



**ÉCOLE RÉGIONALE POST-UNIVERSITAIRE
D'AMÉNAGEMENT ET DE GESTION INTÉGRÉS
DES FORÊTS ET TERRITOIRES TROPICAUX**



Centre de Catégorie II sous les auspices de l'UNESCO

Visit of German parliamentarians to RB Luki and launch of the major Green Alliance project funded by the Swedish International Development Agency

The Luki Biosphere Reserve (RBL) hosted two major events on 31 May and 1 June 2023. Both events contributed significantly to raising ERAIFT's profile as a centre of high-level training and expertise.

The Luki Biosphere Reserve (RBL) is one of three UNESCO Man and Biosphere (MAB) sites in the Democratic Republic of Congo. A relic of the Guinean-Congolese Mayombe forest massif, the RBL provides local communities with most of their food, medicines and building materials.

Agriculture and carbonization are the main sources of income for local people. But these two activities are the most powerful drivers of deforestation, with major repercussions for biodiversity. To fight against the degradation of the Luki forest and maintain the ecosystem services as best we can, a number of development and scientific research initiatives are underway. Alongside INERA, which is responsible for the management of the Luki RB, ERAIFT and WWF are joining forces to ensure the preservation of this biologically rich ecosystem, which is facing a major threat of extinction.

On 31 May, six German parliamentarians accompanied by RBL experts discovered the unique natural attractions of the site. They also appreciated the major importance of mobilising human, technical and financial resources to ensure the operation of such a research station. It should be pointed out that the 6 German MPs, led by the Hon. Dr. Christoph Hoffmann, Head of Delegation, belong to the Environment and Energy Committee of the Bundestag (the German parliament). As such, they have a direct influence on the political decisions that shape the German budget law.

On Thursday 1 June, the RBL welcomed a Swedish delegation led by the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden to DR Congo, HE Henric Rasbrandt, in the presence of provincial public authorities led by Mr José Ntedika Nyimi, Deputy Director of Cabinet and Special Representative of HE the Governor of the Province of Central Kongo. The delegation was welcomed with great pomp and ceremony by the site management teams and numerous representatives of the local community of Luki. In addition to the diplomatic authorities, two key figures from WWF-Sweden, Ms Anastasia Lundquist and Mr Olle Forshed, also attended the event.

The whole assembly gathered at the RBL to launch the major Green Alliance project funded by SIDA (Swedish International Development Agency). The aim of the project is to establish a green alliance with local communities by implementing a landscape-scale intervention in Central Kongo. The main thrusts of the project are to improve and diversify agroforestry production, promote social and economic development in rural areas and strengthen community governance structures.

Successively, the two delegations visited the RB Luki primary forest at length and met with local stakeholders, led by experts from ERAIFT, INERA and WWF DRC. On this occasion, the specific interventions of ERAIFT and the importance of its fundamental mission of training high-level executives were concretely highlighted in the field and greatly appreciated by the visitors.

ERAIFT thanks INERA, WWF-RDC, the Swedish Embassy and the German Embassy for the invitations and for their support for ERAIFT