



Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs
Academic General Secretariat
Direction of Research, Innovation, and Development
B.P. 368 Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo
Website : www.ulpgl.net
Email : colloque2025@ulpgl.net | Tel. : +243998386842

International Conference

Call for Papers

Central Theme : **Environmental Disruptions and Sustainable Development: Multidisciplinary Contributions**
Conference Dates : Wednesday, January 29 to Friday, January 31, 2025
Location : Salomon Campus, ULPGL, Goma, North Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo

I. Background and Rationale

Today's world faces unprecedented climate change and environmental degradation, presenting some of the most intricate challenges of our time (Nguyen, Grote, Neubacher, Do, and Paudel, 2023). Environmental disruptions—including climate change, deforestation, pollution, and biodiversity loss—have complex, multidimensional impacts (IPCC, 2021).

For instance, irreversible climatic shifts severely impact the agricultural sector, particularly in economies where agriculture is foundational, further disrupting global consumption patterns. Additionally, climate change accelerates biodiversity loss by altering ecosystem structures and optimal temperature ranges. It increases risks associated with foodborne, waterborne, and vector-borne diseases, and hastens the spread of antimicrobial resistance due to persistent pathogenic infections. These environmental changes also pose serious threats to forestry and tourism sectors (Raihan, 2023).

Furthermore, environmental disruptions exacerbate global inequalities, as follows: (i) the most vulnerable populations, particularly the poor and marginalized, face disproportionately greater impacts from environmental disasters and often lack resources to rebuild the following events such as floods and droughts; (ii) limited access to essential resources like water and farmland; (iii)



adverse health outcomes from pollution and environmental degradation that predominantly affect disadvantaged communities with limited healthcare access; (iv) forced migration; (v) economic disparities; and (vi) educational inequities.

Thus, achieving sustainable development demands a holistic, adaptive, and inclusive approach that centers both people and the environment. This approach integrates environmental, social, and economic dimensions into development policies, considering the long-term impacts of decisions on society and the environment, as articulated in socio-ecological resilience theory (Scown et al., 2023).

Higher education institutions play a critical role in this effort by training future leaders, driving impactful research, and promoting sustainable practices, thereby contributing to solutions for contemporary environmental challenges.

The Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs (ULPGL) is organizing this international conference to address major challenges posed by environmental disruptions within the framework of sustainable development. This conference aims to advance an interdisciplinary and multidimensional approach, promoting a rethinking of academic research and university education to address these challenges. The conference will provide a platform to: (i) understand underlying mechanisms by bringing together experts across disciplines to better comprehend the causes and impacts of environmental disruptions, as well as factors influencing their progression (Ostrom, 2009); (ii) evaluate multidimensional effects on human societies (IPBES, 2019); (iii) encourage innovative solutions by fostering research and emerging technologies to address environmental challenges (Nature, 2023); and (iv) contribute to public discourse, providing policymakers with insights for developing ambitious environmental policies (UNEP, 2022).

Since its founding in 1985, ULPGL has established itself as a leader in promoting scientific research and sustainable development in Central Africa. This conference will gather national and international experts to discuss adaptation strategies, propose innovative solutions, and strengthen cooperation between state and non-state partners in both the Global North and South.

II. Conference Objectives

The main objective of this conference is to foster an interdisciplinary approach, bringing together researchers and experts from diverse backgrounds to holistically address environmental issues, enabling a better understanding of complex interactions across systems in the DRC.

The specific objectives include:

- **Analyzing the causes and consequences of environmental disruptions:** This involves identifying drivers of disruptions—such as human activities, climate change, and biodiversity loss—and assessing their impacts on ecosystems and societies (IPCC, 2021).
- **Exploring interactions between environmental and social dimensions:** This call encourages research on the links between environmental disruptions and social inequalities, conflicts, migration, and other socio-political dynamics (Rockström et al., 2009).
- **Identifying adaptation and mitigation strategies:** Contributions should propose solutions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, preserving biodiversity, improving natural resource management, and enhancing societal resilience to climate change (IPCC, 2014).
- **Fostering dialogue between science and policy:** This call seeks to bridge the gap between researchers and policymakers, promoting an integrated approach to environmental management (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005).
- **Raising awareness of environmental challenges:** Increasing participants' awareness of the impacts of environmental disruptions and the significance of sustainable development across various sectors in the DRC and the region.
- **Promoting interdisciplinary research:** Encouraging cross-disciplinary collaborations to develop integrated approaches to environmental challenges.
- **Developing innovative solutions:** Stimulating innovation through the presentation of sustainable projects, technologies, and practices that can be applied on a large scale.
- **Expanding networks:** Facilitating the creation and expansion of international networks among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to enhance cooperation and coordination in sustainable development.



II. Conference Objectives

The main objective of this conference is to foster an interdisciplinary approach, bringing together researchers and experts from diverse backgrounds to holistically address environmental issues, enabling a better understanding of complex interactions across systems in the DRC.

The specific objectives include:

- **Analyzing the causes and consequences of environmental disruptions:** This involves identifying drivers of disruptions—such as human activities, climate change, and biodiversity loss—and assessing their impacts on ecosystems and societies (IPCC, 2021).
- **Exploring interactions between environmental and social dimensions:** This call encourages research on the links between environmental disruptions and social inequalities, conflicts, migration, and other socio-political dynamics (Rockström et al., 2009).
- **Identifying adaptation and mitigation strategies:** Contributions should propose solutions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, preserving biodiversity, improving natural resource management, and enhancing societal resilience to climate change (IPCC, 2014).
- **Fostering dialogue between science and policy:** This call seeks to bridge the gap between researchers and policymakers, promoting an integrated approach to environmental management (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005).
- **Raising awareness of environmental challenges:** Increasing participants' awareness of the impacts of environmental disruptions and the significance of sustainable development across various sectors in the DRC and the region.
- **Promoting interdisciplinary research:** Encouraging cross-disciplinary collaborations to develop integrated approaches to environmental challenges.
- **Developing innovative solutions:** Stimulating innovation through the presentation of sustainable projects, technologies, and practices that can be applied on a large scale.
- **Expanding networks:** Facilitating the creation and expansion of international networks among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to enhance cooperation and coordination in sustainable development.



III. Conference Sub-Themes

Participants are invited to submit proposals under one of the following sub-themes, though this list is not exhaustive :

- (1) *Conservation of ecosystems and biodiversity: Interdisciplinary approaches for sustainable management*
- (2) *Engineering contributions to environmental protection and climate change mitigation*
- (3) *Internal displacement and climate-induced conflicts: Population vulnerability and migration management*
- (4) *Impacts of climate disruptions on food security and agricultural value chains in the DRC*
- (5) *Green entrepreneurship and climate-smart business development in the energy and hydroelectric sectors in the DRC*
- (6) *Environment and climate change : Theological perspectives*
- (7) *Managing resilient urban infrastructures amid climate disruptions: Roles of the public and private sectors*
- (8) *Natural resource management and forest conservation for reducing climate vulnerability in the DRC*
- (9) *Economic impacts of climate risks in the DRC: Adaptation and resilience scenarios*
- (10) *The judicial dialogue to climate and environmental emergencies*
- (11) *Strengthening institutions and climate governance: Strategies for effective environmental risk management in the DRC*
- (12) *Science, education, and innovation for climate adaptation: New tools and university reforms in the DRC*
- (13) *Transitioning to a low-carbon economy: Opportunities for entrepreneurship and sustainable management*
- (14) *Integrating decolonial theory, climate change, and migration*

IV. Expected Outcomes

The conference is expected to yield the following outcomes :

- In-depth reflection on reforming research and higher education systems in the DRC to address climate challenges.
- Establishment of new international collaborations for sustainable development.



- Formulation of policy and scientific recommendations to enhance environmental resilience.
- Publication of conference proceedings, compiling selected contributions.

V. Key Dates

- October 25, 2024 : Launch of the call for papers
- November 25, 2024 : Abstract submission deadline
- November 26, 2024 : Notification to authors
- Dec 1, 2024 – Jan 10, 2025 : Submission of article drafts
- January 29 – 31, 2025 : Conference at ULPGL, Goma
- April 15, 2025 : Publication of conference proceedings

VI. Additional Information

Further details will be available on the ULPGL website (www.ulpgl.net). Please complete the registration form that will be sent upon abstract submission. Given the limited financial resources allocated to this conference, selected presenters who request financial assistance may receive support for accommodation, meals, and local transportation for the duration of the conference.

VII. Submission Guidelines

Proposals (abstracts) should be sent to colloque2025@ulpgl.net using the communication submission form.

VIII. Indicative Bibliography

- Bassey, M. A. (2018). Sustainable development in Africa: Challenges and opportunities. *African Journal of Environmental Science and Technology*, 12(4), 135-145. <https://doi.org/10.5897/AJEST2018.2543>
- Dasgupta, A., et al. (2009). Environmental degradation and economic growth: A review of the literature. *Journal of Economic Surveys*, 23(4), 778-802. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6419.2009.00557.x>
- Driesen, D. M. (2010). *Environmental Sustainability: A Property Rights Approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- IPBES (2019). *Plateforme intergouvernementale scientifique et politique sur la biodiversité et les services écosystémiques*.
- IPCC (2021). *Groupe d'experts intergouvernemental sur l'évolution du climat*.



- Kihangi Bindu, K. (2024). « La repression des atteintes environnementales en RDC, note explicative », *Academy of Environmental Law*, IUCN, 13.
- Kihangi Bindu, K. (2022). *Traité de droit de l'environnement : Perspectives congolaises*, Globethics.net, African Law, 12, Genève.
- McDonald, D. A. (2018). *Sustainable Development: Linking Economy, Society, Environment*. Routledge.
- Millenium Ecosystem Assessment (2005). *Évaluation des écosystèmes pour le millénaire*. Retrieved from <http://www.millenniumassessment.org/documents/document.356.aspx.pdf>
- Nations Unies. (2021). *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021*. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2021/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2021.pdf>
- Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement (PNUE). (2019). *Global Environment Outlook 6 (GEO-6): Healthy Planet, Healthy People*. <https://www.unep.org/resources/global-environment-outlook-6>
- Raihan, A. (2023). A review of the global climate change impacts, adaptation strategies, and mitigation options in the socio-economic and environmental sectors. *Journal of Environmental Science and Economics*, 2(3), 36-58.
- GIEC. (2021). *Climate Change 2021 : The Physical Science Basis*. Groupe d'experts intergouvernemental sur l'évolution du climat. <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/>
- République Démocratique du Congo. (2019). *Plan national d'adaptation aux changements climatiques*. https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/DRC-NAP_FRENCH.pdf
- République Démocratique du Congo. (2021). *Rapport national sur le climat et le développement (CCDR)*. Banque mondiale. <https://www.preventionweb.net/fr/publication/republique-democratique-du-congo-rdc-rapport-national-sur-le-climat-et-le-developpement>
- Scown, M. W., Craig, R. K., Allen, C. R., Gunderson, L., Angeler, D. G., Garcia, J. H., & Garmestani, A. (2023). Towards a global sustainable development agenda built on social-ecological resilience. *Global sustainability*, 6, e8.
- Sutherland, J. P., et al. (2020). The role of technology in achieving sustainable development goals. *Sustainability*, 12(8), 3345. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12083345>
- TEEB. (2013). *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) for Water and Wetlands*. <https://www.teebweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/TEEB-Water-and-Wetlands.pdf>
- World Bank. (2010). *World Development Report 2010: Development and Climate Change*. <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-0-8213-7982-0>

Goma, October 25th, 2024
 Dr. Kennedy KIHANGI BINDU
 Secrétaire Général Académique
 Vice Rector Academic Affairs
 Ordinary Professor

