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Climate and capitalism: ambush at the forest preservation in Équateur (Democratic Republic of the Congo).

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study purposes to categorize the forest exploitation, and to demonstrate that market traps the struggle against climate change globally, and particularly the forest preservation in Équateur, province of Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Methodology and Results: Data was collected by using documentary, interview and direct observation technics. Functionalist and hypothetico-descriptive analysis led to results following that two of three forest exploitation types are practicing in the capitalist method. These kinds are industrial and artisanal forest exploitation. The last type of forest exploitation is practicing in a pro-environmental manner, and does not purpose to benefit like in the two preceding cases.

Conclusion and application of results: Without efficient States, forests will be destroyed and that will lead to a global warming aggravation. These results imply that the State must become strong to play its role in the forest governance and in correcting market failures. It is necessary to use an economic instrument at an excessive rate to discourage the capitalist forest exploitation. Finally, it must promote endogenous knowledge, and diminish rural poverty in order to preserve the Équateur (DRC) forest. Moreover, Forest countries can develop solutions, but international actors are not giving real solutions and it is necessary that these countries of Congo Basin create their organization so as to mobilize their efforts and visions in the struggle against climate change.

Keywords: Market, climate change, International Community, Poverty, forest.

INTRODUCTION

For its vast forest, which contributes to the maintenance of world climatic equilibrium, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) constitutes a solution country for the quality of environment. Moreover, this forest undergoes a forest degradation and deforestation of

continuous style. For proof, «into a letter consigned by 30 searchers and publicly addressed to Norwegian minister of climate and environment, Simon Lewis (*Professor at the University of Leeds*) and his colleagues denounce negative potentially impact of forest

exploitation on the marshlands of the Congolese cuvette, sheltering in a party of bogs. This letter demands to Norway to refuse financing of forests durable management program in DRC submitted in 2017, by Development French Agency (DFA). During the same year, other searchers published a contrary viewpoint, which sustains that such financing cannot prevent (Gourlet-Fleury *et al.*, 2017).

Gueroult (1931), analysing Hegel's judgment on pure antithetic reason, affirms with him that verity is in thesis and antithesis. In effect, in these two documents, including contradictory viewpoints of these searchers, the commune point remains the necessity to preserve forests from all activity, which leads to ecological damages susceptible to contribute to climate change. The two groups of researchers above recognize that the most important party of bogs stays in the province of Equateur (Gourlet-Fleury *et al.*, 2017). Nevertheless, formal and informal economic activities are found there, in urban and rural places. Each year, world human community copes at environment surprises in mutation among which, the biodiversity loss, air and water pollution. (Trommetter, 2018) However, most public actors camp again on their positions, each in its struggle in lifestyle competition characterized by a leaning at market functioning highly perfected. In addition, the gravity of facts accelerates with the rhythm of pushed of importance accorded to market economy, which embraces the world. Because, in the countries, which did not accept market economy, we find today, market economy notably the china, the India. It means that the world is introduced in the logic of the market while it is shaken by dangerous phenomena like climatic change.

During this time, the international community continues with durable development, since the prime summit of the earth of Rio, in 1992 (Bouguerra, 2021). This development demands the conciliation of three pillars

namely viable economy, durable ecology and equitable social. The highlight of these pillars comes from unequal and dominant development model recognition (Koné, 2020). However, past decades, the world gravely deviated from the vision drafted in Rio. In addition, amplification of phenomena seems send none message tending to convert the capitalism holders from their conviction. For these, this doctrine remains the single religion, which carries security of domination power that they need. Nevertheless, for the suppressed, it is always this last, which is the single religious conviction which remains the true divinity against the poverty which shakes them.

By consequence, despite enormous quantities of wealth yielded, the actual tendency is not far from Verzola affirmation following that costs and benefits sharing remains unequal (Verzola and Quintos, 2013). *The 20% the richest are responsible for near 80% of greenhouse gas emissions, and they benefit 70% of total world revenue. In addition, Damon attests that the poverty itself concentrates in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Damon, 2021). *The Africa continent; at this time, shelters 90% of world population living with revenue under 1, 90 American dollar (USD) by day. In addition, African continent remains taken by directing class globally conducted by the profit maximization and the consolidation of their position* (Tandon, 2013).

In fact, the struggle of the international community aims to preserve forest ecosystems, the biodiversity, and the quality of air, water and soil. Nevertheless, this fight remains trapped by the market economy, which dominates the world. It itself does through contradictions which proof a vast hypocrisy of some actors.

Alcayna-Stevens and Bedford, (2018) affirmed that the province of Equateur benefits with natural forests inestimable bogs at West (about border of Republic of the Congo), and some small prairies at south. Knowing that

these last contribute to climatic equilibrium maintenance in stocking carbon, several voices demand the preservation of these forests. However, how to preserve these ecosystems at the interface of the harsh poverty, supremacy of market, fragility of State, and galloping

human population growth? That is why this article aims to categorize the forest exploitation types in the province of Equateur, and to demonstrate that these types of exploitation are infected by capitalism, which remains a trap for the forest preservation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study location: This study conducted in the province of Equateur in DRC. The figure below presents the geographic location of this province:

This figure localizes just the province of Equateur, whence it lags the hashtag, the ladder, the square and the orientation.



Figure 1. Geographic map of the province of Equateur
Source: Ndinga, (2021).

In fact, this province has an area of 103,902 Km². Its geographic bank details are following 0° 04' north, 18° 16' East. The province is relatively punt, crossed by Congo River from North-East to South-west, with a mean altitude of 340 meters. The NTumba Lake is its low point, until 320 meters. The Ubangi mouth on the Congo River located in West region of the province. The climate is damp tropical and the region is covered by an evergreen rainforest of important density and diversity of trees. This justifies in some measure, lag of dry season. The zone is characterized by rains during all year. The human population composed by Mongo at East, and Bobangi at West. The human population density is almost of 16

hab/Km² (Richey, 2022). A large part of the human population of Equateur suffers from drastic poverty Families in both urban and rural areas face the daily challenge of putting food on the table. Furthermore, other than yields from agriculture, the others products from transformation are considered like luxury (Bungudi, 2022). The survivorship becomes a daily problem for the habitants of this province.

Data collection: The data collected from using documentary, interview and direct observation technics during period goes from November 2021 to May 2022. The literature review provided us with secondary data on capitalism and climate change. So, primary data amassed

concerns types of exploitation. We interviewed 8 persons who are leaders of industrial forest exploitation sites, in reason of one person by site, and 44 leaders of artisanal forest exploitation distributed following: 17 at Mbandaka, 6 at Bolomba, 9 at Ingende, 4 at Basankusu, 4 at Bikoro and 4 at Lukolela. The following materials helped us to collect data: a laptop, a modem, a notepad, and pens. We use the following means to travel: Motorcycle, car, pirogue, other conveys and boat.

Data analysed: We analysed data by using functionalist and hypothetical deduction approaches. Because, this study going from global system to local reality. In first time, the global capitalist system functioning conceived from secondary data collected concerning it. Therefore, primary data analysed and presented in different figures and tables. That allowed us to understand the global and local dimensions of forest preservation trapped in the study zone.

RESULTS

Global economy system: The secondary data collected analysed allowed us to conceive the

global economic functioning capitalist system presented in the figure below:

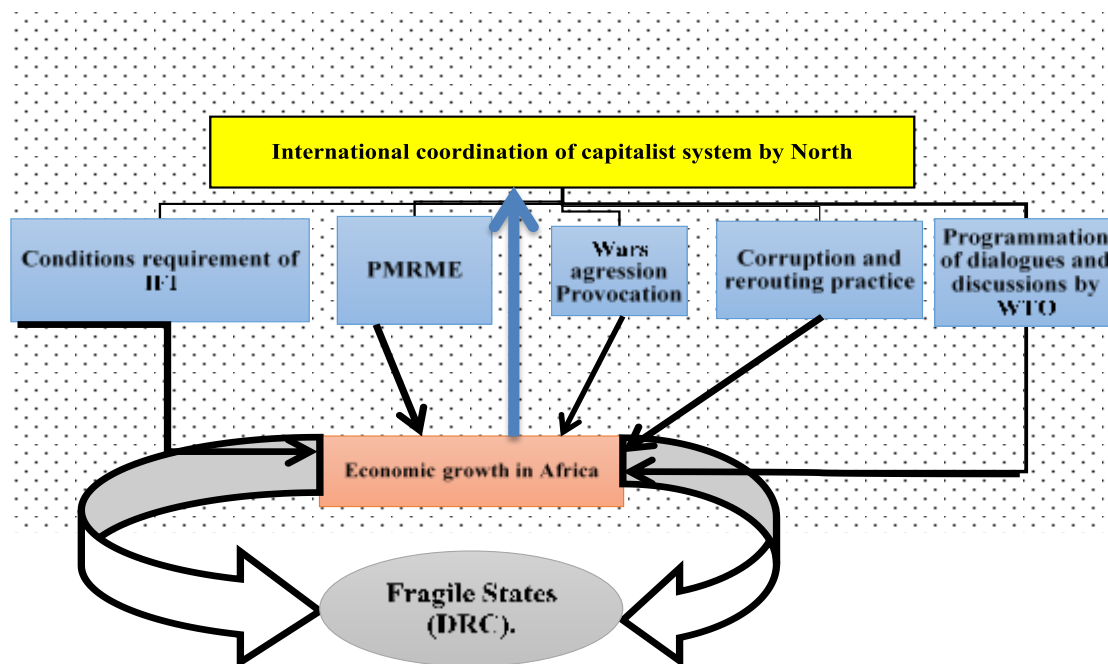


Figure 2: economic system representation.

This figure shows how the international economic system functions. In fact, dominant States of the North are cordoning this system. They use strategies, which aim to release at least one process, which lead to dispossess Africa generally and DRC particularly of its wealth (yield or raw wealth). This North, attached to market economy, uses also international financial institutions (IFI) to impose some conditions to poor countries

among them, DRC. These requirements linked to their aids, carrying tragic consequences which accelerate population African misery generally and Congolese particularly. This same North realizes the prices manipulation of raw materials of exportation (PMRME) in disfavour of poor countries, which depend with raw materials exportations recipes. Additionally, the North favours raw materials exploitation in provoking aggression wars in

DRC. This last aim is to create a big equipment military market, and to plunder natural resources. They constitute trade military groups (TMG) composed by States, persons and multinational firms, which work with conjunction (Masamba, 2021). The North in complicity with kleptocrats in African countries acquired for this cause, gains economic growth extraction. In effect, these kleptocrats or negative transformation leaders, reroute, corrupt, plunder, save and invest in the North. That guarantees the asymmetric circulation sense of wealth between North and South. That aggravates the mass poverty in

Africa generally and DRC particularly. Additionally, it is a situation, which destroys African States. The WTO organizes international meetings for leaders to voice their grievances. This institution lost its existence sense and its rules are severally violated by the USA, the French, without consequent sanction. Market economy is constructed on three pillars in conflict: economic progress, social injustice and pressure on environment. The figure below shows how the three pillars of actual dominant development, which governs the world functions.



Figure 3: Conflict Sens representation of market economic system pillars.

The struggle for economic progress creates the pressure on environment. Because, if we want abundant yield, it must exploit copiously the ecosystems. In addition, to increase capital accumulation necessity salaries reduction or revenues decreasing. It means that we install social injustice. By consequence, an entertained poverty by social injustice which maintains a precision on environment through abundant ecosystems exploitation. In this fact, none sensitization for forest preservation cannot lead to behaviour favourable for environment quality. In addition, most environment demotes, most poverty accelerates. We understand that pillars of dominant development entertain the climatic

change in playing negatively on the ecosystems. The reality of system shows that environment degradation can limit the economic progress, if all things are equal elsewhere. In the province of Equateur, this logic remains the same. Most the artisanal forest operators increase their benefices in view to allow them to accumulate capitals, it means realize an economic progress in forest sector, most their actions create a precision on environment through the forest degradation and deforestation. Moreover, the conditions become hard. That is why the residents of the affected zone take refuge in town (rural exodus). However, they begin to exploit the peri-urban forests, which accelerate the forest

degradation and the deforestation in these zones. Because, the conditions in the town are not the same like in village, the poverty accelerates itself. The good governance that some searchers argue to approve like the forth pillar of durable development cannot be obtained in fragile State. Because, following Organization of Cooperation and Economic Development (OCED), a fragile State *has a weak capacity to assure les functions of local governance, and is not able to develop the constructive and advantageous relations in the society. Fragile States are vulnerable face to internal and external shocks notably natural catastrophes and economics crisis. Among the indicators of a fragile State, we count crisis, wars, natural catastrophes, extrema poverty, inequalities, State legitimacy loss, demographic precision. However, who are the artisans of this situation? If occidentals preoccupied themselves, worry is not to see these fragile States to become stable or normal, but ideally, to take dispositions that*

this faint does not perturb the quietude of occidental States, notably by terrorist movements' alimentation, uncontrolled immigration, drug traffic (Meme, 2022).

So, these findings show that market economy functions globally in disfavour of DRC, and particularly in forest preservation disfavour in Equateur; the three pillars of this anti-preservation, remains in contradiction or in conflict. This situation cannot allow the forest of this province to contribute to global climate maintain in long run or of durable manner.

Forest exploitation and market economy in Equateur/ DRC: The market economy logic infected all the world economic system, from big institutions until small local institutions. Forest countries in the world are not at besides. In spite of if their forests contribute to global climate, we must be sure if that will continue in long run. That is why in the party, the results relative to forest exploitation types are inventoried and categorized in the figure 4 below:



Figure 4: Forest exploitation types in the province of Équateur.

The inventory of forest exploitation led to three types. We count industrial exploitation forest, which is assured by some multinational firms operating in forest concessions; artisanal exploitation forest which is developed by some persons. This last operates itself in peri-urban forests, without norms respect nor ecological considerations. Finally, we count too, the durable exploitation assured by peasants doing

not aim the interest and capital accumulation. The two first forest exploitation types caused forest degradation and deforestation. Following artisanal exploitation operators, the interest goes at most of 400% and remains very attractive. Concerning the industrial exploitation forest operators, the wood international market always prosper, in spite of the world economic conditions. Because the

province of Equateur is not far from Kinshasa, the biggest wood market in the country, the exploitation attractive sold locally, the artisanal wood is important in the construction and of movable fabrication. Based on our interview with the operators, we discover that the majority are in the capitalism logic. Because, they aim to accumulate capitals, and they employ workers who have modicum wages going from 40 to 55 USD by moth.

However, many are chiefs of housework's have in mean 6 persons. That does not allow them to assure their existence correctly, so the social activity is miserable. The furnished justification by employers is that they have fear to fabric other challengers if their workers receive good wages. The repartition of artisanal operators in function of nationality has a big importance. The figure 5 below presents it

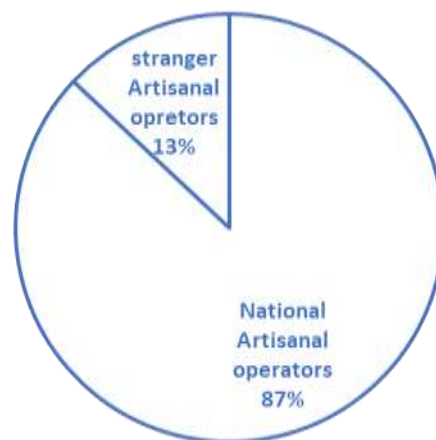


Figure 5: Artisanal operators repartition in nationality.

Artisanal wood exploitation is in large party assured by national operators. However, some strangers notably Chinese who exploit

artisanal type too. The industrial operator's nationality situation is presented in the figure 6 under:

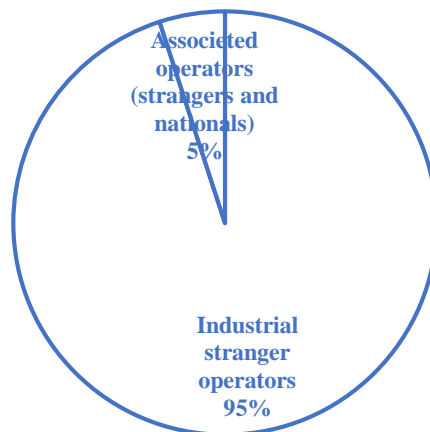


Figure 6: Industrial operators repartition in nationality function.

Following this figure, quasi-totality of industrial operators are strangers. As told above, this

exploitation type is based on market economy logic. We note that some strangers are associated

with nationals in weak proportion. The figure 7 below distributes artisanal operators following time in the activity.

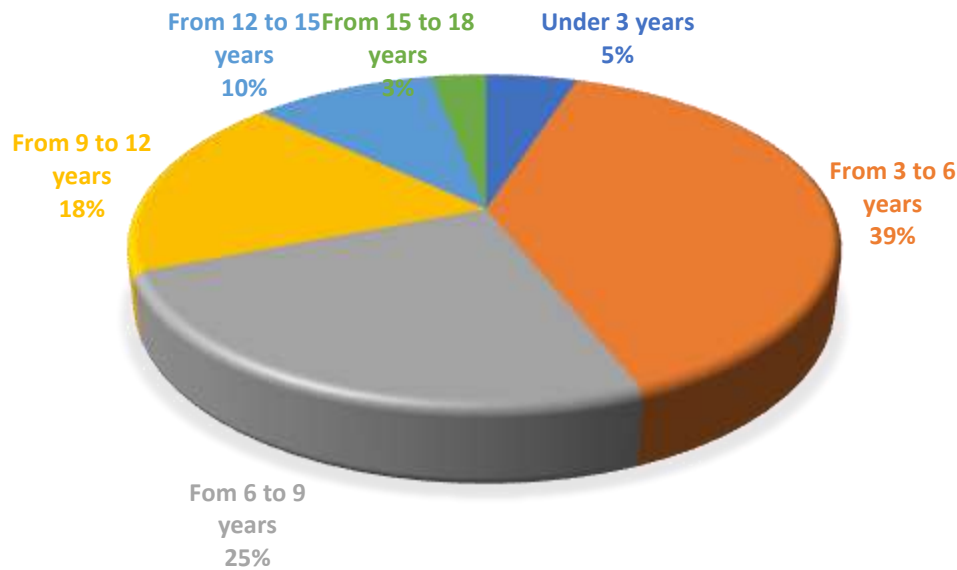


Figure 7: Artisanal operators repartition in activity time.

Following this figure, artisanal operators' majority last in activity from 3 to 6 years, followed by those who lasted from 6 to 9 years. Only 3% of them persisted from 15 to 18 years in the activity. It means that there are new

operators while the old continue to professionalize the activity. It is an activity that creates jobs, and continues by this fact, revenues source. The operators have several profiles that the figure 8 below presents.

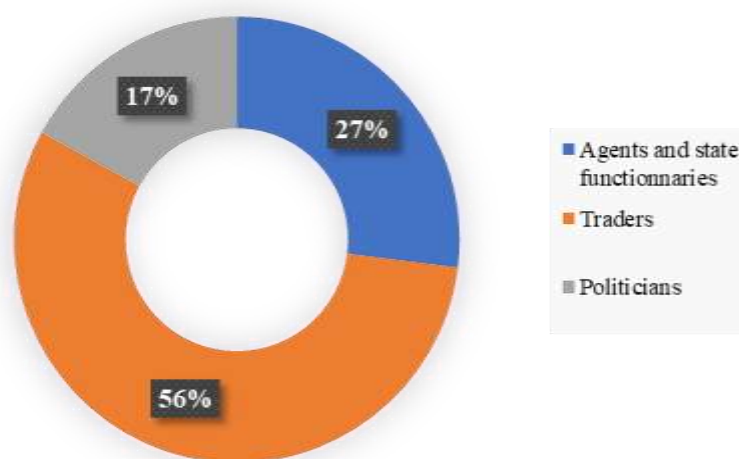


Figure 8: Operators repartition in status function.

The big majority of operators are traders followed by State functionary's category. Some politicians exploit also the artisanal wood. The circumstances of them of this

activity are diversified. Much witness that they realized the small economies before to begin the forest exploitation. Others profited only of politic rent for to begin.



Figure 9: Operators repartition in point view function on activities future.

This figure shows that the majority of operators appreciate forest exploitation, and affirm that it has a best future. These last justify their point view by the high interest gained in each trade operation. However, a small number of them tell that activity does not pay, and they justify their point view by bad conditions of exploitation. Curiously, they do not forsake

forest exploitation, just the time to find another activity. They have fear to begin unemployment. They add to the meticulous conditions of forest exploitation. Like told above, the operators employ some persons. The figure 10 below shows their repartition following number of workers used.

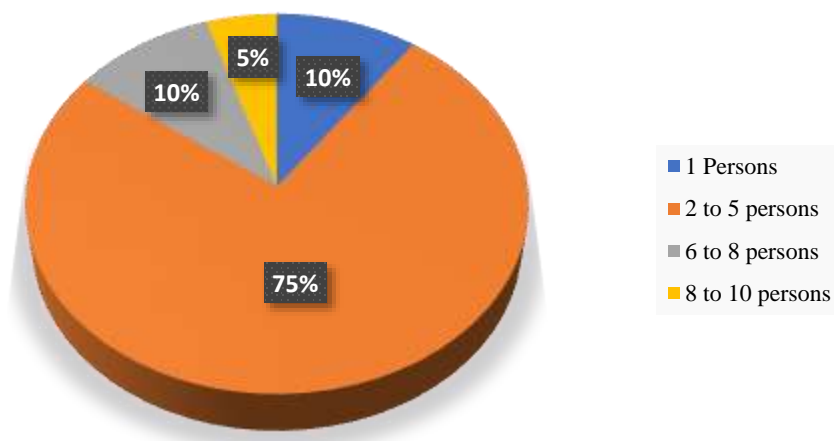


Figure 10: Operators repartition in numbers of workers used.

Following this figure, the majority of artisanal operators use from 2 to 5 workers. A weak operator's number use 8 to 10 workers. Following their points view, the number of workers depends of exploitation fund (capital). We understand by here that most the financing

improves, most there is artisanal intensification of forest exploitation. Then, almost all territories will be affected by forest exploitation. Concerning the localization of industrial forest exploitation, the table below presents it.

Table 1: Localization of forest industrial firms.

	Enterprise	Localisation
1	KOKIBAFODE (Ex Maniema Union)	Ingende & Bolomba
2	BABKIBOIS	Ingende
3	SOMIFOR	Bikoro
4	SIBOIS	Bikoro & Lukolela
5	SODEFOR (Ex. FORABOIS)	Lukolela
6	MOTEMA	Ingende

Source: Coordination of Environment/Province of Equateur

Following this table, a large party of forest in this province is exploiting. In total, we count 16 forest concessions in all territories, excepted: Bomongo, Maknza and Basankusu. However, artisanal forest exploitation is elsewhere, and especially in territories where woods evacuation conditions are favourable. Though, the same fact is observed around urban centres, that is to say, in the peri-urban forests. In addition, these peri-urban forests are deeply touched by wood energy fabrication especially, these urban centres have not electric energy source. We suppose that most of 90% of population use the charcoal like energy source. So, these findings show that market economy infected deeply the forest

exploitation in the province of Equateur. It concerns the industrial forest exploitation assured totally by strangers, and artisanal forest exploitation assured in majority by nationals. Yet, there is a forest exploitation type based on endogen knowledges. This type of exploitation does not aim to realize benefit nor to accumulate capitals. We call it, pro-environmental forest exploitation. It is assured by peasants. It is resumed by agricultural self-sufficiency practices, which do not purpose to accumulate capitals, and respect the uncultivated time. In concerning the collect of non-timber forest product (NLFP), and hunting.

DISCUSSION

Forest exploitation types categorization:

The results concerning forest exploitation types is corroborated notably Vanacker, (2018) who used the dense time series images Landsat (30m), to categorize the forest degradation types detecting different impacts to know: exploitation tracks, raw timber parks and knockings down pierced. These impacts reveal that in its zone, we find the exploitation types following: industrial and artisanal forest exploitation. So, he did not tell about other exploitations because of their absence.

The reality revealed by our results attest the conclusion of Nzereka et al.,2010 study in the province of Mai-Ndombe, following that the ordinances n°84/2016 of 29 October 2016 concerning forest exploitation and n°85/2016, which institutionalize Artisanal Forest Unity, are not respected by artisanal operators, four years after. In addition, the texts governing artisanal sawing sector are less known and/or none respected by actors. The operators accede to this profession without to hold at

preliminary the administrative documents requested.

Operators in Equateur do not abide by exploitation norms. Concerning the peri-urban forests, our results confirmed that of Ngbolua *et al* (2018) at Gbadolite about wood exploitation in peri-urban forests. They found that the majority of households used wood energy. So, the pressure coming from exploitation explained by augmentation of human population create the forest degradation and deforestation in the peri-urban zones. In effect, the artisanal wood exploitation in peri-urban zones does not aim only to satisfaction of a survival but also profit accumulation. The dimension of market economy touched these forms of forest exploitation. Elsewhere, the severe poverty in the rural places creates rural exodus. Thereby, that creates the augmentation of urban population. Anyhow, industrial forest exploitation incites the destruction of forests, and the deforestation in the province of Equateur. This situation remains unexplained by the State, and the corruption of agents of the forest administration. In addition, artisanal forest exploitation about urban centres comes in second position. This last is provoked by rural exodus. So, with this reality, we cannot accept that poverty is causing the forest exploitation. If someone exploits in the capitalist logic, he is not a poor. The forest exploitation by the poor does not cause destruction of forest ecosystem. The third form of forest exploitation qualified like pro-environmental exploitation. In effect, it is a survival exploitation. It concerns notably some natural alimentary, medicinal resources. This type of exploitation does not attack the forest cover. However, several authors affirm that poverty causes a large part, the destruction of forest cover by deforestation and degradation of forests. Also noted are the policies of international financial institutions in DRC that explain the rural poverty, and the increasing of rural exodus today (Valier, 2000; Chauveau, 2000; Nicolas, 2020). We can underline that

industrial and artisanal forest exploitation, remain today dangerous against forest preservation. In effect, if continued with their activities, most the bog areas will be destructed like in Indonesia (Gourlet-Fleury *et al.*, 2017). Because of forest preservation is trapped by market economy (capitalism), the finding of a solution against destruction cover forest in the province of Equateur needs to understand the functioning of market economy in global and local levels.

Global and local capitalist system functioning: Our perception of economy market functioning following the present results confirms the hypothesis of articles published into *Monthly Review Press* in 2002, which sustains that there is a contradiction between capitalist system based on expansion need, capitals accumulation, unlimited growth and ecosystems of planet. In addition, Klein (2015) argued that the verity which disturbs on climatic change, does not concern greenhouse gas, yet it concerns the economic model which remains in war against the earth.

Some years later, Harribey (2008) said that *capitalism is completely globalized. However, far to instate the stability and efficacy of economic system, its globalization and financing provoked at the end of XXth century and at to begin of XXIth century, a scale crisis and unpublished dimensions: capitals accumulation bumps periodically on social contradictions that it provokes, however it bumps too now on the limits of planet. Global warming, exhaustion resources, biodiversity loss and multiples of pollutions are exactly in discussions of society, while social conditions is demoting in several places, in terms of work or social rights.* In effect, to want to protect the bogs areas in the province of Equateur in a context characterized by the functioning of market economy in the forest sector, the severe poverty and State fragility remains a complex question.. In effect, following our results, all industrial firms of forest exploitation in the province of Equateur function with stranger

capitals. Also artisanal forest exploitation is infiltrated by market economy logic and strangers. This reality gives us the conviction that the preservation of bogs areas is idealist because, nothing cannot prevent capitals accumulation in absence of efficacy public coercion. Then, because of negative role of multilateral institutions in the functioning of

world economic system, how they can steer the struggle against climate change? We note that these institution favor the market economy, and cannot pilot the climate policies which have some considerations against market logic. There is necessity of servant leadership the process of struggle against climate change.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This article aims to categorize the forest exploitation types in the province of Equateur in Democratic Republic of the Congo, and to demonstrate that these exploitations kinds function in capitalist logic, which remains a trap in the face of bogs preservation. We used documentary, free interview and direct observation to collect data, which analysed in functionalist and hypothetico-deductive approaches. The results show three types of forest exploitation: industrial forest exploitation, artisanal forest exploitation and pro-environmental exploitation. In addition, the study revealed that functioning of economic system in global and local levels are anti-conservists. In effect, without an effective State, forests will be destroyed and that will

lead to a global warming aggravation in great measure. These results imply that the State must become strong to play its role in the forest governance and in correcting market failures. Because, for forest countries it is necessary for them to create their organization to put in common their efforts, and to unify their visions in the struggle against climate change. On the terrain, the State must apply a high rate of economic instruments in view to discourage forest operators, and to decrease the pressure in the forests. So, how can the international financial institutions pilot efficacy the struggle against climate change when they promote the free functioning market, which traps the ecosystems (forest, water, air, soil)?

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