



Long-Term Strategic Vision for CEPF investment in the Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot



CRITICAL | **ECOSYSTEM**
PARTNERSHIP FUND


BirdLife
INTERNATIONAL

December 2022

In the Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot, CEPF has entrusted BirdLife International to be the dedicated regional implementation team (RIT) to provide strategic leadership for the 2016-2022 CEPF investment in the hotspot. Within this framework, the Long-Term Strategic Vision for the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund investment in the Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot was developed under the supervision of the RIT. It was subsequently presented to the CEPF donors working group before submitting the final version to CEPF donors for final approval.

Suggested citation:	CEPF (2022). Long-Term Strategic Vision for the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund investment in the Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot. BirdLife International. December 2022. p88.
Compiler	Lucille Palazy, independent consultant.
Acknowledgements	Thanks to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the participants of the one-on-one consultations for their availability and for sharing their valuable experience.- all the grantees and other participants of the Final Assessment Workshop for their insight on the Long-Term Vision.- Mariana Carvalho, CEPF RIT Leader, Peggy Poncelet, CEPF Grant Director, Jan Kamstra, IUCN NL Nature Conservationist, and Jean-Baptiste Deffontaines, BirdLife International Deputy Regional Director for Africa, for their constructive feedback on the Long-Term Vision.- the other members of the Advisory Group for their guidance and suggestions throughout the design process.
Donors	The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, and the World Bank. A fundamental goal of CEPF is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation..

Front picture: forest encroachment with agriculture in the buffer zone of the Obô Natural Park in São Tomé – Bom Sucesso area © BirdLife International / Jean-Baptiste Deffontaines

Table of Contents

<i>Acronyms list</i>	5
<i>Summary of the Long-Term Vision</i>	7
1. Objective and principles of the Long-Term Vision	9
1.1 Objective of the Long-Term Vision	9
1.2 Main tasks and key principles	9
2. Brief description of the context	11
2.1 Environmental context for forests and biodiversity conservation in the hotspot....	11
2.2 Social, policy and economic context for biodiversity conservation in the hotspot...	15
2.3 Current status of the Civil Society in the hotspot’s countries	17
2.4 Current private sector engagement in forest and biodiversity conservation in the hotspot	20
2.5 Biodiversity, climate change, pandemics and integrated approaches	22
3. Lessons learned and recommendations	25
3.1 Capacity building interventions	25
3.2 Awareness raising and behavioural changes.....	26
3.3 Community involvement and livelihoods’ strengthening.....	27
3.4 Involvement of central and decentralised government authorities	29
3.5 CEPF’s niche	29
3.6 Collaborating with other key sectors linked to sustainable forest management.....	32
3.7 Private sector engagement.....	33
3.8 Regional collaboration.....	33
4. The Long-Term Vision	34
4.1 Transition conditions, criteria and targets for the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot	34
4.2 Theory of Change	58
4.3 M&E plan	63
4.4 Budget	72
4.5 CEPF’s implementation structure in the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot	77
4.6 Risk analysis	80
<i>Next steps</i>	82
<i>Conclusion</i>	83
<i>Appendices</i>	84
Appendix A. Recently launched and upcoming investments for conservation in the hotspot	84
Appendix B. Methodology for the development of the Long-Term Vision	85
1. Summary of the main steps of the design process for the Long-Term Vision and timeline.....	86

2. Inception meetings, strategic support and literature review 86
3. Stakeholder consultations..... 87

Acronyms list

Acronym	Meaning
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
BIOPAMA	Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme
BirdLife	BirdLife International
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resources Management
CEPF	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
CI	Conservation International
COMIFAC	Commission des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale
CREMA	Community Resource Management Area
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSTT	Civil Society Tracking Tool
ECONOBIO	Économie au Service de la Biodiversité
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EFA	Environmental Foundation Africa
EU	European Union
FFEM	Fond Français pour l'Environnement Mondial
FFI	Fauna and Flora International
GBF	Global Biodiversity Framework
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEF SGP	GEF Small Grants Programme
GFWA	Guinean Forests of West Africa
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
IDH trade	The Sustainable Trade initiative
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
IUCN NL	IUCN National Committee of the Netherlands
IUCN SOS	IUCN Save Our Species
KBA	Key Biodiversity Area
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCAA	National Capital Accounting Assessment
OECMs	Other effective area-based conservation measures
PA	Protected Area (government-based or community-based)
PAPFOR	Support programme for the preservation of forest ecosystems in West Africa
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
PPI	Programme de Petites Initiatives
RIT	Regional Implementation Team

RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMART indicator	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound indicator
TBA	Tropical Biology Association
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP-WCMC	United Nations Environment Programme - World Conservation Monitoring Centre
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USFWA	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Authority
WA BiCC	West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change
WABiLED	West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development
WACSI	West Africa Civil Society Institute
WCF	Wild Chimpanzee Foundation
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society

Summary of the Long-Term Vision

1. The Guinean Forests of West Africa (GFWA) Biodiversity Hotspot stretches across 621,705 km² from the southern part of West Africa to Central Africa north of the Congo basin. It spreads over 11 countries: Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, São Tomé and Príncipe, and the islands of Equatorial Guinea. The hotspot contains three main forest types which belong to the tropical and subtropical moist broadleaf forests group: lowland forests; mangrove and swamp forests; and submontane to montane forests. This region has remarkable levels of diversity and endemism of plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and insects.
2. The main causes of degradation and loss of forests and their biodiversity across the hotspot are legal and illegal logging, expansion of plantations, legal and illegal mining and related infrastructure, urbanisation, increased need for wood energy, bushmeat hunting, wildlife trafficking, slash-and-burn agriculture and large-scale agro-industrial crop development. Major drivers of these detrimental activities are a steep population growth, increased incidence of poverty and food insecurity, and changing climate conditions characterised by increased temperatures and changes in rainfall patterns with more intense rainfall events and more severe droughts.
3. Between 2001 and 2022, CEPF donors have invested USD18.4 million in the form of small or large grants to support civil society organizations (CSOs) in conserving forests and biodiversity in the GFWA hotspot. This support is not intended to be permanent. Its aim is for CSOs to progressively gain independence to be able to access other resources and respond to future conservation challenges. Five graduation conditions have been previously defined by CEPF: i) conservation priorities and best practices for their management are identified, documented, disseminated and integrated into national strategies across the hotspot; ii) local civil society groups dedicated to conservation priorities collectively possess sufficient organisational and technical capacity to be effective advocates for, and agents of, conservation and sustainable development, and to be able to influence decision making; iii) adequate and continual financial resources are available to address conservation of global priorities; iv) institutional framework, public policies and their enforcement, and private sector business practices are supportive of biodiversity conservation; and v) monitoring systems are in place to measure impacts and support an adaptive approach.
4. The objective of the Long-Term Vision is to define the duration and types of investments needed to reach a point at which CEPF and its partners¹ can start to withdraw their support to CSOs. A brief analysis of the current situation in each country was undertaken, remaining priority needs were identified and a set of quantitative targets with a timeline were defined under each graduation condition to guide upcoming investments in the hotspot. To achieve this, a review of the literature was undertaken, 38 one-on-one interviews were organised with stakeholders, and CEPF's grantees were consulted through Hatch collaborative online platform and during CEPF's Final Assessment workshop.
5. Some of the key elements that came out from previous experiences and shall guide future investments are: i) peer-to-peer learning is a powerful capacity building approach that should be maximized; ii) CSOs must be encouraged to join forces rather than compete for funding; iii) to provide adequate support to CSOs a deeper understanding of the local context is needed; iv) grassroots organisations require tailor-made and medium- to long-term support which

¹ "CEPF partners" in the report refers to the donors and international organizations investing in or working for conservation in the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot.

requires the synchronisation of different funding sources; v) behavioural changes are required, so the use of creative media is an efficient approach and the collaboration with the media must be significantly strengthened; vi) conservation interventions cannot be successful and/or sustainable without communities' ownership, and securing access rights to natural resources, therefore empowering communities must be at the core of all investments; vii) the support of government authorities is crucial to the success, maintenance and upscaling of conservation interventions, strong relationships must therefore be built with relevant authorities at the onset of all investments; viii) strong collaboration of conservation-focused organisations with health, education and food security organisations must be established for conservation investments to be systematically paralleled with investments for increased access to family planning and education particularly for women and youth; ix) the private sector must be further engaged in conservation through adopting and supporting more sustainable practices, and through contributing financially to conservation; x) hotspot-level collaboration between governments must be established to enable a regional harmonized approach to achieve substantial conservation results; and xi) multiple knowledge gaps on best conservation practices and their impact still remain, the establishment of long term and rigorous monitoring systems is urgently needed.

6. Important gaps have been identified among existing funding sources for conservation: inadequate structures to support small grassroots organisations, insufficient funding available for science-based evidence-generation projects to inform the prioritization and design of conservation investments as well as on the long-term impacts of the investments, insufficient knowledge sharing and collaboration between stakeholders in the hotspot which prevents adequate complementarity. These are key gaps that should guide CEPF's investment niche.
7. Civil society groups in each country have significantly grown during the last two decades. Tremendous progress was made regarding increasing capacity of CSOs and government institutions, improving policies, raising public and communities' awareness, establishing and managing Protected Areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), and supporting the adoption of nature-based sustainable livelihoods as examples. However, knowledge gaps, capacity strengthening needs, weaknesses in the policy and institutional frameworks, non-capitalised public and private financial opportunities for conservation, among others, still remain. These impede CSOs' ability to influence decision making and behaviours towards the mainstreaming of forests and biodiversity conservation efforts in their respective countries.
8. Despite the end of the third CEPF's funding phase in the hotspot, CEPF partners' investments are continuing and are already contributing towards achieving the Long-Term Vision's targets. The Long-Term Vision provides a tool to enable conservation actors to move away from isolated project-based approaches towards a programmatic, integrated, landscape-based approach to the conservation of forests and their biodiversity across the hotspot. The collaborative process established to design the Long-Term Vision should be maintained. Adequate systems should be established as soon as possible in order to monitor the progress towards achieving the Long-Term Vision's targets and end of goal whereby Guinean Forests landscapes will be well connected and sustainably managed, and support biodiversity conservation, communities' livelihoods and resilience to climate change.

1. Objective and principles of the Long-Term Vision

1.1 Objective of the Long-Term Vision

9. The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) provides grants to civil society – non-governmental, private sector and academic organisations – to conserve biodiversity. Small grants – as defined for the Guinean Forests of West Africa (GFWA) Biodiversity Hotspot² – are those for funding amounts up to USD50,000. Large grants are those for funding amounts above USD50,000. The maximum duration of each grant is in theory five years. In practice, small grants are usually 1-2 years in length, and large grants usually 1-3 years in length. Funding is focused on the hotspot at species, sites and corridors³ scales, and support initiatives aligned to the priorities identified in the [Ecosystem Profile](#) and that support achievement of Aichi targets and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
10. CEPF has provided support in the hotspot during two main phases: 2016 - 2022 with US\$10.1 million (for the entire GFWA hotspot) and 2001 – 2012 with US\$8.3 million (for Upper Guinean Forests only). CEPF donors are the French Development Agency (AFD), Conservation International (CI), the European Union (EU), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Government of Japan, and the World Bank. Between 2016 and 2022, 79 projects were funded including 30 large grants and 49 small grants. Multiple other donors supported forest and biodiversity conservation in the region as well as the strengthening of civil society organisations (CSOs) capacities, including *inter alia*: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (through IUCN National Committee of the Netherlands – IUCN NL), MAVA Fondation pour la Nature (MAVA), and Fond Français pour l'Environnement Mondial (FFEM) as examples.
11. CEPF is not intended to be a permanent presence in each hotspot, but rather works toward progressive independence of CSOs⁴, which shall reach sufficient capacity, access to resources, and credibility to respond to future conservation challenges. The objective of the Long-Term Vision is to define the duration and types of investments needed to reach a point at which CEPF and its partners⁵ can start to withdraw their support to CSOs. To achieve this objective, a **common and harmonious approach among partners** – whereby complementarity and synergies are maximized – must be implemented for greater impact. The Long-Term Vision aims to guide future investments of CEPF and its partners working on biodiversity conservation in the hotspot.

1.2 Main tasks and key principles

12. The design of the Long-Term Vision for the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot consisted of:
 - Taking stock of the **current situation pertaining to forests and biodiversity conservation** in the 11 countries;

² <https://www.cepf.net/our-work/biodiversity-hotspots/hotspots-defined>

³The nine “corridors” defined in the Ecosystem Profile are of different types: i) hydrological units; ii) pre-existing corridors; iii) cluster of connected KBAs; and iv) cluster of spatially proximate areas. Hence, they partially correspond to the “landscapes” as defined in the present report (i.e., hydrological units) but not fully. These nine “corridors” are therefore not mentioned thereafter in the document to avoid confusion, the term “landscapes” is preferred. The terms “biological corridors” are however used to refer to the areas that connect two or more KBAs or other priority conservation areas to enable the movement of species.

⁴ “CSOs” in this document refer to local/grassroot and national Civil Society Organisations in the hotspot’s countries. CSOs do not include international NGOs.

⁵ “CEPF partners” in the report refers to the donors and international organisations investing in or working for conservation in the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot.

- Identifying **ongoing and upcoming investments** from partners, and their future priorities/strategies;
 - Compiling **lessons learned and good practices** from previous investments; and
 - Identifying **next investment priorities and opportunities for complementarity**.
13. Based on this analysis, **graduation criteria, targets and timelines** were defined for the conservation-focused CSOs in the hotspot's countries to become less reliant on CEPF and partners' support. **Priority actions** were identified thereafter to guide CEPF and partners towards achieving these targets. The methodology to design the Long-Term Vision included the creation of an Advisory Group that met monthly, a review of the literature, one-on-one consultations with a diversity of actors, grantees' consultations online, the consolidation of the Long-Term Vision during the Final Assessment workshop of the CEPF investment phase 2016-2022, and the presentation of the document to the CEPF donors working group before submitting the final version to CEPF donors for final approval (please see Appendix B).
14. Some key principles for the design of the Long-Term Vision were set by the consultant in collaboration with the CEPF team and its partners at the beginning of the design process.
- Focusing on **CSOs and by extension on local communities**: Sustainability cannot be achieved without communities' ownership. It is crucial to support CSOs as they have the local knowledge and relationships with local communities, and they will often remain in the area beyond the funding period⁶. Furthermore, working with local CSOs will reduce the potential impact of travel restriction linked to pandemics or other crisis.
 - Adopting an **integrated landscape-level approach**: This approach aims to consider all the factors that have an influence (positive or negative) on Key Biodiversity Areas⁷ (KBAs) and their biodiversity. A hydrological basin or watershed is generally a good way to define a landscape (Figure 1). This holistic approach is necessary to achieve sustainable conservation results. It will enable to generate multiple benefits including conserving KBAs and their species, increasing KBAs connectivity thereby maximising species' capacity to expand and adapt, supporting sustainable and climate-resilient practices in other land-use categories to address threats on KBAs conservation, and increasing communities' resilience. Under this approach, the collaboration with other relevant sectors (e.g., health, education, agriculture) must be maximised.

⁶ TetraTech, 2021. USAID/West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change (WA BiCC), Final Report (2015-2021).

⁷ Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) are the most important places in the world for species and their habitats. Faced with a global environmental crisis we need to focus our collective efforts on conserving the places that matter most. The KBA Programme supports the identification, mapping, monitoring and conservation of KBAs to help safeguard the most critical sites for nature on our planet – from rainforests to reefs, mountains to marshes, deserts to grasslands and to the deepest parts of the oceans. <https://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/>

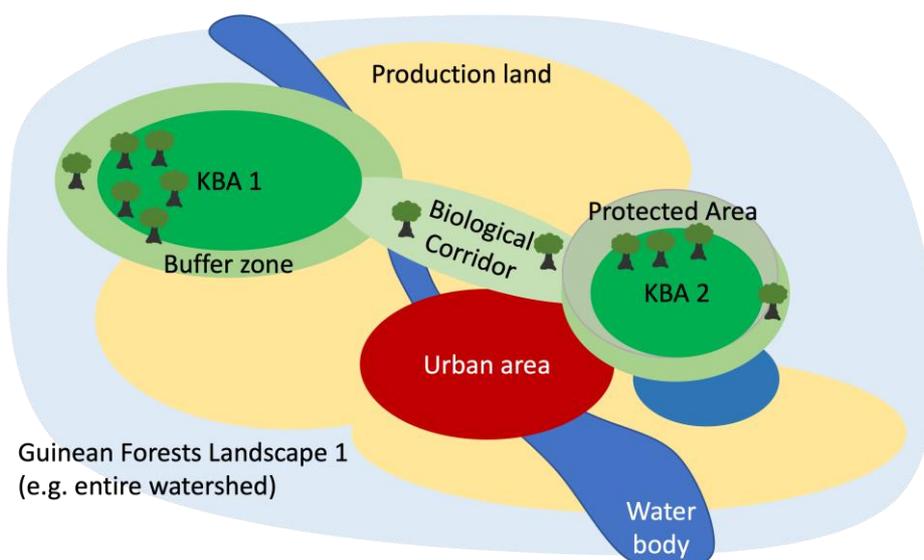


Figure 1: Landscape unit as defined in the Long-Term Vision. Note: Production land includes agricultural land, pastoral land and plantations exploited by communities or private sector.

2. Brief description of the context

15. The GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot stretches across 621,705 km² from the southern part of West Africa to Central Africa north of the Congo basin. It spreads from Guinea and Sierra Leone to the Sanaga River in Cameroon, and encompasses the countries of Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria, and the four islands of the Gulf of Guinea: Bioko and Annobon (Equatorial Guinea), and the independent nation of São Tomé and Príncipe⁸. The hotspot contains three main forest types which belong to the tropical and subtropical moist broadleaf forests group: lowland forests; mangrove and swamp forests; and submontane to montane forests. This region has remarkable levels of biodiversity and species endemism. Based on the Ecosystem Profile, the hotspot is home to 9,000 plants including 1,800 endemic species, 416 mammals (65 endemic), 917 birds (48 endemic), 107 reptiles (20 endemic), 269 amphibians (118 endemics) and 1,000 butterflies (1 endemic). As an example of species richness in the hotspot, it provides habitat to five Critically Endangered and 21 Endangered primate species, and is therefore a priority area for primate conservation.

2.1 Environmental context for forests and biodiversity conservation in the hotspot

Current KBAs' network in the hotspot

16. The GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot's countries have 144 forest KBAs which cover a surface of 148,556 km² in total⁹. The largest surface of forest KBAs is found in Cameroon (a large proportion of these KBAs are part of the Congo basin and not the Guinean Forests), followed by Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia (Table 1).

⁸ CEPF, 2015. Ecosystem Profile: Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot

⁹ <https://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/kba-data>. Consulted on 15 April 2022

Table 1: KBAs' repartition and assessment year for each hotspot's country (Source: <https://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/kba-data>)

Country	Number of KBAs	KBA area (km ²)	Year assessed	Percentage of KBAs included in Protected Areas & Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECM)*
Guinea	15	5,778	2001 (9) 2015 (5) 2018 (1)	73.8
Sierra Leone	9	4,909	2001 (1) 2005 (8)	70.9
Liberia	9	15,350	2015 (7) 2018 (2)	35.1
Côte d'Ivoire	14	23,319	2001 (1) 2015 (11) 2018 (2)	82.6
Ghana	30	15,257	2001 (3) 2005 (3) 2015 (22) 2018 (1) 2020 (1)	82.6
Togo	4	4,789	2001 (2) 2015 (2)	79.5
Benin	5	12,221	2001 (4) 2015 (1)	60.0
Nigeria	21	23,939	2001 (10) 2015 (11)	82.2
São Tomé and Príncipe	5	516	2001 (1) 2015 (2) 2018 (2)	86.3
Cameroon	28	38,475	2001 (12) 2015 (10) 2018 (6)	43.3
Equatorial Guinea	4	4,003	2001 (2) 2018 (2)	100
Total	144	148,556	2001 (45) – 31% 2005 (11) – 8 % 2015 (71) – 49% 2018 (16) – 11% 2020 (1) – 1%	

*Note: OECM's coverage is currently being assessed by the United Nations Environment Programme - World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), this percentage is therefore indicative and should not be used as such.

Threats to forests and biodiversity in the hotspot

17. Deforestation rates remain very high in the countries of the hotspot. In fact, they have increased in recent years, with a higher deforestation rate overall in Upper Guinean Forests than in Lower Guinean Forests¹⁰. According to the UNEP-WCMC report 2021, forest cover has decreased throughout the hotspot since 2000. The Upper Guinean Forests lost 14% of its forest cover since 2000 with an average loss of 0.4% per year from 2000 to 2014, and 1.6% per year since 2014. In the Lower Guinean Forests, an average of 0.1% of forest cover was lost annually from 2000 to 2014, and 0.4% annually since 2014.

¹⁰ UNEP-WCMC, 2021. Status and threats to the Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot: Endline assessment of management effectiveness, forest cover change and threats in the CEPF investment areas

18. The identified causes of deforestation and forest degradation vary from one publication to another. The feedback received during the consultations is well aligned with the threats identified in the Mainstreaming Strategy 2019 and in the Concept Note of the AFD's Forest Territories Facility Initiative. Overall, there are several common causes of deforestation, forest degradation and biodiversity loss between the countries of the hotspot. These include legal and illegal logging, expansion of plantations, legal and illegal mining and related infrastructure, urbanisation, bushmeat hunting, increased need for wood energy, slash-and-burn agriculture and large-scale agro-industrial crop development. Wildlife trafficking has also increased in the region in the past 10 years and is a growing threat to species conservation. Extractive (mining), energy (dams), agribusiness (plantations) and associated infrastructure (roads, rail, power-lines, ports, etc.) projects across the hotspot were said to be expanding exponentially and destroying and fragmenting vast areas of habitat. In particular, mining projects have significant primary and/or indirect impacts and also frequently result in large influxes of people, which can further increase hunting pressure and habitat destruction and fragmentation. These developments also have cumulative impacts whereby, the impacts resulting from the interaction of mining with other activities and industries, such as transport infrastructure, are larger than those of each sector taken independently. The West African mining industry has seen significant fundraising activity since 2020, driven by higher metal prices and a need to identify and mine metals to fulfil growing global demand¹¹. Paradoxically, demand is being driven by metals needed for the transition to carbon emissions reduction and lessening the impact of climate change, and the post Covid-19 recovery. This surge for metals follows a down cycle between 2012 and 2018 which led to metal reserves/resources not been replaced and low exploration. Africa hosts some of the largest known reserves and resources of some of the key metals. The West African region has been one of the fastest growing mining jurisdictions in the world, particularly for large proven gold deposits which stretch across the hotspot. This region, which includes new gold producing countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, saw the third largest inflow of exploration expenditure globally (behind Australia and Canada) in 2020 with over US\$470m invested into the ground. This has translated into a significant rush by mining groups into geographies which host these metals as global demand outstrips supply. There is no region where this is more pertinent than West Africa, which has seen a combination of ten-year highs in fund raisings for gold companies and an exploration boom which has gathered pace since 2020. Some differences have been identified between countries, for example the prevalence of mining is much higher in some hotspot countries than in others. Indeed, in Ghana, artisanal mining (often illegal) has a severe impact on forests. Bauxite mining in particular is a major threat to Atewa¹² and Tano-Offin Forest Reserves, both classified as priority KBAs. Another threat in Ghana is the expansion of rubber plantations which hasn't been mentioned in other countries. In Sierra Leone, mining for gold, diamonds, ore and iron as well as titanium in the South West is a massive threat to forests. In Guinea, the mining sector is growing and part of Mount Nimba National Park was recently unlisted to further expand mining. In Nigeria, oil exploration in the Niger Delta is a major cause of noise, air and water pollution which severely affects forest ecosystems such as mangroves and the species inhabiting them. It is a growing cause of degradation in other hotspots' countries as new oil fields are being discovered in West Africa's coastal seaboard¹³.¹⁴ These aforementioned causes of degradation are likely exacerbated by population growth, poverty and communities' reliance on natural resources, and climate change.

¹¹ [Exploration-Boom-In-West-Africa-Opportunity-or-Challenge.pdf](#)

¹² A court case is underway to prevent mining in Atewa Range Forest Reserve.

¹³ Adeola et al., 2021. Crude oil exploration in Africa: socio-economic implications, environmental impacts, and mitigation strategies. *Environment Systems and Decisions*, Vol 42, p26–50

¹⁴ <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/endless-oil-spills-blacken-ogonilands-prospects>

19. At the country level, Liberia, Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire have particularly high deforestation rates.

- In Liberia, the deforestation rate is particularly high with 10% per year. The South East of the country is much more forested than the rest of the country. Logging by private companies is a major issue. There is a lot of confrontation between logging companies and conservation organisations over forest land, particularly in the South East. The expansion of palm oil plantations on forest areas is another big issue in Liberia. The government is promoting the development of palm oil production, although the law of 2018 on land tenure – which has been strongly pushed by the CSO movement – has made it more difficult. Mining is also a big source of deforestation in Liberia. Some mining sites abandoned during the Ebola crisis are currently being reopened including in an important forest block in the Western region. Another big issue is slash-and-burn agricultural practices. There is no agroecology movement yet in Liberia. The Ministry of Agriculture does not yet focus on sustainable practices and as a result, chemical products remain widely used for crop production.
- In Nigeria, between 2000 to 2015, FAO estimated that forest areas have decreased from 13.1 million ha to less than 7.0 million ha. This corresponds to an annual average forest cover loss of 409,600 ha¹⁵. Wood fuels, timber extraction and agriculture are the main sources of deforestation in the country. The government owns forests and the Moratorium voted in 2008 has stopped the implementation of community-based system for sustainable forest exploitation. It has led to a significant increase in the deforestation rate.
- In Côte d'Ivoire, annual deforestation rate was 2.7% in 2017¹⁶. An important cause of deforestation is the expansion of cacao plantations which has led to the loss of 85% of forest cover in Côte d'Ivoire since 1960. The pledge to end deforestation for the expansion of cocoa plantations (i.e., Cocoa and Forests Initiative, 2017) seems to have had limited effects with reports that deforestation for cocoa production is continuing^{17,18}.

20. Development projects from government and private companies are a primary threat to forests and biodiversity in Cameroon and several other countries of the hotspot. According to Taken and Kohtem 2020, more than 1 million ha of Protected Areas (National Parks, Wildlife Reserves and Wildlife Sanctuaries) are overlapping with mining permits for exploitation, exploration and research which correspond to 44% of the total surface of Protected Areas. Another 0.5% of Protected Areas are under exploitation by agro-industries, and 0.5% are forest exploitations¹⁹.

Ongoing efforts for Protected Areas' creation

21. The governments in the hotspot countries are more or less prioritising the creation of terrestrial Protected Area. A combination of Protected Areas' creation and declassification is observed. The governments have been supportive of Protected Areas' creation in several countries (e.g., Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone). As an example, in Liberia, several international organisations are supporting the government towards achieving the national target to have 30% of remaining forests protected by 2025. 10% of remaining forests are

¹⁵ UNEP, 2017. Forestry and Macroeconomic Accounts of Nigeria: The Importance of Linking Ecosystem Services to Macroeconomics

¹⁶ République de Côte d'Ivoire, 2017. Stratégie Nationale REDD+ de la Côte d'Ivoire

¹⁷ Mighty Earth, 2022. Sweet nothings, How the Chocolate Industry has Failed to Honor Promises to End Deforestation for Cocoa in Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana

¹⁸ <https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/deforestation-flagged-in-west-africa-despite-chocolate-industry-promises/47365238>

¹⁹ Taken Mbi B. M. & Kohtem Lebga A., 2020, Protected Areas in Cameroon at the Mercy of the 2035 Emergent Project. Natural Resources Management and Biological Sciences, Chapter 14, p 386 Ebook - DOI: 10.5772/intechopen.92086. <https://www.intechopen.com/chapters/72286>

currently protected and have a management plan. Ongoing support of CI, Fauna and Flora International (FFI), Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF), the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), and USAID to local CSOs is expected to enable to reach 20 to 25% by 2025. In Guinea, WCF is working on the creation of a Protected Area in lower Guinea and the development of a national network of Protected Areas. On the other hand, part of the Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve in Guinea was declassified for mining development. The allocation of exploitation permits in Protected Areas is also observed in several countries (e.g., Cameroon, Ghana).

2.2 Social, policy and economic context for biodiversity conservation in the hotspot

Population growth

22. West Africa is home to 5% of the world's population. It is the fastest growing of any of the world's regions with an average annual growth rate of 2.75%. The current population is 5 times bigger than in 1950. The population is young with almost half of West Africans aged 15 or less. The population is expected to exceed one billion by 2059²⁰. Higher population densities are found in Nigeria. 61% of the total population of the hotspot's countries lives in Nigeria (Table 2).

Table 2: Population size, growth rate and density in each hotspot's country
(Source: <https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/> Accessed on 25 April 2022)

Hotspot's Country	Population size 2022	Growth rate (%)	Density (per km ²)
Guinea	13,795,271	2.82	56
Sierra Leone	8,275,317	2.10	115
Liberia	5,281,519	2.44	55
Côte d'Ivoire	27,612,371	2.57	87
Ghana	32,270,215	2.15	142
Togo	8,642,473	2.43	160
Benin	12,721,660	2.73	113
Nigeria	215,735,601	2.57	238
São Tomé and Príncipe	226,851	1.91	237
Cameroon	27,781,621	2.59	59
Equatorial Guinea	1,487,830	3.47	53
Total	353,830,729	2.53	120

23. Population growth in recent decades has been a major driver of deforestation in African countries^{21,22}. The projected population growth across the hotspot's countries will lead to increased pressure on natural ecosystems and resources to sustain livelihoods.

Economic situation

24. After experiencing a GDP growth of 3.4 percent in 2018 and 3.6 percent in 2019, West Africa's GDP contracted in 2020 because of COVID-19²³. Despite the limited spread of the virus and less restrictive lockdowns in the region, many West African countries have been hit hard by the pandemic. It has increased poverty and inequality by disproportionately affecting

²⁰<https://eros.usgs.gov/westafrica/population#:~:text=Not%20only%20has%20West%20Africa's,of%20up%20to%209%20percent> Consulted on 25 April 2022.

²¹ Oyetunji P.O. et al., 2020. The Effects of Population Growth on Deforestation in Nigeria: 1991 – 2016. J. Appl. Sci. Environ. Manage, Vol 24 (8), p1329-1334

²² Asongu S.A. & Jingwa B.A., 2012. Population growth and forest sustainability in Africa. Int. J. Green Economics, Vol 6 (2)

²³ ADB, 2021. West Africa Economic Outlook 2021

vulnerable groups including women, young people, and informal sector workers. In addition, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has triggered a global economic shock that is strongly impacting the region (e.g., surging oil and food prices).

25. Nigeria alone accounts for roughly two-thirds of West Africa's GDP. The second largest economy in West Africa is Ghana which was amongst the 10 fastest growing economies of Africa in 2019. The primary sector has been the key driver of growth with mining (i.e., bauxite, gold, diamond, aluminium and manganese) and agriculture (i.e., coconut, cocoa, cashew and coffee) being the main activities²⁴. Ghana is the largest producer of gold on the African continent. The country's growth is also strongly linked to the increase in hydrocarbon production. Côte d'Ivoire had a high growth rate in the last decade and has the third largest economy of the region. On the other hand, Liberia and Sierra Leone are among the smallest economies of the hotspot.

Poverty

26. Poverty is prevalent in the region and has been aggravated by COVID-19 pandemic. Based on a recent report from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), poverty has increased by 3% in 2021. Indeed, the proportion of people in the region living with less than \$1.90 a day increased from 2.3% in 2020 to 2.9% in 2021. Debt burdens have also increased. Global recession due to the pandemic has particularly affected the economy of 6 out of the 15 ECOWAS countries, including Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria. Benin and Côte d'Ivoire were less affected because of their low-resource economies, relatively more diversified economic structures and significant past public investment (e.g., in infrastructure development) as stated in the ECOWAS report. Food security has considerably deteriorated in the region because of a combination of factors including *inter alia* terrorism and violent extremism, climate change, the restrictions related to COVID-19 as well as the recent conflicts between Russia and Ukraine. Nigeria is home to half of the food insecure people of the ECOWAS region. Food consumption and nutrition within the hotspot's countries are particularly low in Sierra Leone and Liberia because of inflation, as well as in the Northern half of Nigeria because of conflicts²⁵.

Policy context

27. Each of the hotspot's countries have developed a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) between 2011 and 2016. These documents all highlight the biodiversity richness of their respective country but with little reference to its importance for people. They promote traditional conservation measures such as the creation of Protected Areas, the protection of species and habitat, and most of them also promote restoration interventions. They also emphasize the need to undertake research on the value of biodiversity, raise the awareness of decision makers on its importance, mainstream biodiversity conservation in policies and decision-making processes such as spatial planning, and support local communities in adopting sustainable management practices. The countries' NBSAP and international commitments create a conducive environment for biodiversity conservation in the hotspot. However, biodiversity mainstreaming into other sectors often more powerful than the environmental sector is not yet achieved and national development plans do not always reflect these commitments²⁶. As a result, the expected targets are generally not achieved within the defined timeframe.

²⁴ <https://perspectives-cblacp.eu/en/the-rising-west-african-economic-power/> Consulted on 28 May 2022

²⁵ World Food Programme & United Nation Economic Commission for Africa, 2021. Monitoring report on the impact of COVID-19 in West Africa

²⁶ CEPF & BirdLife International, 2019. Workshop report: Mainstreaming biodiversity in the Guinean Forests of West Africa Hotspot, Monrovia, Liberia

Civil insecurity

28. Several of the hotspot's countries have conflict zones where insecurity hinders the implementation of conservation measures. Nigeria and Cameroon are particularly high-risk countries²⁷. In Nigeria, there are several sources of conflicts (e.g., conflicts between community groups, regional divides, armed groups) that threatened stability and economic development. Violent extremism and terrorist activities including from Boko Haram terrorist group in Northern Nigeria have disrupted livelihoods and led to massive population displacements. Banditry is still causing insecurity in the North. Conflicts between community groups occur in the centre of the country and other sources of unrest exist in the Southeast because of a separatist movement. Civil unrest in these regions threaten the success and sustainability of conservation efforts. In Cameroon, the North-western part is classified as "conflict zone" because of the separatist movement of the English-speaking zones. Attacks from Boko Haram terrorist group in the far North of the country in the last decade have forced people displacement. CSOs work on the ground is therefore difficult because of safety. In addition, finding funding for insecure areas is complicated. Another prominent issue is that people displacement in conflict zones prevents the implementation of community-based conservation interventions. Terrorism also has a significant impact in Côte d'Ivoire and Benin according to the Global Terrorism Index 2021. In addition to these conflict zones, the outbreak of violent protests and conflicts is frequent across the hotspot's countries, which disrupts the functioning of CSOs.

2.3 Current status of the Civil Society in the hotspot's countries

29. A two-year mentoring programme funded by CEPF was implemented from January 2020 to March 2022 to support CSOs capacity strengthening in the hotspot. Three international organisations – namely the West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI), the Tropical Biology Association (TBA) and FFI where selected to provide training to CSOs in nine of the hotspot's countries (Benin and Equatorial Guinea where not part of the programme). These international organisations worked with national mentors to accompany CSOs after the training sessions. In total, 67 CSOs (or mentees) benefitted from the programme. Based on an analysis funded by CEPF undertaken in March 2022 with 84 CSOs – including those who benefitted from the mentoring programme – the main weaknesses of the surveyed CSOs are their human resources (particularly staff retention and staff experience) and their financial capacity (especially diversifying their sources of income and achieving financial sustainability)²⁸. Organisational profile and strategic planning are also common weaknesses of most of the respondents. An overview of the situation of the civil society in each hotspot's country is provided below.

Guinea:

30. Guinea has very few local CSOs. International organisations and the government tend to always work with the same CSO which has mid-level capacity. The strengthening of CSOs and research institutions remains a priority in the country. Many CSOs are still functioning on a voluntary basis and work discontinuously. As a result, these organisations are not well structured. CSOs need support with organising themselves into networks and to identify conservation leaders. Access to financial resources was identified as a major issue faced by CSOs in Guinea.

²⁷ <https://www.visionofhumanity.org/maps/global-terrorism-index/#/>

²⁸ Chiapero F., Lewis M., Mesnildrey N. and Lopez V. O., 2022. Developing spatial-analytical tools to visualise and orient capacity support to CSOs in West Africa to enhance its position for biodiversity conservation. MSc graduation report, Department of Geography, University of Cambridge

Sierra Leone:

31. CSOs' capacities have significantly improved in recent years in Sierra Leone. According to WACSI, a couple of national CSOs have efficiently mentored smaller CSOs as part of the mentoring programme. New CSOs led by the youth have emerged. However, there are still important capacity needs for CSOs – particularly to support young conservation leaders. CSOs are not yet structured into networks, and they currently do not have adequate capacity and resources to challenge the government or the private sector (e.g., on mining issues). Furthermore, the large majority of funding is allocated to development with big international organisations working in the country, but very limited funds go to conservation interventions. Funding availability is a major issue faced by CSOs. Some CSOs are starting to work on cross-sectoral projects with development CSOs (e.g., coastal restoration project in mangroves for food security).

Liberia:

32. According to FFI, several CSOs in Liberia have been good mentors under the mentoring programme. Other CSOs are well established and receive funding from different sources. Overall, CSOs capacity in the country remains limited and the level of education is low compared to other countries of the hotspot. The capacity of CSOs to influence government processes or private companies remains limited. CSOs are regularly consulted during policy and strategy development processes but further support is needed to enable them to influence decisions. The technical capacity of sectoral government organisations also requires strengthening to support the sustainable management of natural resources. A National Civil Society Council was established in Liberia in 2004 but it is not very effective.

Côte d'Ivoire:

33. Only few conservation-focused CSOs currently exist in Côte d'Ivoire but the CSOs' community is slowly developing. Indeed, the government is taking steps to support conservation. This is enabling some CSOs to get stronger and to gradually become more influential both regarding government processes and regarding the organisation of social movements with the public. There are a few good conservation leaders in the country. However, according to WACSI, lots of support is still needed to grow and strengthening the network of CSOs. Limited access to financial resources is also a major issue faced by CSOs in the country.

Ghana:

34. As previously mentioned, Ghana has a good governance system where CSOs can challenge the government on a diversity of matters including conservation. There are multiple strong CSOs with good capacity and few remaining training needs according to TBA. The CSOs involved in the mentoring programme showed more interest in receiving support for on-the-ground activities than for capacity building. However, the collaboration between CSOs is limited. There is no common strategizing discussion between CSOs. Collaboration is limited to when CSOs are appointed together to work on common projects. Some organisations already undertake a mentoring role with other smaller organisations (e.g., A Rocha Ghana). A national partnership of CSOs is currently being piloted by WACSI in the country and a National Coordination Group on KBAs was recently established with support from the RSPB.

Togo:

35. Very little knowledge is available on environmental CSOs in Togo. Several CSOs are specialised on the conservation of coastal and marine biodiversity. UNDP is currently supporting nine CSOs under the GEF Small Grant Programme (SGP) – OP7 (2020-2024) to implement projects for natural resource management and environmental protection. The current level of capacity of existing CSOs is unknown.

Benin:

36. Many CSOs are working locally for the development of nature-based livelihoods and conservation in Benin with support from bilateral and international organisations. Like in most hotspots' countries, a major challenge of CSOs in Benin is that they rely on external funding and have to halt most of their activities in between projects. There are however several leading, stable CSOs. Most of them are members of the National Platform of CSOs in the environment sector "ProEnvironnement" aimed to increase the influence of the civil society in decision-making processes. This platform was established in collaboration with the Ministry of the Living Environment and Sustainable Development, and has 12 member CSOs.

Nigeria:

37. There is a couple of CSOs in Nigeria who benefit from long-term funding with regular external donors. These CSOs also are strong conservation leaders and have some capacity to influence government decisions. According to TBA, these CSOs successfully fulfilled their mentoring role under the mentoring programme. Except for the couple of strong CSOs found in the country, other CSOs have limited visibility and require support to increase their organisational and financial capacity. Support is also needed to organise CSOs into strong networks. A National Network of CSOs was established in 1992 but it is not operating efficiently. However, a Coalition for Biodiversity Conservation – including experts and CSOs – was recently created to increase conservation experts' and CSOs' capacity to communicate on conservation issues and influence government decisions. A National Coordination Group on KBAs was also recently created with support from RSPB.

São Tomé and Príncipe:

38. There are multiple local CSOs but they are often politicised and/or their capacity is limited. Basic training is required for many of them (e.g., some of them have never written a funding proposal). Few CSOs are specialised in addressing conservation matters. There are however a couple of leading local CSOs who do need support but play an important role in supporting local conservation initiatives and communicating on conservation issues. According to FFI, these CSOs have successfully mentored smaller CSOs under the mentoring programme. There are also two active CSOs working in coastal area (e.g., for sea turtle conservation). A platform for sustainable tourism exists but is not yet stable.

Cameroon:

39. Cameroon only recently started to receive support for CSO strengthening within the mentoring programme. Based on the results of the mentoring programme in Cameroon whereby 15 organisations were supported, the civil society in Cameroon still requires lots of support. There is currently no CSOs' network, except for a group of CSOs working together for sea turtles' conservation and a local group of CSOs in the North West. CSOs are not organised enough to be able to confront big development projects. In addition, CSOs are often politicised and are therefore not independent enough. However, according to TBA, there are a few good mentoring CSOs in the country. In addition, a couple of leading CSOs are punctually consulted by the government for specific initiatives (e.g., tree planting campaigns, design of the REDD+ strategy).

Equatorial Guinea:

40. There is an important information gap on the civil society in Equatorial Guinea. There is an active research association that is a collaboration between a local and an international university that works primarily on the largest of the two islands that are part of the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot (i.e., Bioko). Recently, the government expressed interest in increasing funding for the protection (forest guards) of Protected Areas with an objective of ecotourism

development, which might be a good opportunity for conservation-focused CSOs to become more involved. Further investigation of the CSOs in Equatorial Guinea is necessary.

Note: TBA is currently piloting a CEPF-funded training programme in Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Sierra Leone and Liberia which targets women-led organisations in conservation. The proposed training focuses on leadership and supports the establishment of networks of women-led CSOs. Their programme is receiving lots of interest with a high number of demands from women-led organisations to benefit from this training programme. There is therefore a good potential to support women-led, conservation-focused CSOs in becoming conservation leaders in the hotspot's countries.

2.4 Current private sector engagement in forest and biodiversity conservation in the hotspot

41. Private sector funding (i.e., financial contributions from small, medium and large enterprises operating at the national, regional and international levels) for forest and biodiversity conservation is currently limited in the hotspot. However, the financial opportunity for conservation that exist within the private sector is increasingly recognized. As a result, multiple local initiatives are emerging to access financial resources from the private sector nationally (e.g., CSR, PES) and internationally (e.g., carbon trading). Similarly, as the activities of some companies operating in the hotspots' countries have been identified as significant sources of deforestation and forest degradation, efforts are being made in several countries to engage with these companies and support them in adopting more sustainable practices. Lastly, several initiatives are focusing on increasing engagement with private companies to promote the adoption of sustainable practices by the local producers they work with to strengthen and sustain value chains.

Carbon trading and biodiversity offsetting

42. Most of the hotspot's countries are showing interest in entering the carbon market. Their REDD+ programmes are at different development stages. For example, Nigeria finalised its REDD+ Strategy in 2021 and is currently developing the corresponding Action Plan. The REDD+ programme is integrated in the national budget for 2022 and several local initiatives are underway. There have been recent discussions on a Green bond but it is not yet established. In Côte d'Ivoire, a REDD+ strategy is available but so far there are few REDD+ investments ongoing in the country. Liberia REDD+ strategy is currently under finalisation. UNDP has been approached by the government to support a carbon market development project. Ghana's government is currently developing its national REDD+ programme. In Guinea, a REDD+ roadmap is available but no REDD+ strategy has been developed yet. The COMBO project, funded by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial (FFEM), with co-financing from other donors, including NORAD, is working on developing biodiversity offsetting schemes whereby the degradation caused by mining is compensated through the protection of biodiversity-rich areas.

43. BirdLife's REDD+ project in Gola Forest landscape supported by RSPB in collaboration with BirdLife partners in Sierra Leone and Liberia is the only established carbon credit system that was identified in the region. Carbon credits are currently being sold on the market, with RSPB supporting the selection of the buying companies. A service provider manages the benefits generated and shares them between the government and the communities. Shares are determined in a participatory manner as well as the community development activities to be financed with these funds (i.e., mostly social and health infrastructure in Gola Forest landscape). The establishment of this system required long-term support. It took 40 years in Gola Forest landscape. There is a long-term agreement between Sierra Leone and Liberia for

the protection of the transboundary peace park recently established. Strong government buy-in was identified as an important success factor for the establishment of the financing system in Gola Forest. Overall, there is a strong general interest towards entering the carbon market within the hotspot's countries. However, the availability of reliable information on good models including on their impacts, success factors and sustainability is still very limited.

CSR and PES

44. Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) or Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) schemes are still rare in the hotspot, but a few initiatives have been identified. In São Tomé and Príncipe, a first PES system was established with support from BirdLife International with a drinking water company which provides financial support to fund ecoguards. A coconut milk company is supporting the production of charcoal from coconut wastes to be used as fertilizers and pesticides. This company is also working on a certification system for organic coconut milk value chains. In Nigeria, the government has established CSR initiatives with banks and some private companies to support reforestation (e.g., 10 million USD for large scale reforestation from a cement production company). The Ministry of Environment collaborates with the private sector to try address funding gaps, through getting the private sector to support CSOs for example. In Benin, private sector involvement in conservation is also increasing. A private sector platform for CSR was recently established and some big companies are supporting conservation interventions. Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) are now mandatory and CSR guidelines have been adopted. There are currently no PES systems in Liberia, but it is under discussion. According to the Forest Law, 10% of logging revenue should go into a trust fund for conservation but it has not yet materialised. CI is currently supporting the establishment of a Conservation Fund which aims to cover the management costs of all Protected Areas that have been gazetted. Similarly, the AFD is currently supporting the establishment of a Trust Fund for Protected Areas' management in Côte d'Ivoire. To conclude, financial contributions towards conservation from private sector companies operating within the hotspot's countries is currently very limited.

Sustainable value chains development

45. The development of sustainable value chains is another important avenue of work with private sector companies to address sources of degradation and provide financial support for the preservation of forests and biodiversity. Some of the initiatives the partners consulted during the Long-Term Vision design process for value chain strengthening are mentioned here. In Ghana, Noé is supporting the development of sustainable value chains (e.g., shea, coconut oil, cacao, honey and wax) for the long-term management of Community Resource Management Area (CREMAs). This includes *inter alia* the development of agreements between local producers and private companies (e.g., Small and Medium Enterprises) to produce organically certified products. RSPB is also working in Ghana on the integration of the agroforestry approach in the cacao value chain. In Côte d'Ivoire, WCF is working on the development of community-based ecotourism in Taï National Park including the development of value chains for the production of aesthetic products by women (i.e., cacao and makoré). GIZ is also supporting the development of the sustainable cacao and makoré value chains. WCF is also working on ecotourism development in Liberia (e.g., in SAPO National Park). The Sustainable Trade initiative (IDH trade) recently started working on the cocoa value chain in Northwest Liberia to support the adoption of improved production practices and certification systems. These pilot initiatives will hopefully generate evidence-based information on their impact in the short to long term to enable the replication and upscaling of good models across the hotspot. The upscaling of certification systems would support countries from the Northern

Hemisphere in addressing imported deforestation issues²⁹ linked to the aforementioned value chains (i.e., palm oil, cacao and coconut products among others).

Improving business practices:

46. There are ongoing efforts in the hotspot to support private companies that depend on ecosystem services and biodiversity, through awareness raising and support to adopt improved practices. In Ghana, a private sector platform named BESNet focused on value chains was established five years ago by A Rocha Ghana with support from IUCN NL. It has currently 24 participating companies. It was initially established for the Atewa's landscape but it gained interest and it is now broader. It aims to support companies in adopting sustainable practices. A "Green Corporate Award" system was established for companies with green and sustainable value chains. Four awards have been attributed so far and the number of applicants is increasing every year. The platform also provides support to companies in accessing green funding sources. Furthermore, IUCN works in Ghana and Cameroon with the private sector to improve practices in three sectors: agribusiness (with a focus on non-timber forest products), extractive industry (with a focus on large-scale mining) and infrastructure (with a focus on road infrastructure). In São Tomé and Príncipe, a large agricultural company is investing c. 1 million Euros to improve the sustainability of its plantations. Several projects are underway in the country to improve coconut, cacao and vanilla value chains and access certifications with support from BirdLife International. In Guinea, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) is supporting the creation of an association of bauxite mining companies to initiate dialogue on their practices. Increased networking between conservation organisations and businesses are an important first step towards achieving the objective of reducing the negative impacts of some private companies on forest and biodiversity conservation, and supporting sustainable businesses, that will require continuous efforts and resources in the upcoming period.

2.5 Biodiversity, climate change, pandemics and integrated approaches

Current climate change trends and future scenarios

47. According to IPCC 6 report, West Africa has already experienced widespread losses and damages attributable to human-induced climate change. West Africa's average annual and seasonal surface temperatures have increased by 1–3°C since the mid-1970s. Between 1961–2014, the frequency of very hot days (over 35°C) increased by 1–9 days per decade and tropical nights (minimum temperature above 20°C) by 4–13 nights per decade. Cold nights have become less frequent. Annual rainfall has increased since the mid-1990s but rainfall changes have been characterized by fewer and more intense rainfall events, increased frequency of extreme rainfall events, river flooding, as well as increased frequency of meteorological, agricultural and hydrological droughts (including multi-year droughts). A research³⁰ published in January 2022 shows that deforestation in West Africa has made storms more frequent and thus increased the risk of disastrous flash flooding, in particular in the region's coastal cities. When deforestation occurs within a few tens of kilometres of the coast, rainfall is strongly affected by the sea breeze. The sea breeze circulation results from the contrast between the cool ocean and warm land, and since deforestation means warmer land, that temperature difference is enhanced, which intensifies sea breeze storms. Coastal areas that have experienced substantial deforestation saw afternoon storms happen twice as often compared with 30 years ago, while regions with more stable land cover saw 30-40% increases. The sharp increase in storminess around coastal deforestation areas coincides with

²⁹ Pendrill F. et al., 2019. Agricultural and forestry trade drives large share of tropical deforestation emissions. *Global Environmental Change*, Vol 56, p1-10

³⁰ [Deforestation is causing more storms in west Africa, finds 30-year satellite study](#)

many of the region's cities, for example, Freetown and Monrovia, the capitals of Sierra Leone and Liberia, respectively. Freetown experienced a devastating flash flood in 2017 triggering mudslides and the loss of more than 1,000 lives, further highlighting the environmental drivers³¹. The observed effects of these climatic changes in West Africa include: negative impacts on human health particularly for the poorest and most vulnerable people (i.e., infectious disease, cardiovascular and respiratory disease, malaria), expansion of woody vegetation over grasslands and shrubland which has a negative impact on biodiversity, sea level rise and coastal erosion, increased frequency of wildfires, degradation of freshwater ecosystems, reduced crop, pastoral and fisheries productivity, reduced economic growth rate and economic losses, reduced water availability, and increased risk of conflicts among other impacts³². As examples, sea level has risen by 0.25 cm per year in Benin and Togo, and by 0.32 cm per year in Côte d'Ivoire between 1992 and 2017³³.

48. Regarding future predictions, warming in West Africa under the 1.5, 2 or 3°C scenario is expected to be higher than global average. The frequency of lethal heat days will increase. Rainfall is expected to decrease in the West and increase in the East (with Medium Confidence). Extreme rainfalls and flooding will be more frequent. Under the 2°C scenario, West Africa will experience drier, more drought-prone and arid climate particularly during the last decades of the 21st century. The amplitude of the effects of these changes varies according to the emissions and global warming scenario. The aforementioned observed effects of climate change are all expected to worsen under the future climate scenario. According to a recent study undertaken in five coastal countries including Côte d'Ivoire, Togo and Benin, sea level will rise by 0.1 meter by 2030, 0.3 meter by 2050 and 1.0 meter by 2100 on average in these three countries³⁴. Sea level rise is expected to have a severe impact on low-lying coastal towns and cities in the region. Each country of the hotspot has a significant surface of low elevation zones and will therefore be highly impacted by sea level rise³⁵. The cities of Lagos, Porto Novo and Cotonou are particularly at risk of permanent flooding by 2050 and 2100³⁶. The lagoons of Mono and Kouffo in Benin, the area between Abidjan and border with Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, coastal neighbourhoods of Lomé in Togo are also particularly at risk of flooding³⁷. In addition to flooding, sea level rise and storm surges will lead to coastal erosion issues. The islands of São Tomé and Príncipe, as well as Bioko and Annobon from Equatorial Guinea, are certainly in the forefront of the countries most threatened by sea level rise, due to the insularity.

49. The IPCC report for Central Africa shows that the climate changes observed in the Western part of Central Africa – which includes two countries of the hotspot, namely Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea – are very similar to West Africa. These two countries have likely experienced a slightly milder temperature increase (temperature increased by 0.75°C to 1.2°C

³¹ [Sierra Leone's Mudslide: Addressing Environmental Factors](#)

³² Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) Programme and African Climate & Development Initiative (ACDI), 2022. The IPCC's sixth assessment report: Impacts, adaptation options and investment areas for a climate-resilient West Africa

³³ WACA, 2020. Effects of Climate Change on Coastal Erosion and Flooding in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Senegal, and Togo

³⁴ WACA, 2020. Effects of Climate Change on Coastal Erosion and Flooding in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Senegal, and Togo

³⁵ USAID, 2020. Mapping West Africa's Low Elevation Coastal Zones, WA BiCC programme

³⁶ Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) Programme and African Climate & Development Initiative (ACDI), 2022. The IPCC's sixth assessment report: Impacts, adaptation options and investment areas for a climate-resilient West Africa

³⁷ WACA, 2020. Effects of Climate Change on Coastal Erosion and Flooding in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Senegal, and Togo

since 1960 at the regional level in Central Africa compared to the aforementioned 1°C to 3°C in West Africa). Observed changes and predictions in rainfall and extreme rainfall could not be assessed with confidence for Central Africa because of the low availability of station data³⁸. The observed effects of climate changes are similar in West Africa and in the Western part of Central Africa according to the report. Overall, the future predictions for West Africa should generally apply to Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea as well.

50. The effect of future climate prediction on biodiversity in Africa – in particular plant, insect and vertebrate species – will be at high risk of local population collapse. At 2°C global warming, 36% of African freshwater fish species are vulnerable to local population collapses, and 7–18% of African land-based species assessed are at risk of extinction. Climate change is also projected to change patterns of invasive species spread. Biomes are also expected to shift with severe consequences on species and livelihoods.

Potential to adapt

51. According to an analysis undertaken in 2019 in 15 West African countries³⁹, using selected indicators for adaptive capacity, exposure and sensitivity, Liberia was identified as the most vulnerable to climate change followed by Guinea, Sierra Leone and Benin while Ghana appeared as the least vulnerable to climate change. When looking exclusively at the adaptive capacity score, Liberia has the lowest adaptive capacity score followed by Guinea, Sierra Leone and Benin, while Ghana has the highest adaptive capacity score followed by Togo, Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire⁴⁰. The security and public health challenges in Liberia in the last three decades, including the civil war and the Ebola crisis, have had severe effects on the countries capacity to adapt to external shocks. However, when looking exclusively at the exposure to climate change, this study highlighted that in Liberia, Guinea, and Ghana have a lower exposure because of year-round rainfall and a dense forest cover.

52. Proposed avenues to adapt to climate change in the region based on the IPCC reports include *inter alia*:

- Ecosystem-based adaptation solutions whereby biodiversity and ecosystem services are used to assist people to adapt to climate change⁴¹;
- Climate-resilient agricultural practices (e.g., agroforestry systems, soil and water conservation practices, crop diversification, drought-resilient crops);
- Landscape-level, transboundary and cross-sectoral approaches for natural resources management (e.g., water); and
- Use of existing local and indigenous knowledge to cope with climate variability.

Post-covid situation and conservation financing:

53. The pandemic has had a significant negative impact on the availability of financing for Protected Areas management. It has led to several interruptions of tourism activities because of travelling restrictions (or health risks for great apes such as Chimps in Tacugama Chimp Sanctuary – Sierra Leone) and highlighted the need to develop national tourism. Philanthropic

³⁸ Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) Programme and African Climate & Development Initiative (ACDI), 2022. The IPCC's sixth assessment report: Impacts, adaptation options and investment areas for a climate-resilient Central Africa

³⁹ This study did not include Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea and São Tomé and Príncipe in their analysis.

⁴⁰ Ayodotun, B., Bamba, S. and Adio, A., 2019. Vulnerability Assessment of West African Countries to Climate Change and Variability. Journal of Geoscience and Environment Protection, Vol 7, p13-15. DOI: 10.4236/gep.2019.76002

⁴¹ Interestingly, populations at risk from storm surge and/or sea level rise coincide with areas of high coastal ecosystem-based adaptation potential on the coastlines of the Gulf of Guinea, Gambia, Guinea Bissau and Sierra Leone (IPCC Report).

funding has also reduced (e.g., Gashaka Gumti National Park in Nigeria). The lock downs and health measures have restricted the operation of conservation agencies. The pandemic has also severely affected livelihoods. Increased poverty is expected to have fuelled increased pressure on natural resources⁴². The pandemic has also highlighted the linkages between human health and wildlife trafficking which could increase the allocation of funds from the health sector towards conservation and increase awareness amongst stakeholders (governments, hunters, consumers, population in general) to enforce legislation to protect species.

Integrated approaches:

54. Biodiversity conservation, sustainable development and climate change adaptation are indissociable and must be addressed together across investments. Climate change predictions should be systematically considered when designing projects to maximise the contribution of the investments to climate change adaptation. Opportunities to strengthen the integration of biodiversity and ecosystem conservation with the development of climate-resilient livelihoods should be systematically identified to multiply the benefits generated and the likelihood of their success and sustainability. **Social matters such as poverty, literacy, education and birth control have a major impact on the likelihood of success and sustainability of conservation initiatives, and must therefore be addressed in parallel of conservation investments.** Opportunities to strengthen local economy to reduce the reliance on international markets thereby increasing resilience to any future pandemic should be maximised across nature-based investments.

3. Lessons learned and recommendations

3.1 Capacity building interventions

Mentoring approach:

55. The efficiency of the **mentoring approach**, whereby a strong CSO provides training and medium-term support to weaker or emerging organisations was suggested in the Ecosystem Profile and confirmed during the Long-Term Vision's consultations. One of the three organisations supported by CEPF to implement the mentoring approach in the hotspot, TBA, organized at least six sessions between the mentor and its mentees throughout the mentoring programme. The feeling of being part of a group was reported as greatly valuable. In addition, it enables the mentees to receive support over a longer time period to accompany them in applying the new tools and practices after the training sessions. In alignment with this approach, **peer-to-peer learning** appears as the most efficient experience sharing method, and the opportunity for grantees to discuss projects, practices, successes and lessons learned should be maximized (e.g., each grant could systematically include exchange visits as a condition to be validated). Mentoring systems should be established at the beginning of an investment phase to maximise CSOs' capacity to access grants and successfully implement projects. Peer-to-peer learning could also start from the very beginning through encouraging previous grantees in supporting potential new grantees in going through the application process.

In-person training at least for the first training phase:

56. Under the IUCN project on freshwater KBAs, supported by CEPF, KBA training and validation workshops, where an in-person facilitator was present, were more productive than workshops where the facilitator was joining online. FFI and TBA also highlighted the necessity

⁴² Lindsey, P., Allan, J., Brehony, P. et al., 2020. Conserving Africa's wildlife and wildlands through the COVID-19 crisis and beyond. *Nat Ecol Evol*, Vol 4, p1300–1310. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41559-020-1275-6>

to organize the **first training phase in person** to create a solid relationship with the mentees. This is particularly important with CSOs who have low capacity. Getting the trainees/mentees and trainers/mentors together in the same place for one week enables the creation of strong bonds which are key to the success of the capacity strengthening interventions. The training sessions can be online thereafter if necessary, however – if possible – face-to-face training does seem to be more fruitful.

Increased understanding of the context to inform capacity building:

57. Training should start with a visit to the CSO to **analyse and understand the context within which it is operating** and provide adapted support. The Civil Society Tracking Tool⁴³ (CSTT) does not provide sufficient information on the context. This could be part of the role of the members of CEPF's implementation structure (Proposal Design and Baseline Assessments Experts as proposed under Section 4.5). This analysis should be undertaken at the beginning of the funding period for each country and/or during the reviewing phase of the proposal for each new grantee.

Training based on demand for more ownership:

58. The selection criteria for the trainees within CSOs should be defined. It should not be by nomination, as **the interest must come from within**. Similarly for mentorship, interested CSOs should apply to participate to the programme.

Capacity building coupled with technical grants:

59. It is necessary to **couple organisational strengthening with receiving a small grant** in a more systematic manner, in order to enable learning-by-doing training as well (e.g., 6 out of 17 of WACSI mentees received a small grant).

Group proposals:

60. CSOs in the hotspot are often competing for funding. For increased conservation impact, CSOs should be encouraged to **move away from competition and to consider a more collaborative approach**. This would have to be done gradually. It would be supported by increased networking between CSOs for peer-to-peer learning and collaboration at the national level (see Section 4.1). Wherever feasible, some Calls for Proposals could be specifically for a group of CSOs, within one country or between countries (e.g., for transboundary landscapes). It would require that adequate support is provided to the interested CSOs in designing their proposal. Peer-to-peer learning could be supported in this case too with previous grantees supporting new grantees in going through the application process as part of joint proposal.

Measuring impact of capacity building interventions:

61. Considering that the benefits of training courses might not arise immediately and that implementing changes might require some time, it would be necessary to capture impact beyond the end of the training. In general, impact is measured at the beginning and end of the training. This is likely not sufficient to measure tangible impacts from the training on the functioning and efficiency of the mentees. **Measuring impact beyond the end of the training** would enable to better identify the most efficient training approaches.

3.2 Awareness raising and behavioural changes

62. Communication strategies such as **creative media**, featuring the use of film, drama, music and hands-on experience appear to have been more effective at generating enthusiasm and

⁴³ <https://www.cepf.net/file/11714>

awareness⁴⁴. The efficiency of creative media such as theatre, comic books, and radio dramas with call-in shows is raising awareness of rural population and local authorities is also highlighted in the lessons learned report of the West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change programme (WABiCC)⁴⁵.

63. The media have a major role in increasing awareness and supporting the behavioural changes needed to protect forests and biodiversity. There are some examples in the hotspot whereby the media have had a significant influence on government decisions (e.g., policy amendment to reduce taxes for companies producing renewable energy in Cameroon). According to the discussions held with CSOs and journalists during the consultation process for the design of the Long-Term Vision, journalists need training on: i) environmental issues to be able to communicate these accurately and impactfully; ii) existing environmental regulations; and iii) proposal development to access funding to cover specific environmental matters⁴⁶. Similarly, CSOs need training on how to communicate clearly and convey strong messages during interviews with the media⁴⁷. In addition to training sessions, a network between the media and CSOs should be created to improve communication and understanding between these two sectors. Awareness raising of the editors in chief of the newspapers, radio channels and TV channels on environmental issues is also needed for environmental matters to make the headline more regularly.

3.3 Community involvement and livelihoods' strengthening⁴⁸

64. Community ownership is essential to the success and sustainability of conservation projects. Each project, for which this would be relevant, must have a **clear and strong community-involvement approach** and be community owned (see Table 5). No specific issues with community involvement during the latest investment phase were raised during the design process for the Long-Term Vision but the importance of engaging all communities' groups – with a particular focus on traditional authorities – was emphasised multiple times.
65. Considering the prevalence of poverty in the hotspot, **livelihoods' development must be at the core of the approach** for forest and biodiversity conservation. Working towards increasing the connectivity between KBAs will require substantial incorporation of livelihoods' components across the investments. As stated in the Ecosystem Profile, poverty is a constant obstacle to conservation success. It adds that CEPF's supported projects that have included alternative income generation components have been efficient in raising interest and securing engagement of local communities⁴⁹. Socio-economic benefits for local communities are crucial for projects' success.
66. **Communities' empowerment** – focusing primarily on women and youth – is crucial to enable them to be the main decision makers and beneficiaries for their land. Local communities must be empowered to choose their own sustainable economic alternatives from their land rather than resorting to accepting short-term benefits from private companies (e.g., mining, logging

⁴⁴ IUCN, 2015. Ecosystem Profile: Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot

⁴⁵ TetraTech, 2021. USAID/West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change (WA BiCC), Final Report (2015-2021)

⁴⁶ As an example, the Rainforest Journalism Fund's regional initiative for the Congo Basin is open to Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea. <https://rainforestjournalismfund.org/fr>

⁴⁷ National Geographic's training material "Storytelling for impact" could be a good basis for these training sessions (<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/education/professional-development/courses/storytelling-for-impact/> Consulted on 17 June 2022)

⁴⁸ This lesson learned/recommendation is aligned with CBD Post-2020 Targets 20 and 21.

⁴⁹ IUCN, 2015. Ecosystem Profile: Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot

or plantations) which are limited (and sometimes do not materialise) and will likely have a negative impact on their environment and well-being. In Liberia as an example, a paradigm change is needed from prohibiting any form of exploitation and preventing communities' access to forests which has been unsuccessful, towards the sustainable exploitation of forest resources by local communities. Similarly, in Ghana, the protection status of some forest areas (e.g., no access) and their buffer zones should be reviewed to allow for the sustainable management of forest resources by local communities at least in some defined zones.

67. The establishment of **Community-Based Management systems** has been supported locally in most hotspot's countries as a mean to secure communities' access to land and corresponding natural resources, increase communities' involvement in decision making, enable the development of sustainable livelihoods and support the conservation of natural resources. The availability of evidence-based information on the efficiency of such systems in supporting conservation in the long term remains limited, but positive feedback on their impact was received from partners during the consultation process. Some examples of Community-based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) systems in the hotspot are:

- The Community Forest approach seems to be a promising system for forest conservation in Liberia. A Darwin project 2020-2023 is focusing on generating evidence on the efficiency of this model.
- The community-based conservation approach supported in Fouta-Djallon landscape in Guinea was also described as efficient in supporting Chimpanzees conservation locally.
- WCF's Community Ecoguard Programme in Grebo-Krahn National Park landscape in Liberia is said to have generated positive results for women empowerment, awareness raising, and has contributed to the reduction of illegal activities and bushmeat consumption.
- In Ghana, the CREMAs, which are Protected Areas of IUCN Category 6, require five to six years to become financially autonomous in some regions and 10 years in other regions. In South Ghana, Noé's CREMAs' system is recent (Economie au Service de la Biodiversité – ECONOBIO – started in 2017) but seems promising. The first CREMAs that have been supported by the programme should be financially autonomous within two to three years thanks to the Conservation Agreements signed between the communities and private companies purchasing NTFPs at premium prices. As a note, Noé is also currently establishing a South-South collaboration between Namibia and Ghana to benefit from the experience of the CBNRM programme in Namibia. Importantly, a recommendation based on the experience generated with the CREMAs is that communities should not be given equipment for free, they should contribute through labour, land, small financial contribution, progressive reimbursement, ensuring maintenance costs or supporting future investments for small equipment. For larger equipment, they should contribute through renting equipment, paying cooperatives fees or sharing benefits among others⁵⁰.
- In Côte d'Ivoire, traditional village-level management systems for forest protection are found in several regions and could be strengthened. GIZ is supporting this model and helping villagers in identifying issues related to forest protection and solutions in a participatory manner. Communities are thereafter supported by GIZ in the development of a management plan.
- In Nigeria, a USAID project implemented between 2003-2006 in the Cross-River state on CBNRM and sustainable agriculture has generated positive results on cacao value chain development and certification that are still visible today with farmers using and benefitting from these improved practices. This offers an opportunity to identify the factors of success and sustainability in this site, and enable peer-to-peer learning.

⁵⁰ Noé, 2021. Concilier la conservation de la biodiversité et le développement de filières pro-biodiversité: Fiche d'information sur les leçons apprises

- In Benin, Community-based Association for Biodiversity Conservation (i.e., ACCB) in the Mono Delta Biosphere was described as more efficient than government-managed initiatives in supporting mangroves' conservation.

3.4 Involvement of central and decentralised government authorities

68. The support and participation of governmental authorities in conservation initiatives is essential to the success and sustainability of their outcomes. The implementation of the Long-Term Vision will require the engagement of governmental institutions across the interventions (see Figures 4 to 8). Indeed, government authorities are key players in the identification of KBAs (e.g., as members of the KBA working group) and in the assessments of ecosystems and species as they are the main warrants for the integration of this information into decision making and into development planning, and for the consolidation and update of this information over time. Another area of interventions that requires the buy-in of central and decentralised authorities is the design of local natural resources' management plans, and their integration into existing local/provincial/national development plans. This is equally a key aspect for ensuring government ownership. Policy strengthening and law enforcement are also under the responsibility of central and decentralised authorities, and are essential to enable conservation-focused CSOs to fulfil their mission. The establishment and maintenance of robust and successful collaborations at transboundary and hotspot levels for knowledge sharing, concerted decision making and the adoption of harmonious conservation approaches rely on the commitment of relevant ministries from each of the hotspot's country. Under the latest investment phase, close collaboration with local authorities was established across the projects. In particular, local authorities were strongly involved in the design of management plans and the development of supporting local legislative documents such as bye-laws (e.g., to secure access rights to natural resources for local communities). The buy-in of central and local authorities necessitates that: i) they are engaged in the projects from the design phase, and in all decision-making and planning processes thereafter; and ii) awareness raising and training is provided where required to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the project and all the required tools to participate efficiently.

3.5 CEPF's niche

Supporting small grassroots organisations that cannot yet access donors funding:

69. Donors are often unable to provide sufficient support to small grassroots organisations and prefer to fund the ones that can already show from previous projects that they have the capacity to manage the funds. An important niche of CEPF (and partners' programmes such as PPI) is to **support small CSOs in increasing their capacity and experience** up to a point where they are able to access other sources of funding. This should be done in close collaboration with other programmes and organisations that focus on supporting CSOs by providing: small grants in a specific set of countries in West and Central Africa (e.g., PPI); targeted support in specific countries (e.g., IUCN NL in Ghana); targeted support to specific partner CSOs in a wide range of countries (e.g., BirdLife International); and grants in broad thematic areas at the global level (e.g., GEF SGP⁵¹). These programmes and organisations have their own geographical and thematic priorities and scope, with some overlapping areas. This presents a great opportunity for complementarity that has partly but not fully been harnessed during past CEPF investment phases (please see Section 4.5 below).

70. Supporting small grassroots organisations should be followed up with other investments to be optimal. This would enable support to be more targeted and more visible. CEPF's support

⁵¹ Stand-alone capacity development projects are eligible since GEF SGP's Operational Phase 5.

to grassroots organisations would be optimal if there was an information-sharing system in place for partners to access **information on ongoing grants and on the performance of the grantees** in an easy and timely manner. A virtual map showing in each country which CSOs are supported by whom, for how long, for which interventions and how they are performing could be developed. Grantees supported by CEPF that performed well should be systematically supported thereafter by other funding sources (e.g., IUCN SOS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Authority – USFWA, RainForest Trust). This would enable to accelerate the establishment of a diversified and robust community of CSOs in the hotspot.

71. More than 50% of the funds for grants were allocated to international organisations during the latest investment phase. It is recommended for CEPF to **focus primarily on CSOs within the hotspots' countries**⁵². Support to international organisations (i.e., international NGOs and international research organisations) should be limited to: i) hotspot-level or multi-country projects, with as much collaboration as possible with the hotspots' CSOs; and ii) to transferring skills on the use of specific methodologies and tools to the hotspots' CSOs. This greater focus on national CSOs would require increasing the human and financial resources allocated to support proposal development within the CEPF team (please see Section 4.5).

Supporting science-based evidence-generation projects leveraging conservation outcomes by addressing knowledge gaps:

72. During the last investment period of CEPF, three large grants (i.e., for KBA assessments and inventories) and five small grants (i.e., on threatened species, and local plant biodiversity) were allocated to science-oriented projects, which corresponds to 20% of the grants. CEPF's budget for science-based evidence-generation projects, informing conservation actions (e.g., on ecosystems, species, biodiversity, nature-based economic opportunities), could be maintained to better prioritise investments within the hotspot, and to generate evidence base on conservation models (e.g., community-based approaches, impact of sustainable livelihoods' development), which could further be promoted, tested, and scaled up. Among the grants allocated to science-oriented projects between 2016 and 2021, two of the small grants were allocated to national organisations and the others were allocated to international organisations. As previously mentioned, the focus on national research organisations should be increased to build in-country capacity to continue, extend and update science-based outputs beyond CEPF support. Regional and international research organisations should only be appointed to build capacity of national organisations on specific approaches and tools (e.g., cross-sectoral approach, consideration of future climate scenario, M&E tools) or for multi-country projects where no suitable national organisation can be identified. Research efforts should not be stand alone, they should be tailored to directly address the information needs of CSOs working on the ground. The collaboration between national research organisations and conservation-focused CSOs working on the ground should therefore be clearly defined within the project proposal.

*Geographical prioritisation*⁵³:

73. According to the consulted stakeholders, CEPF's focus on the conservation of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems including coastal areas of the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot seems adequate as these are the broad categories of ecosystems of the hotspot. It is however

⁵² CEPF focus during the previous investment phase was: "CEPF will provide resources and capacity to civil society organizations at the grassroots, regional, national and international levels to establish long-term partnerships across sectors and borders." <https://www.cepf.net/our-work/biodiversity-hotspots/guinean-forests-west-africa>

⁵³ Review of the ecosystem profile is needed to inform the geographies for future investments. Any suggestions made in this section come from the stakeholder consultation and have been kept as a track-record. They can therefore not be considered as CEPF recommendations.

suggested to have a **more general scope on Guinean Forests landscapes in alignment with an integrated approach**. These landscapes would include all the factors and land-uses that have an influence (positive or negative) on Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and their biodiversity. This might require to further define, in a participatory manner, the term “landscape” in the context of the hotspot (e.g., watershed).

74. CEPF prioritises projects focusing on the conservation of KBAs. During the consultations, it was stressed that knowledge gaps sometimes make it difficult to meet the KBAs criteria and that the process of identification of a KBA can take time. Some areas can therefore not receive funding despite being rich in biodiversity and needing urgent actions. Until KBAs are updated in each of the targeted countries, a more flexible approach should be adopted. It is proposed to start with mapping the priority forest landscapes for biodiversity and ecosystem services, in particular water provision (e.g., see KBA+ approach used in Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands Hotspot⁵⁴) based on existing local data, spatial data and complementary assessments (see Section 4.1). These maps would enable to direct funding in biodiversity rich areas even if they are not yet classified as KBA and will inform the updating of the KBAs’ network.
75. The majority of existing KBAs have been triggered by the presence of a single species. While flagship species are key to attract funding and raise awareness, it is felt that biodiversity levels should be considered in the prioritisation exercise. To go further, based on the biodiversity conservation objective, stakeholders suggested that biodiversity levels be the first prioritisation criteria. Most suitable flagship species to raise funding should be identified thereafter within these priority areas⁵⁵.
76. Several additional specific suggestions regarding prioritizing support within the hotspot were made in reports and during the Long-Term Vision’s consultations. WCMC report identified six KBAs over four countries (i.e., Sierra Leone, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia) that have experienced the biggest forest cover loss (10 to 22%) between 2014 and 2019 and could therefore be the focus of future investments to halt deforestation in these sites. WACSI suggested to work on countries that are starting to put their international commitments into action such as Côte d'Ivoire. Noé identified specific transboundary landscapes that would need investments: i) Ankasa-Tano transboundary landscape (Ghana/Côte d'Ivoire) where work is needed particularly in the Côte d'Ivoire part recently recognized as community forest; ii) the transboundary landscape Togo/Ghana in South East Ghana which is a highland forest rich in biodiversity and an important area to link upper and lower Guinean Forests; iii) Reserve of Fazao in Togo; and iv) biological corridor between Tanoë's CREMA and Reserve. USFWA Great Ape Conservation Fund suggested to focus on remaining large patches of forest habitat for great apes’ populations where they can survive rather than trying to save small remaining forest habitat patches. On the other hand, some partners have stressed the importance of conserving some small forest patches that contain endemic species within the hotspot. Another suggestion is to focus on Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone that have most of the remaining Guinean Forests. In the current context of climate change, among the biodiversity rich areas and/or areas with high endemism, it does seem reasonable to **focus on protecting the remaining large forest patches as well as on increasing connectivity within local networks of small/medium-sized KBAs that have the potential to protect multiple species and ecosystem services, in particular the provision of water, and give them the capacity to adapt to changing conditions**, while supporting a growing human population,

⁵⁴ Conservation International – Madagascar, 2014. Ecosystem Profile: Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands, p290

⁵⁵ McGowan at al., 2020. Conservation prioritization can resolve the flagship species conundrum, Vol 11 (994). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-020-14554-z>

rather than spreading the funding thin in an attempt to protect all remaining Guinean Forests patches regardless of isolation and size.

Learning processes to be promoted by CEPF:

77. Several respondents pointed out that the learning process from CEPF could be strengthened and that the impact could be made more visible. For example, it was pointed out that partners would like to access more information on good approaches and practices from the on-the-ground activities of CEPF grantees in the hotspot. There is a need to increase visibility of the small-scale projects supported by CEPF for partners to build on them. More efforts could be invested in communication. As an example, increased work with scientists would enable to generate evidence-based information on grants' impact. This information would then have to be simplified and packaged adequately to make it accessible to the wider group of stakeholders and shared using a diversity of communication tools (e.g., newsletters, creative media, workshops and events). Another suggestion is to ask grantees to fill in the CSTT one year after the end of the project to be able to better capture the longer effects of the project⁵⁶.

3.6 Collaborating with other key sectors linked to sustainable forest management

78. An enormous challenge faced in conservation is population growth. As previously mentioned, the population is growing particularly fast in West Africa (2.75% per year). For any conservation effort to have a positive and long-lasting impact, this issue must be addressed. The environmental sector generally has limited budget and cannot fund social development projects. However, several ways to contribute significantly to addressing this issue of rapid population growth have been identified: i) **empowering women** through increased access to decision making within their community and to sustainable sources of income; ii) increasing **access to education for girls and boys**; iii) increasing **access to sustainable sources of income** for the youth; and iv) creating **collaborations between conservation-focused CSOs and organisations working in the health, social development and education sectors** (e.g., CSOs, donors, government institutions) to **increase access to family planning and education in parallel to conservation interventions**⁵⁷. As an example of cross-sectoral initiatives during the latest investment phase of CEPF, adult literacy was supported in the Gola landscape in parallel to conservation interventions in Liberia.

79. **Partnerships with organisations focused on food security** are also necessary to promote best agricultural, livestock husbandry and fishing practices that address simultaneously the issues of poverty, hunger, malnutrition, biodiversity loss, deforestation, soil degradation, chemical pollution and vulnerability to climate change. Alternatives, such as agroecology approaches, and the promotion of NTFPs and traditional plants, should be identified and implemented.

80. To increase cross-sectoral collaboration, a combination of approaches can be used. At the local scale, CSOs from different sectors should be encouraged to work together. At the national level, the CSOs network should also look into increasing collaboration with CSOs from other sectors and integrate these CSOs into the network if adequate. Strengthening interventions for the institutional and policy framework should include as much as possible other sectors linked to environmental matters (e.g., health, agriculture, fisheries, mining, education, tourism, energy, infrastructure) to ensure the integration of forests, biodiversity and climate change concerns into the policies of these sectors. National/transboundary/regional

⁵⁶ Chiapero F., Lewis M., Mesnildrey N. and Lopez V. O., 2022. Developing spatial-analytical tools to visualise and orient capacity support to CSOs in West Africa to enhance its position for biodiversity conservation. MSc graduation report, Department of Geography, University of Cambridge

⁵⁷ Bongaarts J., 2016. Slow down population growth. *Nature*, Vol 530 – p409-412

knowledge-sharing platforms should be opened to and promoted with organisations from other relevant sectors. At the regional level, the suggested donor roundtable (please see Section 4.5) could be extended to big donors in health, education and food security sectors.

3.7 Private sector engagement

81. Considering the current and potential impact of some private sector activities and projects as well as the financing potential that is held by private companies, increasing engagement with the private sector should be prioritized for future investments in the hotspot (see Section 4.1). Increasing engagement with private companies can be done in several manners:

- Through the creation of discussion platforms between conservation-focused CSOs and private companies to support companies in assessing the vulnerability of their business to environmental degradation and climate change, and in identifying more resilient and sustainable practices (private sector whose business is/are not necessarily vulnerable to environmental degradation and climate-change should also be aware of the benefits of investing in practices that are more environmentally friendly).
- Through supporting the development of sustainable value chains whereby producers are encouraged in adopting sustainable practices⁵⁸.
- Through reinforcing EIA policies, quality control systems and mitigation interventions.
- By increasing the flow of funds from the private sector towards conservation interventions using CSR, carbon credit, biodiversity offsets and PES among others⁵⁹.

82. At least two past grants which had a dedicated focus on mainstreaming biodiversity into the practices of mining companies have been a good illustration of how good communication with the private sector can lead to best practices and even flow of funding for conservation. These mainstreaming grants have initiated an essential work by creating an enabling environment for mining companies in conservation corridors, particularly in Guinea, to implement the mitigation hierarchy (avoid, minimize, restore, offset). The development of practical and user-friendly guidelines for these mining companies to engage in Public Private Partnerships and Public Private Community Partnerships, such as Conservation Agreements, has enhanced regional capacities to support and spread international best practices. At least one mining company has expressed its interest in designing and implementing the Biodiversity Offset Management Plan for the Simandou project, including looking for offset sites where six community conservation agreements would be implemented.

3.8 Regional collaboration

83. There is a consensus that regional collaboration between the hotspot's countries should be increased. There are several existing platforms (Mano River Union, ECOWAS, COMIFAC) that include part of the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspots' countries. The Mano River Union includes four of the hotspot countries (Guinea, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone). ECOWAS goes

⁵⁸ The experience of CI with the Conservation Agreements Private Partnership Platform in 10 countries (none of the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot's countries) provided valuable lessons learned including for example "the utility of Conservation Agreements may be less about bringing the private sector to the table (they are already at the table because they want a responsible brand and a sustainable supply of inputs) and more about enabling communities to conserve and produce sustainably so that they can be partners for the private sector." CI, GEF & IUCN, 2020. Can conservation agreements catalyse private sector support for community-led conservation? – Lessons learned and recommendations for replication.

⁵⁹ The document *Top business engagement tips for conservation organisations* produced by IUCN provides step-by-step guidance to engage with private companies. IUCN (2020). *Top business engagement tips for conservation organisations: A collection of lessons and case studies from landscapes around the world*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN, 30pp

beyond the hotspots with 15 countries including eight of the hotspot's countries (excluding Cameroon, São Tomé and Príncipe and Equatorial Guinea). The West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) has eight member countries which include Côte d'Ivoire, Benin and Togo from the hotspot. COMIFAC counts 11 member countries including three of the hotspot's countries, namely Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea and São Tomé and Príncipe. These platforms are functioning more or less well according to the feedback received during the Long-Term Vision's consultations. They don't cover all the hotspot's countries or don't have a strong forest conservation focus, like for ECOWAS for which only six of its member countries are concerned with this topic⁶⁰. **An informal coordination platform specifically for the hotspot's countries would be needed to enable a harmonised approach to forest and biodiversity conservation. A similar platform as the one created for the implementation of the Great Green Wall programme could be established.** Annual meetings could be organised through this informal platform with government institutions, international organisations, donors, private sector representatives and CSOs where adequate. At government level, decision-makers and/or technical staff could be invited depending on the matters to be discussed. To minimize costs, side meetings could take place during existing regional or global events. These meetings would focus on increasing knowledge sharing and collaboration at the hotspot's level. Donors such as GEF, AFD, EU and USAID could potentially be approached to fund annual meetings for the 11 countries.

84. Considering that the protection of transboundary landscapes is a growing priority and based on the experience of the partners, transboundary agreements between two or more countries based on biological units should also be established to increase collaboration between countries within the hotspot. A proposed strategy to create transboundary partnerships is to start with bringing together governments' technical teams on a regular basis. They can thereafter relay the information to the superiors within their institutions who can then learn from activities already happening on the ground. This is a good entry point towards creating official agreements⁶¹.
85. It is important to note that the differences in languages and cultures can make communication and collaboration difficult within the hotspot. For example, collaboration challenges between French and English-speaking countries were highlighted several times during the consultations. Similarly, cross-country collaboration with São Tomé and Príncipe (Portuguese-speaking), and with Equatorial Guinea (Spanish-speaking) is currently challenging. This should be considered adequately when initiating the negotiations.

4. The Long-Term Vision

4.1 Transition conditions, criteria and targets for the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot

86. Five conditions that should be met for CSOs to graduate from CEPF support were defined by CEPF prior to the assignment. The Long-Term Visions for other CEPF's Hotspots (e.g., IndoBurma) follow this general structure. Minor amendments were made to the wording of these conditions to make it more specific. The five graduation conditions are as follows:
1. Conservation priorities and best practices for their management are identified, documented, disseminated and integrated into national strategies to guide conservation investments across the hotspot.

⁶⁰ EU (e.g., PAPFOR) signed a convention with ECOWAS, everything linked to the environment have been delegated to UEMOA, only Côte d'Ivoire is part of UEMOA. For PAPFOR Phase 2, another type of agreement is being considered.

⁶¹ TetraTech, 2021. USAID/West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change (WA BiCC), Final Report (2015-2021)

2. Local civil society groups dedicated to conservation priorities collectively possess sufficient organisational and technical capacity to be effective advocates for, and agents of, conservation and sustainable development, while being equal partners of government agencies influencing decision making in favour of sustainable societies and economies.
3. Adequate and continual financial resources are available to address conservation of global priorities.
4. Institutional framework, public policies and their enforcement, and private sector business practices are supportive of biodiversity conservation.
5. Monitoring systems are in place to measure impacts and support an adaptive approach.

87. Five graduation criteria were defined by CEPF under each condition. The conditions and criteria towards graduation are synthesized in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Synthesized representation of the main conditions and criteria towards graduation.

88. The information collected during the consultations with CEPF grantees on achievements and timelines during the previous CEPF investment phases was used to define baseline levels, realistic targets/objectives and timelines for the Long-Term Vision for each criterion (Table 3). In alignment with the timeline necessary to reach the targets of each of the graduation criteria, the Long-Term Vision is designed over a period of 15 years, presented in the tables as three 5-year implementation periods. **It is estimated that 15 years of coordinated and targeted investments are needed to enable conservation-focused CSOs working in the hotspot to have sufficient capacity, access to resources, and credibility to become enduring and effective agents of forest and biodiversity conservation, independently**

from the support of CEPF and its partners (please see Table 3). Beyond this period, CEPF and its partners should be able to lessen their support provided for CSOs' strengthening, and focus more on maintaining, reinforcing, extending and updating the systems in place as well as monitoring impacts (e.g., regularly updating KBAs and PA statuses; punctual and targeted support to partner CSOs for capacity strengthening; continuously supporting the mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation across sectors; continuously advocating for conservation and looking for opportunities to increase resources allocation for conservation; maintaining and supporting the proactivity of the platforms, networks and roundtables in place; maintaining and constantly improving monitoring systems to ensure that impacts are adequately measured).

Table 3: Graduation targets, milestones and proposed strategies/actions

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
Graduation Condition 1. Conservation priorities and best practices: Conservation priorities and best practices for their management are identified, documented, disseminated and integrated into national strategies to guide conservation investments across the hotspot.							
<p>1.1 Globally threatened species. Comprehensive global threat assessments conducted for all terrestrial vertebrates, vascular plants and at least selected freshwater taxa.</p> <p>(E)</p>	<p>There has been significant progress in knowledge generation since the Elmina workshop of 1999 particularly on big taxonomic groups. There are important knowledge gaps remaining on plant species across the hotspot. A national forest inventory was undertaken in Liberia in 2018/2019. A national inventory of flora species is ongoing in Nigeria, no other national inventories have been identified in the hotspot countries. Some local inventories have been undertaken (e.g., Gola forest).</p> <p>There are important knowledge gaps on the impact of CC on wildlife and habitat.</p> <p>Some areas have never been assessed (e.g., in Guinea).</p>	<p>Ecological inventories undertaken in existing KBAs (i.e., for KBAs created before 2023).</p>	<p>Inventories undertaken in existing and new KBAs (see Condition 1 Criteria 2), and species assessments – including their resilience to climate change – are completed for at least 60% of all recorded species of terrestrial vertebrate, vascular plant and at least 3 major freshwater taxa in the hotspot, and with results incorporated onto the IUCN Red List.</p>	<p>Species assessments – including their resilience to climate change – are completed for at least 90% of all inventoried species of terrestrial vertebrate, vascular plant and at least 3 major freshwater taxa in the hotspot, and with results incorporated onto the IUCN Red List.</p>	<p>Species assessments – including their resilience to climate change – are completed for at least 90% of all recorded species of terrestrial vertebrate, vascular plant and at least 3 major freshwater taxa in the hotspot (based on inventories undertaken for each KBA - see Condition 1 Criteria 2), and with results incorporated onto the IUCN Red List.</p> <p>[Note: this target might have to be adjusted based on the results of the inventories to remain realistic].</p>	<p>(i) GBF post-2020: Target 3 (ii) SDG 6 - 6.6 (iii) SDG 15 - 15.2 (iv) SDG 15 - 15.5</p>	<p>Support national research organisations in undertaking ecological inventories across KBAs [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, IUCN Working Groups, WCS]</p> <p>Support national research organisations in undertaking species assessments to address knowledge gaps in the hotspot's KBAs [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, IUCN Working Groups, WCS]</p>

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
<p>1.2 Key Biodiversity Areas. KBAs identified in all countries and territories in the hotspot, covering, at minimum, terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems.</p> <p>(E)</p>	<p>A total of 144 KBAs exist in the hotspots' countries. At least 39% of existing KBA need to be reviewed urgently. Other KBAs (mostly created in 2015) will need to be reviewed shortly after. The need for new KBAs is unknown but some potentially rich areas are not recognized as KBAs and don't have any form of protection (e.g., Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire). RSPB is supporting an IBA/KBA transition process, where IBAs are being assessed to determine if they meet KBAs criteria.</p> <p>National KBAs' coordination groups are currently being established in Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea with support from RSPB. There is already a KBA working group in Nigeria which is also receiving training from RSPB.</p> <p>Priority forest landscapes for Chimpanzee conservation are currently being mapped in Guinea.</p>	<p>National or transboundary KBAs' coordination group established and operational in each country (meeting taking place twice a year with resources allocated annually).</p> <p>Map of priority forests landscape for biodiversity – taking current climate trends and future climate conditions into account – available for each country of the hotspot and new KBAs and biological corridors identified accordingly across terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems within the hotspot taking future climate conditions into account.</p> <p>Status of 50% of existing KBAs (prioritising the 80 KBAs assessed before 2010) reviewed across the hotspot, covering terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems.</p>	<p>Status of 75% of existing KBAs reviewed across the hotspot, covering terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems.</p>	<p>Status of 100% of existing KBAs reviewed across the hotspot, covering terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems.</p>	<p>National or transboundary KBAs' coordination group established and operational in each country (meeting taking place twice a year with resources allocated annually).</p> <p>Map of priority forests landscape for biodiversity – taking current climate trends and future climate conditions into account – available for each country of the hotspot and new KBAs and biological corridors identified accordingly across terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems within the hotspot.</p> <p>Status of existing KBAs (prior to 2021) reviewed across the hotspot, covering terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems.</p>	<p>(i) GBF post-2020: Target 3 (ii) SDG 6 - 6.6 (iii) SDG 15 - 15.2 (iv) SDG 15 - 15.5 (v) Forest Convergence Plan in West Africa - Area of intervention 1</p>	<p>Support the establishment of a KBA National Coordination Group in each of the hotspot countries based on RSPB's experience [led as much as possible by a governmental organisation] - [Potential supporting organisations: RSPB]</p> <p>Support KBA National Coordination Group members in developing a map of priority forests landscape for biodiversity (see Forest to Sea report for Upper Guinea as an example) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, RSPB]</p> <p>Support KBA National Coordination Group members in the creation of KBAs where needed based on the map of priority forests landscape for biodiversity [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, RSPB, RainForest Trust]</p> <p>Support KBA National Coordination Group members in reviewing the status of existing KBAs [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, RSPB, RainForest Trust]</p>

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
1.3 Protected Areas. KBAs gazetted as Protected Areas at the national level. (E)	[Baseline level TBD] The proportion of natural forests and KBAs which are currently under protection (government protection and OECM) is currently being investigated by UNEP-WCMC (approximately 30% of terrestrial KBAs currently under protection based on the results of the Mid-Term Assessment 2019, 57% based on the KBA database).	40% of KBAs, their buffer zones and relevant biological corridors are gazetted as Protected Areas or OECMs.	55% of KBAs and their buffer zones and relevant biological corridors are gazetted as Protected Areas or OECMs.	70% of KBAs and their buffer zones and relevant biological corridors are gazetted as Protected Areas or OECMs.	70% of KBAs and their buffer zones and relevant biological corridors are gazetted as Protected Areas or OECMs.	(i) GBF post-2020: Target 3. (ii) SDG 6 - 6.6 (iii) SDG 15 - 15.2 (iv) SDG 15 - 15.5 (v) AFR100 and Bonn challenge restoration targets	Support the KBA National Coordination Group in identifying areas of KBAs that are not currently within a protected area, in collaboration with UNEP-WCMC [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, RSPB] Support CSOs in advocating for the gazettement of KBAs as Protected Areas or OECMs (see training to be provided under Condition 2 Criteria 2) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, RSPB, PPI and others] Support CSOs in the creation and establishment processes for Protected Areas [Potential supporting organisations: Rainforest Trust and other partners]
1.4 Reservoirs of natural capital. Reservoirs of natural capital identified in all countries and territories in the hotspot, covering ecosystem services particularly critical to human survival. (D)	NCAA for forests undertaken in Nigeria (2016) and Côte d'Ivoire with support from UNEP. An NCAA was supported by CI in Liberia in 2017 but to date it's use to inform budget allocation and development planning is limited. CI is currently undertaking another one in coastal areas. UNEP-WCMC is currently supporting a National assessment in Cameroon. Except for these four countries, no other NCAA could be identified in the targeted countries. Some local assessments have been undertaken or are ongoing in Ghana (Atewa) and Guinea (Tako-Gama).	NCAA undertaken on the demand of a line government institutions in 2 more countries (6 out of 11). National capital accounts inform development planning in at least 4 out of 11 countries. [Note: 4 because the process of integrating the results and recommendations into development planning can take time]	NCAA undertaken on the demand of a line government institutions in 4 more countries (8 out of 11) National capital accounts inform development planning in at least 8 out of 11 countries		NCAA undertaken in at least 8 of the targeted countries (at least for forests) including the identification and mapping of reservoirs of natural capital for water provision and at least 2 other ecosystem services essential to healthy, sustainable societies (e.g., climate resilience, NTFP provisioning, carbon storage, etc.) National capital accounts inform development planning in at least 8 out of 11 countries	(i) GBF post-2020: Target 8. (ii) SDG 15 - 15.9	Support advocacy for Natural Capital Assessments with government institutions [Potential supporting organisations: CI, RSPB] Financial support to undertake NCAs if led by at least 1 cross-sectoral government institution (e.g., Ministry of Planning) and with the aim to direct public (and private) resources accordingly [Potential supporting organisations: CI, RSPB] Support for the integration of the NCAA results in the budgeting exercises [Potential supporting organisations: CI, RSPB] [Note: National NCAs must be a cross-sectoral exercise lead by a government institution. Otherwise, it will not be incorporated into development planning.]

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
<p>1.5 Landscape-level integrated management plans. KBAs and buffer zones, biological corridors and reservoirs of natural capital are part of a landscape-level integrated Management Plan under implementation</p> <p>(E)</p>	<p>At least 4 transboundary agreements already exist (Tai Grebo, Gola, ZWW, CocoForest partnership).</p> <p>[Current % of KBAs with management plans to be determined as part of KBA review work under Condition 1 Criteria 2] All the landscapes targeted under WABICC/WABILED have a management plan including the development of sustainable livelihoods. Several organisations are testing sustainable management planning systems locally (e.g., WCS, EU, WCF, RSPB).</p>	<p>At least 8 bilateral transboundary management agreements signed and under implementation (for each transboundary KBA/landscape) for knowledge sharing, concerted decision-making, planning and exchange visits.</p> <p>At least 40% of KBAs are integrated into landscape-level climate-resilient management plans (including zoning of no-take areas, such as buffer zones and biological corridors, & resilient livelihood development areas) that are under implementation and guide the sustainable management of KBAs and surrounding areas over the next 10 years.</p> <p>[Note: targets to be revised after the baseline for the current % of KBAs with management plans is set]</p>	<p>At least 55% of KBAs are integrated into landscape-level climate-resilient management plans (including zoning of no-take areas, restricted areas such as buffer zones and biological corridors, and resilient livelihoods' development areas) that are under implementation and guide the sustainable management of KBAs and surrounding areas over the next 10 years.</p> <p>Each integrated landscape-level climate-resilient management plans is embedded into relevant national, sub-national and local development plans.</p>	<p>At least 70% of KBAs are integrated into landscape-level climate-resilient management plans (including zoning of no-take areas, restricted areas such as buffer zones and biological corridors, and resilient livelihoods' development areas) that are under implementation and guide the sustainable management of KBAs and surrounding areas over the next 10 years.</p> <p>Each integrated landscape-level climate-resilient management plans is embedded into relevant national sub-national and local development plans.</p>	<p>At least 8 bilateral transboundary management agreements signed and under implementation (for each transboundary KBA/landscape) for knowledge sharing, concerted decision-making planning and exchange visits.</p> <p>At least 70% of KBAs are integrated into landscape-level climate-resilient management plans (including zoning of no-take areas, such as buffer zones and biological corridors, and resilient livelihoods' development areas) that are under implementation and guide the sustainable management of KBAs and surrounding areas over the next 10 years.</p> <p>Each integrated landscape-level climate-resilient management plans is embedded into relevant development plans.</p>	<p>(i) GBF post-2020: Target 1, 9, 10, 20, 21 (ii) SDG 1 targets (2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development) (iii) Forest Convergence Plan in West Africa - Area of intervention 3 & 4 (iv) AFR100 and Bonn challenge restoration targets</p>	<p>Establishment and implementation of transboundary management agreements between relevant pairs of countries, and creation of a network of transboundary landscapes for information/experience sharing [Potential supporting organisations: USAID, EU, GIZ, RSPB]</p> <p>Support CSOs in establishing community-based management areas with local communities – with a particular focus on women and youth – including the design of participatory management plans, and securing access-rights to natural resources and land tenure within these areas (e.g., establishment of Community Forests [PAPFOR], Community-based conservation with village level forest conservation committees [Neil - UNEP-WCMC]) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF and other partners]</p> <p>Support CSOs in implementing sustainable livelihood projects with local communities in GFWA landscapes to generate sustainable, climate-resilient and biodiversity-friendly income with a particular focus on women and youth (e.g., agroecology practices, sustainable fisheries/aquaculture/small livestock production as protein alternatives to bushmeat, sustainable exploitation of NTFPs, ecotourism) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF and other partners]</p> <p>Support CSOs in working with national and decentralised government authorities to integrate the new management plans into existing development plans</p>

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
1.6 Conservation strategies. Conservation priorities incorporated into national conservation plans or strategies and action plans developed with the participation of multiple stakeholders. (D)	NBSAPs of the hotspot's countries have all been developed between 2011 and 2016, and need to be updated during the first investment period (except for Liberia's NBSAP that is running until 2025, and Sierra Leone's NBSAP that is running until 2026).	Update the NBSAPs of and other relevant national strategy documents in at least 8 countries of the hotspot in alignment with the priority landscapes and updated KBAs.	Update the NBSAPs of and other relevant national strategy documents in the 11 countries of the hotspot in alignment with the priority landscapes and updated KBAs.	N/A	Threatened species, KBAs and/or landscapes are incorporated into the NBSAPs of and other relevant national strategy documents in each hotspot country with the participation of multiple stakeholders.	GBF post-2020: Target 1	Support sectoral ministries in updating their NBSAPs of and other relevant national strategy documents to integrate updated conservation priorities [Potential supporting organisations: UNDP, CI, AFD] Support countries with spatial planning (Alignment with CBD Post-2020 Framework Target 1) [Potential supporting organisations: UNEP-WCMC, AFD]
1.7 Regional knowledge sharing platforms. Governmental and non-governmental organisations in each country can easily access reliable information and data to support biodiversity and forest conservation. (E)	Several formal coordination platforms including part of the hotspot exist (Mano River Union, ECOWAS, COMIFAC). None of them at hotspot's level. Several international organisations are working on centralising information on Protected Areas and conservation (e.g., data on biodiversity, threatened species, CC, demographics) linked to biodiversity conservation in the region (e.g., EU/BIOPAMA/OBAPAO and IUCN/MOLOA).	1 informal coordination platform established at hotspot level with governments, international NGOs, donors, private sector and CSOs where appropriate. The governmental- and non-governmental organisations of each country of the hotspot have access to a reliable, up-to-date and long-term centralised database to store all data and reports linked to biodiversity and forest conservation	N/A	N/A	1 informal coordination platform established at hotspot level with governments, international NGOs, donors, private sector and CSOs where appropriate. The governmental- and non-governmental organisations of each country of the hotspot have access to a reliable, up-to-date and long-term centralised database to store all data and reports linked to biodiversity and forest conservation	SDG 17 - 17.7	Establish an information coordination platform at hotspot level with relevant governmental, non-governmental and private stakeholders [GEF] Follow the progress with OBAPAO and MOLOA and facilitate the data gathering and management process, as well as the institutionalisation process to sustain data management and dissemination on the platforms, in the hotspot countries where appropriate [Indirect support from CEPF]

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
		(including climate change, threatened species, KBAs and Protected Areas, management plans, land-use and forest cover changes, human population trends...).			(including climate change, threatened species, KBAs and Protected Areas, management plans, land-use and forest cover changes, human population trends...).		
Graduation Condition 2. Civil society capacity: Local civil society groups dedicated to conservation priorities collectively possess sufficient organizational and technical capacity to be effective advocates for, and agents of, conservation and sustainable development, while being equal partners of government agencies influencing decision making in favour of sustainable societies and economies.							
2.1 Conservation community. The community of civil society organizations is sufficiently broad and deep-rooted to respond to key conservation issues and collectively possesses the technical competencies of critical importance to conservation. (E)	On average, there is currently 1 or 2 leading CSOs in each country. 1 to 8 strong (stable and active) organisations working at least partly in conservation have been identified in each country (3,5 per country on average).	<p>At least 2 leading CSOs per country playing a mentorship role with smaller CSOs and working with the government.</p> <p>At least 6 conservation-focused CSOs are working actively and consistently in addressing conservation issues in each country.</p>	<p>At least 3 leading CSOs per country playing a mentorship role with smaller CSOs and working with the government.</p> <p>At least 9 conservation-focused CSOs are working actively and consistently in addressing conservation issues in each country.</p>	<p>At least 3 leading CSOs per country playing a mentorship role with smaller CSOs and working with the government.</p> <p>At least 12 conservation-focused CSOs are working actively and consistently in addressing conservation issues in each country.</p>	<p>At least 12 conservation-focused CSOs are working actively and consistently in addressing conservation issues, including at least 3 playing a leadership role (e.g., mentoring smaller CSOs) in each hotspot country.</p> <p>At least 1 recognized* CSO working continuously or regularly in or around each of the identified KBAs</p> <p>*Recognized among partners = CSO who has successfully implemented at least 1 grant.</p> <p>[To be quantified after the review of existing KBAs and identification of new KBAs]</p>	N/A	<p>Support grantees in becoming mentors with smaller organisations in their country [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, RSPB, BirdLife]</p> <p>Support previous grantees in partnering on project proposals with other CSOs [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI]</p> <p>Targeted call for proposal and selection: focus proposal on GFWA landscapes were there are no recognized active CSO [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI]</p>

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
<p>2.2 Institutional capacity. Local civil society groups collectively possess sufficient institutional and operational capacity and structures to raise funds for conservation and to ensure the efficient management of conservation projects and strategies.</p> <p>(E)</p>	<p>Less than 10% of the CSOs assessed in the hotspot have a CSTT score of 80 or more. This corresponds to 0 to 2 CSOs per country with a CSTT score of 80 or more.</p>	<p>At least 3 conservation-focused CSOs per country in the hotspot have a compounded capacity considered as high (e.g., CSTT score of 80 or more).</p>	<p>At least 5 conservation-focused CSOs per country in the hotspot have compounded capacity considered as high (e.g., CSTT score of 80 or more).</p> <p>At least 3 conservation-focused CSOs per country in the hotspot are able to access funds from international donors without support from CEPF or PPI.</p>	<p>At least 5 conservation-focused CSOs per country in the hotspot have a compounded capacity considered as high (e.g., CSTT score of 80 or more).</p> <p>At least 5 conservation-focused CSOs per country in the hotspot are able to access funds from international donors without support from CEPF or PPI.</p>	<p>At least 5 conservation-focused CSOs per country in the hotspot have a compounded capacity considered as high (e.g., CSTT score of 80 or more).</p> <p>At least 5 conservation-focused CSOs per country in the hotspot are able to access funds from international donors without support from CEPF or PPI.</p> <p>At least 50% of women participation across training courses.</p>	<p>SDG 5 - 5.5</p>	<p>Support capacity building of CSOs with a particular focus on Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea (which have few strong CSOs and are key for the hotspot's conservation) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, BirdLife]</p> <p>[Note: all training must be gender equal: 50% of participants must be women (each CSO must send a men and a women trainee)]</p> <p>Identified training priorities on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human resources (particularly staff experience/staff retention) • financial management and financial resources (sustainability strategy/unrestricted funding/diversified funding sources) • project design and management to meet expectations of international donors (e.g., training on climate change integration in projects, measuring contribution to SDGs and Aichi targets) • communication to inform on their activities (particularly in Cameroon) • leadership with a particularly focus on women • advocacy across the hotspot • Basic technical training (e.g., species recognition)

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
<p>2.3 Financial resources. Local CSOs have access to sufficient unrestricted funding sources (e.g., membership, donations, small businesses) to maintain their core operations between projects.</p> <p>(E)</p>	<p>The large majority of the CSOs in the hotspots remain reliant on projects and have no or very limited unrestricted funding. Indeed, access to financial resources identified as a big challenge for CSOs (low CSTT score) particularly the diversification of funding sources, and financial sustainability (unrestricted funding). Human Resources and Financial Resources identified as the main two threats to their organisations by 11 out of 13 surveyed grantees (MSc report, 2022).</p>	<p>At least 2 CSOs in each country have access to sufficient unrestricted funding to maintain their staff and core costs without relying on international donors.</p>	<p>At least 4 CSOs in each country have access to sufficient unrestricted funding to maintain their staff and core costs without relying on international donors.</p>	<p>At least 5 CSOs in each country have access to sufficient unrestricted funding to maintain their staff and core costs without relying on international donors.</p>	<p>At least 5 CSOs in each country have access to sufficient unrestricted funding to maintain their staff and core costs without relying on international donors.</p>	<p>GBF post-2020: Target 1</p>	<p>Support CSOs in developing sound strategic and financial plans [MSc report, 2022] [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, BirdLife]</p> <p>Support CSOs in developing business plans and developing unrestricted sources of funding (online shops, sustainable NTFP value chains, membership and national donations, ecotourism) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, IUCN NL, BirdLife]</p>

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
<p>2.4 Partnerships. Effective mechanisms (e.g., forums, round-tables, mutual support networks, alliances, etc.) exist for conservation-focused civil society groups to work in partnership with one another.</p> <p>(E)</p>	<p>In Benin, the ProEnvironnement network (12 CSOs) was recently established and it seems to be working well. CSOs partnership exist in several other countries (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Nigeria) but they are not active. In Ghana, WACSI is currently piloting a CSOs partnership. Partnership between CSOs needs strengthening across the hotspot countries. Peer-to-peer learning has been successful in several previous initiatives and should therefore be supported as a priority (most efficient learning tool - PPI/FFEM).</p> <p>At the global level, the GEF CSO network aims to increase CSOs involvement in the GEF processes.</p>	<p>At least 6 national networks for CSOs in conservation and other relevant sectors established and active (health, social development, education) - 1 per country.</p> <p>At least 5 networks for women-led CSOs in conservation and other relevant sectors established (building on the efforts of TBA).</p> <p>At least 40% of the conservation projects are complemented by projects focused on family planning and education.</p>	<p>11 national networks for CSOs in conservation and other relevant sectors established and active (health, social development, education) - 1 per country.</p> <p>At least 7 networks for women-led CSOs in conservation and other relevant sectors established (building on the efforts of TBA).</p> <p>At least 60% of the conservation projects are complemented by projects focused on family planning and education.</p>	<p>At least 80% of the conservation projects are directly paralleled with projects focused on family planning and education.</p>	<p>11 national networks for CSOs in conservation and other relevant sectors established and active (health, social development, education) - 1 per country.</p> <p>At least 7 networks for women-led CSOs in conservation and other relevant sectors established and active (building on the efforts of TBA in Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, Liberia and Sierra Leone).</p> <p>At least 80% of the conservation projects are complemented by projects focused on family planning and education.</p>	<p>GBF post-2020: Target 1</p>	<p>Support the establishment or strengthening of CSOs networks in each of the hotspots' countries [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, BirdLife]</p> <p>Ensure the integration of peer-to-peer knowledge sharing activities in each grant [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF]</p> <p>Publish Call for Proposals for groups of CSOs (at least 2 conservation CSOs or a conservation and a development CSO (Sub-activity: encourage conservation CSOs and development CSOs to collaborate as lots of funding goes to development) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI]</p> <p>[See Criteria 2.1] Support previous grantees in becoming mentors with smaller organisations in their country and/or partnering on project proposals with other CSOs [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI]</p> <p>Support CSOs networks and groups in working with GEF Agencies to access GEF funding [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, GEF, PPI]</p> <p>Ensure the monitoring of the impact of peer-to-peer learning activities using a gender-sensitive approach (based on TBA experience with impact monitoring from training and adaptive approaches with CSOs) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, TBA, FFI]</p>

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
<p>2.5 Transformational impact. Local civil society groups are able, individually or collectively, to influence public policies.</p> <p>(E)</p>	<p>CSOs and journalists have difficulties to communicate and convey clear and impactful conservation messages. Environmental matters are not in the front line often enough.</p>	<p>Decision-making and planning protocols related to forests and the environment clearly state the necessity to include CSOs in the consultations.</p> <p>At least 2 CSOs in each country are regularly consulted by the government (for decision-making, policy development and strategising processes) in each hotspot country.</p> <p>At least 1 network between the media and CSOs created in each country with training sessions for journalists on environmental issues, for CSOs on public speaking, and awareness raising of the editors in chief of the newspapers, radio channels and TV channels on environmental issues.</p>	<p>At least 3 CSOs in each country are regularly consulted by the government (for decision-making, policy development and strategising processes) in each hotspot country.</p>		<p>At least 3 CSOs in each country are regularly consulted by the government (for decision-making, policy development and strategising processes) in each hotspot country.</p> <p>At least 1 network between the media and CSOs created in each country with training sessions for journalists on environmental issues, for CSOs on public speaking, and awareness raising of the editors in chief of the newspapers, radio channels and TV channels on environmental issues.</p>	<p>GBF post-2020: Target 1</p>	<p>[See Criteria 2.2] Provide training to CSOs on communication and advocacy to participate meaningfully in decision-making processes [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, BirdLife]</p> <p>Support advocacy for CSOs to be involved in all government decision-making processes [Potential supporting organisations: UNDP, IUCN NL, FFI]</p> <p>Support CSOs in collaborating with the media, and provide required training to the media, editors in chief and CSOs for improved public communication on environmental matters</p>

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
Graduation condition 3. Sustainable financing. Adequate and continual financial resources are available to address conservation of global priorities.							
<p>3.1 Public sector funding. Public sector agencies responsible for conservation in the hotspot have a continued public fund allocation or revenue-generating ability to operate effectively.</p> <p>(E)</p>	<p>The Ministries of Environment in the hotspot's countries receive less than 1% of government's budget annually. It is far from being sufficient to cover their operational costs and interventions. Some institutions have received support to develop long-term financial plans (EPA Liberia supported by UNDP to develop a 4-year budgeted workplan). Several countries have an Environmental Fund integrated in the policies but it hasn't been established (e.g., Liberia, Sierra Leone). No operational environmental fund has been identified in the hotspot's countries.</p>	<p>The main public sector agencies responsible for conservation in 6 countries have assessed their long-term financial needs to fulfil their mandate.</p> <p>At least 2 environmental funds established and operational, with a significant portion of the fund dedicated to conservation initiatives.</p>	<p>The main public sector agencies responsible for conservation in 11 countries have assessed their long-term financial needs to fulfil their mandate.</p> <p>The main public sector agencies responsible for conservation receive at least 70% of the financial resources they need in at least 6 countries.</p> <p>At least 4 environmental funds established and operational, with a significant portion of the fund dedicated to conservation initiatives.</p>	<p>The main public sector agencies responsible for conservation in each hotspot country receive at least 90% of the financial resources they need.</p>	<p>The main public sector agencies responsible for conservation in each hotspot country have assessed their long-term financial needs to fulfil their mandate.</p> <p>The main public sector agencies responsible for conservation in each hotspot's country receive 90% of the financial resources they need.</p> <p>At least 4 environmental funds operational, with a significant portion of the fund dedicated to conservation initiatives.</p>	<p>GBF post-2020: Target 1</p>	<p>Support governmental institutions in assessing their financial needs [Potential supporting organisations: CI, UNDP]</p> <p>Support governmental institutions in identifying and accessing opportunities to address financial gaps [Potential supporting organisations: CI, UNDP]</p> <p>[Note: Target aligned with Step 1 identified under Western Chimp Conservation Plan "Objective 9.6: By mid-2025, all national environmental agencies (NEAs) in range state countries have defined technical, logistical and financial needs of all chimpanzee conservation-related activities under their jurisdiction for the next five years. Objective 9.7: By mid-2025, all Protected Areas have published/made available a detailed report of their technical, logistical and financial needs for the next five years."]</p>

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
<p>3.2 Donor funding. Donors collaborate efficiently to provide sufficient funds towards addressing conservation priorities in the hotspot.</p> <p>(E)</p>	<p>There are lots of investments across the hotspot with multiple donors (USFWS, GEF TF, GEF SGP, EU, AFD, RainForest Trust, TNC...) and international organisations (IUCN, BL, RSPB, Noe, UNDP, FAO, FFI, WCS, UNEP-WCMC, CI, Re:wild, WCF...) supporting conservation in the hotspot. This includes some large investments projects such as WABiLED and expected projects under GEF-8, NaturAfrica, and funds such as IUCN SOS, Great Ape Conservation Fund and RainForest Trust. However, there is limited collaboration and coordination between these initiatives which reduced efficiency towards addressing conservation priorities.</p>	<p>Donor roundtable established, and donors (and relevant international organisations) are meeting at least once a year to identify opportunities for complementarity and synergy, and maximise knowledge sharing on good practices.</p> <p>There is steady progress towards addressing the drivers of forest and biodiversity loss, on track towards achieving the conservation objective.</p>	<p>Donors (and relevant international organisations) are meeting at least once a year to identify opportunities for complementarity and synergy, and maximise knowledge sharing on good practices.</p> <p>There is steady progress towards addressing the drivers of forest and biodiversity loss, on track towards achieving the conservation objective.</p>	<p>Donors (and relevant international organisations) are meeting at least once a year to identify opportunities for complementarity and synergy, and maximise knowledge sharing on good practices.</p> <p>There is steady progress towards addressing the drivers of forest and biodiversity loss, on track towards achieving the conservation objective.</p>	<p>Donors other than CEPF are committed to providing funding for conservation and sustainable development in the hotspot that, in combination with public and private funding, is sufficient to achieve the conservation objective (i.e., 0 net deforestation in KBAs).</p>	<p>GBF post-2020: Target 1</p>	<p>Establish a donors (and relevant international organisations) roundtable in the environmental sector, ensure regular meetings of the members, and concerted decision making for synergy and complementarity towards achieving the same objectives (based on the experience in CEPF MED Hotspot) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, AFD, EU, USAID, RainForest Trust, GEF]</p> <p>Advocate for the consideration of biodiversity, forest conservation and climate change across donors supporting development projects, and encourage synergies and complementarity [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI]</p> <p>Monitor the progress towards achieving the conservation targets [CEPF, PPI, BirdLife]</p>

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
<p>3.3 Mainstreaming of conservation goals into other sectors. Ministries of key development sectors have adopted conservation goals and integrated them into their strategies and plans.</p> <p>(E)</p>	<p>Forest and biodiversity conservation are poorly integrated into the strategy and plans of key development sectors such as agriculture, water and sanitation, fisheries, tourism, mining, infrastructure and energy in the hotspot's countries.</p>	<p>At least 2 sectoral ministries with the largest potential impact on forests and biodiversity (agriculture, fisheries, tourism, mining, infrastructure, energy) or mostly impacted by forest and biodiversity loss (water and sanitation, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, health) in at least 4 hotspot country have integrated forest and biodiversity conservation priorities and sustainable practices into their strategies and plans.</p>	<p>At least 2 sectoral ministries with the largest potential impact on forests and biodiversity (agriculture, fisheries, tourism, mining, infrastructure, energy) or mostly impacted by forest and biodiversity loss (water and sanitation, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, health) in at least 7 hotspot country have integrated forest and biodiversity conservation priorities and sustainable practices into their strategies and plans.</p>	<p>At least 2 sectoral ministries with the largest potential impact on forests and biodiversity (agriculture, fisheries, tourism, mining, infrastructure, energy) or mostly impacted by forest and biodiversity loss (water and sanitation, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, health) in at least 9 hotspot's countries have integrated forest and biodiversity conservation priorities and sustainable practices into their strategies and plans.</p>	<p>At least 2 sectoral ministries with the largest potential impact on forests and biodiversity (agriculture, fisheries, tourism, mining, infrastructure, energy) or mostly impacted by forest and biodiversity loss (water and sanitation, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, health) in at least 9 hotspot's countries have integrated forest and biodiversity conservation priorities and sustainable practices into their strategies and plans.</p>	<p>(i) GBF post-2020: Target 8 (ii) SDG 15 - 15.9</p>	<p>Support sectoral ministries with the largest potential impact on forest and biodiversity or being most affected by forest and biodiversity loss in ensuring that their strategies and plans integrate forest and biodiversity conservation priorities and sustainable practices [Potential supporting organisations: UNDP, IUCN]</p>

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
<p>3.4 Long-term mechanisms. Financing mechanisms (e.g., trust funds, revenue from the sale of carbon credits, etc.) exist and are of sufficient size to yield continuous long-term returns for at least the next 10 years.</p> <p>(E)</p>	<p>One long-term financing mechanism (carbon credit market) established in Gola Forest in Sierra Leone. One long-term funding mechanism (PES) established in STP. One long-term funding mechanism (biodiversity offset) is under establishment in Guinea. In Liberia, CI initiated the Liberia Conservation Fund in 2018. In Benin, a CSR system is currently starting. In Ghana, CREMAs system and Park de Noé are working on long-term funding mechanisms. In Nigeria, a CSR system was established by the government to fund reforestation interventions.</p>	<p>At least 2 types of long-term financing mechanisms (e.g., Carbon offset or biodiversity offset, CSR, PES, trust funds, tax revenue system for extractive activities) for Protected Areas and OECMs' management (including CEPF priority KBAs) piloted in each country to cover running costs and support the development of sustainable livelihoods in GFWA landscapes.</p> <p>At 10% of CEPF priority KBAs have a long-term financing mechanism in place to cover for running costs and support the development of sustainable livelihoods in GFWA landscapes.</p>	<p>At least 2 types of long-term financing mechanisms (e.g., Carbon offset or biodiversity offset, CSR, PES, trust funds, tax revenue system for extractive activities) for Protected Areas and OECMs' management (including CEPF priority KBAs) demonstrated in each country to cover running costs and support the development of sustainable livelihoods in GFWA landscapes.</p> <p>At 50% of CEPF priority KBAs have a long-term financing mechanism in place to cover for running costs and support the development of sustainable livelihoods in GFWA landscapes.</p>	<p>Sustainable financing mechanisms (e.g., Carbon offset, biodiversity offset, CSR, PES, trust funds) supporting the conservation of CEPF priority KBAs operate and yield funding such that financial constraints are no longer identified as a barrier to effective conservation management for at least 80% of CEPF priority KBAs.</p>	<p>At least 2 types of long-term financing mechanisms (e.g., carbon offset or biodiversity offset, CSR, PES, trust funds, tax revenue system for extractive activities) for Protected Areas and OECMs' management demonstrated in each country to cover for running costs and support the development of sustainable livelihoods in GFWA landscapes.</p> <p>Sustainable financing mechanisms (e.g., Carbon offset, biodiversity offset, CSR, PES, trust funds) supporting the conservation of CEPF priority KBAs operate and yield funding such that financial constraints are no longer identified as a barrier to effective management for at least 90% of CEPF priority KBAs.</p>		<p>Support government ministries and CSOs in assessing the running costs of Protected Areas and OECMs [Potential supporting organisations: IUCN NL, BirdLife International, UNDP, CI, Noe]</p> <p>Support CSOs – in collaboration with other partners – in the development of REDD+ programme (carbon credits and/or biodiversity offsetting) – based on the experience of RSPB in Gola – to incentivise the maintenance of forest cover [Potential supporting organisations: RSPB, WCS, Noe, CI, UNDP, EU]</p> <p>* Note: REDD+/Carbon credit projects/low-emission development recognized as a priority for investments among the partners [Re:Wild, WABILED, RSPB, UNEP-WCMC, M. Bakaar, Tony Atah].</p> <p>Potential next landscapes for replication of the Gola experience: Eastern Nigeria/Western Cameroon, and Western Côte d'Ivoire and eastern Liberia [RSPB]</p> <p>Advocate with government to accrue funds for conservation from the private sector through CSR or PES systems, and implement these systems through partnerships with CSOs [Potential supporting organisations: RSPB, Re:wild, IUCN NL, UNDP]</p> <p>Support the establishment of other suitable long-term financing mechanism (e.g., trust funds or fiduciary funds) [Potential supporting organisations: IUCN NL, BirdLife International, UNDP, CI, Noe]</p>

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
Graduation Condition 4. Enabling policy and institutional environment: Institutional framework, public policies and their enforcement, and private sector business practices are supportive of biodiversity conservation. ["Mainstreaming"]							
4.1 Institutional framework for conservation. Adequate institutional framework in the environmental sector that enable long-term planning, implementation and maintenance of sustainable management interventions (D)	There is some overlap, unclarity and/or partitioning in the mandate of environment-related institutions – particularly those responsible for Protected Areas' and forest resources' management – in several of the hotspot countries (e.g., STP, Benin, Nigeria) which hinders efficient collaboration and integrated approaches.	Roles and responsibilities of each sectoral institutions in forest and biodiversity management (within and outside Protected Areas) as well as collaboration systems are clearly defined in at least 6 out of 11 hotspot's countries.	Roles and responsibilities of each sectoral institutions in forest and biodiversity management (within and outside Protected Areas) as well as collaboration systems are clearly defined in all hotspot's countries.		Roles and responsibilities of each sectoral institutions in forest and biodiversity management (within and outside Protected Areas) as well as collaboration systems are clearly defined in all hotspot's countries.	N/A	Support government institutions in identifying and addressing weaknesses in their mandate and their complementary for the sustainable management of forests and biodiversity [Potential supporting organisations: UNDP, AFD, FFI]
4.2 Legal environment for conservation. Laws exist that provide incentives for desirable management practices and disincentives against undesirable practices. (E)	The countries' legislative framework is well aligned with international commitments (except for some improvement needed in STP to better integrate biodiversity protection). Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Cameroon and Benin have adequate policies to protect forests but their enforcement is an issue. [Silas, CAMGEW, BEES]. Côte d'Ivoire government for example has started to put their commitments into action. They now have adequate policies for	A review of the legislative framework is undertaken in at least 5 other countries of the hotspots (following the example of RSPB in Ghana). At least 1 legislative document updated or developed (biodiversity conservation, sustainable practices, EIAs, land and/or natural resources tenure, climate resilience) drafted based on	At least 2 legislative documents updated or developed (biodiversity conservation, sustainable practices, EIAs, land and/or natural resources tenure, climate resilience) drafted and submitted for validation based on the recommendations from the review of the legislative framework in each hotspot's country.	The legislative framework in each hotspot's country promotes biodiversity conservation (e.g., KBAs protection). National and/or sub-national regulations incentivise good NRM practices (e.g., agroecology, sustainable harvesting rates, secured access to natural resources) and disincentivises unsustainable practices (e.g., use	The legislative framework in each hotspot's country promotes biodiversity conservation (e.g., KBAs protection). The legislative framework incentivise good NRM practices (e.g., agroecology, sustainable harvesting rates, secured access to natural resources) and disincentivises unsustainable practices (e.g., use of chemicals, slash-	(i) SDG 1 - By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural	Support government institutions in undertaking a review of the legislative framework [Potential supporting organisations: RSPB, UNDP, FAO, CI] Advocate for and support the drafting of policies promoting biodiversity conservation, sustainable natural resources management practices (e.g., agriculture, fishing, forestry, tourism), CBNRM models, Land tenure security for communities with a particular focus on women and youth [Potential supporting organisations: AFD, FAO, UNDP] Support CSOs in working with relevant governmental agencies on improving EIAs (and SEAs) legislation [Potential supporting organisations: IUCN NL, AFD, Re:wild]

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
	<p>forest protection and environment protection [WACSI]. However, some policy updates are needed to support the implementation of integrated approaches and promote good practices. EIA/SEAs policies need to be improved in most countries. Some improvements of the land and/or natural resources tenure policies to enable community-based management systems would be needed in several countries such as Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire.</p> <p>In Ghana, a National Policy Review was undertaken and led to significant policy improvements.</p>	<p>the recommendations from the review of the legislative framework in each hotspot's country.</p> <p>[Note: Number of documents needed to be defined based on the results of the National Policy Reviews]</p>		<p>of chemicals, slash-and-burn, uncontrolled harvesting) – especially in GFWA landscapes – in each hotspot's country.</p> <p>National EIA policies in each country include avoidance of important biodiversity sites, mandatory compensation, and external audits (such as in Guinea).</p> <p>Legislative framework recognizing local communities' long-term access rights to natural resources and ownership of the land, and supporting the establishment of CBNRM models (e.g., such as in Guinea) in each of the hotspot's country.</p>	<p>and-burn, uncontrolled harvesting) – especially in GFWA landscapes – in each hotspot's country.</p> <p>National EIA policies in each country include avoidance of important biodiversity sites, mandatory compensation, and external audits (such as in Guinea).</p> <p>Legislative framework recognizing local communities' long-term access rights to natural resources and ownership of the land, and supporting the establishment of CBNRM models (e.g., such as in Guinea) in each of the hotspot country.</p>	<p>resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance (ii) SDG 5 - 5.6.a. (iii) Forest Convergence Plan in West Africa - Area of intervention 1</p>	

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
<p>4.3 Education and training. Environmental and social education integrated across the curricula, and domestic programs exist that produce trained environmental managers at secondary, undergraduate, and advanced academic levels.</p> <p>(E)</p>	<p>Environmental and social education is poorly integrated in the curricula of the targeted countries. There are several good initiatives of environmental programmes ongoing in schools (e.g., Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia). Many children in the hotspot's countries do not attend formal schools and receive informal education at village level.</p> <p>Re:wild is currently implementing a training programme for primatologists. USAID is supporting Masters training on CITES in Sierra Leone, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria. Several countries have a Masters' programme or professional training in biodiversity conservation (e.g., Liberia, Sierra Leone).</p>	<p>Environmental and social education integrated in the curricula of primary, secondary and tertiary education and in local informal education systems in at least 3 of the hotspot's countries.</p> <p>At least 2 Masters programmes or professional trainings in the sustainable management of forest resources and/or biodiversity conservation in the region (at least 1 in French and 1 in English)</p>	<p>Environmental and social education integrated in the curricula of primary, secondary and tertiary education and in local informal education systems in at least 7 of the hotspot's countries.</p> <p>At least 3 Masters programmes or professional trainings in the sustainable management of forest resources and/or biodiversity conservation in the region (at least 1 in French and 1 in English)</p>	<p>Environmental and social education integrated in the curricula of primary, secondary and tertiary education and in local informal education systems each of the hotspot's countries.</p>	<p>Environmental and social education integrated in the curricula of primary, secondary and tertiary education in each of the hotspot's countries.</p> <p>At least 3 Masters programmes or professional trainings in the sustainable management of forest resources and/or biodiversity conservation in the region (at least 1 in French and 1 in English). [Note: 1 per country will likely be too much as students must be able to find good job opportunities within the region]</p>	<p>(i) SDG 13 - 13.3 (ii) Forest Convergence Plan in West Africa - Area of intervention 7</p>	<p>Support CSOs in implementing environmental clubs initiatives in schools where environmental and social education is insufficient based on the experience of EFA, WCF and BirdLife [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, IDH]</p> <p>Support the development of environmental and climate change manuals, their piloting in a sub-set of schools and their integration at the national level [Potential supporting organisations: USAID, GEF]</p> <p>Support governments and research institutions in the creation/establishment/strengthening of Masters programmes and professional training courses in the hotspot [Potential supporting organisations: USAID, WCF, EFA]</p>

<p>4.4 Enforcement. Local government and/or community bodies have the authority and capacity to enforce the law within and outside Protected Areas (including arrests and prosecutions).</p> <p>(E)</p>	<p>Law enforcement is an important issue across the countries of the hotspot. The majority of the required policies for forest and biodiversity protection exist but their enforcement on the ground is very limited. This is generally because of insufficient human and financial capacity of sectoral government institutions. WCF is piloting a Community Ecoguard Programme to address this enforcement gaps in some Protected Areas in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea.</p>	<p>At least 30% of gazetted Protected Areas in each hotspot's country have their boundaries demarcated on the ground, have a clear surveying system (regular patrols) and law enforcement system in place.</p> <p>At least 40% of arrests for conservation offenses (from local government and community bodies) lead to a penalty being imposed (fine, confiscation, imprisonment, etc.).</p> <p>EIA legislation is adequately applied and mitigation measures are implemented to minimise risks of degradation in KBAs, buffer zones and biological corridors in at least 3 of the hotspots countries.</p>	<p>At least 50% of gazetted Protected Areas in each hotspot's country have their boundaries demarcated on the ground, have a clear surveying system (regular patrols) and law enforcement system in place.</p> <p>At least 50% of arrests for conservation offenses (from local government and community bodies) lead to a penalty being imposed (fine, confiscation, imprisonment, etc.).</p> <p>EIA legislation is adequately applied and mitigation measures are implemented to minimise risks of degradation in KBAs, buffer zones and biological corridors in at least 4 of the hotspots countries.</p>	<p>At least 70% of gazetted Protected Areas in each hotspot's country have their boundaries demarcated on the ground, have a clear surveying system (regular patrols) and law enforcement system in place.</p> <p>At least 50% of arrests for conservation offenses (from local government and community bodies) lead to a penalty being imposed (fine, confiscation, imprisonment, etc.).</p> <p>EIA legislation is adequately applied and mitigation measures are implemented to minimise risks of degradation in KBAs, buffer zones and biological corridors in at least 6 of the hotspots countries.</p>	<p>At least 70% of gazetted Protected Areas in each country have their boundaries demarcated on the ground, a clear surveying system (regular patrols) and a law enforcement system in place.</p> <p>At least 50% of arrests for conservation offenses lead to a penalty being imposed.</p> <p>EIA legislation is adequately applied and mitigation measures are implemented to minimise risks of degradation in KBAs, buffer zones and biological corridors in at least six countries.</p> <p>[Note: achieving more than six countries prioritising KBA protection might be unrealistic, so the combined efforts of improving EIAs and collaboration with the private sector should significantly reduce the impact of private sector projects.]</p>	<p>GBF post-2020: Target 3.</p>	<p>Support CSOs in establishing Community-based Management Areas including a community-based law enforcement system whereby a designated group (e.g., ecoguards) is able to enforce the law in Protected Areas and OECMs (e.g., WCF's Community Ecoguard Programme) to address gaps in law enforcement [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, WCF, WCS, RainForest Trust]</p> <p>Advocate for increased funding allocation for law enforcement within and outside of National Parks with government institutions, based on aforementioned financial needs assessment [Potential supporting organisations: UNDP, FFI]</p> <p>Support the identification of private or external funding sources for Protected Area and OECMs' management [Potential supporting organisations: Noe, CI]</p> <p>Provide training for national experts and CSOs on EIAs [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, Re:wild, IUCN NL]</p> <p>Provide training for governmental institutions on EIAs and SEAs to undertake EIAs' quality control (technical reviews) and rejecting bad quality ones, and provide training across the justice system on environmental regulations, crimes and sentences [Potential supporting organisations: Re:wild, IUCN NL]</p>
--	--	--	--	--	---	---------------------------------	---

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
<p>4.5 Business practices. Private sector business practices in sectors with a (potentially) large biodiversity footprint are supportive of the conservation of natural habitats and species populations.</p> <p>(E)</p>	<p>1) 2 CSOs/Private Companies networks are in place and active in Benin (led by EcoBenin) and Ghana (led by A Rocha). Two attempts in Liberia: National Cacao Platform led by the Ministry of Agriculture, and National Oil Palm Platform between private sector and CSOs but not operational.</p> <p>2) In STP, there is good progress with private sector engagement in the agricultural sector where large footprint companies are investing to improve practices.</p>	<p>1 platform between conservation-focused CSOs and private companies established and operational in at least 5 countries to assess the impact of CC and environmental degradation on the sustainability of their businesses, and assist them in identifying and adopting more sustainable practices.</p> <p>At least 1 large company per country identified as having a large (actual or potential) biodiversity footprint (e.g., mining, logging, intensive agriculture) has introduced business practices supportive of the conservation of natural habitats and species populations across their operations.</p>	<p>1 platform between conservation-focused CSOs and private companies established and operational in at least 8 countries to assess the impact of CC and environmental degradation on the sustainability of their businesses, and assist them in identifying and adopting more sustainable practices.</p> <p>At least 2 large companies per country identified as having a large (actual or potential) biodiversity footprint (e.g., mining, logging, intensive agriculture) have introduced business practices supportive of the conservation of natural habitats and species populations across their operations.</p>	<p>At least 1 platform between conservation-focused CSOs and private companies established and operational in each country to assess the impact of CC and environmental degradation on the sustainability of their businesses, and assist them in identifying and adopting more sustainable practices.</p> <p>At least 3 large companies per country identified as having a large (actual or potential) biodiversity footprint (e.g., mining, logging, intensive agriculture) have introduced business practices supportive of the conservation of natural habitats and species populations across their operations.</p>	<p>At least 1 platform between conservation-focused CSOs and private companies established and operational in each country to assess the impact of CC and environmental degradation on the sustainability of their businesses, and assist them in identifying and adopting more sustainable practices.</p> <p>At least 3 large companies per country identified as having a large (actual or potential) biodiversity footprint (e.g., mining, logging, intensive agriculture) have introduced business practices supportive of the conservation of natural habitats and species populations across their operations.</p>	<p>(i) GBF post-2020: Target 15. (ii) SDG 17 - 17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships (iii) Forest Convergence Plan in West Africa - Area of intervention 5 iv) AFR100 and Bonn challenge restoration targets</p>	<p>Support CSOs to work with government institutions to identify all upcoming private sector projects planned in the next 10 to 20 years, to assess their environmental impact, and identify ways to collaborate with the private sector to minimise this impact [Potential supporting organisations: IUCN, UNDP, CI]</p> <p>Support CSOs to engage with the private sector [Potential supporting organisations: IUCN, UNDP, USAID]</p> <p>Support CSOs to collaborate with private sector companies in the agricultural sector to develop/strengthen sustainable agricultural value chains including improved practices (e.g., for increased vegetation cover in cacao, cashew and other plantations [WABILED]) and certification systems to incentivise the adoption and maintenance of biodiversity-friendly practices [Potential supporting organisations: IUCN, UNDP, CI, USAID, BirdLife, Noé]</p> <p>Support CSOs to collaborate with private companies in the extractive industries to minimise their impacts on biodiversity, and adopt mitigation practices [Potential supporting organisations: IUCN, UNDP, CI, USAID, WCS, GIZ]</p> <p>Support CSOs to establish community-based ecotourism projects where appropriate (e.g., in Tai, Grebo and Sapo in Liberia [WABILED, Neil - UNEP-WCMC]) in collaboration with the private sector where needed [Potential supporting orgs: IUCN, UNDP, CI, USAID, WCS, GIZ]</p>

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
Graduation Condition 5. Monitoring impact: Monitoring systems in place to measure impacts and support an adaptive approach							
<p>5.1 Biodiversity monitoring and identification of good practices. Nationwide or region-wide systems are in place to monitor status and trends of forests, biodiversity, threats, and efficiency of conservation practices.</p> <p>(E)</p>	<p>No government-based national M&E system on forests and biodiversity, and/or on the impact of conservation practices was identified in the hotspot's countries. M&E interventions are linked to projects and often led by international institutions.</p> <p>METT or IMET are used to monitor several National Parks but governments have not yet adopted it as a monitoring tool for Protected Areas nationally.</p> <p>Integrated decision making tools (e.g., Landscape Outcome Assessment Methodology – LOAM, Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool – IMET) have not yet been adopted by the hotspot's countries.</p> <p>Several initiatives are proposing or have proposed common monitoring indicators on specific themes (migratory birds by</p>	<p>Government institutions are trained in the use of M&E tools for biodiversity and threat monitoring and integrated decision-making tools in 6 hotspot countries.</p> <p>Systems are in place to monitor biodiversity and strengthened species, the trends and health of forests, the sources of degradation (e.g., forest fire, wildlife trade, invasive species, etc.) and the efficiency of conservation practices, in at least 40% of gazetted KBAs and biological corridors, and data from these systems are being used to adjust the management plans, and guide land-use planning and development control.</p> <p>Common</p>	<p>Government institutions are trained in the use of M&E tools for biodiversity and threat monitoring and integrated decision-making tools in all hotspot countries.</p> <p>Systems are in place to monitor biodiversity and strengthened species, the trends and health of forests, the sources of degradation (e.g., forest fire, wildlife trade, invasive species, etc.) and the efficiency of conservation practices, in at least 60% of gazetted KBAs and biological corridors, and data from these systems are being used to adjust the management plans, and guide land-use planning and development control.</p> <p>Common</p>	<p>Systems are in place to monitor biodiversity and strengthened species, the trends and health of forests, the sources of degradation (e.g., forest fire, wildlife trade, invasive species, etc.) and the efficiency of conservation practices, in at least 80% of gazetted KBAs and biological corridors, and data from these systems are being used to adjust the management plans, and guide land-use planning and development control.</p> <p>Common monitoring indicators to facilitate knowledge sharing and the comparison of approaches are adopted by at least 8 of the</p>	<p>Systems are in place to monitor the trends and health of forests and biodiversity, main sources of degradation (e.g., forest fire, mining, wildlife trade, invasive species, Climate Change etc.) and the efficiency of conservation practices, in at least 80% of gazetted KBAs and biological corridors, and data from these systems are being used to adjust the management plans, and guide land-use planning and development control [adapted from Mainstreaming strategy].</p> <p>Common monitoring indicators are adopted by at least 8 of the hotspots countries to facilitate knowledge sharing and the comparison</p>	<p>(i) SDG 17 - 17.7 Promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed</p>	<p>Support government institutions in identifying and received training on most relevant monitoring tools [Potential supporting organisations: RSPB, UNEP-WCMC, WCF, EU/Biopama]</p> <p>Support CSOs in working with government institutions to establish long-term monitoring systems [Potential supporting organisations: RSPB, UNEP-WCMC, WCF, EU/Biopama]</p> <p>Support CSOs and research organisations in assessing and monitoring threats to forest ecosystems and biodiversity across the GFWA landscapes and their interactions [Potential supporting organisations: RSPB, UNEP-WCMC, WCF, EU/Biopama]</p> <p>Support CSOs in working with local communities in monitoring the impact of their interventions in the long term in Community-based Management Areas [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, RSPB, UNEP-WCMC, WCF]</p> <p>Create synergies between the support provided by Biopama on the use of monitoring tools and the support provided by CEPF (Suggestion in WCMC report 2021: Aligning the future CEPF funded projects with those receiving support from Biopama would be a good way forward to share data and ensure that there is no duplication in effort) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, EU/Biopama]</p>

Suggested graduation criteria (E: Essential; or D: Desirable)	Baseline level relative to target [please see Section 2 for more information]	Milestone Phase 1 (2023-2027)	Milestone Phase 2 (2028-2032)	Milestone Phase 3 (2033-2037)	Suggested targets	Contribution to global targets (e.g., SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)	Support actions to meet the targets* (where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)
	RSPB, great apes in Côte d'Ivoire by WCF). BIOPAMA also provides grants for training on a set of international M&E tools.	monitoring indicators are proposed for the hotspot to facilitate knowledge sharing and the comparison of approaches.	monitoring indicators to facilitate knowledge sharing and the comparison of approaches are adopted by at least 5 of the hotspot's countries.	hotspots' countries.	<p>of approaches.</p> <p>[Note: The knowledge generated on good practices will thereafter be shared through the improved communication streams resulting from Condition 1, at transboundary and regional levels].</p>		<p>Promote maximised synergies between all existing M&E systems of donors working in the hotspot (e.g., AFD Facility Forest Territories indicators, OBAPAO's regional set of indicators) to facilitate knowledge sharing and comparison of approaches [Potential supporting organisations: RSPB, UNEP-WCMC, WCF, EU/BIOPAMA, IUCN, AFD]</p> <p>Support CSOs and research organisations in undertaking research projects on the impact of improved agricultural, forestry, fishing, harvesting practices on ecosystems health, biodiversity and local economy [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, WCS]</p>

***Support actions** is a list of actions that CEPF and partners can take to directly or indirectly influence the required changes. Potential support organisations have been suggested for each action based on their experience and interest.

4.2 Theory of Change

89. The Theory of Change is divided into two main elements. The first element is the situation analysis. It defines the conservation target – the Guinean Forests’ landscapes – which is composed of four main elements: the KBAs and their species; KBAs’ buffer zones; the biological corridors between KBAs; the production lands including agricultural lands, pastoral lands, plantations, inland and coastal fishing areas; and the communities living in these landscapes. The situation analysis presents the main direct threats identified on the Guinean Forests’ landscapes as well as the contributing factors and drivers (Figure 3). Finally, the proposed strategies (or actions) are summarised in the situation analysis to show how the identified threats will be addressed.
90. The second element of the Theory of Change is the Diagram of Results chains which shows how the proposed strategies/actions and their outputs will lead to the end goal of the Long-Term Vision: **connected and sustainably managed Guinean Forests Landscapes that support biodiversity conservation, communities’ livelihoods and resilience to climate change across the region**. The results chains are grouped per graduation condition (see Figures 4 to 8). The main stakeholders responsible for the specific strategy/action are specified. These include the government, CSOs, private sector as well as donors and international organisations if they are the main actor for a specific action.
91. The achievement of the expected results and progresses towards the end goal depends on a number of wider assumptions⁶² (depicted by an ‘A’ in Figures 4 to 8). These assumptions are operating over different scales and at different points along the causal chains. In addition, three critical assumptions have been identified. These critical assumptions will need to be monitored during future potential investment phases. If they were found to no longer be met, CEPF and partners’ engagement in the specific country or site would have to be reconsidered.

Critical assumptions:

- CA1. No major changes in political priorities going against international commitments at the national level.
- CA2. No national crisis leading to civil unrest at the country scale.
- CA3. No major changes in the political or socio-economic situation that would prevent CSOs from operating.

⁶² *Assumptions* are external factors or conditions that need to be present for change to happen, but are beyond the power of the project to influence or address, e.g., turnover of government officials, global financial situation.

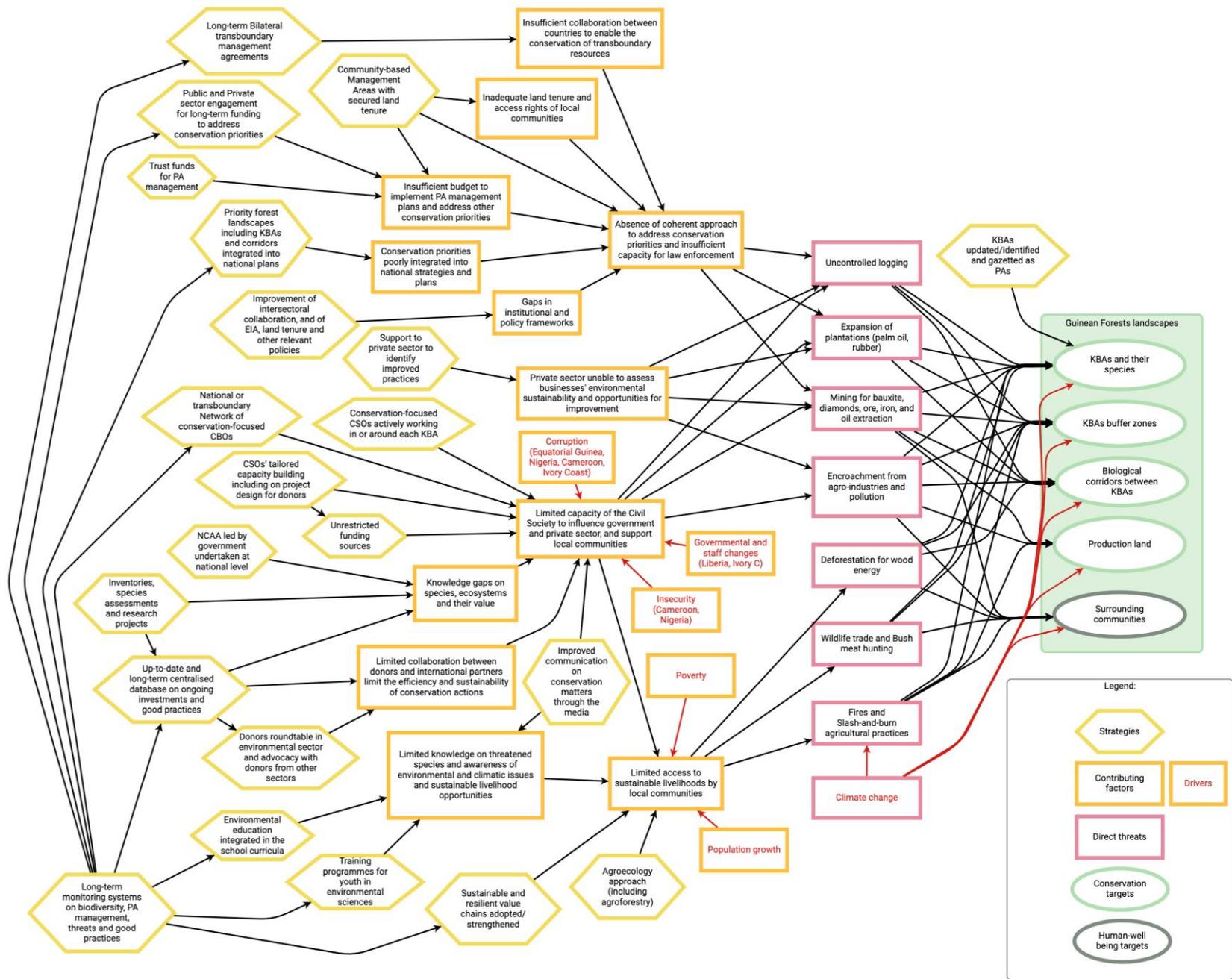


Figure 3: Situation model and proposed Strategies/Actions

Results-chains for each Graduation Condition:

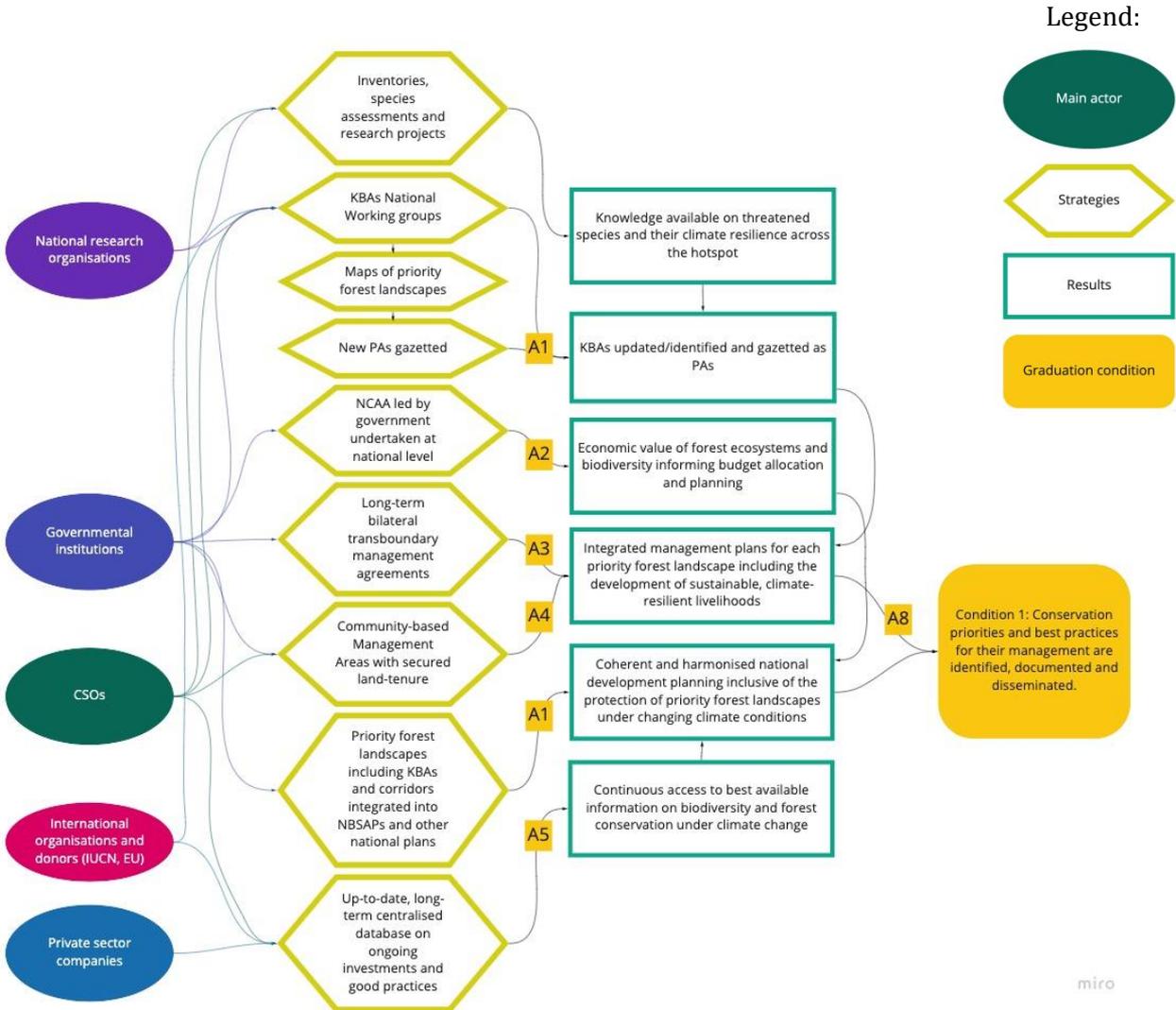


Figure 4: Results chain for Graduation Condition 1

Key Assumptions for Graduation Condition 1:

- A1. Governments are supportive of forest and biodiversity conservation in alignment with their ratification to international agreements.
- A2. Improved knowledge on biodiversity, ecosystems and their value helps convince governments to prioritize conservation, and triggers behavioural changes.
- A3. Neighbouring countries are willing to collaborate.
- A4. Community-based management systems and secured access to natural resources are successful in sustainably improving communities’ livelihoods which enables behavioural changes towards defending natural resources and adopting sustainable exploitation practices.
- A5. Knowledge sharing database are maintained in the long term, effectively used and regularly updated.
- A8. Long-term monitoring of pilot projects by donors allows the identification of successful and sustainable models (supported by evidence-based information) for replication/upscaling.
- A12. Ecosystems and biodiversity within KBAs are able to resist or adapt to climate change.

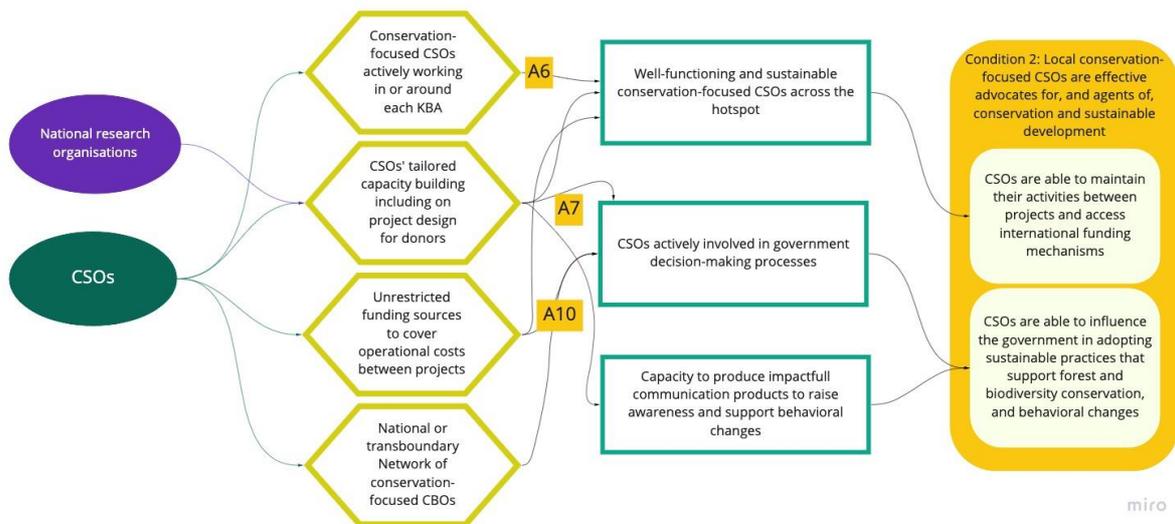


Figure 5: Results chain for Graduation Condition 2

Key Assumptions for Graduation Condition 2:

A6. Civil society organisations are present and willing to engage in biodiversity conservation, to partner with unfamiliar actors from other sectors, and to adopt innovative approaches.

A7. Increasing the capacity and credibility of local civil society organisations is likely to open political space for these organisations as they become recognized as trusted advisors (rather than causing them to be viewed as threats to vested interests).

A10. CSOs have the acknowledge that they need to efficiently and continuously collaborate and be able to address conservation priorities, and they are willing to do so.

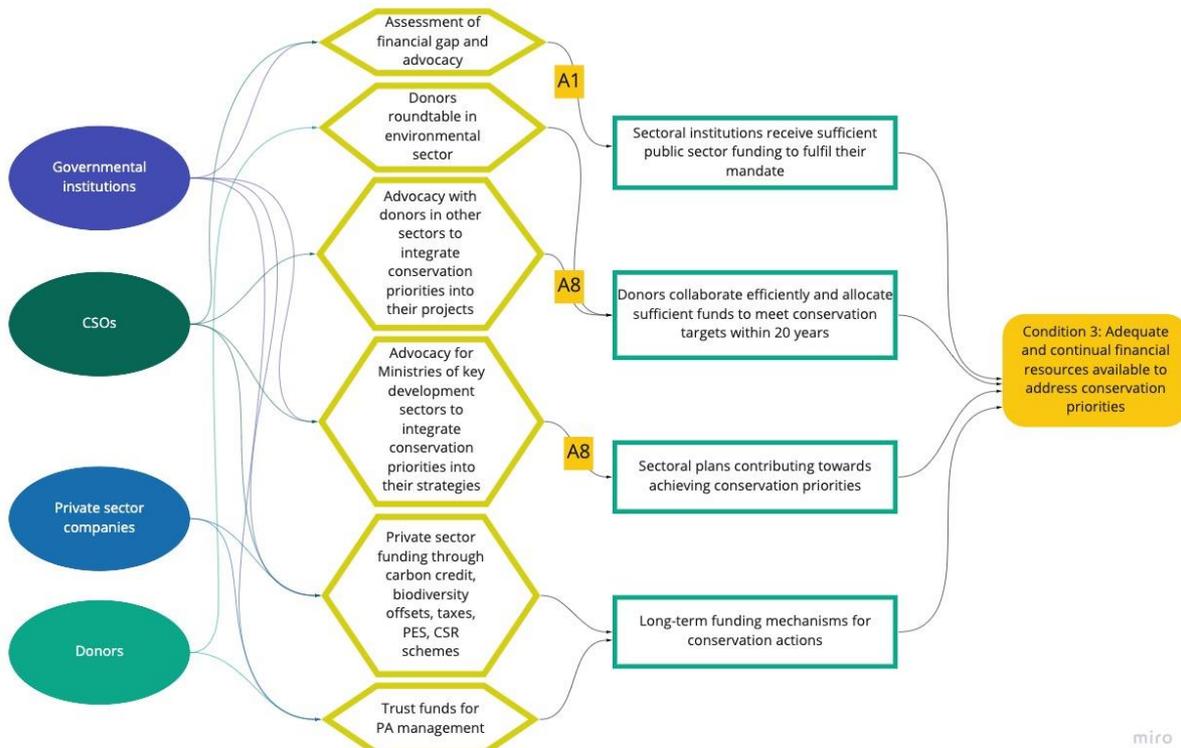


Figure 6: Results chain for Graduation Condition 3

Key Assumptions for Graduation Condition 3:

- A1. Governments are supportive of forest and biodiversity conservation in alignment with their ratification to international agreements.
- A8. Long-term monitoring of pilot projects by donors allows the identification of successful and sustainable models (supported by evidence-based information) for replication/upscaling.

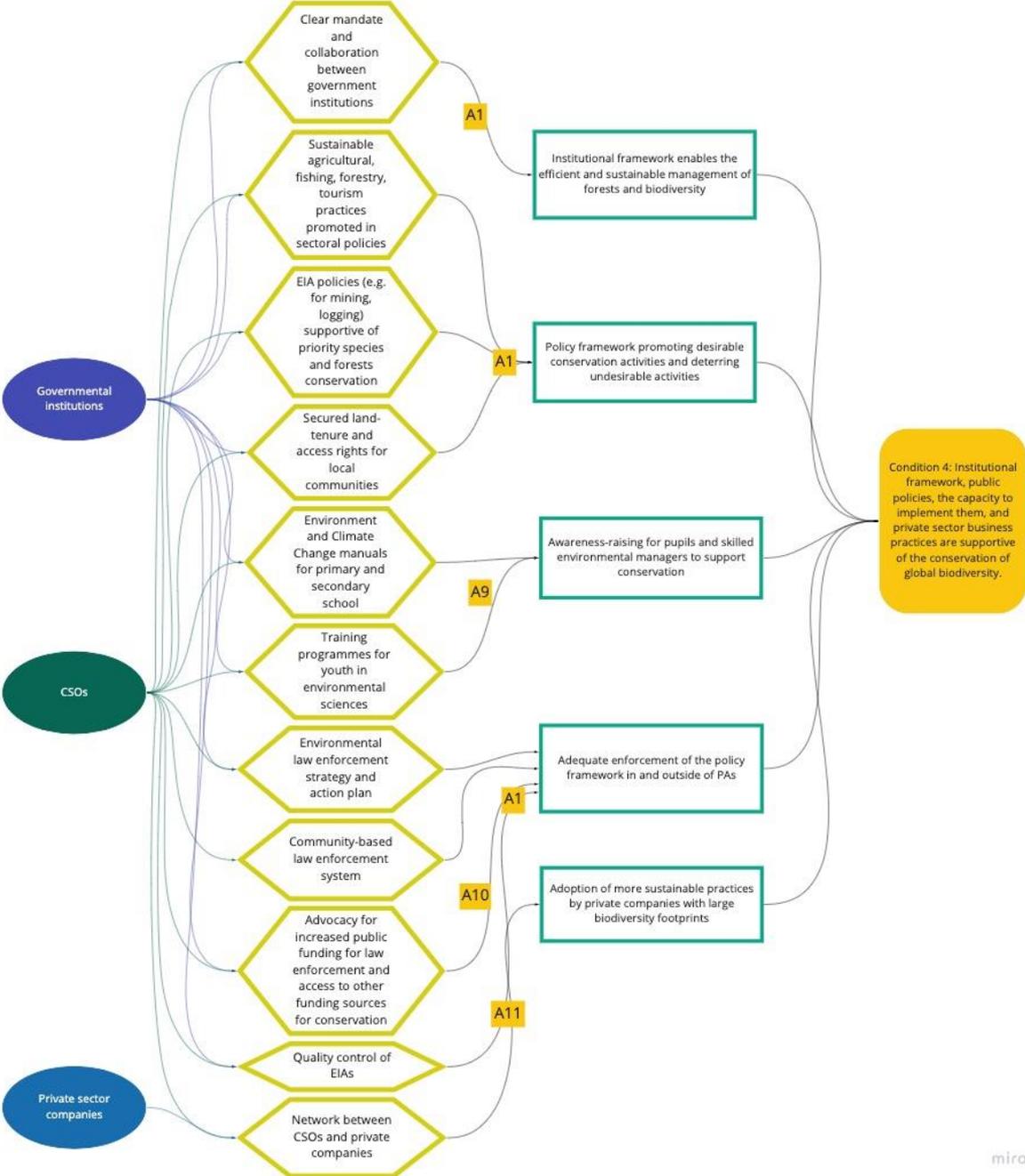


Figure 7: Results chain for Graduation Condition 4.

Key Assumptions for Graduation Condition 4:

- A1. Governments are supportive of forest and biodiversity conservation in alignment with their ratification to international agreements.
- A9. National academic institutions produce graduates with the skills and perspective to respond to local conservation challenges by working with or within civil society organisations.

A10. CSOs acknowledge that they need to collaborate efficiently and continuously to be able to address conservation priorities and are willing to do so.

A11. Sustainable practices with similar or higher economic benefits can be identified as alternatives for private sector companies with large carbon footprint.

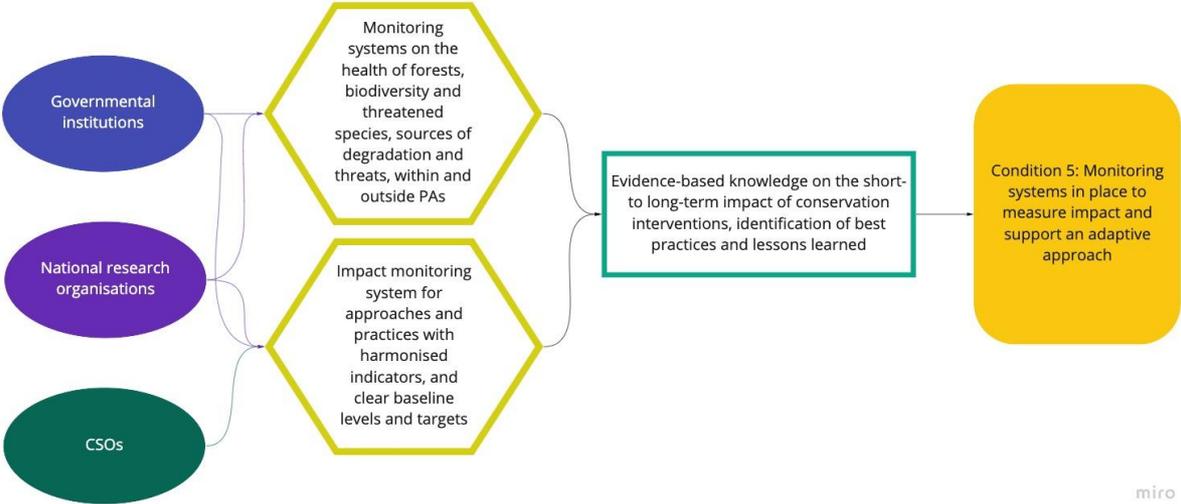


Figure 8: Results chain for Graduation Condition 5

4.3 M&E plan

92. Some knowledge gaps regarding the baseline situation prior to project investments have limited the monitoring of impact in previous CEPF investment phases. As an example, species’ population size is a major impact indicator of CEPF and was monitored under the previous CEPF phases but data deficiency on initial population sizes or insufficient monitoring resources have challenged the measure of this impact. Building on this experience, more efforts and resources should be invested in monitoring the biological impact (on species as well as on biodiversity) of the investments. Adequate time and resources must be invested at the onset of each project to ensure that the set of indicators to be monitored are well defined and the baseline level are adequately quantified for each indicator.

93. The Long-Term Vision offers an opportunity to adopt a programme-based approach and thereby monitor impacts in the medium and long term. This is greatly necessary as a large proportion of the impacts of conservation investments will only arise after several years (e.g., species recovery, ecosystem health). The impact of capacity building interventions for CSOs should also be monitored in the long term.

94. Regarding the monitoring of the progress towards achieving the Long-Term Vision targets, means of verification are proposed in Table 4 for each of the graduation criteria and targets. These targets are mostly output based, therefore impact-based indicators are also proposed where adequate to guide the monitoring of the medium- to long-term impacts of the investments.

Table 4: Means of verification of the Long-Term Vision’s targets and suggested Impact Indicators for the Long-Term Vision in the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot

Suggested graduation criteria	Suggested targets	Means of verification for the Long-Term Vision targets	Suggested impact indicators
Graduation Condition 1. Conservation priorities and best practices: Conservation priorities and best practices for their management are identified, documented, disseminated and integrated into national strategies to guide conservation investments across the hotspot.			
1.1 Globally threatened species. Comprehensive global threat assessments conducted for all terrestrial vertebrates, vascular plants and at least selected freshwater taxa.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Species assessments – including their resilience to climate change – are completed for at least 90% of all recorded species of terrestrial vertebrate, vascular plant and at least 3 major freshwater taxa in the hotspot (based on inventories undertaken for each KBA - see Condition 1 Criteria 2), and with results incorporated onto the IUCN Red List. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KBAs’ inventories Research reports on species IUCN database’s updates 	<p><i>Core indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trend in species’ population size or trend in biodiversity levels (biodiversity index, fish diversity index of NatureMetrics) Trend in forest cover (in KBAs, in biological corridors, in production land, and at the overall landscape level) Number of developed/adjusted policies deriving from NCAA implemented. <p><i>Other relevant indicators (external):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of governments’ budget allocation to conservation interventions (and proportion of this budget managed by conservation-focused CSOs) Trend in climate resilience indexes <p>[Note: the indicators should be adjusted later on to maximise alignment with the CBD indicators to be updated at the Conference of the Parties i.e., (headlines) indicators for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework]</p>
1.2 Key Biodiversity Areas. KBAs identified in all countries and territories in the hotspot, covering, at minimum, terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National or transboundary KBAs' coordination group established and operational in each country (meeting taking place twice a year with resources allocated annually). Map of priority forests landscape for biodiversity – taking current climate trends and future climate conditions into account – available for each country of the hotspot and new KBAs and biological corridors identified accordingly across terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems within the hotspot. Status of existing KBAs (prior to 2021) reviewed across the hotspot, covering terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KBA coordination groups’ reports KBAs’ assessment reports Priority forest landscapes’ maps KBA database’s updates 	
1.3 Protected Areas. KBAs gazetted as Protected Areas at the national level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 70% of KBAs and their buffer zones and relevant biological corridors are gazetted as Protected Areas or OECMs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KBA National Coordination groups’ reports on KBAs’ protection statuses Legislative documents (e.g., bye-laws, decrees) for the creation of Protected Areas’, CBNRM areas and other area-based conservation measures 	
1.4 Reservoirs of natural capital. Reservoirs of natural capital identified in all countries and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCAA undertaken in at least 8 of the targeted countries (at least for forests) including the identification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCAA reports References to NCAA results in governments’ budgeting processes 	

Suggested graduation criteria	Suggested targets	Means of verification for the Long-Term Vision targets	Suggested impact indicators
territories in the hotspot, covering ecosystem services particularly critical to human survival, such as water provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and mapping of reservoirs of natural capital for water provision and at least 2 other ecosystem services essential to healthy, sustainable societies (e.g., climate resilience, NTFP provisioning, carbon storage etc.). National capital accounts inform development planning in at least 8 out of 11 countries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual governments budget allocation per sector (environmental/natural resources' management/climate change adaptation sectors) 	
1.5 Landscape-level integrated management plans. KBAs and buffer zones, biological corridors and reservoirs of natural capital are part of a landscape-level integrated Management Plan under implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 8 bilateral transboundary management agreements signed and under implementation (for each transboundary KBA/important landscape) for knowledge sharing, concerted decision-making and planning, exchange visits. At least 70% of KBAs are integrated in Landscape-level climate-resilient management plans (including zoning of no-take areas, restricted areas such as buffer zones and biological corridors, and resilient livelihoods' development areas) that are under implementation and guide the sustainable management of KBAs and surrounding areas over the next 10 years. Each integrated landscape-level climate-resilient management plans is embedded into relevant national, sub-national and local development plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transboundary agreements Landscape-level integrated management plans and KBAs coverage Updated national, sub-national and local development plans Communities' surveys Field visits Satellite imagery (e.g., LandSat) 	
1.6 Conservation strategies. Conservation priorities incorporated into national conservation plans or strategies and action plans developed with the participation of multiple stakeholders.	Threatened species, KBAs and/or landscapes are incorporated into the NBSAPs of and other relevant national strategy documents in each hotspot country with the participation of multiple stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NBSAPs National strategy documents and action plans National and/or sub-national development planning guidelines 	
1.7 Regional knowledge sharing platforms. Governmental and non-governmental organisations in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 informal coordination platform established at hotspot level with governments, international NGOs, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting reports from the hotspot-level coordination platform 	

Suggested graduation criteria	Suggested targets	Means of verification for the Long-Term Vision targets	Suggested impact indicators
each country can easily access reliable information and data to support biodiversity and forest conservation.	<p>donors, private sector and CSOs where appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The governmental- and non-governmental organisations of each country of the hotspot have access to a reliable, up-to-date and long-term centralised database to store all data and reports linked to biodiversity and forest conservation (including climate change, threatened species, KBAs and Protected Areas, management plans, land-use and forest cover changes, human population trends...). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centralised database and usage (frequency of updates, number of visits disaggregated per country, number of documents downloads disaggregated per country, feedback from users) 	
<p>Graduation Condition 2. Civil society capacity: Local civil society groups dedicated to conservation priorities collectively possess sufficient organizational and technical capacity to be effective advocates for, and agents of, conservation and sustainable development, while being equal partners of government agencies influencing decision making in favour of sustainable societies and economies.</p>			
2.1 Conservation community. The community of civil society organizations is sufficiently broad and deep-rooted to respond to key conservation issues and collectively possesses the technical competencies of critical importance to conservation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 12 conservation-focused CSOs are working actively and consistently in addressing conservation issues, including at least 3 playing a leadership role (e.g., mentoring smaller CSOs) in each hotspot country. At least one recognized* CSO working continuously or regularly in or around each of the identified KBAs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from mentees, mentoring reports, exchange visits reports Map of ongoing investments Field visits in KBAs 	<p><i>Core indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trend in CSOs' capacity score (e.g., CSTT score) Trend in additional funding leveraged by CSOs Number of policy/strategy documents updated/developed to be more supportive of conservation Number of conservation-focused networks and/or partnerships lasting beyond projects implementation <p><i>Other relevant indicators (external):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> % access to education for girls and boys Trend in literacy and education levels for women and men Trend in access to family planning and in the use of contraceptives Trend in family sizes Trend in human well-being indices Number and success rate of court cases against unsustainable projects won by CSOs
2.2 Institutional capacity. Local civil society groups collectively possess sufficient institutional and operational capacity and structures to raise funds for conservation and to ensure the efficient management of conservation projects and strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 5 conservation-focused CSOs per country in the hotspot have a compounded capacity considered as high (e.g., CSTT score of 80 or more). At least 5 conservation-focused CSOs per country in the hotspot are able to access funds from international donors without support from CEPF or PPI. At least 50% of women participation across training courses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity assessments' scores (e.g., CSTT) Training support material Attendees' lists from training sessions Accepted CSOs' project proposals (from external donors) BirdLife Quality Assurance System (QAS) 	
2.3 Financial resources. Local CSOs have access to sufficient unrestricted funding sources (e.g., membership, donations, small	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 5 CSOs in each country have access to sufficient unrestricted funding to maintain their staff and core costs without relying on international donors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business plans Annual finance reports CSOs' operational reports (staff maintenance, continuity of on-the-ground interventions) Field visits 	

Suggested graduation criteria	Suggested targets	Means of verification for the Long-Term Vision targets	Suggested impact indicators
businesses) to maintain their core operations between projects.			
2.4 Partnerships. Effective mechanisms (e.g., discussion forums, round-tables, mutual support networks, alliances, etc.) exist for conservation-focused civil society groups to work in partnership with one another.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 national networks for CSOs in conservation and other relevant sectors established and active (health, social development, education) - 1 per country. At least 7 networks for women-led CSOs in conservation and other relevant sectors established and active (building on the efforts of TBA in Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, Liberia and Sierra Leone). At least 80% of the conservation projects are complemented by projects focused on family planning and education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSOs' network reports Validated joint proposals (including GEF-funded proposals) Exchange visits' reports Collaboration/cofinancing agreements Activity reports from conservation, education, family planning interventions Communities' surveys Field visits Countries profile (UN agencies) 	
2.5 Transformational impact. Local civil society groups are able, individually or collectively, to influence public policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 3 CSOs in each country are regularly consulted by the government (for decision-making, policy development and strategizing processes) in each hotspot country. At least 1 network between the media and CSOs created in each country with training sessions for journalists on environmental issues, for CSOs on public speaking, and awareness raising of the editors in chief of the newspapers, radio channels and TV channels on environmental issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government workshops' reports and attendees' lists Guiding documents for governments' decision-making processes CSOs' reports on design/updating processes for legislative documents CSOs and media networks' reports Media training sessions' reports, training material and attendees' list Communication products (radio shows, TV shows, newspapers' articles...) Occurrence of environmental matters in the headline Reports and surveys from the media and CSOs on advocacy and behavioural changes National and/or local surveys of public opinion 	
Graduation condition 3. Sustainable financing. Adequate and continual financial resources are available to address conservation of global priorities.			
3.1 Public sector funding. Public sector agencies responsible for conservation in the hotspot have a continued public fund allocation or	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main public sector agencies responsible for conservation in each hotspot country have assessed their 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministries' financial assessments reports Annual governments' budget allocation reports Ministries' financial reports 	<p><i>Core indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of sustainable financing mechanisms delivering funds to biodiversity conservation

Suggested graduation criteria	Suggested targets	Means of verification for the Long-Term Vision targets	Suggested impact indicators
revenue-generating ability to operate effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> long-term financial needs to fulfil their mandate. The main public sector agencies responsible for conservation in each hotspot's country receive 90% of the financial resources they need. At least 4 environmental funds operational, with a significant portion of the fund dedicated to conservation initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative documents for the establishment of environmental funds and funds' operational reports including funding allocation Projects' proposals financed by the Environmental Funds 	<p><i>Other relevant indicators (external):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trend in the proportion of the public funds allocated to conservation Trend in the budget from donor, public and private sources allocated to conservation in the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot
3.2 Donor funding. Donors collaborate efficiently to provide sufficient funds towards addressing conservation priorities in the hotspot.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donors other than CEPF are committed to providing funding for conservation and sustainable development in the hotspot that, in combination with public and private funding, is sufficient to achieve the conservation objective (e.g., 0 net deforestation in KBAs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting reports from the donors' roundtable Updated strategy documents, programmes' documents, budgets and activity reports of donors in other relevant sectors Annual action plans for the Long-term Vision and annual progress reports towards achieving Long-Term Vision targets 	
3.3 Mainstreaming of conservation goals into other sectors. Ministries of key development sectors have adopted conservation goals and integrated them into their strategies and plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 2 sectoral ministries with the largest potential impact on forests and biodiversity (agriculture, fisheries, tourism, mining, infrastructure, energy) or mostly impacted by forest and biodiversity loss (water and sanitation, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, health) in at least 9 hotspot's countries have integrated forest and biodiversity conservation priorities and sustainable practices into their strategies and plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated strategy documents, budgets and activity reports of ministries in agriculture, fisheries, tourism, mining, infrastructure, energy, water and sanitation, health and other relevant sectors 	
3.4 Long-term mechanisms. Financing mechanisms (e.g., trust funds, revenue from the sale of carbon credits, etc.) exist and are of sufficient size to yield continuous long-term returns for at least the next 10 years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 2 types of long-term financing mechanisms (e.g., carbon offset or biodiversity offset, CSR, PES, trust funds, tax revenue system for extractive activities) for Protected Areas and OECMs' management demonstrated in each country to cover for running costs and support the development of sustainable livelihoods in GFWA landscapes. Sustainable financing mechanisms (e.g., carbon offset, biodiversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protected Areas and OECMs' running costs reports Legislative documents for the establishment of the financing mechanisms and operational reports Operational and financial reports of the funds 	

Suggested graduation criteria	Suggested targets	Means of verification for the Long-Term Vision targets	Suggested impact indicators
	offset, CSR, PES, trust funds) supporting the conservation of CEPF priority KBAs operate and yield funding such that financial constraints are no longer identified as a barrier to effective management for at least 90% of CEPF priority KBAs.		
Graduation Condition 4. Enabling policy and institutional environment: Institutional framework, public policies and their enforcement, and private sector business practices are supportive of biodiversity conservation. ["Mainstreaming"]			
4.1 Institutional framework for conservation. Adequate institutional framework in the environmental sector that enable long-term planning, implementation and maintenance of sustainable management interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roles and responsibilities of each sectoral institutions in forest and biodiversity management (within and outside Protected Areas) as well as collaboration systems are clearly defined in all hotspot's countries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institution Framework assessment reports Revised ministries' organisational structure documents and tasks of each ministry/department/sub-department 	<p><i>Core indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of companies adopting improved practices (already captured under graduation criteria 1: Number of policy/strategy documents updated/developed to be more supportive of conservation) Number of communities (with gender ratio of community members) empowered to better manage and benefit from their natural resources Trend in the management effectiveness score of Protected Areas (e.g., METT score) Number of men and women with increased cash benefits from the sustainable use of natural resources <p><i>Other relevant indicators (external):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental awareness/knowledge anchored in the educational system at all levels Trend in the number of conservation offences in Protected Areas and OECMs Trend in the carbon footprint of targeted companies Absence of inconsistent legislative framework implemented across different sectors in each country of the hotspot (e.g., mining quarries overlapping with Protected Areas)
4.2 Legal environment for conservation. Laws exist that provide incentives for desirable management practices and disincentives against undesirable practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The legislative framework in each hotspot's country promotes biodiversity conservation (e.g., KBAs protection). The legislative framework incentivises good NRM practices (e.g., agroecology, sustainable harvesting rates, secured access to natural resources) and disincentivises unsustainable practices (e.g., use of chemicals, slash-and-burn, uncontrolled harvesting) – especially in GFWA landscapes – in each hotspot's country. National EIA policies in each country include avoidance of important biodiversity sites, mandatory compensation, and external audits (such as in Guinea). Legislative framework recognizing local communities' long-term access rights to natural resources and ownership of the land, and supporting the establishment of CBNRM models (e.g., such as in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews of the legislative framework New and revised legislative documents 	

Suggested graduation criteria	Suggested targets	Means of verification for the Long-Term Vision targets	Suggested impact indicators
	Guinea) in each of the hotspot country.		
4.3 Education and training. Environmental and social education integrated across the curricula, and domestic programs exist that produce trained environmental managers at secondary, undergraduate, and advanced academic levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental and social education integrated in the curricula of primary, secondary and tertiary education in each of the hotspot's countries. At least 3 Masters programmes or professional trainings in the sustainable management of forest resources and/or biodiversity conservation in the region (at least 1 in French and 1 in English). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised education manuals Reports from pilot schools' projects Revised national schools' curriculum Masters programmes and training material Students' lists from Masters and Professional training courses Field visits in schools Surveys with pupils Surveys with alumni to measure employment success 	
4.4 Enforcement. Local government and/or community bodies have the authority and capacity to enforce the law within and outside Protected Areas (including arrests and prosecutions).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 70% of gazetted Protected Areas in each hotspot's country have their boundaries demarcated on the ground, have a clear surveying system (regular patrols) and law enforcement system in place. At least 50% of arrests for conservation offenses (from local government and community bodies) lead to a penalty being imposed (fine, confiscation, imprisonment, etc.). EIA legislation is adequately applied and mitigation measures are implemented to minimise risks of degradation in KBAs, buffer zones and biological corridors in at least 6 of the hotspots countries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governments' law enforcement reports CBRNM reports Protected Areas and OECMs' budget reports for demarcation/fencing, patrolling and law enforcement EIA reports EIA mitigation plans' implementation reports Budget reports on conservation offences' fines Field visits to Protected Areas, OECMs and exploitation sites 	
4.5 Business practices. Private sector business practices in sectors with a (potentially) large biodiversity footprint are supportive of the conservation of natural habitats and species populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 1 platform between conservation-focused CSOs and private companies established and operational in each country to assess the impact of CC and environmental degradation on the sustainability of their businesses, and assist them in identifying and adopting more sustainable practices. At least 3 large companies per country identified as having a large (actual or potential) biodiversity footprint (e.g., mining, logging, intensive agriculture) have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stocktake reports on upcoming development projects and their projected impact Meeting reports of the CSOs/private companies' platform Updated business strategies of private companies Reports on financial benefits generated through the adoption of value chains' certification schemes Reports on financial benefits generated through ecotourism projects Surveys with local producers and communities Field visits to production sites, processing sites and ecotourism sites 	

Suggested graduation criteria	Suggested targets	Means of verification for the Long-Term Vision targets	Suggested impact indicators
	introduced business practices supportive of the conservation of natural habitats and species populations across their operations.		
Graduation Condition 5. Monitoring impact: Monitoring systems in place to measure impacts and support an adaptive approach			
5.1 Biodiversity monitoring and identification of good practices. Nationwide or region-wide systems are in place to monitor status and trends of forests, biodiversity, threats, and efficiency of conservation practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systems are in place to monitor the trends and health of forests and biodiversity, main sources of degradation (e.g., forest fire, mining, wildlife trade, invasive species, Climate Change etc.) and the efficiency of conservation practices, in at least 80% of gazetted KBAs and biological corridors, and data from these systems are being used to adjust the management plans, and guide land-use planning and development control. Common monitoring indicators are adopted by at least 8 of the hotspots countries to facilitate knowledge sharing and the comparison of approaches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment reports on training needs for efficient monitoring systems Training reports on monitoring approaches and tools, and attendees' list List of suggested common indicators for the hotspot Project proposals/inception reports including SMART indicators and targets, quantified baseline levels for each indicator, and monitoring approach Detailed monitoring plans at country and hotspot's levels with clear identification of the role of each organisation in data collection, compilation, analysis and sharing of the results Budget allocation and reports for monitoring Research reports Annual monitoring reports at local, national, transboundary and hotspot's levels 	<p><i>Other relevant indicators (external):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of updates to the minimum set of high-level indicators which capture the overall scope of the goals and targets of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (with a time lag of less than five years between updates by countries, tracking national progress, as well as for tracking regional and global progress) Trend in the number of data and metadata related to the national country biodiversity indicators made publicly available Number of existing mechanisms, including for example by a member of the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership, or an intergovernmental organization, or a well-established scientific or research institution, for maintaining the indicators per country

4.4 Budget

95. The budget (Table 5) is presented for Phase 1 (possibly 2023-2027) and for the entire 15-year period. These amounts are broad estimations of the funding needs. The budget per criteria should be refined per activity considering actual costs (taking inflation into account) in each country and in alignment with annual workplans. Furthermore, the proposed budget is not for CEPF support only. Many of the proposed interventions are to be supported by partners according to their expertise and priorities, as specified against each support action in Table 3 Column 8.

Table 5: Budget for Phase 1 (possibly 2023-2027) and for the entire 15-year period for implementation of the Long-Term Vision in the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot

Graduation Condition	Suggested graduation criteria	Suggested targets	Budget Phase 1 2023-2027 (USD)	Total budget (USD)
1. Conservation priorities and best practices: Conservation priorities and best practices for their management are identified, documented, disseminated and integrated into national strategies to guide conservation investments across the hotspot. (Total budget for Phase 1 2023-2027: USD 4,950,000)	1.1 Globally threatened species. Comprehensive global threat assessments conducted for all terrestrial vertebrates, vascular plants and at least selected freshwater taxa.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Species assessments – including their resilience to climate change – are completed for at least 90% of all recorded species of terrestrial vertebrate, vascular plant and at least 3 major freshwater taxa in the hotspot (based on inventories undertaken for each KBA - see Condition 1 Criteria 2), and with results incorporated onto the IUCN Red List. 	1,100,000	3,300,000
	1.2 Key Biodiversity Areas. KBAs identified in all countries and territories in the hotspot, covering, at minimum, terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National or transboundary KBAs' coordination group established and operational in each country (meeting taking place twice a year with resources allocated annually) Map of priority forests landscape for biodiversity – taking current climate trends and future climate conditions into account – available for each country of the hotspot and new KBAs and biological corridors identified accordingly across terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems within the hotspot Status of existing KBAs (prior to 2021) reviewed across the hotspot, covering terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems 	1,000,000	3,000,000
	1.3 Protected Areas. KBAs gazetted as Protected Areas at the national level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 70% of KBAs and their buffer zones and relevant biological corridors are gazetted as Protected Areas or OECMs (Means of verification: Adequate legislation drafted/adopted) 	550,000	1,650,000
	1.4 Reservoirs of natural capital. Reservoirs of natural capital identified in all countries and territories in the hotspot, covering ecosystem services particularly critical to human survival.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCAA undertaken in at least 8 (4 more than the baseline) of the targeted countries (at least for forests) including the identification and mapping of reservoirs of natural capital for water provision and at least 2 other ecosystem services essential to healthy, sustainable societies (e.g., climate resilience, NTFP provisioning, carbon storage etc.) National capital accounts inform development planning in at least 8 out of 11 countries 	600,000	1,200,000

Graduation Condition	Suggested graduation criteria	Suggested targets	Budget Phase 1 2023-2027 (USD)	Total budget (USD)
	1.5 Landscape-level integrated management plans. KBAs and buffer zones, biological corridors and reservoirs of natural capital are part of a landscape-level integrated Management Plan under implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 8 bilateral transboundary management agreements signed and under implementation (for each transboundary KBA/important landscape) for knowledge sharing, concerted decision-making and planning, exchange visits At least 70% of KBAs are integrated in Landscape-level climate-resilient management plans (including zoning of no-take areas, restricted areas such as buffer zones and biological corridors, and resilient livelihoods' development areas) that are under implementation and guide the sustainable management of KBAs and surrounding areas over the next 10 years. Each integrated landscape-level climate-resilient management plans is embedded into relevant national, sub-national and local development plans. 	900,000	2,700,000
	1.6 Conservation strategies. Conservation priorities incorporated into national conservation plans or strategies and action plans developed with the participation of multiple stakeholders. (D)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threatened species, KBAs and/or landscapes are incorporated into the NBSAPs of and other relevant national strategy documents in each hotspot country with the participation of multiple stakeholders. 	700,000	1,000,000
	1.7 Regional knowledge sharing platforms. Governmental and non-governmental organisations in each country can easily access reliable information and data to support biodiversity and forest conservation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 informal coordination platform established at hotspot level with governments, international NGOs, donors, private sector and CSOs where appropriate The governmental- and non-governmental organisations of each country of the hotspot have access to a reliable, up-to-date and long-term centralised database to store all data and reports linked to biodiversity and forest conservation (including climate change, threatened species, KBAs and Protected Areas, management plans, land-use and forest cover changes, human population trends...). 	100,000	100,000
2. Civil society capacity: Local civil society groups dedicated to conservation priorities collectively possess sufficient organizational and technical capacity to be effective advocates for, and agents of, conservation and	2.1 Conservation community. The community of civil society organizations is sufficiently broad and deep-rooted to respond to key conservation issues and collectively possesses the technical competencies of critical importance to conservation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 12 conservation-focused CSOs are working actively and consistently in addressing conservation issues, including at least 3 playing a leadership role (e.g., mentoring smaller CSOs) in each hotspot country At least 1 recognized* CSO working continuously or regularly in or around each of the identified KBAs 	1,500,000	3,000,000
	2.2 Institutional capacity. Local civil society groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 5 conservation-focused CSOs per country in the hotspot have a 	2,000,000	5,000,000

Graduation Condition	Suggested graduation criteria	Suggested targets	Budget Phase 1 2023-2027 (USD)	Total budget (USD)
sustainable development, while being equal partners of government agencies influencing decision making in favour of sustainable societies and economies. (Total budget for Phase 1 2023-2027: USD 5,200,000)	collectively possess sufficient institutional and operational capacity and structures to raise funds for conservation and to ensure the efficient management of conservation projects and strategies.	<p>compounded capacity considered as high (e.g., CSTT score of 80 or more).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 5 conservation-focused CSOs per country in the hotspot are able to access funds from international donors without support from CEPF or PPI. At least 50% of women participation across training courses. 		
	2.3 Financial resources. Local CSOs have access to sufficient unrestricted funding sources (e.g., membership, donations, small businesses) to maintain their core operations between projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 5 CSOs in each country have access to sufficient unrestricted funding to maintain their staff and core costs without relying on international donors. 	500,000	1,100,000
	2.4 Partnerships. Effective mechanisms (e.g., discussion forums, round-tables, mutual support networks, alliances, etc.) exist for conservation-focused civil society groups to work in partnership with one another.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 national networks for CSOs in conservation and other relevant sectors established and active (health, social development, education) - 1 per country At least 7 networks for women-led CSOs in conservation and other relevant sectors established and active (building on the efforts of TBA in Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, Liberia and Sierra Leone) At least 80% of the conservation projects are complemented by projects focused on family planning and education. 	300,000	500,000
	2.5 Transformational impact. Local civil society groups are able, individually or collectively, to influence public policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 3 CSOs in each country are regularly consulted by the government (for decision-making, policy development and strategising processes) in each hotspot country At least 1 network between the media and CSOs created in each country with training sessions for journalists on environmental issues, for CSOs on public speaking, and awareness raising of the editors in chief of the newspapers, radio channels and TV channels on environmental issues. 	900,000	1,500,000
3. Sustainable financing. Adequate and continual financial resources are available to address conservation of global priorities. (Total budget for Phase 1 2023-2027: USD 2,150,000)	3.1 Public sector funding. Public sector agencies responsible for conservation in the hotspot have a continued public fund allocation or revenue-generating ability to operate effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main public sector agencies responsible for conservation in each hotspot country have assessed their long-term financial needs to fulfil their mandate. The main public sector agencies responsible for conservation in each hotspot's country receive 90% of the financial resources they need. At least 4 environmental funds operational, with a significant portion of the fund dedicated to conservation initiatives. 	600,000	1,100,000
	3.2 Donor funding. Donors collaborate efficiently to provide sufficient funds towards addressing conservation priorities in the hotspot.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donors other than CEPF are committed to providing funding for conservation and sustainable development in the hotspot that, in combination with public and private funding, is sufficient to achieve the 	50,000	100,000

Graduation Condition	Suggested graduation criteria	Suggested targets	Budget Phase 1 2023-2027 (USD)	Total budget (USD)
		conservation objective (e.g., 0 net deforestation in KBAs).		
	3.3 Mainstreaming of conservation goals into other sectors. Ministries of key development sectors have adopted conservation goals and integrated them into their strategies and plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 2 sectoral ministries with the largest potential impact on forests and biodiversity (agriculture, fisheries, tourism, mining, infrastructure, energy) or mostly impacted by forest and biodiversity loss (water and sanitation, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, health) in at least 9 hotspot's countries have integrated forest and biodiversity conservation priorities and sustainable practices into their strategies and plans. 	400,000	900,000
	3.4 Long-term financing mechanisms (e.g., trust funds, revenue from the sale of carbon credits, etc.) exist and are of sufficient size to yield continuous long-term returns for at least the next 10 years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 2 types of long-term financing mechanisms (e.g., Carbon offset or biodiversity offset, CSR, PES, trust funds, tax revenue system for extractive activities) for Protected Areas and OECMs' management demonstrated in each country to cover for running costs and support the development of sustainable livelihoods in GFWA landscapes. Sustainable financing mechanisms (e.g., Carbon offset, biodiversity offset, CSR, PES, trust funds) supporting the conservation of CEPF priority KBAs operate and yield funding such that financial constraints are no longer identified as a barrier to effective management for at least 90% of CEPF priority KBAs. 	1,100,000	3,300,000
4. Enabling policy and institutional environment: Institutional framework, public policies and their enforcement, and private sector business practices are supportive of biodiversity conservation. ["Mainstreaming"] (Total budget for Phase 1 2023-2027: USD 6,370,000)	4.1 Institutional framework for conservation. Adequate institutional framework in the environmental sector that enable long-term planning, implementation and maintenance of sustainable management interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roles and responsibilities of each sectoral institutions in forest and biodiversity management (within and outside Protected Areas) as well as collaboration systems are clearly defined in all hotspot's countries. 	420,000	770,000
	4.2 Legal environment for conservation. Laws exist that provide incentives for desirable management practices and disincentives against undesirable practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The legislative framework in each hotspot's country promotes biodiversity conservation (e.g., KBAs protection) The legislative framework incentivises good NRM practices (e.g., agroecology, sustainable harvesting rates, secured access to natural resources) and disincentivises unsustainable practices (e.g., use of chemicals, slash-and-burn, uncontrolled harvesting) – especially in GFWA landscapes – in each hotspot's country. National EIA policies in each country include avoidance of important biodiversity sites, mandatory compensation, and external audits (such as in Guinea) 	600,000	1,200,000

Graduation Condition	Suggested graduation criteria	Suggested targets	Budget Phase 1 2023-2027 (USD)	Total budget (USD)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative framework recognizing local communities' long-term access rights to natural resources and ownership of the land, and supporting the establishment of CBNRM models (e.g., such as in Guinea) in each of the hotspot country. 		
	4.3 Education and training. Environmental and social education integrated across the curricula, and domestic programs exist that produce trained environmental managers at secondary, undergraduate, and advanced academic levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental and social education integrated in the curricula of primary, secondary and tertiary education in each of the hotspot's countries. At least 3 Masters programmes or professional trainings in the sustainable management of forest resources and/or biodiversity conservation in the region (at least 1 in French and 1 in English) 	650,000	1,950,000
	4.4 Enforcement. Local government and/or community bodies have the authority and capacity to enforce the law within and outside Protected Areas (including arrests and prosecutions).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 70% of gazetted Protected Areas in each hotspot's country have their boundaries demarcated on the ground, have a clear surveying system (regular patrols) and law enforcement system in place At least 50% of arrests for conservation offenses (from local government and community bodies) lead to a penalty being imposed (fine, confiscation, imprisonment, etc.). EIA legislation is adequately applied and mitigation measures are implemented to minimise risks of degradation in KBAs, buffer zones and biological corridors in at least 6 of the hotspots countries. 	4,400,000	9,000,000
	4.5 Business practices. Private sector business practices in sectors with a (potentially) large biodiversity footprint are supportive of the conservation of natural habitats and species populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 1 platform between conservation-focused CSOs and private companies established and operational in each country to assess the impact of CC and environmental degradation on the sustainability of their businesses, and assist them in identifying and adopting more sustainable practices. At least 3 large companies per country identified as having a large (actual or potential) biodiversity footprint (e.g., mining, logging, intensive agriculture) have introduced business practices supportive of the conservation of natural habitats and species populations across their operations. 	300,000	660,000
5. Monitoring impact: Monitoring systems in place to measure impacts and support an adaptive approach (Total budget for Phase 1 2023-	5.1 Biodiversity monitoring and identification of good practices. Nationwide or region-wide systems are in place to monitor status and trends of forests, biodiversity, threats, and efficiency of conservation practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systems are in place to monitor the trends and health of forests and biodiversity, main sources of degradation (e.g., forest fire, mining, wildlife trade, invasive species, Climate Change etc.) and the efficiency of conservation practices, in at least 80% of gazetted KBAs and biological corridors, and data from these systems are being used to 	1,200,000	2,200,000

Graduation Condition	Suggested graduation criteria	Suggested targets	Budget Phase 1 2023-2027 (USD)	Total budget (USD)
2027: USD 1,200,000)		adjust the management plans, and guide land-use planning and development control. [adapted from Mainstreaming strategy] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common monitoring indicators are adopted by at least 8 of the hotspots countries to facilitate knowledge sharing and the comparison of approaches. 		
TOTAL			19,870,000	45,230,000

4.5 CEPF's implementation structure in the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot

96. In alignment with the lessons and recommendations in Section 3, it is suggested that CEPF's implementation structure for potential future investment phases could include (Figure 9):

- One **Team Leader** coordinating the CEPF investment in the Hotspot.
- One **M&E and Environmental & Social Safeguards Specialist** providing technical leadership and strategic direction for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities, working together with the Sub-Regional Programme Officers to advise and support development of the projects and overall program framework, plans and indicators to capture performance results and provide effective, accurate and timely monitoring, evaluation and reporting; leading and coordinating the planning and development of CEPF's safeguards policies on biodiversity conservation, sustainable natural resource management, pollution prevention and abatement, pesticide use and greenhouse gas emissions, as well as on prevention and mitigation of undue harm to people.
- Four **Sub-Regional Programme Officers**⁶³ supporting grantees from proposal design (3 or 4 countries each) to further implementation support, undertaking preliminary assessments of the context in which a new grantee operates, ensuring relevant M&E in coordination with the M&E Specialist, and having an important role in linking CSOs working on similar matters.
- One **Communications Officer** at hotspot level (using research results, M&E results and grantees experience, and translating it into a diversity of communication tools to reach a wider audience – please see Section 3.4).
- One **Administration and Finance Manager** seconded by one **Procurement and Administration Assistant**⁶⁴ that will both engage in producing detailed annual project budgets and reports/accounts; support/facilitate the purchase of project equipment; implement all agreed project finance management procedures; prepare financial project reports to CEPF; support the reviews of grants applications and reports in relation to CEPF finance and administrative procedures; support contracting and disbursement of grants; and building finance management capacity among grantees.

⁶³ A particular focus should be given to support francophone countries to address the imbalance in application success rate. Chiapero F., Lewis M., Mesnildrey N. and Lopez V. O., 2022. Developing spatial-analytical tools to visualise and orient capacity support to CSOs in West Africa to enhance its position for biodiversity conservation. MSc graduation report, Department of Geography, University of Cambridge.

⁶⁴ There was only one Administrative and Financial Assistant during the previous investment phase which was insufficient according to the feedback received.

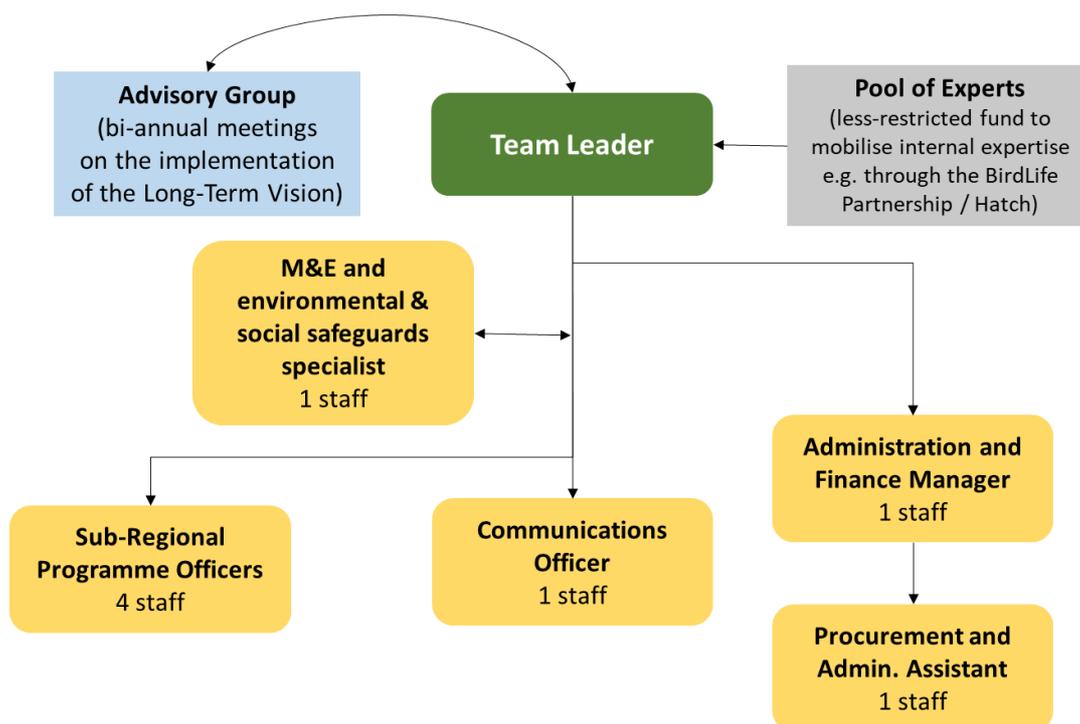


Figure 9: Proposed CEPF coordination structure

97. It is suggested that the role of the Team Leader should include *inter alia*:

- **Increasing peer-to-peer learning** between grantees as it is recognized as an efficient approach to capacity building⁶⁵ by organising annual meeting where grantees come together to share their knowledge and experience, and communication channels.
- **Increasing collaboration between international partners** through i) regular meetings with international organisations working for conservation in the hotspot should be organised annually to maximise synergies and knowledge sharing; and ii) establishment and maintenance of an information-sharing system for donors and international organisations on ongoing grants and on the performance of the grantees (see Section 3.4).
- **Encouraging collaboration between donors** by supporting them in organising annual meetings to discuss their priorities, ongoing and upcoming investments, and identify opportunities for collaboration and complementarity.
- Organising **regular meetings (bi-annually) at the hotspot's level with a broader audience** for partners to meet relevant CSOs and regional donors, and vice-versa.
- Identifying opportunities for **cross-sectoral collaboration** (at CSO level and at donor level) and supporting their establishment.
- **Selecting proposals** (jointly with other relevant experts).
- **Fund raising** for the hotspot.

98. The cost of the organisation of the suggested meetings could be shared between partners. Existing meetings and conferences could be built on to minimise the costs of partners' meetings. For example, side meetings/events could be organised at: i) IUCN (and CBD) conferences to share knowledge products; and ii) ECOWAS Ministerial gathering on environment and/or African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) meetings to advocate for the hotspot and share briefs on good approaches.

⁶⁵ Lesson learned from PPI 2016-2021 p15 – Fonds français pour l'environnement mondial (FFEM), Fondation MAVIA, UICN France, UICN Med -Pour une société civile africaine au coeur de l'action environnementale - Capitalisation croisée du PPI et du PPI OSCAN. Paris, France, 2021 (16 p)

99. The M&E and Environmental & Social Safeguards Specialist, and the Sub-Regional Programme Officers could potentially be based in leading CSOs within the hotspot countries. This would enable to support CSOs' capacity building, promote interactions between CSOs and peer-to-peer learning, and reduce travel costs. The Team Leader would have to be independent from the CSOs to avoid any conflicts of interest. The Communications Officer and the Administration and Finance staffs should also be independent from the CSOs for more neutrality.
100. The role of the Team Leader regarding increasing collaboration between international partners would include participating actively in the agreement already established by the Programme de Petites Initiatives (PPI). The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of 2017–2022 was recently renewed (May 2022). It includes PPI (IUCN France, AFD on behalf of FFEM and IUCN PACO), CI (on behalf of CEPF), IUCN NL and PPI for CSOs in North Africa (French acronym: PPI OSCAN). Based on the stocktaking of the previous MoU, there is a need to increase complementarity, knowledge sharing and communication, and monitoring between partners. The CEPF Team Leader would work closely with these partners as part of the agreement, as well as with other relevant organisations supporting CSO strengthening. Beyond organisations working on CSO strengthening in the hotspot, the Team Leader would also engage with other relevant international or bilateral organisations already investing or planning to invest in the hotspot, in conservation and in other relevant sectors, in order to maximise synergies, cross-sectoral collaboration and the mainstreaming of forest and biodiversity conservation interventions across sectors (please see Section 3.4).
101. The Long-Term Vision provides a common framework to work towards. To be able to achieve the goal of supporting the graduation of CSOs in the hotspot, it is essential to clarify the role of each of the organisations in the implementation of the Long-Term Vision. Suggestions were made in the Long-Term Vision regarding potential responsible organisations for each proposed action (Table 3). The list is not exhaustive. This should be taken one step further through discussions between CEPF and partners to map resources and refine the role of each organisation towards achieving each target. In the mid-term, this would be eased by the regional knowledge sharing platforms. This would enable to maximise the harmonisation and complementarity of the support provided in the hotspot towards achieving the Long-Term Vision targets. It is suggested that the Advisory Group established to support the design of the Long-Term Vision should continue to meet regularly to oversee the implementation of the Long-Term Vision.
102. **Regular meetings of the donors** investing in the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot would also enable to continuously identify opportunities for complementarity and synergy, and maximise knowledge sharing on good practices. This was attempted in 2017 with a first Roundtable meeting but it did not continue because of a diversity of reasons, including that it should be limited to donors only and it is necessary to have a dedicated person responsible for planning, following up and encouraging regular meetings (especially during the first year of establishment of the roundtable). The experience generated in the Mediterranean Biodiversity Hotspot with the establishment of a donor roundtable could be built on. In the Mediterranean Biodiversity Hotspot, seven or eight donors meet approximately every year to discuss their ongoing and future investments, and identify areas of complementarity. They have a rolling system whereby a different donor invites the others in its facilities. Each donor covers for its own travelling costs. The donors also jointly cover the costs to maintain an interactive map of the investments in the hotspot. However, it is important to note that the dynamic in the Mediterranean Hotspot is currently led by the MAVA Foundation, closing in 2023. This could therefore affect the sustainability of the initiative. Suggested donors to

participate to the roundtable for the hotspot include EU, AFD, FFEM, GEF, USAID, US Fish&Wildlife Services and the RainForest Trust, and eventually the GCF. The Long-Term Vision would then be used as guidelines regarding the next priorities, thereby facilitating the implementation of a harmonised approach among the donors.

4.6 Risk analysis

103. Risks to the successful implementation of conservation interventions have been identified in Table 6. Mitigation measures to reduce the impact of such risks – should they arise – on the conservation interventions are proposed.

Table 6: Risks to the successful implementation and sustainable of the conservation interventions

Risks	Likelihood of occurrence	Impact	Mitigation measure
Civil unrest prevents the implementation of the interventions and the creation of community-based management systems.	Low to Medium	High	<p>Local risks of conflicts will be assessed carefully before validating any investment, and monitored throughout the implementation period. Conflict areas might have to be avoided as unfortunately sustainability can hardly be achieved if communities are not in a position to engage in the projects.</p> <p>Even when countries suffer from political or civil unrest, donors should not necessarily stop investing in local civil society; on the contrary, it can be beneficial to continue supporting these groups, if at all possible, in order to keep the organizations and their work going during and after the crisis.</p> <p>Instability can affect the implementation of projects in some hotspot countries, and these risks are likely to continue to affect some countries in the future. Spreading grant making across multiple eligible countries, with flexibility in terms of timing and scope of calls for proposals, can maximize donors' ability to take advantage of opportunities, while minimizing the risk of failure to meet portfolio-level targets due to political or security problems in particular countries.</p> <p>Globally, and within the hotspot, CEPF has an established track record of supporting CSOs in post-conflict countries (ex. Cameroon, Guinea, Sierra Leone), where minimal funding can make a major difference to the resurgence of a CSO community and to integrating environmental concerns into plans for reconstruction and social and economic recovery. The risks and merits of any such engagement in the case of post-conflict countries in the hotspot region would need to be carefully considered.</p>

Risks	Likelihood of occurrence	Impact	Mitigation measure
The absence of community buy-in hinders the success and sustainability of the interventions.	Low	High	Incentives from conservation for local communities and the integration of conservation interventions into development initiatives are at the forefront of the proposed vision. Communities' buy-in and ownership of the interventions will be a key condition for the projects to be supported. Sustainable sources of income for local communities will systematically be developed alongside the conservation interventions. This will offer sustainable and lucrative alternatives to detrimental practices. This is expected to empower local communities and enable them to benefit from ecosystems goods and services in the long term. Social development benefits will also be accrued where adequate, based on communities' priorities.
Government changes and staff turnover create delays in the interventions.	Low to Medium (depending on the country)	Medium	CSOs are the main targets of CEPF's support. Their participation to decision-making processes, their communication skills and their advocacy skills will be strengthened as much as possible. This will support them in becoming more influential and being less affected by governmental changes.
Turnover of staff within supported CSOs	Medium	Medium	Under the proposed vision, CSOs will be empowered in several manners, including by increasing their recognition by the government, increasing their financial capacity by generating unrestricted income and increasing their capacity to access a diversity of funding sources, and raising awareness on the importance of addressing conservation matters. This will increase job security, improve their working conditions and better the way their contribution is seen by the public and the government.
Future pandemics or other global crisis prevent international travels and restrict national travels.	Low	High	Working with local CSOs and local communities will reduce the vulnerability of conservation actions to international travel restrictions.

Risks	Likelihood of occurrence	Impact	Mitigation measure
Conservation projects cannot be sustainable because of population growth in the hotspot.	High	High	Increased collaboration with organisations in the social development sectors (CSOs within the hotspot, international NGOs and donors) is an important focus of the Long-Term Vision, which aims to encourage these organisations in implementing family planning, literacy, education and other priority interventions for community empowerment alongside conservation projects. Women empowerment through increased participation to decision making ⁶⁶ , access to family planning, education and sustainable income sources is the first angle to approach demography issues ⁶⁷ . Youth is another priority target for empowerment and livelihoods' improvement interventions in the Long-Term Vision. Demographic growth projections will be considered when evaluating project proposals. A specific indicator was added under Criteria 2.4 to monitor the implementation of interventions addressing the issue of population growth rate to complement conservation projects.
Climate change and extreme climate events threaten ecosystems' health and species survival.	Medium	Medium	A strong focus will be given to increasing the connectivity between KBAs to enable species to expand their distribution areas and/or migrate. Future habitat suitability under the climate scenario will be assessed and considered when identifying priority landscapes and developing management plans.

Next steps

104. Despite the end of the current investment phase of CEPF, efforts towards achieving the Long-Term Vision are ongoing through multiple programme and projects (see Appendix A). In addition, a new Call for proposal of PPI came out shortly after the CEPF investment phase 2016-2022 Final Assessment workshop (20 June) and the GEF-8 Replenishment to be launched on 1 July 2022 offers an opportunity for governments to allocate funding for the protection of the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot through the "Amazon, Congo, and Critical Forest Biomes Integrated Programme". CSOs and international organisations must harness this opportunity to access GEF funding for forest and biodiversity conservation in the hotspot through close collaboration with governmental institutions and GEF Agencies. These initiatives are already contributing or will contribute to achieving one or several of the targets defined under Section 4.1. The monitoring of the progress towards achieving the Long-Term Vision targets should therefore start now. The first step would be to map all the current and upcoming investments in the hotspot's countries. An interactive map that all partners can add to would enable to have a complete and up-to-date overview of the investments in the hotspot. An annual Action Plan should then be developed in a participatory manner, with a clear identification of the role and contributions of each organisation in the process. Annual meetings should follow to monitor the progress and plan the following year. The Advisory

⁶⁶ Blackstone S. R., 2016. Women's empowerment, household status and contraception use in Ghana. *Journal of Biosocial Sciences*, Vol 49, p423-434

⁶⁷ Bongaarts J., 2016. Slow down population growth. *Nature*, Vol 530, p409-412

Group could ensure that the dynamic collaboration that took place for the design of the Long-Term Vision is maintained.

Conclusion

105. The necessity of funding mechanisms such as CEPF for CSOs is clear. Despite several decades of investments, there are still urgent actions needed to enable the conservation of forest ecosystems and their biodiversity. To achieve significant and long-lasting results, it is crucial to move away from the project-based approach and towards a programmatic, regional approach. The Long-Term Vision will bring together all partners working for biodiversity conservation in the hotspot. It provides guidance to prioritise investments towards a common goal. The entire process to design the Long-Term Vision show a strong will for a paradigm change, away from isolated investments towards harmonised conservation efforts. It has the potential to be a robust tool for fundraising if packaged adequately to fit the audience (media, donors, public).
106. While CEPF will continue operating through CSOs, these CSOs will be further encouraged to increase their interactions with other stakeholders, including the private sector and cross-sectoral stakeholders like other CSOs focused on family planning. It is urgent indeed to shift from the sectoral approach where interdependent sectors function in silo towards a truly integrated approach. Addressing population growth issues is an absolute necessity. Partnering with other sectors is a challenging task, but it cannot be overlooked if environmentalists want to have a chance to have a significant impact on the conservation of forests and their biodiversity in the region.

Appendices

Appendix A. Recently launched and upcoming investments for conservation in the hotspot

Project	Scope	Implementation period	Budget
FFEM&MAVA/IUCN/PPI-6	Global	2021-2025	Euros 3,500,000
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Dutch Lottery/IUCN NL through A Rocha Ghana	Ghana (Atewa & Mole Landscape)	2021-2024	USD 1,500,000
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Tropenbos International Netherlands	Ghana (Juabeso/Bia Landscape)	2021 -2025	Euro 1,000,000
BMZ/NABU AfriEvolve project: Capacity development for green NGOs in Africa (on Climate Smart Agriculture, Organisational Strengthening, and Cooperation)	6 countries including Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire	2021-2023	Euro 1,600,000
USAID/ West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development programme – WABILED (partners: Re:wild, Born Free, TRAFFIC)	5 demonstration landscapes and ECOWAS countries	2021-2025	USD 50,000,000
GEF-8 Amazon, Congo, and Critical Forest Biomes Integrated Program	Amazon and Congo Basins, and biologically important regions such as IndoMalaya, Meso-America, and Western Africa	N/A	N/A
GEF-6/7 - UNDP GEF-funded biodiversity projects upcoming/recently started in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, São Tomé and Príncipe - CI GEF-funded project initiated in 2022 in Liberia (on palm oil and cacao VC) - Projet d'appui à la commercialisation, productivité agricole et nutrition of the Fonds International de Développement Agricole (FIDA) in São Tomé and Príncipe (on agricultural production and VCs – design phase)	Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, São Tomé and Príncipe	N/A	N/A
EU&AFD/Noé – “Parc de Noé programme” (in collaboration with African Parks)	Chad and Niger but could extend to some hotspot's countries	N/A	N/A

Project	Scope	Implementation period	Budget
EU/ Support programme for the preservation of forest ecosystems in West Africa (PAPFOR) Phase 2 [yet to be confirmed]	6 landscapes : Tai Grebo-Khran Sapo, Gola-Foya, new Key Landscapes for Conservation and Development - Wologizi-Wonegizi (Liberia) - Ziama (Guinea), Outamba-Kilimi-Pinselli-Soya - into Guinea, Mt Nimba (Guinea Liberia Côte d'Ivoire), Cross River Nigeria with some transboundary activity into Cameroon	2023-2028	Euro ~30,000,000
EU/IUCN SOS	Global	2018-2024	N/A
USFWS/Great Ape Conservation Fund	Global	Defined yearly	minimum USD 3,000,000 per year
WCS COMBO Phase 2	Four countries including one hotspot's country: Guinea	2021-2025	USD 6,000,000
RainForest Trust	Global	2020-2025	USD 200,000,000
AFD/Forest Territories Facility programme	Guinea Gulf and Central Africa	Upcoming	N/A
EU/IUCN-IUCN NL-Eco Benin-ENABEL	Benin - Mono Delta Biosphere Reserve	2022 - 2027	Euro 12,000,000

Appendix B. Methodology for the development of the Long-Term Vision

1. Summary of the main steps of the design process for the Long-Term Vision and timeline

1. Literature review and one-on-one consultation process	January – March 2022
2. Monthly meetings of the Advisory Board	January – May 2022
3. Broader stakeholders consultation via the Hatch platform	March – April 2022
4. First Draft of the Long-Term Vision opened to comments (incl. on the Hatch platform)	End of May 2022
5. Workshop with key stakeholders from the hotspot to consolidate the Long-Term Vision	6-10 June 2022
6. Presentation to the CEPF Secretariat and its donors' Working Group	June 2022
7. Long-Term Vision Final Report dissemination (incl. via the Hatch platform)	End of June 2022

2. Inception meetings, strategic support and literature review

a) Meetings with CEPF's RIT and Grant Director for the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot:

107. The first meeting with the RIT took place on the 16th of November 2021 to discuss the Long-Term Vision design process including the members of the Advisory board and the list of people and organisations to be consulted during the one-on-one consultation process. Three more meetings were organised in November and December including a discussion on 20th December with Jack Tordoff who led the design of the Long-Term Vision for the IndoBurma Hotspot. Thereafter, discussions between the consultant and the RIT took place on a weekly basis from January to April 2022.

b) Establishment of an advisory group:

108. An advisory group with key actors of conservation in the hotspot was established early January to ensure that the Long-Term Vision meets their expectations, engages with appropriate stakeholders and takes account of relevant initiatives within civil society, government, private sector, and the donor community.

109. The Advisory Group members are:

- Peggy Poncelet - Grant Director at CEPF;
- Jan Kamstra – Senior Expert Conservation & Communities at IUCN NL;
- Nicolas Salaun – Chargé de programme Coopération Internationale at IUCN France, and Paul Estève – Chargé de mission PPI at IUCN France;
- Mohamed Bakarr – Senior Environmental Specialist at the GEF;
- Dirck Byler – Great Ape Conservation Director & Rapid RESCUE Facility Director at Re:Wild;
- Tommy Garnett – Founder of the Environmental Foundation Africa (EFA); and
- Jean-Baptiste Deffontaines – Head of West Africa sub-regional office at BirdLife International.

110. The meetings with the advisory group were organised monthly (four meetings in total between January and May 2022). Additional one-on-one meetings were undertaken with each of the advisory group members.

c) Literature review:

111. A diversity of documents was consulted to design the Long-Term Vision. It included:

- CEPF’s Ecosystem Profile for the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot, CEPF Operational Manual and Monitoring Framework documents, Long-Term Vision documents from other hotspots, Mid-Term Assessment report, Supervision Mission report, Mentoring programme documents, Mainstreaming Strategy and Capacity Development Analysis for the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot;
- National Policy and Strategy documents as well as Budget Statements where available (i.e., Benin, Ghana, Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, São Tomé and Príncipe, Togo);
- National and Regional Technical reports (e.g., Forest to Sea Report, UNEP-WCMC reports, BirdLife International reports);
- Partners’ Projects and Programmes Documents (e.g., AFD, EU, BirdLife International, IUCN, USAID and GEF programmes, Union for Africa Framework);
- Partners’ Strategy Documents (e.g., EU’s NaturAfrica Strategy, RSPB, BirdLife International’s Regional Strategies);
- Species-based and Site-based Management Plans (e.g., Re:wild Action Plans, BirdLife International’s Strategy for São Tomé and Príncipe);
- Lessons learned and Evaluation reports from recent projects (e.g., PPI, WA BiCC, ECONOBIO);
- International Commissions Framework documents;
- NBSAP of the hotspot countries; and
- National Capital Accounting Assessment (NCAA) reports where available.

3. Stakeholder consultations

a) One-on-one consultations:

112. A total of 38 online interviews were undertaken between the 1st of February and the 14th of April 2022. All the meetings were organised virtually, except one which had to be done via email because of connection issues.

	Respondent	Organisation/project	Date and time
1	Jan Kamstra	IUCN NL	Tue 1 Feb – 3 pm
2	Nicolas Salaun & Paul Esteve	IUCN France – PPI	Wed 2 Feb – 3 pm
3	Dirck Byler	Re:wild	Wed 2 Feb – 5 pm
4	Mohamed Bakarr	GEF	Wed 9 Feb – 4 pm
5	Jean-Baptiste Deffontaines	BirdLife International	Thu 10 Feb – 11 am Tue 15 Feb – 10.30 am
6	Seth Appiah-Kubi	A Rocha Ghana	Mon 14 Feb – 12 pm
7	Leandre Banon, Charles VanDyck & Whitney Segnonna	WACSI	Mon 14 Feb – 4 pm
8	Faith Muniale & Anthony Kuria	TBA	Thu 17 Feb – 8 am
9	Laura Owens	FFI	Fri 18 Feb – 1 pm
10	Tony Atah	Independent Consultant – REDD+ Nigeria	Mon 21 Feb – 11 am
11	Silas Siakor	IDH trade	Tue 22 Feb – 4.15 pm
12	Nonie Coulthard	Independent Consultant – PAPFor	Wed 23 Feb – 2 pm
13	Tommy Garnett	EFA	Wed 23 Feb – 5 pm
14	Tanya Merceron	IUCN – BIOPAMA	Fri 25 Feb – 3 pm
15	Genevieve Campbell	Re:wild	Mon 28 Feb – 5 pm
16	Emmanuel Wirsiy	CAMGEW	Tue 01 March – 2 pm
17	Bertille Mayen	GIZ	Wed 02 March – 2 pm

	Respondent	Organisation/project	Date and time
18	Ken Cameron	USFWA	Thu 03 March – 3 pm
19	Goetz Schroth	UNDP	Mon 07 Mar – 10 am
20	Nicolas Drunet	Noé	Mon 07 Mar – 11.30 am
21	Remco van Merm	IUCN SOS	Mon 07 Mar – 3 pm
22	Stephen Kelleher, Tuagben Darlington, Eugene Cole, Bessike Balinga & Ndam Nouhou	USAID – WABiLED	Mon 07 Mar – 4 pm
23	Wenceslas Gatarabirwa	RSPB	Tue 08 March – 12.30 pm
24	Annika Hillers	WCF	Wed 09 March – 1 pm
25	Marc Languy	AGRECO – PAPFOR2	Thu 10 March – 12 pm
26	Pierre Van Asbroeck	AFD	Thu 10 March – 1 pm
27	Neil Burgess	UNEP-WCMC	Fri 11 March – 11 am
28	Frédéric Hounga	Benin Environment and Education Society (BEES)	Fri 11 March – 1 pm
29	George Llebo	CI	Fri 11 March – 3 pm
30	Hugo Rainey	WCS – COMBO	Tue 15 March – 1.30 pm
31	Sareme Berhanu Gebre (via email)	IUCN	Email on 15 March
32	Constance Corbier	FFEM	Thu 31 March – 3 pm
33	Olivier Langrand	CEPF	Mon 04 April – 5 pm
34	Ibironke Favour Olubamise	GEF Small Grant Programme	Tue 05 April – 9 am
35	Benjamin Karmorh	Environmental Protection Agency (GEF Focal Point Liberia)	Tue 05 April – 2 pm
36	Nina Marshall	CEPF	Fri 08 April – 4 pm
37	Pierre Carret	CEPF	Mon 11 April – 10 am
38	Antoine Marchal	Rainforest Trust	Mon 14 April – 5 pm

b) Grantees consultation via the Hatch platform:

113. A webpage was created on BirdLife’s Hatch platform in March 2022 to inform grantees on the Long-Term Vision exercise, give them the opportunity to contribute and collect information to address any gaps from the one-on-one consultation process and literature review.

c) Consolidation sessions for the Long-Term Vision during CEPF’s Final Assessment workshop:

114. Eighty-eight key stakeholders participated to the CEPF’s Final Assessment workshop in Accra, Ghana, from 06 to 09 June 2022. One full day was allocated to discussing and consolidating the draft Long-Term Vision during the workshop. The draft Long-Term Vision was shared with the participants one week before the workshop to enable them to review the document. Seven of the participants had already been previously interviewed as part of the one-on-one consultation process. These consultations at different stages of the design process are expected to maximise stakeholders’ ownership of and support for the Long-Term Vision. The Long-Term Vision was presented in plenary and all the participants had the chance to provide comments during or after the discussion session. The comments and suggestions from the consolidation sessions were thereafter addressed to prepare the consolidated draft of the Long-Term Vision.

d) Presentation of the consolidated document to CEPF working group (virtual meeting)

115. The draft Long-Term Vision was presented to the CEPF Working Group on 19 January 2023. Comments from Working Group members were incorporated into the final version of the document, which was submitted to the CEPF Donor Council for approval in October 2023.