

# Dissemination

## Presentation given by Ralf Becker at the French Embassy, Brazzaville


Strengthening the National Biodiversity Strategy in Congo Brazzaville  
Darwin Initiative Project 15/021



1

Collaborators in Congo

1. Institut de Recherche Forestière et de Développement (IRFD)
2. Groupe d'Etude et de Recherche sur la Diversité Biologique (GERD)
3. Centre de Recherche et de Formation en Biologie (CRFB)




2

Project Objectives

to work with Congolese institutions to strengthen the National Biodiversity Strategy:

1. Key-issuing the national assessment of a working biodiversity sector
2. Prioritize the biodiversity sectors to focus on
3. Develop local expertise and training facilities to provide the Congolese with the skills to manage the biodiversity of the Mayombe Mountains
4. Develop a national framework for monitoring biodiversity in the Mayombe mountains



3

Mayombe Mountains  
A little explored and difficult place to reach



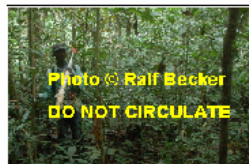
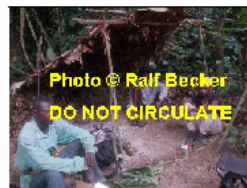
4



Living and collecting in the forests

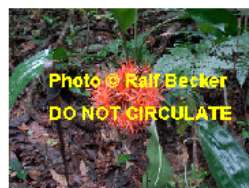
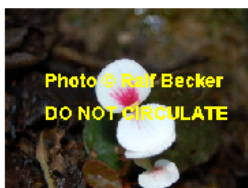
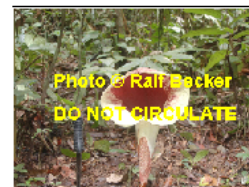
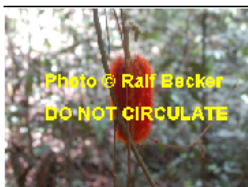


8



Amazing floral diversity

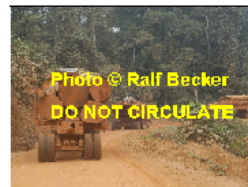
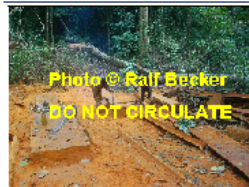
15



Threats to biodiversity



25





**UNE FLORE RICHE & DES ESPÈCES NOUVELLES DANS LE PUYOMBI**



BIGONIACEAE (espèce nouvelle)



ARACEAE



ORCHIDACEAE (espèce nouvelle)



LILIACEAE (espèce nouvelle)



CONRACHEAE



MELASTOMATACEAE (espèce nouvelle)



LILIACEAE

**Nous préservons aujourd'hui la flore de demain!**



LIVE BBC News 24



News services Your news when you want it



News Front Page

World

UK

England

Northern Ireland

Scotland

Wales

Business

Politics

Health

Education

Science/Nature

Technology

Entertainment

Also in the news

Video and Audio

Have Your Say

Magazine

In Pictures

Country Profiles

Special Reports

RELATED BBC SITES

SPORT

WEATHER

CBBC NEWSROUND

ON THIS DAY

EDITORS' BLOG

Last Updated: Tuesday, 11 September 2007, 10:16 GMT 11:16 UK

E-mail this to a friend

Printable version

## Experts hope to save rare plants

**A team of UK scientists has mounted an expedition to a remote corner of the Congo to study rare plants before they are wiped out by deforestation.**



A specialist expedition vehicle was sent from the UK for the project

Experts from the University of Reading have travelled to the rainforests of the Mayombe mountains, which are under threat from logging and farming.

"It is vital we examine this area now so these biological treasures are not lost forever," said Dr Simon Potts.

The work is part of a two-year project to study the area and collect samples.

Dr Potts, who is leading the team, added: "This is a very exciting project which will allow us to study one of the last areas on earth relatively unknown to science.

**“ We don't actually know much about what grows and lives there ”**

Dr Simon Potts

"The Congo basin is widely recognised as one of the world's most important biodiversity hotspots, but we don't actually know much about what grows and lives there, and more importantly, what might happen to them if deforestation continues."

A member of the team who is already working in the area has just returned from the Mayombe mountains with more than 400 species of plants.



**BBC Berkshire**  
Sport, travel, weather, things to do, features and much more

### SEE ALSO

- University to redevelop town land 27 Jun 07 | Berkshire
- Second royal honour for professor 16 Jun 07 | Berkshire

### RELATED INTERNET LINKS

- University of Reading
  - Reading Borough Council
- The BBC is not responsible for the content of external internet sites

### TOP BERKSHIRE STORIES

- Ecuador crash survivors returning
  - Student shot in NZ makes progress
  - Six in court over election fraud
- News feeds

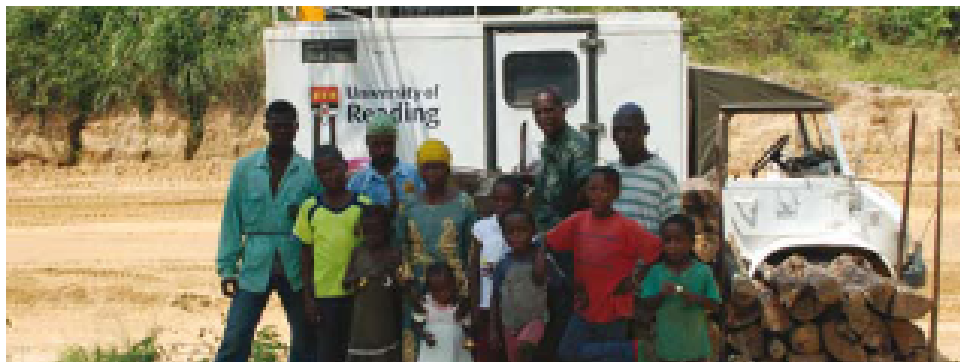
### MOST POPULAR STORIES NOW

MOST E-MAILED MOST READ

- TV presenter left suicide notes
- 'Kidnap trial' for Shannon mother
- What happens to lost airport luggage?
- Potter fan faces Rowling in court
- Vitamins 'may shorten your life'

Most popular now, in detail

# Scientists explore uncharted Congo



A team of University of Reading scientists have mounted the first scientific expedition into a remote corner of threatened African rainforest.

Experts from the University's Centre for Agri-Environmental Research are examining man's affect on the remote rainforests of the Mayombe mountains in the Congo basin, under increasing threat from logging and agriculture. Little is known about the area's flora and fauna, but what is clear is they may be lost if deforestation continues.

Dr Simon Potts, who is leading the team, said: 'This is a very exciting project which will allow us to study one of the last areas on earth relatively unknown to science.'

'The Congo basin is widely recognised as one of the world's most important biodiversity hotspots, but we don't actually know much about what grows and lives there, and more importantly, what might happen to them if deforestation continues.'

'It is vital we examine this area now so these biological treasures are not lost forever.'

Ralf Becker, project manager in the Congo, has just returned from the Mayombe mountains with the first samples. The team has already collected more than 400 species of plants; three of which may be new to science, and are currently being examined by experts at Kew Gardens. The expedition also collected more than 150 species of butterfly and many types of bee.

The expedition is conducting a systematic survey of plants and pollinators in the region and aims to identify some of the main threats to the forest. The project, sponsored by DEFRA's Darwin Initiative, assists poorer countries with rich biodiversity to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) through collaborative projects drawing on UK biodiversity expertise.

'It is vital we examine this area now so these biological treasures are not lost forever'

## Exploring the Congo

**A team of University of Reading scientists have mounted the first scientific expedition into a remote corner of threatened African rainforest.**

Experts from the University's Centre for Agri-Environmental Research are examining man's affect on the remote rainforests of the Mayombe mountains in the Congo basin, which are under increasing threat from logging and agriculture.

Little is known about the area's flora and fauna, but what is clear is they may be lost if deforestation continues.

Dr Simon Potts, Senior Research Fellow, Agriculture, who is leading the team, said: "This is a very exciting project which will allow us to study one of the last areas on earth relatively unknown to science.

"The Congo basin is widely recognised as one of the world's most important biodiversity hotspots, but we don't actually know much about what grows and lives there, and more importantly, what might happen to them if deforestation continues. It is vital we examine this area now so these biological treasures are not lost forever."

Ralf Becker, the project manager in Congo, has just returned from the Mayombe mountains with the first samples. The expedition team has already



University expedition vehicle in the Congo

collected more than 400 species of plants, three of which may be new to science and are currently being examined by experts at Kew Gardens, London. The expedition also collected more than 150 species of butterfly and many types of bee.

The expedition is conducting a systematic survey of plants and pollinators in the region and aims to identify some of the main threats to the forest. The project has been sponsored by DEFRA's Darwin Initiative, which assists poorer countries

with rich biodiversity to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) through collaborative projects drawing on UK biodiversity expertise.

Carrying out research in the area is extremely difficult because of the lack of roads, mountainous terrain, swamps and torrential rains and would be impossible to reach in a normal 4WD. A specialist expedition vehicle has therefore been sent from the University of Reading to the Congo.