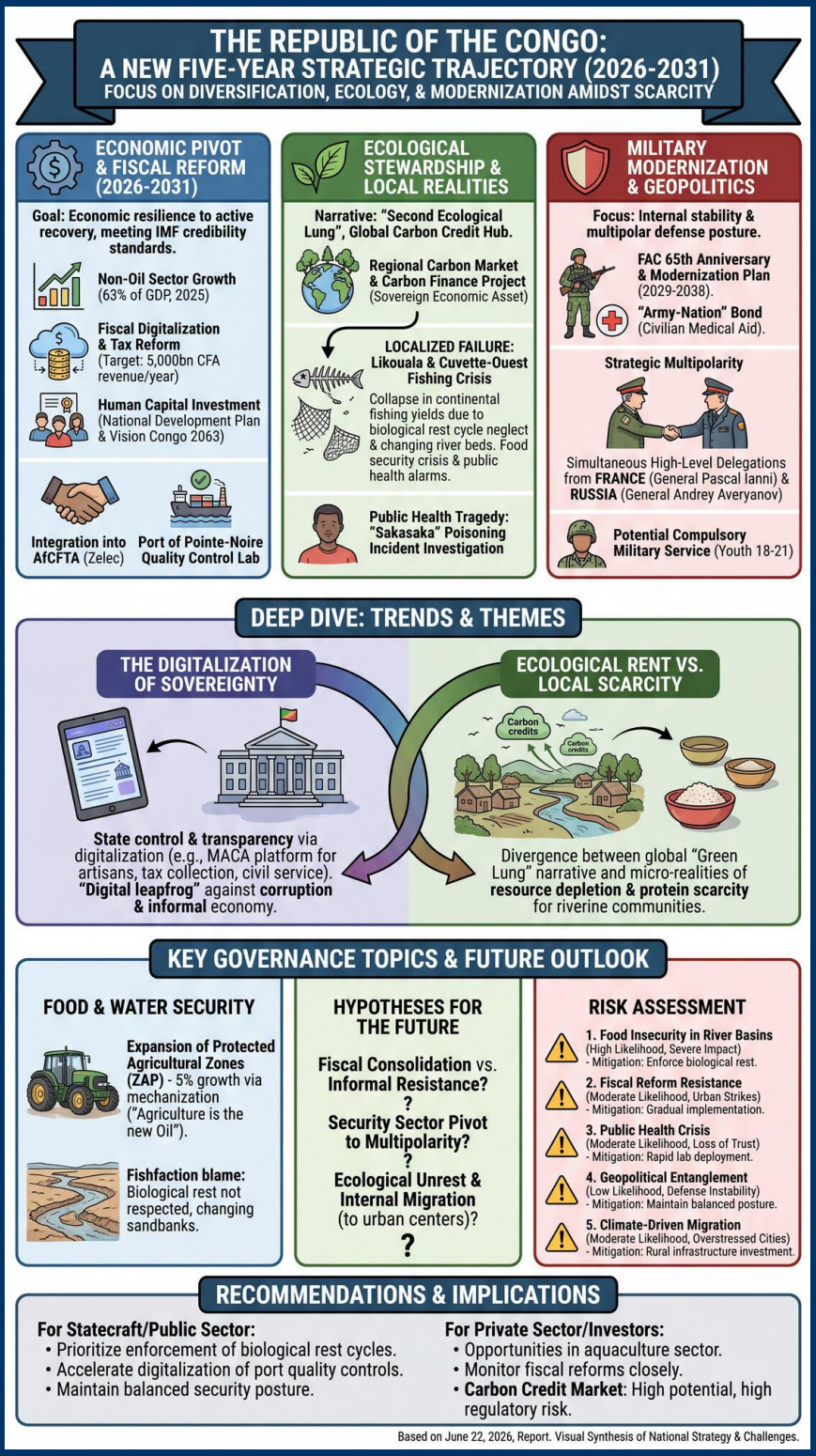
TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

TELECONGO

JUNE 22, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT



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THE REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO DEFINES A NEW FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC TRAJECTORY FOCUSED ON ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION, ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP, AND MILITARY MODERNIZATION AMIDST REGIONAL RESOURCE SCARCITY.

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

June 22, 2026, marked a significant pivot for the Republic of the Congo as Prime Minister Anatole Colliné Makoso presented the government's comprehensive Action Program (2026-2031) to the National Assembly. This roadmap, which integrates the **National Development Plan (PND)** and the **Vision Congo 2063**, signals a transition from economic resilience to active recovery. The administration is prioritizing non-oil sector growth, fiscal digitalization, and human capital investment to meet the IMF-mandated financial credibility standards. The day was also characterized by a heavy nationalist sentiment surrounding the 65th anniversary of the Congolese Armed Forces (FAC) and the Gendarmerie, showcasing a force that is resolutely committed to maintaining internal stability.

Simultaneously, the broadcast highlighted a stark contrast between high-level ecological leadership and localized environmental failure. While officials celebrated the launch of the **Regional Carbon Market** and the nation's role as the "second ecological lung" of the planet, reports from the Likouala and Cuvette-Ouest departments detailed a collapse in continental fishing yields. This scarcity is driving populations toward expensive, imported frozen products and away from traditional fresh fish, creating a burgeoning food security crisis in once-abundant river basins. Geopolitically, the state continues to navigate a complex multipolar environment, hosting high-level military delegations from both **France** and **Russia** within the same 24-hour period.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

- **Unveiling of the 2026-2031 Action Program:** Prime Minister Makoso outlined 20 priority actions, focusing on fiscal reform, debt lissage, and non-oil sector expansion, which has reached 63% of the PIB as of 2025.
- **Military Anniversary and Modernization:** The 65th anniversary of the FAC served as a platform for Defense Minister Raymond Zéphirin Mboulou to emphasize a ten-year **modernization plan (2029-2038)** and the reinforcement of the "Army-Nation" bond through civilian medical assistance programs.
- **Carbon Market Institutionalization:** Arlette Soudan-Nonono, Minister of Environment, launched the first steering committee for the **Carbon Finance Project**, aiming to operationalize forest preservation as a sovereign economic asset.

- **Likouala Fishing Crisis:** A significant decline in fish captures in Makotipoko and Epena has led to a localized economic depression, forcing traditional fishermen to pivot to selling frozen imports and causing public health concerns.
- **Public Health Tragedy:** Authorities are investigating a mysterious **poisoning incident** involving a traditional "Sakasaka" dish that resulted in multiple deaths and several critical hospitalizations, sparking widespread public alarm.

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Macroeconomics & Trade

- The government is implementing a new **fiscal policy** targeting 5,000 billion CFA francs in annual revenue through digitalization and simplified collection to ensure budget sustainability.
- Integration into the **AfCFTA (Zelec)** is driving the creation of a new quality control laboratory at the Port of Pointe-Noire to certify Congolese exports for continental markets.

Armed Conflict & Militarization

- High-level diplomacy saw French General Pascal Ianni and Russian General Andrey Averyanov conducting concurrent visits to reinforce bilateral military partnerships.
- The government is considering the introduction of **compulsory military service** for youth aged 18 to 21 to bolster the national defense structure.

Food & Water Security

- Expansion of **Protected Agricultural Zones (ZAP)** is credited with a 5% average growth in agricultural PIB over the last four years, primarily through mechanization efforts.
- The dramatic rare faction of fish in the Congo River basin is being blamed on **biological rest cycles** not being respected and changing sandbank distributions in the river beds.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Digitalization of Sovereignty

A recurring theme is the weaponization of digitalization to enforce state control and economic transparency. From the **MACA digital platform** for artisans to the digitalization of the tax collection system and civil service management, the state is attempting to modernize its bureaucracy to meet IMF transparency requirements. This "digital leapfrog" is framed as the primary mechanism to combat corruption and the **"informalization"** of the economy.

Ecological Rent vs. Local Scarcity

There is a growing divergence between the state's macro-narrative of environmental leadership and the micro-realities of resource depletion. The government is successfully positioning the Congo Basin as a global carbon credit hub, yet the local populations who depend on these ecosystems for protein are reporting a total **scarcity of fish**. This suggests that while carbon finance may stabilize the national treasury, it has yet to solve the immediate food security issues facing riverine communities.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

- **Elite Consolidation:** Prime Minister Makoso's presentation was a display of **institutional alignment**, with the National Assembly president urging deputies to support the government's "audacious" vision. This suggests a period of high political stability following the recent presidential mandate.
- **Social Pact Resilience:** The government is aggressively promoting its **National Social Pact**, particularly in Pointe-Noire, to manage public expectations and maintain order among women's groups and artisans.
- **Public Health Anxiety:** The poisoning incident in Makotipoko has created a **trust vacuum**, forcing state media to issue warnings against cooking traditional foods indoors and highlighting the fragility of the healthcare system in rural areas.

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

- **Strategic Multipolarity:** The simultaneous engagement with **French General Pascal Ianni** and **Russian General Andrey Averyanov** demonstrates Congo's intent to remain a neutral but critical security partner in Central Africa. The visit by General Averyanov, in particular, signals a deepening of military ties with Moscow.
- **Regional Integration:** The government is positioning itself as a leader in the **Blue Fund for the Congo Basin**, hosting regional summits to harmonize carbon market policies and climate transition strategies.
- **Diplomatic Economy:** The planned **Brazzaville-Kinshasa bridge**, funded via the African Development Bank (AfDB), is the cornerstone of the state's plan to become a regional transport hub.

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The Congolese economy is showing signs of recovery after a protracted recession, with a projected GDP growth of **5.5% in 2026**. Debt management remains the critical variable, with the state pursuing a "smoothing" of Eurobond obligations to avoid repayment peaks that would derail investment.

- **GDP Growth:** Real GDP growth reached **3.1%** in the second quarter of 2025, driven by a **4.2%** surge in the primary sector.
- **Debt Ratios:** Public debt to GDP has decreased from **111.1%** in 2020 to a projected **92.46%** in 2025 under the IMF program.
- **Fiscal Target:** The government aims to collect **5,000 billion CFA francs** annually through structural tax reforms.
- **Commodity Shift:** The non-oil sector's share of GDP has risen to **63%**, up from **53%** in 2022, signaling a successful diversification trend.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

The day's broadcasts focused on the formalization of the executive team and strategic military appointments intended to stabilize the new mandate.

- **Anatole Colliné Makoso:** Confirmed as the primary **"chef d'ouvrage"** for the 2026-2031 vision, emphasizing his role as the constitutional bridge between the Presidency and Parliament.

- **Claude Le Roy:** The return of the veteran French coach to lead the **Diables Rouges** (national football team) is a calculated move to use national sport as a unifying tool for public sentiment.
- **Colonel Major Emer Fred OV Nyanga:** Installed as the new **Commander of the Defense Zone No. 1** (Pointe-Noire) to secure the nation's critical economic hub.
- **Raymond Zéphirin Mboulou:** Reaffirmed as Defense Minister, leading the FAC 65th anniversary celebrations and the FAC's ten-year modernization agenda.

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

The editorial tone was overwhelmingly **nationalistic and celebratory**. The presentation of the Prime Minister's Action Program was the lead story across all segments, framed as a moment of "great democratic and republican significance." The 65th anniversary of the FAC was given secondary prominence, with significant airtime dedicated to humanizing the military through reports on **free medical clinics** and student outreach. A critical "buried" story was the collapse of the fishing industry; while it received deep reporting, it was positioned as a local environmental issue rather than a systemic failure. The **poisoning mystery** was treated with urgency but carefully managed to avoid suggesting state negligence.

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

The Republic of the Congo is framed as a **resilient, emerging leader** in the Congo Basin, managing a delicate balance between Western financial institutions and diverse security partners.

- **France**: Portrayed as a **reliable, historical partner** in security and culture, evidenced by General Ianni's visit and the support for the MACA artisan platform.
- **Russia**: Framed as a **strategic military ally** and "brother in arms," with General Averyanov's visit emphasizing mutual honor and loyalty.
- **IMF**: Viewed as a **strict but necessary disciplinarian**, whose "label of quality" is essential for Congolese financial credibility.
- **Brazil**: Portrayed as a **model for agricultural and forestry success** that Congo seeks to emulate through technology transfer.

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

- **Narrative Seeding:** The government is aggressively seeding the narrative that **"Agriculture is the new Oil"** to prepare the public for a future where hydrocarbon revenues may dwindle. The success of the ZAP zones is central to this messaging.
- **Meta-Narrative of the "Green Lung":** By framing the nation as a global ecological savior, the government is building moral leverage against international creditors, essentially **"weaponizing" environmental stewardship** to secure more favorable financial terms.
- **Crisis Management:** The poisoning incident was met with a swift **information operation** to blame traditional cooking methods and "invisible" contamination, effectively shielding local authorities from scrutiny over food safety regulations.

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- **Fiscal Consolidation:** If the government successfully digitalizes tax collection, they will likely meet IMF targets, but **informal sector resistance** could lead to localized civil friction.
- **Security Sector Pivot:** The modernization of the FAC (2029-2038) and the **Russian General's visit** suggest a long-term plan to decrease reliance on Western security architectures in favor of a multipolar defense posture.
- **Ecological Unrest:** Continued fish scarcity in the Likouala basin could trigger **internal migration** toward urban centers, potentially overwhelming Brazzaville's infrastructure.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks): Expect heightened police and health inspections in traditional markets following the **Sakasaka poisoning**. The government will likely announce the formal results of the toxicological investigation to calm public fear.

Medium Term (1-6 Months): The launch of the **2027-2031 National Development Plan** will dictate the 2027 budget. Agricultural output from ZAP zones will be closely monitored to see if it can offset the protein deficit caused by the fishing crisis.

Long Term (1-5 Years): The success of the **Regional Carbon Market** will determine Congo's status as a regional financial power. Failure to diversify away from oil will risk a sovereign debt crisis as global energy markets shift.

RISK ASSESSMENT

- **Food Insecurity in River Basins:** Scarcity of fresh fish leading to malnutrition or social unrest. **Triggers:** Continued capturing of juvenile fish and lack of biological rest enforcement. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** Severe local economic collapse. **Mitigations:** Immediate enforcement of biological rest periods and subsidies for aquaculture.
- **Fiscal Reform Resistance:** Digitalization of tax collection causing backlash from informal traders. **Triggers:** Aggressive enforcement of the new digital tax code. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** Urban strikes. **Mitigations:** Gradual implementation and incentives for formalization.
- **Public Health Crisis:** The Sakasaka poisoning indicating a broader failure in the food supply chain. **Triggers:** More deaths or discovery of chemical contaminants. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** Loss of trust in local governance. **Mitigations:** Rapid lab deployment and port-to-market quality control.
- **Geopolitical Entanglement:** Competing interests between France and Russia leading to internal military friction. **Triggers:** Exclusive arms or training deals with one side. **Likelihood:** Low. **Impact:** Instability in the defense sector. **Mitigations:** Maintaining the current balanced diplomatic posture.

- **Climate-Driven Migration:** Rural ecological failure driving population surges in Brazzaville. **Triggers:** Continued drought or river depletion. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** Overstressed urban services and increased poverty. **Mitigations:** Rural infrastructure investment as outlined in the Action Program.

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

- **Causality of Fish Scarcity:** The broadcast mentions "natural and entropic factors" but fails to investigate if **industrial pollution** or foreign commercial fishing is contributing to the river depletion.
- **Toxicology of the Poisoning:** There is no specific detail on whether the Sakasaka poisoning was **biological (cyanogenic glycosides)** or **chemical (pesticides)**, which is critical for prevention.
- **Russian Delegation Agenda:** While General Averyanov's visit was covered kituba, the **precise nature of the agreements** signed remains obscured by nationalistic rhetoric.
- **IMF Conditions:** The Prime Minister emphasizes "credibility" but downplays the specific **austerity measures** required to maintain the IMF program.

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

- **The "Potemkin" Economy:** The non-oil sector growth (63%) might be inflated by state-led infrastructure projects rather than genuine private sector expansion, creating a **fragile bubble** that will burst if foreign financing dries up.
- **Strategic Stalling:** The "modernization" of the military and the **Social Pact** could be interpreted as the elite preparing for a period of **increased domestic repression** disguised as order, using digital tools for surveillance rather than efficiency.
- **Black Swan - Total Ecological Collapse:** A sudden shift in the Congo River's hydrology could render the Brazzaville-Kinshasa bridge and associated ports obsolete before completion, turning a massive investment into a "stranded asset."

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- Prioritize the **enforcement of biological rest** in river basins to prevent a total collapse of the continental fishing industry.
- Accelerate the **digitalization of port quality controls** to ensure compliance with AfCFTA standards and boost export legitimacy.
- Maintain the **balanced security posture** between France and Russia to avoid becoming a proxy battleground for external powers.

For Private Sector/Investors:

- Opportunities exist in the **aquaculture sector** as natural captures continue to fail; demand for sustainable protein will only rise.
- Monitor **fiscal reforms** closely; the shift to digital tax collection may increase transparency but could also lead to short-term logistics disruptions.

- The **Carbon Credit Market** represents a high-potential but high-regulatory-risk entry point as the regional framework is institutionalized.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

The National Assembly is currently focused on the formal adoption of the 2026-2031 Action Program and the legislative framework for carbon credit sovereignty.

- **BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:**
  - **Action Program 2026-2031:** The blueprint for economic diversification and human capital investment presented by PM Makoso.
  - **Finance Carbon Project Law:** Legislation to regulate and monetize forest preservation credits.
  - **Law 19/2022 (Loi Mbara):** Implementation review of the law against violence targeting women.
- **HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:**
  - **National Assembly Plenary:** Presentation of the government's five-year strategic action plan.
  - **Regional Forum on Carbon Markets:** A high-level summit in Brazzaville to coordinate ecological finance.
  - **Defense Anniversary Ceremony:** Ministerial speech detailing military modernization and recruitment goals.

KEY STORIES

- **Prime Minister Makoso’s Five-Year Vision:** Anatole Colliné Makoso presented the 2026-2031 Action Program, emphasizing fiscal digitalization, debt management, and human capital, citing **3.1% GDP growth** as a sign of recovery.
- **65th Anniversary of the FAC:** The nation celebrated its military force with parades and speeches from Defense Minister Mboulou, emphasizing the **"Army-Nation"** bond and modernization plans.
- **Carbon Market Forum:** Arlette Soudan-Nonono launched the first steering committee for the **Carbon Finance Project**, positioning the Congo Basin as a global leader in green finance.
- **Fishing Crisis in Epena and Makotipoko:** Reports detailed the collapse of fish captures in the Likouala basin, causing economic hardship and a shift to imported frozen goods.
- **Sakasaka Poisoning Investigation:** Authorities are investigating multiple deaths in Makotipoko linked to a **contaminated cassava dish**, leading to public health warnings and hospitalizations.
- **Russian Military Delegation Visit:** General **Andrey Averyanov** visited Brazzaville to reinforce military cooperation, described in kituba as a high-level diplomatic mission.
- **French Military Cooperation:** General **Pascal Ianni** met with Congolese defense officials to reaffirm France's commitment to bilateral security ties.

- **AfDB and Women's Promotion:** A delegation from the **African Development Bank** met with Minister Iness Nefer Berti Ingani Vumbuyalo to discuss a **Social Pact** for women's economic integration.
- **Sickle Cell Awareness Day:** The 18th World Sickle Cell Awareness Day was marked by **medical training sessions** in Brazzaville to improve patient diagnostic care.
- **MACA Artisan Platform Launch:** The launch of the digital **Manufacture d'Art et d'Artisanat Congolais (MACA)** platform, supported by the French Embassy, to help Congolese artisans sell their work globally.
- **Protected Agricultural Zones (ZAP) Expansion:** The government reported that agricultural growth is driven by the expansion of mechanization in ZAP zones, contributing significantly to non-oil PIB.
- **Football Leadership Change:** The reappointment of **Claude Le Roy** to lead the national team is part of a broader strategy to use sports as a driver of national cohesion.
- **Nzobi Spiritual Festival:** Discussion of the traditional **Nzobi festival**, framed as a spiritual heritage rather than sorcery, to be held in Cuvette-Ouest.
- **Infrastructure Projects:** Updates on the **Brazzaville-Kinshasa bridge** and the **Sunda dam**, seen as critical for regional energy and logistics.
- **Widowhood Reform:** Discussions on legal protections for **widows** to prevent dispossession, framed as a social justice priority.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Today's Media Trends is a public interest experiment in applying deep thematic trend analysis to television news coverage from around the world to explore how responsibly applied advanced AI can help journalists and scholars better understand the overarching trends, themes and patterns of our global world.

No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

Each morning, in collaboration with the Internet Archive's TV News Archive, we apply Google's Gemini 3 to deeply examine yesterday's coverage from each television news channel to tease out the overarching themes and trends of its news coverage into a richly annotated thematic analysis. Each high-level insight is connected back to the original broadcast, allowing journalists and scholars to understand the dominate themes and trends and instantly click out to the underlying sources for details.

By helping journalists and scholars see the broader trends and patterns of global news coverage, this analysis helps them identify relevant stories and coverage they might not otherwise have encountered and uncover connections, emphases and narrative shifts that enable more comprehensive reporting and deeper, evidence-based research.

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