

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2264

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 14, 2003

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

AN ACT

To authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2004 and 2005 to carry out the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) program, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Congo Basin Forest
3 Partnership Act of 2003”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds the following:

6 (1) The tropical forests of the Congo Basin, lo-
7 cated in the Central African countries of Cameroon,
8 the Central African Republic, the Democratic Re-
9 public of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, the
10 Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, and Sao
11 Tome/Principe, are second in size only to the trop-
12 ical forests of the Amazon Basin.

13 (2) These forests are a crucial economic re-
14 source for the people of the Central African region.

15 (3) Congo Basin forests play a critical role in
16 sustaining the environment—absorbing carbon diox-
17 ide, cleansing water, and retaining soil.

18 (4) Congo Basin forests contain the most di-
19 verse grouping of plants and animals in Africa, in-
20 cluding rare and endangered species, such as the
21 lowland gorilla, mountain gorilla, chimpanzee, and
22 okapi. These plants and animals are invaluable for
23 many reasons, including their genetic and bio-
24 chemical information, which could spark advances in
25 medical, agricultural, and industrial technology.

1 (5) Logging operations, driven by a growing
2 global demand for tropical hardwoods, are shrinking
3 these forests. One estimate has logging taking out
4 Congo Basin forest area at a rate of twice the size
5 of the State of Rhode Island every year.

6 (6) The construction of logging roads and other
7 developments are putting intense hunting pressure
8 on wildlife. At current hunting levels, most species
9 of apes and other primates, large antelope, and ele-
10 phants will disappear from the Congo Basin, with
11 some becoming extinct.

12 (7) If current deforestation and wildlife deple-
13 tion rates are not reversed, the six countries of the
14 Congo Basin most immediately, but also the world,
15 will pay an immense economic, environmental, and
16 cultural price.

17 (8) The United States has an interest in seeing
18 political stability and economic development advance
19 in the Congo Basin countries. This interest will be
20 adversely impacted if current deforestation and wild-
21 life depletion rates are not reversed.

22 (9) Poorly managed and nonmanaged logging
23 and hunting threatens to do to the Congo Basin
24 what it did to West Africa, which lost much of its
25 forest and wildlife through over-exploitation.

1 (10) Purged of wildlife, some Congo Basin for-
2 ests already are “empty forests”.

3 (11) In an attempt to conserve the forests of
4 the Congo Basin, the region’s governments convened
5 the Yaounde (Cameroon) Forest Summit in March
6 1999.

7 (12) In September 2002, Secretary of State
8 Colin Powell launched the Congo Basin Forest Part-
9 nership (CBFP) in Johannesburg, South Africa. The
10 CBFP promotes the conservation and sustainable
11 use of the region’s forests, for example, by working
12 to combat poaching, illegal logging, and other
13 unsustainable practices, and giving local populations
14 an economic stake in the preservation of the forests,
15 including through the development of ecotourism.

16 (13)(A) The United States contribution to the
17 CBFP will focus on conserving 11 key landscapes in
18 6 countries—Cameroon, the Central African Repub-
19 lic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equa-
20 torial Guinea, Gabon, and the Republic of Congo—
21 identified at the Yaounde Forest Summit as being of
22 the greatest biological importance to the region.

23 (B) The United States will fund field-based ac-
24 tivities within these 25,000,000 acres that aim to

1 support a network of 27 national parks and pro-
2 tected areas and well-managed forestry concessions.

3 (C) In this way, the work will build on existing
4 United States efforts, including those of the Central
5 African Regional Program for the Environment
6 (CARPE) of the United States Agency for Inter-
7 national Development, which will implement the
8 CBFP.

9 (14) The CBFP has broad international finan-
10 cial support, including from non-African govern-
11 ments, the European Commission, the International
12 Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and nu-
13 merous nongovernment organizations.

14 (15) A dramatic step toward conserving Congo
15 Basin forests has recently been taken by Gabon. In
16 September 2002, President Omar Bongo announced
17 the creation of 13 national parks, representing over
18 10 percent of Gabon's surface area. Previously,
19 Gabon had no national park system.

20 (16) With the CBFP and other initiatives,
21 there exists unprecedented momentum for the con-
22 servation of Congo Basin forests.

23 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appro-
25 priated to the President to carry out the Congo Basin For-

1 est Partnership (CBFP) program \$18,600,000 for each
2 of the fiscal years 2004 and 2005. Of the amounts appro-
3 priated pursuant to the authorization of appropriations
4 under the preceding sentence for a fiscal year,
5 \$16,000,000 is authorized to be made available to the
6 Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment
7 (CARPE) of the United States Agency for International
8 Development.

9 (b) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated pursuant
10 to the authorization of appropriations under subsection (a)
11 are authorized to remain available until expended.

Passed the House of Representatives October 7,
2003.

Attest:

JEFF TRANDAHL,

Clerk.