



# Environment Education and Lifelong Learning

The Kahuzi-Biega – Itombwe Corridor for Landscape and Wildlife Restoration

Toronto, EELL 2025



Forest  
Health  
Alliance





# Agenda

- The Corridor
- Communities
- Biodiversity
- Lessons Learned
- Next Steps



Dominique Bikaba



Dr. Kerry Bowman



Matt Brunette



# The Corridor



- DRC is the second largest country in Africa with about one million sq Km of forests, covering half of the national territory and representing more than 76% of the Congo Basin Forests.

- The project is based in eastern DRC where Dr Kerry Bowman has been traveling annually for the last 25 years.



**For Forests, Wildlife and Local Peoples**

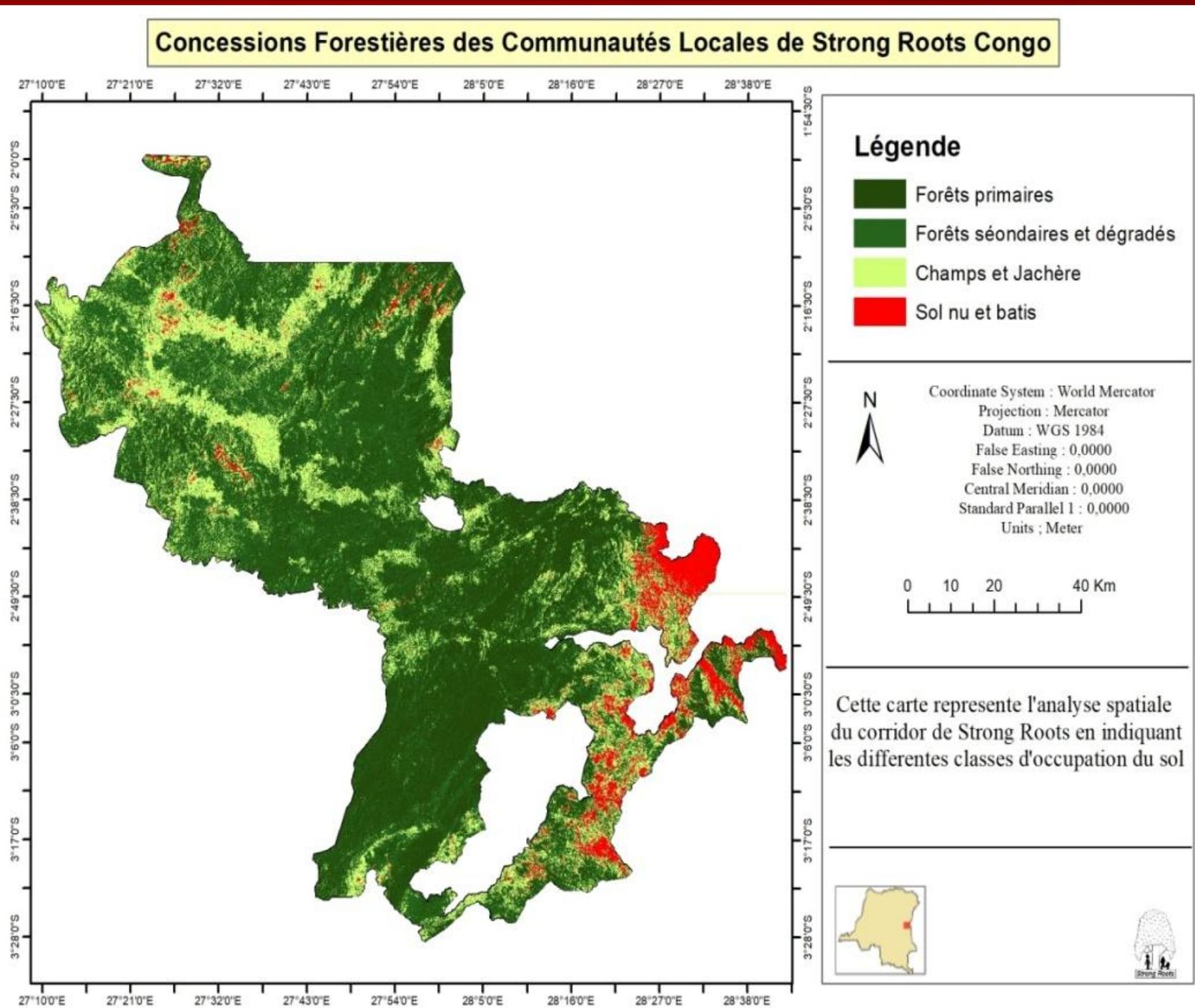
# Deforestation Drivers

Deforestation (0.3% in 2024) is mostly by:

- Mining
- Agriculture
- Sources of energy
- Demography
- Poverty



# Corridor Area



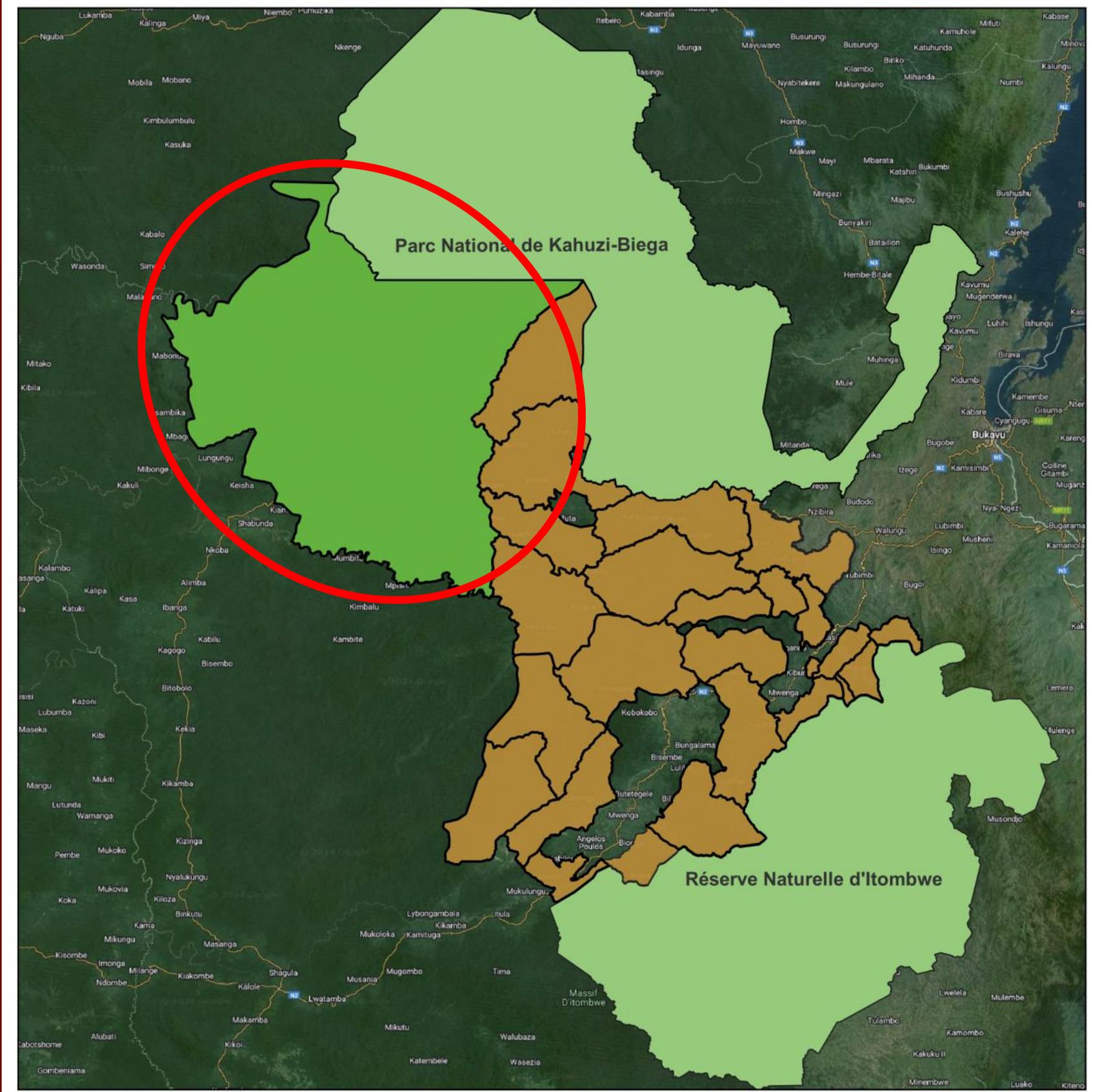
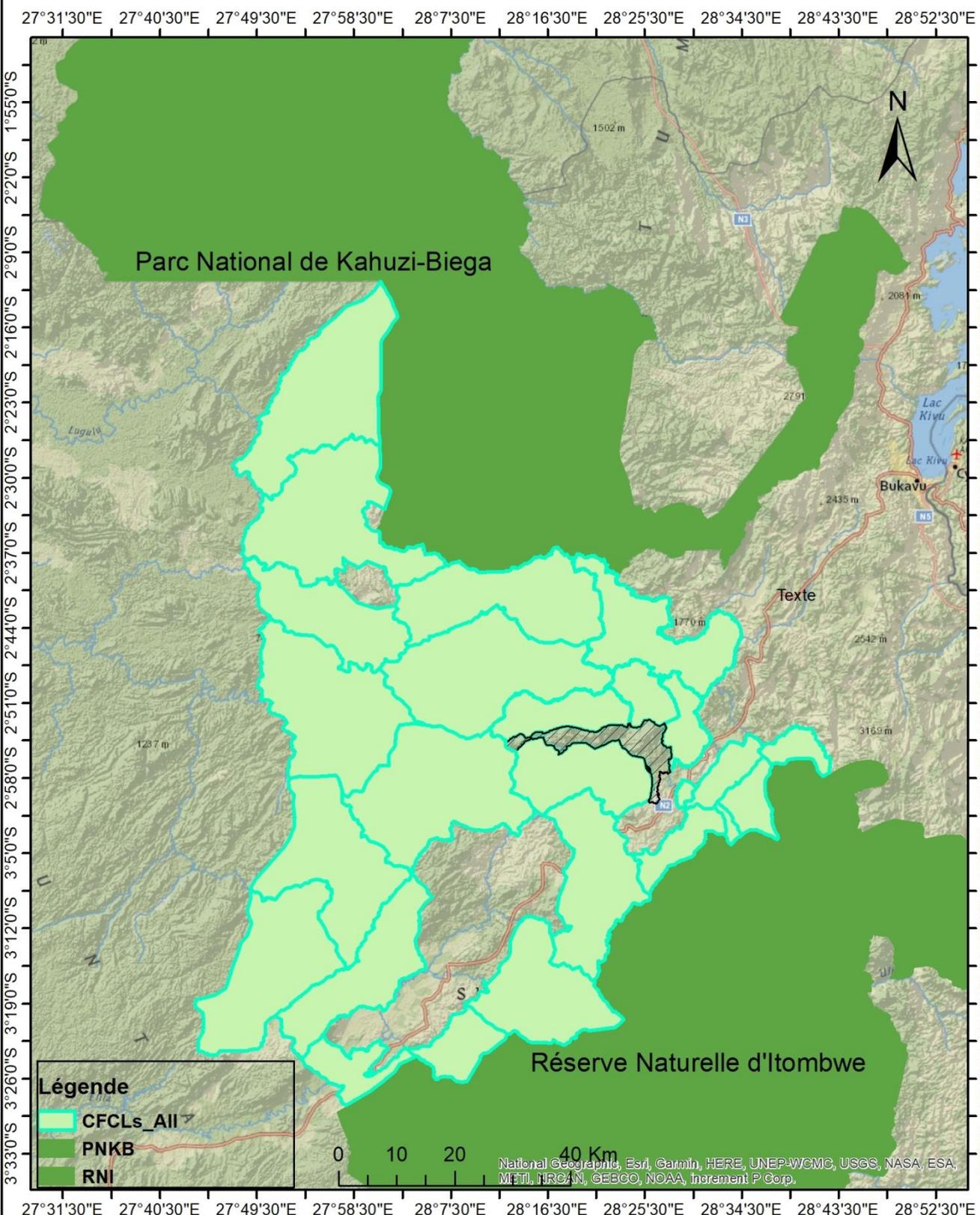
- 4% of pop growth/ year
- 98.6% of energy come from wood
- Mining provides 72% of local economy (western part of the corridor)
- 12% of forest loss (2013 – 2024)
- 83% of old growth (2024)



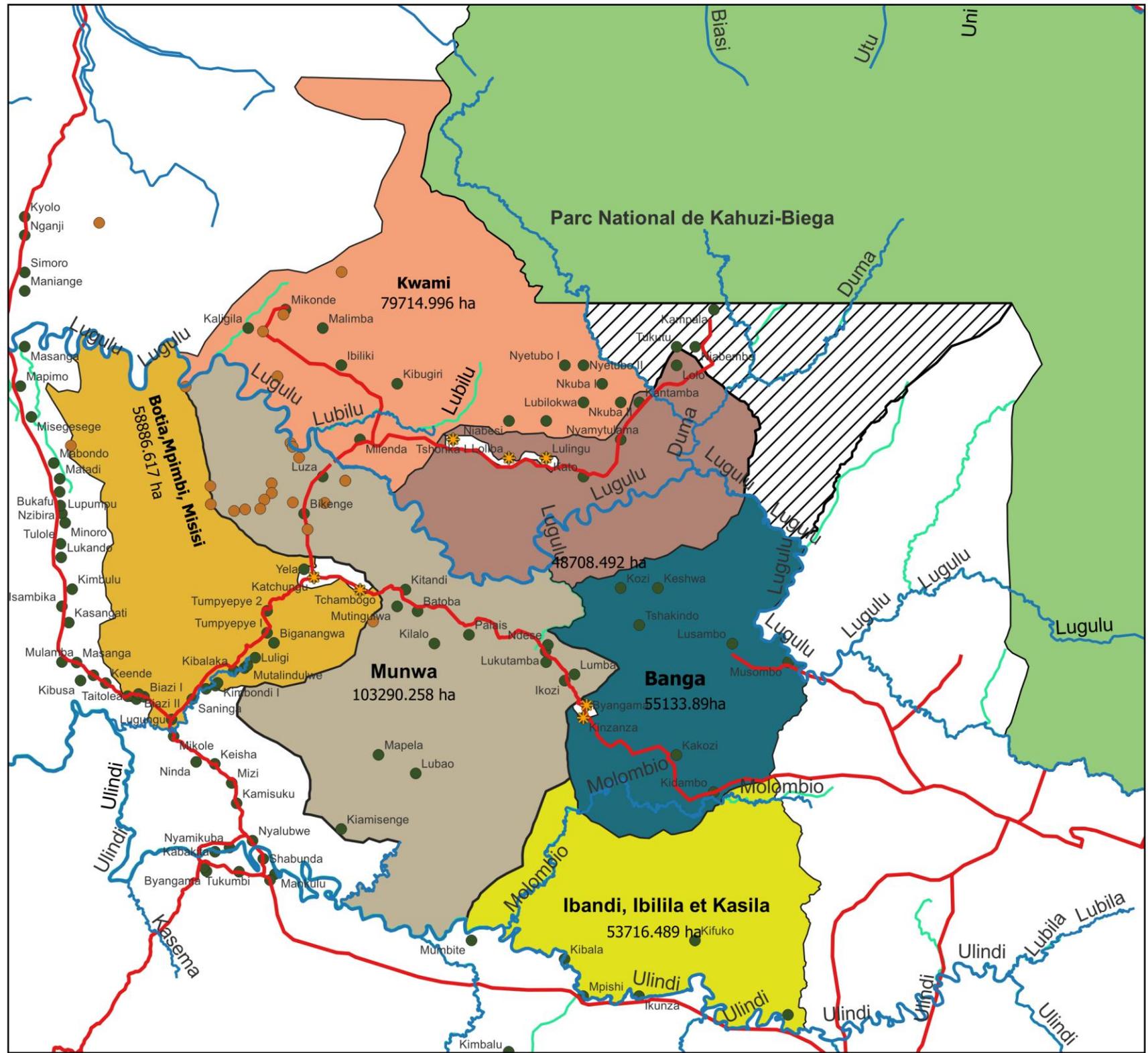
| Chiefdoms    | # CFCLs   | Area in ha     | Groupings |
|--------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|
| Bakisi       | 6         | 250,947        | 2         |
| Basile       | 5         | 84,735         | 7         |
| Burhinyi     | 1         | 5,272          | 4         |
| Luindi       | 5         | 25,705         | 6         |
| Wamuzimu     | 7         | 205,526        | 11        |
| Ngweshe      | 1         | 29,253         | 1         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>25</b> | <b>601,438</b> | <b>31</b> |

We have helped communities securing 25 Forest Concessions of Local Communities (CFCLs), spanning more than 600,000ha, for which 23 CFCLs have been granted titles.

# Concessions Forestières des Communautés Locales



Les zones cartographiées et documentées dans Bamuguba Nord, Chefferie de Bakisi , Territoire de Shabunda

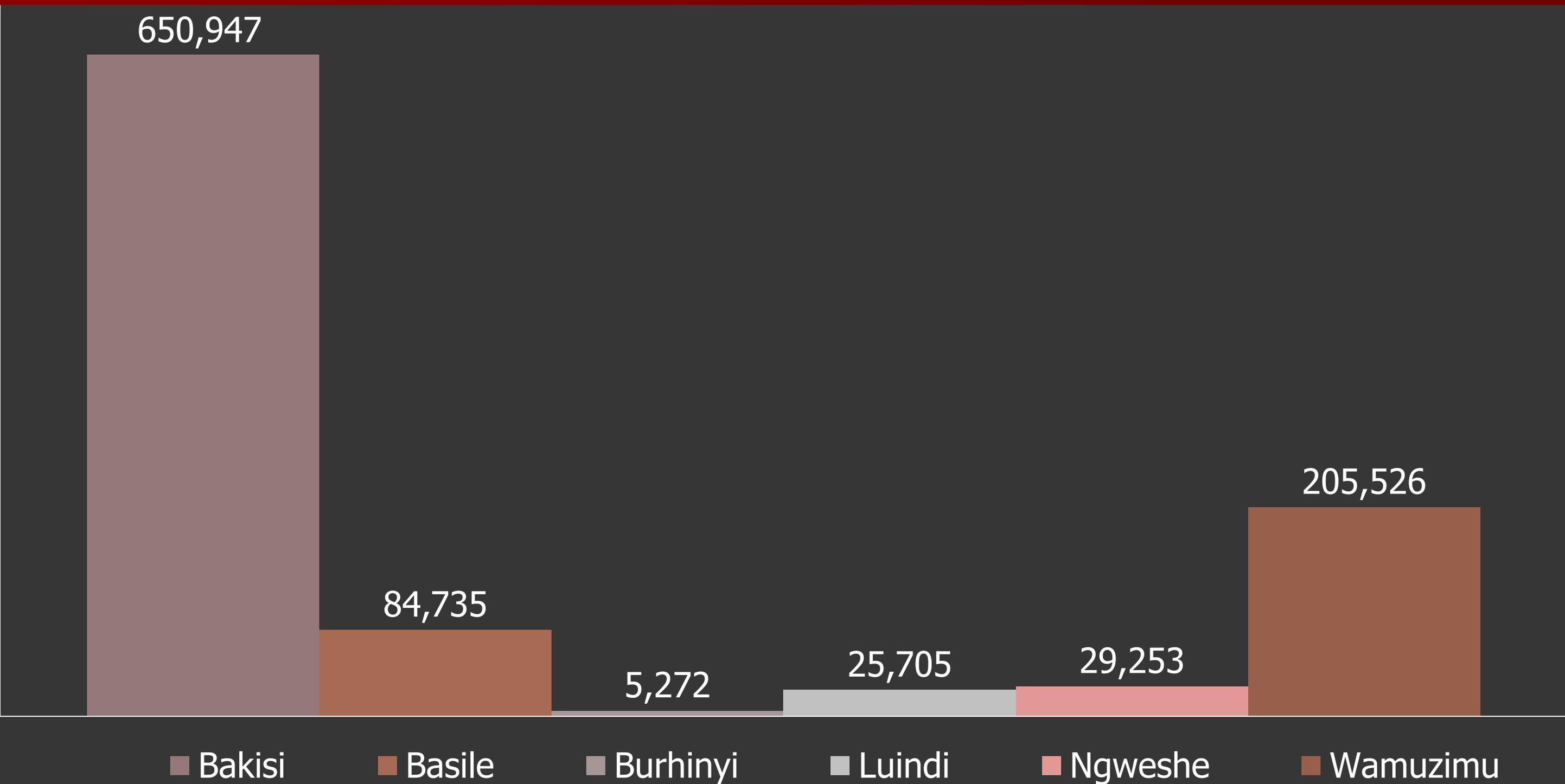


**Légende**

- Rivières
- Routes
- Cours d'eau
- Coordonnées \_Bamuguba Nord
- ★ Grande agglomération d'habitation
- Villages
- PNKB
- ▨ Zone non documentée
- Kamuno
- Banga
- Botia, Mpimbi, Misisi
- Kwami
- Munwa
- IBANDI ET IBILILA, Kasila

This additional area is owned by 12 Clans (Communities) and is scheduled to be legally secured by 2028

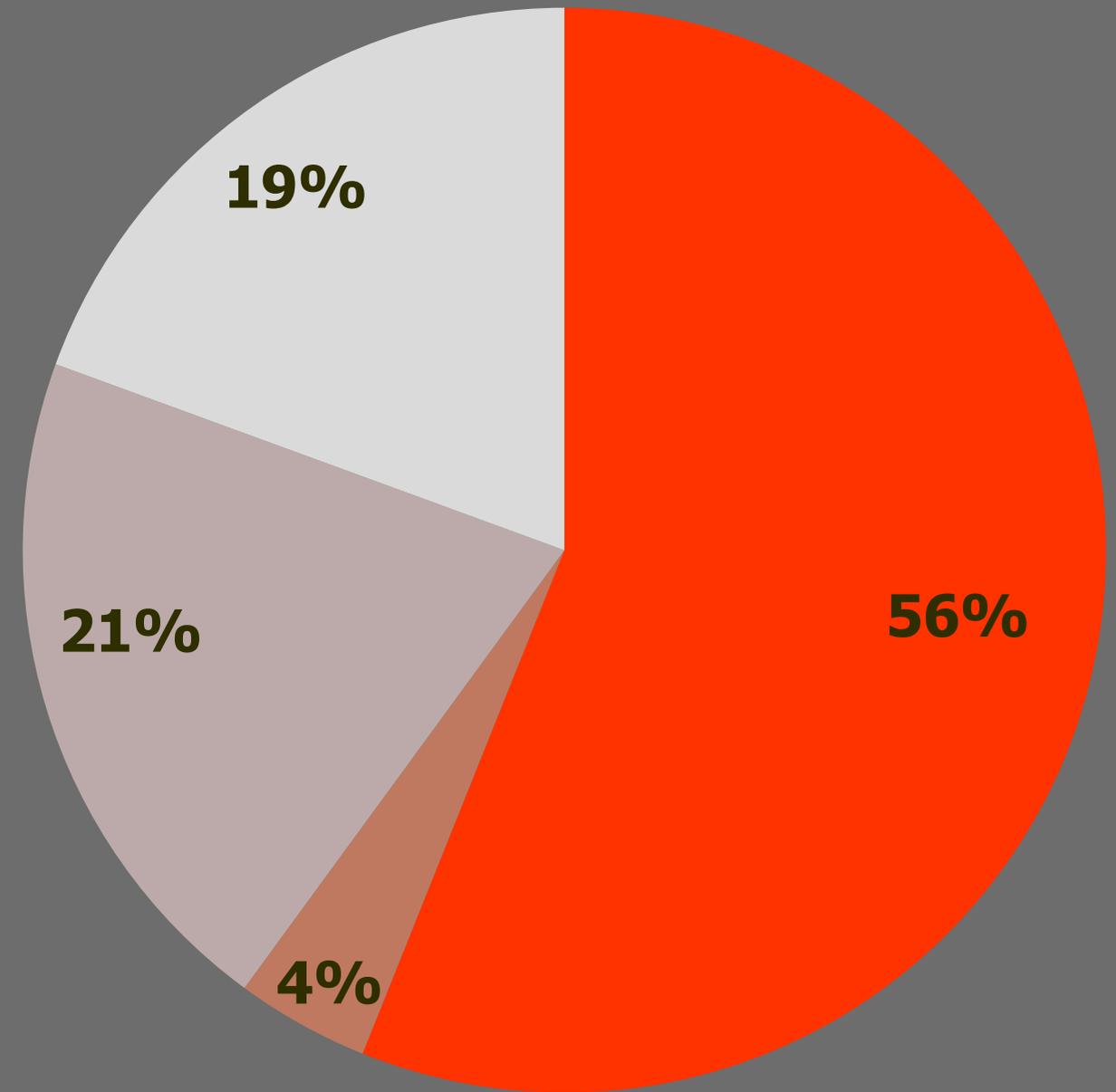
# Corridor Securing Status and Chiefdoms Contribution





# Corridor Securization Status

■ Secured ■ Waiting for titles ■ Documented ■ Under process



# The Corridor Film

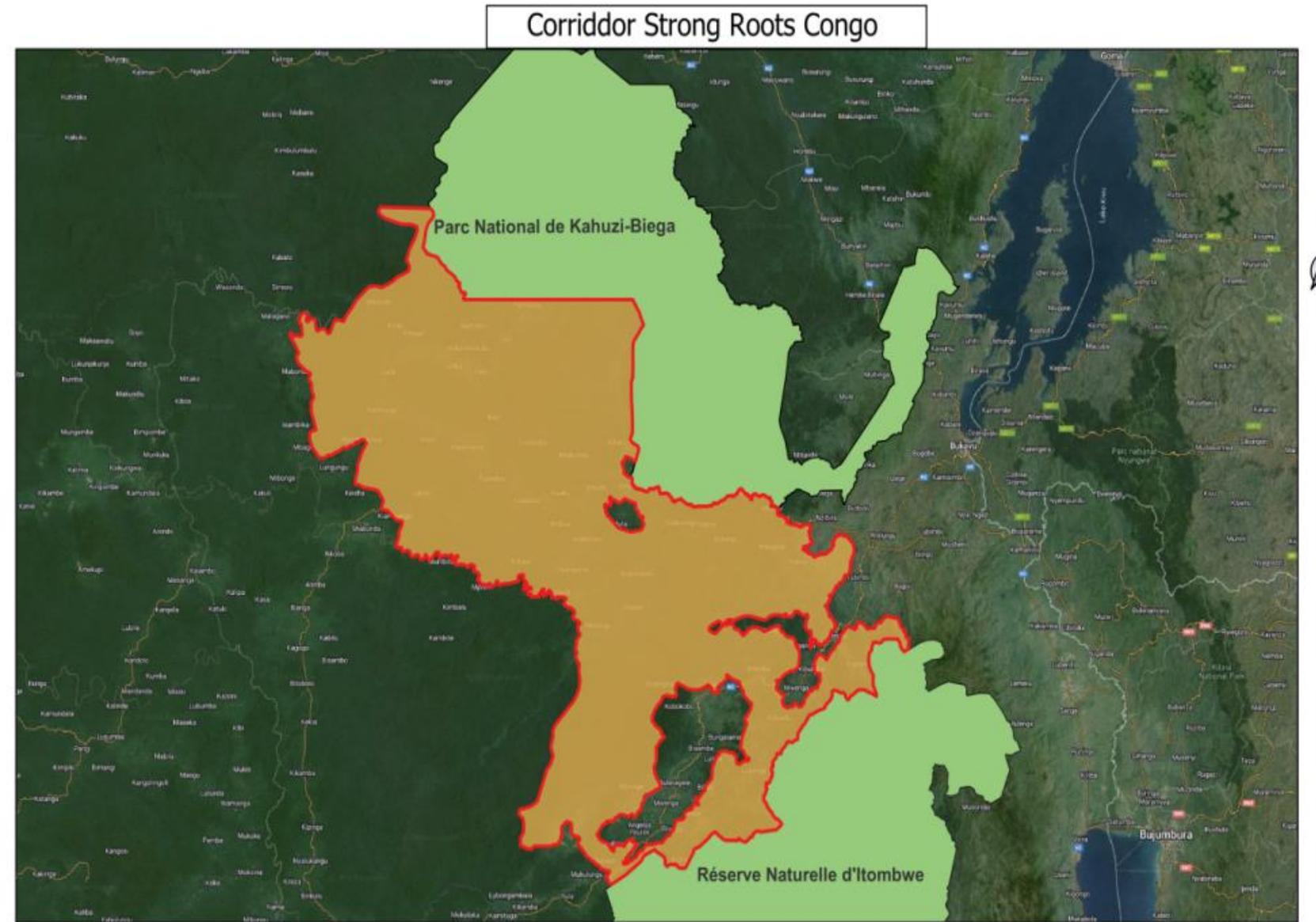


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fo0JxCtmIgY&t=1s>



Communities

# Ecological and management connectivity with protected areas



Légende

- Corridor
- Parc National Kahuzi Biega
- RN\_Itombwe

0 25 50 km



- Permanent dialogues with ICCN
- Boundaries demarcation
- Villages documentation
- Participatory mapping of conservation zones

# Traditional Knowledge and Science

Documenting local communities' traditional knowledge and practices and understanding how they have contributed to shape and maintaining the forests, is essential in forest and landscape restorations.

This has improved our understanding of their contributions to maintain the forest and species intactness. We are now looking for ways to integrate them in formal conservation approaches.



REPUBLIQUE DEMOCRATIQUE DU CONGO  
PROVINCE DU SUD-KIVU / TERRITOIRE DE MWENGA  
CHEFFERIES DES BASILES ET DES WAMUZIMU

# *L'apport de la coutume lega à la gestion rationnelle et durable des ressources naturelles*



**MWAMI LONGANGI IV BYEMBA**  
**KAMPANGALASA CHRISTIAN**  
CHEF DE CHEFFERIE DES WAMUZIMU



**MWAMI KALENGA RIZIKI LWANGO**  
**LUCIEN**  
CHEF DE CHEFFERIE DE BASILE



Kitutu, Février 2021

REPUBLIQUE DEMOCRATIQUE DU CONGO  
PROVINCE DU SUD KIVU  
TERRITOIRES DE KABARE ET DE KALEHE



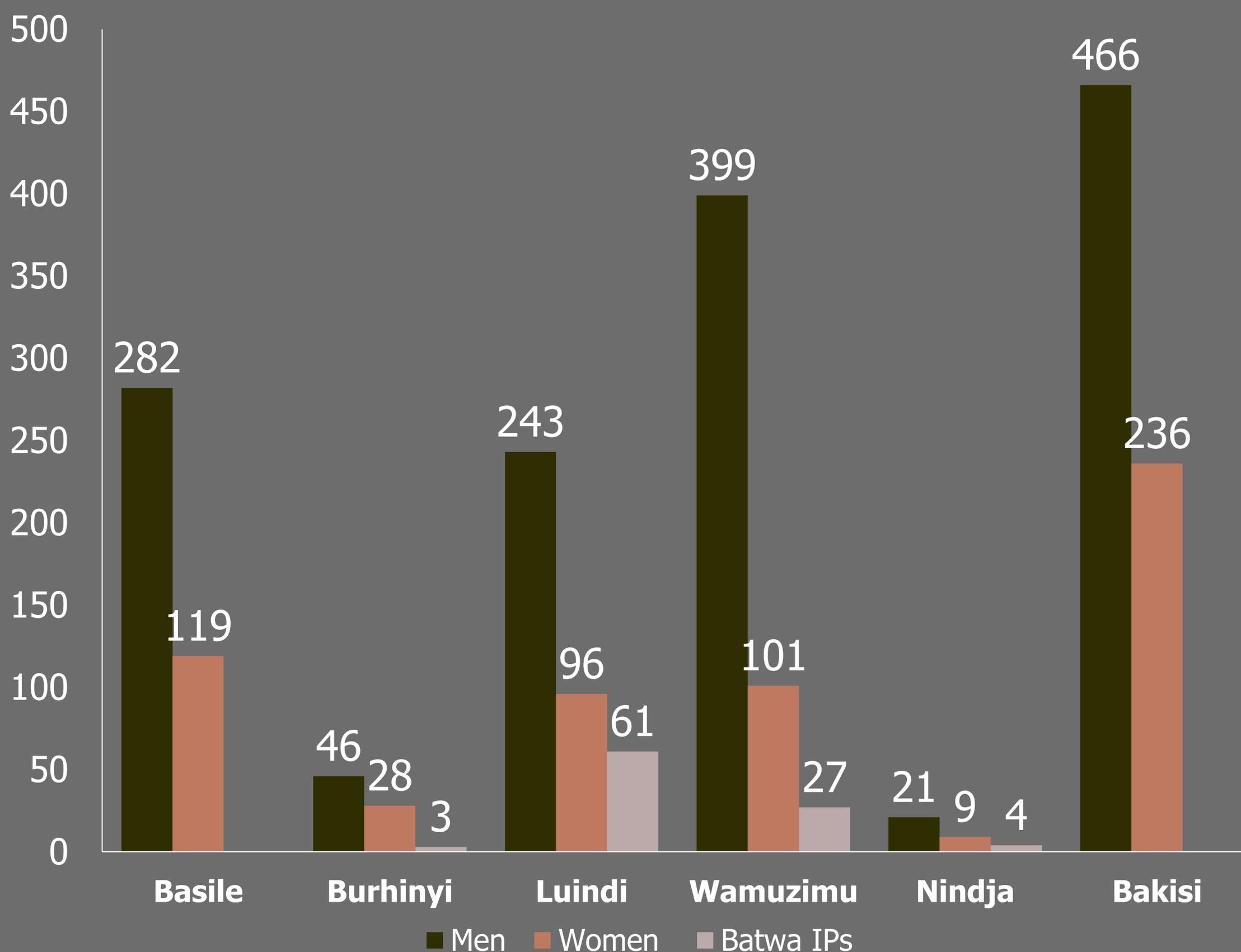
VADE MECUM DE LA  
COUTUME BATWA  
AUTOUR DU PARC  
NATIONAL DE  
**KAHUZI-BIEGA**

Apport de la coutume autochtone  
**Batwa à la gestion rationnelle et  
durable des Ressources naturelles**

Kavumu, Août 2023

# Vade Mecum

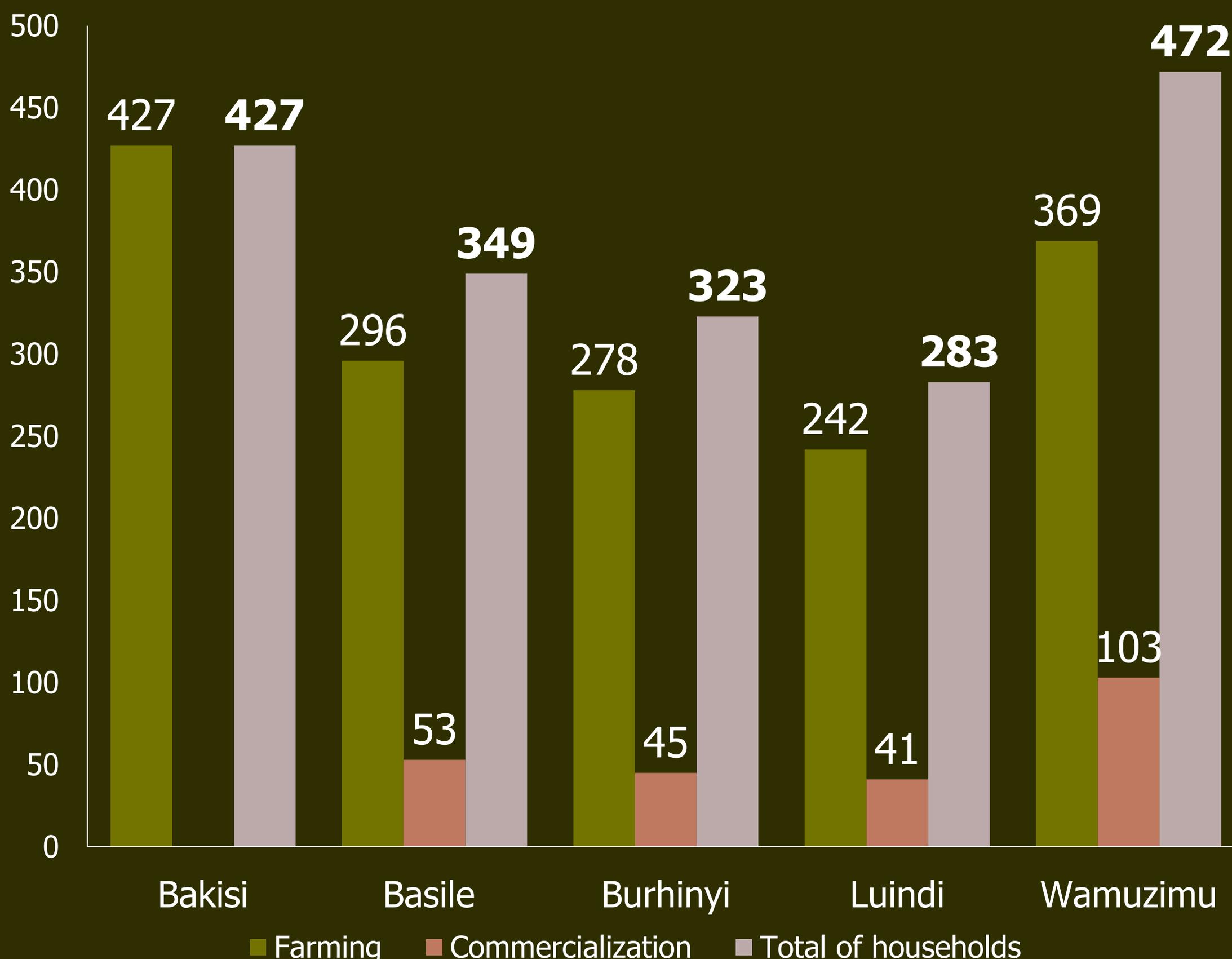
# Forest Governance & Management



|           |       |       |
|-----------|-------|-------|
| Men       | 1,457 | 2,141 |
| Women     | 589   |       |
| Batwa IPs | 95    |       |



# Agricultural Action Plan Implementation



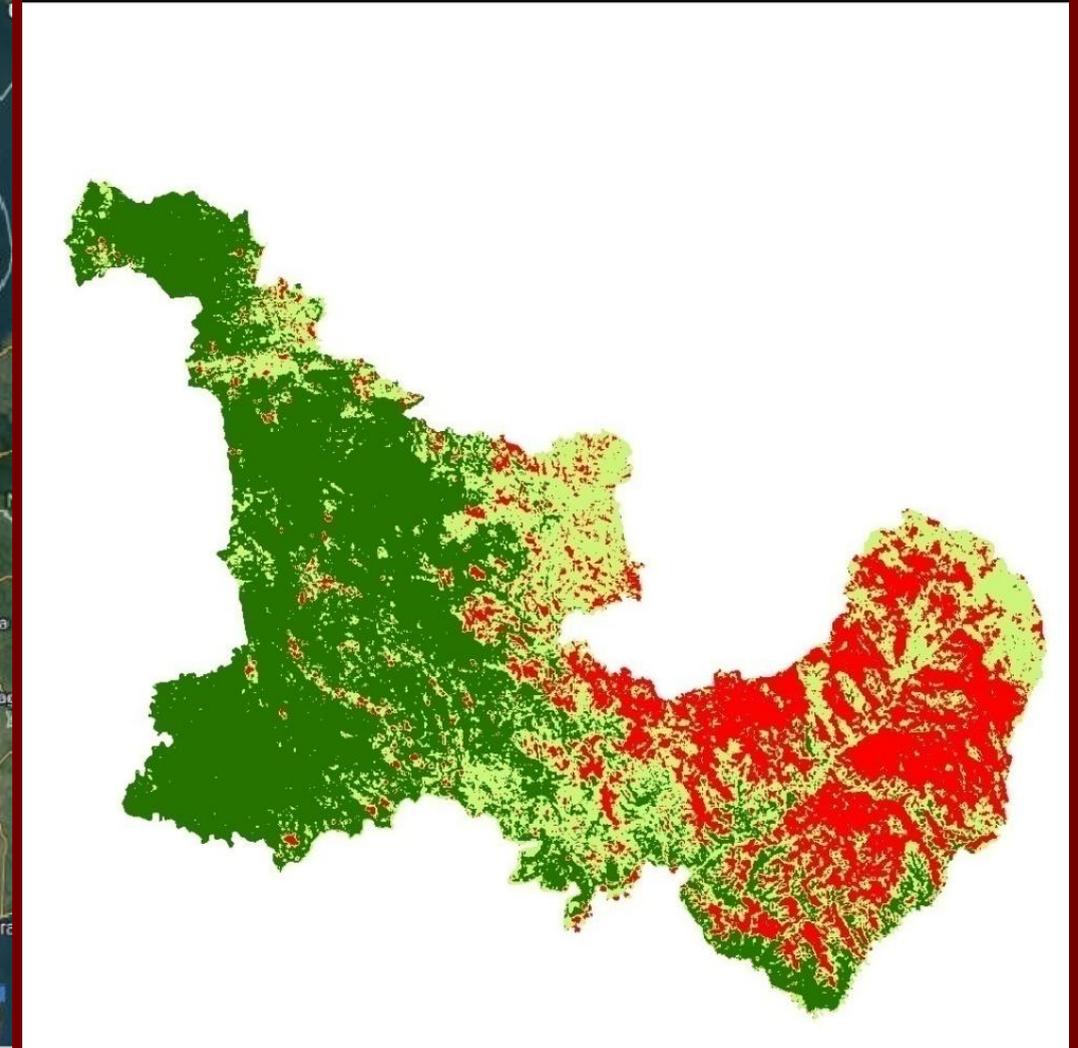
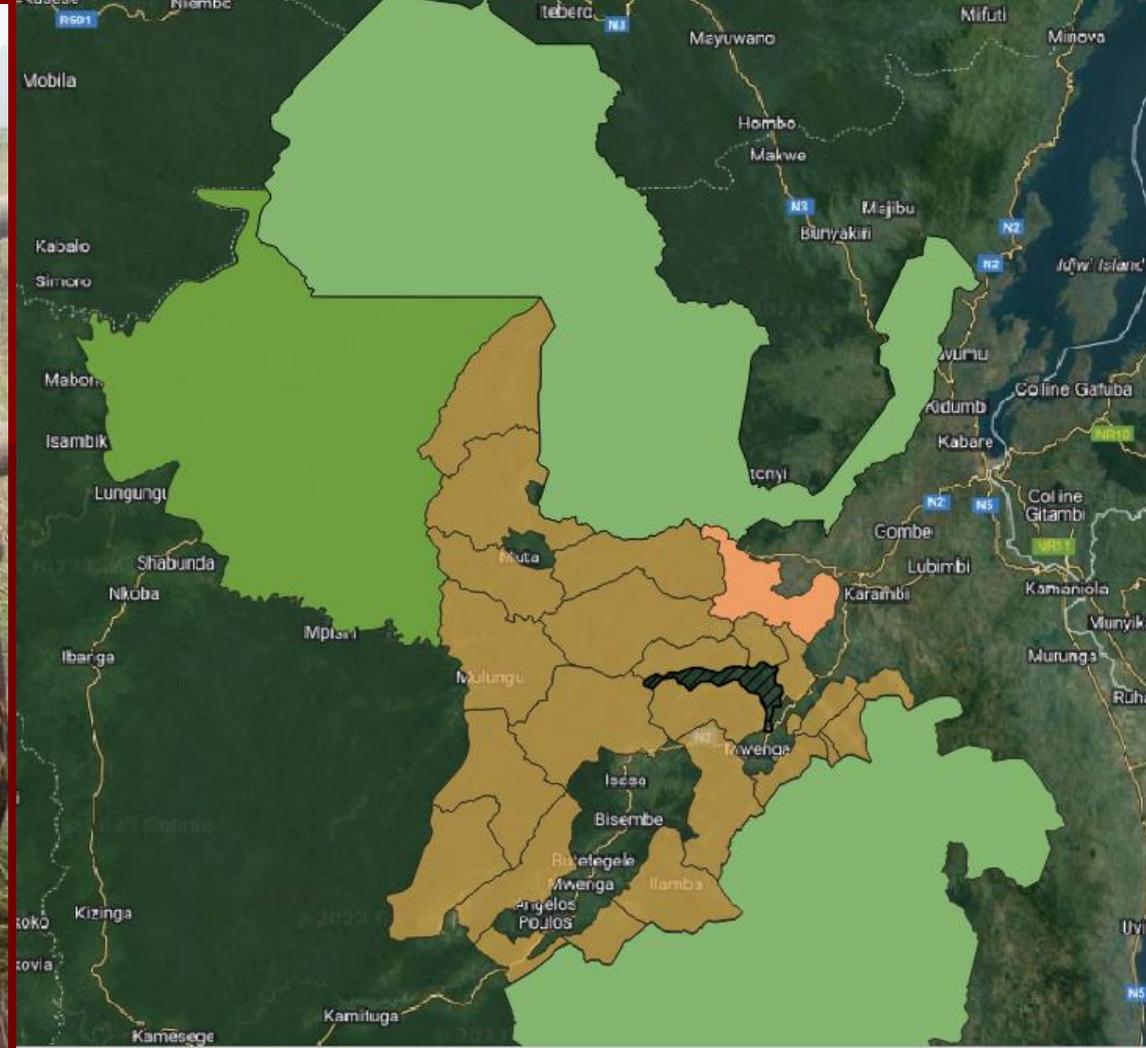
|                   |       |
|-------------------|-------|
| Farming           | 1,612 |
| Commercialization | 242   |
| Total             | 1,854 |



Biodiversity

# Returning Species





**August 6, 2019,  
Facebook: Savoir vivre news Post**

'Un léopard qui voulait exterminer toute la population du territoire de Walungu est finalement traqué par la population. Plusieurs personnes sont terriblement blessées'...

'Espèce protégée, on aurait dû procéder autrement que de l'abattre , c'est fort dommage !!'

'C'est bon de tuer cette bête dangereuse car la vie d'une personne est plus chère que celle d'un sauvage, courage la population de Walungu'.

# Bagadais d'Albert

*Prionops alberti*

Endemic to the eastern DRC, where it is located in four mountain ranges, including Itombwe Massif. It is a highly endangered species due to deforestation and climate change which is modifying its habitat, and it was even believed that it had disappeared as no observations has been made for almost twenty years. The American Bird Conservancy had even classified it as a “lost” species.



Matt Brady / The University of Texas at El Paso

Yellow-crested helmetsrike

Sources: University of Texas at El Paso (2024).

First known photos of 'lost bird' captured by UTEP scientists.

Date : 20/02/2024. [www.eurekalert.org](http://www.eurekalert.org)

# 'Dream birds' in the mist: First photo of 'lost' bird in DRC mountains



RYAN TRUSCOTT

23 SEP 2024 AFRICA

Comments

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## **Increase of gorilla populations**

The number of surveyed gorillas have increased from 3,800 to 6,800 (WCS, 2021); where 3,000 gorillas are recorded on community forests. We continue surveying community forests to update these numbers as we finalize with biological inventories in the region





# Lessons Learned

# What works, what doesn't work and why?



Not all conservation initiatives contribute to poverty reduction, and not all actions for reducing poverty contribute to sustainable conservation

Local communities and Indigenous peoples detain a large asset of knowledge and practices in biodiversity conservation, which have tremendously contributed to design this project. However, as science and new technologies alone are not enough, these traditional knowledge and practices are also not enough alone to sustain forestry.





# Stakeholders





# Next Steps



# Forest Health Alliance and Strong Roots Congo Strategic Plan 2026 - 2030

- Food security (Sustainable agriculture and agro-forestry)
- Sustain energy sources
- Local infrastructure (education, health and transportation)
- Diversify local economy sources
- Reducing deforestation from 0.3% to 0.12% by 2030



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**Let's give them a promising future**



**Thank you**