



Congolese Youth  
Biodiversity  
Network

# 2026-2031 STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE CONGOLESE YOUTH BIODIVERSITY NETWORK

Congolese  
youth at the  
heart of the  
action for  
biodiversity

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# **2026-2031 STRATEGIC PLAN**

## **OF THE CONGOLESE YOUTH BIODIVERSITY NETWORK**

Congolese youth at the heart of the action for biodiversity

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2026–2031 Strategic Plan serves as the operational strategic framework guiding youth engagement in biodiversity governance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), through the Congolese Youth Biodiversity Network. Developed at a pivotal moment when the country is consolidating its position as a climate-solution country, a megadiverse nation, and a sanctuary of invaluable natural wealth, this Plan goes beyond positioning young people as key actors in the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP 2025–2030) and the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). It also amplifies their voices within these policy frameworks, as well as in other multilateral environmental agreements to which the country is committed.

The DRC is home to the world’s second-largest tropical forest massif, covering approximately 1.55 million km<sup>2</sup> and accounting for 60% of the forests of the Congo Basin (UNEP, n.d.; IUCN, 2023). Yet, in 2024, the DRC recorded a record loss of approximately 590,000 hectares of primary forest, representing the third-largest absolute loss worldwide, after Brazil and Indonesia (WRI, 2025; Global Forest Watch, 2025). In the face of this ecological emergency, and given that young people represent 65% of the national population, their mobilization is a strategic imperative.

This Strategic Plan is structured around six strategic pillars, namely: (1) Youth Mobilization and Engagement; (2) Capacity Building; (3) Advocacy and Policy Participation; (4) Communication and Visibility; (5) Research and Support for Young Biodiversity Researchers; and finally, (6) Partnerships and Resource Mobilization. It comprises 30 priority actions, 45 performance indicators, and an indicative budget of USD 1,200,000 over five years.

# FOREWORD

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is endowed with a natural heritage of exceptional value. Its tropical forests, remarkable biodiversity, and unique ecosystems give the country a special responsibility to preserve the living world for the benefit of present and future generations.

However, this wealth is currently facing numerous threats. Deforestation, ecosystem degradation, unsustainable exploitation of natural resources, and the impacts of climate change are placing increasing pressure on our natural capital. In response to these challenges, our country has reaffirmed its commitment to biodiversity through the National Forest Policy 2025–2035 and the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs 2025–2030), placing nature conservation at the heart of its development priorities.

In this context, Congolese youth have an essential role to play. As the majority of the population and present across all provinces of the country, young people are both directly affected by environmental crises and a source of innovative solutions to address them. Their engagement is therefore an indispensable lever for building a sustainable future.

It is with this conviction that we have developed this 2026–2031 Strategic Plan. This document is the result of a participatory process that brought together young people from different provinces of the DRC through online consultations. These exchanges provided an opportunity to gather their concerns, priorities, and aspirations, ensuring that this Plan genuinely reflects the vision of Congolese youth for biodiversity.

I would like to sincerely thank all those who contributed to this process. Through their ideas, experiences, and commitment, they have enriched this collective roadmap and demonstrated the determination of Congolese youth to fully embrace their role in conserving our natural heritage.

Aligned with the national priorities of the DRC and the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, this 2026–2031 Strategic Plan will guide our efforts to strengthen the capacities of young people, promote their participation in decision-making processes, and consolidate their contribution to environmental governance.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite all our partners, public institutions, civil society organizations, local communities, and technical and financial partners to support this shared vision, with the aim of making Congolese youth an indispensable force in biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

**MR. JACQUES ASSUMANI**

Coordinator of the Congolese Youth  
Biodiversity Network, GYBN-DRC





## DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The 2026-2031 Strategic Plan is the result of a collective effort that brought together the entire National Coordination Team of the Congolese Youth Biodiversity Network, as well as its members and partners committed to biodiversity conservation and youth participation.

Its development was based on a participatory process combining strategic reflection, consultations, and analyses of the priorities of Congolese youth in the areas of biodiversity, environmental protection, and sustainable development.

We extend our sincere appreciation to all those who contributed to the development of this document, particularly the members of the National Coordination Team for their availability, technical contributions, and commitment throughout the process. Special recognition goes to Mr. Jacques Assumani, National Coordinator, and Mr. Patrick Isamene, Communications and Fundraising Officer, for their strategic guidance, valuable feedback, and important contributions to the finalization of this Plan. The strategic pillars, priorities, and objectives presented in this document also draw on the findings of a broad national consultation that collected more than 5,000 responses from young people across all provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Conducted through an online survey, this initiative made it possible to gather the perceptions, expectations, priorities, and recommendations of Congolese youth regarding biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

The geographical diversity of the respondents therefore helped ensure national representation of the contributions collected, making this Plan a reflection of the aspirations and priorities expressed by young Congolese women and men across the country.

Through this process, the Congolese Youth Biodiversity Network reaffirms its commitment to participatory and inclusive governance, grounded in listening, consultation, and the meaningful engagement of young people in safeguarding biodiversity and building a sustainable future.



## WHO ARE WE ?

The Congolese Youth Biodiversity Network (CYBN) is the official national coordination of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN), which is the only officially recognized and accredited youth constituency under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

The Network is registered as a non-profit association in the Democratic Republic of the Congo through the Ministry of Justice and Keeper of the Seals, under registration number F.92/50.027. It was established out of the commitment of a generation of young people conscious of their responsibilities in the face of today's environmental emergencies. Officially founded on 22 May 2019, the Network has progressively developed into a leading platform for youth engagement in biodiversity conservation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The organization's primary mandate is therefore to bridge the gap between international negotiation spaces and Congolese youth, who are among those most severely affected by ecosystem degradation while also holding the key to developing sustainable solutions.

The overall objective is to systematically, technically, and legitimately represent the voice of Congolese youth throughout processes related to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). To translate this ambition into systemic change on the ground, the CYBN advances its strategic vision through four fundamental pillars:

-  **Raise Awareness:** Increase young people's awareness of the value of biodiversity by disseminating scientific knowledge and explaining international agreements and frameworks.
-  **Connect:** Bring together individuals, environmental clubs, and youth organizations into a strong and supportive national coalition capable of influencing public policies and contributing to halting biodiversity loss in the DRC.
-  **Inspire:** Train and equip the next generation of leaders and future decision-makers to promote the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity, thereby contributing to a healthy society and environment.
-  **Include:** Align initiatives with an inclusive vision that specifically strengthens youth engagement and empowerment in biodiversity conservation.

The CYBN's scope of action is, by definition, national, covering all provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, recognizing that the DRC, as a climate- and biodiversity-solution country, bears a responsibility that extends beyond its borders, the CYBN has embedded a Pan-African and global vocation into its identity. The Network actively participates in regional dynamics across the Congo Basin and collaborates with other global youth constituencies to elevate the priorities and perspectives of countries of the Global South.

Organizationally, the CYBN draws its strength from robust and structured governance based on four categories of membership. Founding members, who laid the foundations of the Network in Kisangani, safeguard its ideological continuity and contributed to training its first generation of youth facilitators. Ordinary members constitute the beating heart of the Network: hundreds of young researchers, activists, and students aged 18 to 35 who contribute to the organization's activities on a daily basis. Together, founding and ordinary members form the effective membership, which holds the exclusive authority to elect the organization's leaders and provide strategic direction. The Network also relies on supporting members, who provide material or financial assistance, as well as honorary members, distinguished individuals recognized for their outstanding services to the cause of biodiversity conservation.

The CYBN's true added value lies in its ability to transform civic activism into high-level technical expertise. Far from being merely a youth platform, the Network has established itself as a pool of expertise for the DRC. Its delegates have gained access to some of the world's leading multilateral institutions and decision-making spaces.

The CYBN has effectively represented Congolese youth at Conferences of the Parties (COPs) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), contributing to critical discussions surrounding the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Similarly, the Network's experts have carried the country's voice into the United Nations Climate Change Conferences (UNFCCC COPs), demonstrating the inseparable link between the conservation of the Congo Basin and global climate regulation.

At the national level, with the support of partners including, among others, the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, GIZ, and the African Wildlife Foundation, the CYBN has organized numerous youth forums and consultations on biodiversity issues and related national policies. These initiatives include the organization of the first National Youth Biodiversity Summit, alongside numerous other activities, capacity-building initiatives, advocacy efforts, and national-level engagements.

The CYBN has therefore established itself as an indispensable stakeholder in ensuring that the voices and priorities of young people are meaningfully reflected in the negotiation processes under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Through this Strategic Plan, the organization builds upon the strong foundation established since 2019 to take a new step forward: toward sustained institutional influence in the service of biodiversity conservation, environmental governance, and future generations.



## OUR VALUES & PRINCIPLES

### Ecocentrism

The CYBN adopts an ecocentric approach that recognizes the intrinsic value of biodiversity, regardless of its usefulness to human beings. We place nature at the heart of decision-making and promote the conservation of ecosystems as a foundation for the well-being and prosperity of societies.

### Collective well-being

The Network works to promote collective well-being by recognizing the close interconnections between the health of ecosystems and the well-being of human communities. Its actions aim to generate shared benefits by reconciling biodiversity conservation with improved living conditions.

### Empathy, humility, benevolence and kindness.

The CYBN values relationships grounded in empathy, humility, and compassion. These values foster a respectful and collaborative environment that encourages mutual learning and meaningful youth engagement in biodiversity conservation.

### Wisdom and culture.

The Network recognizes the importance of traditional ecological knowledge, cultures, and traditions in biodiversity conservation. It promotes their integration into contemporary approaches to develop solutions that are locally appropriate, context-sensitive, and sustainable.

### Equity

The Network is committed to promoting equity in access to opportunities, resources, and participation. It strives to reduce inequalities and ensure that all voices, particularly those of young people, are heard and meaningfully represented in biodiversity governance processes.

### Transparency, honesty and accountability

The CYBN operates with transparency, integrity, and accountability in the implementation of its initiatives. It is committed to ensuring the responsible management of resources and maintaining relationships of trust with its partners and beneficiaries.

### Diversity and Inclusion

The Network considers diversity an essential asset and promotes active inclusion across all its activities. It encourages the participation of young people from diverse backgrounds in order to strengthen the representativeness, inclusiveness, and effectiveness of its initiatives.

### Rights, justice and responsibility

The Chapter promotes environmental justice by emphasizing the rights and responsibilities associated with the management of natural resources. It advocates for equitable and responsible biodiversity governance that benefits all.



The implementation of this Strategic Plan relies on a collective dynamic. It requires the commitment and active engagement of public institutions, civil society organizations, academic institutions, and technical and financial partners. We are convinced that by strengthening our organization, capacities, and coordination, we can make a meaningful and tangible contribution to more inclusive, effective, and participatory biodiversity governance in the DR Congo.



## Theory of Change

### IF...

young people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are equipped with knowledge and skills in biodiversity science, ecological monitoring tools, and the mechanisms of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), while having effective access to funding, data, networks, and decision-making spaces.

### SO...

They become competent, organized, and credible actors, capable of generating reliable environmental data, proposing science-based solutions, and actively participating in biodiversity governance.

### THROUGH...

The establishment of an operational national youth network structured around provincial coordination bodies and thematic platforms, aligned with national conservation priorities and international commitments.

### ALLOWING...

The gradual and effective integration of young people into environmental governance frameworks, particularly the NBSAP 2025–2030, national sectoral policies, and the processes of the Convention on Biological Diversity, including the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).

### LEADING TO...

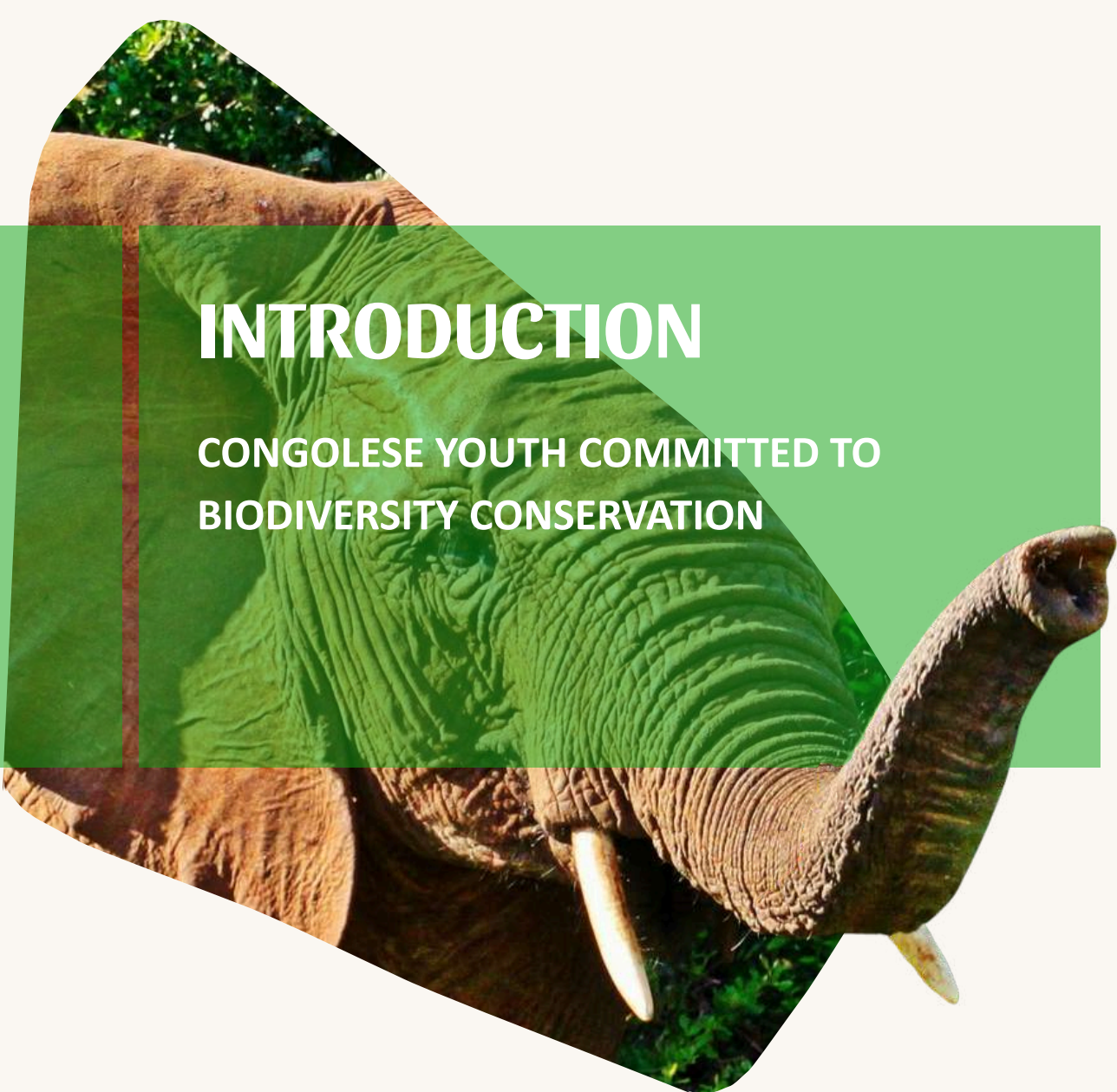
Systematic youth participation in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of biodiversity policies, as well as in the implementation of concrete actions for conservation, ecological restoration, and sustainable ecosystem management at the local and landscape levels.

### WHICH REINFORCES...

Ecological connectivity, ecosystem resilience, and the quality of scientific data available to support decision-making in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

### ULTIMATELY RESULTING IN...

A strengthened and inclusive biodiversity governance system in which young people are recognized as legitimate and influential actors in conservation, directly contributing to the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) and the achievement of the objectives of the NBSAP 2025-2030.

A close-up photograph of an elephant's head, showing its eye, ear, and tusk. A semi-transparent green rectangular overlay is placed over the center of the image, containing the title and subtitle text.

# INTRODUCTION

CONGOLESE YOUTH COMMITTED TO  
BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION



## Congolese youth committed to biodiversity conservation

Given the importance of biodiversity for human well-being, food security, water supply, climate regulation, and sustainable development, its conservation has become a major priority for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Forests, wetlands, savannas, mountains, rivers, and other natural ecosystems play a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance and supporting the livelihoods of millions of people across the country. These ecosystems provide essential services, including soil protection, regulation of the water cycle, carbon storage, crop pollination, and the provision of natural resources used daily by local communities (World Bank, 2024). Across the country, communities depend directly on these resources for their food, economic activities, health, and resilience to environmental shocks. Natural ecosystems also constitute a valuable heritage for present and future generations because of their ecological, social, cultural, and economic value. Their conservation is therefore a critical condition for ensuring sustainable and inclusive development.

However, these ecosystems are facing multiple pressures. Deforestation, unplanned agricultural expansion, mining, logging, rapid urbanization, pollution, vegetation fires, and the impacts of climate-related disturbances are contributing to the progressive degradation of natural habitats.

This situation reduces the capacity of ecosystems to provide the services on which communities depend and increases the vulnerability of territories to environmental crises.

In some areas, the loss of vegetation cover contributes to soil erosion and reduces soil productivity. Elsewhere, the destruction of wetlands affects water availability and flood regulation. Habitat fragmentation also leads to the decline of numerous animal and plant species, some of which play essential roles in ecosystem functioning. These processes undermine not only biodiversity conservation but also the development prospects of communities that depend on these ecosystems.

In response to these challenges, public authorities, civil society organizations, local communities, Indigenous Peoples, researchers, technical and financial partners, as well as private-sector actors, are called upon to strengthen their collaboration in order to promote the sustainable management of natural resources. The international commitments undertaken by the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the fields of environment and biodiversity provide an important framework for guiding these efforts and promoting the better integration of ecological considerations into public policies.

In this context, youth participation emerges as an essential lever for accelerating action for biodiversity. Representing a significant share of the Congolese population, young people constitute a force for mobilization, innovation, and transformation that can make a meaningful contribution to achieving conservation and sustainable development objectives.

Their involvement in environmental governance processes not only strengthens ownership of policies but also promotes the development of solutions tailored to local realities.

The role of young people in awareness-raising, environmental education, ecosystem restoration, scientific research, advocacy, and community mobilization initiatives is growing steadily. In several provinces across the country, they actively participate in reforestation programs, wetland protection, biodiversity monitoring, the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices, and various actions aimed at reducing pressures on natural resources. Their engagement contributes to raising collective awareness of the importance of preserving the country's natural heritage.

It is against this backdrop that the Network has gradually established itself as a key actor in mobilizing young people for biodiversity conservation. Since its establishment, GYBN DRC has worked to structure, coordinate, and strengthen the capacities of young people engaged in nature conservation, sustainable natural resource management, and environmental governance.

Through its activities, the Network contributes to creating spaces for exchange, dialogue, and learning, enabling young people to better understand biodiversity-related challenges and develop the skills required to participate effectively in decision-making processes. It also supports youth-led local initiatives and encourages their involvement in national, regional, and international biodiversity-related mechanisms.

This approach seeks to ensure that the concerns, expectations, and contributions of young people are taken into account in the development, implementation, and evaluation of biodiversity-related policies.

Over the past few years, the Network has supported numerous awareness-raising and capacity-building initiatives across the country.

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, adopted in December 2022, explicitly recognizes the importance of youth participation in implementing the actions required to achieve global conservation and sustainable development goals.

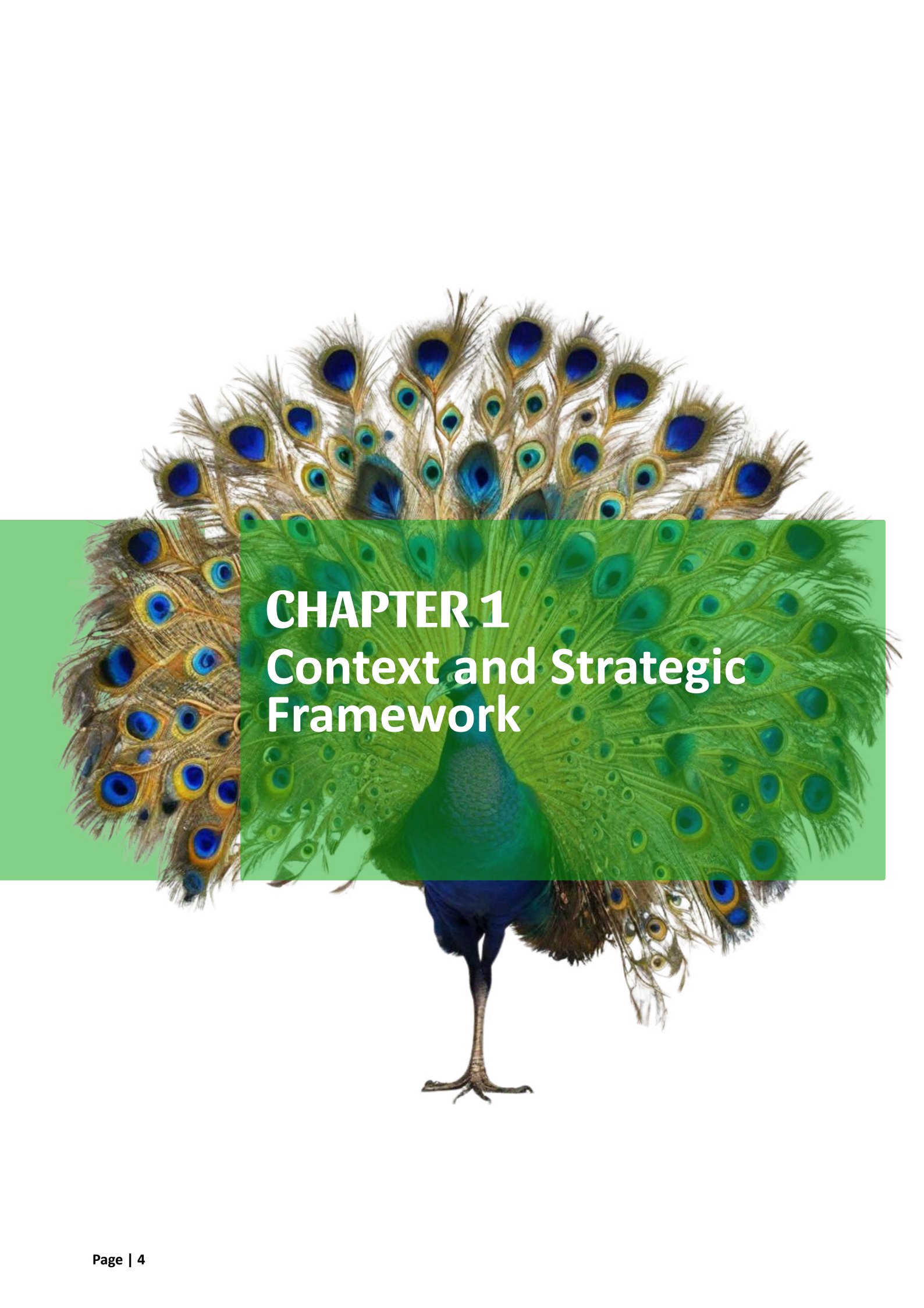
In this context, the engagement of Congolese youth represents a major opportunity to support national efforts for biodiversity conservation. By strengthening young people's capacities, supporting their active participation, and promoting their initiatives, it is possible to contribute to building a future in which nature conservation and sustainable development mutually reinforce one another. The CYBN intends to pursue its efforts in this direction by mobilizing more young people and fostering their contribution to biodiversity conservation for the benefit of communities and future generations.

This Strategic Plan builds on this strategic continuity. It seeks to strengthen youth participation in biodiversity governance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, enhance their technical and institutional capacities, and increase their involvement in decision-making processes. It is aligned with national policy frameworks on environment and biodiversity, as well as with international commitments, notably the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

It also incorporates national priorities related to ecosystem conservation, sustainable natural resource management, and ecological connectivity initiatives such as the Kivu-Kinshasa Green Corridor.

The overall objective of this Plan is to structure and strengthen youth action for biodiversity by enhancing their organization, skills, and influence, thereby enabling them to make an effective contribution to the protection and sustainable management of ecosystems in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.





# CHAPTER 1

## Context and Strategic Framework



## A generation of young people offering solutions for biodiversity

**THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF BIODIVERSITY IN THE DRC** - By virtue of its unique position, which we have repeatedly highlighted throughout this document, the Democratic Republic of the Congo occupies a pivotal position in the global conservation landscape. This importance stems from the vast extent and exceptional diversity of its ecosystems, including the dense forests of the Congo Basin, savannas, wetlands, and lake systems, which perform essential ecological functions.

These natural systems regulate the climate and hydrological cycle, contribute to maintaining soil fertility, and directly support the livelihoods of millions of people. This exceptional biological capital represents both a strategic asset for the country's sustainable development and a fundamental pillar of global ecological stability.

**ECOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND GOVERNANCE GAPS** - The country faces the critical imperative of ensuring the sustainable management of its biodiversity in a context of steadily increasing anthropogenic and climate-related pressures. The national natural heritage is experiencing significant degradation, including deforestation and accelerating habitat fragmentation, growing pressure on wetlands and lake ecosystems, as well as forms of natural resource exploitation that are often unsustainable and inadequately regulated.

These dynamics are compounded by a structural gap between policy commitments and their effective implementation. Despite the country's commitment to ambitious international instruments and the existence of national legal frameworks, institutional, technical, and financial constraints continue to significantly limit the effective implementation of public conservation policies.

**THE SITUATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE: POTENTIAL AND CONSTRAINTS** - Across the country, young people are already actively engaged in biodiversity conservation. Numerous local initiatives have emerged in areas such as awareness-raising, community-based action, and on-the-ground conservation. However, this potential remains insufficiently structured and faces several major constraints.

Youth-led initiatives remain fragmented and poorly connected, limiting their visibility, coordination, and overall impact. Young actors also have uneven levels of technical, scientific, and policy-related capacity, which restricts their influence in decision-making spaces. Finally, access to strategic information and funding mechanisms remains limited.

**THE CYBN RESPONSE: AN INTEGRATED STRATEGY** - The CYBN was established to address these structural gaps. The Network positions itself as an interface platform connecting young people, national institutions, and multilateral environmental governance frameworks.

Our approach is based on a theory of change structured around five successive and interdependent stages: structuring, capacity building, connectivity, participation, and action on the ground.

Structuring aims to consolidate the organization's internal systems and provincial coordination structures in order to build a coherent and representative youth movement. Capacity building focuses on developing technical, scientific, policy, and leadership skills. Strengthening connectivity facilitates the flow of strategic information and collaboration among organizations. Participation seeks to ensure the effective integration of young people into the processes of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other environmental governance mechanisms. Finally, action on the ground supports the implementation of concrete initiatives for biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable ecosystem management.

**ALIGNMENT AND COHERENCE OF POLICY FRAMEWORKS** - This Strategic Plan is strongly aligned with the national priorities and international commitments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

At the national level, it directly contributes to the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), which constitute a central framework for the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. It also aligns with key government-led initiatives, particularly ecological connectivity programs such as the Kivu-Kinshasa Green Corridor, which seeks to integrate biodiversity considerations into territorial and socioeconomic development.

At the international level, the CYBN, through the GYBN, engages with the major multilateral environmental agreements, particularly the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement, as well as the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). These instruments explicitly recognize the role of young people and encourage their active participation in environmental governance processes.

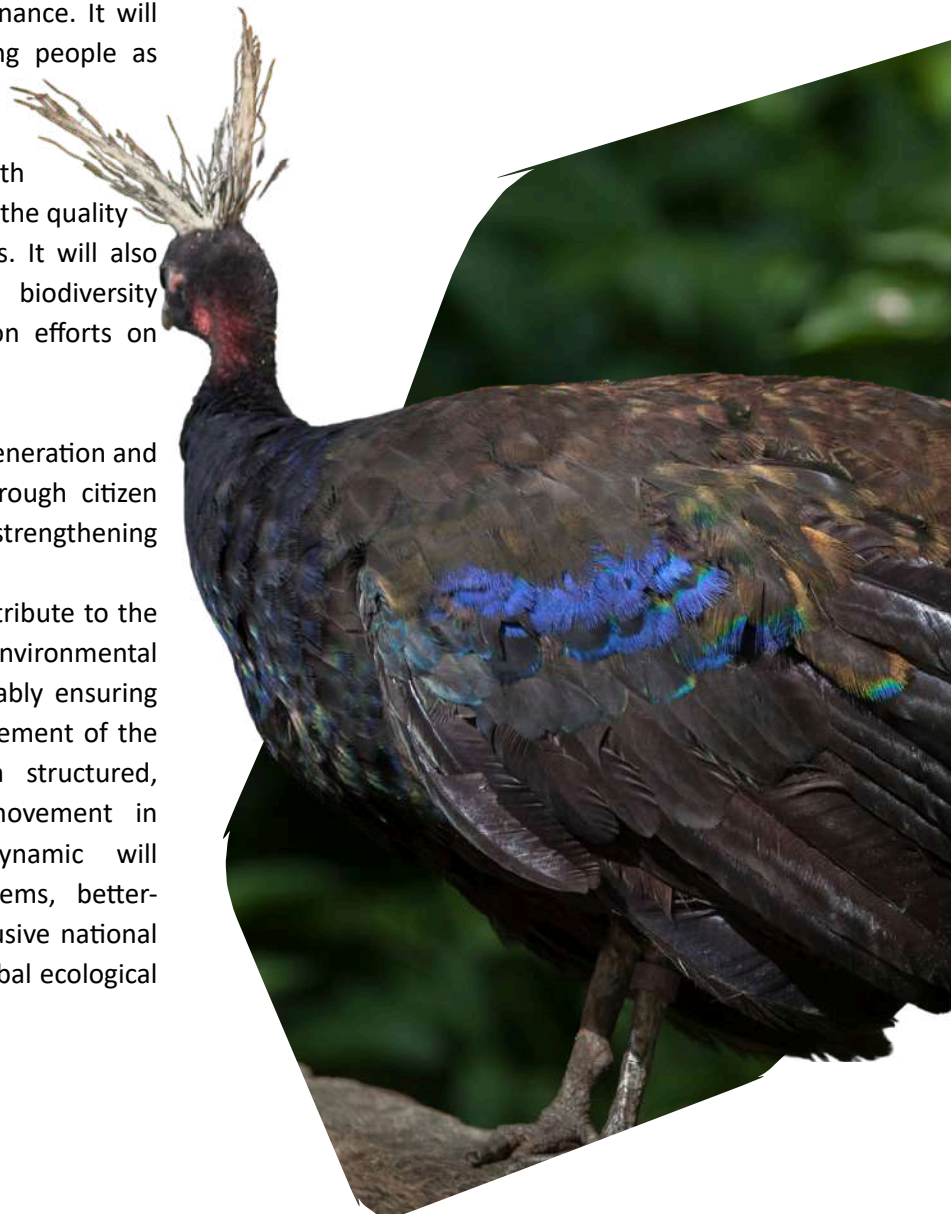


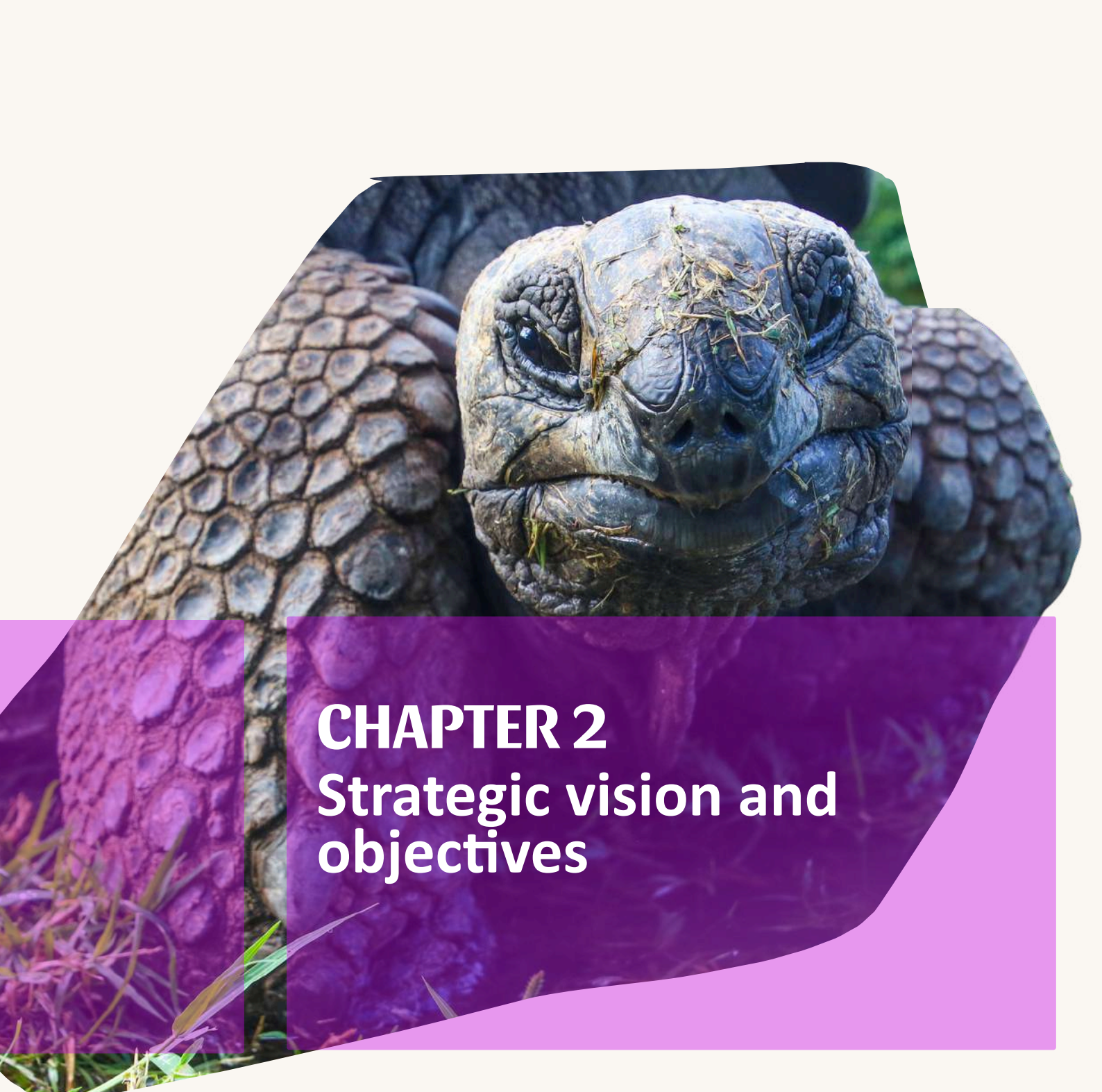
### EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND FINAL IMPACT -

The implementation of this integrated approach is expected to generate measurable transformations at multiple levels of environmental governance. It will contribute to the recognition of young people as legitimate, competent, and influential actors in the biodiversity sector. It will strengthen the effective inclusion of youth in decision-making spaces and improve the quality of their contributions to public policies. It will also promote greater effectiveness in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration efforts on the ground.

The approach will further support the generation and use of reliable environmental data through citizen science, thereby informing and strengthening decision-making processes.

The CYBN's ultimate ambition is to contribute to the emergence of a new generation of environmental leaders in the DRC, capable of sustainably ensuring the protection, restoration, and management of the country's natural capital. Through a structured, skilled, and fully engaged youth movement in environmental governance, this dynamic will contribute to more resilient ecosystems, better-protected communities, and more inclusive national development, while also supporting global ecological balance.





## **CHAPTER 2**

# **Strategic vision and objectives**



## Vision

A Congolese youth committed and influential in the conservation and governance of biodiversity.

## Mission

To mobilize, strengthen the capacities and represent the youth of the DRC in order to actively contribute to the protection of biodiversity.

## Strategic objectives

Mobilizing young people for biodiversity.



Strengthening their skills and leadership



Promote their participation in environmental policies.



To increase the visibility and impact of youth initiatives.



Develop partnerships and mobilize resources.



### Objective 1

#### ***Mobilizing young people for biodiversity.***

#### **By 2031:**

- Structuring an active national network covering all 26 provinces, with approximately 2,500 registered young members, of which 40% are women and 20% are from local and indigenous communities;
- Organize at least 2 national campaigns per year and 60 cumulative local awareness actions over the period, with a target of reaching 500,000 people;
- Establish and maintain 26 functional provincial focal points;
- Erect and equip the national office and at least 10 provincial coordination offices.

## Objective 2

### ***Strengthening their skills and leadership***

#### **By 2031:**

- train 1,200 young people (at least 50% of whom are women) through workshops and fellowship-type training (biodiversity, ecological monitoring, advocacy, leadership, negotiation processes).
- Organize a summit of young Congolese people on biodiversity every 2 years;
- Ensure that at least 60% of beneficiaries apply the skills acquired (projects, technical contributions, advocacy).
- Implementing an annual mentoring program that has supported 150 young leaders (50% women), 50 of whom hold coordination roles (provincial or thematic).
- Establish a specific annual community inclusion program for young people from indigenous and native populations living around protected areas.
- Establish an annual award recognizing youth innovations in biodiversity protection.

## Objective 3

### ***Promote youth participation in environmental policies.***

#### **By 2031:**

- Facilitate the effective participation of young people in at least 15 national consultation processes (SPANB, sectoral policies, climate plans) and 10 international processes, particularly those related to the Rio conventions.
- Produce and submit 20 technical contributions or position papers at the national and international level.
- Ensure the presence of at least 10 young people in official delegations or recognized spaces for political dialogue.



## Objective 4

***To increase the visibility and impact of youth initiatives.***

### By 2031:

- Reach a cumulative audience of 500,000 people through the network's communication channels.
- Produce at least 150 pieces of content (reports, videos, infographics, articles) highlighting the actions of young people.
- Documenting and disseminating 50 high-impact local initiatives.
- Establish partnerships with at least 15 national media outlets or digital platforms to relay the network's actions.

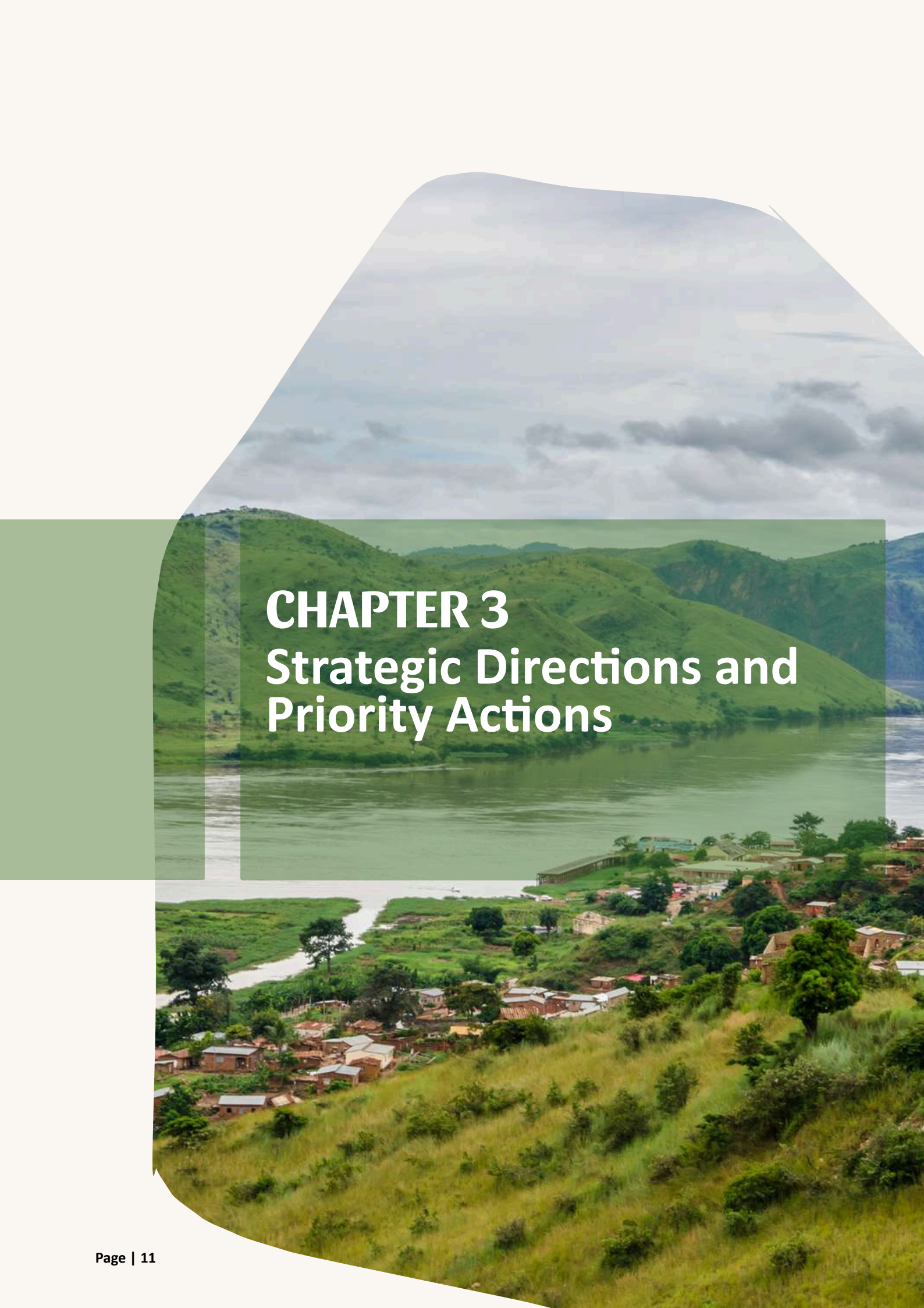
## Objective 5

***Develop partnerships and mobilize resources.***

### By 2031:

- Establish at least 25 active partnerships (NGOs, universities, public institutions, regional and international networks).
- To mobilize cumulative funding of at least USD 1,200,000 to support network activities and youth initiatives.
- Submit at least 30 project proposals to national and international donors, with a target success rate of 30%.
- Establish at least 5 multi-stakeholder projects that are co-financed and implemented at the national or provincial level.





# **CHAPTER 3**

## **Strategic Directions and Priority Actions**



## STRATEGIC AXIS 1 - STRENGTHENING YOUNG PEOPLE'S MOBILIZATION AND STRUCTURED COMMITMENT TO BIODIVERSITY

Since its establishment, the Congolese Youth Biodiversity Network in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has helped create an initial dynamic of mobilization among young people engaged in biodiversity conservation. However, this mobilization remains uneven across provinces, insufficiently structured at the national level, and only weakly connected to strategic environmental governance processes.

In a context where young people constitute the majority of the population, strengthening their engagement represents a major lever for supporting national conservation efforts. Such engagement goes beyond occasional participation in awareness-raising activities; it requires sustainable organization, effective coordination, and the capacity to act collectively and coherently.

This strategic pillar therefore seeks to consolidate and expand the existing network by strengthening its territorial presence and improving coordination mechanisms between the national and provincial levels. The objective is to move from fragmented mobilization toward a structured dynamic capable of sustaining continuous action and ensuring stronger representation of young people across the country. It also emphasizes the need to strengthen youth engagement through initiatives adapted to local realities, particularly in areas of high ecological value such as forests, wetlands, and landscapes undergoing transition. Awareness-raising campaigns are a strategic tool in this regard, serving not only to inform but also to foster support and active engagement among young people and communities.

Furthermore, this strategic pillar contributes to increasing the visibility of youth engagement in biodiversity by showcasing local initiatives and facilitating their dissemination on a broader scale. It thereby helps create a collective dynamic in which experiences and actions undertaken across different provinces can be shared, strengthened, and aligned.

By strengthening the mobilization and structured engagement of young people, this strategic pillar provides an essential foundation for implementing the Network's other strategic priorities, particularly capacity building, participation in public policy processes, and partnership development.



## STRATEGIC AXIS 2 – STRENGTHENING YOUTH CAPACITIES AND LEADERSHIP FOR BIODIVERSITY

Capacity building is undoubtedly one of the most important levers for improving the quality and impact of youth engagement in biodiversity conservation. In the DRC, despite growing mobilization, many young people face constraints related to limited access to information, technical training, and tools for participating in environmental governance processes. This situation limits their ability to develop structured contributions, implement sustainable initiatives, and engage effectively in decision-making spaces.

This strategic pillar seeks to address these gaps by developing a capacity-building framework tailored to the realities and needs of young people in the DRC. It is based on an integrated approach combining technical training on biodiversity, advocacy skills development, and leadership development.

Biodiversity training will strengthen young people's understanding of ecological challenges, ecosystems, and monitoring tools, while fostering greater ownership of national and international priorities. Advocacy training will equip young people with the skills needed to better understand policy processes, develop structured advocacy messages, and participate effectively in consultations and negotiations. Leadership development will strengthen their ability to coordinate initiatives, mobilize other young people, and represent their communities.

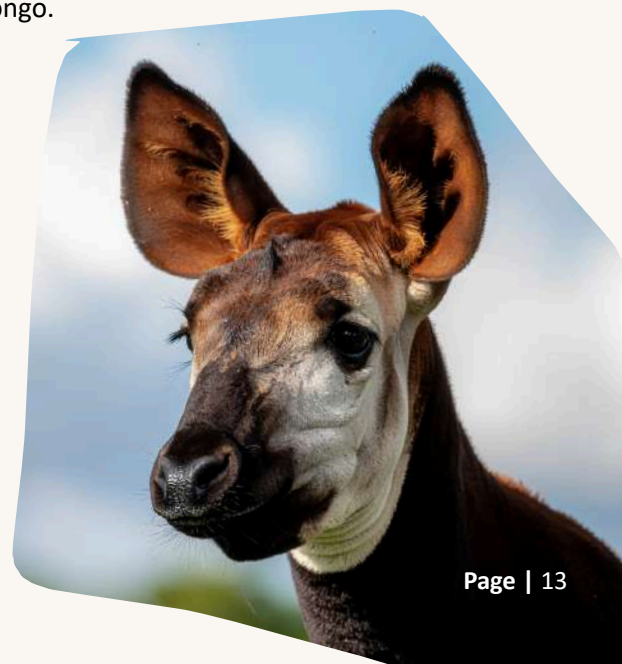
The implementation of this strategic pillar will rely on diversified formats, including at least one summit each year, training sessions, webinars, practical workshops, and field-based projects that enable participants to apply the knowledge and skills acquired in practice.

Particular attention will be given to adapting the content to local contexts in order to ensure its relevance and foster ownership among young people.

Furthermore, this strategic pillar provides for the establishment of structured fellowship programs designed to support young people engaged in biodiversity conservation over a defined period through a pathway combining training, mentorship, and involvement in concrete initiatives. These programs will aim to nurture a new generation of leaders capable of engaging strategically with biodiversity-related challenges.

Capacity-building activities will also provide an essential foundation for the advocacy efforts led by the Congolese Youth Biodiversity Network. By strengthening young people's knowledge and skills, this strategic pillar will contribute to improving the quality of their participation in processes related to the Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as in national environmental governance processes.

In this way, this strategic pillar fully supports the Network's objectives by contributing to raising awareness, connecting, and mobilizing young people, while strengthening their leadership and commitment to biodiversity conservation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.





### STRATEGIC AXIS 3 -

## YOUTH ADVOCACY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN BIODIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

Youth participation in environmental decision-making processes remains a central issue for effective biodiversity governance. Despite their growing engagement on the ground, their involvement in formal spaces for the development, implementation, and monitoring of public policies remains limited. This strategic pillar seeks to strengthen their role in advocacy and policy engagement, both at the national and international levels.

At the national level, this strategic pillar aims to strengthen the structured contribution of young people to environmental public policies, particularly those related to biodiversity, climate change, and the sustainable management of natural resources. It seeks to facilitate their participation in national consultations, strategic planning frameworks, as well as processes for the review and implementation of sectoral policies. Particular attention will be given to integrating youth perspectives into environmental planning and sustainable development documents.

At the international level, this strategic pillar strengthens the participation of Congolese youth in multilateral environmental processes to which the country is committed. This includes Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), as well as the processes of the conventions arising from the Rio Conference, notably the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). Particular priority will be given to preparing and supporting youth participation in Conferences of the Parties (COPs), especially those of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The objective is to strengthen young people's ability to understand international negotiation issues, formulate common positions, participate in official delegations, and amplify the voices of Congolese youth in global biodiversity dialogue spaces.

This strategic pillar also provides for the development of coordination and pre-COP preparation mechanisms to ensure structured, coherent, and strategic youth participation in international processes. This includes consolidating common positions, producing advocacy briefs, and establishing spaces for exchange among young people before, during, and after conferences.

By strengthening youth advocacy and political participation, this strategic pillar contributes to positioning Congolese youth as legitimate and organized actors in environmental governance spaces. It aims to ensure that their perspectives are better reflected in national and international decisions, while strengthening their capacity to influence biodiversity-related policies.



## STRATEGIC AXIS 4 – COMMUNICATION, VISIBILITY AND POSITIONING OF YOUNG PEOPLE ON BIODIVERSITY

In the digital age, communication is an essential lever for strengthening the visibility, understanding, and recognition of youth action for biodiversity. Despite the diversity of youth-led initiatives, many of these efforts remain poorly documented, insufficiently promoted, and inadequately disseminated at both national and international levels. This strategic pillar therefore seeks to establish a coherent, modern, and effective communication strategy adapted to today's digital realities.

Within this framework, particular attention will be given to strengthening the Network's presence on digital platforms. This will involve developing and regularly managing the social media platforms of the Congolese Youth Biodiversity Network in order to showcase activities, share knowledge and opportunities, and mobilize a broader community of young people engaged in biodiversity conservation. This digital presence will also provide an accessible and dynamic space for dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and awareness-raising.

The establishment of an official website will also constitute a strategic priority. The website will serve as the Network's central communication platform, bringing together institutional information, youth-led initiatives, educational resources, and opportunities related to biodiversity. It will contribute to strengthening the Network's credibility, visibility, and organizational profile at both national and international levels.

Furthermore, this strategic pillar provides for the regular production of visibility and communication materials tailored to different audiences.

These will include digital content, awareness-raising materials, infographics, videos, and other communication tools designed to make biodiversity-related issues more accessible and highlight youth-led actions across the different provinces of the country.

An important component of this strategic pillar will also be the implementation of media and digital campaigns. These may take the form of thematic social media campaigns, online biodiversity challenges, digital mobilization days, and participatory initiatives aimed at engaging young people and the general public around environmental issues. These actions will help strengthen civic engagement and foster a collective movement for biodiversity protection.

This strategic pillar will contribute to greater recognition of the role of young people in biodiversity conservation. It will also strengthen their positioning as engaged and influential actors capable of raising awareness, mobilizing communities, and positively influencing behaviors in support of environmental protection across the country.





## STRATEGIC AXIS 5 - SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND SUPPORT FOR YOUNG RESEARCHERS IN BIODIVERSITY

Action for biodiversity must be firmly grounded in robust scientific evidence. Yet, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, research and ecological monitoring efforts remain constrained by insufficient technical, financial, and institutional resources. This situation limits the availability of up-to-date local scientific data, which are essential for informed decision-making and for the effective implementation of national and international biodiversity commitments.

In response to this situation, CYBN seeks to contribute to the emergence of a new generation of young researchers and conservation practitioners capable of generating, promoting, and mobilizing scientific knowledge in support of nature conservation. This strategic pillar aims to strengthen the technical and methodological capacities of students, recent graduates, and young professionals engaged in ecology, conservation, and sustainable natural resource management.

In this regard, practical training sessions will be organized on modern ecological survey methods, biodiversity monitoring technologies, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), bioacoustics, digital data-collection tools, as well as approaches to processing and analyzing field data. These training activities will enable participants to acquire skills aligned with international scientific standards and enhance their employability in the research and conservation sectors.

To promote scientific excellence and encourage innovation, CYBN will also establish the “Young Biodiversity Researcher Award.” Organized annually, this competition will recognize outstanding theses and research projects focusing on biodiversity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This initiative will help highlight the work of students and emerging researchers while stimulating the production of knowledge that can contribute to biodiversity conservation and sustainable ecosystem management.

Finally, particular attention will be given to strengthening the interface between science and public policy. Young researchers will be supported in developing skills in science communication and policy brief writing. The objective is to enable them to translate complex scientific findings into clear, accessible, and actionable recommendations for decision-makers.

Through this approach, CYBN DRC aims to strengthen the contribution of Congolese research to the implementation of the NBSAP, while supporting more informed participation by the DRC in international processes related to the Convention on Biological Diversity.





## STRATEGIC AXIS 6 - STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

The effective implementation of this Strategic Plan depends on the Network's ability to develop strong and strategic partnerships capable of mobilizing diversified resources. In a context where the need for funding and technical support for youth-led initiatives remains significant, this strategic pillar seeks to establish a proactive and sustainable approach to collaboration with key actors in the environmental and development sectors, as well as with institutions and organizations supporting youth empowerment.

Collaboration with public institutions constitutes a key pillar of this approach. The Network will seek to strengthen its relationships with relevant government ministries, specialized agencies, and national programs within its areas of intervention. This collaboration aims to enhance the Network's institutional recognition, facilitate youth integration into planning processes, and align the Network's actions with national priorities.

Partnerships with non-governmental organizations represent another strategic lever. They will help strengthen synergies with actors already engaged in biodiversity conservation, facilitate knowledge and experience sharing, and foster the development of joint initiatives at both national and local levels. These partnerships may also support capacity building, technical assistance, and the implementation of collaborative projects.

Universities and academic institutions are also essential partners under this strategic pillar. Collaboration with academic institutions will contribute to strengthening research and knowledge-sharing on biodiversity, while supporting the

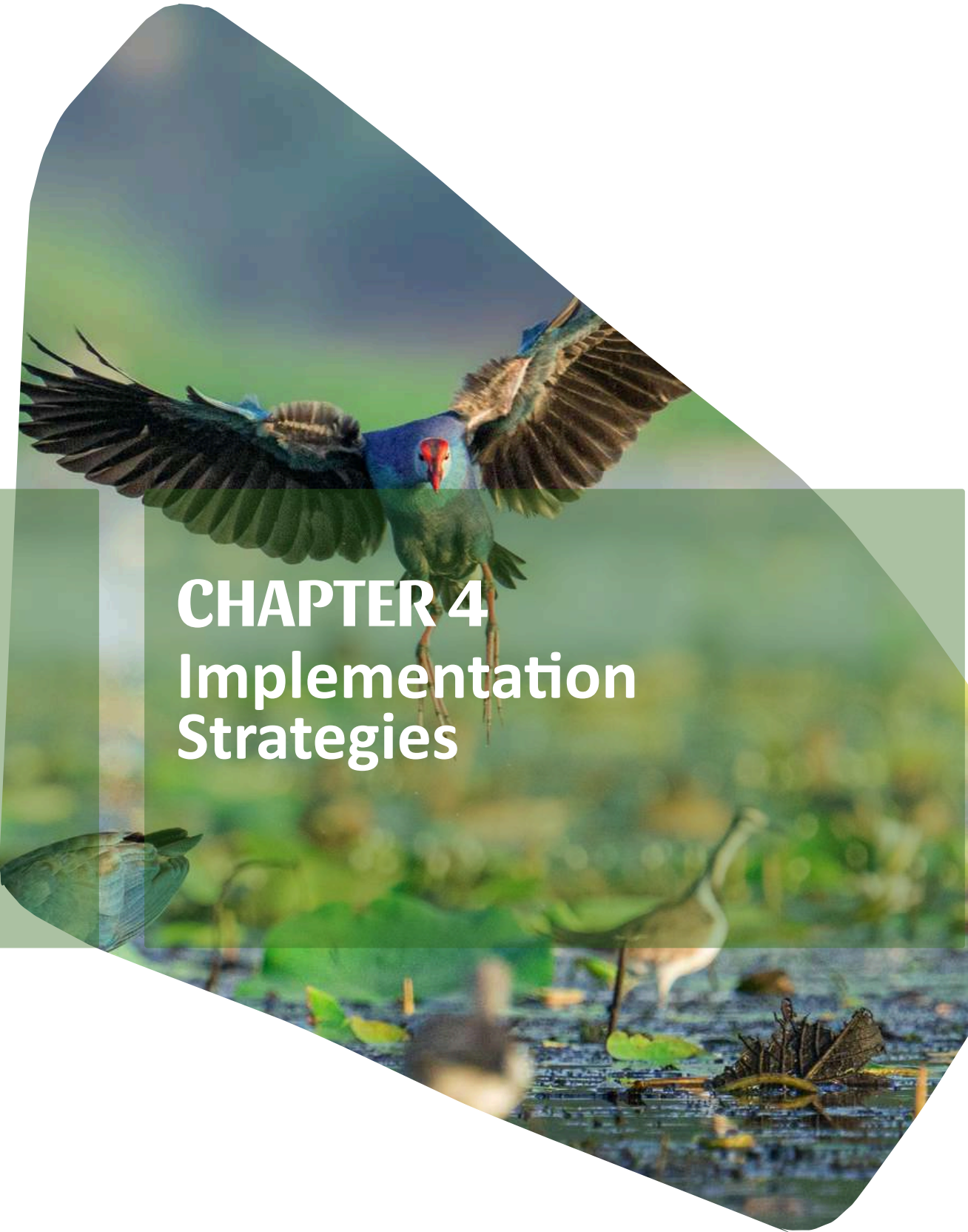
emergence of new generations of young researchers and conservation practitioners in the country.

Furthermore, resource mobilization is a central component of ensuring the sustainability of the Network's activities. This involves actively seeking funding from technical and financial partners, international organizations, foundations, and funding mechanisms dedicated to youth, biodiversity, and climate action. This approach will also include the development of well-structured and competitive project proposals aligned with national and international priorities.

This strategic pillar also aims to diversify funding sources in order to reduce dependence on any single category of partner and strengthen the Network's financial resilience. The objective is to establish a coherent resource mobilization strategy combining institutional funding, collaborative projects, and innovative financing initiatives.

By strengthening partnerships and resource mobilization, this strategic pillar will contribute to the long-term sustainability of the Congolese Youth Biodiversity Network and the continuity of its activities. It will also position the Network as a credible, well-structured, and effective actor capable of working collaboratively with diverse stakeholders in the biodiversity and sustainable development sectors.



A vibrant bird with blue, green, and red plumage is captured in mid-flight over a pond. The bird's wings are spread wide, showing intricate feather patterns. The background is a soft-focus view of a pond with green lily pads and water. The entire image is framed within a white, angular shape that resembles a stylized house or a modern architectural element.

# CHAPTER 4

## Implementation Strategies



The implementation of this 2026–2031 Strategic Plan is based on a clear organizational structure, effective coordination mechanisms, and a robust monitoring framework. Strengthening the Network’s structure and clearly defining roles and responsibilities at different levels are essential conditions for ensuring the coherence of actions, the achievement of results, and accountability to members, partners, and stakeholders.

The implementation mechanisms are based on a decentralized approach structured around the National Coordination and Provincial Coordinations. The National Coordination is responsible for strategic planning, technical oversight, resource mobilization, partnership management, and representing the Network at national and international levels. It ensures the overall coherence of activities, compliance with strategic orientations, and alignment with national and international biodiversity frameworks, as well as with the values promoted by the Global Youth Biodiversity Network. It is also responsible for preparing periodic reports and overseeing the Network’s institutional communication.

Provincial Focal Points serve as the operational link between the National Coordination and local actors. They are responsible for mobilizing young people in their respective provinces, implementing field activities, reporting information to the national level, and coordinating local initiatives.

Their role is essential to ensuring the Network’s effective presence throughout the national territory. Strengthening their capacities and providing them with the necessary working tools will therefore be a

priority for ensuring effective implementation. Network members, as grassroots actors, directly contribute to the implementation of activities. Their involvement is encouraged through voluntary participation mechanisms, thematic working groups, and collaborative projects. The National Coordination will ensure regular communication with all members and create spaces for dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and exchange of experiences.

Strategic partnerships play a cross-cutting role in the implementation of the Plan. They make it possible to mobilize complementary technical, financial, and institutional resources while strengthening the Network’s credibility and position within the biodiversity conservation landscape in the DRC. Partnerships will be formalized through memoranda of understanding or cooperation agreements specifying the respective commitments of the parties and mechanisms for joint monitoring. Particular attention will be given to creating synergies with government-led initiatives, notably the Kivu–Kinshasa Green Corridor, as well as with programs implemented by international agencies operating in the DRC.





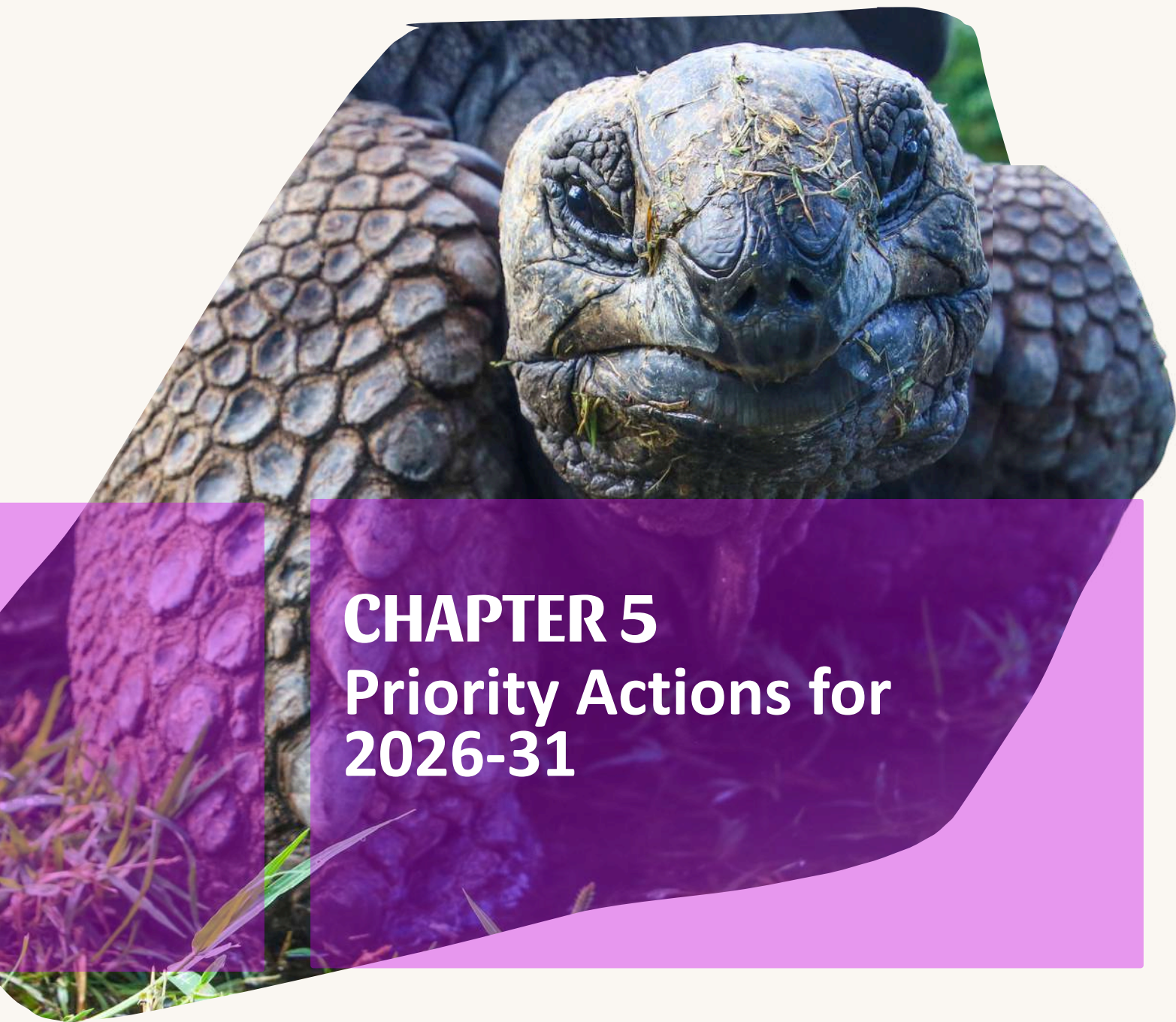
Monitoring and evaluation constitute an integral component of implementation. A monitoring and evaluation framework will be established, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative indicators to measure progress against the strategic objectives. Semi-annual and annual progress reports will be produced and shared with members and partners.

A mid-term evaluation, scheduled for 2028, will assess intermediate results and enable strategic adjustments where necessary. A final evaluation in 2030 will assess the overall impact of the Plan and generate lessons learned to inform future strategic plans.

Resource mobilization will be integrated into the implementation framework through a dedicated strategy, translated into annual action plans. This strategy will include identifying potential donors, preparing project proposals aligned with national and international priorities, and diversifying funding sources. The National Coordination will oversee funding follow-up, ensure transparent financial management, and prepare the financial reports

required by partners. A resource mobilization target of at least USD 1,200,000 over the duration of the Plan has been set to support the Network's activities and youth-led initiatives.

The implementation of this Action Plan is part of a collective and inclusive dynamic. It relies on the engagement of young people, the support of partners, and collaboration with public institutions. By strengthening its internal organization, consolidating its partnerships, and ensuring rigorous monitoring of its activities, the Congolese Youth Biodiversity Network is positioning itself to make a significant contribution to biodiversity governance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to the emergence of a new generation of environmental leaders.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Priority Actions for 2026-31**



### **AXIS 1: Mobilization and structural engagement of young people**

#### **Action 1: Mapping and deployment of coordinations**

Identify, structure, and formally establish the Network's 26 provincial focal points to ensure comprehensive territorial coverage across the country.

#### **Action 2: Establishment of pilot offices**

Establish and equip 10 provincial coordination offices in strategic provincial capitals to decentralize the Network's operations.

#### **Action 3: Awareness campaigns: Biodiversity DRC**

Design and launch 2 major annual national campaigns focused on combating deforestation and the collapse of primary forests.

#### **Action 4: Local Conservation Caravans**

Organize a cumulative cycle of 60 local awareness-raising actions in rural and peri-urban areas with high ecological value.

#### **Action 4: Mass Inclusive Recruitment**

Implement a targeted membership campaign to reach 2,500 active members by 2030, strictly integrating 40% women and 20% young people from local and indigenous communities.

### **AXIS 2: Capacity Building and Leadership**

#### **Action 6: Technical Training Scholarships**

Design and deliver certified training programs for 1,200 young people on ecological monitoring, biodiversity science, and the mechanisms of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

#### **Action 7: Mentoring Program intergenerational**

Implement an annual mentorship program pairing 150 young leaders with experienced experts in forest ecosystem management and environmental governance.

#### **Action 8: National Youth Summit on Biodiversity**

Organize a national summit every two years, bringing together delegates from the 26 provinces to harmonize youth contributions and share experience among peers.

#### **Action 9: Youth Inclusion Program indigenous**

Initiate a specific strengthening framework on environmental rights and traditional knowledge for young people living around protected areas.

#### **Action 10: National Innovation Award environmental (Award)**

Create and award an annual prize recognizing the best technological or community innovations led by young people to preserve natural capital.



### **AXIS 3: Advocacy and youth participation**



#### **Action 11: Advisory Working Group**

Institutionalize the presence of young people in at least 15 public consultation processes on sectoral policies and the SPANB.



#### **Action 12: Negotiation Taskforce internationals**

Select, prepare and integrate at least 10 youth delegates into the official DRC delegations during the COPs of the Convention on Biological Diversity.



#### **Action 13: Drafting position papers (Policy Briefs)**

Produce and submit 20 science-based technical contributions to policymakers to influence biodiversity laws.



#### **Action 14: Advocacy for the "Corridor Ecological and Green"**

Mobilize the network to deliver specific advocacy using the ecological connectivity of the Kivu-Kinshasa pilot project.



#### **Action 15: Youth Observatory on the implementation implementation of the SPANB**

Establish a citizen monitoring framework where young people assess the local implementation of the 2025-2030 SPANB objectives.

### **Axis 4: Communication, visibility and positioning**



#### **Action 16: Launch of a Web Portal centralized**

Create and manage an official website serving as a resource center, mapping green initiatives by young people in the DRC.



#### **Action 17: Creation of a Biodiversity Web Radio**

Launch a specialized online radio station to broadcast environmental education programs in national languages.



#### **Action 18: AI application to aid identification**

Develop a mobile application based on artificial intelligence to help young people in the field identify threatened fauna and flora species.



#### **Action 19: Multimedia Content Production d'impact**

Produce and distribute 150 video clips, infographics and reports documenting the loss of primary forests and local solutions.



#### **Action 20: Network of partner media**

Form formal alliances with at least 15 national media outlets and digital influencers to massively relay the network's conservation efforts.



## Axis 5: Strategic Partnerships and Resource Mobilization

### Action 21: Agreements of ministerial collaboration

Negotiate and sign memoranda of understanding forms with the supervisory ministries (Environment, Youth) to legitimize the network's action.

### Action 22: Academic Alliances for the research

Establish partnerships with universities across the country to link student theses to SPANB's data collection needs.

### Action 23: Project Proposal Pipeline (Project Hunting)

Write and submit at least 30 structured project proposals to international donors (target success rate: 30%).

### Action 24: Funded multi-stakeholder consortia

Design and implement at least 5 large-scale projects in co-financing with international NGOs and the private sector.

### Action 25: Donors' Roundtable

Donors' Roundtable – Organize a biennial strategic meeting with technical and financial partners to secure the budget target of USD 1,200,000 essential to the plan.

## Axis 6: Research and support for young researchers in biodiversity

### Action 26: Organizing Bootcamps in ecology and conservation technologies

Organize intensive training sessions (theoretical and practical) for young researchers on modern ecological monitoring protocols.

### Action 27: Annual launch of the "National Prize of the Young Researcher in Biodiversity"

Create a competitive scientific excellence prize aimed at promoting and rewarding financially and logistically the best final year projects (Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate) focusing on biodiversity management in the DRC.

### Action 28: Workshops on writing policy briefs for the "Science-Politics" interface

To train young scientists not to restrict their work to academic libraries, but to translate complex scientific theses into accessible and impactful advocacy documents called Policy Briefs.

### Action 29: Implementation of a scientific mentoring and co-publication program

Connecting promising young researchers with senior national and international scientists, as well as with experts from conservation NGOs.

### Action 30: Creation of an open and collaborative database "BioJeunes-RDC"

Design an open digital library centralizing research papers, dissertations and non-confidential ecological data collected by students and young professionals in the country.

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**Congolese youth at the heart of the action for biodiversity**

Mobilize • Represent • Act

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