

## **International Conference on Afforestation and Reforestation (CIAR) Brazzaville, Congo**

From 2 to 5 July 2024, ERAIFT (Category 2 Centre under the auspices of UNESCO) jointly animated a stand with UNESCO Brazzaville, on the occasion of the first edition of the International Conference on Afforestation and Reforestation (CIAR), held at the Kintélé International Conference Center in the Republic of Congo.

Held as part of the celebration of the African and global decade of reforestation, this conference was organized by the African Union Commission, the United Nations Forum on Forests, the African Forest Forum and the Government of the Republic of Congo. The main objective is to increase the global forest area and that of the Congo Basin in particular, through afforestation and reforestation activities. This in order to preserve habitats and biodiversity; support and maximize the production of goods and services provided by forests, and increase the capacity of atmospheric carbon sequestration in the fight against climate change.

Specifically, it aimed to: (1) take stock of progress in afforestation and reforestation, document good practices and lessons learned, identify the challenges facing Africa and propose recommendations on the way forward; (2) adopt a global/African strategy for afforestation and reforestation (and priority actions), including technical, scientific and financial aspects; (3) prepare to call for the inclusion of the African and Global Decade of Afforestation in the United Nations agenda, through an African and global declaration on afforestation and reforestation; (4) designate a body to monitor the implementation of the recommendations made following the exchanges.

This first CIAR brought together nearly 2000 representatives of States, regional and sub-regional political and economic organizations, partner organizations, the global scientific community, financial partners and donors, international forest, climate and biodiversity organizations, international NGOs, civil society organizations, the private sector, students, representatives of local communities and indigenous peoples.

Structured into three main components, including the expert sessions, the ministerial segment and the summit of Heads of State and Government, each entity was asked to: (i) prepare a draft strategy for resource mobilization to implement recommendations to be submitted to ministers for approval; (ii) reflect on and discuss key issues related to the operationalization of recommendations and potential actions to address these issues, and on the common position for financing and investment for the implementation of the recommendations; (iii) to analyze and adopt the proposals for recommendations of the Conference.

In support of UNESCO Brazzaville for its participation in the expert session, the Director of ERAIFT, Professor Baudouin MICHEL, moderated a panel on the theme “*Lessons learned from 40 years of reforestation in the DRC and future perspectives for the Congo Basin*”.

ERAIFT thanks UNESCO, the Brazzaville office and Her Excellency, Rosalie Matondo, Minister of Forest Economy of the Republic of Congo, for being associated to this international meeting, and congratulates the Republic of Congo for this commendable initiative in favor of the restoration of forest habitats and ecosystems in the world and the Congo Basin in particular.

