



GEF-8 PROGRAM FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT (PFD)

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GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Title: The Guinean Forests Integrated Program			
Country(ies):	Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone	GEF Program ID:	
Lead GEF Agency:	CI	GEF Agency Program ID:	
Other GEF Agenc(ies):	FAO IUCN (select)	Submission Date: 12 th April 2023	
Type of Trust Fund:	GEF Trust Fund		
Anticipated Program Executing Entity(s) and Type(s):			
Sector (only for Programs on CC)	(select) N/A	Program Duration (Months)	60
GEF Focal Area (s):	Multi Focal Area (Biodiversity, Climate Change, Land Degradation, International Waters)	Program Commitment Deadline	
GEF Program Grant (a)	24,820,795.31	GEF Program Non-grant (b)	N/A
Agency Fee Grant: (c)	2,233,868.99	Agency Fee Non-Grant: (d)	N/A
Total GEF Project Financing: (a+b+c+d)	27,064,664.30	Total Co-financing:	112,164,406
PPG Amount (e):	799,998.65	PPG Agency Fee(s) (f):	71,947.64
Total GEF Resources (a) + (b) + (c) + (d) + (e) + f)	27,926,610.59		
Project Sector (CCM only)	(select) N/A		
Program	Guinean Forests		

Program Summary***

The Guinean Forests Integrated Program (GFIP) seeks to stem and reverse forest loss and degradation in this critical forest biome. The GFIP will apply a regional, whole-of-biome approach to engage governments and other partners throughout the region to enhance the enabling environment for conservation and sustainable management of Guinean Forests, including dissemination of knowledge, tools, and best practice; support for technical and institutional capacity growth; innovative financing solutions; and facilitation of processes to enhance regional harmonization of policies relating to forest ecosystems. To address threats posed by expanding agriculture, unmanaged timber and non-timber resource extraction, and infrastructure development, country projects in Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone will apply multiple levers of transformation, including an enhanced enabling environment for sustainable forest management through supportive government policy and sustainable financing solutions; alternatives to unsustainable land and resource use through land use planning and support for sustainable livelihoods and nature-friendly enterprises; and enhanced forest governance through multi-stakeholder dialogues for co-management of protected areas and landscape-level coordination for improved planning and decision making. The regional component of the GFIP will reinforce these areas of work with technical support and capacity building, learning and knowledge exchange, and facilitation of transboundary forest landscape management and regional policy dialogue. Collectively, these efforts will expand and strengthen the management of 1,599,889 ha of forest areas under formal protection and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), improve the sustainable management of 317,308 ha in wider forest landscapes outside Protected Areas (PAs), and restore 27,433 ha of land, thereby mitigating GHG emissions by at least 16,210,624 million Mt CO₂e. Critical to achieving these results will be ensuring inclusive, gender-equitable socioeconomic benefits for at least 115,666 (of which 50% will be women).

Indicative Program Overview

Program Objective:	To invest in the protection and effective governance of the Guinean Forests to sustain the health of the planet and flow of vital ecosystem services that underpin human well-being.					
Program Components	Component Type	Program Outcomes	Program Outputs	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
					GEF Program Financing	Co-financing
COMPONENT 1: Land use planning and spatial analysis	Technical Assistance	Outcome 1.1: Updated and expanded data and information base available Outcome 1.2: Integrated participatory land-use and spatial plans developed	-	GEFTF	6,446,831	21,921,780
COMPONENT 2: Expand and improve management of forests in protected areas and OECMs	Technical Assistance	Outcome 2.1: Expanded coverage of protected areas and OECMs Outcome 2.2: Improved management effectiveness of existing protected areas and OECMs	-	GEFTF	7,457,669	43,301,430
COMPONENT 3: Sustainable land use linked to improved participatory and equitable forest management outside protected areas	Technical Assistance	Outcome 3.1: Improved sustainability of productive sectors in forest landscapes Outcome 3.2: Improved inclusive and equitable access to local livelihoods and nature-friendly enterprises Outcome 3.3: Strengthened inclusive community forest governance	-	GEFTF	5,901,680	24,387,922
COMPONENT 4: Policy engagement to improve inclusive, equitable enabling conditions for forest conservation and management	Technical Assistance	Outcome 4.1: Improved policy framework for inclusive, participatory land-use planning Outcome 4.2: Improved policies to foster inclusive economic environment conducive to forest conservation, e.g., incentives, reduction of perverse subsidies	-	GEFTF	1,000,000	150,600
COMPONENT 5: Regional cooperation, knowledge sharing,	Technical Assistance	Outcome 5.1: Gender-sensitive knowledge generation and exchange, including public	-	GEFTF	1,1931,115.99	6,481,309

and learning		<p>awareness/communications</p> <p>Outcome 5.2: Enhanced coherence and synergies between projects and regional initiatives</p> <p>Outcome 5.3: Sustainable financing strategies formulated.</p> <p>Outcome 5.4: Enhanced basis for regional policy harmonization</p>				
COMPONENT 6: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework	Technical Assistance	Outcome 6.1: A functional gender-sensitive M&E framework in place	-	GEFTF	901,559	8,355,205
Subtotal				GEFTF	23,638,854.99	104,598,246
Program Management Cost (PMC) (if this is an MTF project, please report separate PMC lines for each TF)				GEFTF	1,181,940.32	7,566,160
Total Project Cost				GEFTF	24,770,795.31	112,164,406

PROGRAM OUTLINE

A. PROGRAM RATIONALE

The Guinean Forests of West Africa comprise a globally recognized biodiversity hotspot spanning the southern part of West Africa into the northern region of Central Africa.¹ Covering approximately 620,000 km², the region includes two sub-regions: the Upper Guinean Forests (starting in Guinea and extending eastward to Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, and part of Benin); and the Lower Guinean Forests extending from southern Nigeria into southwestern Cameroon and including São Tomé and Príncipe and Equatorial Guinea's islands. The Guinean Forests support globally important levels of biodiversity (including high levels of species richness and endemism) and provide valuable ecosystem services to well over 200 million inhabitants of the region.

An estimated 10 million hectares of forest have been lost in West Africa since the beginning of the 20th century, with only around 15% of the original forest cover still intact.² Decades of poor natural resource governance, civil conflicts, and high levels of poverty and income inequality have left the region's ecosystems in a precarious state, making the protection of biodiversity and ecosystem services upon which the population depends all the more challenging and urgent.

Principal threats to the Guinean Forests include agricultural expansion, unsustainable logging and fishing, bushmeat hunting and trade, industrial and artisanal mining, and climate change and pollution.³ Expansion of the agricultural frontier for both subsistence and commercial crops is the leading cause of forest loss, such that approximately 80% of the region's original habitat is considered an "agriculture-forest" mosaic.⁴ Root causes of these threats include high levels of poverty and wealth inequality, intense pressure for economic development, expanding infrastructure and settlements, and inadequate definition and recognition of land tenure and resource rights. Weak governance of natural resource use and management is a contributing factor to these threats throughout the region.

Forests continue to be lost and degraded across West Africa, with Nigeria having one of the world's highest deforestation rates and Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire's primary forest loss rates increasing by 60% and 26% respectively from 2010-2020.⁵ (Table 1 below summarizes forest trend data for the eight countries originally eligible for the GFIP.) Failure to address the drivers of forest loss and degradation will result in continued habitat and ecosystem service loss, and loss of natural capital will erode the socioeconomic wellbeing of forest-dependent communities and foreclose sustainable economic development options.

¹ Mittermeier, R., P. Gil, M. Hoffmann, J. Pilgrim, T. Brooks, C. Mittermeier, J. Lamoreux & G. Fonseca. 2004. *Hotspots Revisited: Earth's Biologically Richest and Most Endangered Terrestrial Ecoregions*.

² Ibid.

³ CEPF. 2016. *Ecosystem Profile: Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot*.

⁴ Fairhead and Leach (1998) cited in Norris et al. (2010); Li et al. 2007.

⁵ FAO. 2022. *The State of the World's Forests 2022. Forest pathways for green recovery and building inclusive, resilient and sustainable economies*. Rome, FAO.

Table 1: Forest Trends in GFIP-eligible Countries

Country	Stable Forest Cover (2000-2020)	Disturbed Forest (2000-2020)	Net Forest Loss (2000-2020)	Total Net Change (% of total tree cover, 2000-2020)
Cameroon	33,900,000 ha	1,670,000 ha	626,000 ha	-1.7%
Côte d'Ivoire	16,800,000 ha	4,380,000 ha	1,650,000 ha	-6.9%
Ghana	8,670,000 ha	1,690,000 ha	573,000 ha	-5.1%
Guinea	14,600,000 ha	2,626,000 ha	1,590,000 ha	-8.3%
Liberia	6,420,000 ha	2,530,000 ha	334,000 ha	-3.6%
Nigeria	20,600,000 ha	1,180,000 ha	1,470,000 ha	-6.1%
São Tomé-Príncipe	NA	NA	77 ha*	-0.5%
Sierra Leone	3,400,000 ha	1,990,000 ha	545,000 ha	-9%

Source: Global Forest Watch (2023).

*(2001-2021)

The program's objective is to invest in the protection and effective governance of the Guinean Forests to sustain the health of the planet and the flow of vital ecosystem services that underpin human well-being. The Guinean Forests Integrated Program (GFIP) will help maintain globally significant biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services through the following Global Environmental Benefits:

- *Protected Areas*: Create 347,875 ha of new PAs; improve management of 1,386,713 ha of PAs; establish sustainable management in 470,800 ha
- *Restoration*: Restore 65,000 ha of degraded land
- *CO2 sequestration*: Absorb and sequester an estimated 24 million Mt CO2e through improved landscape management and forest protection, climate-smart agriculture, and restoration
- *Community well-being*: Benefit at least 70,000 people through training, development of new income-generating opportunities, and incentives for sustainable practices and restoration

Reversing current trends in forest loss and degradation will require addressing the following barriers that characterize the baseline scenario:

- *Lack of comprehensive participatory integrated land use planning*: Sustainable landscapes require coordination among stakeholders based on a shared vision for land and resource use.
- *Insufficient data to guide land-use planning (LUP), decision-making, and management*: Effective LUP and other policy- and decision-making require reliable data and information to understand interactions and trade-offs within social-ecological-economic systems. Throughout the region, much of the available data and information is outdated, incomplete, and/or unreliable.

- *Lack of access to sustainable livelihoods:* Rural communities throughout the region depend on agriculture supplemented by a range of timber and non-timber forest products, including charcoal and firewood. Given current prevailing land- and resource-use practices, efforts to increase income through these activities are linked to deforestation and forest degradation. Altering this dynamic will require overcoming limited knowledge of and access to competitive, sustainable income-generating alternatives.
- *Limited government capacity for effective conservation and sustainable management:* Conservation and sustainable management of land and resources require a set of technical capacities that are in short supply throughout the region. Examples range from understanding ecosystem service dynamics to planning processes (land use, spatial, resource management) to innovative conservation management technology to best practices for agriculture and other resource use.
- *Weak policies and legislation relating to forest governance:* Policy and legislative work in the region have not kept pace with the growing pressure on the region's forests. Although higher-level policy commitments to biodiversity and climate goals have been articulated by most governments, there is a dearth of policies and legislation to actualize these commitments on the ground. Relevant areas relate to land tenure and resource rights, mandated multi-stakeholder land use planning, and shared governance arrangements over protected areas and other forest areas.
- *Gender inequality in natural resource management including land tenure:* When women lack access and are not represented in decision-making, an opportunity is lost to strengthen natural resource management through women's unique contributions (e.g., knowledge, values, and strengths). For example, research on forest user groups found that groups with a quota in place for gender-balanced membership conserved more trees in a Payment for Ecosystem Services intervention and shared the payments more equally compared to groups without a quota.⁶
- *Limited coordination of transboundary forest management:* Several landscapes important to biodiversity and ecosystem services in the region span national boundaries. Although transboundary coordination is recognized as a need by relevant government agencies, in practice such coordination is limited, due to competing priorities and limited capacity and resources.
- *Limited financing for protected areas and sustainable landscape management:* Governments throughout the region struggle to provide adequate budgets for protected areas and sustainable management of the wider landscapes in which they are located. Some of the resulting shortfalls is met through philanthropic funding and ODA, often channeled through environmental NGOs, but sizeable gaps remain and these flows do not constitute a sustainable long-term financing solution. A combination of policy and work on financing mechanisms is needed to overcome this barrier.

The program approach is well suited to addressing drivers of environmental degradation given the prevalence of transboundary dynamics for the region's remaining large Intact Forest Landscapes; the ubiquitous role of key economic sectors (e.g., cocoa and palm oil) in the region's forest areas; and shared regional needs with respect to capacity building, policy reform, and conservation finance. By emphasizing regional coordination, cooperation, and cross-project learning, the program approach can maximize the impact of funding invested per these themes. This also

⁶ IUCN (2020). Gender and Natural Resource Governance: Addressing inequalities and empowering women for sustainable ecosystem management. IUCN: Gland, Switzerland

will contribute to enduring outcomes by generating a regional community of practice with a shared basis of capacity and knowledge, grounded in aligned policies and policy objectives.

As signaled above, the central stakeholders are IPLCs living in and around forest landscapes, as their daily decisions on land- and resource-use directly impact the future of these landscapes. Local communities will be project partners and beneficiaries, as a combination of institutional capacity building, sustainable livelihoods, and enhanced tenure and resource rights strengthens their ability and incentives for sustainable forest management. This will include support for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) dedicated to implementing projects that contribute to sustainable economic development while achieving priority conservation outcomes in the Guinean Forests of West Africa Hotspot. The success of the IP also will depend on the participation of the private sector as a key stakeholder in forest landscapes, principally as concessionaires involved in commercial agroforestry and agriculture, as well as the mining sector. They will be key participants in LUP processes, engaged to secure commitment to deforestation-free supply chains, and involved in work to enhance local community participation in these supply chains. To ensure a conducive enabling environment for this body of work, a range of government agencies are key stakeholders in efforts ranging from direct work on the ground to policy reform at the national level, notably environmental protection and protected area management agencies, but also ministries of finance, land authorities, and agencies implicated in infrastructure development and their contractors (e.g., roads, energy). Finally, a set of regional stakeholders includes regional initiatives and other policy forums such as the Mano River Union, AFR100, and others that can contribute to coordination and exchange.

The GFIP builds on prior and current regional investments, including funding for direct biodiversity conservation as well as larger thematic investments with conservation benefits, such as initiatives to address climate change, safeguard ecosystem service delivery, and improve management practices at the corridor and landscape scale. Relevant recent investments in the region include:

- The West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change (WABiCC) program was a USD53.75 million initiative funded by USAID (2015-2021). The goal of the program was ‘to improve conservation and climate-resilient, low-emissions growth across West Africa’. WABiCC focused on targeted landscapes across the region to work with policy makers and practitioners to improve governance, policy, and practice through three components: Combatting Wildlife Trafficking; Increasing Coastal Resilience to Climate Change, and; Reducing Deforestation, Forest Degradation, and Biodiversity Loss. This has been followed by the USD49 Million West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development (WABiLED, 2021-2025) program, which also works with partners to strengthen the capacity of national and regional networks and institutions to enforce and prosecute wildlife trafficking laws across the region; implement regional and transboundary cooperation and biodiversity conservation strategies in the key forested countries of Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone; and improve capacity for economic planning and development of low emissions development strategies to reduce West Africa’s greenhouse gas emissions, thus contributing to national and global climate commitments. The three core objectives include: 1) Support combating wildlife trafficking (CWT) and great ape conservation through improved regional coordination and operationalization of national and regional policies, laws, and regulations. 2) Reduce deforestation, forest degradation, and biodiversity loss in key forests through technical and knowledge management support. 3) Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and increase carbon sequestration from land use.
- From 2016-2022, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) directed USD10 million in conservation investments to strengthen civil society throughout the Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot, which the program will build upon, leveraging prior relationships with key stakeholders as well as lessons learned from previous experiences.
- The Global Forest Transformation for People and Climate Project has been funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and implemented by FAO in collaboration with ECOWAS. This USD8.25 million, 5-year project (2019-2024) is intended to help roll out the ECOWAS Convergence Plan for the Sustainable Management and Use of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa, which aims to mobilize political,

institutional, financial, and technical support to address transboundary forest issues across ECOWAS's 15 member states. The project's objective is to strengthen decision-making on forests and land management across West Africa by improving knowledge of forest dynamics, supporting legal reform, and demonstrating and sharing best community-based forest practices across the region.

- The support Program for the Preservation of Biodiversity and Fragile Ecosystems, Governance and Climate Change in West Africa (PAPBIO) is funded by the European Union with the overall objective of promoting endogenous, sustainable, and inclusive economic development that meets the challenges of climate change. In consultation with ECOWAS, the program has been designed to advance integrated protection of biodiversity and fragile ecosystems and enhanced resilience to climate change through improved regional governance of transboundary protected areas and biodiversity. One component of the program is to support a set of protected areas throughout the region, with implementation led and coordinated by IUCN.
- The Support Program for the Preservation of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa (PAPFor), funded by the European Union, is a 5-year (2019-2024), €20 million program that seeks to effectively and efficiently protect biodiversity and priority forest ecosystems in West Africa, contributing to climate change resilience and food and water security. It is focused on six transboundary forest landscapes in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, and Nigeria.
- The GEF-funded (\$6.3M; \$56.3M co-financing) Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project (2015-2022), involving Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone with IUCN as Implementing Agency, promoted holistic approaches to integrated ecosystem management and participatory community-based strategies for conservation and sustainable use of soil, water, and biota. The project relates to 10 transboundary river basins shared by the countries, which also are ecologically critical parts of the Guinean Forests biome. Among the project outputs that the GFIP will build on are Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA), Strategic Action Plan (SAP), identification of forest restoration sites, and work on community resource governance and livelihoods.
- The GEF-funded Global Opportunities for Long-term Development of Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM) Sector Plus (GOLD+) project relates directly to one of the threats to parts of the Guinean Forests hotspot, as informal ASGM operators are present in several important forest landscapes. Within the region, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, and Sierra Leone are participating in the GOLD+ project, seeking to formalize the sector and stimulate the adoption of improved practices, including the elimination of mercury use.
- The Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration Impact Program (FOLUR) is a \$345 million, seven-year (~2020-2027) global GEF IP led by the World Bank, intended to transform food and land use systems to the benefit of human wellbeing and biodiversity and other ecosystem services. FOLUR works in 27 countries; in West Africa, these include Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, and Liberia, providing a relevant foundation of learning and prior work both in the field and on policy, including capacity building, greening commodity value chains (esp. palm oil and cocoa), and strengthening of community governance and cooperatives, and spatial land use planning.

Key lessons learned from current and past investments in the region include:

- Distribution of funding for conservation across the region is uneven, with many KBAs and priority corridors receiving little or no funding.
- Despite support from programs like the UNDP-GEF Strategic Program for West Africa to support national government capacity to manage protected area systems, there is a persistent shortage of investment and capacity needed to ensure effective management throughout the region. Moreover, many KBAs remain outside of the region's protected area systems and national conservation priorities.
- Investments in CSOs and communities have proven to be effective in achieving conservation outcomes that also alleviate poverty and improve natural resource governance.
- Mainstreaming gender considerations in project design is a critical means to both promote gender equity and enhance the effectiveness of interventions relating to natural resource use and management.

- Legal recognition of collective title, community forests, and other forms of tenure and property rights are important enabling factors for sustainable resource management that would benefit from additional investment throughout the region.

The GFIP will support a number of GBF and MEA goals, as well as regional goals, such as those established under the AFR100. The GFIP directly will contribute to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework by advancing Goals A and B (relating to conservation and sustainable use respectively), and particularly Targets 1-5 (spatial planning, biodiversity conservation, and management, including the 30x30 target), 8 (climate change), 9-11 (sustainable use and management of biodiversity and ecosystem services), 14 (policy and planning), 18 (perverse incentives), 19 (capacity building), 20 (financing), 21 (data availability), 22 (IPLCs) and 23 (gender). As Target 8 specifically addresses issues related to climate change, the GFIP also supports the objectives of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) through increased mitigation and resilience measures related to spatial planning and ecosystem protection and restoration. Likewise, by emphasizing protection and restoration, the GFIP contributes to the strategic objectives and expected impacts of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) (see Table 2).

Through improved land-use planning, better enforcement, and supporting sustainable economic alternatives at the landscape scale, the GFIP also aligns with the goals of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, notably in the areas of artisanal and small-scale gold mining, mercury use reduction, and restoration of former mining sites. Seven child-project countries have ratified the convention (Liberia has signed but not yet ratified), and four have developed national action plans. The GFIP will facilitate country child project coordination with the GEF GOLD/GOLD+ program where relevant (see Table 3). Finally, the program also helps advance the regional AFR100 aim to restore 100 million hectares of land in Africa by 2030. Collectively, the target countries have committed to restoring 26.7 million ha to both AFR100 and the Bonn Challenge; the GFIP has a restoration target of over 27,400 ha (see Table 4) and also will coordinate with the Ecosystem Restoration IP to explore potential synergies in the implementation of field activities as well as policy engagement.

Table 2: Mapping of Program Components to GBF Goals and Relevant MEA Objectives^{7,8,9}

Program Components	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Goals and Targets	UNFCCC	UNCCD	Minamata
Component 1: Land use planning and spatial analysis	Goals A and B; Targets 1, 8	The GFIP contributes to Target 8 under the GBF (minimizing the impact of climate change and increasing resilience), and thus aligns with the climate mitigation objectives of the UNFCCC.	Strategic objective 1; Expected impacts 1.1 and 1.3	Article 7 (Artisanal and Small-scale mining)
Component 2: Expand and improve management of forests in protected areas and OECMs	Goals A, B; Targets 1, 2, 3, 4, 8		Strategic objectives 1, 2, and 3; Expected impacts 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1 and 3.2	Article 7 (Artisanal and Small-scale mining)
Component 3: Sustainable land use linked to improved participatory and equitable forest management outside protected areas	Goals A and B; Targets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11.		Strategic objectives 1, 2, and 3; Expected impacts 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1 and 3.2	Article 7 (Artisanal and Small-scale mining); Article 12 (Contaminated sites)
Component 4: Policy engagement to improve inclusive, equitable enabling conditions for forest conservation and management	Goals A and B; Targets 8, 14, 18, 19, 22, 23		Strategic objectives 1, 2, 4, 5; Expected impacts 1.3, 2.3, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1	Article 7 (Artisanal and Small-scale mining); Article 12 (Contaminated sites); Article 13 (Financial resources and mechanism)
Component 5: Regional cooperation, knowledge sharing, and learning	Goal D; Targets 8, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23		Strategic objectives 1, 2, 4, 5; Expected impacts 1.4, 2.3, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3	Article 7 (Artisanal and Small-scale mining); Article 13 (Financial resources and mechanism)
Component 6: <i>Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework</i>	Adaptive management, tracking impact, and monitoring the application of safeguards contribute to the inclusive, equitable pursuit of all of the above.			

⁷ <https://www.cbd.int/article/cop15-cbd-press-release-final-19dec2022>

⁸ [https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/ICCD_COP\(13\)_L.18-1716078E_1.pdf](https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/ICCD_COP(13)_L.18-1716078E_1.pdf)

⁹ <https://mercuryconvention.org/sites/default/files/2021-06/Minamata-Convention-booklet-Sep2019-EN.pdf>

Table 3: Status of Minamata Convention on Mercury of GFIP Countries

Country	Signature Date	Status	Ratification Date	National Action Plans
Cameroon	24/09/2014	Ratification	10/3/2021	-
Cote d'Ivoire	10/10/2013	Ratification	1/10/2019	-
Ghana	24/09/2014	Ratification	23/03/2017	link
Guinea	24/09/2014	Ratification	22/10/2018	link
Liberia	24/09/2014	Signature		-
Nigeria	10/10/2013	Ratification	1/2/2018	link
Sao Tome and Principe		Accession	30/08/2018	-
Sierra Leone	12/8/2014	Ratification	1/11/2016	link

Table 4: AFR100-Bonn Challenge Commitments/GFIP Child Project Restoration Targets

Country	AFR100-Bonn Challenge Commitment	GFIP Restoration Targets
Cameroon	12 million ha	-
Cote d'Ivoire	5 million ha	-
Ghana	2 million ha	-
Guinea	2 million ha	7,000 ha
Liberia	1 million ha	-
Nigeria	4 million ha	3,000 ha
Sierra Leone	700,000 ha	17,433 ha
Total:	26.7 million ha	27,433 ha

B. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Program Description

The Theory of Change for the Guinean Forests Integrated Program (GFIP) holds that **IF** the area of forest under improved management in existing and new protected areas (PAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) is expanded, and **IF** areas outside PAs and OECMs in forest landscapes are under improved sustainable management and governance, and **IF** these changes are reinforced by supportive policy changes that enhance the enabling environment for conservation and sustainable management of forests, **THEN** improved forest landscape management will reduce forest loss and degradation and the accompanying loss of ecosystem services and biodiversity decline due to habitat loss and overexploitation of natural resources, and help mitigate climate change. Achieving this transformation will require investment in: expanding the data and information base to guide management planning and activities; technical and institutional capacity of governments for effective forest management; sustainable livelihood alternatives and nature-friendly enterprise development; and policy reform and coordination. The coordination role of the GFIP Regional Child Project will generate synergies between Country Child Projects, with emphasis on transboundary management of forest landscapes shared across national borders; joint efforts on activities that benefit from scale such as sustainable financing solutions; and policy alignment to amplify the regional voice in international arenas. Beyond this coordinating role, the larger added value of the GFIP Regional Child Project will be to foster a whole-of-biome approach to protecting the integrity of the Guinean Forests, by promoting regional integration among governments and other stakeholders in countries throughout the region. Finally, noting

the central roles of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IP&LCs)¹⁰ in the use and management of forest and other natural resources, and the importance of gender dynamics in shaping this use and management, the design of these interventions must reflect equity and inclusivity, prioritizing participation, Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and gender mainstreaming.

The Theory of Change reflects the following assumptions:

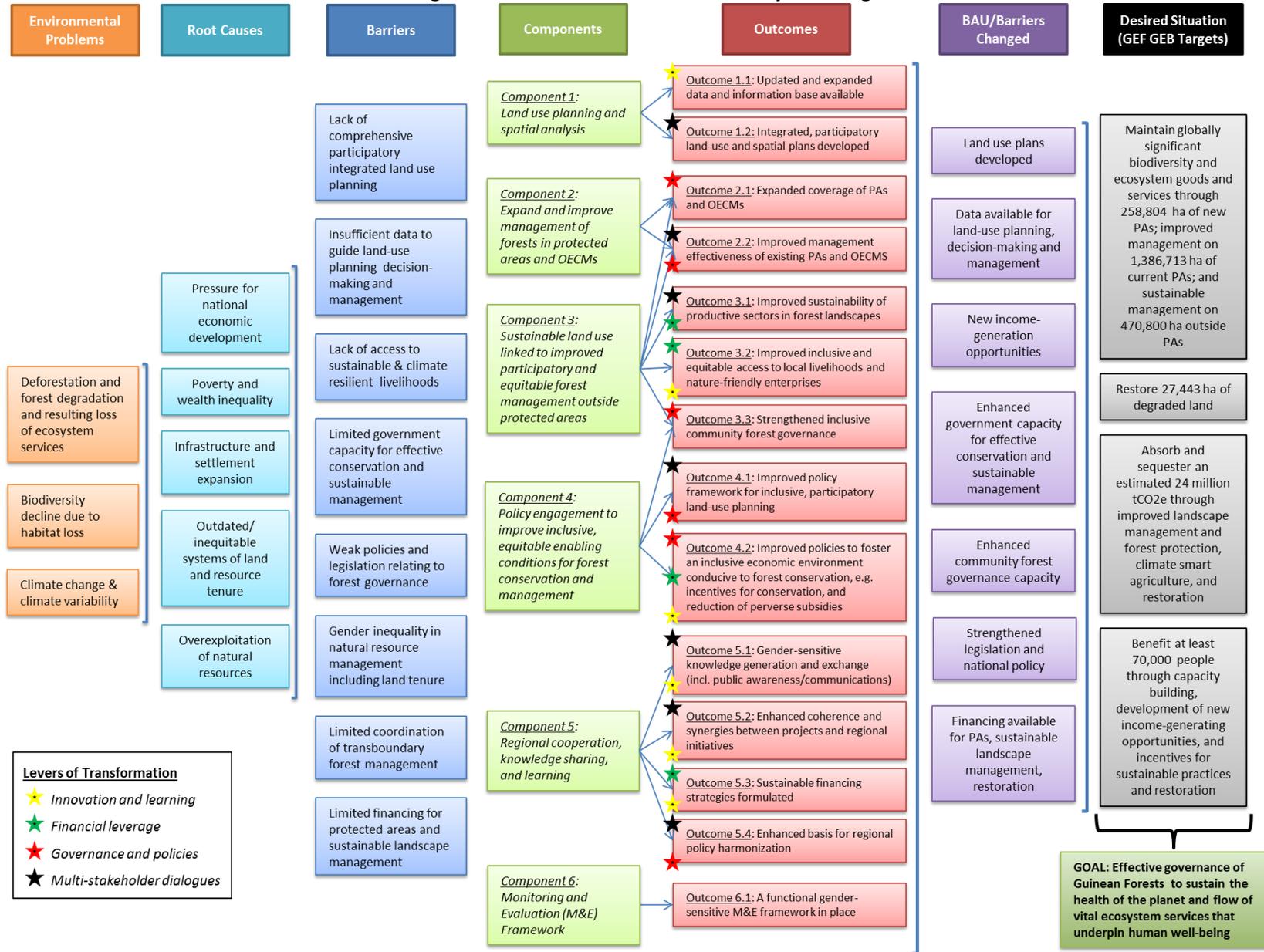
- The key drivers of forest loss and degradation are agricultural encroachment and unmanaged extraction of timber and non-timber forest resources, spurred by subsistence needs and pressure for economic development.
- Given additional knowledge and technical capacity, the economic context provides opportunities to generate income from alternative, sustainable uses of the natural resource base.
- Community-level governance mechanisms, given adequate support, can embrace forest management roles, and government agency counterparts in protected area management can accommodate community participation in co-management.
- The social and cultural context is amenable to enhanced participation and decision-making by women and marginalized groups with respect to the use and management of land and natural resources.
- Private sector entities operating in forest landscapes have sufficient interest and commitment in sustainable management to play constructive roles in multi-stakeholder planning, dialogues for inter-sectoral coordination, and partnerships with communities, civil society, and government.
- Governments of the region share the political will and policy commitments needed to align regionally for a whole-of-biome approach to forest governance and coordinate management of transboundary conservation areas and forest landscapes
- Improved sustainable forest management demonstrably can generate social, environmental, and financial benefits that unlock a diverse set of sustainable financing solutions.
- Government policy- and decision-makers are prepared to recognize the need to reinforce the enabling environment for strengthened IP&LC forest management, including co-management models for PAs, tenure and resource rights as a basis for OECMs and sustainable land use, and incentives for restoration, conservation, and sustainable forest management.
- Ecologically, targeted forest landscapes are sufficiently robust such that with improved conservation and management, reinforced by restoration where needed, interventions contribute to resilience such that the investment will not be overwhelmed by the negative impacts of climate change.

The principal transformation levers targeted by the project are:

- Innovation and learning: Collection and dissemination of knowledge and best practices, informing land use/spatial planning, design of governance arrangements, support for alternative livelihoods and nature-friendly enterprise, and policy reform and alignment
- Financial leverage: Enhanced ability to secure innovative and sustainable financing, in terms of both technical capacity and regional policy alignment, to sustain conservation and sustainable management in the long term
- Governance and policies: Improved incentive-environment through income generation and supportive policies that reinforce social, economic, and environmental drivers of sustained, positive behavior change
- Multi-stakeholder dialogues: Alignment and collaboration fostered through processes ranging from community-level participatory land use planning and protected area co-management to multi-stakeholder spatial planning at the landscape scale to multi-country dialogue around transboundary forest landscape management.

¹⁰ Per the GEF-funded Inclusive Conservation Initiative, IPLCs may be defined as "Communities that have a long historical association with the lands and waters that they have traditionally lived on or used for their subsistence."

Figure 1: The Guinean Forests IP Theory of Change



The objective of the Guinean Forests Integrated Program (GFIP), part of the overall GEF-8 Amazon Congo, and Critical Forest Biomes IP is to invest in the protection and effective governance of the Guinean Forests to sustain the health of the planet and flow of vital ecosystem services that underpin human well-being. Noting previous and ongoing commitments and initiatives (e.g., the ECOWAS Convergence Plan for the Sustainable Management and Use of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa and the Libreville Roadmap that emerged from the One Forest Summit in March 2023), the GFIP will pursue systemic transformation in how the region addresses shared forest management challenges. This transformation will be of significant global importance given the ecological value of the Guinean Forests of West Africa as a global biodiversity hotspot that is threatened by pressing environmental and development challenges.

The programmatic approach of the GFIP will take into account the similar and transboundary nature of many of the challenges facing forests throughout the region: several of the forest blocks and forest landscapes across the region cover multiple countries (e.g., Lofa-Gola-Mano Complex [Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone]; Mount Nimba Complex [Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia]; Cestos-Sapo-Grebo-Taï-Cavally Corridor [Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire]; Forest Reserves of Southeastern Côte d'Ivoire and Southwestern Ghana; and Korupmba-Obachap [Cameroon, Nigeria]), whose boundaries are highly porous to sources of environmental, demographic, and economic pressure such as deforestation and forest degradation, migration, and wildlife trafficking.

Therefore, the GFIP will complement nationally-delimited approaches by developing capacities and mechanisms to ensure that investments in sustainable forest landscape management reflect a region-wide perspective to maximize impact and cost-effectiveness, build on and contribute to regional and global knowledge of best practices in inclusive, equitable, climate resilient forest management, and apply effective monitoring and adaptive management at the regional level that, among other concerns, addresses the risk of transboundary leakages of impacts. An example of this type of regional perspective as well as coordination with other initiatives is the artisanal and small gold mining (ASGM) sector, where policy reform and other interventions in one landscape or country could drive this source of pressure to a different geography; the GFIP will coordinate with and learn from the GOLD+ program to foster effective multi-country strategies to respond to ASGM in ways that mitigate such leakage risk. Another example is the potential that policy reform relating to commercial agroforestry in one country could drive unsustainable palm oil development at the expense of forest health in another country; the GFIP will draw on the FOLUR program to inform efforts towards regional policy alignment relating to deforestation-free agroforestry supply chains seeking to preempt this type of leakage.

Regional work under the GFIP will reinforce key features of the country child projects. These include innovative, integrated approaches featuring coordination and collaboration between multiple sectors to address trade-offs and promote synergies; comprehensive landscape-wide planning and decision-making that incorporates multiple social and environmental variables; integrated consideration of enabling conditions for landscape sustainability including governance, access, and tenure rights; and transboundary collaboration on management and conservation. The program will focus on removing the barriers currently preventing sustainable forest management from being scaled up to the landscape, national and regional levels; to maximize sustainability and scale of impact, a country-driven capacity enhancement approach will be applied at programmatic and individual child project levels to maximize country ownership, commitment, and mutual accountability for results. By developing this body of capacity enhancement as a regional effort, the GFIP will maximize learning and knowledge exchange among countries, enhance cost effectiveness through joint multi-country capacity-building investments, cultivate a community of practice, and strengthen the foundation for policy alignment efforts among countries.

The GFIP will apply Levers of Transformation to effect enduring change at a regional level:

- Multi-stakeholder dialogues: Multi-stakeholder dialogues will operate at all levels of the program, ranging from alignment and collaboration fostered through processes ranging from community-level participatory land use planning and protected area co-management to multi-stakeholder spatial planning at the landscape scale.

Regional-level dialogues will be critical on several fronts, from the multi-country dialogue around transboundary forest landscape management to region-wide deliberations to align domestic policies and interventions as well as collective participation in international policy forums. While much of anticipated regional dialogues will relate to inter-governmental exchange, it also will be important to ensure a civil society voice as well as private sector representation, given the prevalence of social and economic factors affecting Guinean Forests that countries throughout the region have in common. These factors include issues surrounding community tenure and resource rights, access to finance that enables sustainable management, the prominence of commercial agroforestry in rural development planning, and challenges in managing social and environmental risks that attend infrastructure development, among others.

- **Innovation and learning:** The countries in the Guinean Forests region offer a wide diversity of experience with past and current initiatives seeking to address various challenges relating to sustainable forest management. Therefore capturing and disseminating knowledge and learning to inform replication, scale-up, and the propagation of successful innovation will maximize impact by adopting a regional approach. The GFIP will engage other regional initiatives to collect and curate learning products relating to key topic areas such as land use/spatial planning, design of governance arrangements, support for alternative livelihoods and nature-friendly enterprise, policy reform, and alignment. It also will prioritize the identification and dissemination of innovations with regional relevance, ranging from locally-adapted technological solutions for conservation management (e.g., GIS-based participatory planning methods or GPS-based forest ranger tools) to creative governance arrangements that promote inclusiveness and equity to innovative conservation finance solutions at scale.
- **Governance and policies:** Although countries throughout the Guinean Forest region have articulated high-level policy commitments that support the conservation and sustainable management of forests (e.g. in their NBSAPs and NDCs, and their support for the 2022 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework), translating these commitments to positive change on the ground remains a challenge. Doing so entails putting in place concrete governance arrangements and regulatory provisions, supported by specific policies that shape how stakeholders relate to the natural resource base. Countries already have recognized the value of considering policies collectively as a region and pursuing alignment and harmonization among policies, through their support for the ECOWAS Convergence Plan for the Sustainable Management and Use of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa. However, the region does not yet benefit from a standing regional mechanism that focuses on policy alignment for forest management, a role played elsewhere by the Central Africa Forest Commission (COMIFAC) for example. Building on initiatives such as the Global Forest Transformation for People and Climate Project (funded by Sida and implemented by FAO in collaboration with ECOWAS), the GFIP will seek to convene policy makers from the region's countries to pursue policy alignment and explore the potential for and working towards a mechanism analogous to COMIFAC.
- **Financial leverage:** A barrier common to all Guinean Forest countries is inadequate financing for critical needs such as protected area budgets, environmentally-compatible community development, multi-stakeholder forest governance mechanisms, and effective monitoring and enforcement of environmental regulations in forest landscapes. While countries are pursuing potential financing solutions based on locally relevant needs and opportunities, the GFIP also will approach this challenge with a regional lens. One obstacle to some types of innovative financing solutions is a mismatch in scale between on-the-ground needs and the size of investment needed to justify transaction costs; regional approaches may permit aggregation of needs to overcome this mismatch. Another obstacle relevant to the return-seeking source of finance is a risk, whether real or perceived, and a regional strategy may permit diversification and spread of risk in a portfolio approach that can reassure potential investors. A regional approach to climate finance may also benefit from this type of risk management, as well as the scope for addressing international leakage. Thus, an ambitious push to address financing needs can benefit in multiple ways from the regional nature of the GFIP, drawing on (among other initiatives) recent advances achieved in the One Forest Summit and its Libreville Roadmap. Moreover, this lever of transformation

intersects in important ways with those relating to innovation and learning, governance and policies, and multi-stakeholder dialogues.

To ensure that these levers of transformation ultimately advance sustainability and scale, the GFIP will pursue system-wide, country-driven, and gender-sensitive capacity development across people, organizations, institutions, and policies. Insufficiency of human and institutional capacities has been identified as an obstacle to the conservation and sustainable management of Guinean Forests. This includes inadequacies with respect to institutional integration and coordination among sectors and stakeholders; harmonization of regional and national, skills and knowledge; as well as participatory governance, particularly at the forest landscape level. The GFIP will maximize ownership and commitment by applying a country-driven approach to capacity development that empowers people, enhances gender equity, strengthens organizations and institutions, and enhances the enabling policy and governance environment.

A gender-sensitive human and institutional capacity development strategy and action plan will be developed at both the programmatic level and for the individual child country projects. Methodological steps include a participatory capacity assessment with a baseline definition, contextualizing appropriate capacity development interventions, and tracking results while capturing lessons learned. Anticipated results of the GFIP include enhanced integration and coordination among sectors and stakeholders, improved multi-stakeholder governance through inclusive participatory processes, and application of strengthened skills and expanded knowledge for improved sustainable management of forests in protected areas as well as wider forest landscapes.

The Program Framework Document (PFD) reflects the overall framework for the design and implementation of participating country child projects as well as the ways in which the other countries of the Guinean Forests region will be engaged. The PFD represents the sum of the child projects, including the regional coordination child project that will ensure a regional whole-of-biome approach, but the child projects have determined the balance of PFD elements to respond to their specific circumstances, within the constraints of the overall framework. The PFD has been formulated in such a way as to ensure that:

- ✓ Each of the child projects conforms to and contributes to the overall GFIP objective.
- ✓ The structure and approaches of the child projects are aligned and coordinated such that they collectively comprise a coherent regional multi-country programmatic initiative.
- ✓ Individual child projects include provisions for how they will contribute to the programmatic scale-up of impacts.
- ✓ Each child project has the flexibility needed to tailor its design to the country's particular needs and priorities.

The country child projects as well as the regional child project will be formulated through a process of co-design within the overall GFIP framework set out in the PFD, and subsequently implemented with GFIP support to ensure regional coherence. Key steps following Council approval of the PFD and child project concepts will be as follows:

I. Detailed project design phase:

1) Establishment of inter-agency coordination and governance structure to oversee the process of co-designed formulation of the child projects, including the regional coordination child project, to ensure that project design responds to the need for inter-country harmonization and regional coherence. This structure will be funded through the Project Preparation Grant (PPG) requested for the formulation of the regional child coordination project. The core of this structure is anticipated to take the form of a multi-stakeholder Project Design Steering Committee.

2) Preparation of the CEO Endorsement Request package for the regional child coordination project, under the oversight of the inter-agency coordination and governance structure.

3) Preparation of country child projects using PPG funding allocated to each project, again under the overall oversight of CI GEF Agency; CI GEF Agency will also be responsible for reporting on country child project design processes to the inter-agency coordination and governance structure.

II. Implementation phase:

4) Initiate implementation of the regional coordination child project: at this juncture, CI GEF Agency will continue to be responsible for oversight, while technical support and day-to-day follow-up with the country child projects will become the responsibility of the Executing Agency (to be identified during the regional coordination child project PPG phase).

5) Following the start of implementation, the inter-agency coordination and governance structure will evolve into the Program Steering Committee, with responsibilities beyond the oversight of project design, as will be defined during the regional coordination child project PPG phase.

6) Initiate implementation of the country child projects.

III. Consolidation and scale-up phase:

7) Lessons and experiences will be documented and prepared for dissemination to multi-stakeholder audiences throughout the regional and country child projects. The regional coordination child project will prepare and execute a communications strategy and a stakeholder engagement strategy that together will include a focus on key audiences throughout the region to prepare a foundation for replication and scale-up, including policymakers, community rights and development organizations, and funding sources.

The regional coordination child project will contribute to the effectiveness, sustainability, and impact of the GFIP as a whole. It will increase the effectiveness and sustainability of the country child projects through technical support and capacity-building; facilitation of policy harmonization; knowledge exchange and dissemination including knowledge inputs from external sources; and programmatic M&E. These aspects of the regional coordination child project will also contribute to scale-up of models and impacts at the regional level, including by laying the groundwork for a permanent regional policy coordination mechanism.

Program Components

Component 1: Land use planning and spatial analysis: Land use planning (LUP) is expected to result in better coordination between stakeholders, increased synergies among different interventions and investments in landscapes, and reduced conflicts with respect to land and resource use. Spatial planning will inform other efforts of the program, including siting of PAs and OECMs, restoration work, and efforts to promote sustainable agriculture and agroforestry. Doing so will require convening civil society, the private sector, and government; multi-stakeholder dialogues; and provisions to ensure that perspectives of women, youth and elderly, and marginalized groups are incorporated. The GFIP will compile lessons learned from different LUP experiences in the region to identify tools, models, and processes that lend themselves well to the Guinean Forests context, as a basis for encouraging wider application.

Outcome 1.1: Updated and expanded data and information base available: The program will support applied scientific research to continue building the evidence base that reinforces the motivation for transformational change, as well as the body of best practices that makes such change possible. The regional coordination child project will take stock of existing data layers relative to the data and information that informed the CEPF Ecosystem Profile for the Guinean Forests of West Africa biodiversity hotspot, and update this profile with newly available information. Thus, updated

regional data and information will be available as input to land use planning and spatial analysis to be conducted for individual project geographies.

Outcome 1.2: Integrated, participatory land-use, and spatial plans developed: LUP will be executed at multiple levels, from local to regional, including community lands and forest landscapes, based on participatory and inclusive multi-stakeholder processes. The process will be supported by the data and information layers made available under Outcome 1.1. The program will leverage CI's high-resolution maps of irrecoverable carbon in Earth's ecosystems to prioritize sites within the region whose protection is essential for global climate security, incorporating this new science within the KBA+ methodology. Guidance to country child project design will draw on the regional process and include key activities to ensure irrecoverable carbon reserves remain in place long-term, such as inclusive project design, climate change adaptation planning, long-term finance mechanisms for irrecoverable carbon, and technological capacity building to use remote sensing to monitor and rapidly respond to threats.

Component 2: Expand and improve management of forests in protected areas and OECMs: PAs and OECMs will be established and/or expanded as anchors for sustainable management within forest landscapes. These serve as core interventions to reverse deforestation and forest degradation trends and will require investment in management capacity and institutional arrangements to accommodate co-management, apply social and environmental safeguards, and formulate benefit-sharing arrangements. With the increased emphasis on OECMs under the 2022 Kunming-Montreal GBF, one area of work of the GFIP will be to facilitate regional multi-country efforts to align on definitions, measurement, and deployment of OECMs, converging with efforts to promote community-led conservation efforts.

Outcome 2.1: Expanded coverage of protected areas and OECMs: Analysis conducted for Outcome 1.2 will inform the prioritization of additional areas for protection, including contextualization within regional priorities for the Guinean Forests biome as a whole. Community engagement and community-led forest governance elements in all projects may include the identification of other opportunities to apply OECMs.

Outcome 2.2: Improved management effectiveness of existing protected areas and OECMs: The program will enhance the management of PAs and OECMs through supporting activities related to sustainable financing, legal compliance, fire control, threat reduction measures (hunting, illegal logging, etc.), development of land use planning instruments, creation/updating of management plans, implementation of ecological and socio-economic monitoring systems, and incorporation of inclusivity, equity and representation principles in governance and management arrangements. GFIP's principal role in this regard will be to compile lessons and best practices from across the region and facilitate access to knowledge products and capacity building. GFIP also will cultivate a community of practice to sustain ongoing mutual exchange and learning throughout the region, with protected area management authorities and community-level natural resource governance bodies as key constituents. To improve the sustainable management of PAs, the program will support the capacity building of government institutions and local communities in areas including co-management of PAs, enforcement and monitoring, and governance.

Component 3: Sustainable land use linked to improved participatory and equitable forest management outside protected areas: Local communities are the de facto managers of much of the Guinean Forests in wider landscapes outside PAs and OECMs. Sustainable management of these forests, therefore, will require reinforcing community governance systems for forest management, and investment in sustainable livelihoods and enterprises that are compatible with the maintenance of healthy intact forests. In some areas, larger private sector actors such as commercial agroforestry operations (e.g., in palm oil, cocoa, or coffee sectors) may be important project partners for work on sustainable (deforestation-free) commodity supply chains.

Outcome 3.1: Improved sustainability of productive sectors in forest landscapes: The program will support partnerships with the private sector to mainstream sustainability considerations into production systems and business processes. To do so, GFIP will leverage the networks of CI and other partners to link project implementers with companies that

demonstrate openness to such collaboration. GFIP also will link implementers to other projects that have shown success in such partnerships (e.g., under FOLUR or the Good Growth Partnership¹¹), to open avenues of knowledge sharing and networking. The set of country child projects will include financial and technical assistance to communities to improve the sustainability of productive practices such as agriculture and agroforestry; GFIP will serve as a conduit to expertise in the region and beyond to inform these types of investment. Addressing unsustainable agricultural practices will reduce pressure on buffer zones of PAs and support the restoration of degraded forest landscapes to build connectivity and maintain the flow of ecosystem functions and services.

Outcome 3.2: Improved inclusive and equitable access to local livelihoods and nature-friendly enterprises: Through the country child projects, the program will establish and strengthen the protection of key forest biodiversity areas through incentives for community-based conservation, such as providing technical and financial assistance to support the development of conservation-compatible, climate-smart livelihoods and enterprises. Building on land use planning under Component 1, this provides an opportunity to improve ecosystem connectivity through spatial targeting of nature-friendly practices. Through livelihood diversification and value chain development, communities will be agents of change in ensuring fair and effective protection and restoration of these critical forest areas. Activities may include targeted restoration of degraded forest patches, enhancement of nature-based solutions to development challenges in broad buffer zone areas surrounding protected areas (i.e. gender-sensitive capacity development of IP&LCs, smallholder producers, SMEs, and producer groups); support for community-based forest management plans; IP&LC livelihood strategies; strengthened sustainable forest-based and agroforestry value chains (NTPFs, ecotourism); and partnerships to leverage green investments and apply monitoring/traceability for green products. Although these interventions necessarily will be quite localized and site-specific, an important role for the program will be to ensure that both capturing learning from and applying learning to these activities are conducted within a regional perspective, given the comparable circumstances and needs facing forest-dwelling communities throughout the Guinean Forests.

Outcome 3.3: Strengthened inclusive community forest governance: The program will use spatial planning conducted through activities in Component 1 to support multi-stakeholder governance mechanisms. Other initiatives such as FOLUR and the Good Growth Partnership have demonstrated the value (and challenges) of cultivating such mechanisms, including examples that are geographically focused (e.g., diverse stakeholders in a landscape) and sector-focused (e.g., a palm oil platform to keep stakeholders throughout the supply chain along with government agencies). The GFIP will draw from examples throughout the region and elsewhere (e.g., southern Africa offers a variety of models) to inform participatory stakeholder/coalition-led development of mechanisms, with an emphasis on empowering communities in community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) processes and governance. GFIP will work with country child projects to ensure that land use plans developed with communities adjacent to PAs will support enhanced IP&LC participation in conservation (e.g. in Community Forests) and strengthen community-based resource management. Communities will be supported by training and capacity building for sustainable forest management and monitoring, as well as techniques to address governance challenges such as elite capture, gender and minority inequality, limited accountability, and obstacles to participation and representation. Lessons learned from these activities will feed into regional policy engagement under Components 4 and 5.

Component 4: Policy engagement to improve inclusive, equitable enabling conditions for forest conservation and management: Mandating LUP, gazetting additional areas as PAs and recognizing OECMs, and applying legislative and regulatory frameworks that promote sustainable use of productive lands require a set of supporting policies. The program will support child projects that seek to enhance the policy environment, particularly with respect to land tenure and resource rights, incorporating LUP into government processes, creating incentives for restoration, conservation, and sustainable use, and reducing perverse incentives that encourage unsustainable land and resource use. To do so, the GFIP will draw on documentation of best practices from throughout the region, with an eye toward policy

¹¹ <https://goodgrowthpartnership.org/>

harmonization. Thus, while part of this work is focused on supporting country-specific work on national policies, there is a strong link between this part of the program and efforts to foster regional policy harmonization under the regional coordination child project captured under Component 5. To do so, the GFIP will build on previous regional policy analysis conducted, for example, under the Global Forest Transformation for People and Climate Project (Sida-funded, implemented by FAO in collaboration with ECOWAS).

Outcome 4.1: Improved policy framework for inclusive, participatory land-use planning: Policy and legislative work in the region have not kept pace with growing pressure on the region's forests. Although higher-level policy commitments to biodiversity and climate goals have been articulated by most governments, there is a dearth of policies and legislation to actualize these commitments on the ground. The program will include activities to support policies for inclusive forest conservation, restoration, and management. One example is the facilitation of steps toward improved, gender-sensitive land tenure rights and policies, others include developing and updating land management policies and establishing or supporting landscape-level and national coordination mechanisms focused on forest conservation and management. Capacity building for key government and non-government stakeholders will help mainstream biodiversity conservation into public policy and private sector planning, including, for example, the dissemination of land tenure codes.

Outcome 4.2: Improved policies to foster an inclusive economic environment conducive to forest conservation, e.g. incentives, reduction of perverse subsidies: Projects under GFIP will include deployment of financing mechanisms that provide incentives and sustain enduring policy and behavior change in favor of conservation on the part of communities, businesses, and governments. This may include support for revenue generation (e.g. via ecotourism or green bonds) and advocating for a portion of REDD+ funds to be channeled directly into biodiversity conservation. The program will also support the identification of policies that create perverse incentives which may fuel deforestation and forest degradation, and the formulation of strategies to reform such policies. Work on strengthening positive incentives and reforming perverse incentives is closely tied to enhancing policy coherence, which again will benefit from ongoing analytical work under the aforementioned FAO-implemented project. As with other outcomes, the role of the regional program will be to facilitate knowledge sharing, linkages to expertise, and access to training and capacity building to empower implementers and key stakeholders to identify and respond to needs and opportunities with respect to improving the enabling environment.

Component 5: Regional cooperation, knowledge sharing, and learning: Efforts to advance the outcomes from Components 1-4 will benefit from synergies derived from a regional approach. This includes coordination on transboundary work, replication and scale-up of demonstrated models and interventions, and joint efforts with respect to innovative financing mechanisms. Realizing these benefits will require dedicated investment in gender-sensitive collection, curation, and exchange of knowledge and lessons learned, supported by a program-level M&E framework designed to support and feed into knowledge management. Among the potentially most impactful elements of regional cooperation relates to regional policy alignment or harmonization. The GFIP will engage the Guinean Forest countries and ECOWAS to explore ways to formalize ongoing inter-ministerial dialogue on policy issues related to forest governance, including work towards common positions on policies in global forums on forest management and conservation, such as the recent One Forest Summit. Efforts to this end would benefit from a permanent standing body with the explicit and focused purpose of facilitating regional coordination and policy alignment with respect to sustainable forest management (inspired, for instance, by the COMIFAC example). Other areas that would benefit from institutionalized regional multi-stakeholder cooperation include work on innovative financing, addressing cross-border threats, and avoiding the risk of leakage.

Outcome 5.1: Gender-sensitive knowledge generation and exchange, including public awareness/communications: Participating countries, project partners, and other stakeholders will increasingly share, access and apply knowledge. Governments, stakeholders, and the general public will have a shared and deeper understanding of issues surrounding forest conservation and management. The objective of this outcome will be learning, knowledge management, increased access to information, capacity building, and exchange among GFIP country child projects and project

partners; participants in the overall Amazon, Congo, and Critical Forest Biomes IP; and the wider global community working on landscape-level forest conservation and sustainable management. This also includes an emphasis on the dissemination of innovations in technology applications, institutional arrangements, and market participation. The implementation of a communications strategy also will inform and educate the general public and decision-makers on issues, challenges, and solutions relating to sustainable forest landscape management. Noting that forest- and natural resource-use involves distinct gender considerations, activities relating to knowledge generation and collation of lessons learned as well as dissemination of knowledge products will be designed to capture gender dynamics and reach specific audiences. Activities in furtherance of this outcome will include the following:

- Develop a communications strategy within the first year of the project, with input from key stakeholders. The strategy will include a digital knowledge management platform and the use of social media to reach wider audiences.
- Develop innovative knowledge products in multiple languages, capturing best practices from country child projects to facilitate replication by organizations in other countries and contexts.
- Conduct direct outreach based on the communications plan that identifies opportunities to 1) disseminate tools, methodologies, and other practitioner-facing project outputs, and 2) amplify messages emerging from country child projects individually and collectively
- Organize regional exchanges among project implementers and partners, including annual learning events focused on incentive-based, community-led forest conservation and sustainable resource management, as well as an exchange among government stakeholders on success stories related to forest landscape management; the annual regional workshops will be conducted jointly with the Congo Basin IP in collaboration with UNEP.
- Conduct targeted training on topics relevant to the IP, such as community-based conservation and innovative financing solution
- Communicate results of the IP to audiences within and outside participating target countries.
- Support country child projects to create locally developed materials for communications and outreach
- Explore collaboration between the GFIP and other relevant knowledge platforms with aligned objectives such as the Global Landscape Forum.

Outcome 5.2: Enhanced coherence and synergies between projects and regional initiatives: Country child projects will benefit from efficiencies and increased impact as a result of synergies amongst each other and with other relevant work taking place in the region. The transboundary collaboration will become more deeply institutionalized in participating countries. A key role of the regional child project will be to coordinate efforts of country child projects, by identifying potential synergies and areas for joint work and facilitating transboundary efforts. The regional child project will:

- Align country child projects, through the definition of clear priorities and strategies, and by convening lead implementers to identify potential synergies between projects
- Establish and facilitate processes for ongoing coordination of transboundary components of country child projects
- Establish structures to develop and maintain a coherent portfolio of country child projects that are coordinated with each other and well aligned with investments by GEF and other donors, guided by the Ecosystem Profile and PFD and regular interaction between national GEF focal points and implementing and executing agencies
- Establish an advisory body with representation from related regional programs and stakeholders to guide alignment and coordination among related initiatives
- Promote coordination between initiatives that maximize synergies and cross-project learning, for example through regional collaboration or joint production of learning products by thematically related projects

Outcome 5.3: Sustainable financing strategies formulated: The regional child project will pursue donor coordination, support country child projects in the design and deployment of sustainable financing strategies, and facilitate joint work on financing solutions between projects. To enhance efficiencies and cost-effectiveness, the regional child project will seek to facilitate coordination among donors and projects by convening implementers and funding sources with

overlapping agendas and investments. Country child projects also will benefit from access to expertise on sustainable financing solutions, and joint work on such solutions will enable work towards sustainable financing on a more ambitious scale, including climate finance. Recognizing that sustainable financing is a persistent challenge for projects throughout the region, the regional child project will prioritize facilitating collective access to relevant technical expertise for the country child projects on this theme. To achieve this Outcome, the regional child project will:

- Convene donors with overlapping objectives in donor round tables to share information and coordinate investment, help avoid duplication of effort, and identify opportunities for synergies.
- Link country child projects to other financing initiatives (e.g., the Finance Lab for Irrecoverable Carbon), potential corporate partners, impact investors, and other sources, as well as ongoing work by CI's Conservation Finance Division on innovative financing solutions
- Provide guidance to country child project development of innovative incentive mechanisms for local communities to protect natural resources, such as PES (e.g., water funds, restoration grants, or climate finance) or support for nature-based enterprises in forest-resident communities (e.g., through CSP's Conservation Agreement model or CI Ventures impact investment)
- Coordinate joint pursuit of financing solutions (e.g., multi-country efforts to fund management of transboundary forest landscapes, work on regional financing mechanisms)

Outcome 5.4: Enhanced basis for regional policy harmonization: Country child projects will include policy work to enhance enabling conditions for effective forest conservation. The regional child project will link projects to expertise in CI and other institutions in CI's network to support efforts on this front and to facilitate exchanges between project countries to encourage policy alignment at a regional level. Noting the institutional gap at the regional level with respect to policy alignment mechanisms focused on forest management that is specific to the biome, this Outcome also relates to exploring the development of a regional policy coordination body, to supplement subregional platforms such as the Mano River Union and regional institutions with broader remits such as ECOWAS; in doing so, the GFIP will help advance the ECOWAS Convergence Plan for the Sustainable Management and Utilization of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa. Under this Outcome, the regional child project will:

- Convene members from technical as well as policy-making levels within relevant government institutions from each country child project to formulate and pursue aligned policy goals, agendas, and approaches.
- Provide support to collective and coordinated participation in international platforms
- Facilitate exploration by countries in the region of possible steps towards an ongoing regional policy coordination mechanism focused on the conservation and sustainable management of forest landscapes

Component 6: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework

Outcome 6.1: A functional gender-sensitive M&E framework in place: Outcome 6.1 will ensure monitoring and evaluation of the GFIP as a whole. This is in addition to M&E which will be performed by each country child project. The regional child project will design its M&E framework to feed into knowledge generation, impact assessment, and adaptive management for the program, including explicit attention to the levers of transformation. The GFIP M&E framework will be applied to ensure compliance with the GEF policies and guidance while striving to maximize the use of existing M&E reporting tools and systems to minimize the additional burden on countries. The M&E framework will include verification of appropriate development and application of safeguards plans, including the inclusion of gender-specific indicators. Under this sub-component, the regional child project will:

- Capture and track progress on the program's results, adherence to the results framework, application of safeguards plans, materialization of co-financing, program functioning as an integrated effort, and how well country child projects are working and complementing each other. This includes periodic forward-looking assessments of implementation against project-level Theories of Change.

- Use standard GEF monitoring tools, such as the Biodiversity Tracking Tool/Protected Area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT), as well as bespoke tracking tools on subjects such as gender mainstreaming and civil society institutional capacity.
- Regularly convene M&E point persons from the country child projects as a technical working group to foster alignment and harmonization.
- Aggregate M&E data from country child projects into overall IP-level data, complemented by additional program-level data from regional child project activities.
- Prepare quarterly and annual technical and financial reports, and facilitate the program's Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation.
- Prepare and execute an explicit learning strategy and plan to maximize the value of project reporting and inform replication and scale-up.
- Inform GEF and other Implementing Agencies on program implementation issues and the need for realignment and adjustment of the original results framework.

GFIP and the Private Sector

The platform will engage the private sector at multiple levels to develop systematic solutions, promote and strengthen sustainability standards and practices, and pursue partnerships at landscape, country, and regional levels to enhance the enabling context for sustainable management of forest landscapes. Multinationals and national companies will be engaged to consolidate commitments to deforestation-free production models, including participation in land use planning processes. Private sector counterparts also will be engaged to co-develop sustainable financing solutions for forest conservation and management, for example by building incentives into supply chain relationships, exploring potential biodiversity offsets and payments for ecosystem services, or developing green bond offerings. Finally, the financial sector will be engaged to develop financial services and products that enable stakeholders in forest landscapes to make sustainable choices (e.g., in terms of livelihoods and nature-friendly enterprises), such as credit arrangements linked to zero deforestation commitments.

Investments by child projects will include gender-sensitive programming to strengthen local community capacity to participate in sustainable value chains (with attention to, for example, post-harvest care, processing, packaging, marketing, and business management, noting different gender roles within rural production systems). This also entails working with community-level and small/medium-scale private sector producers and producer associations that may be involved in the development of sustainable products and better practices. Improved sustainable management of production areas outside of protected areas in forest landscapes includes technologies and practices for sustainable intensification (e.g., improving land and water management); improved use of agricultural inputs in climate-smart production systems (e.g., organic fertilizer practices, efficient irrigation practices); and reducing loss and waste (e.g., efficient storage and packaging). Doing so with a regional perspective can allow the GFIP to address issues relating to scope and scale that can hamper relationships between community-level producers and larger private-sector actors. Regional-level financing initiatives also can offer the scale needed to optimize the use of public resources to crowd in private-sector investments by reducing the risks for investors.

GFIP support for policy reform and regional policy harmonization will include facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue between governments and the private sector to identify policy options to remove market barriers or other distortions, for example, those related to perverse incentives that encourage forest clearing; inadequate implementation of existing regulations; risks of investing in sustainable land management; and capacity limitations of small-holders.

Knowledge Management

The GFIP will generate knowledge by documenting results and lessons learned from implementation on the ground, and through facilitated exchange among project implementers to capture experiences and reflections. Knowledge generation and exchange will be guided by a publication plan with support from CI's scientific research capacity and a dissemination plan with support from CI's science communications capacity, seeking opportunities to disseminate tools, methodologies, and other practitioner-facing project outputs. To this end, early in the implementation phase, the Regional Child Project will convene project implementers to identify key learning themes and questions to focus initial knowledge generation efforts.

The Lead Agency and multiple supporting units within CI offer extensive track records in developing knowledge products to capture best practices from portfolio investments to facilitate replication by organizations in other countries and contexts. CI also has a track record of organizing exchanges among implementers and stakeholders at the regional (biome/hotspot) level, with a strong emphasis on south-south exchange. Regular (annual) learning events to be conducted over the course of the program will include dedicated time to compile and prepare knowledge products and plan joint development of additional knowledge products over the subsequent implementation period.

Knowledge generation activities will include an emphasis on capturing voices from diverse stakeholders on the ground, particularly local community members. This effort will ensure that different gender perspectives are represented in knowledge products; knowledge dissemination likewise will devote attention to gender considerations to ensure that products reach diverse audiences. This also will require allocating time and resources for preparing knowledge-sharing products in formats and languages accessible to different audiences. Gender-sensitive communication & publication principles that will be applied include:

- Use of both male and female authors and reviewers for diversity of perspectives
- Use of gender-sensitive language and gender-balanced images (with positive depictions of women as agents of change)
- Use of gender analysis to shape context and content (use gender arguments based on reliable sources and qualitative and quantitative data including sex-disaggregated data)
- Reference to relevant international and national policy frameworks, policies, strategies, and plans relating to gender equity and mainstreaming

The Regional Child Project will prepare a regional communications strategy within the first year of the project. The purpose of the strategy will be to leverage knowledge products to communicate the results of the IP to audiences within and outside participating target countries and will include: supporting communications and public awareness strategies to be developed by each Country Child Project; production and dissemination of high-quality knowledge products synthesizing regional results, lessons learned, and emerging best practices; design and deployment of a digital platform for information sharing with a knowledge management portal; and use of social media to reach wider audiences.

Country Child Project Alignment and Contributions

Guinea

The government of Guinea established an objective of 25% of its land under protection by 2025 in its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP 2016). The actual rate of land coverage by PAs in the country is currently 15%. National policies and strategies that support the protection of the environment, the conservation of biodiversity, the preservation of the integrity of forests, and the restoration of land include (i) The National Environmental Action

Plan (PNAE) of 1994; and (ii) the Guinea National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, adopted in 2015. While actions are being put in place to conserve these landscapes, more capacity is needed to halt the drivers of degradation and deforestation in the region.

This project will contribute to the conservation of intact forests and their biodiversity while restoring the forest ecosystem of the Bossou corridor in the southern tip of Guinea, focusing on the Mount Nimba (Bossou) Biosphere Reserve (MNBR) and the Ziama Forest Biosphere Reserve (ZFBR). The project will respond to drivers of degradation by strengthening community-based resource management, capacity building of key institutions at the national and local levels for enforcement and monitoring of the reserves, increasing awareness of the importance of these reserves, and working with communities to ensure sustainable smallholder agricultural practices in buffer zones and adjacent areas. The project will enhance protected areas management and OECMs using international IUCN Standards (IUCN Green List) and guidance, sustainable financing, legal compliance, fire control, development of land use planning instruments, and implementation of an ecological and socio-economic monitoring system. The OECMs will be mapped using participatory and digital mapping tools at the village and communal levels in order to integrate their management into communal and national policy. The project will restore ecosystem connectivity between Mount Nimba Biosphere Reserve and the chimpanzee corridor to maintain the flow of ecosystem functions and services. The project will reduce pressure on protected area buffer zones by enhancing investment in sustainable practices, land use planning and management, developing sustainable agriculture and NTFP value chains, diversifying agricultural practices and livelihoods, and building the capacity of communities.

Liberia

The Government of Liberia (GoL) made a bold commitment to forest protection by enacting the 30% target in its National Forestry Reform law of 2006. In addition, the Community Rights Law (2009) codified communities' conditional use of forest resources, including provisions enabling small-scale contracts for harvesting timber and non-timber forest products. It also provided the basis for the designation of Community Forests. Liberia's Land Rights Law (2018) provides the framework for customary land ownership and management, and the basis for protection from land grabs. Together, these laws empower local communities to assert roles in land use planning and management that affects their lands, including agroforestry concessions as well as protected areas, and the establishment of co-management committees to include local communities in PA management. GoL's national development plan, the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD), 2018-2023, includes actions to reduce forest degradation and deforestation, and its National Determined Contributions (NDC) have been revised to target a 50% reduction in the deforestation rate. GoL also continues to work with partners to advance protected area establishment, develop models for community co-management, and seek long-term PA financing. In 2011 (and amended in 2020), the Governments of Liberia and Sierra Leone signed an MoU to conserve the transboundary Gola Forest. In 2019, the Governments of Liberia and Guinea signed a bilateral agreement for collaboration in the management of the Ziama-Wonegizi-Wologizi forest complex. Together, these national commitments reflect close alignment with the GFIP goal of achieving forest landscape-level impacts and transformational change for Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs).

The Liberia child project approach corresponds closely to the GFIP Theory of Change, by furthering effective management of new and existing PAs, working with communities outside PAs on livelihoods, investing in multi-stakeholder forest management capacity inside and outside of PAs, and consolidating and strengthening transboundary management of the Gola forest landscape. The project seeks to create and update management plans through inclusive participatory processes consistent with co-management that involves collaboration between protected area management authorities and neighboring communities. The project will enhance income generation in local communities adjacent to PAs through the promotion of climate-resilient and conservation-friendly livelihoods and enterprises. Activities will include developing and implementing land use plans with local communities adjacent to PAs, providing training and technical support for climate-smart, sustainable agriculture, supporting the development

of climate resilient and conservation-friendly Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), and linking SMEs, producer associations and producers to financial services that enable sustainable production.

Nigeria

Nigeria's commitments related to the conservation of its critical forest landscapes are closely in line with the objective and key components of the Guinean Forests IP. For example, NBSAP (2016-2020) goals and targets include participatory ecosystem-based spatial planning, restoration, PA expansion, awareness raising, valuation and PES, and community participation for CFB and other ecosystems. LDN Target Setting Programme (2018) commits to achieving LDN by 2030, through a range of measures including halting the conversion of forests to other uses. Guinean Forests of Nigeria in Cross River State are among the prioritized landscapes. National Forest Policy (2020 update) priorities include promoting forest biodiversity conservation and partnerships with the private sector and civil society organizations. Cross River State Forest Policy (2019) confirms that the state's biodiversity strategy will continue to be based on a system of Protected Areas and strengthened partnerships with local communities both within and outside of protected areas. Strategies include developing supportive legal frameworks for land tenure, access rights, and benefits sharing from forest resources; developing capacity and attitude changes in government and non-governmental organizations to create genuine partnerships for collaboration with local community groups; developing strong community institutions to ensure transparent decision-making, equitable representation and participation of women, men, youth, and vulnerable groups, and equitable sharing of forest benefits and responsibilities.

The Nigeria child project will pursue transformational landscape-level action to advance biodiversity conservation via integrated planning and financing strategies. The project will support land use planning and improved management of protected areas through activities such as in-depth analysis of PA & OECM coverage and gaps, enhanced IP&LC capacity and participation in the conservation of protected areas, and conservation financing strategies (e.g. via ecotourism, green bonds and the National Forestry Trust Fund). Nature-based solutions for buffer zones surrounding the protected areas will include activities such as capacity building (for IP&LCs, smallholder producers, SMEs, and producer groups), support for community-based forest management plans, strengthened green forest-based and agroforestry value chains (NTFPs, ecotourism), partnerships to leverage green investments and create associated incentives, and monitoring/traceability for green products. The project will support the development of policies for inclusive forest conservation, PA co-management, and forest restoration, building on and operationalizing key, innovative policy elements outlined in the Cross River State 2019 forest policy, strengthened regulatory frameworks and land tenure systems, and transboundary collaboration.

Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone has enacted several policies to address forest loss and degradation. The legal basis for national forest management is the Forestry Act (1988), and the government currently is in the process of aligning forest policies with the Framework for Effective Management of Natural Resources in its national Poverty Reduction Strategy. The framework emphasizes sustainable forest management to prevent loss and degradation while reducing poverty. In 2010, the Forestry Division adopted policies supporting collaboration with communities and landowners to protect and restore forests. In August 2022, Parliament passed the Customary Land Rights and National Land Commission Acts, banning industrial development (like large-scale agribusiness) in ecologically important areas. In 2011 (and amended in 2020), the Governments of Liberia and Sierra Leone signed an MoU to conserve the transboundary Gola Forest.

The Sierra Leone Child project will build on prior investments in Sierra Leone and the wider Guinean Forests region by strengthening government and local community capacity to protect the standing forest and restore degraded and deforested areas, while simultaneously promoting climate-resilient sustainable livelihoods through secure land tenure arrangements and increased capacity to sustainably manage natural resources. The project will strengthen multi-

stakeholder co-management of existing protected areas and OECMs in the Gola Forest landscape through strategic spatial planning that integrates conservation with local/national development mechanisms developed through prior investments. Activities will include strengthening existing forest co-management committees at national and local levels, capacity building of the conservation governance and coordination structures, and developing and updating comprehensive landscape planning. The project will establish and strengthen the protection of key forest biodiversity areas and other ecologically sensitive zones through incentives for community-based conservation, centered on climate-smart livelihood interventions. Incentives such as support for livelihood strengthening will be linked to conservation commitments in community-led management and action plans and may be aligned with efforts to formalize land tenure rights. The project will mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use into policies and decision-making, allowing for improved planning, management, and selection of priority areas. Capacity-building will improve the management capacity of the protected area management authority.

Guinea-Liberia-Sierra Leone Transboundary collaboration for the improved management of the shared Lofa-Gola-Mano Conservation Corridor

These three country child projects also include work on strengthening collaboration and coordination in the transboundary watershed and forest landscapes in the Lofa-Gola-Mano Conservation Corridor shared by Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. The Mano River basin is the third-most biodiverse sub-regional watershed in the world after the Amazon and Congo basins. Eighty percent (80%) of the water resources that feed West Africa derive from this region, making maintenance of the watershed essential for ecosystem function and the region's socioeconomic well-being. In 2011, the Governments of Liberia and Sierra Leone signed an MoU to conserve the transboundary Gola Forest, amended in 2020 reaffirming commitment to joint forest management and biodiversity protection of their two adjoining PAs as the Gola Forest Peace Park. In 2019, the Governments of Liberia and Guinea signed a bilateral agreement for collaboration in the management of the Ziama-Wonegizi-Wologizi forest complex. The project will build on the policy commitments in these MoUs to further consolidate transboundary collaboration under the aegis of the Mano River Union (MRU), also building on the GEF-funded Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project. Activities will include addressing gaps in the watershed and forest management and enforcement along the borders between the countries, reinforcing existing governance and advisory structures (such as the Transboundary Committee) and establishing new technical subcommittees, and pursuing sustainable financing solutions to maintain joint management efforts beyond the GFIP.

All four country child projects also include a focus on strengthening coordination and collaboration at local, national, and regional levels through learning and knowledge sharing. Specifically, the projects will undertake knowledge management, sharing of lessons learned, and best practices through south-south exchanges and participation in national, regional, and international platforms/forums. The projects will liaise with the GFIP regional coordination project for technical support and assistance as needed.

In addition to the incremental contributions of each of the country child projects, the GFIP as a regional program will amplify these contributions to achieve further additionality with respect to generating multiple GEBs (i.e., areas under effective and sustainable management and restoration, generating ecosystem services including forest-based carbon sequestration to mitigate climate change). Although there are a host of relevant projects being undertaken in countries throughout the region, there are only a few regional initiatives focused on addressing forest loss and degradation in Intact Forest Landscapes in this critical forest biome. The GFIP presents an opportunity to consolidate a regional approach, and the regional child project will be an instrumental incremental investment to provide technical support, foster regional alignment and coordination, and lay the foundation for replication and scale-up through research, information, networking, and knowledge exchange. These roles also demonstrate how the GFIP will be transformative and achieve collective impact above and beyond the set of individual country child projects. Thus, scale and additionality will be achieved through each of the five sub-components of the GFIP regional child project (corresponding to Outcomes under the Theory of Change presented above):

Project sub-component 1: Knowledge management and communication (*Gender-sensitive knowledge generation and exchange, including public awareness/communications*): The incremental contribution of the program will be a cross-project, synthesizing regional perspective in the production of knowledge products and broad regional dissemination reach, reflecting clear additionality to existing work and to the collection of individual child projects.

Project sub-component 2: Coordination (*Coherence and synergies between projects and regional initiatives*): A key role for the regional child project will be to coordinate efforts of country child projects, by identifying potential synergies and areas for joint work, and facilitating transboundary efforts. Synergies that enhance cost-effectiveness, increase enduring impact, and amplify outreach and communications reflect clear additionality.

Project sub-component 3: Financing solutions (*Formulation of sustainable financing strategies supported*): Donor coordination and joint work on financing solutions between projects constitute key incremental contributions to increase the availability of effective, efficient, and sustained funding, which will become increasingly important as other related regional initiatives conclude.

Project sub-component 4: Policy (*Regional policy harmonization*): Additionality under this part of the regional child project will be achieved by linking projects to expertise in CI and other institutions in CI's network; an important incremental contribution will be to enhance policy alignment at a regional level, in furtherance of the ECOWAS Convergence Plan for the Sustainable Management and Utilization of the Forest Ecosystems in West Africa.

Project sub-component 5: Regional project monitoring and evaluation (*Gender-sensitive M&E framework in place*): GFIP additionality of M&E under the regional child project will be based on contributions to regional-level knowledge generation as well as consistent implementation and impact tracking across the country child projects to further reinforce the case for replication and scale-up.

Project sub-component 6: Program-level monitoring and evaluation (*Functional gender-sensitive M&E framework for the Guinean Forests Integrated Program*): The incremental contribution of sub-component 6 will be to test the hypothesis that the regional integrated approach of the GFIP delivers an impact that is greater than the sum of its country child project parts. Demonstrating that this is the case will serve as a strong argument in favor of continued regional coordination and alignment for a whole-of-biome approach by the Guinean Forest countries.

Coordination and Cooperation with Ongoing Initiatives and Programs.

Is the GEF Agency being asked to play an execution role in this program?

Yes No

If so, please describe that role here. Also, please add a short explanation to describe the cooperation with ongoing initiatives and projects, including the potential for co-location and/or sharing of expertise/staffing

GOVERNANCE AND COORDINATION OF THE GUINEAN FORESTS PROGRAM

The Program will be governed by The Guinean Forests Program Management, two (2) committees, and one Regional Coordination and Technical Project Unit - with distinct roles that complement each other. The 2 committees will be embedded in the regional coordination project's implementation structure and will be led by CI (supported by the Executing Agency) to undertake their functions. These governing bodies will be responsible for strategic technical and operational oversight of the program, including decision-making for the realization of the program's near-term and long-term objectives. The program's governance and coordination structure is described below and diagrammatically presented in Figure 1:

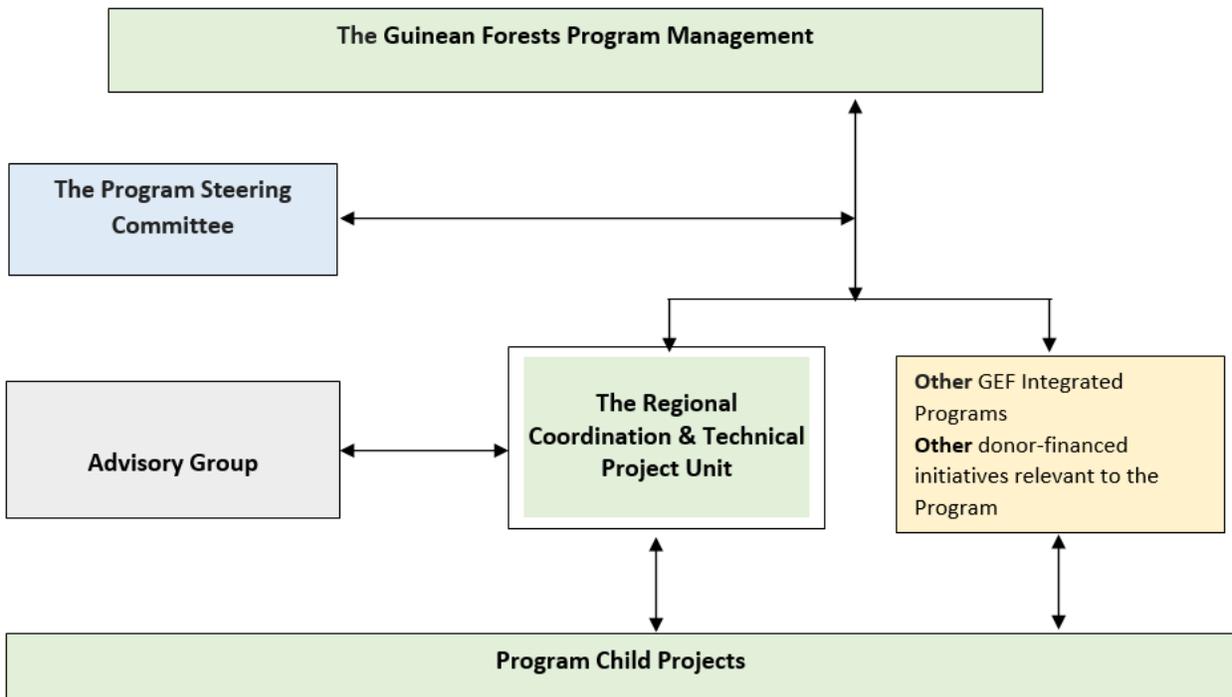
- A. **The Guinean Forests Program Management** will comprise representatives from the CIGEF Implementing Agency. The overall role of the CI-GEF Implementing Agency will include technical and financial project oversight and supervision, assuring compliance of the program with GEF policies and procedures as well as monitoring and evaluation at the program and regional levels. Finally, CI-GEF will make recommendations to optimize project performance and will arbitrate and ensure the resolution of any execution conflicts.
- B. **The Program Steering Committee (PSC)** will comprise representatives from CI, The GEF, The Regional project's Executing Agency (EA)¹², The Lead Agencies of the Child Projects, and other core program partners (TBD at the PPG Phase). The envisioned role of the PSC is outlined below:
- Tracking the overall progress of the program
 - Foster adaptive management
 - Lead the formulation of sustainable financing strategies through pursuing donor coordination and supporting country child projects in the design and deployment of sustainable financing strategies
 - Amplifying coordination with other GEF-financed and other donor-financed initiatives relevant to the Program
 - Providing guidance that will ensure the program directly contributes to the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and selected MEAs; finding entry points that will be the vehicle for the One Forest Summit outcomes. The committee will ensure an action plan for this activity is developed and executed by the program.
 - Amplifying the visibility of the program on regional and international platforms
- C. **The Regional Coordination and Technical Project Unit** is part of the Regional Coordination project and will comprise representatives from CI, The Executing Agency (TBD at PPG Phase), and other key executing Agencies (TBD at the PPG Phase). The envisioned role of this Unit is outlined below:
- Foster adaptive management
 - Program coordination
 - Enhancing knowledge sharing, collaboration, and learning at regional and country levels
 - Providing tailored technical assistance and quality assurance including on gender mainstreaming and safeguards
 - Frequent communications and coordination with Guinean Forest's national project teams
 - Host an annual workshop to bring together the PSC, national project teams, and other key stakeholders in the region. This annual meeting will be jointly hosted by UNEP (Congo Basin IP) and CI (Guinean Forests IP)
 - M&E at regional and program levels

A Regional Communications Committee will be established under this unit and will comprise communications representatives from CI, GEF, Lead Agencies of the Child Projects, The Regional Coordination Project's Executing Agency, a country representative from the Child Projects, and other key executing Agencies (TBD at the PPG Phase). The objective of this committee is to amplify the program's visibility on various platforms at regional and international levels and support the generation and dissemination of knowledge management products. The communications committee will also be key in the drafting and dissemination of the Program's Annual progress report.

¹² The Lead Executing Agency (EA) will be competitively selected during the PPG Phase. **At concept stage**, a list of potential organizations that are likely to be selected as EA has been provided. This list is not exhaustive. **At the PPG Phase**, a selection criterion will be developed and after which, CI will approach potential organizations and request them to respond to the criteria.

- D. **An Advisory Group comprising experts** in the field from universities, the private sector, and NGOs will meet once or twice a year to provide recommendations for the program. The purpose of this group will be to serve as a forum in which partners and related initiatives keep each other apprised of developments and identify opportunities for collaboration and synergy on an ongoing basis. To facilitate coordination and cooperation with ongoing initiatives, anticipated participants in this advisory group also will include ECOWAS, MRU, CEMAC, and UN agencies, among others.

Figure 2: The Program’s governance and coordination structure



Core Indicators

Project Core Indicators		Expected at PFD
1	Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management (hectare)	1,599,889
2	Marine protected areas created or under improved management (hectare)	
3	Area of land and ecosystems under restoration (hectare)	27,433
4	Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectare)	317,308
5	Area of marine habitat under improved practices (hectare)	
6	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated (metric ton of CO ₂ e)	16,210,624
7	Shared water ecosystems under new or improved cooperative management (count)	
8	Globally over-exploited marine fisheries moved to more sustainable levels (metric ton)	
9	Chemicals of global concern and their waste reduced (metric ton of toxic	

Project Core Indicators		Expected at PFD
	chemicals reduced)	
10	Persistent organic pollutants to air reduced (gram of toxic equivalent gTEQ)	
11	People benefiting from GEF-financed investments disaggregated by sex (count)	115,666 (57,290 women 58,376 men)

Explain the methodological approach and underlying logic to justify target levels for Core and Sub-Indicators (*max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page*)

Entries for Core Indicator targets are the aggregates of targets provided in the country child project concepts; for details, please see explanations provided in those concepts. Note that figures remain subject to ongoing review and refinement.

NGI (only): Justification of Financial Structure

N/A

Risks to Achieving Program Outcomes

Risk Categories	Rating	Comments
Climate: Impacts from climate change could alter priority areas for conservation, exacerbate floods and/or droughts (potentially leading to the project or wider regional or country-level instability), and/or lead to changes in country development priorities.	Low	The Program will ensure all child projects are closely aligned with country-level commitments on climate change and support related strategies and action plans. Prior and future analysis will continue to identify and refine areas that will be most impacted by climate change (such as KBAs or priority watersheds), with project design and implementation incorporating appropriate strategies for climate resilience and mitigation. Anticipated climate change impacts will be a key factor in land use planning and spatial planning to inform decision-making.
Environment and Social: Child projects could bring environmental and/or social risks, notably unintended outcomes from project activities.	High	All child projects will be subject to GEF-related environmental and social safeguards through accredited implementation agencies in each country. The Regional Level Platform will also assess child project-related environmental and social risks during both design and implementation phases, using data gathered from prior and current GEF- and CEPF-related investments. Child projects will be required to prepare relevant safeguard plans, including at minimum gender mainstreaming and stakeholder engagement plans, and grievance accountability and redress mechanisms.
Political and Governance: Program goals and child project objectives could be undermined through detrimental policies and/or through non-compliance with existing laws and regulations.	Medium	Prior involvement with CEPF- and GEF-related investments has allowed for strong regional and country-specific networks and alliances with key government officials from the local to the national level, as well as with the private sector, CSOs, and international multi- and bilateral stakeholders. The Regional Level Platform will utilize these networks and alliances to ensure Program and child project-specific goals are supported, as well as identify where detrimental policies or

		<p>non-compliance with complementary policies are undermining successful implementation. Particular attention will be given to identifying existing or new policies that create perverse incentives that undermine the larger environmental goals of the Program, and opportunities to incorporate policy reform into Child Project design.</p>
<p>Macro-economic: A number of macro-economic variables, such as demand for specific commodities, international food, and mineral prices, increasing levels of international debt and inflationary pressures, could individually or collectively pose risks for the project, including exacerbating the principal drivers of habitat loss and degradation, and undermining the viability of livelihood & enterprise interventions in the project.</p>	Medium	<p>Economies of the Guinean Forest region are heavily dependent on commodities such as cacao which can be subject to large price swings, adding a degree of complexity to long-term planning for sustainable investments, such as certified products. While growing, markets for certified products are often difficult for producers to access, as capacity-building, capital, and marketing are required.</p> <p>By placing IPLCs at the center of its strategies, the Program can build off of two decades of investment and experiences in sustainable development, promoting best practices to improve productivity and profitability while conducting outreach to potential higher-value markets for more sustainable produced commodities. Securing land and natural resource tenure and supporting capacity building and enforcement will also enable IPLCs to more effectively manage, and benefit from, areas for conservation and restoration, and prevent unauthorized land uses, such as illegal logging or unregulated bushmeat hunting.</p>
<p>Strategies and Policies: The Guinean Forest region is a large, multi-country region with diverse stakeholders and priorities, posing a challenge to the development and implementation of coherent strategies and policies needed for successful project outcomes.</p>	Low	<p>Over two decades of prior investments by GEF and CEPF have demonstrated a number of coordination and collaboration mechanisms that the Program’s Regional Level Platform will adopt to ensure strategic and policy coherence among key stakeholders. This will include regular country- and regional-level meetings, exchanges and capacity-building workshops, and regular information sharing and updates from the Program’s monitoring and evaluation component.</p>
<p>Technical design of project or program: Design elements may not function as intended and/or project/program assumptions could prove to be incorrect, leading to project components or the program as a whole underperforming during implementation. Failure to adequately budget for successful outcomes, or for committed counterpart funding to be delivered, could also result in projects or the program not fully achieving objectives.</p>	Low	<p>Both the Program technical design as well as the design of the child projects will be based on over two decades of prior experiences and lessons learned from GEF and CEPF investments. Programmatically, all components are well aligned with national policies and commitments, as well as with GEF strategies and objectives.</p> <p>Communication and coordination with key stakeholders will be core elements of all Program components, including regular meetings from the local to regional levels. The knowledge management component includes a monitoring and evaluation mechanism that will guide adaptive management, allowing for design corrections should conditions and priorities change during implementation.</p> <p>Lessons learned from prior programs and projects will guide the budgeting process, thereby mitigating the risk that budgets are misaligned with objectives. The Regional Level Platform will be utilized to ensure that committed counterpart resources are</p>

		delivered as promised, as well as engage in efforts to leverage additional funding from new sources, thereby helping to mitigate shortfalls.
Institutional capacity for implementation and sustainability: Countries in the region have a number of institutional and technical capacity gaps, some substantial, which could undermine the successful implementation of child projects and reaching Program goals.	Substantial	<p>The Program’s design explicitly recognizes the need for capacity building throughout the region and incorporates strategies to address gaps. The Regional Level Platform addresses capacity gaps by promoting region-wide cooperation and knowledge sharing, as well as through targeted technical support</p> <p>Specific child projects will also identify capacity-building gaps and incorporate project elements to address these gaps and will coordinate efforts with the Regional Level Platform to direct resources and technical expertise where appropriate.</p>
Fiduciary - Financial Management and Procurement: National governments across the region often struggle to adequately enact and fund policies that support conservation, as the economic development and revenue needs are substantial. This could result in counterpart support/co-financing not being delivered either fully or in part, undermining child project and/or Program goals.	Medium	<p>Country-level commitments for both the Program and child projects are explicit in signed letters of endorsement that detail levels of co-financing/counterpart support. Regular communication and coordination with government stakeholders will support the timely delivery of committed resources. Identifying additional sources of support will also be a priority for the Regional Level Platform, and adaptive management mechanisms will allow for resource re-allocation in the event of shortfalls in committed support.</p>
Stakeholder Engagement: Program and child project success are contingent upon effective stakeholder engagement and commitment to achieving country- and regional-level goals. Ineffective or incomplete engagement processes could result in a full or partial failure to successfully implement project-level activities.	Low	<p>Prior investments and lessons learned in the region over the last two decades have resulted in a broad range of strong stakeholder relationships and effective engagement mechanisms that the program will build upon.</p> <p>The Regional Level Platform is specifically tasked with building synergies and coherence between projects, making effective stakeholder engagement a key responsibility to achieve these goals. Throughout implementation, the Regional Level Platform will coordinate closely with child projects to ensure key stakeholders are being effectively engaged and able to deliver upon commitments, hold regular meetings, disseminate knowledge, and build capacity where needed.</p> <p>Safeguard requirements for child projects will include the preparation of stakeholder engagement plans, subject to review per GEF and Lead Agency standards.</p>
Overall Risk Rating	Medium	

Safeguards Rating (PFD level):

PROJECT CATEGORY	Category A	Category B	Category C
	X		

Justification: The child projects and the regional child project were screened for Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) risks. Overall, ESS risks were identified from Low to High with the majority falling under the High risk/Category A classification. Note that the screenings are preliminary and further assessments of the ESS risks will be conducted during the PPG phase.

The high ESS risks were attributed to the projects taking place in protected areas and/or near areas occupied by traditional peoples, and some project activities, such as land use planning and improved forest management, potentially affecting access to natural resources by local communities. Mitigation measures and plans to address these risks will be developed during the PPG phase.

C. ALIGNMENT WITH GEF-8 PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES AND COUNTRY/REGIONAL PRIORITIES

The program corresponds to the objectives of the Amazon, Congo, and Critical Forest Biomes Integrated Program. The program will support local communities and CSOs as a central strategy for achieving the larger regional goal of protecting and maintaining intact forest landscapes. The program's focus on the corridor and landscape-level interventions also expand and improves the management of intact forest landscapes, centered on protected areas and KBAs identified through the GEF-supported CEPF portfolio (which will be updated on the basis of information and analysis produced since the preparation of the CEPF Ecosystem Profile). The program also will channel investments in sustainable land use outside of protected areas, thereby improving connectivity, promoting sustainable livelihoods, and ensuring better delivery of ecosystem services; transboundary corridors will be a particular priority. Finally, the program will build on innovative financial mechanisms that have proven successful, including the REDD+ project in Sierra Leone's Gola Rainforest National Park and Conservation Agreements that have been negotiated with communities and private sector entities, notably in Liberia; work on sustainable financing also will draw on the momentum generated at the Libreville One Forest Summit in March 2023.

The program components are well-aligned with GEF-8 programming strategies, building on over two decades of investment and lessons learned from prior and current regional GEF investments, including the GEF-7 FOLUR IP and the CEPF project portfolio in the Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot.¹³ Addressing key drivers of forest loss and degradation and protecting and restoring critical ecosystem services and habitats are integral to the program's strategy. Complementing these strategies will be policy-level support to enhance national and regional coherence and capacity, helping the region's countries move towards more sustainable, resilient economies that are better able to respond to priorities for addressing climate change (NDCs, NBSAPs, NAPs, etc).

With respect to GEF-8 Focal Area strategies defined in the GEF-8 Programming Directions, the program is closely aligned with Objective 1 under the Biodiversity Focal Area (*To improve conservation, sustainable use, and restoration of natural ecosystems*). This includes work on financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of PAs, as well as biodiversity mainstreaming in priority sectors, including local applications with demonstrated practical relevance (e.g., land use planning). Under the Climate Change Focal Area, the program's investment in expanding and strengthening PAs as well as forest management and restoration outside PAs correspond to Pillar I, Objective 1.4 relating to Nature-based Solutions. This area of work also is relevant to Objectives 1 and 2 of the Land Degradation Focal Area, through the promotion of regenerative/climate-smart agriculture (guided by spatial planning)

¹³ <https://www.cepf.net/our-work/biodiversity-hotspots/guinean-forests-west-africa>

and restoration of degraded productive lands, including strengthening of community-based natural resource management as well as tenure rights recognition and safeguards. The GFIP also converges with the Ecosystem Restoration IP, given the importance of restoration of productive lands as well as fragmented and degraded forests to enhance the health of Guinean Forest landscapes. The GFIP also aligns closely with the GEF-8 Wildlife Conservation for Development IP given its focus on securing wildlife populations and key landscapes, and ensuring that countries and communities derive socioeconomic benefits from wildlife as a natural asset; shared themes include habitat protection, sustainable wildlife use, ecotourism, and human-wildlife conflict. Finally, with respect to the International Waters Focal Area, transboundary work under the program (e.g., along the Mano River shared by Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone) will further Objective 3 (*Enhance water security in freshwater ecosystems*). Specific program components and their alignment with GEF-8 programming strategies and regional objectives include:

Land use planning: This component will focus on generating the information necessary to develop integrated land-use plans, and then utilize that information to improve natural resource management through the participatory multi-stakeholder landscape- and local-level land use planning. This Component will generate the basic knowledge base and planning foundation for the pursuit of GEF-8 programming strategies.

Expanding and improving the management of protected areas: This component directly aligns with GEF-8's programming strategies to protect major global environmental assets and address drivers of habitat loss and degradation. The component will also support the empowerment of IPLCs that live in and around target PAs, using lessons learned from CEPF's prior experiences catalyzing conservation by civil society. A concerted effort will seek to incorporate KBAs currently not under formal protection into the region's protected area system, informed by spatial planning results from Component 1.

Sustainable land use outside protected areas: Land use planning outputs will provide spatial guidance for efforts relating to restoration and improved land use practices. Central to this process will be support for strengthened land tenure and resource rights for IPLCs in priority corridors. Lessons learned from innovative financing mechanisms used in past projects, such as Conservation Agreements, REDD+, private sector engagement, and "green" certification schemes will inform new investments in areas outside of protected areas. These will collectively support more sustainable land use, while simultaneously bolstering key ecosystem services such as those derived from healthy watersheds. This component aligns with several GEF-8 programming strategies, including addressing drivers of deforestation, promoting "greener" and more sustainable economic systems, and employing innovation mechanisms to achieve conservation and sustainable development objectives.

Policy engagement: The program will build on prior and current investments in policy engagement initiatives by supporting strategic national-level policies that will impact regional conservation and restoration, including those relating to: climate change mitigation and adaptation, land-use planning, conservation finance, and more secure land and natural resource tenure. It will also support policies that create positive incentives for conservation, restoration, and sustainable development while working to address perverse incentives that drive habitat loss and degradation. These measures align with GEF-8's strategies to develop enabling conditions to mobilize finance and improve incentives for forest protection while eliminating perverse incentives and will empower IPLCs and communities seeking more secure land and natural resource tenure. It also will help participating countries better respond to several climate-related priorities, including the development and strengthening of NDCs, NBSAPs, NAPs, and other key commitments.

Regional cooperation and learning: The program will support multi-stakeholder engagement and regional cooperation and learning by deploying a Regional Level Platform, which will be based on CEPF's proven Regional Implementation Team (RIT) model. Under the RIT model, a team of experts works directly with grantees to build capacity and ensure coherence and promote synergies at the regional scale. The Regional Level Platform for the program will focus on 1) knowledge generation and exchange; 2) building coherence and synergies between projects; 3) supporting regional-

level initiatives (including support for transboundary projects); 4) mobilization of finance; and 5) monitoring and evaluation of results, from the project to the regional level. While the Regional Level Platform most directly aligns with GEF-8's programming strategy of regional cooperation (including the development of transboundary corridors), it also supports the development of enabling conditions and resource mobilization through catalyzing financing opportunities.

Criteria for the selection of child projects center on ensuring that investments help maintain the integrity of the GFB's globally important critical forests and maximize multiple GEBs. Factors considered in the assessment of Expressions of Interest submitted for the IP were the degree to which proposed child projects reflect:

- i. Coverage of Guinean Forest Biome
- ii. Landscape connectivity
- iii. Demonstration of ambitious policies to prioritize the maintenance of forest integrity
- iv. Demonstration of ambitious policies for halting deforestation
- v. Demonstration of ambitious policies for the restoration of degraded areas
- vi. Proposed strategies and policies consider carbon stocks
- vii. Proposed strategies and policies consider biodiversity
- viii. Potential to target intact forest landscapes across national borders
- ix. Evidence of policies that recognize land tenure access and resource rights
- x. Transparent co-management strategies with Indigenous People and Local Communities.
- xi. Potential and opportunities for transformational change at large scale

Child projects also are required to demonstrate strong baselines and co-financing opportunities, contributions to the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), and contributions to the IP goals including transboundary/regional connectivity. Policy alignment for each country is reflected as follows:

Guinea: The Government of Guinea has demonstrated commitment to forest protection at different levels, from engaging communities in capacity-building activities for sustainable land management to equipping and funding park rangers and anti-poaching programs. Reforestation campaigns and restoration actions have been rolled out through a Presidential Initiative. Further work has recognized the rights of private forest owners and updated legal texts of various codes (forest code, wildlife code, and hunting regulations, environmental code, water code, livestock code) whose sanctions against offenders were previously very weak. National policies and strategies that support the protection of the environment, the conservation of biodiversity, the preservation of the integrity of forests, and the restoration of land include the National Environmental Action Plan (PNAE) of 1994 and the Guinea National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy adopted in 2015.

Liberia: The Government of Liberia has made a bold commitment to forest protection by enacting the 30% target in its 2006 National Forestry Reform Law, and by setting an NDC target of reducing the national deforestation rate by 50%. They have ratified national legislation such as the Environment Protection Management Law, the National Wildlife and Conservation Protected Area Management Law, and the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) to strengthen the framework for forest and biodiversity conservation. Regionally, the GOL has also signed on to initiatives that will support the harmonization of transboundary conservation efforts through the ECOWAS Environmental Policy and Action and the Mano River Declaration. With its partners, the GOL continues to prioritize Protected Area establishment governance and co-management, including gender integration, and private sector involvement while seeking long-term financing.

Nigeria: The Government of Nigeria has been an active participant in the ECOWAS-led regional-level forest conservation effort "The Convergence Plan for the Sustainable Management Use of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa".

Nigeria also is a key actor in Africa’s Great Green Wall Project and has restored approximately 4.9 million ha of degraded lands. Southeastern Nigeria is home to over 50% of the country’s remaining forest.

Sierra Leone: The Government of Sierra Leone has helped pioneer ambitious efforts to use REDD+ opportunities to finance the management of protected areas and community forests in the Gola landscape. Recently passed legislation prioritizes forest integrity and halting deforestation by barring destructive development in ecologically important areas. The 2010 Forestry Policy adopted by the Forestry Division articulates a clear set of ambitious policies to work with communities and landowners to maintain forests and reforest degraded areas. The government recently at COP 26 made a commitment to planting 25 million trees over 960,000 ha by 2030. Regional commitments include African Convention on Nature and Natural Resources and the Mano River Declaration. The Gola Rain Forest National Park (GFNP) is Sierra Leone’s largest remaining area of intact lowland rainforest; in 2011, Liberia and Sierra Leone signed an MoU to conserve Gola Forest, amended in February 2020 reaffirming commitment to joint forest management and biodiversity protection.

D. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment***:

We confirm that gender dimensions relevant to the program have been addressed as per GEF Policy and are clearly articulated in the Program Description (Section B).

Yes

In the West Africa Region, women and men have different uses, practices, and knowledge related to natural resources, specifically forests. Women rely heavily on non-timber forest products (NTFPs) for their livelihoods, as they use them for both household subsistence but also as a source of income¹⁴. Some of these NTFPs include shea nut, moringa, cashew nuts, forest fruit juice, soumbala, oysters, and honey. Meanwhile, men are more engaged in timber extraction and bushmeat hunting¹⁵. Both women and men rely on charcoal and fuelwood as sources of energy, used both at a household level and beyond. The region has a high prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV) which also impacts access to natural resources, as women and youth face higher risks of GBV during collection activities. On the other hand, men tend to face very different risks associated with timber extraction, such as chainsaw accidents. Also, even if most smallholder producers and agricultural workforce are women in the region, they face greater challenges to accessing credits, exercising their rights to land tenure, and are often informally employed with no basic labor and work conditions guaranteed. For example, in Liberia, female smallholder producers and women in the agricultural force produce 60 percent of agricultural products, but they have more limited access to productive inputs than their male counterparts, including land¹⁶. Furthermore, men dominate the workforce from the formal forestry sector in all West Africa countries, and very few countries have significant numbers of women in senior-level governmental positions forestry related¹⁷. Even though this is only a glance at gender roles relevant to this integrated program and to the West Africa Region, it is possible to observe the importance of integrating a gender-responsive, and where possible, gender transformative approach to technical programming.

¹⁴FAO, SIDA, ECOWAS (2021). “Gender Equality and Forestry in West Africa: Preliminary Findings and Recommendations for West African Countries”. Available at: <https://www.fao.org/3/CB4280EN/CB4280EN.pdf>

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Rights and Resources Initiative (2012). “Women and forests in Liberia: Gender policy and women’s participation in the forest sector of Liberia”. Washington, DC. Available at: <https://rightsandresources.org/wp-content/exported-pdf/rriafricabriefsencombined.pdf>

¹⁷ FAO, SIDA, ECOWAS (2021). “Gender Equality and Forestry in West Africa: Preliminary Findings and Recommendations for West African Countries”. Available at: <https://www.fao.org/3/CB4280EN/CB4280EN.pdf>

Acknowledging the above, this program will build on the existing knowledge and tools on the intersections between gender, sustainable land use, and sustainable livelihoods in the region to ensure that the actions to be implemented by the Child Projects both avoid perpetuating already existing gender gaps and seize opportunities to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

All the components of the IP present opportunities to advance this objective through the implementation of country-specific projects, transboundary efforts, and regional efforts. Component 1 will provide opportunities for closing information gaps and advancing gender-disaggregated and gender-responsive data for land-use planning and spatial analysis in the region (e.g., differentiated uses of natural resources by women, men, and those from disadvantaged groups, such as youth and indigenous peoples). In this same Component, efforts to ensure inclusivity and meaningful participation of women and those from disadvantaged groups in integrated land-use planning will be key to ensure that the creation, expansion, or improved management of PAs or restrictions to access to natural resources in OECMs, do not disproportionately affect them. It will also ensure that their differential knowledge and practices on forest landscapes are recognized. These two objectives are also relevant to Component 2.

For Component 3, the efforts of the program and child projects will focus on ensuring that the opportunities that the improved sustainability of productive sectors will bring, can benefit women, men, and those from disadvantaged groups in an equitable way (for example, emerging roles and training offered on skills to perform them, in productive sectors highly dominated by men, are equitably accessible for women). Also, that actions to improve access to sustainable livelihoods, can contribute to women's economic empowerment and equally benefit those from disadvantaged groups. This will be considered as part of the gender analysis at the PPG phase, where child projects will explore a thorough understanding of livelihood alternatives, their supply chains and what opportunities for women, youth, and IPs, exist in these supplies chains, and what is needed to materialize their participation. The same rationale applies to nature friendly-enterprises, by ensuring that women/youth/IPs -led/owned SMEs are also supported by the child projects efforts. In Component 4, the program will encourage child projects and governments to advance gender-sensitive policies and policy frameworks on participatory land-use planning, land tenure, and economic incentives for conservation.

Component 5 will provide an opportunity to advance capacity-building opportunities across stakeholders in the region, on gender intersections with sustainable land-use planning, forest conservation, and sustainable livelihoods. It will also serve as a platform (through the Regional Child Project) to exchange good practices, successful case studies, and lessons learnt on gender-sensitive land-use planning, forest conservation, and sustainable livelihoods. The knowledge exchange will be dialogic, and the platform will allow knowledge and experience from communities, women-led organizations, and those led by other disadvantaged groups, which feature highly in learning processes. To achieve this, a gender strategy will be developed during the PPG phase through the Regional Child Project, to identify knowledge gaps and needs, design capacity-building actions to address those needs, and design spaces for knowledge and experience exchange among different countries and stakeholders in the region. Finally, to contribute to these ambitions, child projects are expected to develop their own local level, gender analysis, and gender mainstreaming or gender action plans. Those plans will be a route map to seize the opportunities and avoid any risks to perpetuate gender inequalities, in accordance with the gender objectives associated with the program components and outcomes mentioned above. The program will also encourage the child projects to budget for their gender mainstreaming plans and to have the required gender expertise as part of the project teams, both at the PPG and project implementation phases.

Stakeholder Engagement

Owing to the GEF timeline for EOIs, concept development, and PFD preparation, the bulk of stakeholder consultations necessarily have been deferred to the PPG phase. However, the child concepts build on prior work in each of the

countries that have benefited from extensive stakeholder consultations, engagement, and participation over the past years through various related initiatives, such that they reflect strong familiarity with stakeholder perspectives, needs, and priorities. While this does not replace the need for stakeholder engagement and consultations during detailed project design, it lends confidence that the concepts developed to date are consistent with stakeholder expectations and concerns.

March 21-23, 2023: the GFIP design team engaged representatives of the governments of Cameroon, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria at a PFD design workshop in Liberia. Also in attendance were representatives from GEF and the GEF-STAP, FAO, Fauna, and Flora International, Wild Chimpanzee Foundation, Conservation International (Liberia Program and Africa Division), and IUCN. The attendees comprised country child project proponents and their principal partners in project preparation, other country representatives interested in potential future participation in the GFIP, and regionally active environmental NGOs. Sessions over three days permitted close examination of the proposed GFIP design (PFD and regional coordination child project), and clarification of GEF expectations with respect to the IP and the country child projects. There was broad consensus that the GFIP design as presented in this PFD is an appropriate response to regional needs with respect to forest management, and conforms to the needs and expectations of the participating country governments and other regional partners. Two side sessions were held by the GFIP design team with government representatives from Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone to align on a shared transboundary watershed component to incorporate into their respective country child projects, which also is reflected in this PFD.

We confirm that key stakeholders were consulted during PFD development as required per GEF policy, their relevant roles to program outcomes, and the plan to develop a Stakeholder Engagement Plan in the Coordination Child Project before CEO endorsement has been clearly articulated in the Program Description (Section B).

Yes

Were the following stakeholders consulted during the PFD preparation phase:

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Civil Society Organizations?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Private Sector?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Provide a brief summary and list of names and dates of consultations

March 21-23, 2023 Guinean Forests IP PFD Design Workshop (Liberia)

(Please upload to the portal documents tab any stakeholder engagement plan or assessments that have been done during the PFD preparation phase.)

The Guinean Forests PFD design Workshop Report has also been uploaded (including the list of participants)

Private Sector

Will there be private sector engagement in the program?

Yes No

And if so, has its role been described and justified in the section B program description?

Yes No

Environmental and Social Safeguards

We confirm that we have provided indicative information regarding Environmental and Social risks associated with the proposed program and any measures to address such risks and impacts (this information should be presented in Annex D).

Yes

The child projects and the regional child project were screened for Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) risks. Overall, ESS risks were identified from Low to High with the majority falling under the High risk/Category A classification. Note that the screenings are preliminary and further assessments of the ESS risks will be conducted during the PPG phase.

The high ESS risks were attributed to the projects taking place in protected areas and/or near areas occupied by traditional peoples, and some project activities, such as land use planning and improved forest management, potentially affecting access to natural resources by local communities. Mitigation measures and plans to address these risks will be developed during the PPG phase.

E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Knowledge management

We confirm that an approach to Knowledge Management and Learning has been clearly described in the Program Description (Section B)

Yes

ANNEX A: FINANCING TABLES [FILLED ON THE PORTAL]

GEF Financing Table

Indicative Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area, and the Programming of Funds

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)		
					GEF Program Financing (a)	Agency Fee (b)	Total a+b
CI	GEFTF	Regional	(select)	(select as applicable)			
Total GEF Resources							

Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Is a Project Preparation Grant for Child Projects requested? Yes No

If yes: fill in the PPG table (incl. PPG fee)

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)		
					PPG (a)	Agency Fee (b)	Total a + b
(select)	(select)		(select)	(select as applicable)			
Total PPG Amount							

Sources of Funds for Country STAR Allocation

GFEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/Global	Focal Area	Source of Funds	Total
(select)	(select)		(select)	(select as applicable)	
Total GEF Resources					

Indicative Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
		GEF Project Financing	Co-financing
(select) (select) WEST AFRICA	GEF Trust	24,770,795	112,524,405
Total Project Cost		24,770,795	112,524,405

Indicative Co-financing

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount (\$)
Guinea				
Government	Ministry of Environment	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	5,000,000
Other Government agency	Other Ministries (agriculture, Cooperation, etc.)	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	10,000,000
GEF Agency	IUCN	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	300,000
Liberia				
GEF Agency	CI	In-Kind	Recurrent Expenditure	413,685
Recipient Country Government	Environmental Protection Agency	In-Kind	Recurrent Expenditure	6,000,000
Recipient Country Government	Forestry Development Authority	In-Kind	Recurrent Expenditure	5,600,000
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Agriculture	In-Kind	Recurrent Expenditure	5,000,000
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Mines and Energy	In-Kind	Recurrent Expenditure	5,000,000
Recipient Country Government	Liberia Land Authority	In-Kind	Recurrent Expenditure	5,000,000
GEF Agency	CI	In-Kind	Recurrent Expenditure	413,685
Nigeria				
Recipient Country Government	Federal Ministry of Environment	Public Investment	Investment Mobilized	10,000,000
Recipient Country Government	Cross River State Government	Grant	Recurrent expenditures	18,000,000
Recipient Country Government	Cross River State Government	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	2,000,000
Recipient Country Government	National Park Services	Grant	Recurrent expenditures	20,000,000
Civil Society Organization	Nigeria Conservation Foundation	Grant	Recurrent expenditures	2,000,000
GEF Agency	FAO	Grant	Investment Mobilized	500,000
Sierra Leone				
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change	In-kind	Recurrent	1,000,000
Recipient Country Government	Environment Protection Agency	In-kind	Recurrent	2,000,000

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount (\$)
Donor Agency	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)[Agricultural Value-Chain Development Project (AVDP)]	In-kind	Recurrent	6,000,000
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Planning and Economic Development	In-kind	Recurrent	5,000,000
Recipient Country Government	National Protected Areas Authority: The Gola REDD project	In-kind	Recurrent	2,000,000
GEF Agency	Conservation International	In-kind	Recurrent	413,685
Regional coordination				
GEF Agency	Conservation International	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditure	937,036
Total Co-financing				112,524,405

Please provide indicative information regarding the expected amounts, sources and types of Co-Financing, and the subset of such Co-Financing that meets the definition of Investment Mobilized.

ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENTS

Name of GEF Agency Coordinator	GEF Agency Coordinator Contact Information
Orissa Samaroo	Vice President, GEF Policy and Portfolio Management, Conservation International Email: osamaroo@conservation.org

Record of Endorsement of GEF Operational Focal Point (s) on Behalf of the Government(s):

Name of GEF OFP	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/dd/yyyy)
Signature			
<<additional fields to be added for regional projects or global projects with on the ground investments>>			

NGIs do not require a Letter of Endorsement if beneficiaries are: i) exclusively private sector actors, or ii) public sector entities in more than one country. However, for NGI projects please confirm that the agency has informed the OFP of the project to be submitted for Council Approval YES

Compilation of Letters of Endorsement

Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter(s) in this Annex. Please include a compilation of the signed LOEs in one PDF file in this annex.

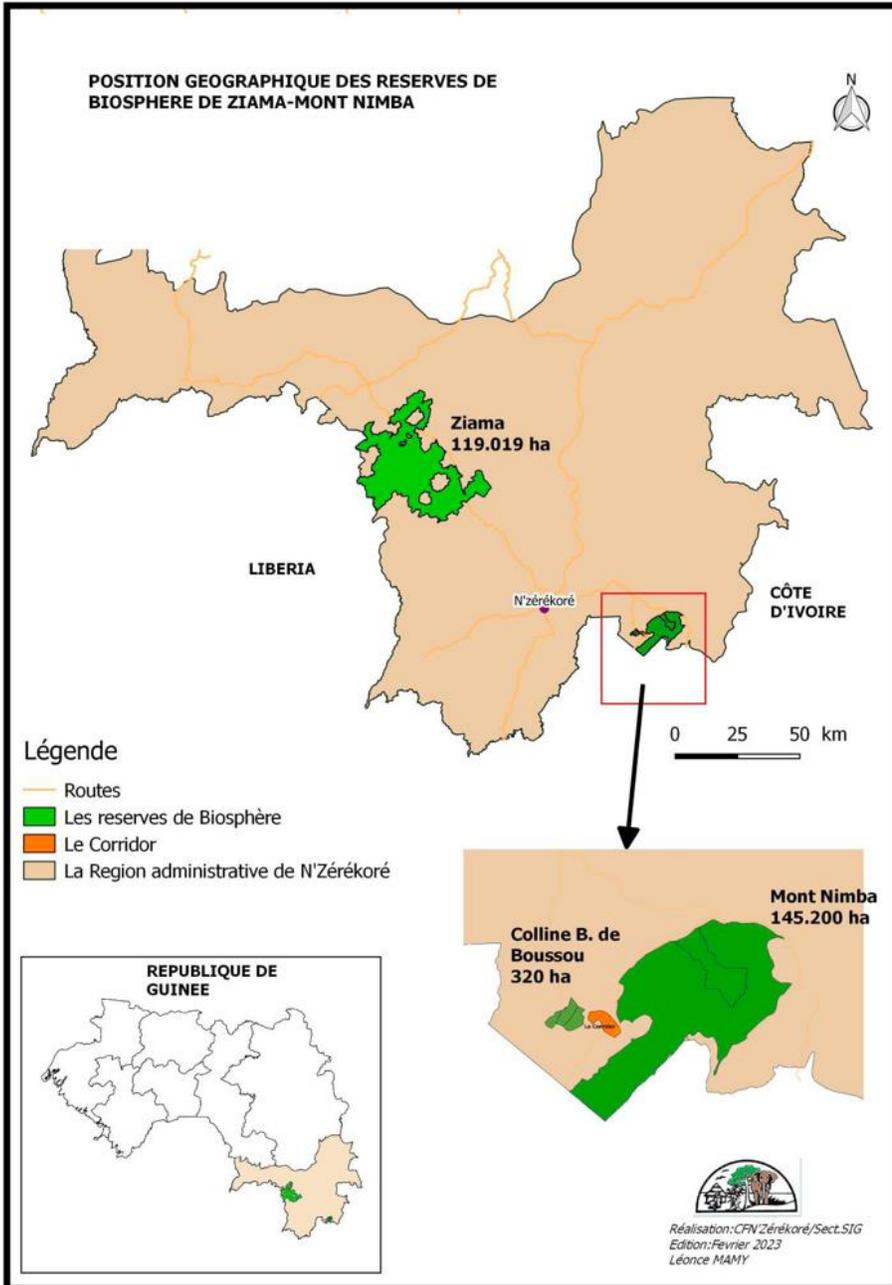
ANNEX C: PROGRAM LOCATIONS

Please provide geo-referenced¹⁸ information and a map of where the program interventions will take place

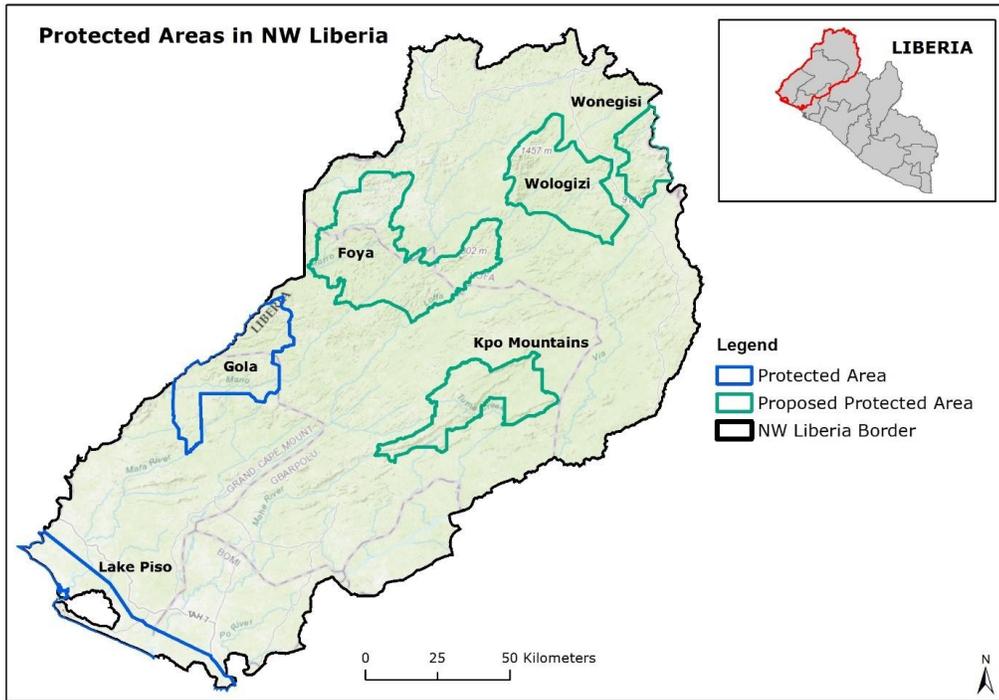
Project Sites	Latitude	Longitude
Guinea		
Ziama Reserve	N 8° 0' 0"	W 9° 35' 0"
Mont Nimba Biosphere Reserve	N 7° 38' 0"	W 8° 26' 0"
Liberia		
Kpo Mountains Proposed Protected Area	N 7° 21' 41"	W 10° 5' 6"
Wologizi Nature Reserve	N 8° 6' 36"	W 9° 55' 40"
Foya Proposed Protected Area	N 8° 22' 13"	W 10° 13' 11"
Gola Forest National Park	N 7° 30' 0"	W 10° 55' 0"
Nigeria		
Cross River National Park (Okwango Division)	N 5° 34' 50"	E 8° 44' 54"
Cross River National Park (Oban Hills Division)	N 5° 30' 0"	E 8° 35' 0"
Ekuri Community Forest	N 5° 47' 40"	E 8° 25' 53"
Afi Mountains/River Wildlife Sanctuary	N 6° 2' 31"	E 8° 33' 12"
Mbe Mountains Community Wildlife Sanctuary	N 7° 3' 12"	E 10° 46' 0"
Sierra Leone		
Gola Rainforest National Park	N 7° 31' 1"	W 10° 58' 8"

¹⁸ Source: GeoNames: <http://www.geonames.org/>

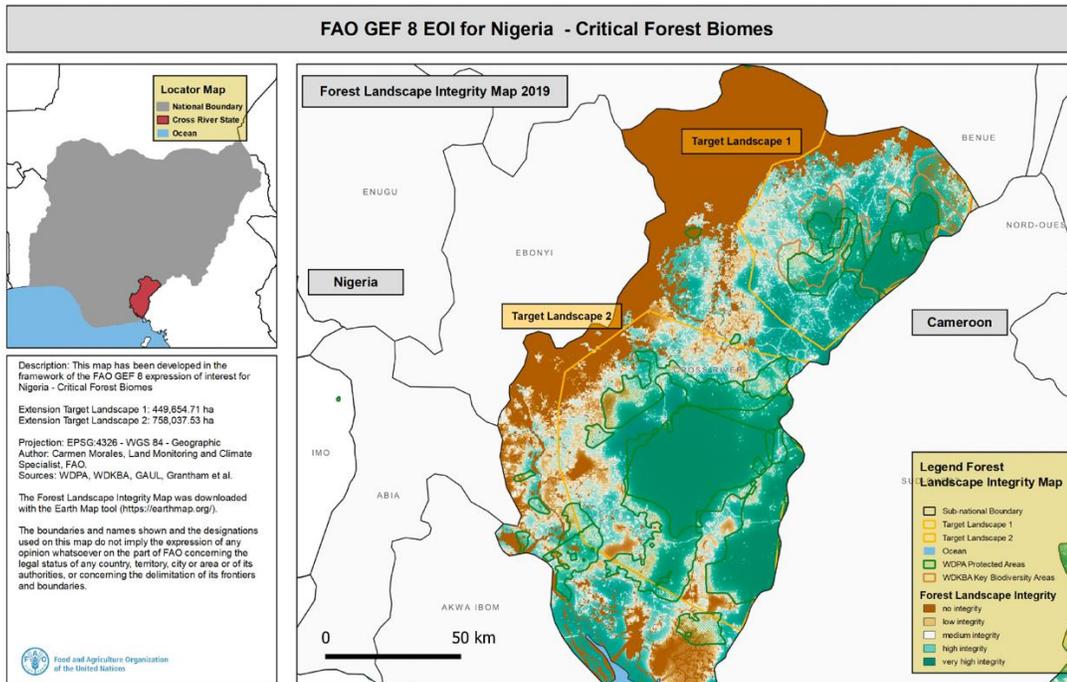
Guinea Project Sites



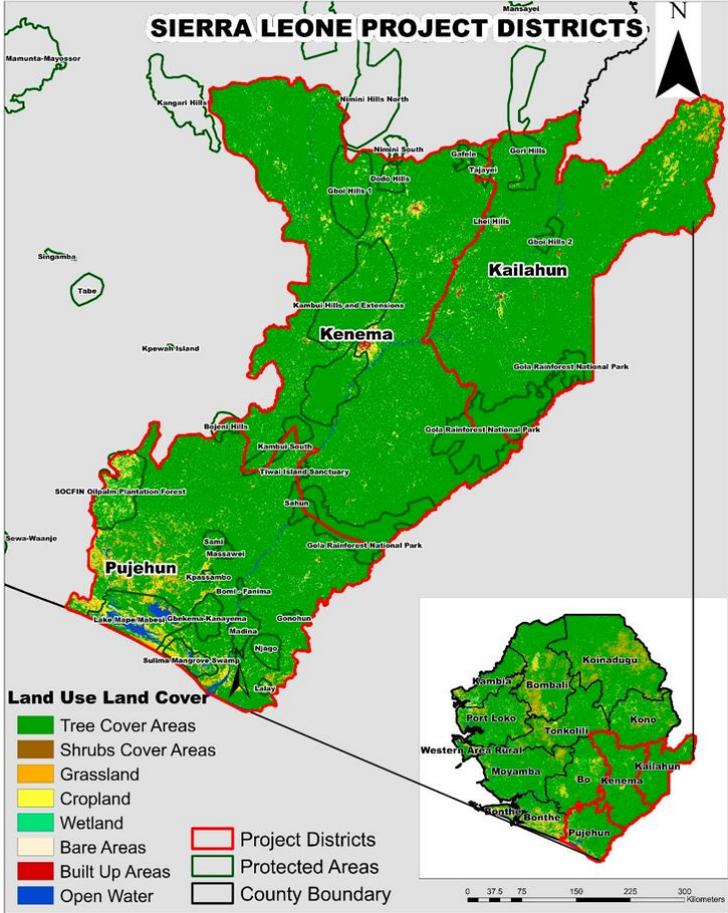
Liberia Project Sites



Nigeria Project Sites



Sierra Leone Project Sites



D ANNEX D: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS SCREEN AND RATING

(Program level) Attach agency safeguard screen form including rating of risk types and overall risk rating.

[PDF File Attached separately]

PROJECT CATEGORY	Category A	Category B	Category C
X			
<p><i>Justification: The child projects and the regional child project were screened for Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) risks. Overall, ESS risks were identified from Low to High with the majority falling under the High risk/Category A classification. Note that the screenings are preliminary and further assessments of the ESS risks will be conducted during the PPG phase.</i></p> <p><i>The high ESS risks were attributed to the projects taking place in protected areas and/or near areas occupied by traditional peoples, and some project activities, such as land use planning and improved forest management, potentially affecting access to natural resources by local communities. Mitigation measures and plans to address these risks will be developed during the PPG phase.</i></p>			

ANNEX E: RIO MARKERS

Climate Change Mitigation	Climate Change Adaptation	Biodiversity	Desertification
Climate Change Mitigation 2	Climate Change Adaptation 1	Biodiversity 2	Desertification 0

ANNEX F: TAXONOMY WORKSHEET

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Influencing models			
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transform policy and regulatory environments		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Convene multi-stakeholder alliances		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate innovative approaches		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deploy innovative financial instruments		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stakeholders			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous Peoples		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Sector		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Capital providers	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Financial intermediaries and market facilitators	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Large corporations	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SMEs	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individuals/Entrepreneurs	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Grant Pilot	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Project Reflow	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beneficiaries		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Communities		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Civil Society		
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Based Organization	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Governmental Organization	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Academia	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Trade Unions and Workers Unions	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Type of Engagement		
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Dissemination	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultation	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participation	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communications		
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Awareness Raising	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Education	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Campaigns	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Behavior Change	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Capacity, Knowledge and Research			
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enabling Activities		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Capacity Development		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Knowledge Generation and Exchange		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Research		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Learning		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Theory of Change	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Adaptive Management	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Indicators to Measure Change	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Innovation		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Knowledge and Learning		
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Knowledge Management	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Innovation	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Capacity Development	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learning	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder Engagement Plan		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender Equality			
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender Mainstreaming		
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beneficiaries	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Women groups	

		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex-disaggregated indicators	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender-sensitive indicators	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender results areas		
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Access and control over natural resources	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participation and leadership	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Access to benefits and services	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Capacity development	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Awareness raising	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Knowledge generation	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focal Areas/Theme			
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Integrated Programs		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Commodity Supply Chains (19 Good Growth Partnership)	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Commodities Production
			<input type="checkbox"/> Deforestation-free Sourcing
			<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Screening Tools
			<input type="checkbox"/> High Conservation Value Forests
			<input type="checkbox"/> High Carbon Stocks Forests
			<input type="checkbox"/> Soybean Supply Chain
			<input type="checkbox"/> Oil Palm Supply Chain
			<input type="checkbox"/> Beef Supply Chain
			<input type="checkbox"/> Smallholder Farmers
			<input type="checkbox"/> Adaptive Management
		<input type="checkbox"/> Food Security in Sub-Sahara Africa	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Resilience (climate and shocks)
			<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Production Systems
			<input type="checkbox"/> Agroecosystems
			<input type="checkbox"/> Land and Soil Health
			<input type="checkbox"/> Diversified Farming
			<input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Land and Water Management
			<input type="checkbox"/> Smallholder Farming
			<input type="checkbox"/> Small and Medium Enterprises
			<input type="checkbox"/> Crop Genetic Diversity
			<input type="checkbox"/> Food Value Chains
			<input type="checkbox"/> Gender Dimensions
			<input type="checkbox"/> Multi-stakeholder Platforms
		<input type="checkbox"/> Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Food Systems
			<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Restoration
			<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Commodity Production
			<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehensive Land Use Planning
			<input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Landscapes
			<input type="checkbox"/> Food Value Chains
			<input type="checkbox"/> Deforestation-free Sourcing
			<input type="checkbox"/> Smallholder Farmers
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Cities	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Integrated urban planning
			<input type="checkbox"/> Urban sustainability framework
			<input type="checkbox"/> Transport and Mobility
			<input type="checkbox"/> Buildings
			<input type="checkbox"/> Municipal waste management
			<input type="checkbox"/> Green space
			<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Biodiversity
			<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Food Systems
			<input type="checkbox"/> Energy efficiency
			<input type="checkbox"/> Municipal Financing
			<input type="checkbox"/> Global Platform for Sustainable Cities
			<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Resilience
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity		
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Protected Areas and Landscapes	

			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Terrestrial Protected Areas
			<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal and Marine Protected Areas
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Productive Landscapes
			<input type="checkbox"/> Productive Seascapes
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community-Based Natural Resource Management
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mainstreaming	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Extractive Industries (oil, gas, mining)
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forestry (Including HCVF and REDD+)
			<input type="checkbox"/> Tourism
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture & agrobiodiversity
			<input type="checkbox"/> Fisheries
			<input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure
			<input type="checkbox"/> Certification (National Standards)
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Certification (International Standards)
		<input type="checkbox"/> Species	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Illegal Wildlife Trade
			<input type="checkbox"/> Threatened Species
			<input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife for Sustainable Development
			<input type="checkbox"/> Crop Wild Relatives
			<input type="checkbox"/> Plant Genetic Resources
			<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Genetic Resources
			<input type="checkbox"/> Livestock Wild Relatives
			<input type="checkbox"/> Invasive Alien Species (IAS)
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biomes	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Mangroves
			<input type="checkbox"/> Coral Reefs
			<input type="checkbox"/> Sea Grasses
			<input type="checkbox"/> Wetlands
			<input type="checkbox"/> Rivers
			<input type="checkbox"/> Lakes
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tropical Rain Forests
			<input type="checkbox"/> Tropical Dry Forests
			<input type="checkbox"/> Temperate Forests
			<input type="checkbox"/> Grasslands
			<input type="checkbox"/> Paramo
			<input type="checkbox"/> Desert
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Financial and Accounting	
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Payment for Ecosystem Services
			<input type="checkbox"/> Natural Capital Assessment and Accounting
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation Trust Funds
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation Finance
		<input type="checkbox"/> Supplementary Protocol to the CBD	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Biosafety
			<input type="checkbox"/> Access to Genetic Resources Benefit Sharing
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forests		
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forest and Landscape Restoration	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Forest	
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REDD/REDD+
			<input type="checkbox"/> Amazon
			<input type="checkbox"/> Congo
			<input type="checkbox"/> Drylands
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Degradation		
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Land Management	
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ecosystem Approach
			<input type="checkbox"/> Integrated and Cross-sectoral approach
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community-Based NRM
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Livelihoods
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Income Generating Activities

			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Agriculture
			<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Pasture Management
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Forest/Woodland Management
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques
			<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Fire Management
			<input type="checkbox"/> Drought Mitigation/Early Warning
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Degradation Neutrality	
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Productivity
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Cover and Land cover change
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carbon stocks above or below ground
		<input type="checkbox"/> Food Security	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International Waters		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Ship	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Freshwater	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Aquifer
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> River Basin
			<input type="checkbox"/> Lake Basin
		<input type="checkbox"/> Learning	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Fisheries	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Persistent toxic substances	
		<input type="checkbox"/> SIDS : Small Island Dev States	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Research	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Pollution	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Persistent toxic substances
			<input type="checkbox"/> Plastics
			<input type="checkbox"/> Nutrient pollution from all sectors except wastewater
			<input type="checkbox"/> Nutrient pollution from Wastewater
		<input type="checkbox"/> Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Plan preparation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Action Plan Implementation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Large Marine Ecosystems	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Aquaculture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Protected Area	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Biomes	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Mangrove
			<input type="checkbox"/> Coral Reefs
			<input type="checkbox"/> Seagrasses
			<input type="checkbox"/> Polar Ecosystems
			<input type="checkbox"/> Constructed Wetlands
	<input type="checkbox"/> Chemicals and Waste		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Mercury	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Artisanal and Scale Gold Mining	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Coal Fired Power Plants	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Coal Fired Industrial Boilers	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Cement	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Ferrous Metals Production	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Ozone	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Persistent Organic Pollutants	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Unintentional Persistent Organic Pollutants	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sound Management of chemicals and Waste	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Waste Management	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous Waste Management
			<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Waste
			<input type="checkbox"/> e-Waste
		<input type="checkbox"/> Emissions	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Disposal	

		<input type="checkbox"/> New Persistent Organic Pollutants	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Polychlorinated Biphenyls	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Plastics	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Eco-Efficiency	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Pesticides	
		<input type="checkbox"/> DDT - Vector Management	
		<input type="checkbox"/> DDT - Other	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Emissions	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Open Burning	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Best Available Technology / Best Environmental Practices	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Green Chemistry	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Change		
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Change Adaptation	
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Finance
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Least Developed Countries
			<input type="checkbox"/> Small Island Developing States
			<input type="checkbox"/> Disaster Risk Management
			<input type="checkbox"/> Sea-level rise
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Resilience
			<input type="checkbox"/> Climate information
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ecosystem-based Adaptation
			<input type="checkbox"/> Adaptation Tech Transfer
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National Adaptation Programme of Action
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National Adaptation Plan
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mainstreaming Adaptation
			<input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector
			<input type="checkbox"/> Innovation
			<input type="checkbox"/> Complementarity
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community-based Adaptation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Livelihoods
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Change Mitigation	
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture, Forestry, and other Land Use
			<input type="checkbox"/> Energy Efficiency
			<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Urban Systems and Transport
			<input type="checkbox"/> Technology Transfer
			<input type="checkbox"/> Renewable Energy
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Financing
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enabling Activities
		<input type="checkbox"/> Technology Transfer	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Poznan Strategic Programme on Technology Transfer
			<input type="checkbox"/> Climate Technology Centre & Network (CTCN)
			<input type="checkbox"/> Endogenous technology
			<input type="checkbox"/> Technology Needs Assessment
			<input type="checkbox"/> Adaptation Tech Transfer
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> United Nations Framework on Climate Change	
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nationally Determined Contribution
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paris Agreement
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Development Goals
		<input type="checkbox"/> Climate Finance (Rio Markers)	
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Change Mitigation 1
			<input type="checkbox"/> Climate Change Mitigation 2
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Change Adaptation 1
			<input type="checkbox"/> Climate Change Adaptation 2

ANNEX G: NGI RELEVANT ANNEXES

N/A

ANNEX H: CHILD PROJECT INFORMATION

Upload one PDF file with all child project concept notes here.

ANNEX I: OTHER

Draft M&E Framework

PDF File Attached separately.

LIST OF KEY REQUIREMENTS LEADING TO CEO ENDORSEMENT OF CHILD PROJECT SUBMISSIONS

During child project design/by endorsement:²⁰

- **Stakeholders:** provide list of stakeholders, roles in the project and means of engagement; specifically address civil society organizations, vulnerable groups and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) (as applicable) and their roles in the project
- **Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment:** carry out gender analysis and prepare gender action plan; include relevant gender aspects in Theory of change and gender-sensitive indicators in results framework (i.e. including the process to collect sex-disaggregated data and information on gender); include gender equality considerations/gender-responsive measures and actions in relevant activities in project components.
- **Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) related documents:** depending on types of ESS risks to be prepared (such as Environmental and Social Impact Assessment, Environmental and Social Management Framework/Plan, Indigenous Peoples Plan and Grievance Mechanism) and made public in country/location in relevant language/s (provide publication date and locations)
- **Private sector involvement mechanisms** (for non NGI projects: anticipated roles and type of PS; this will already be central to the project document for NGI projects)
- **Knowledge Management Plan** - develop “Knowledge Management Approach” for the project and how it will contribute to the project’s overall impact, including plans to learn from relevant previous and ongoing projects; proposed tools and methods for knowledge exchange and learning; knowledge outputs; strategic communication plan; and budget and timeline.
- **Results.** Inclusion of final Core Indicator targets, along with a comprehensive results framework with indicator name, units of measurement, and baseline and target data.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation.** Include a budget, along with an explanation of monitoring arrangements and deliverables.
- **Institutional arrangements** (incl. reporting arrangements and flow of funds) and cross-sector integration approaches, as relevant
- **Sustainability:** Post-project financing sustainability plan
- **Co-finance:** Confirm the amount and type of co-financing and the definition of investment mobilized
- **To be complemented by new GEF8 policies and requirements.**

²⁰ Note: This **a list to remind agencies of key requirements** to address during project **preparation** and include in the endorsement request. No text is, therefore, to be entered here.