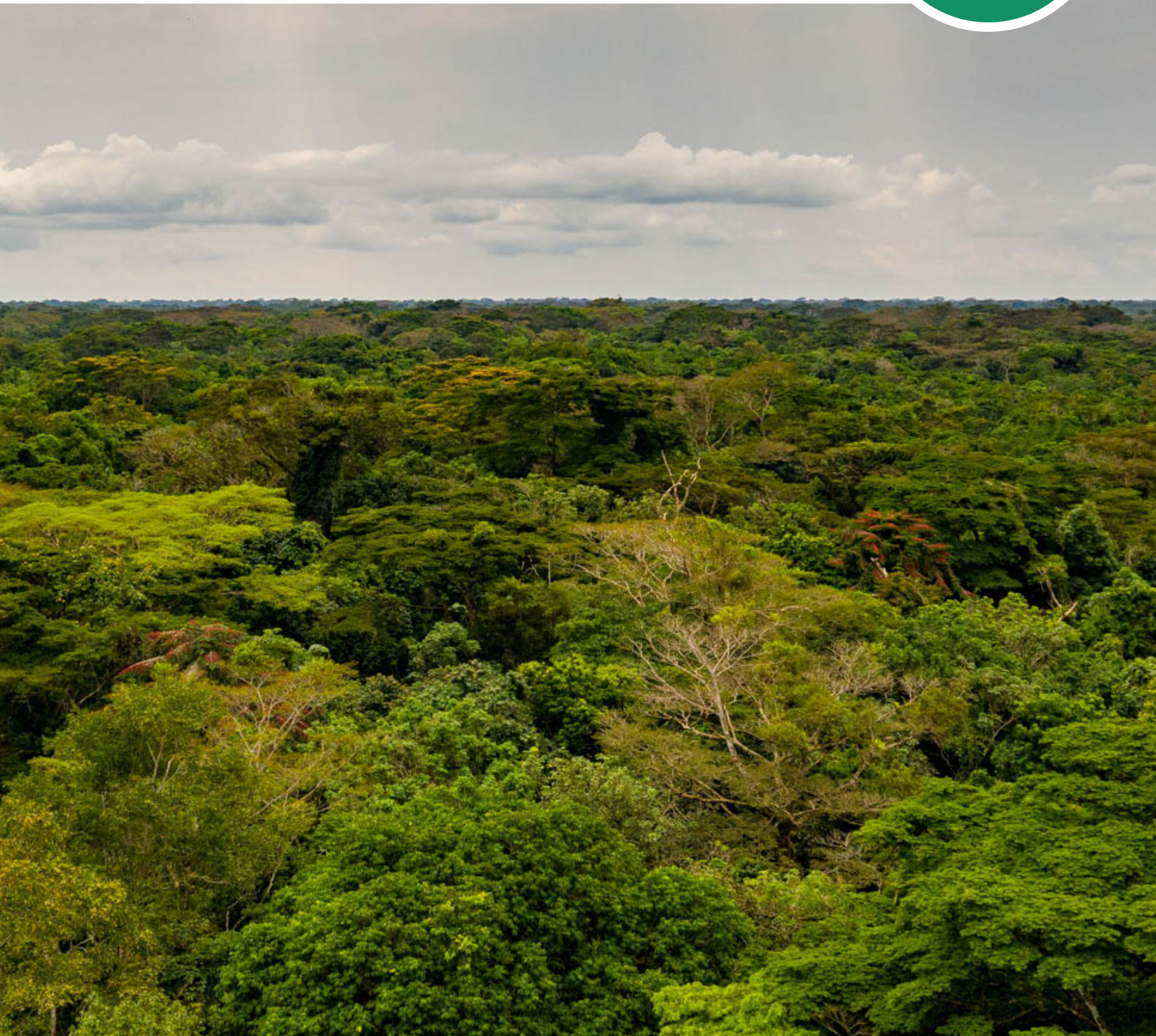


Mai Ndombe REDD+ Project **Impact Report**

Q1-Q2
2021



**EVER
LAND**

**WILDLIFE
WORKS** 

Mai Ndombe REDD+ Project

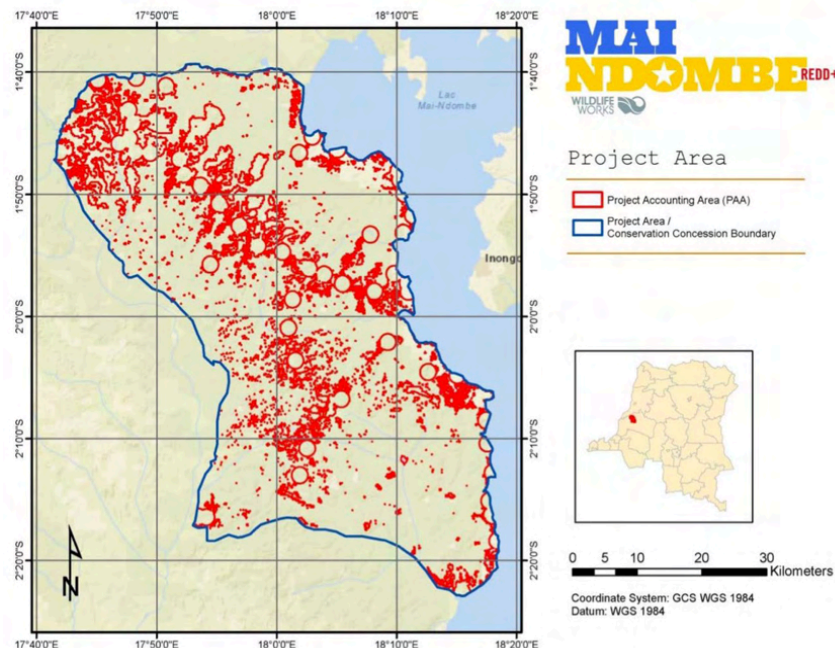
Location: **The Democratic Republic of The Congo**
Project Proponent(s): **Wildlife Works**
Standards: **VCS, CCB**

Perseverance through the pandemic

During the first half of 2021, the Mai Ndombe REDD+ Project continued its support to the communities through:

- ✓ expanding its agricultural development initiative to the village of Nkondi in the Lokanga Groupement
- ✓ completing key infrastructure projects including school buildings in the village of Bokenbene and other buildings in the villages of Ille and Makaba
- ✓ making progress on analyzing the biological diversity of Lake Mai-Ndombe based on important findings from the eDNA campaign conducted at the end of last year.

Despite ongoing challenges posed by the pandemic, the project perseveres.



13,322,276 tonnes of CO2 emissions avoided to date
2,400,000 tonnes of CO2 avoided per year

About the Mai Ndombe REDD+ Project

The Mai Ndombe REDD+ Project protects 300,000 hectares (740,000 acres) of critical bonobo and forest elephant habitat within the world's second-largest intact rainforest and some of the most important wetlands on the planet, the Congo Basin. This project reduces the principal drivers of forest and biodiversity loss and is charting a new pathway for community prosperity through comprehensive investments into the surrounding local communities, which are among the most impoverished in the world. Such investments include building and renovating schools, providing healthcare services (such as access to immunizations), supporting food security and nutrition (such as through agricultural diversification), and providing capacity building activities that empower local communities.



Expansion of Agriculture Villages

Agriculture intensification activities have expanded to the village of Nkondi in the Lokanga Groupement. The project team has started building an animal enclosure in that village and reserved an area for the cultivation of nutritious grasses. Soybean and Cassava have also been planted in Nkondi. Crops in the area are showing signs of growth and a good yield is expected next quarter. Similar to what was done in the Loombe test area, plantain and banana plantations have also been planned for the rainy season next September. Providing and scaling sustainable agriculture intensification activities can help stop deforestation by reducing the need to clear trees to grow food or kill bushmeat to eat.



New school construction providing quality education



The project continues to make strong progress toward meeting its commitment to build schools in every village. Six school buildings were constructed in the village of Ilee and Mankaba at the south westernmost part of the project area and construction of four more buildings has begun in the village of Nselenge, starting with pouring the foundations. Construction will likely be completed during the second semester of 2021. Construction of two new schools and six other buildings has started in Bosongo and Mbwe Nzey, with building foundations completed in Bosongo. Local people in Mbwe Nzey are helping to transport materials to the construction site. These infrastructure developments will continue improving access to quality education in the project area villages.



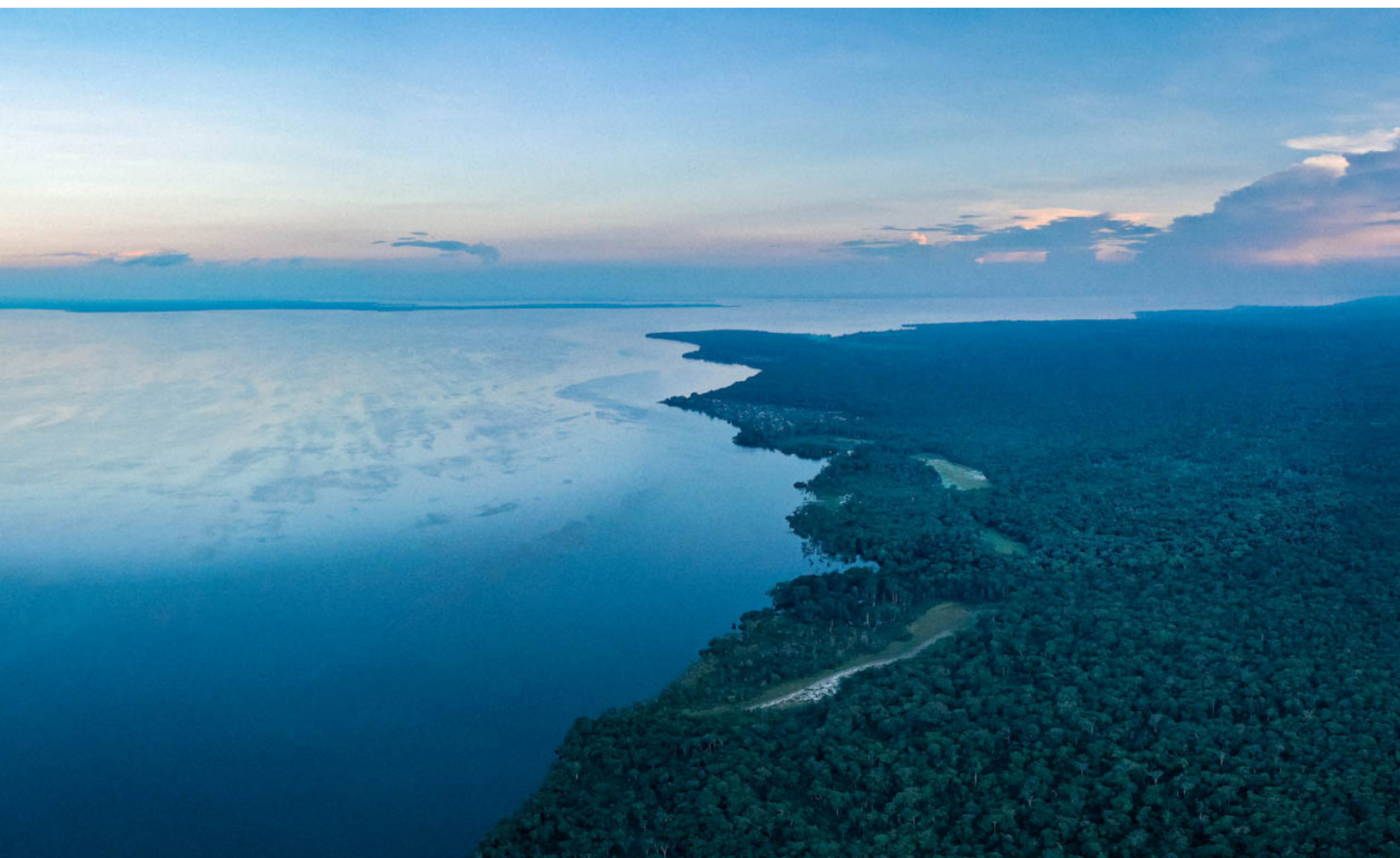
Initial findings from the eDNA campaign



The eDNA campaign conducted in 2020, and described previously in the Q1 2021 Impact Spotlight, has returned initial results that identify the fish stock species in Lake Mai-Ndombe and highlight species that have gone extinct. This critical information will help the project target local species to ensure efforts to restock the lake are successful.

Wildlife Works Carbon received results from Nature Metrics' analysis of water samples from the lake. The process entailed matching genetic material from samples to information in a database and comparing them to locally collected genetic material to assess the lake's current fish stock makeup. The results show that the fish stock has been significantly depleted and that most of the species in the lake have gone extinct, the result of many years of unsustainable fishing practices and the use of mosquito nets.

A team has been formed to do an in-depth analysis of these results. A paper will be prepared and submitted for publication in a scientific journal in the coming months. The hope is that the published paper will raise awareness of the serious impact of unsustainable fishing practices. The analysis and findings will also be presented to the Mai-Ndombe community at large to help members understand the cause and effect of using mosquito nets to fish and how depleted fish stocks impact food security. The results will also be used to guide restocking the lake with species that can live and reproduce in the water based on its chemistry and coexist with the current fish population. For sustainable fishing production, some species will need to be grown using artificial reproduction in labs in Inongo and Loombe.



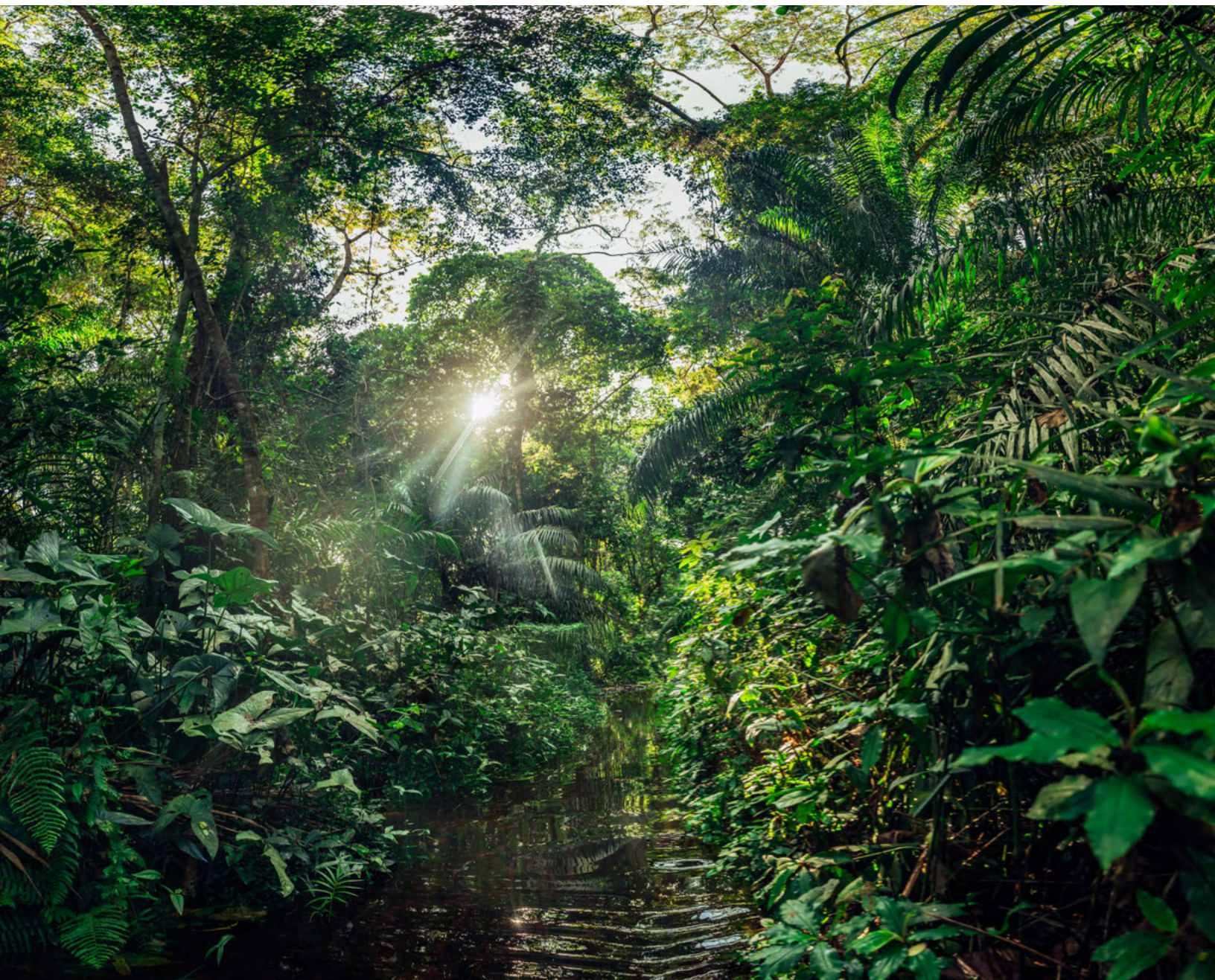


Challenges & Opportunities

The ongoing impacts of COVID-19

The impacts of COVID-19 continue to present major challenges to the project and its activities. During the first half of 2021, a number of project staff members in Kinshasa got COVID. With the support of alternative medicines, everyone recovered from getting sick. Due to the pandemic, most of the project's activities have taken an important hit. However, the office in Kinshasa has completely reopened this semester and activities have returned back to normal.

Despite setbacks, the first half of the year proved to be highly productive with the completion of key infrastructure projects and the scaling of important initiatives like the agriculture villages. As of now, no COVID-19 cases have been reported among employees in Inongo or the project area. Communities will continue to observe social distancing measures until restrictions are lifted.



Transportation to the project area remains a challenge



Transportation to and from Kinshasa remained a major challenge in the first semester with flight restrictions adding another obstacle to reaching the project area. This meant that many employees in Kinshasa were not able to reach the project area during the first quarter of 2021.

On the ground transportation also continued to be challenging. The roads from Kinshasa to Bandundu further deteriorated. This impacted the project's ability to transport building materials. After deciding to stop using the Kinavia flight during the last quarter of 2020 due to poor plane maintenance, the situation got worse

Fortunately, the system put in place at the end of 2020 has continued working to date. Two 4X4 vehicles are being used to assist the project truck if it breaks down on the road. The multiple trips per month (2-3) to Bandundu-Ville is still a big challenge, causing fatigue for the driver and passengers. They have not had any breakdowns or accidents, fortunately, and the project continues searching for alternative ways to reach the project area that don't require flying.

