

# Brazzaville 2026: Why the 3.5 billion USD from the Blue Fund validates AXIS's economic logic

When forests become power infrastructures



Long version

## **Introduction — The signal came from Brazzaville**

**An announcement that goes far beyond climate finance** — At the African Development Bank’s 2026 Annual Meetings in Brazzaville, the announcement of over USD 3.5 billion in funding for the Congo Basin Blue Fund naturally captured the attention of sustainable development and climate finance observers. However, behind the announced amount lies a much deeper shift. What was expressed in Brazzaville is not solely about forest financing. It reveals a gradual transformation in how the world now perceives the strategic resources of the Congo Basin.

**The Congo Basin is changing its status** — For a long time, the forests of the Congo Basin were presented primarily as an environmental heritage to be preserved. This perspective remains essential, of course. But it now appears insufficient. Through the financial commitments announced in Brazzaville, the Congo Basin is beginning to be considered a global strategic infrastructure contributing to climate stability, planetary biodiversity, carbon management, and the new economic balances linked to the ecological transition. The forest is gradually ceasing to be solely a space to be protected and is also becoming an asset of international value.

**The question now facing the DRC** — For the Democratic Republic of Congo, which encompasses the largest portion of the Congo Basin's forests, this evolution raises a fundamental question: How can this global recognition be translated into concrete benefits for the population? How can the value created by environmental services, carbon, biodiversity, and the new green economies be used to finance infrastructure, health, education, access to water, and regional development? In other words, how can global wealth be converted into sustainable local prosperity? The 2026 Annual Meetings of the African Development Bank thus appear as one of the first institutional markers of this evolution. Beyond the amounts announced, they demonstrate a growing recognition of the strategic role that the Congo Basin is destined to play in the new economies of climate, biodiversity, and sustainable development.

**Why this announcement directly concerns AXIS** — It is precisely in this context that the full relevance of the AXIS National Program becomes apparent. Led under the High Patronage of President Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo by the DRC Social Fund and Phoenix Capital BV, AXIS seeks to build mechanisms to govern, track, enhance, and redistribute the value derived from the country's strategic resources. Through the MACC and GoldConnect initiatives, and the WinstantGold pilot project, the program explores architectures capable of linking sovereignty, finance, technology, and community development. From this perspective, the signal sent by Brazzaville goes far beyond the climate issue: it directly illuminates the challenges to which AXIS is now attempting to provide an operational response.

## 1. The \$3.5 billion tells a story that is bigger than its amount.

**The figure masks a deeper transformation** — At first glance, the announcement of over USD 3.5 billion being mobilized for the Congo Basin Blue Fund appears to be excellent news for financing forest conservation and climate resilience. However, reducing the event to its sum alone would likely miss its true significance. What transpired in Brazzaville was not merely a financial decision. It signaled a shift in the perception of environmental resources within contemporary economic and geopolitical strategies. Behind the figures lies a new understanding of the strategic value of the Congo Basin.

**Why donors are now investing in natural infrastructure** — For several decades, major international donors primarily funded physical infrastructure: roads, dams, power grids, schools, and healthcare systems. Today, a new category of infrastructure is gradually attracting international investment: natural infrastructure. Forests, watersheds, biodiversity reserves, and carbon sequestration capacities are no longer considered solely as ecological heritage but as essential assets for the functioning of global economies. Their preservation is becoming an investment in long-term climate, energy, and economic stability.

**From environmental finance to economic valuation** — This evolution marks a significant break with traditional approaches to conservation. For a long time, forest protection was based primarily on a logic of compensation or assistance. New dynamics, on the contrary, seek to recognize the economic value of the services provided by ecosystems. Carbon, biodiversity, water regulation, and climate stability are gradually becoming elements capable of generating financial flows, market mechanisms, and new forms of economic valuation. Protection is thus ceasing to be solely a cost and becoming also a factor in value creation.

**The Congo Basin enters a new asset class** — This is probably the true significance of the signal sent from Brazzaville. The Congo Basin is no longer perceived simply as one of the planet's great green lungs. It is gradually entering the category of global strategic assets. Like energy infrastructure, logistics corridors, or digital networks, it is becoming a critical element of the international balance. This evolution profoundly alters the position of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The issue is no longer simply about protecting an exceptional natural heritage, but about building mechanisms capable of sustainably managing its value for the benefit of the population and national development.

## 2. The Congo Basin is becoming a global strategic infrastructure

**Forests as climate infrastructure** — For a long time, forests were considered primarily as natural spaces to be preserved for their biodiversity or ecological value. This view remains essential, but it is no longer sufficient to describe their role in contemporary ecosystems. Large tropical forests now contribute directly to regulating the global climate, stabilizing water cycles, capturing carbon, and building the resilience of agricultural systems. As such, they fulfill functions comparable to those of major strategic infrastructure. Like energy grids or transportation systems, their proper functioning now determines a portion of global economic and environmental stability.

**Carbon as an economic asset** — The emergence of carbon markets reflects this profound transformation. Long perceived as a simple environmental indicator, carbon is gradually becoming an economic unit capable of generating financial flows, compensation mechanisms, and new forms of investment. This evolution is radically changing how forest areas are understood. Carbon sequestration capacities no longer represent solely an ecological advantage. They are also becoming a valuable resource within the new international climate economies. Carbon is thus entering the category of strategic assets capable of mobilizing capital, technologies, and governance infrastructure.

**New environmental value chains** — This evolution is giving rise to unprecedented value chains. Where traditional economies relied primarily on the extraction, processing, and marketing of physical resources, new environmental economies organize value creation around the certification, traceability, impact measurement, compliance, and governance of natural assets. Environmental data, verification mechanisms, trusted infrastructures, and transaction platforms are becoming as important as the resource itself. Value no longer resides solely in the existence of the forest, but in the ability to demonstrate, certify, and govern the services it provides.

**The global battle for climate resources** — Behind the climate discourse, a new strategic competition is gradually emerging. States, financial institutions, businesses, and international organizations are seeking to secure access to the resources that will play a central role in the energy and environmental transitions of the 21st century. Energy, critical minerals, data, and climate assets are becoming the new objects of sovereignty. In this context, the Congo Basin occupies a unique position. Due to its environmental importance, its carbon sequestration capacity, and its role in global climate balance, it is becoming a strategic territory whose governance will have a lasting influence on the new economic structures of the ecological transition. For the DRC, the stakes therefore go far beyond conservation: it is now a matter of actively participating in the global governance of one of the planet's most important climate resources.

### 3. President Tshisekedi's vision: from "Solution Country" to operational sovereignty

**The May 6th speech as a strategic text** — The speech delivered by President Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo on May 6, 2026, goes far beyond a political intervention focused on the country's security or diplomatic situation. It offers a structured interpretation of the role the Democratic Republic of Congo intends to play in the transformations of the 21st century. Behind the references to peace, strategic resources, infrastructure, and development emerges a genuine doctrine of sovereignty. Congo is no longer presented as a territory defined by its difficulties but as an actor destined to play a central role in the global energy, climate, industrial, and digital transitions.

**Resources as instruments of power** — This vision rests on a simple yet fundamental idea: natural resources are not merely wealth to be exploited but also instruments of power. Cobalt, copper, lithium, gold, and the forests of the Congo Basin now contribute to the construction of new global economies. From this perspective, the strategic question is no longer solely one of resource possession but also one of governance. The ability to organize, secure, certify, and develop these resources is becoming a determining factor in economic sovereignty and international influence.

**Transforming potential into national capacity** — One of the recurring themes in the presidential address concerns the need to transform the country's potential into real capacity. For several decades, the Democratic Republic of Congo has been recognized as one of the richest territories on the planet in terms of natural resources. Yet, this abundance has not always translated into economic development commensurate with its potential. The challenge now lies in building the infrastructure, institutions, and governance mechanisms capable of converting this theoretical wealth into sustainable value creation, jobs, investments, and improved living conditions for the population.

**The "Solution Country" approach** — It is in this context that the notion of "Solution Country," championed by the Head of State, is understood. This expression does not solely refer to Congo's contribution to major global environmental or energy balances. It also reflects a deeper ambition: to make the DRC an actor capable of responding to contemporary challenges while creating value for its own development. Critical minerals contribute to the energy transition. Forests contribute to global climate stability. Water resources support regional balance. The "Solution Country" is thus a country that transforms its strategic advantages into levers for development and sovereignty.

**Why governance becomes central** — This ambition, however, cannot be realized without strengthened governance capacity. In contemporary economies, value no longer depends solely on the resources themselves but on the mechanisms that organize their circulation, certification, financing, and traceability. Financial flows, data, payments, digital identities, and value chains are becoming strategic infrastructures as important as physical resources. It is precisely in this space that the notion of operational sovereignty emerges. Sovereignty ceases to be merely a political or legal principle and becomes a concrete capacity to govern the resources, flows, and infrastructures that produce value. It is also from this perspective that the AXIS National Program can be seen as one of the most ambitious attempts to translate into operational terms the strategic vision championed by President Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo.

#### 4. Why AXIS appears in a new light today

**Re-reading AXIS in light of Brazzaville** — The announcement in Brazzaville does not alter the foundations of the AXIS National Program. However, it sheds new light on its underlying logic. Since its inception, AXIS has often been analyzed through the lens of tokenization, digital assets, or the technological innovations it mobilizes. The signal sent by international donors around the Congo Basin now calls for a broader interpretation. The central question is no longer that of technology but rather the capacity to organize the economic governance of resources that have become strategic on a global scale. From this perspective, AXIS appears less as an isolated innovation than as a response to a structural transformation already underway.

**AXIS is not a digital project** — One of the main difficulties encountered in understanding the program likely stems from this confusion. Because it mobilizes traceability mechanisms, digital infrastructures, distributed ledgers, and advanced certification systems, AXIS is often presented as a technological project. This interpretation, however, is reductive. Technology is not an end in itself, but a tool. The program's true objective is to build mechanisms that connect strategic resources, public institutions, financial actors, local communities, and investors within a single, trusted architecture. Digital technology acts as a facilitator of governance, not as the core of the value proposition.

**AXIS as a national governance infrastructure** — Reviewed in light of developments observed in Brazzaville, AXIS appears more as a national governance infrastructure. The program seeks to organize the certification, traceability, value chain, and oversight mechanisms necessary for the emergence of new strategic economies. Whether dealing with mineral resources, carbon credits, environmental assets, or digital payments, the challenge remains the same: making flows visible, verifiable, and governable. AXIS, therefore, does not simply aim to create digital assets. It seeks to build the institutional infrastructures capable of sustainably supporting their credibility and use.

**From resources to flows** — For a long time, development policies focused primarily on managing the resources themselves. Today, value creation increasingly depends on the ability to organize the flows associated with those resources. Financial flows, information flows, certification flows, compliance flows, and payment flows are becoming the true arenas for value creation and control. A forest, a mineral deposit, or a carbon asset only acquires sustainable economic value when it is integrated into mechanisms capable of ensuring its traceability, recognition, and circulation. Wealth no longer resides solely in the physical resource but in the architecture that governs the flows it generates.

**From flows to value creation** — This is precisely the transition that AXIS is trying to organize. The program is based on the idea that modern economic sovereignty depends on the ability to govern value chains rather than simply controlling upstream resources. By securing flows, strengthening trust, facilitating interoperability between institutions, and creating recognized certification mechanisms, it becomes possible to transform strategic resources into economic assets capable of attracting capital, supporting local development, and financing public infrastructure. As the Congo Basin is recognized as a global strategic asset, this logic is now emerging with new clarity. Brazzaville does not explain AXIS. Brazzaville helps to make its logic more understandable.

## 5. The role of the DRC Social Fund and Phoenix Capital BV

**The alliance between community development and financial engineering** — One of the most remarkable features of the AXIS National Program lies in the very nature of its founding partnership. On the one hand, the Social Fund of the Democratic Republic of Congo has recognized expertise in community development, poverty reduction, territorial support, and the financing of local infrastructure. On the other hand, Phoenix Capital BV, through its partner Winstant Ltd, brings international expertise in financial structuring, capital mobilization, and the engineering of new economic assets. This complementarity makes it possible to connect two worlds that often remain separate: territorial development and investment finance. It also makes it possible to build a bridge between the needs of communities and new sources of financing linked to strategic resources, climate finance, and emerging digital economies. This mobilization capacity is of particular importance for the programs already implemented by the Social Fund of the DRC. Among them is the PTA-DRC, whose objectives of agricultural transformation, job creation, and territorial development could ultimately benefit from the new financing dynamics associated with climate economies, environmental assets, and trusted infrastructure developed within the AXIS framework.

**Why this governance is unique** — Most major development programs traditionally rely on a logic of public funding, international aid, or conventional private investment. AXIS proposes a different approach. The program seeks to link social development objectives with the value creation mechanisms inherent in contemporary markets. This hybrid governance aims to move beyond the usual opposition between impact-driven and financial logic. Natural resources, environmental assets, and trusted infrastructure are no longer considered solely as development tools or investment opportunities, but as components of a single economic architecture designed to simultaneously generate impact, attractiveness, and sovereignty. In this framework, AXIS does not replace the programs of the Social Fund. On the contrary, it seeks to create new financing mechanisms capable of sustainably strengthening their capacity to act.

**The relationship between the State, local communities, and investors** — The success of a program like AXIS depends on its ability to align stakeholders whose objectives sometimes differ. The State seeks sovereignty, transparency, and the creation of national value. Communities expect concrete benefits in the form of infrastructure, jobs, economic opportunities, and improved living conditions. Investors, for their part, seek credible mechanisms for security, governance, and returns. The challenge lies in building a system where these interests converge rather than clash. The DRC Social Fund and Phoenix Capital BV occupy precisely this interface position between local communities, public institutions, and financial partners capable of supporting the program's scaling up. This coordination function is becoming all the more important as the new climate and environmental economies demand close alignment between local needs and the expectations of international markets.

**Building a credible architecture** — In the new economies based on environmental assets, strategic resources, or climate finance, the essential question is not only one of value but also one of trust. Investors are not simply financing resources; they are financing governance mechanisms capable of guaranteeing the traceability, compliance, transparency, and stability of the flows associated with those resources. This is precisely the ambition pursued by the architecture developed around AXIS. By combining the institutional legitimacy of the DRC Social Fund with the entrepreneurial and financial expertise of Phoenix Capital BV and its partners, the program seeks to build the conditions of credibility essential for transforming the country's strategic resources into assets capable of sustainably attracting the capital necessary for its development. The ultimate goal, however, remains the same: to ensure that this financing directly contributes to strengthening community development programs, youth employability, women's empowerment, agricultural transformation, and local infrastructure supported by the Social Fund throughout the country.

## 6. WinstantGold: AXIS's first operational laboratory

**Why start with a pilot project?** — Every national transformation architecture sooner or later faces the same requirement: demonstrating its ability to function in real-world situations. Concepts, theoretical models, and strategic visions provide essential foundations, but they are not enough to convince the institutions, investors, or territories called upon to participate in their implementation. WinstantGold was designed precisely to meet this requirement. As the first pilot project of the AXIS National Program, it aims to concretely test governance, traceability, and value creation mechanisms that can then be deployed on a larger scale in other strategic sectors.

**GoldConnect: making gold traceable and governable** — Artisanal gold represents both considerable wealth and a major governance challenge for many African countries. A significant portion of its value still escapes national traceability, certification, and valuation mechanisms. GoldConnect seeks to address this very issue. The goal is not simply to trace the origin of gold or secure supply chains. It is also about building an infrastructure capable of making gold flows visible, certifiable, and integrable into financial mechanisms that comply with international standards. Traceability thus becomes an instrument of economic sovereignty as much as a tool for compliance.

**MACC: making community carbon financeable** — The Community Carbon Market (MACC) applies a similar logic to environmental resources. Where traditional carbon markets often remain distant from the communities that effectively protect ecosystems, MACC seeks to build mechanisms that directly link territories to the new climate economies. The central issue is not solely environmental. It concerns the capacity to transform the services provided by forests, biodiversity, and ecosystems into recognized, certified assets capable of mobilizing financing. Community carbon thus becomes a potential driver of local development, conservation, and the creation of shared value.

**Test before scaling up** — The value of WinstantGold lies precisely in this experimental function. Before extending AXIS principles to other resources, territories, countries, or strategic asset classes, it is necessary to validate governance mechanisms, operational procedures, certification models, and the interactions between the various stakeholders in the system. Pilot projects help identify regulatory constraints, community needs, investor expectations, and the technical adjustments necessary for a gradual scaling up. This approach reduces risks while strengthening the program's credibility.

**Lessons learned for AXIS** — Beyond the gold and carbon sectors, WinstantGold plays a much broader role in building the national AXIS Program. The project allows for testing a governance framework based on traceability, trust, certification, and the flow of value between territories, institutions, and financial partners. The lessons learned from GoldConnect and MACC will help define future mechanisms applicable to other strategic resources in the country. In this sense, WinstantGold is not simply one pilot project among many. It represents the first testing ground for a broader architecture designed to transform the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of Congo into governable, financeable assets that generate sustainable prosperity.

## 7. How AXIS meets the expectations of international investors

**The central issue of trust** — Behind funding announcements, market mechanisms, or technological innovations, the investment decision always rests on one fundamental factor: trust. Institutional investors, specialized funds, development banks, and climate finance actors are not solely seeking opportunities for returns. Above all, they are looking for environments capable of guaranteeing the stability, transparency, and predictability of value flows. In the case of natural resources, environmental assets, or new digital infrastructure, this requirement becomes even more critical. The real question, therefore, is not only what creates value, but how that value can be secured, governed, and recognized over time.

**First level: real resources** — Investors' primary expectation is the existence of real and identifiable underlying assets. Unlike many projects based solely on projections or abstract models, AXIS relies on tangible resources already recognized globally: gold, forests, carbon, biodiversity, critical minerals, and other strategic assets. This connection to the real economy is a crucial element of credibility. The resources exist, possess intrinsic value, and address growing needs related to the energy, climate, and industrial transitions of the 21st century. They thus provide a comprehensible economic foundation for investors.

**Second level: Governance** — A resource alone is not enough to build trust. Investors are equally interested in how that resource is governed. Who controls the decision-making mechanisms? What are the roles of public institutions? How are communities involved? What oversight mechanisms are in place? AXIS seeks to answer these questions precisely through an architecture that brings together the DRC Social Fund, Phoenix Capital BV, Winstant Ltd and its expertise in digital finance, technical partners, and local stakeholders. This multi-stakeholder governance aims to reduce the risks associated with opacity, institutional instability, or conflicts of interest that often undermine large-scale projects.

**Third level: Traceability** — In the new digital and climate economies, value increasingly depends on the ability to demonstrate the origin, journey, and compliance of the assets involved. Gold must be traceable. Carbon must be measurable and verifiable. Financial flows must be transparent. Data must be secure. It is precisely in this space that the infrastructures developed around AXIS come into play. Traceability is not just a regulatory requirement. It is becoming a mechanism for building trust, enabling investors to have reliable information about the assets and flows they finance.

**Fourth level: liquidity** — Investors also seek mechanisms that allow them to enter, exit, or realize the value of their positions under predictable conditions. A resource can be extremely attractive economically while remaining difficult to finance if it remains confined to illiquid circuits. One of AXIS's ambitions is precisely to build mechanisms capable of linking strategic resources to contemporary financial infrastructures. Tokenization, governance platforms, certification mechanisms, and interoperability with existing financial networks contribute to this quest for fluidity. The objective is not only to create value but also to facilitate its circulation.

**Fifth level: measurable impact** — A significant transformation is currently underway in international investment strategies. Investors are no longer solely interested in financial performance. They also seek to measure the social, environmental, and territorial impacts generated by their investments. Infrastructure, schools, access to water, health centers, community income, and environmental outcomes are becoming

indicators as important as traditional economic performance. AXIS integrates this logic by seeking to directly link the valuation of strategic resources to the benefits generated for territories and populations.

**Why investors are now seeking these hybrid architectures** — Contemporary challenges can no longer be addressed solely through traditional financial models. Climate, strategic resources, digital sovereignty, territorial development, and economic inclusion are now intertwined in increasingly complex systems. Investors are therefore looking for architectures capable of simultaneously combining real assets, robust governance, traceability, liquidity, and measurable impact. It is precisely in this convergence that AXIS's originality lies. The program does not simply seek to finance resources or projects. It seeks to build the trusted infrastructures that enable the sustainable organization of value creation, circulation, and sharing in the new strategic economies of the 21st century.

## 8. Climate finance, gold, carbon and flow governance: a single architecture

**A common mistake: viewing projects as separate entities** — When first encountering the AXIS National Program and its pilot project, WinstantGold, many observers tend to analyze the various initiatives associated with it in isolation. GoldConnect then appears as a mining project. MACC as a carbon-related program. Payment infrastructures as a financial matter. Digital identity mechanisms as a technological issue. This sector-based approach is understandable, but it obscures the essential point. The true originality of AXIS does not lie in each of these mechanisms taken in isolation. It lies in their integration within a single value governance architecture.

**The systemic logic behind AXIS** — Behind the apparent diversity of the projects lies a single question: how to make the strategic resources of the 21st century governable? Whether it concerns gold, carbon, payments, data, or digital identities, the challenge remains the same. It is about building mechanisms capable of ensuring trust, traceability, compliance, and the flow of value. AXIS seeks precisely to connect these different dimensions in a coherent system where physical resources, digital infrastructure, and financial mechanisms function as components of a single operational whole.

**GoldConnect** — In this architecture, GoldConnect represents the governance layer applied to mineral resources. The objective goes far beyond simply tracing gold. It involves building mechanisms to identify stakeholders, certify the origin of resources, secure flows, and ensure value chains comply with international standards. Gold then becomes much more than a raw material. It becomes a governable asset capable of being integrated into broader financial mechanisms, trusted infrastructures, and value creation circuits.

**MACC** — The Community Carbon Market applies the same logic to environmental resources. Here again, the issue is not solely about carbon. It concerns the ability to transform environmental potential into a recognized, measurable, and financeable economic asset. To achieve this, it becomes necessary to build certification, validation, monitoring, and governance mechanisms comparable to those used in mining or financial value chains. MACC thus constitutes the natural extension of an architecture seeking to make visible and governable resources whose value depends precisely on the trust placed in their integrity.

**Payments** — No value economy can function sustainably without appropriate payment infrastructures. Resources can be certified, assets can be recognized, and investors can be present; without effective financial circulation mechanisms, the value chain remains incomplete. AXIS therefore integrates the issue of payments as a central component of its architecture. Financial flows are not considered a secondary function but one of the essential elements for linking resources, institutions, markets, and beneficiaries within a single system of economic governance.

**Identity** — As economies become increasingly digital, the question of identity is acquiring growing strategic importance. Who produces the resource? Who validates the information? Who receives the funding? Who is responsible for the decisions made within the system? These questions are becoming critical for the compliance, transparency, and security of transactions. AXIS integrates this dimension by considering identity as a trust infrastructure essential to the functioning of the new economies of digital resources, data, and assets.

**Digital trust** — Behind gold, carbon, payments, and identity, the same issue ultimately emerges: trust. In environments where transactions are becoming global, automated, and increasingly digital, trust can no longer rely solely on traditional mechanisms. It must be verifiable, traceable, and governable. The various components developed around AXIS contribute precisely to building this new digital trust infrastructure, without which no economy based on strategic resources can operate at scale.

**Towards a programmable resource economy** — The convergence of physical resources, digital governance, financial infrastructure, and trust mechanisms is gradually paving the way for a new generation of economies. In these systems, resources are no longer simply extracted, transported, and traded. They become identifiable, certifiable, programmable, and integrable into value chains governed in real time. This is the evolution that AXIS seeks to anticipate. Behind the apparent diversity of initiatives lies a shared ambition: to enable the Democratic Republic of Congo to have the necessary infrastructure to govern tomorrow's strategic resources in an increasingly digital, interconnected, and trust-based economic environment.

## 9. The real challenge: transforming global value into local prosperity

**Why the issue is no longer extraction** — For decades, the debate on natural resources focused primarily on their extraction. Producing more, exporting more, and attracting more investment were the main objectives of economic policies related to strategic resources. This logic remains important, but it is no longer sufficient to address contemporary challenges. As value chains become more complex, wealth no longer depends solely on the quantity of resources extracted. It depends on the ability to organize the mechanisms that transform these resources into sustainable value for the national economy and its people.

**Why the issue is becoming governance** — Natural resources do not automatically create prosperity. The economic history of many countries shows that an abundance of wealth can coexist with persistent development challenges when governance mechanisms remain inadequate. The real issue then becomes one of controlling flows, ensuring transparency in value chains, certifying assets, and directing revenues toward collective goals. In the new economies based on carbon, data, strategic resources, and digital infrastructure, governance itself becomes a driver of value creation. It is governance that links resources to the expected economic, social, and territorial benefits.

**Benefiting communities** — International recognition of the Congo Basin, climate investments, and new financial architectures are only meaningful if they produce visible effects for the populations concerned. The entire legitimacy of the new environmental economies rests on their capacity to tangibly improve the living conditions of the communities that protect, enhance, or participate in the governance of resources. The challenge, therefore, is not only to create value but also to organize its redistribution in a transparent, measurable, and sustainable way. It is precisely on this point that the credibility of any development strategy based on strategic resources hinges.

**Schools** — Education is one of the primary levers for the sustainable transformation of territories. When natural resources generate new value streams, the challenge lies not only in financing one-off projects but also in strengthening human capacity over the long term. Schools, vocational training, and access to skills become strategic investments, enabling future generations to fully participate in the new economies being built around resources, technologies, and governance infrastructure.

**Healthcare** — The benefits generated by the development of strategic resources are also justified by their ability to improve essential services. Access to care, the quality of healthcare infrastructure, medical equipment, and preventative measures are concrete indicators of the real impact of development policies. The creation of economic value is truly meaningful when it contributes to strengthening the social resilience of communities and sustainably improving the well-being of their populations.

**Water** — In many regions, access to drinking water remains a major development challenge. New financing structures linked to strategic resources offer the opportunity to support local infrastructure that has long faced significant budgetary constraints. Distribution networks, water intake systems, treatment facilities, and local infrastructure can thus become direct beneficiaries of mechanisms designed to transform the value of natural resources into concrete territorial investments.

**Energy** — No sustainable economic transformation is possible without access to energy. Productive activities, public services, digital infrastructure, and new value chains all depend on sufficient energy capacity. From this perspective, revenues from the development of strategic resources can help finance solutions tailored to the needs of local areas: rural electrification, mini-grids, local production infrastructure, or energy equipment for communities furthest from major urban centers.

**Local infrastructure** — Beyond physical infrastructure, local areas need sustainable financing mechanisms capable of supporting their long-term development. Agricultural access roads, community markets, service centers, logistics platforms, and educational and healthcare infrastructure form the invisible foundations of local growth. New value chains linked to carbon, strategic resources, and climate finance offer the opportunity to create financial flows capable of fueling these investments. The challenge is no longer simply to finance isolated projects but to build sustainable mechanisms that serve local communities.

**AXIS's fundamental promise** — Beyond technologies, financial mechanisms, or governance innovations, AXIS's fundamental promise remains ultimately simple: to transform the value created by the Democratic Republic of Congo's strategic resources into concrete development capabilities for communities. In this perspective, AXIS is not intended to replace the programs of the DRC Social Fund. On the contrary, it seeks to provide them with new sources of funding, new governance mechanisms, and new intervention capacities. Agriculture, youth employment, women's empowerment, community infrastructure, access to water, energy, health, and education then become the true indicators of the program's success.

## **Conclusion — Is Brazzaville already validating AXIS's intuition?**

**The announcement in Brazzaville does not yet validate AXIS's success** — It would be premature to consider the mobilization of over USD 3.5 billion for the Congo Basin Blue Fund as validation of the AXIS National Program itself. A program of this magnitude cannot be measured by intentions, announcements, or stated ambitions. Its success will depend on its ability to produce concrete results, attract investors sustainably, generate trust among institutions, and create value for territories and populations. Like any transformative architecture, AXIS will now have to demonstrate its robustness in execution.

**But it does validate the problem AXIS is trying to address** — On the other hand, the signal sent from Brazzaville strongly confirms the relevance of the strategic question AXIS is seeking to answer. The growing recognition of the Congo Basin as a global environmental asset shows that the strategic resources of the 21st century are no longer limited to traditional raw materials. Forests, carbon, biodiversity, data, and trusted infrastructure are, in turn, becoming drivers of value creation. The real question is no longer whether this value exists, but how it can be organized, governed, and redistributed.

**How to transform global wealth into national prosperity?** — The Democratic Republic of Congo is currently facing a historic opportunity. Rarely has a country concentrated so many resources essential to the major contemporary energy, climate, and technological transitions. Yet, history shows that potential wealth never guarantees development. Transforming this global value into national prosperity requires mechanisms capable of linking resources to investments, investments to territories, and territories to populations. It is precisely in this chain of transformation that the country's economic future now hinges.

**How to link sovereignty, finance, climate, and development?** — Contemporary challenges can no longer be addressed sectorally. Environmental, financial, technological, and social issues are now deeply intertwined. Economic sovereignty depends on the ability to govern resources. Climate finance depends on the credibility of certification mechanisms. Territorial development depends on the flow of value to communities. As for investors, they seek structures capable of reconciling security, impact, and governance. True innovation, then, lies less in creating new assets than in building the mechanisms that allow for the sustainable integration of these different dimensions.

**How can the DRC build the infrastructure to sustainably govern its strategic resources?** — This is perhaps the most important question revealed by the Brazzaville signal. As strategic resources take center stage in the new global economies, governance infrastructures are themselves becoming assets of sovereignty. Traceability, payments, certification, identity, digital trust, and value creation mechanisms are no longer secondary functions. They are becoming the tools enabling a state not only to govern the flows that determine its economic power, but also to direct these flows toward national development priorities, territories, and communities that form the foundation of its future prosperity.

**It is precisely within this space that the AXIS National Program is situated** — Led under the High Patronage of President Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo by the DRC Social Fund and Phoenix Capital BV, AXIS does not simply aim to enhance the value of resources. The program seeks to build the governance infrastructures necessary to transform global strategic assets into levers for national and community development. The announcement in Brazzaville does not yet validate the success of AXIS, but it confirms the relevance of the question the program seeks to answer: How can the global value of the Congo Basin, its natural resources, and its climate assets be translated into schools, health centers, local infrastructure, jobs for young people, opportunities for women, and sustainable prosperity for communities? This is precisely the transformation that the AXIS National Program is now striving to make possible. The goal is not the tokenization of resources. The goal is the sustainable transformation of territories.