



## INFORMATION GUIDE ON GABON FOR PARTICIPANTS

### 1. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT GABON

Gabon, located on the west coast of Africa, is one of the region's more stable countries and home to over forty ethnic groups. The largest group is the Fang, forming 40 percent of the population. Other major groups are the Teke, the Eshira, and the Pounou. The cultures of the ethnic groups are akin to other groups in Central Africa, and center around the rain forest and its treasures. Food preferences, farming practices, and quality of life are comparable. The ceremonial traditions vary, however, as do the personalities of the groups.

- 2. Security:** Gabon is generally peaceful and politically stable. The Government of Gabon has pledged to provide extra security at conference venue and within the recommended hotels, and assure of the security and comfort in movement in secured transportation to and from the conference venue. However, as in all countries, a little common sense and reasonable precautions should still be taken, such as locking valuables in the hotel safe, which frees your mind to absorb the natural beauty and incredible sights that will stay with you forever. Always keep your valuable items attended.
- 3. Geography:** Gabon covers 103,347 square miles (267,667 square kilometers). It is bordered by Equatorial Guinea to the northwest, Cameroon to the north, the Republic of the Congo on the east and south, and the Atlantic Ocean to the west. The capital, Libreville, is on the west coast in the north.

### 4. REGISTRATION & CONFERENCE VENUE

The 7<sup>th</sup> Africa Water Week holds at Salle Ouest, Stade de l'Amitié. Libreville from October 29<sup>th</sup> – November 2018. The online registration process is still ongoing through a dedicated website <http://www.africawaterweek.com/>. All relevant information with regard to registration process including fees is available in this website. Onsite registration begins Sunday October 28<sup>th</sup> and is expected to continue through the week of the conference. It is advisable to visit the venue on Sunday to procure your conference badges.

### 5. TRAVEL TO Gabon

Each participant is required to arrange for his/her own means of transport to and from Libreville, Gabon. There are several international flights to and from Libreville.

#### Arrival & departure

All participants are expected to arrange for their own transport from Léon-Mba International Airport, Libreville to their respective hotels except those under special arrangement. The same applies when the delegates will be leaving their hotels to the airport. Most of the hotels have airport shuttles which participants can avail. The Taxi drivers do accept payment both in US Dollars and local currency. However, it is advisable that delegates pay the Taxi drivers in local currency (XAF). The delegates can get Forex services at the arrival section of the airport. The National Organising Committee (NOC) will arrange for Information Desks at the arrival section of the airport for advisory services. Delegates are advised to be on the lookout for persons holding a placard written "AMCOW" or "AFRICA WATER WEEK".

### 6. PASSPORT AND VISA INFORMATION

Entry into Gabon requires a valid passport of not less than six (6) months as well as Visa for those nationals that require Visa. Visas are issued at Gabon Embassies /High Commissions abroad. Participants may also explore the e-Visa application option by visiting <https://evisa.dgdi.ga/>. Where they ask for local contact person, kindly insert Jocelyn BOUYOU MAVOUNGOU, Directeur Général, Direction Générale de l'Eau, MINISTERE DE L'EAU ET DE L'ENERGIE, Boulevard Triomphale - Immeuble 2 Décembre - P 2339, BP 1172 Libreville - GABON - +241 06975774. . For the purpose of this Africa Water Week, a Visa on Arrival will be facilitated for the participants who are unable to secure visa at the embassies or online. Note that you will need to have 70 EUR or 45000 XAF to pay for the visa on arrival. Check the link on the conference website for further information <https://africawaterweek.com/aww7/eta-electronic-travel-autorisation-of-gabon/>.

## 7. HEALTH

**Vaccination:** Yellow fever vaccination is mandatory for many categories of travelers arriving in the Republic of Gabon. Yellow fever vaccination which is given as a single dose should be administered ten (10) days before travelling.

**Medical services:** The NOC will make available an emergency sick bay in the conference venue to attend to minor emergency cases. However, Doctors and Dentists are available in many parts of the country and in all major hospitals. It is recommended that visitors bring sufficient supplies of any drugs they need regularly, and possibly carry their medical insurance.

**Tap water:** as a precaution, boil or sterilise tap water for drinking. Bottled water is recommended for drinking.

## 8. CURRENCY

The official currency in Gabon is the Central African franc (XAF). On average, the exchange rate is approximately USD\$1 = XAF 565. However, it is advised to check the latest rates which are publicly displayed in all foreign currency exchange facilities (e.g. Forex Bureaus and Banks). These Forex facilities are available at the Léon-Mba International Airport, Libreville and numerous Forex Bureaus and banks in Libreville. Credit and debit cards (e.g. Access, MasterCard, Visa, American Express, Eurocard, and Dinners) are accepted by most of the rated hotels. However, most of the hotels and banks offer a relatively lower exchange rate compared to Bureau de Changes.

## 9. WORKSHOP TRANSPORT

Transport will be available from the designated hotels to the conference venue for Ministers, VIPs, AMCOW TAC, and participants. Shuttle buses will be used mostly to transport the delegates. A schedule indicating time of departure from respective hotels will be availed to all participants. However, it is advised that all delegates observe punctuality by being at the reception of their respective hotels to board the bus in good time.

## 10. LANGUAGES

French is the national language. Bantu-group languages are also spoken. Simultaneous translation services in French and English will be provided during the conference. If you wish to make use of translation headsets, you will be required to deposit an official identity card or passport before collection.

## 11. WEATHER

Daytime temperatures for the months of October to November generally reach highs of around 30°C. At night the average minimum temperature drops down to around 23°C. Lightweight clothes (preferably cotton) will make your stay more comfortable.

## 12. TIME & ELECTRICITY

Gabon Standard Time is 1 hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT+1). Gabon is in West Africa Time Zone (WAT). Electrical supply for domestic use is generally 220 Volts AC, 50 Hz. In Gabon the power plugs and sockets are of type C. Check out the following pictures. Type C: also known as the standard "Euro" plug. This socket also works with plug E and plug F.



### **13. Tourism**

Gabon's Atlantic Coast offers some beautiful deserted beach areas, suitable for different kinds of water-based fun. Pointe Denis and Ekwata to the north and Mayumba and Sette Cama in the south are great places to enjoy the sun and gentle waves. Other noteworthy places to visit include Port Gentil and Cap Estérias, as well as Perroquet, which is great for skin diving.

- Loango National Park is the jewel in the crown of Gabon's 13 parks and offers one of the world's most exhilarating safari experiences, thanks to its irresistible combination of scenery and wildlife. With more than 175 km (110 miles) of uninhabited shoreline, it is widely regarded as one of Africa's last great coastal wildernesses. Lagoons, forests, savannahs and wetlands all come together within the park's 1,550 square kilometers (600 square miles). It offers the unique opportunity to observe elephants, buffalos, hippos, gorillas and leopards venturing onto the white sand beaches.
- Lope National Park is situated right in the centre of Gabon and was the first protected area following the creation of the Lope-Okanda Wildlife Reserve in 1946. Lope National Park is listed in the 13 national parks created in 2002. Although the terrain is mostly rain forest, in the north, the park contains the last remnants of grass savannas created in Central Africa during the last Ice Age, 15,000 years ago. In 2007, the Lopé-Okanda landscape was added to the World Heritage List by UNESCO.

### **14. CONTACTS**

For additional information regarding practical arrangements of the meeting or any other inquiries please contact the National Organizing Committee through: Jocelyn BOUYOU MAVOUNGOU, Directeur Général, Direction Générale de l'Eau, MINISTERE DE L'EAU ET DE L'ENERGIE, Boulevard Triomphale - Immeuble 2 Décembre - P 2339, BP 1172 Libreville - GABON - +241 06975774. email: bouyou\_jocelyn@yahoo.com