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TROPICAL ECOLOGY | 2018

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY FOR TROPICAL ECOLOGY (GTÖ)



**CHALLENGES IN
TROPICAL ECOLOGY AND CONSERVATION -
GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES**





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PLAYING THE GAME: DEFINING INDICATORS FOR INTACT FOREST LANDSCAPES IN THE CONGO BASIN

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In 2014, the General Assembly of the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) adopted Motion 65 that called for the protection of the vast majority of Intact Forest Landscapes (IFL) in FSC certified concessions around the Globe. To comply with Motion 65, a Regional Working Group for the Congo Basin on High Conservation Values (HCV-RWG) was established in 2016. To support its decision-making process, FSC invited a team of researchers as facilitators.

The facilitation team associated Companion Modelling and MineSet. Companion Modelling is a participatory approach based on the development and use of role-playing games to support decision-making. MineSet, is a model of regional landscape change developed to explore the future of tropical forest landscapes in Central Africa over the next decades. MineSet places players in the roles of CEOs of logging and mining companies, interacting with markets, the government and NGOs, planning their activities and developing strategies to cope with the environmental, economic and social impacts of their decisions. It features all the major underlying drivers of land use change in Central Africa: demographics, economic and finance signals, governance and transparency, technological changes, and cultural differences. As the game unfolds, the players discover the complexity of the system, and devise new rules and strategies to balance development and conservation.

The game and the discussion that follows enables stakeholders to share and confront their perceptions of the system, better grasp its complexities, explore alternative futures in a low-risk environment, and negotiate new forms of collective action. Taking on the role of a stakeholder has a profound impact on players' awareness and understanding of the system, and has the potential to reshape their perception on the problem at hand. This experience is a critical component of the approach and central to the learning process.

Thanks to this combination, the RWG could unlock stalled negotiations, level the playing field between participants and move toward consensus. This example serves as proof of concept of the use of facilitation and games to address complex negotiations under conditions of high uncertainty and divergent interests. It shows a way to foster transformation in landscape management.