



PRESS RELEASE

Libreville, Gabon, "One Forest Summit", March 2, 2023

PRESERVING BIODIVERSITY IN CENTRAL AFRICA BY THE "COSMETOPEA"

On the occasion of the first edition of the "One Forest Summit", the French cosmetics industry announced that it would finance, through an endowment fund supported by the *Cosmetic Valley*, the study of the forest cosmetopea of the Congo Basin. The objective of the fund is to contribute to preserving biodiversity and to make it the lever of local economic development.

Wanted and announced during COP 27 in Sharm el-Sheikh by Presidents Emmanuel Macron and Ali Bongo, intended to highlight the major contribution of the forests of the Congo-Ogooué Basin in the fight against climate change, the first "One Forest Summit" hosted, on March 2, 2023 in Libreville, eight heads of State as well as, many political, entrepreneurial and research figures from all over the world.

At the initiative of the President of the French Republic, the cosmetics industry actively participated in the round tables and debates held in the Gabonese capital on the challenges of sustainable forest management, an essential objective to meet several of the – interdependent - challenges that the world must face, such as climate change, water stress, invasion by monocultures and loss of biodiversity.

Our delegation, led by Mr Christophe Masson, General Manager of Cosmetic Valley, included Mrs Shirley Billot, Founding President of the *Kadalys* brand, responsible for the *Martinique Cosmetic Valley* antenna and Mr Jean-Yves Berthon, Founding President of *Greentech*.

This presence consecrates, at the scale of our country, the importance of our sector - from ingredient suppliers to producers of finished products - as a major player in the French economy with 45 billion euros in turnover, 250,000 jobs, 19.2 billion euros in exports in 2022 and, internationally, its role in protecting the environment. It highlighted the commitment of the French perfumery and cosmetics sector in terms of local economic development and in structuring, particularly in Africa, sustainable export sectors.

Developed by *Cosmetic Valley* for about ten years, the notion of cosmetopea, and its subdivision the **forest cosmetopea**, were at the heart of discussions in Libreville. The aim was to encourage the States of the continent to promote their genetic wealth and the traditional

cosmetic uses associated with it in order to conserve them, inventory them, and then develop, around them, an economic and ecological ecosystem that will bring growth and employment.

Cosmetic Valley has already developed in France, particularly in the overseas territories of the Indian Ocean, Amazonia and the Caribbean, research programs, university partnerships, transnational networks of entrepreneurs, to pool experiences, tools and resources, and ramp up the sustainable use of natural ingredients in cosmetics.

On the occasion of this summit, the French cosmetics industry announced the implementation of a new development tool: a financial endowment, of over € 500 000, for the study of forest cosmetopeia in the Congo Basin (Central Africa). This funding, supported by the Cosmetic Valley endowment fund, will allow the allocation of scholarships for the realization, on site, of internships, doctoral theses and post-doctorates in the field of cosmetopea.

This commitment of the French cosmetics industry aims to allow the study and identification, by local actors, of plant genetic resources from the forest and their traditional uses for the protection and beauty of skin and hair. Beyond the identification and conservation of traditions that are still oral, the aim is to contribute to the preservation of Africa's heritage and, in compliance with the Nagoya Protocol and at the initiative of local actors, to make it a lever for local economic development.

Marc-Antoine Jamet, President of the Cosmetic Valley competitiveness cluster, said: *"I am pleased that the President of the Republic and the Gabonese authorities wanted the cosmetics industry to testify at this first One Forest Summit. We have enthusiastically answered this call. Cosmetics are as old as the world. They relate to humanity, children or the elderly, women or men, on the whole earth. They originate in natural resources. Preserving them is an imperative. Knowing their multiple properties is a wealth for all – those who collect and produce as well as those who enjoy their benefits. From there, our aim is to contribute to the constitution of sustainable sectors, respectful of the planet, local traditions and ecosystems, and meeting the needs of our research and of the current cosmetics market. This is why I wanted us, together with several major companies in the sector, to respond to President Emmanuel Macron's call and for new funding to be announced today for African forest cosmetopea. This initiative is fully in line with the efforts made for several years by the Cosmetic Valley competitiveness cluster. I hope that it will develop and allow virtuous cooperation between France, Europe and the African continent."*

About cosmetopea

The French perfumery-cosmetics sector, united and coordinated by Cosmetic Valley, initiated the cosmetopea concept in 2010. Like the pharmacopoeia in the field of pharmacy, cosmetopeia aims to make an inventory of natural resources and their traditional uses for the care and well-being of the skin.

In a world where consumers pay particular attention to natural products, eco-responsible origins and processing, cosmetopeia is an innovative source of natural ingredients inspired by traditions, respectful of indigenous populations, the maintenance of resources and biodiversity and in full coherence with the Nagoya Protocol.

Today, the traditional uses of cosmetics are poorly documented. The scientific progress of the twentieth century has often left aside traditional knowledge in medicine, as in cosmetics. That this magnificent world cultural and natural heritage is not – or so little recorded, becomes a systemic problem:

- *The erosion of essentially oral, uncompiled knowledge could lead to the disappearance of an important part of the common history that unites humans and their environment.*
- *Little-considered plants, linked to these traditional practices, could gradually disappear due to climate change and biodiversity loss*

Cosmetopea is thus a lever for biodiversity conservation that drives a new dynamic for a better knowledge of the traditional uses of plants. The first step is to identify and shape the cosmetic properties of the planet's botanical resources.

About COSMETIC VALLEY

COSMETIC VALLEY is the hub of the French national perfumery-cosmetics sector. It was entrusted by the State with the responsibility to setting up a French strategy and coordinate the actions carried out in the service of a sector that brings together 3200 companies, 80% of which are SMEs-VSEs, representing all the cosmetics professions: ingredients, processes, packaging, tests, finished products... With 45 billion euros in turnover and 250,000 jobs, COSMETIC VALLEY is a unique ecosystem in the world, embodying the excellence of one of the jewels of the national economy and illustrating the new values of the "France brand": innovation, performance, product safety, respect for the environment. Driving a leading French sector on the international market, COSMETIC VALLEY is also the world's leading network for cosmetology research with 500 projects representing an investment of 520 million euros.

The world leader in a market estimated at €600 billion, France is the world's leading exporter of perfumes and cosmetics (€19.1 billion in 2022). The French perfumery and cosmetics sector, with a total of €19.2 billion in exports, and an export balance of €15.6 billion, ranks third among contributors to the positive foreign trade balance, behind the Aeronautics and the Wines & Spirits sectors.

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