



EVENT REPORT OF THE 11TH CAFÉ GENERAL ASSEMBLY



11^a Assembleia
Geral
café
Consortium of African Funds
for the Environment

6 – 8, Outubro 2021
Maputo, Moçambique



Maputo City, 06 - 08 October, 2021

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1. Introduction

The Consortium of African Funds for the Environment (CAFÉ) is a network developed in 2011, made of a total of 18 Environmental Funds or Africa Conservation Trust Funds which support over 90 Conservation Areas that cover about 160.000 km² in 16 African countries.

The Consortium of CAFÉ is engaged in building a learning community that can share the best practices and seek innovative funding mechanisms to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in Africa.

Every year, the members of CAFÉ meet for a general assembly which is aimed at ensuring continuous alignment of the different actions and objectives for which the network was developed. In this context, the Foundation for the Conservation of Biodiversity – BIOFUND, a member of CAFÉ, conducted the organization of a hybrid event of the 11th CAFÉ General Assembly, which took place in Maputo City, from 06 to 08 October, 2021, under the topic *“Exchange of Experiences as a Key Factor for the Success of Biodiversity Conservation: Promoting Conservation in Times of Crisis in Africa”*.

This event allowed for the exchange of experiences between different environmental funds regarding sustainable funding mechanisms and opportunities for biodiversity conservation in Africa.

Therefore, this report briefly explains the preparation process for the 11th CAFÉ General Assembly, activities carried out, constraints and results achieved.

The event was made possible with the support of Germany Cooperation through KfW and AFD/FFEM. We address special acknowledgements to the secretariat of MEET CAFÉ in Malawi and FAPBM staff from Madagascar, who assisted the event planning and implementation, as well, speakers and moderators from all over the world, who often made themselves available in different time zones, to partake in this important annual event. The great attendance at the national level allowed a great visibility of BIOFUND and their environmental counterparts' activities, highlighting their importance and potential for synergies.

2. Event preparation

BIOFUND team assisted by the secretariat of CAFÉ started the preparation of the conference about two months in advance, and had agreed to hold a hybrid event (in-person and online) in order to allow the participation of different parts of the world, but also displaying and highlighting the importance of environmental funds nationwide.

The concept note for the event was framed in the context of COVID-19 pandemic, under the theme “*Experience Exchange as a Key Factor for the Success of Biodiversity Conservation: Promoting Conservation in Times of Crises in Africa*”.

By the end of August the first *save the date* was sent to all CAFÉ members, national and international conservation partners and other relevant role players.

A page about [CAFÉ 11th Assembly](#) was developed on BIOFUND website in order for participants to register and share relevant information about the event on a specific field, whereby potential participants registered for the conference from September 15. This page was used to share the agenda and information about speakers for all participants and general public.

In the last week of September, the entire BIOFUND team broke into three groups (made of about 7 to 8 members each), to speed up organizational processes, with the following responsibilities:

- i) Ensuring all event related logistics (hiring service providers for simultaneous broadcast of the event through specific communication platforms, simultaneous interpretation in Portuguese, English and French, physical event venue and gifts).
- ii) Finalizing the identification of the agenda topics for the three-day assembly, identifying national and international speakers and moderators, collection and organization of panellists’ presentations and on-going interaction with them.
- iii) Event communication before, during and after, ensuring regular sending of reminders to all potential participants, bulk disclosure of the event on organization communication platforms and post-event information compilation and sharing.

2.1. Event logistics

A total amount of 2.328.966 MZN (two million, three hundred and twenty-eight thousand, nine hundred and sixty-six meticaís) was spent for the hybrid event of the 11th CAFÉ General Assembly, allocated for hiring the following services:

- Rental of in-person conference room at Radisson Blu Hotel in Maputo including food;
- Hiring an online event broadcast provider;
- Hiring Portuguese, English and French simultaneous interpretation company;
- Webpage development for participants registration and sharing of information;
- Communication material production, publication and printing;
- Acquisition of digital exhibition platform;
- Acquisition of gifts.

2.2. Event cost details

Costs of the 11th CAFÉ General Assembly	
Activity	Amount in MZN
Development of a participants registry webpage	28.665
Communication materials	197.000
Event simultaneous interpretation Portuguese/English/French	346.750
Online event broadcast	768.051
Room rental and buffet services	495.000
Gifts for in-person guests and speakers in 22 countries	342.500
Physical and digital exhibition	151.000
Total amount of costs	2.328.966

2.3. Level of attendance

The 11th CAFÉ General Assembly was attended by a total of 1068 participants, connected online by Zoom, Facebook and Website platforms, and in-person, whereby 601 people participated on the first day, 236 on the second day, and 231 on the third day. The attendances were mostly online including people from 32 countries, four continents, namely: 16 African countries, 6 American countries, 9 European countries and an Asian country. Locally, the event was opened with a recorded message from the Minister of Land and Environment, Ivete Maibaze, in a ceremony conducted by the Chairperson of Board of Directors of BIOFUND, Mr. Narciso Matos, together with the Deputy Chairperson of Board of Directors, Mr. Jorge Ferrão, the representative of National Administration of Conservation Areas (ANAC), representatives of ProAzul, FNDS and other partners.

CAFÉ members and international partners were represented by representatives of 14 African Environmental Funds, members of CAFÉ, and representatives of Latin American environmental funds, RedLAC partners, donors and others.

- **Description of participants**

Way of attendance	Number of participants on the 1 st day	Number of participants on the 2 nd day	Number of participants on the 3 rd day	Total number of participants
In-person	48	43	23	114
Online via ZOOM	81	72	66	219
Online via Facebook & Website	472	121	142	735
Total	601	236	231	1068

2.4. Activities carried out

The event started off with a remote solemn opening by the Minister of Land and Environment, after the intervention of the President of CAFÉ, Karen Price, and interventions of BIOFUND Chairperson of Board of Directors. Ten members of CAFÉ presented their progresses, challenges and opportunities since the last CAFÉ General Assembly, which took place in 2019, in Benin. The day was also marked by [virtual exhibition of biodiversity](#) produced by BIOFUND through pictures given by conservation workers, partners and friends. The exhibition displayed the diversity of land and coastal ecosystems, with an emphasis on wildlife in Mozambique Conservation Areas. Inspiring presentations about the work of biodiversity conservation with emphasis on Gorongosa National Park and Bazaruto Archipelago National Park were also given during the day.

On the second day there were presentations and discussions in plenary sessions, some presentations from the remaining environmental funds and parallel sessions where the need of improving coordination among different partners at national and regional level, and diversification of funding mechanisms for a more effective and lasting support to biodiversity conservation was emphasized.

On the third day, a closed session of the CAFÉ 11th General Assembly took place in the morning. At the meeting, BIOFUND was elected through the Executive Director, to be member of the Executive Committee of CAFÉ. In addition to BIOFUND, executive directors of 3 other environmental funds, namely: Fondation Tri-National Sangha (Cameroon), Fondation Parcs et Reserves de Cote D'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) and Okapi Fund for Nature Conservation in DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo) were also elected for this committee.

In the afternoon on the third and last day, there were plenary sessions with emphasis to the intervention of DR. Jorge Ferrão, deputy Chairperson of Board of Directors of BIOFUND and Dean of Pedagogic University, who highlighted the role of the development of academia by training new leaders and researchers who can work on biodiversity conservation in Mozambique and around the world.

We also heard final remarks from Carlos Manuel Rodrigues, CEO of *Global Environmental Fund (GEF)* who shared a realistic perspective about the role of *Conservation Trust Funds (CTFs)* in supporting biodiversity conservation and the global agenda for the environment, stressing the importance of governments having consistent and coherent policies, as well as the need to mobilize resources in a more efficient way. To view all presentations made during the CAFÉ General Assembly, please, click [here](#).

The agenda, speakers' Bios including the highlights of each session are available [here](#).

2.5. Event disclosure

The dissemination of the 11th CAFÉ General Assembly was previously made through different digital and traditional communication platforms (WhatsApp, Facebook, LinkedIn, Website, Dalima digital Panel, emails, reminders and newspaper), sharing contents about the topics and the speakers' profile, and during the event, with live broadcast of the sessions on [Facebook](#) and [BIOFUND Website](#) and after the event, by sharing the summary of the sessions and news on BIOFUND digital platforms. On traditional media, the event was publicized on TVM channel 1, STV, Media Mais TV and other channels.

2.6. Constraints encountered

Constraints related to bad quality of the internet provided by the hotel made it difficult to display the presentations on ZOOM digital platform. It was necessary to use internet alternative means during the event, to ensure display of presentations on the platform.

The quality of translation during the sessions was very poor, especially French language (which is less common in Mozambique), which made difficult the attendance of the presentations of various sessions for those who cannot speak Portuguese, English or French.

Regarding the physical exhibition, contrarily to what was planned, there was not enough space to assemble the material printed for the exhibition, because the space provided by the hotel to set up the exhibition was at last minute changed to a smaller space.

Some speakers sent their presentations late, which made it difficult to comply with the pre-set schedule and this led to constant changes and small adjustments to the schedule.

Receiving speakers' and moderators' bios late also made it difficult to share them with the general public in advance.

The time set for presentations was not adhered to by most speakers and this reduced the time for discussions and interactions during the sessions, which had already been planned to be very brief.

3. Final remarks

The event had preponderance of the online participants during all days. The presentations were very active with relevant contents, and with many national speakers, which was very positive. The experiences shared by national and international speakers on biodiversity conservation inspiring stories, as well as the role of environmental funds for funding biodiversity conservation emphasized the event.

The event was also marked by the intervention of the Chairperson of Board of Directors of BIOFUND, intervention of the Minister of Land and Environment on main achievements, strategies, policies and conservation partnerships, and by the intervention of the National Director of Peace Parks Foundation (and also founding member of BIOFUND), Mr. Bartolomeu Soto, highlighting BIOFUND as an important partner to fund biodiversity conservation in Mozambique. Sharing experiences, challenges and forthcoming opportunities since the last CAFÉ General Assembly in 2019 in Benin, was much emphasized. The funds emphasized the need of improving national and regional coordination and diversify funding mechanisms for an effective support to biodiversity conservation. It was clear the challenges also open news windows of opportunities such as the forthcoming collaboration between Conservation Trust Funds (CTFs) and the private sector.

The intervention of BIOFUND about supporting public and private Conservation Areas to mitigate COVID-19 effects within the scope of BIO-Fundo de Emergência Project was also much emphasized at the event, including the intervention of Mr. Madyo Couto from Fundo Nacional para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável (FNDS) [National Fund for Sustainable Development], who emphasized the role of public fund on supporting biodiversity conservation, rural development and mobilization of resources in Mozambique; the intervention of Miguel Langa, who shared the role of ProAzul as a public fund that leads coastal and marine conservation work in Mozambique, in line with the principles and procedures of blue economy, and Jorge Ferrão, Dean of Pedagogic University, who emphasized the role of academia on biodiversity conservation in Mozambique and around the world.

The parallel sessions on 6 different themes (3 about more specialized topics and other 3 broad topics) conducted by national and international speakers added a great value to the event. It was possible to reach the main objectives of the conference by joining synergies of different environmental funds for a common reason, i.e. biodiversity conservation. In short, the 11th CAFÉ General Assembly was a very big event that BIOFUND was challenged to organize in a format that fits the new world reality. This was a challenging event with a lot of learning and recommendations for future events.

4. Recommendations

In order to avoid similar contretemps in future events, the following recommendations are listed below:

- Though the small in-person participation allowed an interaction among local partners, however, for the time being, we recommend holding 100% online events during COVID-19 pandemic period. We suggest evaluating the need of holding in-person events in very specific cases, so that we can estimate the cost-benefit involved;
- Form dynamic work teams in advance with set activities;
- Send save the date and invitations in advance;
- Make sure service providers have very clear information about the work required and challenges;
- Create more space on the agenda for debate and avoid having very close sessions one after another (leave reasonable time between sessions), to ensure some flexibility if necessary;
- Prepare the moderators better for a better control of the speakers' time;
- Involve schools and students to attend the events because on one hand the topics discussed add value to their training and on the other hand, this will ensure more audience;
- Seek various focal points at universities to ensure maximum dissemination of information;
- Hire a single general service provider that can meet BIOFUND's needs for the management of all logistic activities, to ensure better accountability and coordination.

5. Event photographs



Figure 1: Event opening moment



Figure 2: Moment of intervention of the Minister of Land and Environment



Figure 3: Moment of intervention of the CEO of BIOFUND



Figure 4: Moment of intervention of the Executive Director of BIOFUND

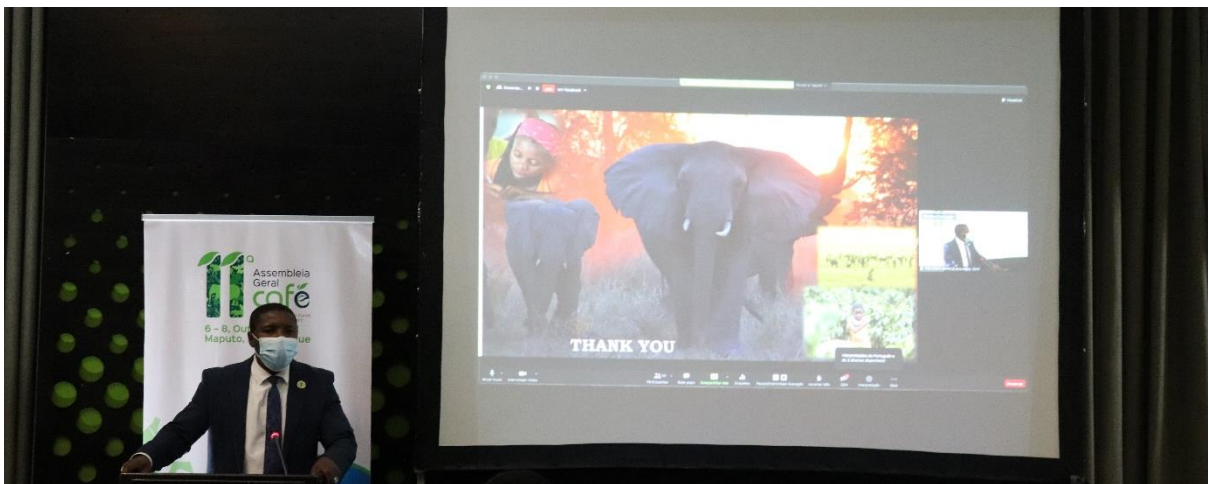


Figure 5: Moment of intervention of Armino Araman – Representative of ANAC

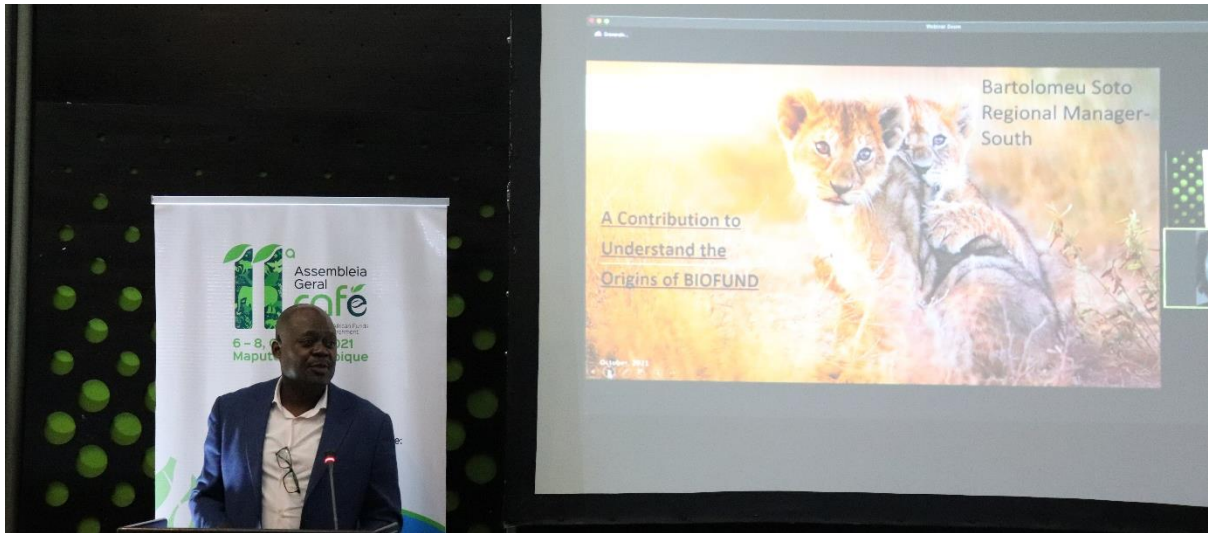


Figure 6: Moment of intervention of Bartolomeu Soto – founding member of BIOFUND



Figure 7: BIOFUND presentation moment - Sean Nazerali, Innovative Funding Director

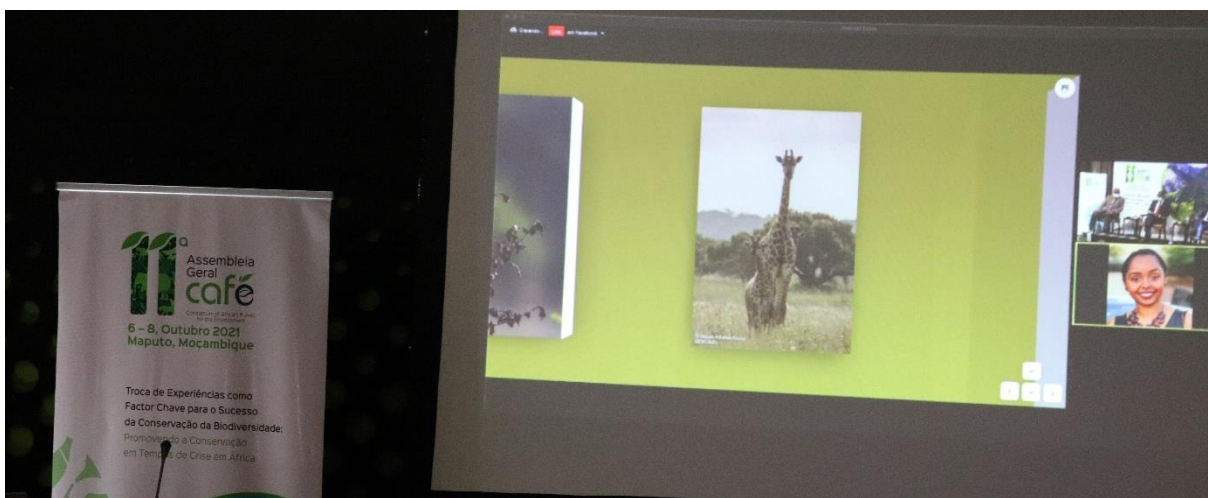


Figure 8: Moment of virtual exhibition of BIOFUND biodiversity



Figures 9 and 10: in-person participants

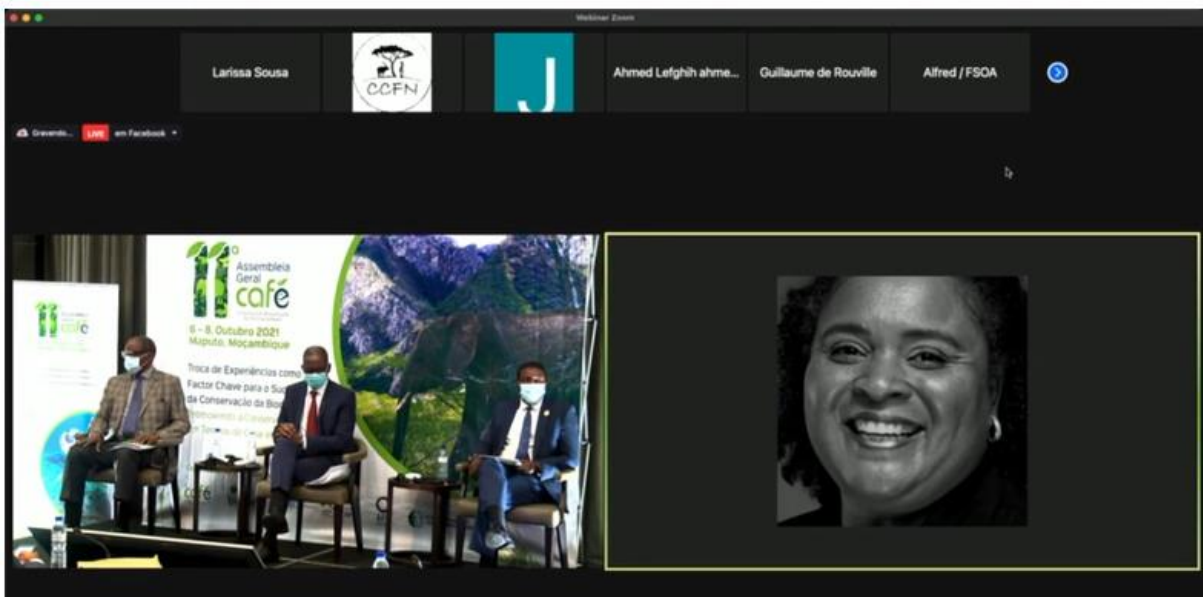
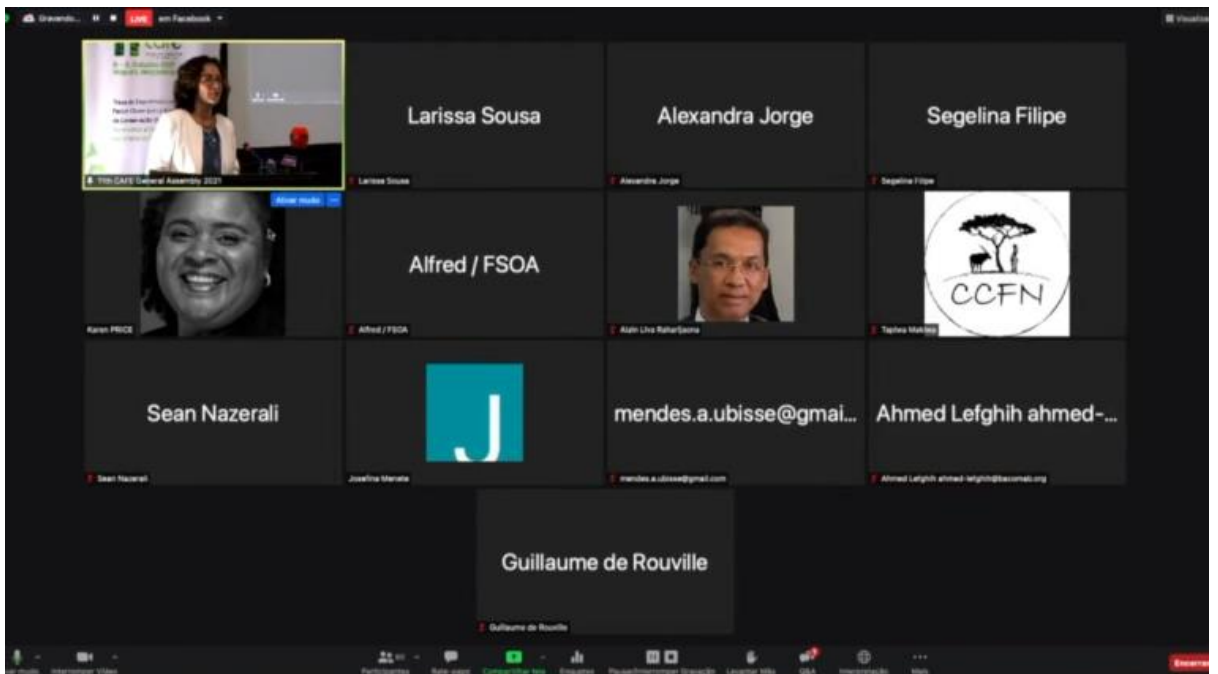


Figure 11: Online participants – Moment of intervention of the President of CAFÉ



Figures 12 and 13: Online participants



Figures 14 and 15: Moment of family photography