓ The risks of "leakage" or displacement of activities that cause deforestation and degradation to peatlands areas are enormous.
- ✓ **The panel members called for mobilizing funding from carbon finance and/or from multilateral/bilateral sources to support development and implementation of peatlands management plans and to support the development of suitable economic activities to improve the livelihoods of local communities living around the peatlands area.**

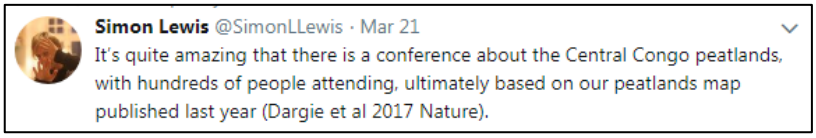


Session 3 Know where peatlands are, their extent, global significance and how they are changing

focussed on sharing data, tools and approaches for assessing the existence and extent of peatlands, and tools and best practice approaches for their monitoring and identifying trends and threats to their health. The session was moderated by **Alue Dohong**, Badan Restorasi Gambut, Indonesian Restoration Agency, Republic of Indonesia, with a keynote address from **Simon L. Lewis**, University of Leeds and University College London, and panelists: **Hans Joosten**, Griefswald Mires Center; **Ifo Suspens**, Université Marien Ngouabi; **Julian Fox**, Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN; **Samba Gaston**, Université Marien Ngouabi; and **Lauren Williams**, World Resources Institute.

Professor Simon Lewis from the University of Leeds delivered a keynote presentation on the peatlands of the Central Congo Basin, highlighting the scientific perspective, including his own studies published in Nature in 2017. Lewis introduced the Central Congo peatlands sharing their location on a map. He shared their findings that **they are the second largest wetland in the tropics (360,000 km2) comprising mostly swamp forest.** He explained that there are some grey literature reports of peat in the area, but these studies do not have any geo-locations, nearby villages, rivers, and such, to locate the peat. There are also no laboratory results or analyses about the peat. **He explained that satellites cannot detect peat**, but instead, other computer programs can be used, including Landsat (optical) for swamp forest, ALOS (radar) for year-round water-logging and SRTM (radar) for DEM, excluding steep slopes.

Lewis shared **his experience of the expedition of a team of local and international scientists to the Central Congo peatlands to study the ecosystem.** They measured the water table depth against the daily rainfall for one year, from April 2013 until March 2014, **and showed that this peatland is rain-fed**. He further explained that peat began to form 10,000 years ago, and started actively sequestering carbon 2,000 years ago, before explaining the process of how peat is formed, with diagrams. Lewis presented in detail the findings of the research by Dargie et al 2017 published in Nature - mapping the area as **145,500km2 and containing an estimated 30.6 Gts of carbon**. They found that the **Cuvette Centrale is the most extensive peatland complex in the tropics**. **Peatlands cover 5.4% of DRC and ROC but store as much carbon as in the vegetation of the entire two countries. According to the studies, 24% of the world's carbon in tropical peat is in the central Congo**. This discovery increases total tropical peat carbon stocks by 36%, to 130 PgC.



Lewis concluded by asking the question of what the future of the Congo peatlands will be? **The Congo peatlands carbon store is currently intact, but is under direct threat, from oil exploration, logging and Oil Palm**. With further concerted investment in the **understanding of how these peatlands function, careful management to maintain hydrological patterns, and the people who live and depend on the swamps, then the future of this region can be a beneficial resource for people locally, nationally and globally**.

Professor Hans Joosten of the Greifswald Mire Centre shared his knowledge and expertise on the critical role of peatlands mapping and identifying hotspots and trends for decision making and in support of climate action. He shared the plans of the Global Peatlands Initiative to undertake a **Global Peatlands Assessment** which would be a good start to filling knowledge gaps and bringing information together into a full, up to date and high-resolution **Global Peatlands Map**. Joosten highlighted that the maps will build on data we already have, will outline gaps on data and identify what further research is needed and how to achieve it. Joosten explained that a substantial amount of data for peatlands exists in the IMCG/GMC Global Peatland Database, including the extent and degradation status of peatlands/organic soils in 268 countries/regions of the world. **The challenge in bringing these different data sources together is standardization and harmonization** as these data sources are based on different resolutions, methods, content, have different degrees of reliability. Some sources include satellite imagery, vintage peatland (proxy) maps and inventories, peatland publications (25,000) with "incidental" observations, and some ground truthing in East Africa, North-East China, Papua New Guinea, North Korea, Iran and the Caribbean. Joosten shared several visual examples of this data.

Joosten emphasized the **need to develop a high-resolution peatland map of the world which also includes current trends and status/health (i.e. undrained/drained)**. He noted the agreed Initiative prioritization of mapping peatlands of the tropics and subtropics (40° N – 40° S). The map will be of **enormous importance for decision makers** and will need to be a sufficiently detailed to be a **strong basis for national and regional land use planning, UNFCCC reporting, MRV reporting under REDD+**, etc. He shared the experience and work done in Uruguay toward their NDC to "rewet 50% of the country's peatlands or 4183 hectares".

Joosten shared that the such a mapping is **required as a basis for continuing national monitoring**. He explained that the **Global Peatlands Initiative partners will help to establish knowledge on where the global peatlands are, where the hotspots (both quantity and threats) are, and will help to further define the data needs and clarify concepts (such as for peat and organic soils)**. There is a commitment and need to **use optimal remote sensing (centralized)**, while **using all available information (through our consortium)**, and **applying sufficient ground truthing**, with **involvement of every country**.

The Global Peatlands Assessment will be a good start toward the global map - however there is a further need for a detailed global map of peatlands. A global map of peatland extent and status of this scale will be **strengthened with the required capacity building for data handling and further monitoring**, and national and sub-regional **ownership will be critical**. He advised that we need to **prioritize the peat extent and status rather than the peat depth** at this point. Joosten expects that a full global mapping of this scale would cost approximately 20 – 40 million Euro and should be completed within five years.

Julian Fox of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) delivered a presentation on peatland measurements and monitoring, highlighting the **urgent need for innovative peatland monitoring systems to enable accurate, efficient and cost-effective monitoring**. While the FAO and their partners have developed some free and open-source solutions, he maintained that **peatland countries need to develop capacities and systems to measure, monitor and report their peatlands**. Fox shared two examples of existing monitoring systems: "Sepal" and "Collect Earth Online". Indicating that "Sepal is an easy-to-use platform for processing and interpreting satellite data using cloud-based supercomputers". The method overcomes the barriers of power internet connections and low computer power or storage space on local computers. The development of a peatland monitoring module using this system is underway. "Collect Earth Online" is a web-based platform created for classifying and monitoring land cover using expert local knowledge. It can access high-resolution data and user reference images and has a utility for monitoring of peatlands.

Session 4 Understanding the value of peatlands – ecosystem services, natural capital, protection and conservation and review options for productive use and drainage-free livelihoods

focussed on the importance of peatland Ecosystem Services and highlighted the opportunity of using ecosystem valuation and natural capital accounting to inform decisions for peatlands protection, conservation and to review options for productive use and drainage-free livelihoods. The session was moderated by **Ibrahima Thiam** from Wetlands International, with a keynote address by **Thierry de Oliviera**, UN Environment, and panelists: **Alain Huart**, World Wildlife Fund Democratic Republic of the Congo; **Emilie Fairet**, Wildlife Conservation Society Congo; **Gerald Schmilewski**, International Peatland Society; and **Johannes Refisch**, Great Apes Survival Partnership.

Thierry De Oliveira of UN Environment shared his experience and the global methodological approaches on Ecosystem Services Valuation and Natural Capital Accounting. He clarified that **Natural Capital** is the *stock of assets that can be used to produce ecosystem goods and services that provide benefits to consumers*, and **Ecosystem Services** are the *benefits that flow from natural capital*; and that **Natural Capital Accounting** is about *integrating the values of nature into decisions.*

Some **highlights from the panel discussion following the key note** included:

- **Peatlands are assets** that have been identified as a priority for action under key international agreements (CBD; UNFCCC; RAMSAR Convention etc.);
- **Intact peatlands provide many important ecosystem services, including climate regulation through carbon sequestration and storage, water regulation, recreation opportunities, as well as provision of habitats for nationally and internationally important wildlife;**
- Many **critical services** provided by ecosystems and nature in general **have no prices allocated to them and as a result are bypassed by markets**;
- **Uncontrolled use of peatlands** including through provisioning services such as agriculture and forestry can have negative impacts such as significant emissions of GHGs, affect water quality, human health and biodiversity, and **can result in significant and costly natural disasters such as fire, flooding, and land loss**, etc;
- **Degraded peatlands pose a high risk** and will ultimately result in **high costs to society**;
- **There are real opportunities to invest in peatlands asset**, through:
    - Stimulation of private investment for peatlands restoration;
    - Market-based incentives: from Payment for Ecosystem Services to Carbon Markets, agro-forestry and agri-environment schemes; and
    - Public-private partnerships.

Panel members highlighted that the **Cuvette Centrale (Lac Tele – Lac Tumba) peatland is home to extraordinary biodiversity**. Charismatic species such as **western lowland gorilas, chimpanzees, bonobos and elephants** are inhabiting this landscape. **Johannes Refisch, Coordinator of the Secretariat for the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP)** indicated that there is great experience to share on protected areas management, community engagement in conservation, and the development of ecotourism activities. In addition, experience from gorilla tracking in the Lossi Interzone near Odzala National park and Nouabale Ndoki can help to design tourism products in the lac Tele / lac Tumba area.

Panel members also highlighted the international and national support that their organizations can provide to address peatland issues in the Congo Basin. For example, WWF's **Green Heart of Africa (GHoA) programme** aims to build a network of ecologically representative, effectively managed, and financially viable sustainable protected areas. Partners have experience in working with governments to **develop management plans**, supporting **local communities in the management of protected areas,** and building capacities for ecological monitoring and data analysis. These experiences and skills can help to identify potential conservation activities in the Congo Basin including setting up management plans with communities which could be a good basis for building collaboration in support of peatlands management. Work ongoing in the Congos by partners is diverse and includes supporting the development and implementation of actions for effective **wildlife protection**; **community based natural resource management**; **ecological monitoring**; **scientific research**; and **environmental education**.

Session 5 Understanding Financial Instruments and Developing investment options

focussed on sharing knowledge of existing financial instruments and experience in developing investment options to ensure the sustainable management of peatlands. With cases drawn from experience on: palm oil; ecotourism; other drainage-free/deforestation free livelihoods from South East Asia. The session was moderated by **Tim Christophersen**, UN Environment, with a keynote address by **Agus Justianto**, Director General Climate Change of the Republic of Indonesia, and the panelists: **Maître Pongui Brice**, Blue Carbon Fund Mirey Atallah, REDD+ National Fund (FONARED); **Adamou Bouhari**, UN Environment; **Faizal Parish**, Global Environment Centre; **Lindland Jostein**, Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI); **Jack Major**, FOREsight Capital and Advisory, UNDP Consultant; and **Tosi Mpanu-Mpanu**, Lead Climate Change Specialist from the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Agus Justianto, Director General Climate Change of the Republic of Indonesia, shared Indonesia's experience in developing financial instruments and investment options for managing climate change. He presented the five main sectors for which emission reduction is needed to address climate change challenges in Indonesia as: forestry; energy; waste industrial process and product used (IPPU); and agriculture. He shared knowledge of the financial instruments used and investment options developed by the government of Indonesia to translate its commitment for environmental protection and climate change action which includes peatlands management.

Applause from the large audience attending Day 1 of the meeting.

Justianto shared an outline of Indonesia's **existing sources of funding for protecting the environment and sustaining natural resources** use such as **reforestation fees**, **Indonesian oil palm fund** mobilised through Indonesian Sustainable Palm Oil (ISPO), **Green Sukuk Bond** managed by the Ministry of Finance as part of our borrowings, and grants from international cooperation. He further shared information on the instruments Indonesia uses such as the Government **Regulation on the Economic Instrument for the Environment and the Environmental Fund Management Agency**. The Regulation intends to **develop a mechanism for financing activities to protect and manage the environment. For example, it provides monetary and/or non-monetary incentives to every party, including central and local governments, to engage in activities that have a positive impact on the sustainability of natural resources and the quality of environmental functions**. They also **provide disincentives** to any party having activities that potentially damage the environment. Also, through this new regulation, there is a provision for **intergovernmental fiscal transfers** among local

governments. This mechanism allows a local government (provincial or district) to transfer funds to other local governments to incentivise the provision of environmental services or the protection of natural resources from degradation.

The **Environmental Fund Management Agency**, which is yet to be established by Presidential decree, will be a public service agency managed by the Ministry of Finance but will involve other relevant Ministries. It is considered as one of **innovative financing mechanisms** for the environment that can be accessed not only by the government but also by non-government entities. The objective of the establishment of this Agency, inter alia, is to manage and mobilize environmental funds from various sources, such as donors, privately, and others. He stressed that **this fund will implement international standards in terms of revenue, fund management, distribution of funds obtained from various parties including communities, business, international agencies, foreign governments, local governments and central government**. It will also implement an **asset management paradigm** that separates asset from the fund manager by utilizing custodian bank as trustee as a form of accountability.

Faizal Parish, Director of the Global Environment Centre, shared the lessons gained from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' (ASEAN) experience toward sustainable management of peatland ecosystems relevant for the Congo Basin. He shared that since the 1980s, **oil palm has been grown on peatlands in Southeast Asia with the associated costs of high CO2 emissions, peat soil subsidence and loss, subsequent flooding and infrastructure damages, and resultant loss of productivity**, etc. Parish stressed that the drainage required for palm oil cultivation causes peat oxidation, and makes the soil susceptible to fires and floods. He noted the **enormous challenges in South East Asia with drained peatlands being hotspots for fires**, and can lead **to haze disasters** and **alarming amounts of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions**.

The financing and investment options considered by the ASEAN Member States to address the peatland degradation challenges include: the **endorsement of a long term multi-stakeholder ASEAN Programme for Sustainable Management of Peatlands Ecosystems (2014-2020)** (APSMPE) in September 2013. The APSMPE supports collaboration between different stakeholders including government, private sector, communities and civil society in the ASEAN region to achieve the goals of the **ASEAN Peatland Management Strategy 2006-2020**. It also **includes fund mobilization** from bilateral cooperation to support programmes, especially in Indonesia, **engagement with private sector** for example through the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), which pledged to stop further oil palm development on peatlands and enhance management of areas already developed.

Parish highlighted some **key lessons learned** from South East Asia that can inform Congo Basin peatlands management:

- **Recognize the high value of peatlands** for climate and water resource management and **acknowledge the risks** to economy and society if peatlands are poorly managed,
- **Avoid the future development of the peatlands for intensive forestry and agriculture purposes**,
- **Enhance the engagement of and benefits for local communities** in peatland areas,
- **Develop national and regional action plans and strategies**,
- **Establish regional and international cooperation mechanisms** and facilitate the partnership with multiple sectors.

Jack Major from FOREsight Capital and Advisory shared his work on the concept of Carbon Offsets stressing the complexity of the design process of **carbon offset** projects on forests. He shared the results of a recent study outlining the requirements and potential for Carbon Compensation in the Lac Tele/Lac Tumba Landscape. The study was commissioned by United Nations Development Program (UNDP) ROC Country Office, in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and Environment (ROC), the Ministry of Forestry, Economy and Environment (ROC), and the Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Tourism (DRC)' Major shared his experience of **setting up transboundary financial instruments which can be very challenging, but is possible**.

Tim Christophersen moderating the panel discussion with Agus Justianto, Maître Pongui Brice, Adamou Bouhari, Faizal Parish, Lindland Jostein, Jack Major, and Tosi Mpanu-Mpanu.

Adamou Bouhari from UN Environment outlined the main **aims of the 7th cycle of funding from the Global Environment Facility** and indicated that funds could be available to support peatland conservation initiatives in the region. He **encouraged countries to review the science available and identify needs**, and where appropriate to write to GEF contributing countries on the importance of peatlands, to **raise awareness on peatlands** and make it a priority in the coming funding cycle considering the vital function and unique aspects of this ecosystem.

Maître Pongui Brice from the Blue Carbon Fund defined the objectives of the **financial instrument as an international development fund which aims to enable the Congo Basin Member States to move from a forest-based economy to an economy based on catchment or water management**. He highlighted that the fund could contribute to improving transportation routes, encourage the establishment of hydroelectric projects, contribute to the development of fishing and fish farming, and reinforce irrigation in order to increase productivity on arable land in the savannah areas. The agreement establishing this fund was signed by twelve countries on March 9, 2017 in Oyo in the Republic of Congo.

Lindland Jostein from Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI), shared an update on the status of the **Central Africa Forest Initiative** (CAFI) and how it is **a key funding instrument that could be accessed and contribute to preserving the peatlands in the region**. He highlighted that CAFI is as a collaborative partnership that brings together Cameroon, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon supported by contributions and collaboration with the European Union, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, South Korea, United Kingdom, and Brazil as South-South partner. **CAFI's support is channelled through a Trust Fund managed by the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office**. CAFI is a unique initiative that supports strategic, holistic and country-level REDD+ and Low Emission Development investments.

Tosi Mpanu-Mpanu, GCF Board Member and Lead Climate Change Specialist from the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Democratic Republic of the Congo shared insights indicating that **wetlands and forests are considered among the Fund's priority areas**. More specifically, they are prioritized among the strategic results areas for both mitigation and adaptation. He shared that the "AFOLU has high mitigation potential at a relatively low cost: 10-12 GtCO2eq/year (24% of global mitigation potential), while **wetlands provide both mitigation and adaptation benefits**". He shared that the GCF had so far "provided Readiness support to 106 countries worth 80 million USD, and as of February 2018 76 projects/programs has been approved by the GCF board". He noted that noted that **there is a long pathway ahead to tackle the challenges faced by our decision makers and experts. He stressed the need to work together to ensure that good, accurate science is available to inform decisions made that impact these globally significant ecosystems.**

Session 6 Summary of Day 1 Knowledge Sharing Technical Sessions

Dianna Kopansky, Global Peatlands Initiative Coordinator of UN Environment summarized the story emerging from the knowledge sharing technical exchanges on Day 1 of the meeting. She appreciated that the **Ministers of the Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo showed their commitment to look at ways to best protect, conserve and sustainably manage/use their peatlands for the benefit of local people, for the benefit of their nations, for the Congo Basin region and for the planet**.

Kopansky highlighted that Tosi Mpanu-Mpanu, GCF Board Member and Lead Climate Change Specialist said that a "long journey starts with small steps" noting that this Third Meeting of the partners of the Global Peatlands Initiative is one of these steps. She shared that "the journey started in Rome where the Initiative was founded, then we moved to Indonesia for our Second Partners Meeting and Global Landscape Forum-Peatlands Matter, and now we are here in the Congo". Kopansky **emphasized the importance of the opportunity for technical exchange of knowledge, lessons, approaches and practices and looked toward the local and regional stakeholders "to learn about what you call you peatlands, how you use them and why they matter to you" in the Congos**.

The day provided an **opportunity to exchange on a wealth of experiences of conservation, deforestation-free livelihood options, and investment platforms and packages**. The partners highlighted **new and emerging opportunities** that are ahead for these countries **to invest in and protect their peatlands**. The sessions also **highlighted the threats and competing interests** for the use of the peatlands and the **urgent need for the people and their livelihoods to be safeguarded**. Kopansky emphasized the **importance of looking at losses rather than revenues exclusively when making the best decisions** reminding participants about the enormous social, economic and environmental losses from peatland drainage in many parts of the world. Including the examples shared by Faisal Parish noting **the loss of land, loss of lives, extreme fires and haze including in South East Asia and Russia**. Kopansky noted the importance of being in Brazzaville discussing that the peatlands here are "**the heart of the Congo Basin and the life of the Congo River and its forests" and emphasize their importance for the globe**.

High-level participants assemble following the conclusion of Day 1 - First Row from left to right: from left to right: Mrs. Suzy Filippini, RoC FAO Representative, Amy Ambatobe Nyongolo, DRC Environment Minister, Arlette Soudan-Nonault, RoC Minister of Toursim and Environment, and Dr. Juliette Biao Koudenoukpo, UN Environment Africa Regional Director

Summaries of Knowledge Sharing Ministerial Sessions Day 2 - Thursday, 22nd March 2018

Session 6 Opening Ceremony for the High-Level Ministerial meeting of the Global Peatlands Initiative

saw a number of esteemed guests share their insights with a packed, over-flowing room of over 260 guests including more than 35 Ministers. The high-level delegates included **Monsieur Clément MOUAMBA,** Prime Minister, Republic of Congo; **Jacques Elion**, Mayor of Poto Poto, Brazzaville; **Siti Nurbaya**, Minister of Environment and Forestry, Republic of Indonesia; **Ahmad Allam-mi**, Secretary General, Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); **Erik Solheim**, Executive Director, UN Environment; **Amy Ambatobe Nyongolo**, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, Democratic Republic of the Congo; and **Arlette Soudan-Nonault**, Minister of Tourism and Environment, Republic of Congo.

- **Jacques Elion, Mayor of Poto Poto, Brazzaville** welcomed participants to the Global Peatlands Initiative meeting encouraging them to take the opportunity to exchange and deliberate over the next few days in the beautiful city of Brazzaville.

The Prime Minister of Republic of Congo, Clément Mouamba, is welcomed to Day 2 of the meeting by Arlette Soudan-Nonault, Minister of Tourism and Environment of the Republic of Congo and Jacques Elion, Mayor of Poto Poto

- **Erik Solheim Executive Director of UN Environment** stressed that we will succeed in protecting peatlands if we focus on people's needs, not on people's greed. He shared that **"the world will not have enough for everyone's greed. If they focus on people's need, we will succeed. If they allow the greed of a few individuals to take over, we will never succeed, and will pay the price globally. Based on the needs of the people, we can succeed"**. He added that destroying peatlands is a health hazard to the people. Fires make a huge amount of smoke and people inhaling this smoke is a huge health hazard.

Solheim emphasised the **relevance of peatlands in climate change mitigation and adaptation.** He emphasized the **need to work together to manage the Cuvette Centrale**, the largest tropical peatland who's fate is globally important. The peatland forests harbour some of the most important and fascinating biodiversity in the world. "If the worst case happened we would lose this biodiversity along with close to 20 years' worth of US emissions or three years of all of global emissions combined. In everything we do, in coal, in oil, all over, for three years, is similar to the carbon in these peatlands in the two Congos".

Standing room only as high-level guests address participants at the opening of the Third Partners meeting of the Global Peatlands Initiative

Solheim concluded that **peatland protection would come from supporting the south-south collaboration**, which he said can only come from a nation with a deep understanding and deep knowledge, and mistakes and successes like Indonesia have. Indonesia can provide the best south-south cooperation. Furthermore, he added that, "For the United Nations, for UN Environment, for all of us, for the donor nations, the partner countries, see how we can support" the Congos. He shared that UN Environment is proud to bring together all leading global institutions on peatland conservation, restoration and sustainable management in the **Global Peatlands Initiative**. The purpose of this Initiative is to support countries such as **Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Peru and Indonesia** to sustainably manage their peatland resources. He asked if "we can bring the **Green Climate Fund** and **Global Environment Facility**, and get much needed support from Europe and other parts of the world? Can we get into an arrangement where we support the protection of the peatlands? And of course, so that the **people living there can see the benefits of conservation**."

Prime Minister of Republic of Congo, Clément Mouamba, reads the Global Peatlands Initiative meeting briefing paper "Carbon, biodiversity and land-use in the Central Congo Basin Peatlands"

- **Siti Nurbaya Minister of Environment and Forestry, Republic of Indonesia** was honored to be in Brazzaville to share Indonesia's experience and extended her gratitude to the government of the Republic of Congo and people for the warm hospitality accorded to her delegation. She appreciated the government and people of the Democratic Republic of Congo for the invitation to visit Kinshasa. She appreciated to Erik Solheim and his UN Environment team, as well as the other members of the Global Peatlands Initiative for the support provided to Indonesia and in the organization of the meeting.

Nurbaya shared that **peatlands are a very important natural resource in Indonesia, and proper peatlands management is a top priority** for her government. She shared that **Indonesia has been a pioneer in tropical peatlands management, and has learned a lot of what they have done well and what they should have done differently**. **They have tried a number of ways to utilize peatlands, some ways have worked well and some have not – and "when it is going wrong, it goes at too fast a speed". Indonesia has developed a great deal of peatland management instruments that can serve the Congo basin countries, to avoid re-inventing the wheel. She added that that is why her important delegation is attending the meeting to share their experiences and knowledge, and to learn from experts and others about new insights related to peatland management.**

Nurbaya appreciated the "**prudence** taken by the Congo basin countries" at the onset of managing the peatlands which have been discovered in the central Congo Basin and applauded the **"top-level commitment"** shown in the Congo. She added that **the President of Indonesia, His Excellency Joko Widodo, has also shown strong commitment to the improvement of peatlands management** indicating that he directly led meetings and oversaw field coordination, and that under his command, her Ministry won support from key agencies.

Nurbaya congratulates the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo for joining the Global Peatlands Initiative, and concluded that together with Peru and Indonesia, they can move towards sustainable management of peatlands.

- **Dr. Amy Ambatobe Nyongolo, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Democratic Republic of the Congo** focussed his intervention on two points: 1) highlighting DRC's potential contribution to the management of the central Congo Basin peatlands noting that it is an **"important reservoir of biodiversity, with an estimated 30 billion metric tonnes of carbon stock";** 2) outlining the **support that the DRC intends to claim or to obtain for participatory peatland management**.

Ambatobe Nyongolo acknowledged the importance of protecting peatlands evidenced with the **establishment of the RAMSAR Sites designated to be of International Importance**, plus the **decision to establish a Dedicated Unit for Peatlands Management inside the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development**. He shared that the mandate for the Peatlands Unit is two-fold – **country mapping and coordination of all peatlands**, and **elaboration and implementation of national strategy for peatland management**, which will include **cross-sectorial policies**. The achievement of these mandates will **require significant technical and financial resources** from various sources, such as donors, privately, and others.

Full house attendance for the Day 2 proceedings. First Row, from left to right: Erik Solheim (UN Environment Executive Director), Arlette Soudan-Nonault, (Minister of Tourism and Environment of the Republic of Congo), Clément Mouamba (Prime Minister of the Republic of Congo), Dr. Amy Ambatobe Nyongolo (Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Democratic Republic of Congo), Siti Nurbaya (Minister of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia).

Minister of Tourism and Environment of the Republic of Congo, Arlette Soudan-Nonault shares that if peatlands are used for agriculture, forestry, resource extraction and infrastructure development there will be enormous consequences on climate and on societies.

- **Arlette Soudan-Nonault, Minister of Tourism and Environment of the Republic of Congo** expressed her appreciation to **Minister Siti for traveling from Indonesia with a high-level delegation of 15 senior staff from her Ministry**, and for the **DRC Minister Dr. Amy Ambatobe Nyongolo for leading an important delegation comprising 46 senior staff from his country**. She highlighted the importance of peatlands both in terms of biodiversity and carbon storage capacity. **She articulated that if peatlands are used for agriculture, forestry, resource extraction and infrastructure development there will be enormous consequences on climate and on societies.** She added that the recent discovery of peatlands in the central Congo Basin **increases the urgency of establishing a solid political, legal or institutional framework to support their protection, and their sustainable management to the benefit of our children, and for the entire world**. She stressed that **peatlands are part of the cultural heritage of the RoC and the DRC**, and it is a great hope for future generations.

Soudan-Nonault called for the international community to support RoC and DRC in their role of custodians of these ancient forests. In order to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreements, and considering the potential mitigation role of the peatlands, the **RoC and DRC Ministers set up national committees and signed on February 2018, a Memorandum of Understanding for the establishment of a joint management body following the Global Peatlands Initiative 3rd meeting of partners in Brazzaville**. They also decided to continue to reach out to local communities to raise awareness on the importance of peatlands.

Siti Nurbaya, Minister of Environment and Forestry for the Republic of Indonesia takes note of the challenges in the Congos for peatlands.

Soudan-Nonault emphasized the need for the international community to **provide appropriate guarantees, in the form of financing, capacity building and technology transfer to both countries, to ensure adequate resources for the management of peatlands and for livelihood improvement of the local comminutes**. She praised and encouraged technical and financial partners from UN Environment, FAO, UNDP and urged them to continue their support and for sustainable management in the Congo Basin. She presented the "assets that RoC has at hand to support the sustainable management of peatlands", namely, the **Environment Action Plan, the National Land Use Plan, the National Strategy for Sustainable Development, the Biological Diversity National Strategy, the Law on the Protection of the Environment, the Law on Fauna and Protected Areas, the Law of Orientation and Development of the Territory, the Land Law, and the Law on Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**. She concluded that from the perspective of the management of peatlands, a **coordination framework involving all sectors is needed as well as a national land use plan with the aim to define land allocation, and specifically for peatlands areas, to avoid the overlapping land uses, and provide a legal base for peatlands area for conservation**.

Prime Minister of the Republic of Congo, Clément Mouamba calls for solidarity and cooperation from international partners to tackle the challenges facing the Congos in the sustainable management of the Cuvette Centrale peatlands.

- **Clément Mouamba, Prime Minister of Republic of Congo**. **shared that peatlands, predominantly those in pristine condition, lock in carbon** - adding that, **"peatlands are one our greatest allies in the fight against climate change". He noted that degraded peatlands are strong net emitters of greenhouse gases and stressed that by conserving peatlands, we can reduce global emissions and conserve this natural carbon sink**.

Mouamba called upon partners to **work jointly on concerted actions to address peatlands management challenges: benefits for local communities and economic development perspective**. He concluded that, because of the severe economic crisis experienced by **Congo countries, they cannot bear alone the cost for preserving peatlands to fight against climate change**. **He asked for**

solidarity and cooperation from international partners to tackle the challenges facing the Congos in the sustainable management of the Cuvette Centrale peatlands.

Session 7 Ministerial High-Level Dialogue was launched with an address by Erik Solheim, Head of UN Environment and Minister Siti Nurbaya with moderation by Mrs. Suze Percy Filippini, FAO Representative to the Republic of Congo.

- **Erik Solheim, Executive Director, UN Environment stressed the importance of south-south and triangular cooperation**. He added that we see this globally being developed in many other areas such as the International solar alliance launched by France and India aimed to accelerate the deployment of solar energy in 121 sun-rich countries between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. The Alliance aims to slow down global warming and transition to a sustainable and low carbon development pathway with economic growth. He added that what we see here with the **Global Peatlands Initiative** is the same – with Indonesia being the one nation in the world with the most experience in handling peatlands issues, developed from lessons learned from degrading peatlands. But through their experiences, Indonesia has developed very good practices in conserving peatlands. He added that **Indonesia has passed very important laws, which provide effective protection for the peatlands, due to the collaboration between the government and private sector**. He concluded that the UN Environment will provide best expertise to support south-south cooperation between Indonesia and the two Congos to further peatlands management knowledge sharing and experience exchange.

Minister Siti Nurbaya of the Republic of Indonesia, and ROC Ministers listen intently during Erik Solheim's address as he shares highlights from the Global Peatlands Initiative publication *Smoke on Water*.

- **Siti Nurbaya Minister of Environment and Forestry, Republic of Indonesia** extended her appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Congo and Democratic Republic of Congo for hosting the 3rd Global Peatland Initiative Partners Meeting. **She noted that Indonesia has gained extensive experience in managing tropical peatlands, both in positive and negative terms, which hopefully will inform the development of a sustainable pathway for peatlands management in the Congo Basin.** These experiences are derived from the history of peatland use, peatland restoration activities, and how they **translate into reform toward good governance and strategic policies**. With regards to the history of peatlands use, she informed participants that in the early 20th century, the utilization of Indonesian peatlands was mostly for subsistence agriculture and conducted through relatively sustainable practices. In the 1960s, the Indonesian Government included peatland in the people transmigration programme and for logging concessions.

In 1990's the government started development of industrial forest plantations and agricultural estates, in particular, oil palm. **The extensive promotion of this industry degraded almost half of Indonesia's peatlands which are mostly located in Sumatra and Kalimantan. The further use of degraded peatlands for plantation has unfortunately also contributed to massive peat fire and carbon emissions which have caused huge environmental deterioration, as well as, economic and social costs.** Nurbaya shared that "A minute of destruction takes a decade to restore". Triggered by the impacts of the massive fire, and considering the condition of land and forest governance in general, she said that **President Jokowi instructed to renew and reinforce the suspension of permit issuance for Primary Forests and Peatlands use, known as the Moratorium**. The implication of this Moratorium was the **postponement of all new applications for formal licenses of plantation companies**. She said that, **in production Forests, new guidelines for restoration of peat ecosystem has been issued to promote better timber management within peatlands**. She added that, a specific **Environment and Forestry Ministerial Regulation** has also been issued in 2017, **requiring concession holders to revise their respective working plans in such a way to shift new plantation from peat areas**. **She concluded that Indonesia has taken such new policies after experiencing negative impacts of unsustainable use of peatlands, an important lesson for other countries with a similar situation**. This could be very relevant to other countries such as Democratic Republic of Congo that has about 20% of its peatlands under forest concessions, and approximately 53% of these are already in operation.

Nurbaya highlighted several joint initiatives with provincial government in the fire prone areas have been launched to mitigate forest fires, including technical capacity building to the most updated technology on forest and peat fires controls. Policies and regulations developed for governing Indonesian peatland management have been supported by law enforcement carried out by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and other relevant law enforcement institutions. This law enforcement does not only discourage others for non-compliance, but it also improves public trust in environmental law enforcement in Indonesia. In terms of best practices, she said that **Indonesian communities have been practicing their customary knowledge and wisdoms in managing peatlands**. The Banjar communities in South Kalimantan through Handils associations have been managing peat lands for centuries. Handils are worm ditches/small canals constructed by local farmers of South Kalimantan to access their agricultural peatland areas. Dayak Ngaju tribe has used "Tata", a small hand-dug waterway into the forest to harvest non-forest timber products.

Erik Solheim, UN Environment Executive Director, and Suze Percy Filippini, FAO Representative to the Republic of Congo, during the panel discussion

Nurbaya shared that **Indonesian civil society is working on innovative community-based approaches like Desa Peduli Gambut; developing governance structure, based on the peat hydrological unit concept, to ensure that peat domes**

are managed through ensuring a stable water level as a key scientific principle. With regards to draining the water in the peatlands for plantation development**, she said that if peatlands should not be drained, and we need to look at the alternative options for economic activities such as Paludiculture and Agroforestry**. She also added that when peatlands are drained for forestry and agriculture, an alternative option is for land clearing without burning. This technique needs to be applied to prevent the use of fire in clearing plant remnants in the area to be planted. Litter or crop residues can be processed into several types of products such as compost, wood vinegar and charcoal briquettes.

Nurbaya informed participants that they will work with partners to establish an international Tropical Peatlands Research Centre in Indonesia and invited support from the Global Peatlands Initiative and UN Environment. Nurbaya stressed that Indonesia is keen to share their peatland experiences with other developing countries with peatlands through south-south and triangular collaboration.

- **Suze Percy Filippini, FAO Representative to the Republic of Congo,** moderator launched into the Ministerial Dialogue asking the two Ministers from the Congos **"How does the Indonesian experience inspire you in the perspective of designing and implementing policy, legal, institutional frameworks, to protect peatlands in your respective countries?"**

Ministers listening in to discussions on Day 2. From left to right: Antoinette Dinga Dzondo, Minister of Social Affairs and Humanitarian Action, Firmin Ayessa, Vice Prime Minister of the Republic of Congo, Henrri Djombo, Minister of State in charge of Agriculture, livestock and fisheries, Pierre Oba, Minister of Mines and Geology, Jean-Jacques Bouya, Minister of land planning and large scale Public Works

- **Arlette Soudan-Nonault, Minister of Tourism and Environment of the Republic of Congo**, welcomed Indonesian experience. She welcomed the DRC Minister of Oil in the panel and saying that **"peatlands management as a cross cutting issue required the establishment of concerted legal frameworks**". She then affirmed that **for a proper peatlands management, we must identify the water source that keeps the water flowing, all the pockets of water that feed the peatlands area. If these pockets of water are disturbed or dry up, this will impact peatlands and also impact the Congo River.**

Soudan-Nonault added that peatlands need to be addressed in 3 ways: the **political dimension** that brings together Ministers and senior government officials; **technical dimension** bringing together experts; and there is an **operational dimension which includes institutions** that are supporting the two Congos. She concluded that beyond existing legal and regulatory frameworks, **the Congo urgently needs to design and implement policies and strategies, including consultation frameworks that bring together all sectors**. **Soudan-Nonault stressed that these consultation frameworks should include indigenous peoples, local communities, and all sectors, and that this is a prerequisite to steer peatlands issue towards a sustainable path**. **Minister Arlette said that what she understood from the Indonesian Minister, is that we must preserve our forests because they allow the maintenance of water in the soil - preserving these peatlands is about preserving the Congo River**.

Soudan-Nonault further articulated the fact that **if peatlands are destroyed by uncontrolled agriculture, deforestation or any other resource extraction that is not implementing best practices management, the Congo will experience similar events as in Indonesia, with frequent fires, economic impoverishment of these regions, and considerable impact on climate.** She stressed the importance of establishing consultation frameworks at both the national and regional level.

Soudan-Nonault called for the **establishment of a fund that would enable Congo countries to set up these consultation frameworks and accelerate scientific research to understand the dynamics of this unique ecosystem**. **Assuring the representatives of communities attending the meeting that the Republic of Congo is approaching this peatlands issue within the framework of mitigation, adaptation and compensation**.

- **Dr. Amy Ambatobe Nyongolo, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Democratic Republic of the Congo**, **responded that they had learned a lot from their colleague Siti Nurbaya, Minister of Environment and Forestry, of the Republic of Indonesia,** and that this will enable them **to adjust DRC's vision for the management of peatlands.** The Indonesian experience tells us, **he said, that "prevention is better than to cure".** He further said, **"we need to avoid going through the same mistake experienced by Indonesia - that is, destroying and then designing restoration measures"**. We need to learn from their mistakes. We understood from Indonesia's experience that it is **easy to conserve than to restore, because restoration required considerable resources**. Minister Amy further said that another message that they understood from the Indonesian experience is that they should avoid being alarmist. **"Peatlands conservation does not mean no exploitation of peatlands. Any exploitation of any resource in the peatlands should be informed by latest scientific studies, it should be preceded and be consistent with results from Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), and finally, abide by standards for best practices management, management plans, etc."**

With regards to the policy frameworks already in place, Minister **Ambatobe Nyongolo** mentioned that the DRC government is "**committed at the very highest level for peatlands conservation and this is testified through the various conventions signed which include: RAMSAR convention, the ratification of the Paris agreement, the Framework Law on the Environment, the Nature Conservation Act, Water Resource Management Law, and the Forestry Code"**. With regards to the Institutional frameworks already in place, the Minister mentioned that a dedicated **Peatlands Unit** has been put in place and will have a **cross sectorial approach, including indigenous groups, involving the Oil and Agriculture Ministries, etc. to design strategies to sustainably managed peatlands areas**.

The Moderator asked a second-round of questions to the Ministers from the Congos and to **Aime Ngoy Mukena, the DRC Minister of Petroleum and Gas** probing to understand "**What are the coordination mechanisms to be put in place at the level of each country? At the bilateral level between the two Congos? And between the partners of the Global Peatlands Initiative, taking into account South-South exchanges, to ensure sound management of peatlands?**

Ambatobe Nyongolo and **Soudan-Nonault** responded that the **implementation at both bilateral and national level of multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder consultation frameworks**: political, diplomatic, legal, scientific/institutional levels, and operational, **will be required to ensure long term management of peatlands**. Minister Aime Ngoy Mukena said that when he came for this meeting he came with concerns that he would be told that it is forbidden to exploit peatland areas. However, this point was clarified by the general consensus of the high level Ministerial dialogue meeting which recommended that **any exploitation of any resource in the peatlands should be informed by the latest scientific studies, should be preceded and be consistent with results from Environmental and Social Impact Assessments, and finally abide by international standards for best practices management** – and emphasized by Ambatobe Nyongolo. **Wet agriculture (paludiculture), eco-tourism and small scale aquaculture are livelihood options that could be viable in the pristine Cuvette Centrale** – any **infrastructure development, industrial forestry or agriculture should be avoided** to maintain the vital ecosystem services that the peatland provides along with keeping the carbon locked in.

Session 8 Reading and signing of the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands brought together in the Declaration the exchanges between the Ministers and Experts in the lead up to the meeting and discussions held over the two days of intense dialogues. The Minister of Republic of Congo thanked the Global Peatlands Initiative and local exerts for sharing their knowledge and took note of the global importance of the hydrology, biodiversity and threats facing the peatlands of the Cuvette Centrale.

The 3rd Meeting of the partners of the **Global Peatlands Initiative led to an unprecedented commitment by the Democratic Republic, the Republic of Congo and Indonesia to protect the Cuvette Centrale peatlands of the Congo Basin from unregulated land use, drainage and degradation as outlined in the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands**. The Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands read by Mrs. Arlette Soudan-Nonault, Minister of Tourism and Environment of the Republic of Congo, further summarized in the following points:

The governments of the Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo and Indonesia:

- ✓ reaffirmed their commitment **to preserve the right of local communities to use natural resources in areas covered by peatlands**; to maintain their traditional uses and to implement the principle of free, prior and informed consent in engaging in activities with local people; and to help them use peatlands sustainably and to develop methods other than destructive practices.
- ✓ **called upon the international community, including the UN Environment, through the Global Peatlands Initiative, to bring their support to both Congos in their efforts to sustainably manage peatlands**.
- ✓ called upon the international community to **fund research programmes that enable countries to better understand the state and extent of peatlands**; to better understand the contribution of peatlands to greenhouse gas fluxes; to better appreciate the costs and benefits of restoring peatland ecosystem services compared with the opportunity costs of a "wait and see" or business as usual approach.
- ✓ called upon the **international community to review existing international mechanisms**, such as the National Determined Contributions, the REDD+ programme and nationally appropriate mitigation measures adopted under the UNFCCC, for the integration of sustainable peatlands management activities into relevant policies.

The governments of the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo:

- **committed to set up multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary national frameworks to manage peatlands in the Central Congo Basin**;
- committed to **finalize land-use plans that promote the conservation and protection of peatlands and prevent their drainage and degradation**, and announce the establishment of a **transboundary collaboration agreement** to preserve the future of these valuable natural peatlands and their ecosystem services.

- committed **to promote best management practices in peatland areas covered by economic activities, so that they are managed in a sustainable and climate-smart way (neither drained, nor degraded)**.
- committed to act without delay to **set up an Observatory for the collection, monitoring and dissemination of multi-purpose data by decision-makers, scientists, journalists and all other stakeholders interested in Congo Basin peatland issues and challenges**;
- committed to **work without delay on the creation of a Center of Excellence for Training, Research and Innovation** as well as on training centers for technical experts, with the aim of developing a pool of competent and quality human resources to steer and promote green growth in Lac Télé/Lac Tumba peatlands.
- called upon the technical and financial partners to support them in the process of **facilitating the establishment of a finance facility similar to Indonesia's private sector landscapes financing facility set up by UN Environment, World Agroforestry Centre, ADM Capital and BNP Paribas**.
- **welcomed the South-South Cooperation offer made by the government** of Indonesia to share knowledge, management tools and lessons learned in peatland management.

Session 9 Triangular Exchange on Governance of Peatlands included an interactive panel discussion based on the presentation shared by **Dr. Muhammad Rizali Karliansyah**, Director General of Pollution Control and Environmental Degradation, Republic of Indonesia. The topics were: Indonesia's experiences on management tools and approaches for peatland restoration and coordination; policy and institutional set ups in Scotland and the United Kingdom; and peatlands restoration best practices. The session was moderated by **Ndinga Assitou**, Wetlands International, and panelists also included **Jonathan Hughes**, International Union for Conservation of Nature; **Lifeng Li**, Wetlands International; and **Alue Dohong**, Deputy Director Badan Restorasi Gabut, Indonesia.

Summary of the presentation, **"Indonesia Policy on Peatland Protection and Management (Experiences, Management Tools/Approaches, Institutional Framework)"** by Dr. Karliansyah, Directorate General for Environmental Pollutant and Degradation Control, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, The Republic of Indonesia. Indonesia's tropical peatlands have enormous benefits for ecosystems, such as forestry, flood control, fire-risk control, eco-tourism, climate stability, biodiversity, the livelihoods of local communities, and for education and research. Given that **peat swamp forests are more vulnerable to human disturbances** than other forest ecosystems, the Government of Indonesia has taken **peat restoration and conservation as high national priority**.

Government Regulations **No.71(2014) and No.57(2016)** have been further supported by **three Ministerial Decrees** which specifically address the following:

(1) inventory of peat ecosystem characteristics and determination of peat ecosystem function
(2) water table measurement for corporate or community land
(3) and peat ecosystems function restoration

Since February 2017, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry has issued decree on establishment of Peat **hydrological unit map and peat ecosystem function map**. The establishment of these maps are very important since it serves as a basis for development and peat dome as protection areas. Peat Hydrological Unit is a peat ecosystem bordered by river or sea, with specific characteristics which may contain peat domes. Several concession holders in Indonesia have diligently implemented this Regulation - now protecting their peat dome areas rather than using them as cultivation areas. **Companies are benefitted by having a better water supply in their peat areas and reducing the likeliness of fires during the dry season**. Indonesia has declared 865 PHU/Peat Hydrological Unit - a total PHU Coverage in Indonesia of more than 24 million hectares.

Indonesia has been working on the restoration of peat ecosystems which they have categorized as follows, namely: **restoration** (hydrological function on rewetted infrastructure); **rehabilitation** (revegetation: natural succession, silviculture, paludiculture, agroforestry); **revitalization** (autonomy: agriculture, fishery, livestock, etc.), and **law and order** (including institutional, Incentives-disincentives, Law enforcement). Indonesia has launched a community-based peat restoration program, with facilitators deployed to 6 provinces covering 19 districts and 28 villages and partnering with 6 local universities. The program **covers both economic and non-economic activities and includes rewetting through canal blocking by local communities**. To date, a total of 175 canals have been blocked with the potential to rewet surrounding areas of approximately 2,450 hectares.

On the economic side, Indonesia has been helping local communities to implement best practices on peat management through cultivation of mix garden, agroforestry, paludiculture, livestock, silviculture, etc. The program has successfully shown diversification of following commodity crops on peatlands, such are aloe vera, coconut, gelam wood, jelutung tree, dragon fruit, pineapple, coffee, etc. The Government collaborates with International Organizations and private sector for improving value chain of these commodities for better prices.

Indonesia has **developed effective legislation** in the field of protection and management of the Peat Ecosystem, as well as technical guidance on the restoration of peat ecosystems. he main problem in the management of peat ecosystem is **poor water management system** in peatlands, so it is necessary to improve the whole peat ecosystem either through **Hydrological Restoration**, **Revegetation** and **Natural Succession**, involving all parties (government, private and local community). Based on data taken from **Document of the Peat Ecosystem Restoration Plan** (covering both, the Industrial Plantation Forest and the Oil Palm Plantation), 111 companies or concession holders in Indonesia, in total, has restored Peat Ecosystem of 1.209.086 hectares, which about 75% comes from Industrial Plantation Forest and the remaining 25% are from Oil Palm Plantation companies.

Videos messages of praise and encouragement were given by celebrities Alec Baldwin (actor) and Roberta Bondar (Canada's first female astronaut)

Session 10 Summary and closing remarks

To close the day's exchanges, **Tim Christophersen of UN Environment** invited **Mr. Nazaire Moundzounguela, General Secretary of the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Framework for Consultation on REDD+** (CACO-REDD+) and Coordinator of the Friends of Nature Association of the Likouala aux Herbes (AANLH) to take the floor. He shared his appreciation for the **exchanges between experts both internationally and locally as well as the opportunity to discuss issues with decision-makers and between the people dependent on and living around the peatlands**. Moundzounguela shared that **"by saving the largest tropical peatlands in the central Congo, it will also protect forest dependent peoples"** in the region.

Dr. Alue Dohong, Indonesian delegate and GPI Steering Committee member (pictured center) and participants celebrate the successful exchanges between the Indonesia, the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo through south-south and triangular collaboration and the signing of the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands.

In closing, Christophersen recognised the d**ynamic discussions held over the two days, across sectors, cultures and across languages and borders – both national and international – which made the event a great success**. He shared that there were over 360 participants in attendance, including the Prime Minister of the of the Republic of Congo, Clément Mouamba; the Executive Director of UN Environment, Erik Solheim; an Indonesian delegation of experts led by the Minister of Environment and Forestry, Siti Nurbaya; two ministers from the Democratic Republic of Congo; heads of regional institutions; and heads of UN agencies (including Country representatives from UNESCO, UNDP and FAO) brought together around a **common interest in working together toward the protection, conservation and sustainable use of this globally significant peatland of the Cuvette Centrale**.

The most **noteworthy outcome from the two days was the agreement signed by the three government ministers** representing the partner countries, Indonesia, Republic of Congo, and Democratic Republic of Congo - **the Brazzaville Declaration** on Peatlands. **The agreement is a significant and ground-breaking political signal to the world that these leaders are passionate about the conservation, restoration and better management of peatlands.**

Christophersen ended noting that after two days of informative knowledge sharing and discussion regarding peatlands, it can be certain that now all English speakers understand the meaning of "Tourbieres", and all French speakers know what "Peatlands" are, as well as the terms used by the Indigenous representatives. He noted that

“regardless of what term is used, we all can be sure that we know why peatlands matter, and their importance for the climate, people and the planet”. For this reason, **the Global Peatlands Initiative members and UN Environment are committed to supporting the implementation of the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands, to protect the global treasure (and substantive carbon store of 30 Gigatons of carbon), that is the Cuvette Centrale peatlands in the Congo Basin. Its protection will require the combined effort of everyone, and with urgency, to overcome the threats to this vital ecosystem. However, it is manageable.**

Assembly of International Global Peatlands Initiative Experts and high-Level Representatives Day 2 of the meeting.

Working Group Discussions allowed for four parallel working groups to discuss in expert groups some immediate actions needed to follow up on the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands as well as for the Global Peatlands Initiative partners to undertake some internal decisions and planning actions.

The following working groups were convened to discuss dedicated topics as follows:
1) **DRC/ROC Follow Up on the Brazzaville Declaration - Working Group 1**: DRC/ROC to identify short term, medium term and long-term priority actions for the implementation of the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands;
2) **Indonesia Follow Up on the Brazzaville Declaration - Working Group 2**: Indonesia to identify short term, medium term and long-term priority actions for the implementation of the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands;
3) **Global Experts on Mapping and Data - Working Group 3**: Discuss availability of data, approach and timeline including identifying key contributors for the planned Global Peatlands Assessment;
4) **Global Peatlands Initiative Steering Committee - Working Group 4**: Discuss and agree on the Governance arrangements to guide the work of the GPI Steering Committee.

Outcomes from DRC/ROC follow up on Brazzaville Declaration - Working Group 1 on short term, medium term and long-term priority actions by DRC and ROC governments and partners to enable the implementation of the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands. **Moderators, Andre Toham, UN Environment and Ibrahima Thiam, Wetlands International** presented the following numbered action points corresponding to commitments by represented countries of DRC and ROC as per the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands.

Andre Toham of UN Environment moderates Working Group 1.

1. **Multi sectoral frameworks**

✓ Short term action: Identify key stakeholders and their roles (stakeholder mapping)
✓ Medium term action: Establish multi sectoral frameworks (both at Ministerial and technical level)

2. **Finalize national land use plans**

✓ Short term action: set up a trans-boundary collaboration agreement between the two Congos
✓ Medium term actions:
- Finalize land allocation plans. It should be noted that both countries are involved in the process of developing national land use plans. This action calls for a rapid finalization of these plans
- Provide the Observatory for Central African Forests (OFAC) adequate resource to support mapping and monitoring of central Africa's peatlands

4. **Development and promotion of a sustainable landscape management model / Inclusive development**

✓ Medium term actions:
- Set up a management plan for Lac Téle Lake Tumba landscape
- Define in the ToRs, the methodology for developing the management plan, as well as human, financial, technical and technological aspects needs

5. **Pro-Peatlands Sustainable investments**

✓ Short term actions:
- Implementation of management plans

- Project proposals writing
- Coordination of concept notes
- The DRC and RoC Ministers should write to the country contributing to GEF 7, requesting a specific contribution from the GEF for Peatlands

6. Climate Investment Plan

✓ Medium term actions:
- Develop policies, strategies and climate plan
- Ensure that peatlands are taken into account in all REDD + processes

7. Diplomacy and Peatland Marketing
- Develop and implement the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands using communications and outreach
- Develop a Tourism Marketing plan for Lake Tele Lake Tumba landscape

8. Operationalization of the Blue Fund and FEVAC for the Congo Basin
- Prepare a concept note for the blue fund and the Central African Green Economy Fund (FEVAC) to support operationalization of these funds;

9. Promoting best practices for sustainable peatland management

✓ Medium term actions:
- DRC and RoC specifically request UN Environment to assist in the design and implementation of a financing facility in the form of a Public Private Partnership, inspired from the Tropical Landscapes Finance Facility facilitated by UN Environment, World Agroforestry Centre, ADM Capital and BNP Paribas to support the Government of Indonesia in its efforts for better sustainable peatlands management
- Establish a dedicated structure for fundraising
- Make exchange visits with Indonesia

10. Set up a peatlands observatory centre

✓ Medium term action:
- Strengthen the missions of the Observatory for Central African Forests (OFAC), by creating a dedicated unit on peatlands

11. Creation of a center of excellence for training, research and innovation
- Make an inventory of existing training structures
- Collaborate with the network of forestry schools and review their Curricula to include peatlands management
- Consider including training modules on peatlands
- Invest in training equipment
- Strengthen the capacities of existing structures
- Collaborate with the UNESCO program

Outcomes from Indonesia follow up on Brazzaville Declaration - Working Group 2 the Indonesian delegation and key stakeholders from Indonesia worked together to identify short term, medium term and long-term priority actions for the implementation of the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands. **Moderators, Alue Dohong, Badan Restorasi Gambut (Indonesian Peatlands Restoration Agency) and Johan Keift, UN Environment** presented the following numbered action points corresponding to commitments by represented countries of DRC and ROC as per the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands.

Part of the Indonesian delegation share their inputs on the follow up to the Brazzaville Declaration for Working Group 2

Key points for action:

- ✓ Study visit/scoping by Indonesian expert (GPI supported) - a commitment is required
  - Including Private Sector, Foreign Affairs and Bappenas
- ✓ GPI to establish triangular collaboration between Norway, DRC/ROC and Indonesia

Possible ideas:

- ✓ Institutional development → local communities/stakeholder → transformational land tenure security KPH/KGH
- ✓ Mapping/assessment: using peat prize approach?
  - Peatland use assessment
  - Use of Environmental Impact tools
- ✓ Showcasing to policy makers experience in Indonesia of impacts/challenges of unsustainable approaches (e.g. large-scale drainage, fires etc)
- ✓ Peat zoning, Peat/land use zoning → peat hydrological units
- ✓ Paludiculture: both community as well as for commercial size production
- ✓ Fire risk management:
  - Identification of fire risks
  - Regulation
  - Detection System
  - Community fire management
- ✓ Ground suppression: what they do have → new peat
- ✓ Green House Gas emission inventory which includes the burnt area using methodology that includes ground tracking
- ✓ Training in forestry, peat management, conservation support, Diklat, vocational training, etc

- ✓ Study exchange: International Tropical Peatlands Research Centre (Secretariat di Bogor), with a sub-station in the Congo/DRC: with CIFOR/ICRAF → option paper – linked to the programmes in the Congo basin.
- ✓ Community based management such as peat-care villages
- ✓ Collaboration on wildlife Conservation and captive breeding (e.g. gorillas)
- ✓ Ecotourism: exchange (including national park, tourism park experience)
- ✓ Institutional development → local communities/stakeholder → transformational
- ✓ Land tenure security
- ✓ Timber extraction → use of reduced impact logging (e.g. rail or winch system), although it is expensive in the Congo, plantation. Establishment as an alternative
- ✓ Private sector collaboration: logging, palm oil, industrial forestry

Possible partners for triangular collaboration

- ✓ REDD+
- ✓ Norway
- ✓ USAID
- ✓ Water governance: Dutch
- ✓ UN Agencies (UN Environment, UNDP, etc
- ✓ Challenges:
  - Language
  - Use alumni network
  - Faster VISA process plus permits
  - No embassies

Outcomes from Global Experts on Mapping and Data - Working Group 3 on the availability of peatlands data, ideal approach, timeline and identified key and "missing" contributors for the planned Global Peatlands Assessment. **Moderators, John Crump, GRID Arendal and Lera Miles, UNEP-WCMC** presented the following direction for the upcoming Assessment.

Global Peatlands Initiative Data, Mapping and Assessment Experts - Working Group 3

Global Peatlands Assessment:

The foundation should be a consistent global consensus map, with case studies from the ROC, DRC, Indonesia and Peru to elaborate on the global picture.

- ✓ A **global consensus map of peatland extent** identifying areas of global significance and how they are changing.

New data would form the basis of this consensus map of peatland extent (and possibly peatland probability)

Using existing data, the map should include overlays of biodiversity values, protection status, forest cover change, climate change pressures, etc

- ✓ **Value of peatlands** – ecosystem services, natural capital, protection and conservation and drainage-free livelihoods. Values are cultural, spiritual as well as ecosystem services, biodiversity, carbon storage, as well as economic.

- ✓ Examples of **land use planning**, linking science to policy, national and multi-sectoral (or multinational) planning and decision making

- ✓ **Financial instruments and investment options** to ensure the sustainable management of peatlands. Examples of business cases for non-destructive activities, including ecotourism and other drainage-free/deforestation free livelihoods
- ✓ **Governance and political, legal or institutional frameworks**

Discussion and Agreements:

Before an outline is developed for the new assessment, GPI partners need to agree on:

- What is the purpose and outcomes of the assessment?
  - Communicate evidence base for effective policy-making in pilot countries and beyond: extent, value, status, threats, policy options
    - Global – map-based assessment
    - 4 countries – detailed zoom
    - Query around inclusion of others with key threats to peatland integrity (eg PNG)
- Appropriate timing?
  - Early: Late 2019 – allows input to 2020 agenda (CBD, SDGs), lay out research agenda of initiative
  - Late: showcase outputs of initiative
- What are the target audiences and thus formats?
  - Traditional approach
    - Summary for Policymakers
    - Assessment report – authoritative peer-reviewed background underpinning this – could be quite plain
  - Feeding into other processes – Emissions Gap Report 2020 – special focus on ER potential
  - Discussion on most appropriate formats for outputs -
    Potential for factsheets for different audiences
    - National: NAPs, NDCs, NBSAPs, National Wetland Strategies
    - Private sector messaging: extractives, relationship to zero deforestation commitments; safeguards
    - Community messaging
    - Global: e.g. integration of peatlands into new CBD targets
- Content

a. **A global map of peatland extent** which will identify areas of global significance and how they are changing.
   - Bringing together maps presented in RRA with new large scale datasets. Data gaps and uncertainty – research agenda – from overlay of original and new peatlands datasets.
     i. Mountain tropics missing from pantropical assessments
   - Using existing data, overlays for biodiversity values, protection status, forest cover change, climate change pressures, infrastructure development (especially Africa), etc.

b. **Value of peatlands** – ecosystem services, natural capital, protection and conservation and drainage-free livelihoods. Values are cultural, spiritual as well as ecosystem services, biodiversity, carbon storage, as well as economic.

c. **Examples of land use planning**, linking science to policy, national and multi-sectoral (or multinational) planning and decision making.

d. **Financial instruments and investment options** to ensure the sustainable management of peatlands.
   - business cases for non-destructive activities, including ecotourism and other drainage-free/deforestation free livelihoods. Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) options for water.
   - stakeholder analyses and value chains – which countries are responsible for most of production /consumption on peat
   - Minimisation of extractive damage – especially oil and gas
   - Conservation /development trade-offs and green economy paradigm
   - Productive land uses for rewetted peat
   - Point-wise linear regression (PLR) analysis and peatland coverage
   - Trase[1] data – status of palm oil – CIFOR also has some decent supply chain data on palm oil

e. **Governance** and political, legal or institutional frameworks
   - country context – development objectives
     Indonesia NA plan peatlands

For GPI to consider in other work streams

Toolkit idea for sharing of country experiences workstream – factsheets, compiling existing refs on sustainable management approaches (restoration, Paludiculture, etc).

Integration of datasets into Global Forest Watch (GFW) for interactive display

- What data do we have and where are the gaps?
- Who needs to be on the team? CLAs or institutional leads?
- Process
  - Author meetings alongside partner meetings
  - Peer-review

Outcomes from Global Peatlands Initiative Steering Committee - Working Group 4 discussed and concluded on the Governance arrangements to guide the work of the GPI Steering Committee and Global Peatlands Initiative. They reflected on the past year which has been fast-paced and has seen the partnership grow from 13 organizations to 24 in under a year! **Annex 1 includes the full GPI Governance Documents**.

Notes from GPI3 Governance & Steering Committee Meeting:

- ✓ Asked for an **update** on how global are we regarding peatlands and the **four pilot partner countries**?
- ✓ Acknowledged the importance of enthusiasm and emphasized the need for a **wider representation of stakeholders** – suggesting to target the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples Groups and other civil society groups.
- ✓ Asked for an analysis of **existing partnership and how to identify key "missing partners" then how to target them and how to invite them to join**?

Working Group 4 – GPI Steering Committee Members ironing out the Governance Arrangements for the partnership.

[1] Trase is a project led by Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) and the Global Canopy Programme (GCP). It draws on vast sets of largely untapped production, trade and customs data, making these supply chains more transparent. The powerful sustainability platform enables companies, financial institutions, governments and others to better understand and address the social and environmental impacts linked to their supply chains.

- ✓ Need to **develop rules under which members are able to, and must brand themselves as GPI**.
- ✓ Emphasized the need to use and draw from the **existing processes** in a systematic way.
- ✓ Shift **focus towards solutions that are viable in the long-term and away from short-term solutions such as carbon offsetting**. Articulate our direction with connections to "think tanks".
- ✓ **Resource mobilization**: need to have a **joint strategy**, **joint projects** and **sharing of opportunities**.
- ✓ Organization needs to be structured with **better flow of communications** (e.g. look at setting up an E-secretariat).
- ✓ Need to **focus the scope of work**, showing the difference from other organizations/conventions. We need to articulate clearly and specifically that we are an enabling initiative/entity.
- ✓ Need to **vet priorities** and outline the context using FAO's 10 global priorities, the Smoke on Water priorities, other organization's priorities and tools such as the IUCN booklet.
- ✓ Need for a **basic inventory of Peatlands** (standardized, worldwide); Standardize data flow.
- ✓ Need for more **resources for monitoring and reporting** – stronger link to MRV and UNFCCC links (FAO lessons learned from Indonesia – and how countries can move toward reporting – UNREDD).
- ✓ **Payment for ecosystem services analysis** is needed for DRC and ROC, for capacity building. Start off with the Country Case Studies – to enable south-south cooperation opportunities/and facilitate and support the exchange.

Extracts from Technical exchange on Peatlands Mapping and Monitoring needs kicked off with presentations on **Advances in Data and Mapping Extent of Peat** by **Hans Joosten, Greifswald Mire Centre**, on **Integrated Mapping of DRC Carbon Stock** by **Elvis Tshibasu, World Wildlife Foundation**, on **Tools and Approaches to Measuring Peat** by **Rosa Roman-Cuesta, CIFOR** and on **Mapping peatlands – a Collaborative Approach** by **Maria Nuutinen, FAO**.

Elvis Tshibasu, World Wildlife Fund shares their work on the Integrated Mapping of DRC Carbon

Professor Hans Joosten of the Greifswald Mire Centre presents work on Hotspot Mapping

Following an interactive question and answer session, the **co-moderators Rosa Roman-Cuesta, CIFOR** and **Maria Nuutinen, FAO** led an exercise with the following results summarized as follows.

Lifeng Li, Johan Kieft and Rosa Maria Roman Cuesta share ideas on priority actions for peatlands mapping in the Congos and globally.

Purpose of mapping:

✓ land use planning, decision-making, land management

✓ For predicting potential changes

- climate projections
- Paleology and archaeology with linkage to climate models
- Factors for adaptation and mitigation
- Disaster Risk Reduction and early warning
- Fire risk management

✓ Identifying restoration baselines and potential

✓ monitoring and reporting to international bodies

- Products of mapping should be Global tropical peat map with scale at 1:25,000

The following Actors in peatland mapping were identified:

✓ Greifswald Mire Centre (GMC): Global Peat Database https://www.greifswaldmoor.de/global-peatland-database-en.html

✓ FAO:
- Integration of peatlands into National Forest Inventories (including survey questions and data collected e.g. on drainage)
- Global Soil Organic Carbon Map with national focal points trained http://www.fao.org/global-soil-partnership/pillars-action/4-information-and-data/global-soil-organic-carbon-gsoc-map
  - Training resources developed
  - Peatland part to be further explored (e.g. Congo Basin)

✓ University groups:
- Leeds University: PEATMAP http://archive.researchdata.leeds.ac.uk/251/
- University College London (UCL)
- Université Marien Ngouabi Brazzaville, RoC

✓ CIFOR (Center for International Forestry Research):
- Global Wetlands Map
- Sustainable Wetlands Adaptation and Mitigation (SWAMP) project

✓ ASEAN Secretariat with Global Environment Centre (GEC)
- Southeast Asia Map with pilot sites: http://www.aseanpeat.net/index.cfm?&menuid=62
- Regional Haze Map for ASEAN http://www.aseanpeat.net/index.cfm?&menuid=216

✓ World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC)
- Mammal, Birds biodiversity mapping
- Starting mapping reptiles
- Village use zones
- Protected zones: https://www.protectedplanet.net/

✓ Wetlands International

✓ World Resources Institute
- **Global Forest Watch Fires http://fires.globalforestwatch.org/map**
  - Includes Indonesian peatlands only (data: Ministry of Agriculture)
- **Global Forest Watch http://www.globalforestwatch.org/map**
  Relevant parts currently (not covering peatlands):
  - Tree cover change, loss,
  - Congo Basin logging roads

- Palm Oil Mills
- Protected areas
- Concessions
- Oil palm (selected countries)
- Biodiversity hotspots
- Mining
- Population density
- Protected areas
- Intact Forest Landscapes
- Tree plantations
- Mangrove forests
- Commodities

In terms of which areas should be mapped in priority, group members identified:

- ✓ Global tropical peatlands -
  - And the following focus countries – DRC, RoC, Peru, Indonesia Papua New Guinea

Julian Fox, FAO, Lera Miles, UNEP-WCMC, Tim Jessup, GGGI, and Jonny Hughes, IUCN share ideas on peatland mapping and monitoring needs.

To achieve these objectives, it was suggested that financial resources be sought – through proposal writing targeting the GEF, GCF, bilateral and National funds.

Extracts from Technical exchange on Peatlands Risk and Threats kicked off with presentations on **Raffles Panjaitan**, from the **Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Indonesia,** followed by **Norbert Ngami, Wildlife Conservation Society** on **Early Warning and Risk for Peatland Degradation,** and on **Peatland Fire Management** by **Johan Kieft, UN Environment,** and on **Peatland Subsidence and Flooding Projections** by **Lifeng Li, Wetlands International,** and on **ASEAN programme** by **Faizal Parish, Global Environment Centre.** The session was **moderated by Alue Dohong, Badan Restorasi Gambut.**

Norbert Gami shared information on peatland fire management in the Republic of Congo with Lac Télé Communities noting that **Lac Télé is a community reserve is a RAMSAR site, with forest and savannah (shrub and flooded). Savannah fire management is conducted with community support**. He shared information on the sources of fires in the Lac Télé area predominantly for opening of access roads to fishing, gathering and hunting or slash and burn agriculture. The **fires have also negatively impacted the biodiversity** in the area. Wildlife Conservation Society has involved local communities for fire management such as using **customary authorities**, "Ndami" established local convention of village lands management, setting up **Local Committee for Natural Resources Management** and giving penalties for unwanted fires. He shared an outline of the National Strategy for Fire Management in Protected Areas including a **Fire Management Committee**, **Village Based Management** and Missions to reduce fires by: **sensitizing villagers on fire management; plan management activities in collaboration with park managers; monitor and evaluate activities; and identify suitable trainings for better fire management**.

Johan Kieft, UN Environment shared insights during his presentation, “Fires in peat, why is there smoke in the water?” outlining the importance of Fire Decision Support and Early Warning Systems. He highlighted some systems that have been designed using different approaches and combination of tools:

The key systems are:

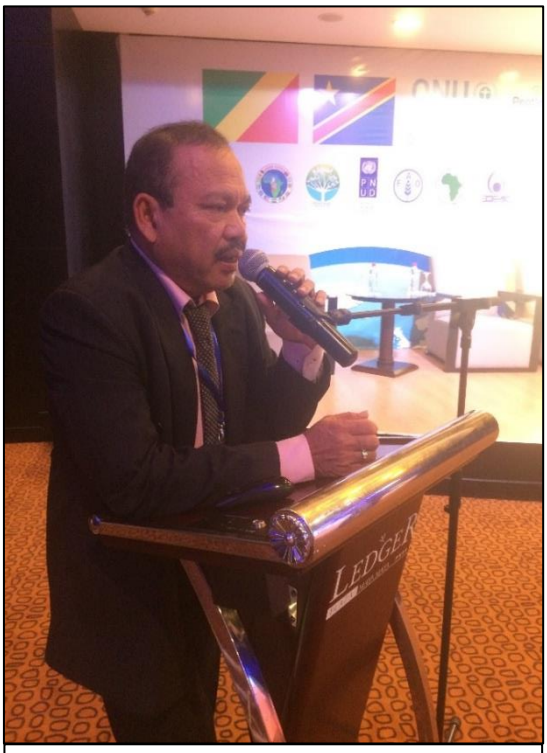
- ✓ **Climate Risk Based:** like FRS - Fire Risk Management system, based on disaster risk management paradigms. Delivers both early warning and vulnerability maps (5 year timeline for implementation).
    - GAMBUT project is an example – provides probabilistic forecast of fire 3 months in advance.
- ✓ **Remote Sensing Based** which involves HOT SPOT MONITORING through REMOTE SENSING provides INFORMATION TO IDENTIFY AND TRACK HOT SPOTS, key systems are SIPONGI and KMS. These systems are well established and used for fire suppression, but suffer from the inability to track fire early due to fire behaviours on peat.
- ✓ **DANGER RATING Based:** The FDRS, probability of a trigger event (ignition). In Malaysia, it is adjusted for peat-based.
- ✓ USE OF **BIG-DATA based systems** like THE HAZE GAZER, developed by the UN GLOBAL Pulse Lab.
- ✓ **Peatland Fires Risk Index (PFRI);** be proposed as basic early warning, particularly for palm oil agroecosystem. Although human activity is a significant factor influencing fire, climate anomalies and bio-physical factors are more scalable to predict the future catastrophic fires. Data transmission to user via an electronic telecommunication device as well as via website.

Jean Jacques Bambuta from the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Democratic Republic of Congo takes notes.

He highlighted the **urgency of fire suppression interventions** which need to take place **within an hour after ignition**. He shared the following links to the **Cuvette Centrale Congo Basin peatlands – noting despite them being intact, fire risk can accelerate quickly and exponentially:**

- ✓ The current development context will lead to logging of primary forest, that will definitely lead to canopy opening, and access, which will trigger fires.
- ✓ Literature suggests that similar systems can be developed for the Congo, as fire vulnerability is increasing rapidly due to rainforest drying (due to climate change).
- ✓ Ideally tropical peat should remain untouched, as the cost of restoration is immense and the effectiveness remains questionable.

Raffles Panjaitan, from the **Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Indonesia** shared their experience in fire, health and haze impacts **highlighting the lessons and approaches used for forest fire response in Indonesia**. He shared that the 2015 peat fires shifted Indonesia to the new paradigm of prioritizing mitigation and early response before fires become a crisis. This new approach has shown results in 2017 for their efforts in mitigating the peat fires, with a 61.8% reduction in the total peat burnt compared to 2016. The Government has a future goal of zero forest and peat fires. The highest commitment from the Indonesian President, Joko Widodo, has been essential element for the success. **The President gave direction to all Ministers and Government Personnel to build strong and effective peat fire mitigation actions, consisting of 6 components**: Prevention and Early Warning; Rewards and Sanction; Improvement and Better Ecosystem Management; Direct monitoring to the field; Firm and Effective Law Enforcement; and Strengthen synergies among Central Government to sub-national (provincial and district government).



Raffles Panjaitan from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Indonesia, speaks about fire, health and haze impacts.

Further, **Panjaitan** shared that the Indonesia Government has done a series of complementary actions to prevent further fire outbreaks:

- Developed an **early warning system** including detection and hotspots ground checks. The results are updated daily and disseminated online at www.bmkg.co.id and www.lapan.co.id
- Established a **special fire brigade**, "Manggala Agni", involving the community to monitor forest and peat fires.
- Improved **water management and infrastructure facilities**, such as building canal blockings, retention basins, and an artesian well.
- Deploy **ground crew outages** (fire brigades, Disaster Response Agency, police and military personnel and task forces) and **air outages** (military air control, water bombing and weather modification).
- **Ensure strong law enforcement** including administrative sanction and/or further criminal investigation to be processed in the court. The investigators are jointly from the Ministry of Environment and the Police.

Lifeng Li, Wetlands International highlighted the **impacts of peatland subsidence for lowland tropical peatlands** in Southeast Asia indicating that about 25 million hectares of peatlands in Western Southeast Asia, particularly, in the coastal lowlands are **90% degraded mainly due to drainage for pulp wood and palm oil plantations**. He shared that **in the first five years after drainage, peatland subsidence is typically 1-2 metres**. In subsequent years, this stabilizes to a constant 3-5 cm per year, resulting in a **subsidence of 2-3 metres in 25 years and 4-5 meters within 100 years**. Wetlands International has been supporting **flood risk simulations** of peatland drainage in Malaysia which predicted that in 25 years, 42% of the area will experience flooding problems, 56% in 50 years and 82% in 100 years. In the Kampar Peninsula, as of 2014, 31% of existing plantation area is regularly flooded or too wet. **Decision-makers need to consider the impact of drainage and degradation as for low lying peatlands, nearly all plantations will be completely unviable in the middle to long term.** For South East Asia the tool projects that 71% will be flooded in 25 years, 83% in 50 years, and 98% in 100 years. **Recommendations from this work includes: banning new drainage development on peatlands; rewetting of damaged peatlands, phase out oil palm and *Acacia* pulp wood on peatlands; invest in "wet uses" which can provide alternative economic value such as Paludiculture** - for example, Jelutung for rubber and Sago for starch (cookies and noodles).

GPI partners share their feedback -indicating "thumbs up" for an excellent technical exchange during the GPI 3 meetings – hosted by ROC and DRC as a conclusion of the Day 3 proceedings.

Global Peatlands Initiative Way Forward and Key Milestones included a brainstorming session on the urgent milestones and key actions required for the way forward, moderated by Tim Jessup from GGGI and Jay Aldous, RAMSAR Secretariat, producing the following results.

	Description	Date
1	Members mapping/Profiles for website and sharing	September 2018
2	Latest published maps available (sharing) working toward a harmonized peatland map	December 2018
3	Global Peatlands Assessment – framework/outline	September 2018
4	Global Peatlands Assessment – who will author/lead each section	October 2018
5	Global Peatlands Assessment – finalized version	December 2019
6	Donors outreach – mass sharing of joint products (RRA/Congo Brief)	September 2018
7	Mapping of key processes to influence and contribute to: internal; external; products; supply chains; targets; national level (ROC/DRC/Peru/Indonesia)	September 2018
8	Outreach to new partners thru stakeholder mapping to fill gaps – Private Sector; Indigenous Peoples; Finance; etc	ongoing
9	Concerted effort to translated materials (English/French/Spanish)	ongoing
10	Major products and their launching/events to be shared with all GPI network (upcoming WWF, WCS, FAO, IUCN, etc)	September 2018
11	Identify knowledge gaps – Hydrology partners	October 2018
12	Identify knowledge gaps – Payment for Ecosystem Services / Natural Capital Accounting	October 2018
13	Identify knowledge gaps – scenario development i.e. losses valued including social, economic and environmental costs	October 2018

Field Trip to two Republic of Congo Peatlands

Day 4 - Saturday, 24th March 2018

Global Peatlands Initiative partners visited two peatlands on a full day outing organized by the organized by the Republic of Congo Ministry of Environment and Tourism:

Bilanko: 85 km N of Brazzaville: This Bilanko peatland has the rare peculiarity of being occupied on a large surface, by a forest vegetation, which has not developed on podzolized, but organic grounds. (Schwarz 1988)

Kgamakala Pond (4"4'30"S, 15"23'E, 400 m) is 750 m long and 200 m wide, largely covered by *Sphagnum.* The canopy cover is dominated by *Alstonia boonei* . 26 km NE of Brazzaville.

International and local experts and delegates join on a field trip to the Cuvette Centrale peatlands to witness the ecosystem firsthand

Third meeting of the Partners of the Global Peatlands Initiative Agenda (actual)

Day 1 - Wednesday, 21 March 2018		
Time	Description	Speaker(s)/Panel Members
08:00 – 08:30	Participant Registration	
08:30 – 09:15 SESSION 1	**Opening Ceremony:** • **Address by Africa Regional Director, UN Environment** • **Address by Executive Secretary of the Central African Forest Commission** • **Intervention by Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, Democratic Republic of the Congo** • **Opening Speech by Minister of Tourism and Environment, Republic of Congo** **Moderator: FAO Master of Ceremonies**	Adamou Bouhari, UN Environment (Representing Juliette Biao Koudenoukpo, Africa Regional Director, UN Environment) Gervais Ludovic ITSOUA MADZOUS, Deputy Executive Secretary, Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC) Amy Ambatobe Nyongolo, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, Democratic Republic of the Congo Arlette Soudan-Nonault, Minister of Tourism and Environment, Republic of Congo
09:15 – 09:30	Coffee break and Group photo	
09:30 – 10:00	Organizing committee/ Mise en place du bureau	
10:00 – 11:00 SESSION 2	**Regional Context – Status update by the Congo Governments** **Summary of the current state of knowledge of the importance of peatlands and summary of work ongoing in the Cuvette Centrale Peatlands:** **- what do we know?** **- what do we need to know about?** **- what are the gaps?** Discussion, Q&A, summary of key knowledge gaps Moderator: Andre Toham, UN Environment	Roséline Blanche Akenze, neé Ognimba, Head of Aquatic Ecosystems Department, Ministry of Tourism and Environment, Republic of Congo Rubin Rashidi Bukanga, Director of Cabinet of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and National REDD Coordinator, Democratic Republic of the Congo Gervais Ludovic ITSOUA MADZOUS, Deputy Executive Secretary, COMIFAC– overview of trans-boundary conservation areas related to the Cuvette Centrale peatland Georges Claver Bouzanga, National Coordinator REDD+, Republic of Congo Honore Tabuna, Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Expert – overview of economic issues related to protected areas. Jay Aldous, Ramsar Secretariat – overview of international agreements and conventions applicable to the Cuvette Centrale peatland.
11:00 – 12:30 SESSION 3	**Know where peatlands are, their extent, global significance and how they are changing** Moderator: Alue Dohong, Badan Restorasi Gambut, Indonesian Restoration Agency, Republic of Indonesia	Keynote address on Congo Basin Peatlands: Simon L. Lewis, University of Leeds and University College London Panelists: Hans Joosten, Griefswald Mires Center Ifo Suspens, Université Marien Ngouabi

		Julian Fox, Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN Samba Gaston, Université Marien Ngouabi Lauren Williams, World Resources Institute
12:30 – 14:00 SESSION 4	**Understanding the value of peatlands – ecosystem services, natural capital, protection and conservation and review options for productive use and drainage-free livelihoods** Moderator: Ibrahima Thiam - Wetlands International	Keynote address on Ecosystem Services Valuation and Natural Capital Accounting Thierry de Oliviera, UN Environment Panelists: Alain Huart, World Wildlife Fund Democratic Republic of the Congo Emilie Fairet, Wildlife Conservation Society Congo Gerald Schmilewski, International Peatland Society Johannes Refisch, Great Apes Survival Partnership
14:00-15:00	**Lunch Break**	
15:00-16:30 SESSION 5	**Understanding Financial Instruments and Developing investment options** **South-South Exchange: Indonesian examples of drainage-free livelihoods and deforestation-free supply chains** **Lac Tele-Lac Tumba Landscape Carbon Offset Feasibility Study** Moderator: Tim Christophersen, UN Environment	Keynote address highlighting Indonesian examples of drainage-free livelihoods and deforestation-free supply chains by Agus Justianto, Director General Climate Change of the Republic of Indonesia Panelists: Maître Pongui Brice, Blue Carbon Fund Mirey Atallah, REDD+ National Fund (FONARED) Adamou Bouhari, UN Environment Faizal Parish, Global Environment Centre Lindland Jostein, Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI) Jack Major, FOREsight Capital and Advisory, UNDP Consultant Tosi Mpanu-Mpanu, Lead Climate Change Specialist from the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
16:30 – 17:00	Summary of Day 1, Briefing including protocols for Day 2 Logistics questions	Dianna Kopansky, UN Environment Andre Toham, UN Environment

Day 2 - Thursday, 22 March 2018		
Time	Description	Speaker(s)/Panel Members
08:00 – 8:30	Arrival and Registration of Participants	
08:30 – 9:00	Arrival of GPI Ministers and Head of UN Environment	
09:00 – 9:30	**Press Conference – GPI Ministers and Head of UN Environment**	
09:30 – 10:00	Arrival and Seating of All Ministers and Head of UN Environment	
10:00 – 11:30 SESSION 6	High- Level Opening of the Global Peatlands Initiative • Welcome words of the Deputy, Mayor of Brazzaville • Address by high-level delegates **Opening Speech, Monsieur Clément MOUAMBA, Prime Minister, Republic of Congo** *Theatrical piece from the book of the Head of State entitled "Africa, stake of the planet", Association for the culture of the protection of Fauna and Flora* Handing over of Global Peatlands Initiative Publication « Smoke on Water » « De La Fumée sur L'eau » to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Congo	Jacques Elion, Mayor of Poto Poto, Brazzaville Siti Nurbaya, Minister of Environment and Forestry, Republic of Indonesia Ahmad Allam-mi, Secretary General, Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Erik Solheim, Executive Director, UN Environment Amy Ambatobe Nyongolo, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, Democratic Republic of the Congo Arlette Soudan-Nonault, Minister of Tourism and Environment, Republic of Congo Clément Mouamba, Prime Minister, Republic of Congo
11:30 – 12:00	Group photo following the cocktail offered by the government of the Republic of Congo	
12:00 – 13:00 SESSION 7	Introduction to the Ministerial High-Level Dialogue **Indonesia –** Keynote presentation on policy / legal or institutional frameworks for peatland management in Indonesia	Erik Solheim, Executive Director, UN Environment Siti Nurbaya, Minster of Environment and Forestry, Republic of Indonesia
	Ministerial Dialogue on the political / legal or institutional frameworks that must be put in place to support the protection of Central Cuvette peatlands **Moderator:** Suze Percy Filippini, FAO Representative, Republic of Congo	High-Level Panel: Arlette Soudan-Nonault, Minister of Tourism and Environment, Republic of Congo Amy Ambatobe Nyongolo - Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, Democratic Republic of Congo Siti Nurbaya, Minster of Environment and Forestry, Republic of Indonesia Erik Solheim, Executive Director, UN Environment Aime Ngoy Mukena, the DRC Minister of Oil
13:00 – 14:00 SESSION 8	Déclaration de Brazzaville	Reading and signing of the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands - Arlette Soudan-Nonault, Minister of Tourism and Environment, Republic of Congo

14:00 – 15:00	**Lunch Break**	
15:00 – 16:30 SESSION 9	**Triangular Exchange on Governance of Peatlands:** Indonesia's experiences on management tools and approaches for peatland restoration and coordination. Policy and institutional set ups in Scotland and the United Kingdom. Peatlands restoration best practices. **Moderation:** Ndinga Assitou, Wetlands International	Presentations by: Muhammad Rizali Karliansyah, Director General of Pollution Control and Environmental Degradation, Republic of Indonesia Jonathan Hughes, International Union for Conservation of Nature Lifeng Li, Wetlands International Panel discussion with Alue Dohong, Deputy Director Badan Restorasi Gabut, Indonesia
16:30 – 17:00 SESSION 10	Summary and Closing remarks **Moderator:** Tim Christophersen, UN Environment	Nazaire Moundzounguela, General Secretary of the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Framework for Consultation on REDD+ and Coordinator of the Friends of Nature Association of the Likouala aux Herbes Tim Christophersen, UN Environment

Day 3 - Friday, 23 March 2018 –Global Peatlands Initiative Meeting (for GPI members only)		
Time	Description	Speaker(s)
Alue Dohong to Chair the proceedings for this day		
09:00 - 09:15 SESSION 12	**Global Peatlands Initiative Status Update** - Update on achievements so far and next agreed steps	Dianna Kopansky, UN Environment
09:15 - 11:30	**Working Group Discussions** **Working Group 1**: DRC/ROC to identify short term, medium term and long-term priority actions for the implementation of the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands; **Working Group 2**: Indonesia to identify short term, medium term and long-term priority actions for the implementation of the Brazzaville Declaration on Peatlands; **Working Group 3: Global Peatlands Assessment** - Outline of the Global Peatlands Assessment - Assigning chapters to lead authors - Agree on timeline, target and research gaps to fill **Working Group 4**: **Global Peatlands Initiative Governance** - Presentation of Governance Documents and Procedures	Moderators: Andre K. Toham, UN Environment and Ibrahima Thiam, Wetlands International Moderators: Alue Dohong, Badan Restorasi Gambut, Republic of Indonesia and Johan Kieft, UN Environment Moderators: John Crump, GRID Arendal Lera Miles, UNEP-WCMC GPI Steering Committee Members: Tim Christophersen, UN Environment as Chair Jonny Hughes, International Union for Conservation of Nature Julian Fox, Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN Hans Joosten, Greifswald Mires Centre Alue Dohong, Badan Restorasi Gambut, Republic of Indonesia Dianna Kopansky, UN Environment as Committee Secretariat
10:30 - 11:00	**Tea/Coffee Break**	
11:30 – 12:30	**Working Group Feedback**	
12:30 - 13:30	**Lunch Break**	
13:30 - 14:30 SESSION 15	**Technical Exchanges on:** - Advances in data and mapping extent of peat (Hotspot Mapping) - Tools and approaches to measuring and valuing peat - WWF DRC on an integrated Mapping of DRC Carbon Stock	Hans Joosten, Greifswald Mires Centre Rosa Roman Cuesta, Center for International Forestry Research Maria Nuutinen, Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN Elvis Tshibasu, World Wildlife Fund Democratic Republic of the Congo
14:30 - 15:30 SESSION 16	**Technical Exchanges on:** - Advances in early-warning and risks for peatland degradation - Tools and approaches on peatland fire management - Peatland Restoration and Carbon financing	Norbert Ngami, Wildlife Conservation Society Congo Johan Kieft, UN Environment Raffles Panjaitan, Ministry of Environment and Forestry Indonesia

	- ASEAN Programme on Sustainable Management of Peatland Ecosystems 2014-2020 (APSMPE) - Peatland subsidence and flooding projections for lowland tropical peatlands in South East Asia	Timothy Jessup, Global Green Growth Institute Faizal Parish, Global Environment Centre Lifeng Li, Wetlands International
15:30 - 15:45	**Tea/Coffee Break**	
15:45 - 17:00 SESSION 17	**Global Peatlands Initiative Way Forward** - Mapping out key milestones - Outline of workplan for 2018/2019	Jay Aldous, RAMSAR Secretariat Timothy Jessup, Global Green Growth Institute
17:00 - 18:00	Wrap up and closing	Dianna Kopansky, UN Environment and Alue Dohong, Badan Restorasi Gambut, Republic of Indonesia