

## KONFUNDESIA

**Size:** 200,000 km<sup>2</sup>

**Boundaries:** North with Derumalia, east with Akinonia, west with Thinessia, south with the Fathomless Sea.

**Capital:** Confluence

**Populaton:** 14.5 million

**GDP per capita:** US\$5,200

**GPD Composition by Sector:** agriculture, 70%; industry, 27%; services, 3%.

**Agricultural Products:** cotton, wheat, potatoes, manioc, tobacco, sugarcane, livestock production.

**Industries:** fishing and fish processing, meatpacking, biofuels production.

**Services:** tourism.

**Natural Resources:** fresh water, fish.

**Urbanization:** 54 %

**Climate:** subtropical in the lowlands, temperate in the mountains.

**Geography:** Approximately 70% of Konfundesian territory is flat, and half of this area is wetlands. The remainder is semi-arid or desert. The other 30% of the country is the mountainous area of the Tarambana Mountains. The country has a wide range of ecosystems from alpine to seacoast, including cloud forests, alluvial plains, intermontane plateaus, and semi-arid areas.

The principal geographical features in the Takong River Basin include:

- *Chimaeras Lake*, internationally recognized for its size and natural beauty. It is attractive to tourists due to its beauty and the availability of recreational activities such as sailing and sport fishing. Nonetheless, it has not seen the development of larger-scale tourist infrastructure.
- *The Shrouded Forest*, which contains the last vestiges of an ecosystem endangered by its division into unsustainable parcels and by timbering and mining activities. Most of this region is a Biosphere Reserve. A national park was established in the most densely forested region, southeast of Pingimanjaro. Among the many benefits of this ecosystem are that it regulates water flow in the river basin, it protects the communities north of Lake Chimaeras from landslides, and provides scenic beauty.
- The Menhir Desert, an arid region in the western part of the country.

**Flora and Fauna:** rare ghost shark, seals and whales along the coast, eagles, reptiles, felines.

**History:** The most widely held theory holds that Konfundesian society descended from the ancient civilization of the Sumerostanis. Humali Arkat III, the current monarch of Konfundesia, considers himself a direct descendent of Sumerostani civilization.

The historical nucleus of Sumerostan and its principal archaeological antiquities are located in what is today's Akinonia, on the peninsula between Astonishing Bay and the Etruria Bay. Studies carried out by the School of Archaeology of the University of Estambay indicate that Sumerostani civilization had much in common with the Tilapi people, who inhabit the islands of the Takong Delta, and claim to have been the originators of the Sumerostani culture. This view is upheld by the royal court in

Konfundesia, which generally supports demands made by the Tilapi against the Akinonian government in Palmyra.

**Political Organization:** Konfundesia is a constitutional monarchy divided into five autonomous regions by the provisions of its 1932 Constitution. Domestically, the monarchy is a force for cohesion, uniting the country's different ethnic groups and its original provinces, which are now known as autonomous regions. Looking outward, it represents the country on the international stage.

The king opens parliamentary sessions and invests the prime minister with his authority as head of government. Despite this limited participation in governmental functions, the monarch is widely respected and even venerated by the majority of the population.

Konfundesian domestic politics are defined by a two-party system. The social democrats, organized as the Konfundesian Liberal Party, are currently in a governing coalition with the Green Party. The opposition is composed of conservative groups organized into the Konfundesian Union.

**Territorial Organization:** Authority is decentralized. The country is divided into five autonomous regions: Harpooners, Metis, Upper Mumbara, Chimaeras, and Tarambana.

**Major Cities:** The main Konfundesian cities in the Takong River Basin are:

- **Confluence**, the capital city. With nearly 2 million inhabitants, it is the kingdom's largest city. It is strategically important due to its location at the confluence of two rivers, the Takong and the Mumbara. Through this port city people, goods, and services arrive and depart from the kingdom.
- **Estambay**, the second largest cities with a population of more than 1 million. An important

port, it is located at the center of Astonishing Bay and is the gateway to the Tarpon Canal, connecting the Fathomless Sea with the Takong River. It serves as the principal point for ingress and egress of sea and river freight transport. Construction is underway to make Estambay a deep-water port.

- **Harpooners**, an ancient coastal city located on Sunset Bay, now the center of the fishing industry.

- **Citadel of Metis**, in the Menhir Desert, the driest region of the country, has grown in importance in recent years due to the increased cultivation of cotton and the large-scale introduction of sugarcane and other crops for the production of biofuels.

- **Saline**, the capital of the Chimaeras Autonomous Region and an important city thanks to its location close to the border with Akinonia on the route that connects the capital cities of the two countries. It is in the country's major livestock area.

**Civil Society:** The constitution intends to promote public participation in the decision-making process through an organized civil society, nongovernmental organizations, universities, and research groups. It recognizes the rights of indigenous peoples to self-determination with respect to the use of their resources. Nevertheless, and despite the administrative decentralization of the country and of the management of natural resources, implementing citizen participation has been difficult. There is an NGO, with international sponsorship, organized to protect Chimaeras Lake from mining pollution.

**Water/ environment-related Legislation:** The 1994 amendments to the 1932 Constitution included a new article that established that "all persons have a right to a healthy and ecologically balanced environment appropriate for the development of life in all of its aspects."

The Kingdom lacks modern legislation pertaining to the natural environment.

Nevertheless in the last five years and with the technical assistance of several international organizations, the country has undertaken a slow process of revising and amending its environmental legislation, attempting to identify overlapping jurisdictional and institutional powers and responsibilities as well as legislative lacunae.

The following laws serve as a basis for the management of natural resources:

- **General Law on Renewable Natural Resources of 1977**, which does not include specific provisions establishing instruments for tasks such as carrying out Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), a deficiency that has generated criticism from various sectors.
- **Water Law of 1964**, which has a development orientation and does not provide for integrated water resources management. A new text providing for modernization has been debated in the national parliament for the last 10 years but has not been approved due to resistance from powerful groups that favor decentralizing water management and devolving authority to the municipalities of each of the autonomous regions, as well as those that favor privatizing services.
- **Forest Code of 1973** establishes that the national parks and protected areas are inalienable and categorizes the reforestation and preservation of wooded areas as a matter of national interest. This law includes a special provision that recognizes the existence of indigenous communities, and reaffirms, albeit incompletely, the constitutionally recognized right of these communities to self-determination with respect to their land and other resources.

To a greater or lesser extent, each of the autonomous regions has developed its own legislation relative to natural resources, which in some regions, is more advanced than the national legislation. Although the management

of natural resources is decentralized, various matters are decided in the capital, particularly inter-jurisdictional questions like those involving water resources.

**Water-Related Administrative Structure:** The institutional framework for the management of natural resources is under the authority of the Ministry of Sustainable Development, the Environment, and Energy, based in the national capital. Nonetheless, each of the autonomous regions has its own authority of the environment and/or natural resources.

**Weaknesses of Legal and Policy Framework:** Although the Kingdom has been modernizing its environmental laws, it has not yet achieved consistency between the new laws and the administrative set up. Thus administrative regulations do not always reflect the intent of the new laws.

**International Agreements:** The Kingdom of Konfunesia belongs to the United Nations and is a party to the most important of the multilateral environmental conventions including the Convention on Biological Diversity, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, World Health Organization, Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

**Water-Related Issues:** Alleged pollution of Chimaeras Lake by mining wastes; threats to marine mammals from dredging in Astonishment Bay; disputes with Akinonia over issues related to the Tarpon Canal and the expansion of the Papyrus Dam; need for irrigation water in the Menhir Desert.

**Energy:** The energy sector is managed by the Konfundesian Electric Agency of (KEA), an autonomous state body organized within the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fishing. Most of the country's energy is hydroelectric and is generated at the Gudi Dam, located on the upper Takong River downstream from its confluence with the Tarambana and Desperation Rivers. In the context of economic expansion, the energy sector has felt pressure to seek alternative sources, one of which is the expanding biofuels sector, which is experiencing rapid growth in the Metis and Upper Mumbara Autonomous Regions. Another option is the construction of the proposed **Edara Dam** on the upper Mumbara, which would be about the same size as the **Gudi Dam**. It would serve both to provide electrical energy and to control flooding during the seasonal ice melt. Environmentalists and much of civil society have pointed out the possible negative effects of this project on the environment, however, particularly in the southernmost wooded areas of the Shrouded Forest.

**Transportation/Infrastructure:** Ten years ago the government inaugurated the Tarpon Canal, a direct aquatic route between the Fathomless Sea and the Takong River. The canal was a project of the Second National Development Plan (NDP II). By facilitating navigation between the sea and the river, it has become one of the most important factors in the kingdom's economic performance.

Since the canal opened, the city of **Estambay** has become the country's most important port, and work has now begun to make it a **deep water port**. However, this successful economic expansion has not come free of problems. The city's population has grown considerably due to migration from the countryside, and the city has not been able provide its many new inhabitants with sufficient housing or jobs.

The road system is inadequate and incomplete, covering only the southern part of the river basin. There are proposals to build a highway

between the cities of Saline and Estambay and another to connect Estambay with the capital. Highways are administered by the Konfundesian Secretariat of Highways (KSH), although in recent years half of the system has been ceded in concession to a private firm in response to recurrent deficits incurred by the sector.

Its **railroads** were once a point of pride for the Kingdom of Konfundesia, but they are now in inexorable decline. The poor condition of passenger and freight lines as well as passenger stations and freight terminals nearly led to their being shut down, a fate that was avoided thanks to the pressures of the Green Party and the opening of a line of credit to save the sector from ruin. The government now proposes to renovate and maintain existing rail lines, particularly for passenger transportation.

**Economy:** Konfundesia is a developing country. With a diversified economy based on farming, livestock production, fishing, and tourism, it has the greatest purchasing power in the region. Its principal economic activities are farming and livestock production, which are practiced in the autonomous regions of Upper Mumbara, Metis, and Chimaeras. Its main crops are cotton, wheat, potatoes, manioc, tobacco, and sugarcane.

**Agriculture:** Agriculture brings in the highest share of GDP. The main crops grown for export are cotton, wheat, potatoes, manioc, and tobacco. Sugarcane is currently being widely developed for use in the incipient but growing biofuel industry, especially along the middle reach of the Takong.

The government has proposed a "Development and Irrigation Plan for the Greater Menhir Arid Region" (DIPGMAR) to irrigate the cotton crops on the periphery of the desert.

Much of the country's livestock production is concentrated in the area bordered on the west and south by the Takong River, on the east by

the Sambara, and on the north by Chimaeras Lake.

**Mining:** The mining sector is not highly developed. Recently, the country proposed mineral exploration by private consortia in the Upper Mumbara and Tarambana Autonomous Regions.

**Tourism:** The principal tourist destinations are Chimaeras Lake and the Shrouded Forest area,

particularly Purple Eagle National Park and Mount Pingimanjaro. The tourism sector has grown for the last 15 years and now constitutes an important source of foreign exchange for the country, although not to the degree hoped for by the Ministry of Tourism, which has endeavored to attract private-sector financing for its improvement and expansion.