



*Belém, November 10, 2025*

## **CORAP message for COP 30:**

# **The voice of local communities in the Congo and the Congo Basin at COP 30: CORAP's**

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is positioning itself and asserting itself as a “solution country” in the face of global climate challenges. This assertion is based on the country’s immense natural potential, namely: strategic minerals, tropical forests, abundant water resources, and various sources of renewable energy. These riches place the DRC at the heart of global energy transition issues, responding to the growing needs of industrialized countries committed to decarbonizing their economies. The Coalition of Civil Society Organizations for Monitoring Reforms and Public Action (CORAP) supports this vision, while reaffirming that the DRC can only truly represent the status of a “solution country” if its national policy is based on a just, inclusive, and participatory transition, focused above all on the needs and aspirations of Congolese communities.

Responses to climate challenges must therefore be based on consultation, effective participation, and informed consent of local communities and indigenous peoples directly affected by projects and programs related to energy and ecological transition.

As a major civil society actor, CORAP alerts, informs, and mobilizes against policies and practices that, under the pretext of transition, risk reproducing extractivist logic and exacerbating the poverty of local populations. It advocates for an alternative development model based on social justice, community development, and environmental sustainability, ensuring that the transition benefits people and territories first and foremost.

### **1. Kivu–Kinshasa Green Corridor: making conservation fair and community-based**

The Kivu–Kinshasa Green Corridor, officially created by decree on January 15, 2025, marks a historic milestone as the first community-based protected area in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Even though it was launched without consulting local communities and civil society organizations, this initiative is now seen as innovative and promising, especially by the folks who got together at the National Civil Society Workshop held in Kinshasa in October 2025 by the Environment and Human Rights Network (R-EDH).

CORAP supports this approach, considering it a major step forward in the decolonization of conservation. The Kivu Kinshasa Green Corridor offers local communities and indigenous peoples the opportunity to regain control of their natural resources and benefit from the economic benefits generated by green, sustainable, and inclusive activities.

CORAP also welcomes the integration of the principle of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), ensuring that any project carried out in the corridor is subject to the agreement of the populations concerned.

However, CORAP emphasizes the need to strengthen the governance of the Kivu-Kinshasa Green Corridor and ensure its alignment with national policies and laws, so that this initiative truly meets the needs of local communities and indigenous peoples. It warns against any abuse that would turn this corridor into a tool serving private or political interests.

The corridor's long-term success will depend on its ability to place communities at the center of its implementation, making this protected area a model of shared governance that reconciles nature conservation, social justice, and community development.

## **2. Large dams and water sovereignty: challenges for a just transition in the DRC**

The World Bank's return to financing the Inga 3 project, the first phase of the Grand Inga dam set to become the world's largest dam with an estimated capacity of 45 GW, is causing deep concern within CORAP.

These concerns stem from the lack of real progress in the country's energy governance. Growing corruption, poor revenue management, a lack of strategic vision for the energy sector, and the major environmental and social risks that these types of megaprojects pose to aquatic ecosystems and riparian communities make the latter victims of non-inclusive development.

CORAP condemns the strategy of financing community micro-projects to buy artificial social acceptance, without transparency on the real structure of the Inga 3 project or its environmental and social impacts. Such an approach, which contradicts the principles of accountability, transparency, and participation that the World Bank claims to uphold, is more akin to an attempt to morally legitimize a controversial project than to a genuine commitment to sustainable and equitable development.

Furthermore, Grand Inga does not primarily aim to meet the energy needs of the Congolese population. Rather, it is part of the African Union's Agenda 2063 and a strategy of regional and international industrial supply, to the detriment of local interests.

For CORAP, the solutions to the Congolese energy crisis lie elsewhere: in the development of a decentralized energy mix based on local hydroelectric potential, solar energy, and other sustainable renewable sources capable of reconciling equitable access to energy, environmental protection, and community development.

## **3. Central Basin: the new oil frontier that threatens the “solution country”**

Recent reports, notably [“From the heart of the forests to the front lines - Threats linked to oil exploitation in the DRC,”](#) warn of the serious ecological and social risks associated with the expansion of oil projects in the Democratic Republic of Congo. According to this study, these exploitation activities could destroy up to 64% of the tropical forests in the Congo Basin, compromise 23% of key areas for biodiversity, threaten nearly 72% of the Kivu-Kinshasa Green Corridor, a recently created community-based protected area, and negatively affect more than 39 million Congolese people.

These findings show that oil exploitation is not a sustainable path to development for the DRC, contrary to official rhetoric that presents it as a source of wealth and jobs.

The report “[Kinkazi, a sacrificed village – Social and environmental impacts of oil exploitation in Muanda](#)” provides concrete evidence of this: after more than half a century of oil exploitation in Muanda, local communities have not benefited in any tangible way from this activity, either in terms of jobs, economic development, or social infrastructure. The promises made to the people remain, to this day, unfulfilled, while oil exploitation continues to degrade the environment and undermine local livelihoods. The operating companies, with the passive complicity of the authorities, impose their will on the communities, whose legitimate demands are systematically ignored, fueling a deep sense of injustice and dispossession.

In light of this, CORAP considers that the desire to exploit 55 oil blocks and three gas blocks is a major contradiction with the DRC’s ambition to present itself as a “solution country” to global climate crises. Continuing along this path would exacerbate deforestation, increase social inequalities, and compromise the country’s credibility in the fight against climate change, even though green and sustainable alternatives already exist to meet the DRC’s energy and economic needs.

***No to oil exploitation, yes to green alternatives for a participatory and thriving economy.***

#### **4. For a just and sovereign energy transition for peoples**

Faced with multiple large-scale extractive projects that are destructive and violate the rights of indigenous communities and peoples, CORAP reaffirms that a just transition is the only real alternative for preserving the sovereignty of local communities and indigenous peoples. This approach aims to break with imposed development models and put people back at the heart of decisions affecting their territories and resources.

A just transition, based on the principle of popular sovereignty over natural resources, must be built around three essential pillars:

1. Genuine prior consultation with local communities before any initiative affecting their lands, lifestyles, and/or ecosystems, taking into account their views and key demands;
2. Effective and continuous participation of populations at all stages: design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of development projects;
3. The guarantee of equitable benefit sharing, so that the economic and social benefits primarily benefit the communities concerned.

For CORAP, such a transition is not limited to technological change, but involves a structural and democratic transformation of the economic model, based on social justice, environmental sustainability, and the self-determination of peoples.

#### **5. Access to climate finance in the Congo Basin**

Local communities and indigenous peoples in the Congo Basin, who are the true guardians of forests and vital ecosystems, play a central role in combating climate change thanks to their traditional knowledge and sustainable practices. However, these same communities, which are already suffering the most severe effects of climate change (loss of biodiversity, food insecurity, displacement, and land degradation), remain largely excluded from international financial mechanisms, particularly the Loss and Damage Fund. This situation illustrates a profound climate injustice that weakens those most committed to preserving the world’s natural capital.

In light of this, CORAP calls on COP 30 to adopt fair and appropriate financial mechanisms that guarantee direct and transparent access to climate funds for local communities, indigenous peoples, and civil society. It welcomes the Tropical Forests Forever Fund (TFFF) initiative, while advocating that this mechanism should not be limited to the Amazon but should be extended to the entire Congo Basin.

CORAP also invites the DRC to strengthen its internal governance and promote its unique natural resources in a spirit of climate sovereignty, so that the energy and ecological transition becomes truly fair, inclusive, and driven by the people.

## 6. Call to action: recommendations for a just transition

On the occasion of COP 30, held in Belém from November 10 to 21, 2025, CORAP is raising the voices of local communities and indigenous peoples in the Democratic Republic of Congo, calling on the international community to recognize their rights, knowledge, and essential role in preserving the ecosystems on which the global climate future depends.

CORAP reiterates that the fight against the climate crisis cannot be won without genuine environmental and social justice, based on:

- Direct access for local communities, indigenous peoples, and civil society organizations to climate finance, including the Tropical Forests Forever Fund (TFFF) and other essential international funds;
- Fair valuation of natural resources and ecosystem services, for the benefit of those who protect them;
- Rejection of a transition model imposed from outside, dictated by economic or political logic disconnected from Congolese realities (oil and gas exploitation, large dams, etc.) ;
- And the promotion of local green alternatives, based on endogenous knowledge, community economies, and decentralized renewable energies.

Through this appeal, CORAP urges decision-makers to break away from economic and energy dependence and to build a just, sovereign, and united transition capable of combining climate justice, human dignity, and the sovereignty of peoples.

Therefore, we say **NO to false solutions**, whether they involve large dams, oil and gas **exploitation**, or any other initiative that ignores the fundamental interests of **local communities** and compromises their future.

**For CORAP**  
Emmanuel MUSUYU



**Executive Secretary**