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FAPBM virtually participated in the 11th General Assembly of the Consortium of African Funds for the Environment. Organized by BIOFUND, the event took place in Maputo (Mozambique) from October 6th to 8th 2021. "Exchange of experiences as a key factor for the success of biodiversity conservation: promoting conservation in times of crisis in Africa" was the

common thread running through the sessions.

The Consortium of African Funds for the Environment (CAFE) is a network of Conservation Trust Funds (CTFs) based in Africa created in 2011, of which FAPBM is a founding member. The 18 Member funds support more than 90 parks and reserves across 12 African countries.

The General Assembly of members focused on the approval of the annual report and the election of the executive committee. Alternatively, sharing sessions brought together CTFs members and conservation stakeholders in Africa to discuss perspectives and strategies. CAFÉ members presented their progress, challenges and opportunities since the last General Assembly in 2020. Members' reports pointed out the Covid-19 pandemic as a huge challenge that has changed the conservation dynamic around the world. Despite this, partnerships have been created and strengthened, efforts made to support conservation and vulnerable communities.

Innovative funding opportunities for protected areas

Innovative financing models from Africa were showcased during the Assembly.

In Mozambique and Côte d'Ivoire, the REDD+ project (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation), has been implemented as a mechanism to monetize the carbon storage capacity of forests to the polluting entities/countries.

In Mozambique, the National Fund for Sustainable Development (FNDS) shared the example of a public fund, set up to support biodiversity conservation, rural development and resource mobilization.

In Uganda, EcoTrust Uganda case demonstrated how payments for water-related ecosystem services and forest restoration have significantly increased the income of local communities.

For Madagascar, Mr. Alain Liva Raharijaona, Executive Director of FAPBM, presented the offset financing model adopted by QMM Rio Tinto in favor of the Agnalazaha protected area.

Through an offset fund, this mining company finances the protected area to compensate the residual negative impacts of their projects after avoidance, mitigation and restoration measures have been taken. FAPBM, as financial manager, is in charge of monitoring the impacts.

At the regional level, SADC has launched a biodiversity grant for African CTFs. The French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) has introduced the BRIDGE project as a new collaborative mechanism to connect CAFÉ and RedLAC (network of CTFs from Latin America) members to support innovative financing schemes. The Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR) provides funding opportunities for coral reef conservation projects in Africa.

Finally, mobilizing private sector capital must be a priority for CTFs given the huge biodiversity funding gap. Models for collaboration of conservation funds with the private sector were discussed in depth with an emphasis on impact investing as an opportunity to raise private funds.

Advocacy for the financing of Madagascar's protected areas



(C) FAPBM

At the end of the World Conservation Congress organized by IUCN in Marseille from September 3rd to 10th, 2021, Mr. Alain Liva Raharijaona, FAPBM's Executive Director, went to Brussels. He was received by Ms Cristelle Pratt, Deputy Secretary General of the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), in charge of environment and climate action, and by H.E. Omer Beriziky, Ambassador of Madagascar with his team. Liva Raharijaona also met with Ms Isabelle Delattre, Head of Unit Southern Africa and Indian Ocean (INTPA), of the European Commission for an exchange on the next EU support to the environment sector in Madagascar. Each of these exchanges was an opportunity to advocate on the importance of Madagascar's protected areas with the expectation of establishing partnerships for sustainable funding.

PROTECTED AREAS

Increasing protected areas' commitment to poverty alleviation

FAPBM supported the workshop on the socio-economic challenges of conservation and restoration in Madagascar, held in Andasibe from October 12 to 16, 2021. This support reinforces that of the reform of the environmental and social management framework of protected areas in Madagascar initiated by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD), with ESSA-Forets and Forest4Climate, whose progress was presented at the opening of the workshop.

Stakeholders from conservation, ecological restoration and rural development were brought together to: (i) share good practices and research results; (ii) advance thinking on the social issues of conservation and restoration; (iii) contribute to the advancement of the reform of the environmental and social management framework of protected areas in Madagascar; (iv) empower stakeholders and increase their confidence in understanding and addressing social issues to ensure effective and equitable conservation and restoration.

In the midst of developing its social and environmental safeguard policy, FAPBM intervened to bring its perspective as a donor and to test the reflections underway on this policy. Mr. Ranto Randriantsoa, FAPBM's Grant Officer, insisted on fair and measurable compensation for communities affected by protected area conservation activities as a starting point for poverty reduction.

Ms. Nanie Ratsifandrihamanana, WWF Country Director and President of the FAPBM Board of Trustees, called for multi-stakeholder funding in favor of protected areas so that communities benefit more equitably from received grants. "We need to secure multiple sources of funding, for instance from the sector in charge of agriculture, livestock and fishing. The environmental sectors alone cannot do it" she pleaded in the film Voices from the Forest: Putting local people at the heart of forest conservation decisions, showed during the workshop.



(C) Artush - Getty Images

Boeny region's protected areas: time to assess

FAPBM participated in the 3rd steering committee meeting of "Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the North-Western landscape of Madagascar, Boeny Region" on September 22nd, 2021 in Mahajanga, at the invitation of MEDD and Conservation International. The involved protected areas in Boeny are: Ankarafantsika National Park (managed by Madagascar National Parks, MNP), Baie de Baly National Park (managed by MNP), Mahavavy Kinkony Complex (managed by Asity), Antrema Biocultural site (managed by MNHN), and Bombetoka Beloboka site (managed by DELC).

The first 4 benefit from annual grants from the Foundation. The last one, Bombetoka Beloboka, will join the FAPBM portfolio starting in 2023. Indeed, thanks to a capital endowment of the GEF carried by Conservation International, FAPBM annual grants in favor of Boeny protected areas will be consolidated. from 2023.

During this meeting, the steering committee reviewed the 2nd year report, the work plan and the budget for the 3rd year of implementation. The discussions concluded that the project is on track to achieve its objectives: (i) The improvement in the management efficiency of the 5 protected areas observed through the increase in the METT score of each (ii) The financial sustainability of each of the 5 protected areas ensured through the FAPBM's contribution; (iii) The full integration of protected areas and their activities into regional development plan (SAC, SRAT, PRD); (iv) The decrease of food insecurity situation compared to the start of the project and surveys are underway to collect data on the improvement of local communities' income.

Represented by Mrs. Nathalie Bodonirina, data analyst, FAPBM has paid special attention to the report on the impact and threats of these protected areas. Fire was pointed out as the main common threat to be managed in the coming months. Supply of adequate and sufficient materials and equipment and the strengthening of mixed patrols and reforestation and restoration activities are among the proposed solutions.



(C) MNP

Ranomafana, essential for the local, regional and national economy

Created in 1991, Ranomafana National Park, covering an area of 40,556 ha, is home to the country's flagship biodiversity. More than 80 species of orchids, 124 species of birds, 14 species of lemurs, to name a few. It is also part of the Unesco World Heritage as a component of the Atsinanana rainforests.

Its touristic value is therefore undeniable, both at the national and local levels. By preserving endemic species, exceptional landscapes, not to mention

thermal springs, the protected area offers tourists the unique experience of appreciating biodiversity in their natural habitats. Ranomafana is among the most visited parks by local and international tourists. In 2019, it welcomed nearly 27,338 tourists. This constitutes an income opportunity for households through guiding, sales of handicrafts or agricultural products, hotel and restaurant business.

Moreover, while the hydraulic ecosystems of the protected area irrigate the nearby crops, the forest ecosystem prevent them from soil erosion The thick forest preserves also the Namorona River, which feeds the JIRAMA electric dam allowing it to provides energy for the Fianarantsoa region.

In view of these multiple contributions, the nation's active forces must mobilize for the protection, restoration and financing for the conservation of Ranomafana's biodiversity.

LEMURS DAY



98% of lemurs are threatened and 31% are critically endangered. At the initiative of the MEDD, the National Lemur Day aims to raise awareness about the conservation of this endemic and emblematic species of Madagascar.

It is traditionally celebrated on the last Friday of October. This year, the theme "Lemurs: Treasure of the forest, not to be consumed or domesticated" was chosen to mark the celebration. The MEDD and its partners have given appointment to the public in the Zoological Park of Tsimbazaza for exhibitions and playful animations around lemurs on October 29th 2021.

The Lemurs Portal Project supported by FAPBM exhibited for the occasion, and proposed a range of activities to introduce young children to lemurs. As the only database dedicated to lemurs in Madagascar, Lemurs Portal is voluntarily and mainly feeded by passionate scientists. It was developed to raise awareness and help decision making in favor of lemur conservation.

In addition to its support to the festivities organized at Tsimbazaza Park, FAPBM joined other organizations involved in lemur conservation for a digital campaign initiated by the MEDD and WWF Madagascar to raise awareness of lemur species. Photos and descriptions are available on the Foundation's social networks. Readers are invited to share the publications to strengthen the mobilization in favor of lemurs.