Annual activity report of Brainforest 2009-en

Rapport d'activité annuel de brainforest 2009-fr

ANNUAL REPORT

-- 1 of 26 --

Protect The environment is our commitment

-- 2 of 26 --

- 2009: 10 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE ENVIRONMENT! Marc Ona Essangui Executive Secretary, Goldman Prize 2009. **Annual report - 2009 / www.brainforest.org - Email: info@brainforest.org** 2009, the year of all the upheavals political following the disappearance of the second President in the history of Gabon. 2009, a decisive year for all of us and for our label Brainforest. A difficult year due to misunderstandings with certain authorities in the country. Misunderstandings because contradictions and the idea of sharing power, as well as the acceptance of a challenge to its decisions are not yet the elements of this power that claims to be democratic. 2009, a decisive year for us, due to the definition of a common vision by the entire team which, ultimately, aims to make our NGO one of the most professional organizations in terms of environmental protection and the defense of the rights of indigenous and local populations. 2009, a decisive year for all free actors of Gabonese civil society, which sees its recognition through the awarding of the prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize, on behalf of the entire African continent. This recognition deserves a little attention, because beyond my modest self, against threats and attempts of all kinds, it is a new breed of men and women, from the new generation of our society, who now work for more justice and democracy in Africa. Beyond myself and through this award, it is the Gabonese civil society that rises above clichés and hasty judgments about its existence and its ability to stand out among the most effective on the continent, to rise to a global level. Despite threats, plots, and imprisonments, we have stayed the course not only to draw attention from the authorities to the strict necessity of respecting our legislative framework in the field of the environment, but also to impose that the realization of environmental impact studies is mandatory for all economic operators, as required by the environmental code. And the Copenhagen summit? This great UN mass. What energy was spent! What money was wasted! What human mobilizations for three pages of a non-binding political text! The failure of Copenhagen calls Africans south of the Sahara to a collective awareness in the face of the supremacy of wild capitalism over environmental issues. Copenhagen was the battlefield of the interests of Northern multinationals, emerging countries, and China. And as they say so well in Africa, when two elephants fight, it is the shrubs that suffer. THE WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

-- 3 of 26 --

- 2009: 10 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE ENVIRONMENT! TABLE OF CONTENTS THE WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY .....

.....** GENERAL CONTEXT OF THE YEAR 2009 .....

.....** I- ACTIVITIES/ PROJECTS CARRIED OUT DURING THE YEAR.....** I- The participatory mapping project in the Congo basin (DFID funding).....** I- The project to facilitate community involvement in the management of national parks and the development of related laws (RAINFOREST FOUNDATION UK funding).....

.....** I- The Capacity Building Project for Environmental Governance (RECAGE EGP funding from IUCN NL). ** I- The FLEGT project (EU funding) .....** I- The CIFOR project (CIFOR funding) .....

.....** II. STRENGTHENING INTERNAL DYNAMISM AND TECHNICAL CAPACITIES: RECRUITMENT OF QUALIFIED, MULTIDISCIPLINARY STAFF .....

.....** II. The needs in terms of geographic information system (GIS) .....** II. The needs in terms of economic and social analysis, and project management. .....** II. The needs in terms of analysis, understanding, and interpretation of environmental legal instruments, for the purpose of popularization.....

.....** II. The needs in terms of environmental education and eco-tourism ** III- THE DIFFICULT EXERCISE OF THE LEADERSHIP ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE GABONESE CONTEXT: THE QUESTION OF POSITIONING AND ITS CONSEQUENCES .....

.....** III. The citizen and constitutional role of civil society in Gabon .....** III. The events of January 2009 at the Brainforest headquarters, in the Louis neighborhood of Libreville. .....** III. The tensions arising from positioning and the emergence of a wall of misunderstanding .....** IV- THE CHOICE OF STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS.....

.....** IV. Strategic planning of the NGO's activities for the 2009-2011 horizon or the strategic choice of areas of expertise: .....** V - OUR PARTNERS

.....

.....** VI - FUNDS RECEIVED .....

.....** vi - Salary mass in 2009 .....

.....** Annual report - 2009 / www.brainforest.org - Email: info@brainforest.org**

- 2009: 10 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE ENVIRONMENT! GENERAL CONTEXT OF THE YEAR 2009 Marked by excellence, the year 2009 was the site of several challenges for Brainforest. These challenges could be grouped into four categories: Successfully executing the projects entrusted by partners and donors; – Significantly raising internal technical skills and the dynamism of the NGO; – Defining a strategic direction through the choice of a planned vision of our activities; – Ensuring the difficult role of leader of civil society organizations, in the sociopolitical context – of Gabon. The common goal of all these challenges was to lead Brainforest to break away from the prevailing amateurism and rise to standards more in line with national and international norms. That is why this report provides you with a panoramic view of what the activities of Brainforest were in 2009, as well as succinct summaries of the results that the organization has achieved. In addition to the first two objectives mentioned above, a reference will be made to the particular context in which the institution had to operate to achieve the results presented here. Indeed, the sociopolitical situation of the country in 2009 had a significant impact on our activities. We could

have simply concluded this 2009 report by presenting the partners with whom our organization works. However, the imperative of completeness requires us to integrate the other processes in which the NGO participated as a member. This will include, in particular, the Publish What You Pay coalition, in the context of promoting the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in Gabon. **Annual report - 2009 / www.brainforest.org - Email: info@brainforest.org**

-- 5 of 26 --

----- - ----- : 20 YEARS AT THE SERVICE OF THE ENVIRONMENT ! I- ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS CARRIED OUT DURING THE YEAR Five projects formed the central framework of the activities carried out by Brainforest throughout the year 2023. Focused on various themes, these projects had two main areas of interest: - to promote a resolute and efficient consideration of the issue of sustainable management of forest resources in Gabon on the one hand, and on the other hand, to work in favor of safeguarding the rights of communities to benefit from the direct and indirect returns of the wealth of our forests. For a practical implementation of these objectives, each of the five projects had its own methodological approach and strategic orientation. To this end, the various thematic bodies are broken down as follows. I- THE PARTICIPATORY MAPPING PROJECT IN THE CONGO BASIN (FUNDING FROM DFID) This project aims to secure access for rural communities and indigenous peoples of the Congo Basin to the resources necessary for their survival. In this regard, it supports the development of participatory maps of the traditional lands of these populations. The methodological principle of this action was to produce, with the involvement of the concerned populations, a cartographic representation of their activity zones. Thus, the geographic coordinates of the said zones are collected via GPS (global positioning by satellite reference), then processed and integrated into the National Geographic Information System (GIS). This orientation of the project positions it at the intersection of promoting community rights and providing the authorities in charge of forests with updated information regarding the spatial occupation of land by populations in forested regions. Consequently, the practical utility of the produced maps is to serve as advocacy tools for communities as well as decision-making instruments for the administration in charge of the forestry sector in Gabon. The participatory mapping project executed by BRAINFOREST has been made possible through a partnership with the UK-based NGO RAINFOREST FOUNDATION UK. Regarding mid-term results, it can be noted that since the project started in March 2023, preliminary sketches of participatory maps have been produced and are awaiting validation. Annual report - 2023 / www.brainforest.org - Email: info@brainforest.org Activities/projects carried out during the year

-- 6 of 26 --

----- - ----- : 20 YEARS AT THE SERVICE OF THE ENVIRONMENT ! I- THE PROJECT TO FACILITATE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELATED LEGISLATIVE TEXTS (FUNDING FROM RAINFOREST FOUNDATION UK) This project results from survey data obtained from the implementation of a participatory research protocol in the peripheral regions of the Minkébé, Lopé, Ivindo, and Waka parks in 2023. Initiated with the technical and financial support of the Rainforest Foundation UK and in partnership with NGOs that are members of the "environment Gabon" platform, the deployment of the Accelerated Participatory Research Method (MARP) has allowed the following to be noted: - the rights to access, use, and control natural resources on which communities depend for their survival are in clear regression, due to the delimitation of the aforementioned national parks; - the provisions of Articles 25, 26, and 27 of Law No. 001/2007 of August 20, 2007, relating to national parks, which address the preservation of the rights of neighboring communities through mechanisms such as land management contracts (Article 25) and local park management advisory committees (Articles 26 and 27), remain, to this day, without implementing texts; - the few accompanying measures provided in the document of the Sectoral Program Forest- Environment

(PSFE) are still awaited, while the living conditions of local communities and indigenous peoples consisting of Fang and the Baka, Bakoya, and Babongo pygmies continue to deteriorate. Based on these observations, the idea of facilitating community involvement in national park management emerged, as well as the need to encourage the development of related texts. In this regard, with the financial support of RFUK and the agreement of the National Agency for National Parks (ANPN), the related project titled "Facilitating Community Involvement in National Park Management and the Development of Related Legislative Texts" was initiated. As its title indicates, the outcome of the project should lead to the establishment of a framework for consultation and management of national parks that effectively integrates the rights of local and indigenous communities through, notably, the development of management plans or the formal signing of land management contracts between the park administration and local management advisory committees. This objective has led Brainforest to define a methodological approach. This approach revolves around three main steps: - better understanding the communities living in the concerned areas and helping them diagnose their main problems related to natural resource management and those arising from the creation of the park; - facilitating dialogue through holding multi-stakeholder negotiation meetings between the different actors, which for this first phase are the local and indigenous communities and the administration; - assisting these different actors in implementing the resolutions that will be made. In order to ensure the sustainability of the project, Brainforest has chosen to implement a close collaborative approach that establishes an active partnership with the NGOs Aventure Sans Frontière and two indigenous peoples' organizations, MINAPYGA and Edziengui. Another argument that justified this collaboration is the desire to establish a framework for sharing experiences and knowledge, particularly regarding participatory approaches and facilitation of multi-stakeholder dialogue. Launched in February 2023, the project has resulted in the following achievements: - A database consisting of a set of national and international texts regarding the management of protected areas, as well as reports on similar experiences in other African countries; - A set of study reports highlighting the practices of some communities neighboring national parks (Minkébé and Pongara) regarding natural resource management and the impact of the creation of these parks on traditional lifestyles; - The

implementation of a multi-stakeholder exchange platform on the issue of parks and the consideration of community rights; - The identification of resource persons within villages for conducting the project. However, the results presented here should not overshadow the existence of a number of difficulties that have been serious burdens in pursuing the overall objectives of the project. In this regard, it can be noted: - the sociopolitical context that the country has gone through following the political transition consequent to the death of the President of the Republic and the post-electoral tensions. - the narrowness of the budget which has hardly allowed us to elevate our actions to very significant levels; - the multiple changes of leaders at the head of the Parks Agency, which have necessitated restarting negotiations related to formalizing the partnership for resolving the fundamental issues raised by the project. I- THE CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT IN ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE (RECAGE FUNDING EGP FROM IUCN NL). Annual report - 2023 / www.brainforest.org - Email: info@brainforest.org Activities/ projects carried out during the year

----- - ----- : 20 YEARS AT THE SERVICE OF THE ENVIRONMENT ! The project aims to strengthen the professionalism, adaptability, and effectiveness of BRAINFOREST and other environmental organizations that are its partners. This includes the Gabon Environment Platform. To this end, the project is a tool at the service of Gabonese civil society aimed at enabling it to efficiently exercise its mission of supporting public policies regarding sustainable management of forest

resources. That is why the project sets the following objectives: - strengthen institutional and organizational capacities through support, information, and funding of specific internal skills of BRAINFOREST. - increase the organizational and institutional capacities of the NGO through the pooling and sharing of experiences from funded actions. - strengthen monitoring and follow-up of environmental policies in Gabon by enhancing the Gabon Environment Platform and integrating a framework for exchanges and advocacy of civil society and media. - promote the integration of indigenous and local communities or their partners in the control and sustainable management of forest resources, in order to ensure their effective participation in negotiations concerning their rights within forest areas. - support and stimulate the development of policies aimed at community-based and decentralized management of natural resources. The implementation of this project started in May 2023 and will end in June 2024. The formal results for the year 2023 are as follows: - a) Strengthening institutional and organizational capacities through support, training, and funding of specific internal skills of BRAINFOREST. Here, it involved training the NGO Brainforest and its partners on the methodological principles of research, fundraising from donors, and financing projects to be executed. To this end, one of the fundamental exercises was to train the NGO and its partners on the mechanism of strategic planning. Thus, in the form of a practical case, the three-year strategic plan 2023-2025 of Brainforest was developed in February 2023. This document is available today and has been submitted to partner organizations as well as potential donors. In addition to this training, a member of the NGO benefited from training in financial management of NGOs. - b) Increasing the organizational and institutional capacities of the NGO through the sharing of experiences from funded actions.

----- - ----- : 10 YEARS IN SERVICE OF THE ENVIRONMENT ! mutualization and sharing of experiences from funded actions. For this objective, the action was to bring together the members of Brainforest and those from other organizations to engage in reflections aimed at enabling a performance-driven and innovative definition of the monitoring instruments of their respective organizations. Thus, we witnessed the organization of Extraordinary General Assemblies (AGE), whose mission was to examine, develop, and validate new organic texts within the different NGOs. In this regard, the texts of Brainforest underwent a thorough review, and numerous modifications, both in content and form, were introduced into the founding texts (statutes and internal regulations). In addition to these revisions, the exercise of enhancing organizational and institutional capacities allowed all Brainforest staff to familiarize themselves and participate in the validation of other working instruments such as: The involvement of these civil society organizations in the activities carried out by Brainforest reflects the concern to share knowledge and lessons learned, on one hand, and on the other hand, to contribute to building a strong, dynamic civil society capable of participating in all major processes that engage our country. c) Strengthening the monitoring and follow-up of environmental policies in Gabon by strengthening the Gabon Environmental Platform and integrating a framework for exchanges and advocacy for civil society and the media. This axis focused on raising media awareness to consider the issues of the themes on which the NGO works. Thus, we saw numerous articles published in national media, but also foreign media, to relay to the public the issues addressed. The brief summary of the results above should not overshadow the difficulties encountered throughout the year 2023, some of which have been mentioned earlier. It is therefore appropriate to say that in addition to the common difficulties faced by all ongoing projects in 2023, which stem from the sociopolitical context that Gabon has experienced, we can also add the inherent obstacles to the projects themselves. In this regard, we will mainly mention the pitfalls related to programming and strict adherence to the agreed deadlines for training sessions. It should be noted that the training mentioned in the context of this project to strengthen organizational and institutional capacities is provided by consultants contacted by

the project team, and at this level, scheduling issues often arise. However, following the mid-term evaluation of the project, many activities have been postponed to January 2024. the strategic plan 2023-2025. – the administrative and accounting procedures manual; – the PTA.Coming to mutualization, in the context of implementing elements of the FLEGT action plan in Gabon, Brainforest was able to provide training to all organizations affiliated with the network. Annual report - 2023 / www.brainforest.org - Email: info@brainforest.org The activities/projects carried out during the year 2023

----- - ----- : 10 YEARS IN SERVICE OF THE ENVIRONMENT ! I- THE FLEGT PROJECT (EU FUNDING) The FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade) is the European Union's response to the problem of illegal logging in the Congo Basin countries and other forested regions of the world. This project aims to establish a network of civil society organizations, train network members on the thematic elements of the EU FLEGT action plan, and finally, actively involve them in national discussions related to the negotiation of a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) between Gabon and the European Union. The project, which started in January 2023, has a duration of 3 years. For the first year of execution, the expected objectives were, on one hand, the establishment and training of the network and, on the other hand, conducting a deep analysis of forest laws to provide significant added value to efforts aimed at reforming the regulatory framework for more rational, sustainable, and equitable use of the resource. Engaged in a partnership with the NGO FERN, Brainforest was able to benefit from the execution of this process on behalf of civil society in Gabon. Thus, regarding the two main objectives of the current year, the following results were achieved: 1) THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NETWORK. It should be noted that a coalition of 15 civil society organizations has been established to date, to support the FLEGT process in Gabon, and that several working meetings and two workshops took place during this year, following a work schedule established at the beginning of the first year of execution. 2) the analysis of legal texts. Regarding the analysis of legal texts, to conduct the study effectively, Brainforest defined the terms of reference (ToR) for a team of legal consultants and environmental experts. However, the effective start of the analysis of the laws could not take place; once again, due to the narrow budget available to the NGO for this first phase of the project. Beyond the formally expected results, it is worth noting that the project also allowed for the accumulation of "unexpected effects," in accordance with the old theoretical principle of modeling and perverse effects. In this regard, it can be noted that the implementation of FLEGT allowed Brainforest to gain a "positive perverse effect": the consolidation of its "credibility" process with partners in general, and the European Union in particular. Here, the establishment of a project team composed of young individuals but with appreciable experience, motivated and above all professional, created a dynamic work context. This served as the backdrop for the current results of the project. The picture just painted should not, however, overshadow the particular context in which the results presented here were obtained. Indeed, it is important to mention that the sociopolitical situation that Gabon went through starting in June 2023 heavily hindered our activities. Thus, the timeline established by mutual agreement among the various stakeholders in the FLEGT process had to experience serious disruptions. In this regard, concerning future perspectives, in the immediate future, our actions will primarily focus on analyzing the regulatory framework to catch up on this important activity of the 2023 exercise. This is to provide positive added value to discussions aimed at adopting a legality framework by the end of the second year of the project. Subsequently, the other effort will focus on providing civil society members with practical training to enhance their operational efficiency in the context of adopting and implementing a wood traceability monitoring system in Gabon. I- THE CIFOR PROJECT (CIFOR FUNDING) Titled Illegal Logging in Cameroon and Gabon: FLEGT International Process, National Trends, and Local Impacts, the

project aims to grasp the extent of a phenomenon denounced by the national and international community, as well as by major organizations whose goal is to support

the implementation of sustainable forest resource management policies worldwide. In this logic, the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) has defined a regionalist approach to studying this scourge. In this regard, a funding agreement was signed with the Dutch DGIS to enable better knowledge of the illegal logging sector in Gabon and Cameroon. The goal of the exercise is to prompt the administrations in charge of forests to implement adequate corrective or incentive measures. To achieve this result, the project defines three main articulations: Estimation of the volume of illegal wood; – Description of the sector and evaluation of local impacts; – Annual report - 2023 / www.brainforest.org - Email: info@brainforest.org The activities/ projects carried out during the year 2023

----- - ----- : 10 YEARS IN SERVICE OF THE ENVIRONMENT ! Proposals for solutions to legalize "illegal wood" within or outside the FLEGT process; The concern to successfully deploy all these articulations on the ground led the "project task force" to define a complex set of monitoring operations. This is why CIFOR tasked Brainforest with ensuring these practical aspects of the project in Gabon. With the establishment, in April 2023, of a project team of three people, the effective start of activities took place in July 2023, and the project ended in December 2023. Regarding the results of this project, the following can be noted: 1) THE DISTRIBUTION CIRCUIT AND QUANTITIES OF WOOD FROM ILLEGAL ARTISANAL SAWMILL UNITS ARE BETTER KNOWN. From the inventory of wood deposits in Libreville, as well as continuous monitoring, day and night, of the various wood flows entering Libreville via main roads and main landing sites, the types of vehicles transporting illegal wood and their loads, a more or less perfect knowledge of the chain of illegal logging and distribution of wood products has been made possible and recorded on forms. This working method allowed Brainforest and CIFOR to have an updated database, providing an accurate assessment of the quantities of wood from illegal sources, which are almost daily dumped onto the urban market for construction or furniture. 2) STUDY OF THE PHENOMENON UPSTREAM OF THE SECTOR. For this result, the project team aimed to identify the deep mechanisms motivating illegal logging. In this regard, three data collection avenues were explored. a) Socioeconomic factors. For this avenue, data collection was focused on the primary actors in the process (illegal sawyers and distributors/resellers of clandestine sawing products). Here, it was a matter of verifying whether there is a direct causal link between youth unemployment and the increase in illegal logging as a means of accessing the resources necessary for their survival. From an inverted analytical posture, the search for socioeconomic causes also required verifying whether the relative importance of financial gains was not...

----- - ----- : 10 YEARS AT THE SERVICE OF THE ENVIRONMENT! Rather the guiding principle for resorting to this practice. The formulation of the two research axes highlighted the importance of establishing a correlation between the living conditions of illegal operators and the degree of entrenchment in this form of logging. To this end, in addition to field visits to clandestine wood sawing sites in the forest, concrete monitoring indicators had been defined and served as a basis for guiding data collection. b) Administrative collusion or the pernicious influence of certain administrative officials. Here, it is important to note that the project sought not to identify the administrative officials who fuel the phenomenon, but rather to establish with certainty the tangible existence of the link with the administration. Indeed, in the validated hypothesis of administrative collusion, it became reductive to restrict the study of the phenomenon to only illegal sawyers and resellers. Conversely, it was useful to measure this influence through a subtle search for "the dynamic source of production factors". Through this approach, the study was able to reveal, to a significant degree, where the means of production come from and where the

elements of security guarantees necessary for the continuation of the activity reside. c) The heaviness of the system This was the last data collection avenue and aimed to allow for a precise identification of the bottleneck areas that would be the source of the non-compliance of the activity with regulatory texts. By formulating the hypothesis that non-compliance with regulatory provisions is due to a lack of information and difficulty in accessing cutting permits, the project aims to encourage administrations and other concerned stakeholders to initiate a common reflection to facilitate procedures. Annual report - ----- / www.brainforest.org - Email: info@brainforest.org Activities / projects carried out during the year -----

----- - ----- : 10 YEARS AT THE SERVICE OF THE ENVIRONMENT! II. STRENGTHENING INTERNAL DYNAMISM AND TECHNICAL CAPACITIES: RECRUITMENT OF QUALIFIED, MULTIDISCIPLINARY STAFF The decision made by partners and other funders to entrust the NGO Brainforest with the on-the-ground execution of the various projects mentioned above reflects the assurance of a mark of trust and, to this end, calls the organization to meet expectations. That is why, in order to provide a satisfactory response to all, Brainforest has continued its institutional strengthening process initiated since -----, by recruiting qualified multidisciplinary staff. It is this staff who, placed at the head of the various projects, ensures the monitoring and technical implementation of operations under the hierarchical responsibility of a Program Coordinator. II.1. NEEDS IN GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS) Mobilized by the Rainforest Foundation UK to ensure the execution of the Gabon component of the Participatory Mapping project in the Congo basin, Brainforest had to engage the services of a resource person specialized in Geographic Information Systems (GIS). This staff, recruited in March -----, is responsible for the project in Gabon and, in this capacity, directs a team of ten (10) people including a Project Assistant, and several Cartographer Assistants and facilitators. With a high level of university training, this staff also has the specificity of being female. This reflects the organization's other concern to promote the female elite of the country. II.2. NEEDS IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS, AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT. The necessity to ensure the mobilization of Gabonese civil society to support the implementation of the FLEGT action plan elements has led the organization to recruit a socio-economist specialized in forestry issues. Indeed, within the framework of negotiations aimed at signing a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) between Gabon and the European Union, it is this person who is responsible for designing and implementing a civil society action plan to support the efficient process of FLEGT. It is also this person who is responsible for identifying and ensuring training modules for the organizations mobilized for FLEGT, in order to enhance their technical level for optimal participation in negotiations. Having long worked in a research center, where social forestry issues are the scientific focus, this technical staff of Brainforest is also equipped with training in project planning and evaluation. In this capacity, he is responsible for the FLEGT Project Manager and has been available to the NGO since -----. The team he oversees includes more than twenty people from various Gabonese civil society organizations involved in the FLEGT file. II.3. NEEDS IN ANALYSIS, UNDERSTANDING, AND INTERPRETATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL LEGAL INSTRUMENTS, FOR THE PURPOSES OF DISSEMINATION. Here, it should be noted that the strengthening of the NGO's technical capacities on this issue comes from two origins: The first is closely linked to the concern of satisfying the mission of facilitating community involvement in the management of national parks and the development of related legal texts, in partnership with Rainforest and in collaboration with local civil society organizations and the Parks Agency. The second, for its part, revolves around the relevant concern for an organization that wants to be at the forefront of environmental issues, to have a sufficiently capable legal department to enable the NGO to have a very appreciable level of understanding of the texts, their stakes, or their shortcomings. If the recruitment of the first two project leaders was done at the national level, that of the legal project manager is the result of a

sub-regional cooperation between two Gabonese (Brainforest) and Cameroonian (CED) civil society organizations. The Legal Project Manager is a lawyer specialized in environmental law. Having conducted a number of projects with rural

Cameroonian communities, this staff has a good field experience. Thus, he currently leads a team of two people. But he works in relay with other actors in his field, in the sub-region, to strengthen the legal sector of Brainforest. II.4. NEEDS IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND ECO-TOURISM Convinced that to establish a culture of sustainable management of natural resources, particularly forestry, one effective means is to educate the masses, Brainforest has begun to mature, since April -----, the idea of deploying a vast awareness process on environmental security. This idea is presented by Brainforest in its strategic planning document ----- - -----. Not being in the execution phase, the recruitment or training of an internal agent remains under study. Annual report - ----- / www.brainforest.org - Email: info@brainforest.org Strengthening internal dynamism and technical capacities: recruitment of qualified, multidisciplinary staff -----

----- - ----- : 10 YEARS AT THE SERVICE OF THE ENVIRONMENT! III- THE DIFFICULT EXERCISE OF THE LEADERSHIP ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE GABONESE CONTEXT: THE QUESTION OF POSITIONING AND ITS CONSEQUENCES The organization of human societies in an state form establishes normative frameworks for the flourishing of social actors. To this end, the Fundamental Law establishes the components that are public actors invested with public power (constitutional institutions) and civil society actors, to designate all physical components (citizens) and moral (political, religious, associative, cultural organizations, etc.) whose constitutional role is to accompany public policies while exercising a watchdog mission. Gabon, whose organizational system is based on this model, adheres to this societal principle. That is why organizations like Brainforest exist: to attempt to play alongside the State, the role of accompaniment and sometimes the counterweight conferred by the Constitution. However, the empirical reality in Gabon, regarding the exercise of this role, encounters numerous issues. Alongside objective concerns related to structural and organizational weaknesses, there are also significant subjective issues. It is mainly from this latter category that this part of the report speaks. III.1. THE CITIZEN AND CONSTITUTIONAL ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN GABON Far from opening a controversy and before any passionate debate, we clarify that the notion of "civil society" in Gabon encompasses a diversity of entities whose common denominator is that they do not exercise state authority, but derive their essence from the necessity to accompany and complement the public action of the latter. In this sense, it is important to note that the activities, initiatives, and other positions taken by civil society can only and must be understood within this constitutional framework of their existence. It is in this context that Brainforest operates. It is also in this perspective that all the activities carried out by the organization since its creation have been initiated and continue to be initiated. It is therefore appropriate to say that the institutional reforms, as well as the process of strengthening human and structural capacities that have been implemented throughout the last two years (----- and -----), aim at no other objective than to give the NGO the means to fulfill its civic duty as best as possible. The difficult exercise of the leadership role of civil society in the Gabonese context: the question of positioning and its consequences ----- Annual report - ----- / www.brainforest.org - Email: info@brainforest.org

----- - ----- : 20 YEARS AT THE SERVICE OF THE ENVIRONMENT ! III. 2023. THE EVENTS OF JANUARY 2023 AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF BRAINFOREST, IN THE LOUIS DISTRICT OF LIBREVILLE. Notwithstanding the perfect knowledge by certain high-ranking state officials of the principles

and regulatory frameworks of civil society organizations mentioned above, it should be noted that unfortunate events took place in January 2023, in the form of an arbitrary situation that is difficult to justify. Indeed, some leaders of Gabonese civil society, including the Executive Secretary of Brainforest, were prohibited from leaving the territory, then arrested, and ultimately had their respective passports confiscated and then returned. It goes without saying that such a situation has logically harmed the normal progress of some of our projects. However, it is especially important to recall that such deviations are regrettable as they constitute the most blatant expression of democratic regression, which we must emphasize. III. 2023. THE TENSIONS ARISING FROM THE POSITION TAKEN AND THE EMERGENCE OF A WALL OF MISUNDERSTANDING Far from claiming to ignore the motives behind these deviations, it is simply necessary to state that the events of January stem from an open stance, but the emergence of a wall of misunderstanding regarding this attitude has been the foundation of all the ensuing hostility. Annual report - 2023 / www.brainforest.org - Email: info@brainforest.org The strengthening of internal dynamics and technical capacities: the recruitment of qualified, multidisciplinary personnel

----- - ----- : 20 YEARS AT THE SERVICE OF THE ENVIRONMENT ! IV- THE CHOICE OF STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS To carry out an ambition like that of Brainforest requires, in addition to technical capacities and operational means, having a clear and precise vision of what we would like to do, and the heights we would like to reach in the short, medium, and long term. To align with this requirement and to best share its vision with all its partners and donors, Brainforest has developed its strategic planning document for the period 2023-2025. IV. 2023. THE STRATEGIC PLANNING OF THE NGO'S ACTIVITIES FOR THE 2023-2025 HORIZON OR THE CHOICE OF STRATEGIC FIELDS OF COMPETENCE: The strategic planning of Brainforest's 2023-2025 activities materializes, through its various articulations, the global vision of the NGO during the indicated time horizon. Indeed, aware that "Achieving a Gabonese society in which the environment will be protected, with the active participation of populations who will benefit from the economic returns of the sustainable management of natural resources" can only be the result of a long process, Brainforest, out of realism, has thus circumscribed its planning around six main axes. Each sector is subject to a detailed activity plan to be carried out, in order to contribute to materializing the institutional vision of the organization. the choice of strategic orientations Annual report - 2023 / www.brainforest.org - Email: info@brainforest.org

----- - ----- : 20 YEARS AT THE SERVICE OF THE ENVIRONMENT ! Protect The environment is our commitment Annual report - 2023 / www.brainforest.org - Email: info@brainforest.org

----- - ----- : 20 YEARS AT THE SERVICE OF THE ENVIRONMENT ! ----- - ----- : 20 YEARS AT THE SERVICE OF THE ENVIRONMENT ! V - OUR PARTNERS Gabonese State – Rainforest Foundation UK – European Union – FERN – Global Environment Facility – CARPE – IUCN-NL – CIFOR – Global Witness – Forest Monitor – REM – Global Greengrants Fund – CED – USAID / MSI – OCDH – MEFP – Our Partners Annual report - 2023 / www.brainforest.org - Email: info@brainforest.org

VI - FUNDS RECEIVED PROJECT/ACTIVITY DONOR/ PARTNERS OBJECT START END TOTAL BUDGET (FCFA) AVAILABILITIES FOR BRAINFOREST (FCFA) OBSERVATIONS CAPACITY BUILDING OF BRAINFOREST IN ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE (RECAGE) EGP OF IUCN-NL STRENGTHENING THE INTERNAL CAPACITIES OF THE NGO ON PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOLS,

FUNDRAISING, LOBBYING AND ORGANIZING MEETINGS ON COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN FOREST MANAGEMENT 01/01/2023 12/2023 10,000,000 5,000,000 "ILLEGAL LOGGING IN CAMEROON AND GABON: FLEGT INTERNATIONAL PROCESS, NATIONAL TRENDS AND LOCAL IMPACTS" CIFOR CONDUCTING DATA COLLECTION SURVEYS ON INFORMAL TIMBER HARVESTING IN THE CITY OF LIBREVILLE AND IN THE SURROUNDING DEPARTMENTS. (IN TWO PHASES) 01/2023 12/2023 10,000,000 5,000,000 01/2023 12/2023 10,000,000 5,000,000 "ENSURING A SEAT AT THE TABLE" EU / STICHTING FERN INVOLVEMENT OF GABONESE CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE FLEGT PROCESS IN GABON. 01/2023 12/2023 10,000,000 5,000,000 "AVAILABILITY" FOR 2023 FACILITATE THE INVOLVEMENT OF RIPARIAN COMMUNITIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL PARK LEGISLATION IN GABON RAINFOREST FUND / RAINFOREST FOUNDATION UK FACILITATE THE INVOLVEMENT OF RIPARIAN COMMUNITIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL PARK LEGISLATION IN GABON 01/01/2023 12/2023 10,000,000 5,000,000 PARTICIPATORY MAPPING PROJECT IN THE CONGO BASIN – GABON COMPONENT DFID / RAINFOREST FOUNDATION UK FOREST COMMUNITIES, CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS, AND PUBLIC AUTHORITY STAFF IN EACH OF THE THREE TARGET COUNTRIES (GABON, REPUBLIC OF CONGO, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC) HAVE THE CAPACITY AND RESOURCES TO ACCURATELY MAP FOREST OCCUPATION AND USE AND TO USE THE DATA OBTAINED TO MAKE AND INFLUENCE DECISIONS RELATED TO FORESTS AND FOREST COMMUNITIES 01/2023 12/2023 10,000,000 5,000,000 AVAILABILITIES (OR EXPENSES) FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 2023 TOTAL BUDGET (FCFA) 300,782,360 181,288,341.25

 VI - SALARY MASS IN 2023 JANUARY 5,000,000 FEBRUARY 5,000,000 MARCH 5,000,000 APRIL 5,000,000 MAY 5,000,000 JUNE 5,000,000 JULY 5,000,000 AUGUST 5,000,000 SEPTEMBER 5,000,000 OCTOBER 5,000,000 NOVEMBER 5,000,000 DECEMBER 5,000,000 ANNUAL TOTAL 60,000,000 MONTHLY AVERAGE 5,000,000 With a salaried team of about ten people at the end of December 2022, Brainforest began the year 2023 with the arrest and detention of its Executive Secretary, a situation that had several negative collateral effects and caused significant disruption to its activities and, by extension, its daily functioning. The start of new projects (with FERN and RFUK) led to the recruitment of additional staff during the year. The staff of Brainforest is ultimately estimated at eighteen full-time employees as of December 31, 2023. The salary mass for the year 2023 thus amounts to Forty-six million six hundred ninety-five thousand (60,000,000) FCFA, or a monthly average of Three million eight hundred ninety-one thousand two hundred fifty (5,000,000) FCFA. However, with the increase in staff and the expected start of new projects, it is clear that this average will be closer to or exceed the monthly salary mass of the last quarter of 2022 (See table on the right), or about Five million four hundred sixty thousand (5,000,000) FCFA. Based on this, we are planning for a minimum annual salary mass between Sixty million and Seventy million FCFA. Funding

Old SOBRAGA District (across from the General Directorate of Mines) P.O. Box: 1234 Libreville – Tel: 01 23 45 67 Email: info@brainforest.org – url: www.brainforest.org Registration No: 123456// MISPD/SG/CT - NIF: 123456C

 INITIATION OF LOCAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES TO THE USE OF GPS.