

SOFEMA supplies motorised floating bridges to ensure exchanges between both banks of the Congo river while bridges are repaired

Press release

Levallois, 15th May 2014 - Second river in the world behind the Amazon by volume of water discharged, the Congo River flows through the Democratic Republic of Congo for over 4,500 km. A great proportion of the country's natural resources (copper, cotton, sugar and coffee) transits from one bank of the Congo to the other. 750 km south of Kisangani, many bridges were severely damaged or destroyed due to traffic and the power of the river itself, disrupting links between both banks.

The World Bank has decided to finance the reconstruction of the metal bridge decks of 11 bridges in the eastern province of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), imposing continued traffic during repairs to the firm that wins the tender.

Two French companies, Matière and SOFEMA chose to collaborate to meet the challenge. Matière, based in Arpajon sur Cère, in the Cantal region, is a specialist in the construction and repair of engineering structures and, through original techniques, has revolutionised the construction of metal bridges.

With its expertise in the renovation of military equipment, SOFEMA has fully refurbished Motorized Floating Bridges from stocks of the French Army, in its Châteauroux site. Tractors, trailers, floating modules, ramps were delivered to meet the specific needs of the DRC (up to the orange paint required for a Public Works operational configuration).

With the installation of motorized pontoon bridges, the economic life of both banks of the Congo River in the Kisangani province is ensured. Mr. Fridolin Kasweshi, Minister of Infrastructure, Public Works & Reconstruction of the DRC states: "SOFEMA's Motorized Floating Bridges are a great solution to the problem of renovating bridges. This solution permits us to safely restore connections over the Congo until the fixed bridges are repaired. I wish to emphasize the importance for our country of a good infrastructure between the two parts of our eastern provinces both economically, politically and socially."