

**CI-GEF PROJECT AGENCY**

# **GEF Project Document**

**Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of  
Sierra Leone's critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape**

**Sierra Leone /West Africa**

**NOVEMBER 2024**

## GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title:	Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone's critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape		
Region:	West Africa	GEF Project ID:	
Project Start Date:	January 2025	Project End Date:	FEBRUARY 2030
Country(ies):	Sierra Leone	Type of Project	FULL-SIZE PROJECT
GEF Agency(ies):	Conservation International	GEF Agency Project ID:	
Anticipated Executing Entity(s) and Type:	The Sierra Leone Environmental Protection Agency (EPA-SL)	GOVERNMENT	
	National Protected Area Agency (NPAA), and	GOVERNMENT	
	Forest Division of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change	GOVERNMENT	
	The Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD)	CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATION	
	Environment Foundation for Africa (EFA) and Africa Wildlife Foundation (AWF)	CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATION	
	The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL)	CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATION	
	Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)	CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATION	
	The Gola Rainforest Conservation Limited by Guarantee (GRC-LG)	CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATION	
GEF Focal Area(s):	Multi-Focal Area	Submission Date:	June 2024; October 2024; November 2024; November 2024; November 2024
Type of Trust Fund:	GEF Trust Fund (GEF TF)	Project Duration (Months)	62 Months
GEF Project Grant: (a)	\$ 5,550,306	GEF Project Non-Grant (b)	N/A
Estimated MTR Date:	June, 2027	Estimated TE Date :	July 2029
Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c)	\$ 499,525	Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant: (d)	N/A
Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d)	\$ 6,049,831	Total Co-financing:	\$7,996,441
PPG Amount (e):	\$ 149,999	PPG Agency Fee(s) (f):	\$ 13,499
Total GEF Resources (a+b+c+d+e+f)	\$ 6,213,329		
Project Tags:	<input type="checkbox"/> CBIT <input type="checkbox"/> NGI <input type="checkbox"/> SGP <input type="checkbox"/> Innovation		
Project Sector <sup>1</sup> (CCM only)	N/A		

<sup>1</sup> For ITS, this is the same pulldown menu that we have for GEF-7

## Project Description Summary

Project Objective: To conserve and restore Kambui Hills Forest Reserve (FR) and the associated community forest lands in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape in order to address climate change impacts						
Project Components/ Programs	Component Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
					GEF Project Financing	Confirmed Co-financing
<b>COMPONENT 1:</b> Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, associated community forests and Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) in the Greater Gola Forest landscape	Technical Assistance	<b>Outcome 1.1.:</b> Strengthened coordination and capacity of key stakeholders (state and non-state actors and communities) for effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape	<p><b>Output 1.1.1.:</b> Gender-responsive policies, plans, tools and guidelines to support sustainable forest and land use planning and management reviewed and implemented.</p> <p><b>Output 1.1.2.:</b> State and non-state actors (from key government ministries, departments, agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, private sector and communities) trained to support inclusive and gender-responsive effective management of the Greater Gola Forest landscape.</p> <p><b>Output 1.1.3:</b> Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders (local communities, CSOs/NGOs, private sector and Gola Transboundary Committees) to support inclusive, and gender-responsive effective governance of the Greater Gola landscape enhanced.</p> <p><b>Output 1.1.4:</b> A national gender-responsive centre of excellence hub established and functional to build capacity for enhanced forest management, biodiversity conservation</p>	GEF TF	1,112,015	2,508,127

			monitoring and land use planning for climate resilience.			
<b>COMPONENT 2:</b> Promoting participatory and gender-responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods	Technical Assistance	<b>Outcome 2.1:</b> Enhanced sustainable resource use by communities adjacent to targeted Protected Areas within the Gola landscape	<p><b>Output 2.1.1:</b> Gender-sensitive community awareness and education programs to support sustainable forest management, land use planning and climate change adaptation developed and implemented</p> <p><b>Output 2.1.2:</b> Gender-responsive participatory spatial / landscape plans for the Greater Gola Forest landscape developed /updated and implemented</p> <p><b>Output 2.1.3:</b> Gender-responsive and climate-resilient alternative income-generating initiatives supported, ensuring inclusive participation and equitable benefits for all genders while promoting sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.</p> <p><b>Output 2.1.4:</b> Innovative, equitable and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management supported</p> <p><b>Output 2.1.5:</b> Inclusive community-based reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives to improve access to ecosystem services implemented.</p>	GEF TF	988,538	1,532,412
<b>COMPONENT 3:</b> Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated	Technical Assistance	<b>Outcome 3.1:</b> Strengthened biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use of	<p><b>Output 3.1.1:</b> Extent of deforestation and forest degradation in Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests established,</p>	GEF TF	1,726,461	2,192,412

community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, land-use planning and climate mitigation		the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape	documented and restoration implemented.  <b>Output 3.1.2:</b> Forest conservation and regeneration as one of the strategies for improved ecosystem health and sustainable financing promoted.			
<b>COMPONENT 4:</b> Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management	Technical Assistance	<b>Outcome 4.1:</b> Strengthened institutional structures for transboundary collaboration between Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia for improved management of the Mano Watershed	<b>Output 4.1.1:</b> The functioning of the committees established under the IUCN-Mano River Union (MRU)-International Waters (IW) Project to support improved management and sustainable use of river basin resources operationalized and institutionalized within MRU.  <b>Output 4.1.2:</b> Capacity for applied research to inform decision-making processes for transboundary watershed and forest management enhanced.  <b>Output 4.1.3:</b> Nature-based solutions to improve freshwater ecosystem health and mitigate climate change impacts and riverbank deterioration implemented	GEF TF	1,006,114	932,414
<b>COMPONENT 5:</b> Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons	Technical Assistance	<b>Outcome 5.1:</b> Strengthened coordination, capacity building, knowledge management, learning and sharing between the Sierra Leone Child Project and initiatives at landscape, national and regional levels including the GEF-	<b>Output 5.1.1:</b> A project Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy developed (including gender, equality and inclusion aspects).  <b>Output 5.1.2:</b> Participation in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project 3-day Annual Forums.	GEF TF	291,469	247,872

		8 Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project	<p><b>Output 5.1.3:</b> Learning and exposure visits facilitated by the Sierra Leone Child Project (and where applicable coordinated by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project)</p> <p><b>Output 5.1.4:</b> Knowledge management products integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects generated, and disseminated at the landscape, national and regional levels including in the (integrating lessons learnt and best-case practices on traditional knowledge for natural resource management, and information on the project as a model for Nature-Based-Solutions)</p>			
<b>COMPONENT 6:</b> Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework	Technical Assistance	<b>Outcome 6.1:</b> An effective and gender-responsive M&E system for the project	<p><b>Output 6.1.1:</b> Periodic M&amp;E reports submitted to CI-GEF Agency.</p> <p><b>Output 6.1.2:</b> Independent evaluations conducted in accordance with the GEF and CI-GEF Evaluation Policies</p>	GEF TF	161,409	202,420
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>GEF TF</b>	<b>5,286,006</b>	<b>7,615,657</b>
<b>Project Management Cost (PMC)</b>				<b>GEF TF</b>	<b>264,300</b>	<b>380,784</b>
<b>Total project costs</b>					<b>5,550,306</b>	<b>7,996,441</b>

## Core Indicators

Project Core Indicators		Expected at CEO Endorsement
1	<b>Terrestrial protected areas</b> created or under improved management (hectare)	22,428 Ha
2	<b>Marine protected areas</b> created or under improved management (hectare)	
3	Area of <b>land and ecosystems under restoration</b> (hectare)	10,000 Ha
4	Area of <b>landscapes under improved practices</b> (hectare)	70,000 Ha
5	Area of <b>marine habitat under improved practices</b> (hectare)	
6	<b>Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated</b> (metric ton of CO <sub>2</sub> e)	1.57 million metric tons of CO <sub>2</sub> e
7	<b>Shared water ecosystems</b> under new or improved cooperative management (count)	Level 2
8	Globally over-exploited <b>marine fisheries</b> moved to more sustainable levels (metric ton)	
9	Chemicals of global concern and their waste reduced (metric ton of toxic chemicals reduced)	
10	Persistent organic pollutants to air reduced (gram of toxic equivalent gTEQ)	
11	People benefiting from GEF-financed investments <b>disaggregated by sex</b> (count)	172,630, of which 30% women

*Explain the methodological approach and underlying logic to justify target levels for Core and Sub-Indicators*

**CORE INDICATOR 1:** Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management (hectare)

*Core Indicator 1.2:* Terrestrial protected areas under improved management effectiveness.

The total area in protected areas that will be under improved management effectiveness is **22,428 Hectares**, tabulated below:

**Table 1: Targeted Protected Areas under improved management effectiveness**

Name of target Protected area	WDPA ID	Area (Ha)	METT Score (At CEO-Endorsement)
Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary	WDPAID10741	1,200	78
Kambui South Forest Reserve	WDPA ID29972	880	29
Kambui Hills Forest Reserve	WDPA303925	20,348	43
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>22,428</b>	<b>150</b>

**CORE INDICATOR 3:** Area of land and ecosystems under restoration (hectare)

*Core Indicator 3.2:* Area of forest and forest land under restoration

As part of the larger Gola Forest Peace Park shared with Liberia and the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)-defined Lofa-Gola-Mano Conservation Corridor that extends into Guinea, the focal area has received previous investments which have identified potential areas for restoration, of which the project will target **10,000 Hectares** in a combination of passive and active restoration, including rehabilitation of productive lands. An assessment will be undertaken to determine the most degraded areas within the targeted Protected Areas which ultimately be selected as the priority restoration sites.

**CORE INDICATOR 4:** Area of landscapes under improved practices (Hectare)

*Core Indicator 4.1:* Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity

Project activities will be undertaken on community lands within a 5-km buffer area from the target Protected Areas. Activities on improved land management practices on community lands surrounding the Kambui Hills

Forest Reserve and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary will target selected chiefdoms and community lands covering an area of **35,000 Ha**. This project builds on interventions by the GEF-funded Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) project (GEF ID:4953) in which it was established that interventions within a 5km buffer area from the Protected Area (PA) would relieve pressure off the PA and hence support biodiversity conservation<sup>2</sup>.

*Core Indicator 4.5: Terrestrial Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) supported*

The target for Core Indicator 4.5 is **35,000 Ha**, the same area under Core Indicator 4.1. The project will explore whether the target area (35,000 Ha) can also be formally classified as OECM or explore working in other areas within this jurisdiction that can be categorized as OECM. Notably, the project support also focuses on creating connectivity between the PAs, involving work on community lands such as enhancing agroforestry, restoring fragile sites, and improving land management.

**CORE INDICATOR 6: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated (metric ton of CO<sub>2</sub>e)**

*Core Indicator 6.6: Carbon sequestered, or emissions avoided in the sector of Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use (indirect)*

Forest conservation improved Protected Area (PA) management, and ecosystem restoration, through this project, focusing on improved management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary and landscape restoration (including reforestation and afforestation of key sites) in the buffer area around the PAs is expected to result in Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigation estimated at **1.57 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e**. This is an initial rough estimate from the EX-ACT tool starting in 2025 (attached separately) and will be recalculated after the Project inception phase, following (a) the data and information based on inventory assessments under component 3 and (b) the determination of specific activities to be carried out in relation to land-uses, forest management and cropland management, under Components 2 and 3. The intention is to create connectivity between the three biodiversity-rich areas of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, Kambui South Forest Reserve and Tiwai Wildlife Sanctuary.

**CORE INDICATOR 7: Shared water ecosystems under new or improved cooperative management**

*Core Indicator 7.4: Level of engagement in IW: LEARN through participation and delivery of key products*

Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone received additional resources from the GEF's International Waters pot of funding to focus on Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management (Component 4), with the Mano Watershed being the target site. With support from the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination project and the European Union-Funded Nature Africa Program, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia target reaching **Level 2** of engagement in the IW: LEARN platform through participation and delivery of key products.

**CORE INDICATOR 11: People benefiting from GEF-financed investments disaggregated by sex (count)**

The target number of direct beneficiaries is approximately **172,630 people (30% women)** broken down in **Table 3**. The target number of beneficiaries was informed by the estimated number of existing staff in state and non-state institutions that will participate in the project, as well as the number of community members in the chiefdoms within the Kambui-Tiwai-Gola landscape project area where the alternative livelihoods, nature-based enterprises will be introduced coupled with awareness activities. The target chiefdoms include Koya, Barri, Tunkia and others as indicated in **Table 2** with a total population of 497,936. The target number of direct beneficiaries is estimated to include 30% of this population (or 149,000 people), reflecting the population that will be reached by the radio awareness programmes under output 2.1.1 and involved in various community-based activities under Components, 1, 2, 3 and 4. Deliberate efforts will be placed in all stakeholder and community mobilizations to ensure that all community-based initiatives such as awareness meetings, SLM activities and trainings have at least 30% participation of women, as indicated in **Table 3**.

<sup>2</sup> IUCN, 2023: Forest Landscape Restoration Interventions. Mano River Union Ecosystem conservation and International Waters Resources Management (IWRM) project. IUCN.



**Table 2: Population statistics of chiefdoms of the project area of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape**

District	Chiefdom	Area (Ha)	Population (2021)	Population Density	Annual Population change (%)
Kenema	Koya	385,400	19,338	50.18	6.2
Kenema	Tunkia	742,700	41,320	55.63	2.3
Kenema	Nomo	350,400	9,351	26.69	9.3
Kenema	Nangowa	569,900	67,567	118.56	6.8
Kenema	Dama	401,800	37,994	94.56	3.6
Kenema	Lower Bambara	685,200	91,477	133.50	3.1
Pujehun	Barri	491,100	50,742	103.32	5.4
Pujehun	Makpele	400,200	61,613	153.96	12
Kenema	Kandu Leppiama	225,900	22,722	100.58	3.7
Kenema	Dodo	323,000	21,143	65.46	-1.3
Kenema	Langrama	539,000	4,474	8.30	3.8
Kanema	Small Bo	427,300	41,744	97.69	5.9
Kemena	Niawa	247,900	12,827	51.74	8.6
Pujehun	Pejeh (Futa peje)	133,600	15,624	116.95	2.3
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,923,400</b>	<b>497,936</b>		

Source: Website <https://www.citypopulation.de/en/sierraleone/admin/>

**Table 3: Breakdown of the number of direct beneficiaries based on the Results Framework**

COMPONENT	OUTPUT	OUTPUT TARGET	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
<b>COMPONENT 1</b>	<b>Output 1.1.2.:</b> State and non-state actors (from key government ministries, departments, agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, private sector and communities) trained to support inclusive and gender-responsive effective management of the Greater Gola Forest landscape.	<b>Target 1.1.2:</b> At least 20 state and 40 non-state actors (from key government ministries, departments, agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, private sector and communities) trained to support inclusive, and gender-responsive effective management of Gola Forest Landscape (Target at least 140 trainees of which 30% women: 80 people from state agencies and 60 from non-state agencies)	98	42	<b>140</b>
<b>COMPONENT 2</b>	<b>Output 2.1.1:</b> Gender-sensitive community awareness and education programs to support sustainable forest management, land use planning and climate change adaptation developed and implemented.	<b>Target 2.1.1:</b> At least 5 gender-sensitive community awareness/education initiatives implemented per chiefdom reaching out to at least 149,000 people within the chiefdoms, of which 30% are women.	104,300	44,700	<b>149,000</b>

COMPONENT	OUTPUT	OUTPUT TARGET	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
	<b>Output 2.1.3.:</b> Gender-responsive and climate-resilient alternative income-generating initiatives supported, ensuring inclusive participation and equitable benefits for all genders while promoting sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.	<b>Target 2.1.3b:</b> At least 22,940 people (30% women) benefiting from gender-responsive and climate-resilient alternative income-generating initiatives	16,058	6,882	<b>22,940</b>
	<b>Output 2.1.4.:</b> Innovative, equitable and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management supported.,	<b>Target 2.1.4b:</b> At least 500 people (30% women) are direct beneficiaries of pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management.	350	150	<b>500</b>
<b>COMPONENT 4</b>	<b>Output 4.1.2:</b> Capacity for applied research to inform decision-making processes for transboundary watershed and forest management enhanced.	<b>Target 4.1.2.:</b> At least 20 people trained (30% women) in three 3 training events undertaken by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project on applied research to inform decision-making in watershed and forest management.	14	6	<b>20</b>
<b>COMPONENT 5</b>	<b>Output 5.1.2:</b> Participation in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project 3-day Annual Forums.	<b>Target 5.1.2:</b> At least 2 Sierra Leone participants in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project Annual Forum (1 rep from the government of Sierra Leone and 1 rep from the PMU, both sponsored by the project), <i>[Total 10 participants (2 per year for 5 years, 50% female)]</i>	5	5	<b>10</b>
	<b>Output 5.1.3:</b> Learning and exposure visits facilitated by the Sierra Leone Child Project (and where applicable coordinated by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project)	<b>Target 5.1.3:</b> At least 5 learning and exposure trips (1 trip per year, 2 representatives from the Government of Sierra Leone per year), <i>[Total 10 participants (2 people per year for 5 years), 50% women]</i>	10	10	<b>20</b>

COMPONENT	OUTPUT	OUTPUT TARGET	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
		<i>This output will also support Sierra local communities to participate in peer exchange visits within the Gola Landscape (2 people per year for 5 years), 50% women]</i>			
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>120,835</b>	<b>51,795</b>	<b>172,630</b>

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## ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

<b>BAU</b>	-	Business-as-Usual
<b>BD</b>	-	Biodiversity
<b>CBD</b>	-	Convention on Biological Diversity
<b>CEPF</b>	-	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
<b>CI</b>	-	Conservation International
<b>CIGEF</b>		Conservation International, GEF Agency
<b>CSO</b>	-	Civil Society Organization
<b>CSSL</b>	-	Conservation Society of Sierra Leone
<b>EPA-SL</b>	-	The Sierra Leone Environment Protection Agency
<b>ESIA</b>	-	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
<b>ESMF</b>	-	Environmental and Social Management Framework
<b>FAO</b>	-	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>FD</b>	-	Forest Department (of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change)
<b>FR</b>	-	Forest Reserve
<b>FIP</b>	-	Forest Investment Program
<b>GBF</b>	-	Global Biodiversity Framework
<b>GEBs</b>	-	Global Environmental Benefits
<b>GEF</b>	-	Global Environment Facility
<b>GFIP</b>	-	Guinea Forests Integrated Programme
<b>GFRCPLP</b>	-	Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project
<b>KBA</b>	-	Key Biodiversity Area
<b>MECC</b>	-	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
<b>METT</b>	-	Management effectiveness Tracking Tool
<b>M&amp;E</b>	-	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MRU</b>	-	Mano River Union
<b>NBSAP</b>	-	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
<b>NGO</b>	-	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NPAA</b>	-	National Protected Area Authority
<b>PES</b>	-	Payment for Ecosystem Services
<b>PPG</b>	-	Project Preparation Grant
<b>PSC</b>	-	Project Steering Committee
<b>REDD+</b>	-	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
<b>RPSC</b>	-	Regional Project Steering Committee
<b>RSPB</b>	-	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
<b>PAMETT</b>	-	Protected Area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
<b>SFM</b>	-	Sustainable Forest Management
<b>SLM</b>	-	Sustainable Land Management
<b>STAR</b>	-	System for Transparent Allocation of Resources
<b>UNDP</b>	-	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNEP</b>	-	United Nations Environment Programme

<b>UNESCO</b>	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>USAID</b>	-	United States Agency for International Development
<b>USD</b>	-	United States Dollars
<b>WB</b>	-	World Bank
<b>WCS</b>	-	Wildlife Conservation Society
<b>WWF</b>	-	World Wildlife Fund /Worldwide Fund for Nature

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>Biodiversity</b>	This is the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part and includes diversity within species, between species, and ecosystems.
<b>Biodiversity hotspot</b>	It is one of the world's most biologically rich and threatened regions. A biodiversity hotspot has at least 1,500 vascular plant species confined to it and has lost more than 70% of its original primary vegetation.
<b>Components</b>	Are sub-section of a project that groups issues into smaller and manageable parts in terms of size, duration, and responsibility (e.g. systems, sub-systems, tasks, sub-tasks, and work packages), which include all steps to achieve the objective. Project management is not included as a specific project component, project strategy, and expected results. Project management arrangements are described in the project document's section on project execution.
<b>Critical ecosystem</b>	Refers to the remaining natural ecosystems within hotspots.
<b>Eco-region</b>	It refers to a large unit of land or water containing a geographically distinct assemblage of species, natural communities, and environmental conditions. The boundaries of an eco-region are not fixed and sharp but rather encompass an area within which important ecological and evolutionary processes most strongly interact.
<b>Ecosystem approach</b>	Is a strategy for integrated management of land, water, and living resources that equitably promotes conservation and sustainable use.
<b>Gender mainstreaming</b>	Refers to the process of assessing the implications for men, women, youth, and any specific interest group of any planned action. It is a strategy for making women's and men's or any interest group's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic, and social spheres so that specific groups such as men and women benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The goal is to achieve gender equality <sup>3</sup> .
<b>Indicators</b>	Measurable entities related to a specific information need, such as the status of a target, change in pressure or progress towards achieving an objective, outcome, and/or output. By identifying indicators, the project can develop a rigorous monitoring plan, evaluate the program's responses and progress towards success, and enable adaptive management. Indicators should be measurable, precise, consistent, and sensitive.
<b>Key Biodiversity Area (KBA)</b>	Is a site that contributes significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity identified using standard criteria.
<b>Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECM)</b>	"A geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in-situ conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values" (CBD, 2018).
<b>Outcomes</b>	Are the intended or achieved short- and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs, usually requiring collective efforts of partners. Outcomes represent changes in development conditions that occur between the completion of outputs and the

<sup>3</sup> Refworld 2020. UN Economic and Social Council Resolution 1997/2: Agreed Conclusions. Accessed from website <https://www.refworld.org/docid/4652c9fc2.html> on 27 October 2023 at 2157 hours.



	achievement of impact. Outcomes respond to the question “What are the short- and medium-term impacts or results of the project?” There can be several outcomes for each component.
<b>Outputs</b>	Products and services which result from the completion of activities within a development intervention. Outputs respond to the questions “What does the project do? Who does the project reach/benefit?” There can be several outputs for each outcome. Outputs need to be quantified whenever possible (hectares, tons of CO <sub>2</sub> , percentage of coverage, number of staff trained, and number of participants among others).
<b>Payment for ecosystem services (PES)</b>	PES is a voluntary transaction in which a well-defined environmental service or a form of land use likely to secure that service, is bought by at least one ecosystem service buyer from a minimum of one ecosystem service provider if and only if the provider continues to supply that service.

## CI-GEF PROJECT AGENCY

### Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone's critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape

#### PROJECT OUTLINE

##### Changes from the PIF

1. The key changes from the concept are summarized below by Component:
  - Component 1: Strengthened governance structures for improved management of the Gola National Park and Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in the Gola Forest landscape. This Component was adjusted to focus largely on Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills FR, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape.
  - Component 2: Innovative climate-resilient and conservation-friendly livelihoods and enterprises. This Component was slightly adjusted for more clarity to focus on promoting participatory and gender-responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods.
  - Component 3: Improved management of the Gola National Park. The title of this Component was adjusted to *"Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation"*.
  - Component 4: Enhance Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management. The title of this Component was adjusted to: *"Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management"*.
  - Component 5: The title of this Component was adjusted to: *"Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons"*
2. The project core indicator targets have been updated and justifications provided under the core indicators section
3. Executing partners have been identified and their roles defined.
4. The project target sites have been firmed. The project will focus on improving the management effectiveness of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, (21,228 ha), Kambui South Forest Reserve (880ha) Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary (1200ha) and associated community forests, which were identified through stakeholder consultations at national level during the PPG, involving the key decision-makers such as Government ministries, departments, and agencies in Sierra Leone. It was observed that Kambui Hills and the associated community forests were facing great anthropogenic pressure, and if no interventions were undertaken, they would be decimated. The increasing deforestation and forest degradation of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve (FR) will diminish the forest products and services, and the pressure will then be transferred to Gola Rainforest National Park (GRNP). To this end, effective management of Kambui Hills FR has a great buffering effect on GRNP.

## PROJECT SUMMARY

1. Sierra Leone is among the five countries, along with Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, and Togo, that are part of the Guinean Forests Integrated Program (GFIP). The objective of this program is *'to protect and improve the effective governance of the Guinean Forests in order to maximize global environmental benefits, contribute to the health of the planet, and ensure the flow of vital ecosystem services that underpin human well-being'*. Through the program's Regional Coordination Project (RCP), a whole-of-society approach will be adopted to foster coordination, learning, and knowledge sharing among state and non-state actors in this critical forest biome, with an emphasis on enhancing transboundary connectivity. It is on this basis that Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Togo, other countries within the Guinean Forest of West Africa and diverse non-state actors, including private sector institutions, will be invited to participate in the learning, knowledge sharing, and capacity building events organized by the Program.
2. Fostering transboundary governance of natural resources in the Guinean Forests of West Africa is at the core of the Guinean Forests Integrated Program. It is against this backdrop that the Program's RCP will undertake activities to strengthen coordination and collaboration among state and non-state actors for effective governance of transboundary natural resources. One of the ways that this will be achieved is through enacting platforms for dialogue and transboundary collaboration between countries on shared forest and watershed management. In this respect, in addition to the STAR resources allocated by Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia to their Guinean Forests Child projects, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) added approximately USD 2 million from the International Waters thematic area to the three countries to focus on interventions that will enhance transboundary governance and watershed management i.e. the Mano River: specifically, Sierra Leone was allocated USD 856,843, Guinea USD 485,985, and Liberia USD 839,432.
3. The Sierra Leone project target site – The Greater Gola Landscape - is located at the heart of the Upper Guinean biodiversity hotspot. It is a transboundary region encompassing key protected areas across Sierra Leone and Liberia: the Gola Rainforest National Park, the Gola Forest National Park, the Foya Proposed Protected Area, the Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary, the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, as well as surrounding areas of buffer zone and community-managed forests. The total size of this landscape is approximately 3,500 km<sup>2</sup>, with a current population of about 250,000 people, distributed among several chiefdoms.
4. From 2000 to 2022, Sierra Leone experienced a net forest loss of approximately 545,000 Ha (equivalent to roughly 9% of total tree cover,) with an additional 1.99 million Ha of forest degraded<sup>4</sup>. The Kambui Hills Forest Reserve associated community forests<sup>5</sup> and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape face several environmental problems, the key ones being deforestation, land degradation, loss of biodiversity, climate change and variability. The drivers of these environmental problems are expansion of the agricultural frontier, illegal resource extraction (logging, mining, and hunting), and charcoal production for fuelwood, all of which are exacerbated by the impacts of climate change and variability. The root causes include high levels of poverty, rapid population growth, a lack of resilient economic alternatives, and gender inequality in the governance and utilization of natural resources.

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<sup>4</sup> Global Forest Watch, 2023; <https://www.globalforestwatch.org/>

<sup>5</sup> For purposes of this Project, the Greater Gola Forest Landscape includes the Protected areas (Gola Forest NP, Kambui Hills FR and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary) and the surrounding communities in Eastern and Southern Provinces of Sierra Leone, as part of the Guinean Forest Biome

5. The main barriers to effective management of the Gola Forest Landscape include, among others, (i) Limited capacity of mandated government agencies for effective conservation and sustainable management of the Gola Forest Landscape; (ii) Limited access to sustainable resilient livelihoods; (iii) Insufficient data to guide sustainable forest management, biodiversity conservation, land-use planning, decision-making, and strategic management; (iv) Inadequate coordination and collaboration among state and non-state stakeholders to address national, local and transboundary issues in the Gola Forest landscape; (v) Weak and incoherent policies, tools, standards and guidelines and legislation relating to forest governance; and (vi) Weak gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation systems to track ecosystem management performance. It is on this basis, that this project's interventions seek to conserve and restore Kambui Hills Forest Reserve (FR) and the associated community forest lands in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape in order to address climate change impacts. Transformative actions will be implemented via six main components that focus on the interventions outlined below:
  - Strengthening forest governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve (FR), associated community forests, and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in the Greater Gola Forest landscape.
  - Promoting inclusive, participatory and gender-responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas to enhance climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods.
  - Improving the management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests for biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation, and climate mitigation.
  - Strengthening transboundary watershed and forest landscape management.
  - Enhancing knowledge sharing, learning, and synthesis of lessons at national, local, regional, and global levels.
  - Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems.
6. Expected project results include:
  - a. Strengthened capacity of key stakeholders (state and non-state actors, including local communities) for biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use, and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape.
  - b. Increased uptake of climate-resilient livelihoods at the community level
  - c. Improved biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use in the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests.
  - d. Enhanced transboundary collaboration and coordination for managing the Mano watershed.
  - e. Improved gender-sensitive knowledge management, learning, and sharing at the National, Local, Regional and Global levels.
  - f. Strengthened effective gender-sensitive M&E systems.
7. **Transformative change** will be achieved through anchoring the interventions on the GEF's Levers of Transformation as described below and elaborated in the Theory of Change section.
  - A. **Governance and Policy:** The Sierra Leone Child Project will enhance the governance of the Gola Forest by promoting policy alignment, inclusive stakeholder engagement, and gender-responsive planning. The project will support policy reviews and strengthen coordination between state and non-state actors in the forestry and natural resource management sectors. Training programs for both state and non-state actors will strengthen these efforts, while the establishment of a National Centre of Excellence will provide ongoing capacity-building opportunities beyond the project's duration. Furthermore, community awareness initiatives will empower local communities to engage in sustainable forest management practices and strengthen their resilience to climate change.

- B. **Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues:** At National, Local, and Transboundary Levels, the Sierra Leone Guinean Forests Child Project will enhance collaboration among state and non-state actors in forestry and natural resource management by establishing an inclusive and gender-responsive coordination mechanism that will bring together state and non-state actors active in the Gola Landscape. Additionally, in partnership with the Guinea and Liberia Guinean Forests Child projects, this project will contribute to the re-activation of the committees from a previous GEF-funded IWRM project (GEF ID: 4953) in order to improve multi-stakeholder dialogue and governance of the Mano River Basin at National, Local and Regional levels. Lastly, regarding fostering multi-stakeholder dialogues at Regional and Global Levels, the Sierra Leone Guinean Forests Child Project with support from the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project, will engage in dialogues at regional and global events, sharing experiences and implementing best practices from other regions with critical forest Biomes such as the Congo Basin, Amazon, Meso-America and Indo-Malay.
  - C. **Learning and Innovation** will be enhanced through the Sierra Leone project via (a) Providing technical training to stakeholders on priority topics in order to improve forest governance and the sustainable utilization of natural resources; (b) Sponsoring Sierra Leone representatives to participate in learning and knowledge-sharing events organized by the GEF's Critical Forests Integrated Programs. Additionally, representatives from marginalized and vulnerable groups will be nominated by Sierra Leone and sponsored by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project to participate in these events; (c) Operationalizing a national gender-responsive hub for capacity building and monitoring biodiversity conservation; (d) Implementing innovative, inclusive pro-nature enterprises and M&E Frameworks
  - D. **Leveraging Financing:** Reviving and institutionalizing the committees established under the Integrated Water Resources Management Project (GEF ID: 4953) will create an enabling environment for the governance of the Mano River watershed. The institutionalized committees will establish a strong foundation for implementing the Mano River Union Strategic Action Plan, ultimately unlocking investments in the region. Additionally, collaboration and partnerships built through this project could potentially unlock financing for biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation and mitigation as well as leverage ongoing investments.
8. The Sierra Leone Guinean Forests Child project seeks to generate inclusive, gender-equitable Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs) through the achievement of the following targets: at least **172,630 direct beneficiaries, of which 30% are women**; mitigate approximately **1.57 Million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e**; ensure at least **35,000 Hectares outside Protected Areas** in the Gola Forest Landscape of Sierra Leone are under improved practices; at least **22,428 Hectares** in the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, Kambui South Forest Reserve and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary are under improved management; at least **10,000 Hectares** of land/ecosystems are restored; increase engagement of Sierra Leone on the GEF's International Waters (IW) knowledge sharing platform (IW: LEARN [https://iwlearn.net/abt\\_iwlearn](https://iwlearn.net/abt_iwlearn)) to **Level 2** through participation and sharing of key knowledge products. Notably, strengthened technical capacity coupled with improved coordination and collaboration amongst state and non-state actors will enhance effective forest resources governance and thus contribute to achieving the targets in the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), the Sierra Leone National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Subsequently, this will also enhance national development planning, particularly in mobilizing climate and conservation finance, developing gender-responsive and climate-proof legislation, and supporting the National Development Plan's goals of green growth, resilience, and sustainable development.

## A. Project Rationale

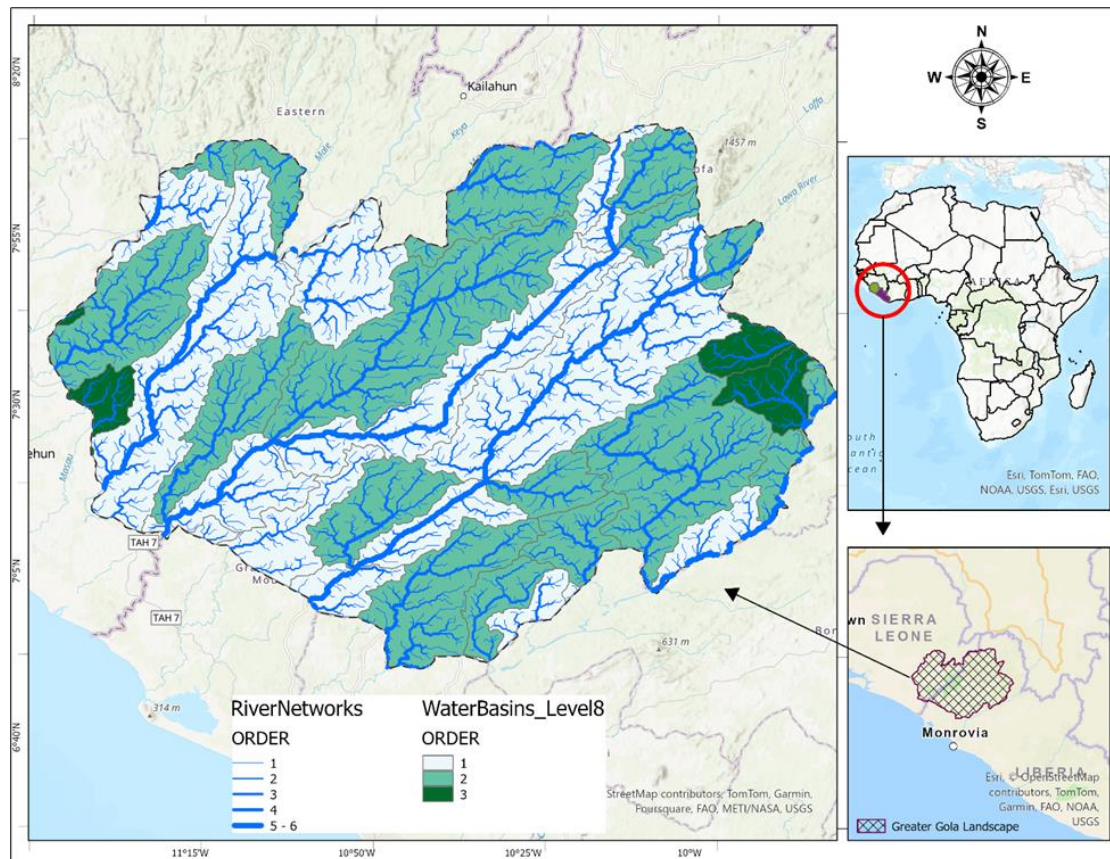
### Project Context

9. Sierra Leone is a Least Developed Country (LDC) located along the West Coast of Africa between Latitudes 70 and 100 North, and Latitudes 10.50 and 13.180 West. The country is bounded on the North, North-West and North-East by the Republic of Guinea, on the South-East by the Republic of Liberia, and the West and South-West by the Atlantic Ocean. The land area measures approximately 71, 740 sq. km (about 45,000 sq. miles). There is a low-lying coastal plain about 80km deep except the Freetown Peninsula, which is dominated by hills<sup>6</sup>.
10. Sierra Leone faces significant socio-economic challenges, marked by income inequality, political instability, and severe socio-economic repercussions from a civil war (1991-2002) and an Ebola crisis (2014-2016). Despite rich natural resources, the country's economic and social infrastructure is underdeveloped, with widespread poverty (57%) and extreme poverty (10.8%). The population is 7.1 million, with a rural majority (59%) and a high youth percentage (over 40% under age 15). By 2030, the population is projected to reach 10.3 million. In the Gola Forest landscape, approximately 570,000 people live, with efforts underway to improve land administration and support community-managed forests. Rural poverty (73%) is prevalent, driven by inadequate social services, poor infrastructure, and limited economic opportunities. Male-headed households dominate, but female-headed households increase in urban areas due to women's empowerment and employment opportunities.
11. **Drainage:** The country's drainage pattern is dense. Numerous rivers rise in the well-watered Fouta Djallon highlands of Guinea and flow in a general northeast-to-southwest direction across Sierra Leone. Their middle courses are interrupted by rapids that restrict navigability to only a short distance inland. River levels show considerable seasonal fluctuations. The drainage system has nine major rivers and a series of minor coastal creeks and tidal streams. From north to south, the principal rivers are the Great Scarcies (also called the Kolenté), Little Scarcies, Rokel (also called the Seli; known in its lower course where it meets the Atlantic as the Sierra Leone River), Gbangbaia, Jong, Sewa, Waanje, Moa, and Mano. The Great Scarcies, Moa, and Meli (one of the Moa's tributaries) form portions of the border with Guinea, while the Mano forms much of the country's frontier with Liberia. The river basins range in size from 14,140 square km for the Sewa to less than 1,000 square km for the smaller basins. **Figure 1** is an overview of the drainage system in the greater Gola landscape. Protection of these water catchments is important for the sustainability of livelihoods in the landscape.

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<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and Environment, 2015. Final Land Policy of Sierra Leone. Version 6. August 2015. Website: <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/sie155203.pdf> . Accessed 10<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 23.26 Hrs.





**Figure 1: Drainage system in the Greater landscape**

12. **Soils:** The soil taxonomy for Sierra Leone gives the following soils progressively in decreasing importance; Ultisols, Inceptisols, Oxisols, Entisols and Spodosols. The clay fraction of most of these soils is predominantly kaolinite, which typically makes up 45 to 75 per cent of this fraction. It should be noted that marked differences occur amongst these soils. The soils along the beach ridges along the coast are very sandy and have very little agricultural value. The clayey soils that occur in tidal swamps along the coast and up adjacent stream estuaries contain sulfur, which may produce extreme acidity if there is too much drainage and oxidation. Under good management, they are used for swamp rice production. The well-drained and moderately well-drained alluvial soils that occur on the flood plains of the larger streams are among the most productive soils in Sierra Leone. They are subject to occasional brief flooding. Gravelly upland soils are the most extensive soils in Sierra Leone; in many in-land areas such as around Kenema, Makeni and Njala, they compose approximately two-thirds of the landscape. They are low in fertility but also droughty during the dry season as a result of low moisture-holding capacity. Their agricultural potential is low, however, and they are better adapted to tree crops like cassava and forestry.
13. **Climate:** The climate is tropical and is characterized by the alternation of rainy and dry seasons. Conditions are generally hot and humid. Mean monthly temperatures range from the mid-20s C to the upper 20s C in low-lying coastal areas; inland they may range from the low 20s C to the upper 20s C. In the northeast, where extremes of temperature are greater, mean daily minimums fall to the low to mid-10s C in January, and mean daily maximums rise to the low 30s C in March. During the rainy season, from May to October, humid air masses from the Atlantic dominate. The sky is cloudy, the winds are southwesterly, sunshine is minimal, and rain falls almost daily, especially during July and August. Precipitation is greater on the coast than inland; the Peninsula Mountains receive more than 5,000 mm annually, while the Northeast receives about 2,000 mm a year. The dry season, from November to April, is characterized by the harmattan, a hot, dry wind that blows from the Sahara. The rainy season tends to have cooler daily maximum temperatures

than the dry season by about 6 °C. The relative humidity, however, may be as high as 90 per cent for considerable periods, particularly during the wettest months, from July to September.

14. **Biodiversity:** Sierra Leone hosts rich biodiversity and a variety of ecosystems including crop and rangelands, forests, freshwater, and wetlands. Sierra Leone's vegetation comprises two major biogeographic ecosystems: the Sudan-Guinea savanna biome mainly in the north and the Guinea-Congo Forest biome mainly in the southeast of the country. The country has about 610,122 ha of national forest estate (8.4% of the total land area), comprising 360,622 ha from the 29 non-hunting forest reserves; 74,800 ha of national parks; and 60,100 ha of game reserves<sup>7</sup>. There are four National Parks namely: the Outamba-Kilimi; Gola Rainforest; Loma Mountains; and Western Area Peninsula National Parks; and one Game Sanctuary - the Tiwai Island Game Sanctuary. The Western Area Peninsula Forest (WAP) has been listed under the UNESCO World Heritage sites, together with Tiwai Island and Gola Forest National Park.
15. Sierra Leone is home to diverse wildlife, including 147 mammal species, 630 bird species (10 endangered), 67 reptiles (3 endangered), 35 amphibians, 750 butterflies, and 200 fish species. Significant populations include over 5500 endangered western chimpanzees, whales, manatees, and various sea turtles. The country's flora and fauna distribution is influenced by geography, farming, and historical conflicts, with remnants of original forests in reserves like the Gola Forest. Secondary forests and savannas dominate, with erosion from farming and grazing affecting vegetation. The civil war impacted wildlife, reducing sightings of large game animals outside protected areas. Common species include chimpanzees, monkeys, antelopes, and diverse insects. Coastal and river ecosystems support a variety of fish and shellfish. Protected areas like Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary and the Gola Forest Reserves aim to preserve this biodiversity, with sanctuaries like Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary focusing on species rehabilitation.

#### **Main Economic activities:**

16. Sierra Leone is an agricultural country<sup>8</sup>. About eighty percent of the people are exclusively dependent on farming for their livelihood and more than 90 percent of the farming population cultivate rice. It is estimated that a total area of 209,000 ha is under cultivation in the Northern Province, followed by 103,000 ha and 98,000 ha in the Eastern Southern Provinces respectively. The crops cultivated are divided into two main groups: perennials and annuals. The perennials include oil palm, cocoa, coffee, cola nuts, coconut palm, mango, rubber, cashew, sugar cane, pineapple, ginger, piassava, banana and plantain. The major annual crops cultivated are rice, cassava, sweet potato, groundnut, maize, cow peas, pigeon peas and assorted vegetables.
17. **Agriculture, forestry, and fishing** contribute to 56.6% of GDP, more than industry (7.8%) and services (38.5%)<sup>9</sup>, and remain the main economic activities in the country. Two-thirds of the population is involved in smallholder subsistence agriculture. Most households engaged in agricultural production are headed by men, with just 15.7% headed by women<sup>10</sup>. Crop production contributes the largest share to agricultural GDP, accounting for 67%, livestock 3%, and fisheries 10%.<sup>11</sup> Nearly 85% of farmers grow rice, mainly in smallholder farms, with cassava being the second most important crop. Nevertheless, of the estimated 5.4 million hectares of fertile arable land, 75% remains uncultivated<sup>12</sup>, and the country has not been able to produce enough rice to meet local demand. Pressure for more agricultural land is a major cause of deforestation and forest degradation.

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<sup>7</sup> The Sierra Leone National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), 2017.

<sup>8</sup> Sierra Leone Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

<sup>9</sup> Statistics Sierra Leone, Report on the 2019 and 2020 Real Gross Domestic Product.

<sup>10</sup> Open Data Sierra Leone (<https://www.opendatasl.gov.sl/ministry-agriculture-forestry-and-food-security>).

<sup>11</sup> GoSL, 2018.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/operations/w/country/sierra-leone>



18. The **livestock** reared are cattle, small ruminants (goats and sheep), pigs and fowl. Most livestock are left to fend for themselves. The water bodies support large volumes of fresh and marine water, which provides fish that is harvested and consumed by the local population. The **commercial logging** of forest trees, the practice of the slash and burn agriculture, the uncontrolled burning of the savannah grassland ecology, mining, environmental pollution and overhunting and fishing all have a devastating effect on Agrobiodiversity. The ten-year rebel war has further threatened and accelerated the extinction of some of the biodiversity. It is therefore prudent to devise measures that will arrest the extinction of the threatened biodiversity.<sup>13</sup>
19. **Mining** - diamond, gold, bauxite, etc. - plays a central role in the economies of the MRU countries, and in particular in the Scarcies basins between Guinea and Sierra Leone. A GIZ report (2020) estimates that in each of these two countries, nearly 300,000 people live directly from artisanal mining and 1.5 million to 1.8 million people benefit indirectly (GIZ, 2020). When it comes to diamonds, in particular, Sierra Leone is the largest producer in West Africa. Diamond mining is estimated to employ at least 150,000 people in Sierra Leone and 200,000 in Guinea, compared to 450,000 for the entire MRU area

**Social context and gender aspects:**

20. The main socio-economic activities in the focus area are farming and mining, with a small percentage engaged in small business or petty trading in the private sector. Women provide more than 80% of farm labour for food production, processing, distribution, and food preparation. Women are generally responsible for food security at family and community levels and are primarily the home managers, community organizers, and caregivers for children, the sick, and the elderly. It is not therefore surprising that women work longer hours at their multiple roles than men, often with uncertain and more limited resources, lower rewards, and public recognition. According to the World Bank's development indicators for Sierra Leone, women account for over 53% of labour in the crop farming subsector and 52% in the poultry subsector. In the informal sector where women predominate, the main activities include soap making, tie-dyeing, and petty trade where generally the reward is very low. In farming, women are engaged mainly in food production, (subsistence farming), where cash returns are much lower than from cash crops where men dominate.
21. Women have access to land, credit, and the opening of bank accounts on their own. After the war, various commercial banks and credit financial institutions were added to the country's financial services. They went to various parts of the country including some chiefdoms' headquarters towns to bring financial services to the farmers in isolated communities. They provided normal banking services of saving, current accounting, and other needed commercial services. Some micro-credit financial institutions also surfaced in the country. Notable among them are BRA, LAPO, and Finance Salone. Each provides credit facilities to small groups of business organizations, especially women's business organisations for weekly to monthly interest. The services business groups range from five to twenty members. The loan given usually falls between Five Hundred Thousand Leones (Le500,000) and three Million Leones (Le3,000,000) per member of the organisation. The interest rate of 20-25% is considered by women as very high which is one of the factors preventing their use. The interest together with the loan is paid weekly with the hope of repaying the loan in three to six months, but the person is encouraged to continue the payment for an equal period within which the loan and interest were paid. If the person did not default in payment, she is upgraded and her savings now will be given to other groups with half of the interest coming to the owner and the other half to the financial institution. It must be noted that the upscaling is a fresh account following the first loan model. If the woman can complete the third or fourth

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<sup>13</sup> ibid

upscaling, her total savings will be enough to set her on a better road to business progress. However, many who were not able to invest in a proper profitable business that could enable them to repay the weekly amount faced different types of recovery embarrassment. Some even fled from their communities to save their face.

22. Gender-based violence (GBV) and Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) are acts deeply rooted in gender inequality and remain one of the most notable human rights violations in all societies around the world. It is violence that is directed against a person because of his/her gender. Even though both women and men experience GBV, most victims are women and girls. On the positive side, there is increased gender awareness among stakeholders, some institutions have been established to prevent GBV such as the Family Support Unit and some legal reforms have taken place to rectify gender-based injustices, which have resulted in the enactment of laws such as the three Genders Justice Acts.

### **PROJECT AREA – THE GREATER GOLA LANDSCAPE IN SIERRA LEONE**

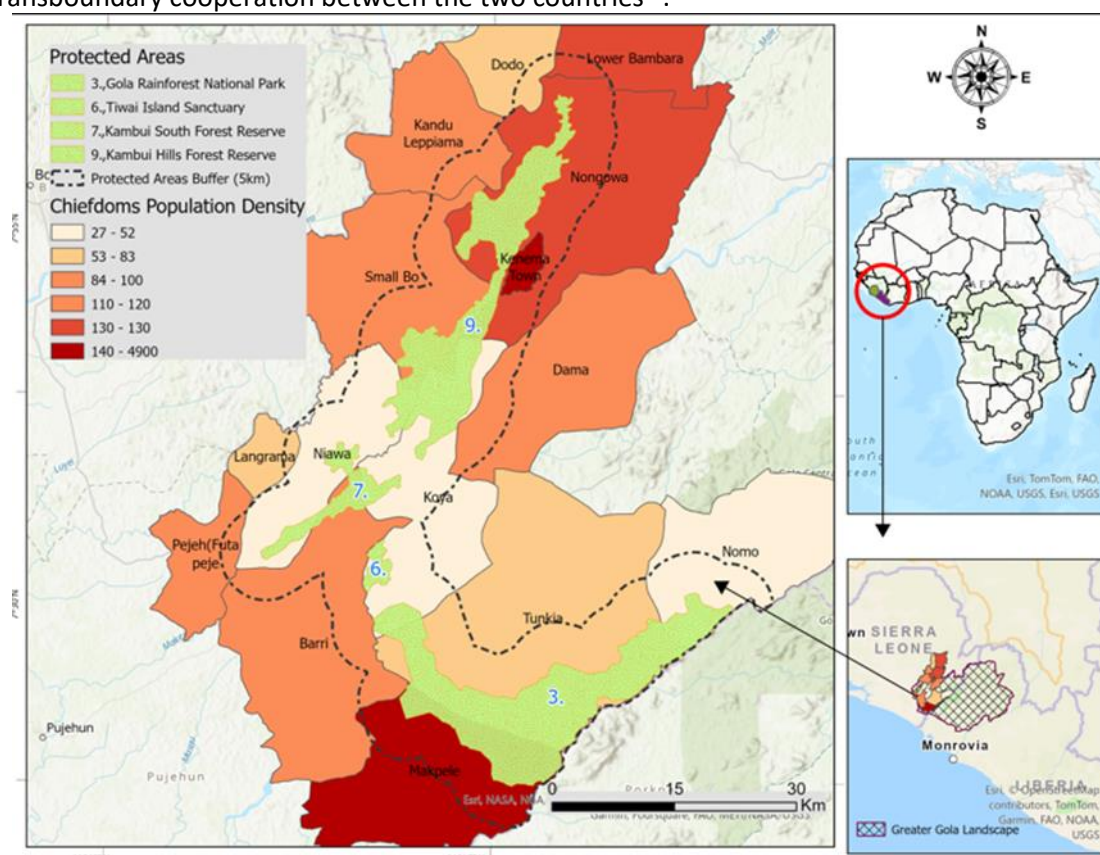
23. The target project area in Sierra Leone encompasses the Gola Rainforest National Park (GRNP), Kambui Hills Forest Reserve (North and South) and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary. This area is part of the Gola-Foya-Kpo Mountains that straddle the Sierra Leone-Liberia border along the Mano River, forming one of the largest remaining blocks of the Upper Guinea Forest<sup>14</sup>. The project area includes the largest single intact forest block in the Upper Guinea Forest, making its protection essential to conserving the region's biodiversity. The Mano River runs through the Gola landscape along the Sierra Leone-Liberia border, with the basin being the third-most biodiverse sub-regional watershed in the world after the Amazon and Congo basins. In Liberia, it includes the Gola Forest National Park (GFNP) and the Foya PPA (Proposed Protected Area). It also includes surrounding community forests (about 160 communities); now extended to include the Kpo Mountains PPA (potential NP) in Liberia south of Foya (part of Kpelle Forest KBA<sup>15</sup>). These important forests (with no major roads or barriers) can link via forest corridors to the rest of the Key Landscape for Conservation and Development (KLCD).
24. The KLCD is home to threatened species including zebra duiker and Jentink's duiker, red colobus, western pied colobus, pangolin, pygmy hippopotamus, forest elephant and others, many endemics to Guinea forests. It holds the world's second-largest population of western chimpanzees, 31 species of fish, 600 species of butterflies and 43 amphibian species. Over 300 bird species have been recorded in Gola and its buffer zones, including the threatened white-necked Picathartes, white-breasted guineafowl, rufous fishing owl, and Gola malimbe. The key forests are Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs).
25. The Gola Transboundary Peace Park covers 3,500 km<sup>2</sup>, straddling the Sierra Leone and Liberia border and incorporating the two contiguous PAs: Gola Rainforest National Park (GRNP) in Sierra Leone, and the Gola Forest National Park (GFNP) and Foya PPA in Liberia.
26. Support from various international and national research and NGO conservation projects led to the signature of a conservation concession agreement in Sierra Leone in 2000 between the Government, Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), BirdLife UK and benefit-sharing agreements with seven Gola Forest chiefdoms to compensate local communities for income forgone from logging. This developed into the first REDD+ project in West African forests, sequestering hundreds of thousands of tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents and supporting thousands of livelihoods<sup>16</sup>. In 2011, the Sierra Leone and Liberian

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<sup>14</sup> [https://papfor.org/IMG/pdf/fact-sheet-gola\\_foya.pdf](https://papfor.org/IMG/pdf/fact-sheet-gola_foya.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/22511>

governments signed a Peace Park Agreement to protect the Gola Landscape leading to transboundary cooperation between the two countries<sup>17</sup>.



**Figure 1: Project target Protected Areas and some community forests – This child project focuses on the Sierra Leone part of the landscape**

**Table 4: Targeted Protected Areas in the Gola Landscape**

Name of Target Protected Area	Category	Area (ha)	WDPA ID	IUCN CATEGORY
1. Kambui Hills Forest Reserve	Forest Reserve	20,348	WDPA ID 303925	Forest Reserve -Not reported
2. Kambui South Forest Reserve	Forest Reserve	880	WDPA ID 29972	Forest Reserve – Not reported
3. Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary	Community Forest	1,200	WDPAID 10741	Community Forest – proposed world heritage site
	<b>Total</b>	<b>22,428</b>		

### **Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and Kambui South Forest Reserve**

27. The Kambui Hills Forest Reserve (KHFR) sometimes refers to an area that comprises two major blocks of natural tropical high forests located in the Eastern Province of Sierra Leone, namely Kambui Hills and Kambui South. There are several figures regarding the size of this forest due to different boundaries and extensions, (CSSL, 2023<sup>18</sup>). However, the Import Bird Areas (IBA) report

<sup>18</sup>Conservation Society of Sierra Leone, 2023 - Report on a review of enabling environment for the development of co-management plan for kambui hills forest reserve, Sierra Leone.

provides the KHFR area as 21,228 ha (consisting of North (20,348 ha) and Kambui South, (880 ha)), which is also commonly used in literature (Jensen, 2021<sup>19</sup>; CSSL, *ibid*). The two forest blocks (Kambui Hills North and Kambui Hills South) are located in the Eastern Province of Sierra Leone and were separately gazetted in 1920 and 1923 respectively. The former was first gazetted as a non-hunting timber production Forest Reserve in which human activity was supposed to be controlled. The reserve is an important remaining fragment of the Upper Guinean Forest and forms part of the Greater Gola landscape.

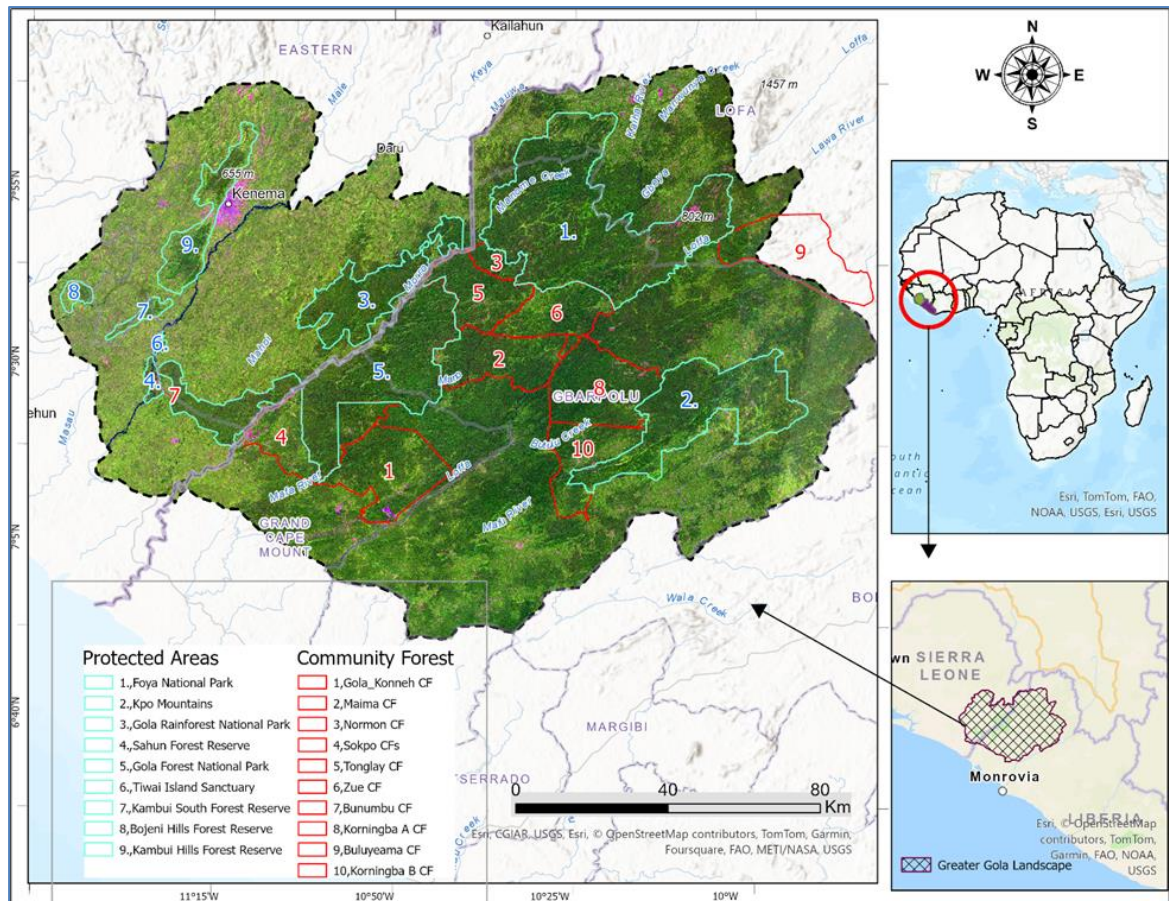
28. The Forest Reserves are under a duo-management regime, with the National Protected Area Authority (NPAA) responsible for conservation and the Forestry Department (FD-SL) responsible for the commercial aspects of the reserve<sup>20</sup>. These government agencies have been over time supported by several non-government actors in the implementation of interventions on the ground. These include the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL), supported by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and Birdlife International UK. However, there is a limited capacity of the mandated agencies to execute their functions, which has affected the effectiveness of law enforcement and the protection of the reserves. Over the years, Kambui Hills has undergone considerable deforestation and forest degradation. The most impactful drivers include agricultural expansion through slash-and-burn methods by small-scale farmers around the margins of the Reserve, resource use pressure for both wood and non-wood products, e.g., logging for timber and charcoal, and small-scale mining for gold. The high prevalence of illegal activities has contributed to the loss of wildlife and forest values and products, which should provide economic and environmental benefits around Kambui.

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<sup>19</sup> Agev Jensen Charity Foundation 2021; Community Based Forest Management in Kambui Hills Forest Reserve- Putting Theory into practice, a Final Project Report (April 2017 to August 2021).

<sup>20</sup> Legal Study on Forests in Sierra Leone: Strengthening the forestry legal framework to address transboundary challenges and degradation trends in the Upper Guinean forest ecosystem; <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/cffcc60f-36f3-4418-91c3-ce2ef695a818/content>; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Rome, 2023; Website accessed on 3rd May 2024 at 0808hrs.



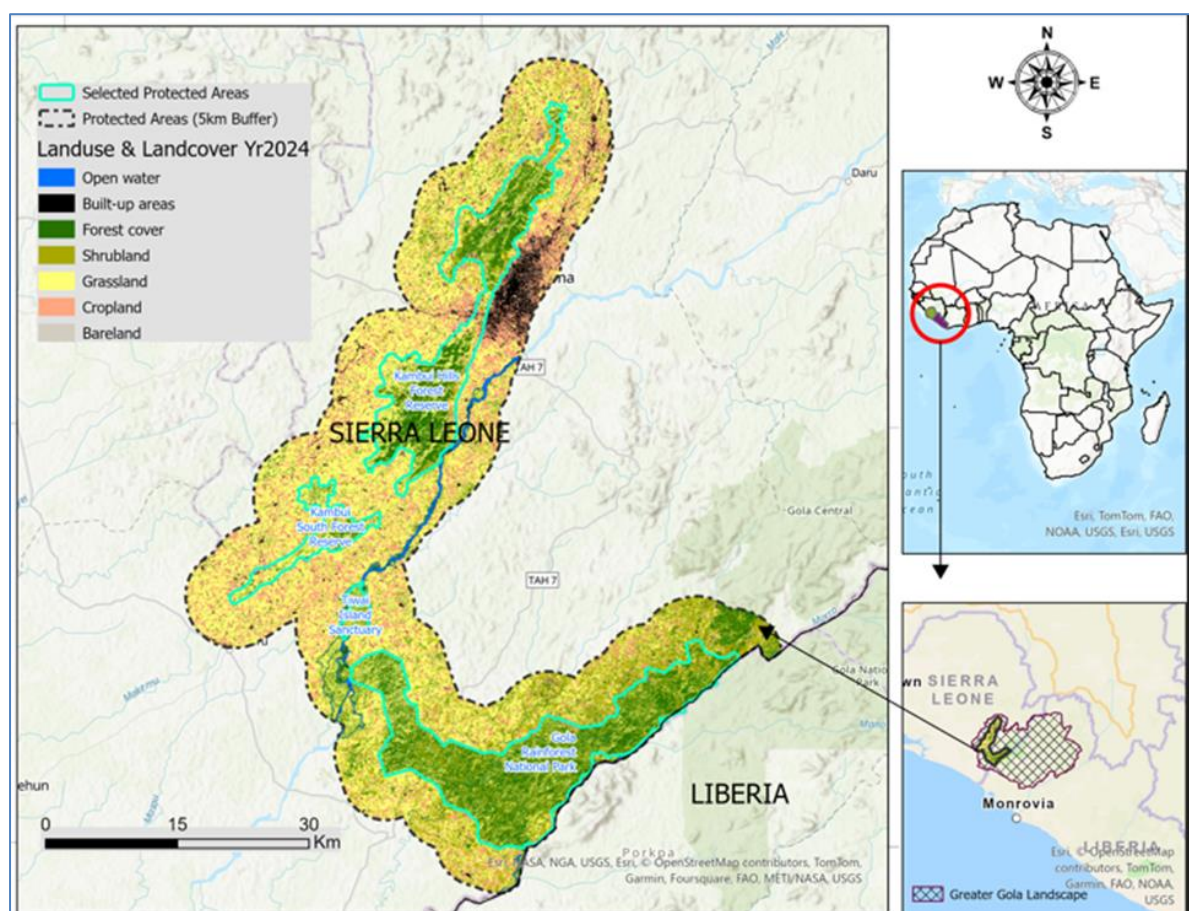


**Figure 2: The Gola-Foya-Kpo Mts (Sierra Leone and Liberia) – This child project focuses on the Sierra Leone part of the landscape specifically; Kambui hills FR, Kambui South and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary and is proposed as a transboundary project.**

### Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary

29. Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary covers the whole of Tiwai Island which is located on the Moa River three kilometres to the west of Gola South. Tiwai which means “big island” in the local Mende language is the largest and northernmost of a series of islands that spread for about 20 km down the Moa River. Tiwai Island is set deep within Sierra Leone’s Upper Guinea Rainforest on the Moa River, in the southern part of the country. The Island is home to one of the richest populations of pygmy hippopotami, more than 100 birds including endemic species, and it is also the best place in the country to see primates – 11 resident primate species make Tiwai Island the protected area with the world’s highest concentration and diversity of primates. The island also houses one of the country’s first ecotourism projects. The Guests have the opportunity to spend the night in a camp surrounded by rainforest, managed by a national NGO - Environmental Foundation for Africa – Sierra Leone (EFASL). All tourism revenue is reinvested into Tiwai Island, contributing to a Community Development Fund that supports various programs, benefiting Tiwai’s eight host communities.
30. Explorers venturing to Tiwai Island have the opportunity to spend time in nature and join an array of activities. These include guided forest walks, immersive community visits, captivating boat tours, and refreshing swims along Tiwai’s sandy beaches, particularly delightful during the dry season. Tiwai Island has also been on the tentative list of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage List. Surrounding communities benefit from significant tourism activities in Tiwai, which itself almost entirely relies on the long-term survival of primates and pygmy hippos.

31. While the project target sites are Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, Kambui South Forest Reserve and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary, project interventions will be undertaken in a buffer area to support the connectivity of these reserves to the Gola Forest National Park for ecological integrity and enhance the sustainability of the ecosystems.



**Figure 3: A proposed buffer area for project interventions to support restoring the connectivity between Kambui, Tiwai and Gola RNP.**

32. With a clear objective to maintain forest cover across the Landscapes and the maintenance of connectivity of the Protected Areas (PAs) through forest restoration of the areas outside the protected areas, the project will contribute to the prevention of further loss of forest biodiversity and restore forest viability, (Languy, 2023)<sup>21</sup>. Increased management effectiveness in the Gola Rain Forest National Park (GRNP) over the years has resulted in better engagements for sustainable financing options through the implementation of the REDD+ Project. Support from various international and national research and NGO conservation projects led to the signature of a conservation concession agreement in Sierra Leone in 2000 between the Government, CSSL (Conservation Society of Sierra Leone), RSPB (Birdlife UK) and benefit-sharing agreements with 7 Gola Forest chiefdoms to compensate local communities for income forgone from logging. This developed into the first REDD+ project in West African forests, sequestering hundreds of thousands of tonnes of Carbon Dioxide equivalents and supporting thousands of livelihoods<sup>22</sup>. This

<sup>21</sup> Marc Languy (2023) Short technical note on the issue of loss of connectivity between Tiwai Island and Gola Rainforest NP (Gola-Foya Landscape, Sierra Leone) and on the need for a dedicated forest restoration initiative; Marc Languy, PAPFor Regional Coordinator

02 February 2023. Monrovia, Liberia.

<sup>22</sup>The Gola REDD+ Project. Accessed on Website <https://golarainforest.org/our-work>

project will aim at scaling up these achievements to cover Kambui Hills and associated communities.

33. Kambui Hills are located along the Mao River, strategically located as part of the Moru River watershed system. In 2011, the Sierra Leone and Liberian governments signed a Peace Park Agreement to protect the Gola Landscape leading to transboundary cooperation between the two countries to promote improved management of the shared natural resources<sup>23</sup>. This project will contribute to the aspirations of the Peace Park Agreement through investments in watershed management in Kambui Hills, Tiwai and the surrounding communities.

### Global Environmental Problems, underlying drivers and root causes

34. Addressing the environmental challenges in the Sierra Leone Gola Forest Landscape requires a multifaceted approach that tackles the underlying drivers, root causes, and barriers to change. This involves improving governance and law enforcement, providing economic alternatives, enhancing infrastructure and social services, and fostering community involvement in conservation efforts. Ensuring the sustainability of the Gola Forest Landscape will also necessitate robust transboundary management and partnerships, particularly with neighboring Liberia, to address the broader regional environmental issues.

#### *Global environmental problems that the project will address:*

33. The project will address the following global environmental problems affecting the Gola Forest Landscape with a focus on Sierra Leone
  - **Climate change and variability** is a global environmental challenge that continues to cause negative impacts on several sectors in Sierra Leone. The impacts are exacerbated by human population growth, increasing pressure on natural resources due to unsustainable resource use practices, poverty, and inadequate awareness about the consequences of resource degradation and depletion. Climate projections developed for the country using the models of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fifth Assessment Report (IPCC AR5) indicate an increase in near-surface temperatures. The values in **Table 5** are the projected temperature changes relative to the 1986–2005 mean temperatures (°C). There is clear evidence of temperature changes at RCP 8.5 making it imperative to consider the effect of climate change on protected areas and justifying the need for effective PA ecological monitoring during and after the project implementation.

**Table 5: Climate projections for Sierra Leone using the IPCC AR5 models**

Country	Under RCP <sup>24</sup>		RCP 8.5	
	2046–2065 Temp. change	2081–2100 Temp. change	2046–2065 Temp. change	2081–2100 Temp. change
Sierra Leone	1.5°C	1.5°C	3°C	5.5°C

Most people in Sierra Leone are subsistence farmers practising rain-fed agriculture with minimum agricultural inputs. Rain-fed agriculture accounts for 30 per cent of the GDP in Africa and employs 70 per cent of the population. As temperatures rise, precipitation will be erratic and uncertain blended with increased frequency and intensity of droughts, floods, heatwaves, and landslides. Many African countries, including Sierra Leone, already experience this climate stress and have low adaptive capacity. Ecological monitoring can be utilized as an inference of

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.wabicc.org/protecting-forests-people-and-the-world-the-gola-transboundary-peace-park-of-sierra-leone-liberia-brings-hope/>

<sup>24</sup> Representative concentration Pathway



impact on the surrounding communities. There is a need to develop appropriate adaptation and mitigation strategies in tandem with robust policies to lower the negative economic impact on the agricultural sector which would help to relieve pressure on protected areas as the main source of livelihoods<sup>25</sup>.

- **Deforestation and Biodiversity loss:** From 2000 to 2022, Sierra Leone experienced a net forest loss of approximately 545,000 hectares (around 9% of its total tree cover) and an additional 1.99 million hectares of forest degradation (Global Forest Watch 2023). The primary causes of this loss include agricultural expansion, charcoal production, and illegal mining and logging, compounded by the impacts of illegal hunting. These activities are driven by high levels of poverty, population growth, a lack of economic alternatives to unsustainable forest uses, and limited government capacity and resources. To address forest loss and degradation, Sierra Leone has enacted several policies. The Forestry Act of 1988 serves as the legal basis for national forest management. Currently, the government is aligning forest policies with the Framework for Effective Management of Natural Resources within its national Poverty Reduction Strategy. This framework emphasizes sustainable forest management to prevent loss and degradation while reducing poverty. In 2010, the Forestry Division adopted policies that support collaboration with communities and landowners to protect and restore forests. Additionally, in August 2022, Parliament passed the Customary Land Rights and National Land Commission Acts, which ban industrial development (such as large-scale agribusiness) in ecologically important areas.
- **Unsustainable exploitation of natural resources:** Sierra Leone continues to experience over-exploitation of natural resources (such as forests, wetlands, soil, biodiversity, aquatic and marine resources, and rangelands) which has led to biodiversity loss, land degradation, deforestation, soil erosion, and increased GHG emissions thereby aggravating the impact of climate change. Unsustainable and over-exploitation of natural resources is a result of increasing human population and greater demands for resources, weak enforcement of environmental policies, and institutional capacity gaps among others. Inadequate policy implementation and institutional capacity gaps are the main causes of resource exploitation, degradation, and depletion in most African countries. For example, a recent UNDP report highlighted these weaknesses in Botswana's natural resource management sector and suggested the need to strengthen institutional capacity as one of the remedies.
- **Land degradation** is prevalent arising mainly from ecosystem fragmentation caused by human population pressures exerted on the natural resources. Land degradation, in turn, threatens local communities' livelihoods. Climate change and human activities such as deforestation and over-cultivation are responsible for land degradation. Local communities' dependence on firewood as a source of household energy has also degraded and depleted forests and woodlands.

### Underlying drivers

1. **Resource Use Pressure:** The high reliance on natural resources for livelihoods, including subsistence agriculture, logging, and mining, drives significant pressure on the forest ecosystem. The communities surrounding the Gola National Park engage heavily in these activities due to limited alternative livelihood options.

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<sup>25</sup> Simbanegavi W and Arndt C (2014) Climate Change and Economic Development in Africa: An Overview. *Journal of African Economies*, 23(AERC Supplement 2): ii4–ii16. Available from: [https://academic-oup-com.proxy.library.adelaide.edu.au/jae/article/23/suppl\\_2/ii4/684146](https://academic-oup-com.proxy.library.adelaide.edu.au/jae/article/23/suppl_2/ii4/684146) (Accessed 2 November 2023)



- a. *Agricultural Expansion*: The primary economic activity in Sierra Leone is subsistence agriculture, which places immense pressure on forest land. Slash-and-burn farming methods around the margins of forest reserves contribute to deforestation.
  - b. *Mining Activities*: Artisanal and small-scale mining, particularly for diamonds, gold, and bauxite, is prevalent. This mining activity leads to deforestation, land degradation, and pollution.
  - c. *Illegal Logging*: Illegal timber trade and logging for charcoal production further degrades forest ecosystems.
2. **Rapid Population Growth**: The population in the Gola Forest landscape is rapidly increasing, leading to greater demand for land, food, and resources, which in turn puts more pressure on the natural resources, resulting in encroachment on forested areas and increased deforestation

### Root Causes

1. *High Poverty rate*: Sierra Leone's high poverty rate, especially in rural areas, compels communities to exploit natural resources unsustainably. The country's poverty rate stands at 57%, with 10.8% living in extreme poverty, leading to over-reliance on the forest for food, fuel, and income.
2. *Weak Infrastructure and Services*: The lack of infrastructure, such as roads and market access, and inadequate social services (healthcare, education, clean water, and sanitation) hinder sustainable development and force communities to rely heavily on natural resources.
3. *Historical Conflict and Instability*: The civil war (1991-2002) and the Ebola crisis (2014-2016) have left enduring impacts on the country's socio-economic structure, weakening institutional capacities and governance frameworks essential for law enforcement capacities and sustainable environmental management.
4. *Inequitable Land Tenure Systems*: Customary communal land tenure systems dominate, with limited formal recognition of community forests. This situation complicates effective forest and land management as well as conservation efforts in general.
5. *Limited Economic Opportunities*: The lack of diverse and sustainable economic opportunities compels communities to engage in illegal and environmentally destructive activities like mining, logging, and slash-and-burn agriculture.
6. *Social Inequality and Gender Disparities*: Social barriers and gender disparities exacerbate environmental issues. Women, who provide the bulk of agricultural labour and are crucial to food security, often have limited access to land, credit, and economic opportunities, hindering sustainable development practices.

### **Key barriers and enablers**

Governance, policy, and institution limitations at the national and local levels:

1. *Limited Government Capacity and Resources coupled with financial constraints*: There is limited capacity within governmental bodies to enforce environmental laws and manage protected areas effectively. The National Protected Area Authority (NPAA), Forestry Department and other relevant institutions often lack the necessary financial and human resources to curb illegal activities such as logging and poaching.

2. *Inadequate Financial Resources*: Insufficient funding hampers the implementation of conservation projects and the development of sustainable livelihoods for local communities.
3. *Limited Coordination and Collaboration between state and non-state actors*: Effective conservation requires coordination between government agencies, civil society organizations, and the private sector. The current limited collaboration undermines conservation efforts. Additionally, overlapping institutional frameworks lead to poor coordination and implementation of conservation policies. This includes a lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities among different government agencies.
4. *Insufficient data* to guide sustainable forest management, biodiversity conservation, land-use planning, decision-making, and strategic management.

#### Local level

5. *Social and Cultural Barriers*: Traditional practices and social norms, such as gender roles in agricultural labor and land management, impede the adoption of sustainable practices. Additionally, women, who are crucial in food production, often have less access to useful information, resources and decision-making processes.
6. *Lack of alternative Economic Alternatives* means that communities often rely on unsustainable forest exploitation for survival, perpetuating the cycle of forest degradation.
7. *Inadequate Legal Enforcement*: Even with policies in place, enforcement is often weak due to a lack of personnel, resources, and sometimes political will, making it difficult to protect the forest effectively. Additionally, policy incoherence and overlapping institutional frameworks further impede the enforcement of policies.
8. *Limited Community Engagement* as well as the inclusion of marginalized and vulnerable groups: Insufficient involvement and empowerment of local communities in conservation efforts have led to their limited support and cooperation, reducing the effectiveness of governance strategies and sustainability of the results.
9. *Education and Awareness*: Low levels of environmental awareness and education among local populations can lead to unsustainable practices and resistance to conservation measures.

35. Threats, Trends of biodiversity loss as well as opportunities/enablers for conservation in Sierra Leone are summarized in [Table 6](#).

**Table 6: Threats, Trends and opportunities/enablers for biodiversity conservation in Sierra Leone**

Aspect	Status
<b>Threats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate change is a major threat to biodiversity, hydrology, and river water quality. Adverse environmental effects have a knock-on effect on agricultural production and thus lead to the expansion of farms.</li> <li>Threat from invasive species is still relatively low although it is experienced in some areas.</li> <li>Major threats to biodiversity are human population increase, urban development, past political instability and civil war which exacerbated habitat loss and fragmentation.</li> <li>Deforestation occurs in the buffer areas of the PAs and surrounding community lands as a result of the expansion of subsistence agriculture.</li> </ul>

Aspect	Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forest degradation also occurs in forest reserves due to selective logging and artisanal mining (for gold and diamonds), facilitated by improved road access.</li> <li>• Bush meat hunting is a vital source of protein and income for rural communities but is unsustainable and has led to declines in the populations of target species. Laws to control hunting are generally poorly enforced, due to limited staff capacity.</li> <li>• There are high levels of poverty in the remote rural communities. Integration of conservation and development is hampered by poor infrastructure, lack of national and local capacity and support, and difficulties in promoting sustainable agriculture and securing market access.</li> </ul>
<b>Trends</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The threats are on an increasing trend - from 2000 to 2022, Sierra Leone experienced a net forest loss of approximately 545,000 ha (equivalent to roughly 9% of total tree cover,) with an additional 1.99 million ha of forest degraded (Global Forest Watch 2023). Primary causes include the expansion of agriculture, charcoal production, and illegal mining and logging, with additional impacts on ecosystems from illegal hunting. All are driven by high levels of poverty, population growth, a lack of economic alternatives to unsustainable forest uses, and limited government capacity and resources</li> <li>• The current population in the overall Gola Forest landscape is increasing and the target area is estimated to be 570,000 people, distributed among several chiefdoms. This large and growing population faces high levels of poverty and few sustainable economic alternatives, resulting in increased pressures on the region's natural resource base. Among the most significant increasing threats are the expansion of the agricultural frontier, illegal resource extraction (logging, mining, and hunting), and charcoal production for fuelwood, all of which are exacerbated by the impacts of climate change. Limited government capacity and resources to adequately manage the project area's natural resources further exacerbate the threats, leading to increased forest loss and degradation.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities/ Enablers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management plans have been prepared for some areas such or and there is an enabling environment to have plans prepared for each of the protected areas. There is a proposal to promote parts of the Sierra Leone Gola and Tiwai landscape as a World Heritage Site.</li> <li>• Initiatives to establish community forests, including protected zones and areas for sustainable utilization, are well advanced in parts of the Sierra Leone GRNP buffer zone.</li> <li>• Transboundary collaboration has increased as the capacity and operations in Sierra Leone and Liberia parks are established, though it is not yet formalized, The Gola Forest Bilateral Coordination Committee has been established to provide effective oversight.</li> <li>• There is a need to develop livelihood interventions that meet forest-friendly, climate-smart criteria, with a focus on food and protein for local consumption and income-generating value chains such as cocoa, honey, ecotourism, and improved access to markets.</li> <li>• Increased efforts are needed to combat the illegal wildlife trade through training for park rangers and community volunteers on patrolling, information gathering and community engagement.</li> <li>• Sustainable financing initiatives include the development of a voluntary carbon (REDD+) scheme, initially in Sierra Leone for a 30-year cycle, and the establishment of trust funds.</li> <li>• Initiatives to promote sustainable production of commercial commodities (e.g. oil palm, cocoa, coffee) are required, along with national policy frameworks and local land use plans.</li> <li>• There is an opportunity for the landscape to become a Centre of Excellence in research and monitoring if local capacity can be expanded and facilities be improved.</li> </ul>

## Incremental cost reasoning

36. With a clear objective to maintain forest cover across the Landscapes (and thus beyond PAs) and with the critical importance, from a long-term conservation perspective, it is crucial that this project contributes to ensuring connectivity of the PAs, in order to prevent further loss of forest cover but also to restore forest connectivity<sup>26</sup>. It is worth noting that, the surrounding communities benefit from significant tourism activities in Tiwai, which itself almost entirely relies on the long-term survival of primates and pygmy hippos. The value addition of the Sierra Leone project to the baseline and achieving transformative change is tabulated below:

**Table 7: Summary of incremental benefits of the project's interventions**

GEBS per GEF focal area	Baseline Scenario (Business As Usual) <i>without project</i>	Incremental Benefits <i>(with project – contributions to baseline)</i>
<b>Biodiversity</b> Global environmental benefits include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation of globally significant biodiversity.</li> <li>• Sustainable use of the components of globally significant biodiversity; and</li> <li>• Fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources, including appropriate access to genetic resources.</li> </ul>	There is ongoing loss of biodiversity through habitat destruction and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources. Secondary forest is now dominant; valuable timber species including African mahogany and African teak, once common in the original forests, are now rare.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 240,000 Ha of forest ecosystem safeguarded through collaboration with partners in Liberia and the effective management of Kambui Hills Forest reserve, Tiwai Wildlife Sanctuary as well as the associated community forest lands for connectivity resulting in protection and conservation of biodiversity against the destruction of habitats through human encroachment, illegal harvesting, and over-exploitation of resources.</li> <li>• Protection and conservation of globally significant biodiversity and threatened species within the Greater Gola Forest landscape (mainly the forest hippo? as well as endangered flora spp.)</li> <li>• Protection and conservation of forests and water bodies within the ecosystem hence increasing carbon sinks which mitigate GHG emissions</li> <li>• Enhance community participation for effective management</li> </ul>
<b>Land Degradation</b> Global environmental benefits resulting from GEF's focus on this focal area include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved provision of agro-ecosystem and forest ecosystem goods and services.</li> <li>• Mitigated/avoided greenhouse gas emissions and increased carbon sequestration in production landscapes, and</li> <li>• Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in productive landscapes.</li> </ul>	The landscape management capacity is still low to ensure sustainable management of biological resources	<p>Strengthened management capacity will progressively enable Sierra Leone and neighbouring Liberia to sustainably manage biological resources. This effort will lead to better-informed strategies, policies, and plans at national and regional levels for sustainable land management.</p> <p>The project will contribute to the GEBS of reduced GHG emissions and increased carbon sequestration through improved capacity of land managers to effectively manage the landscape.</p>

GEBs per GEF focal area	Baseline Scenario (Business As Usual) <i>without project</i>	Incremental Benefits <i>(with project – contributions to baseline)</i>
<b>Sustainable Forest Management/REDD+</b> Global environmental benefits resulting from GEF's focus on this area include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in degradation and deforestation.</li> <li>• Maintenance of the range of environmental services and products derived from forests; and</li> <li>• Enhanced sustainable livelihoods for local communities and forest-dependent peoples.</li> </ul>	Inadequate capacity for effective protection of the Gola Forest Landscape forests – low capacity to implement forest management activities; inadequate institutional coordination and inadequate alternative livelihood options	<p>The Forests within the landscape will be protected and conserved. This project will strengthen national capacity and institutional coordination to implement forest management activities as well as strengthen collaborative management with other stakeholders.</p> <p>The project provides a profound basis for strengthened institutional capacity, and enhanced stakeholder engagement including transboundary experience sharing, comprehensive on-ground forest management, forest inventory and data collection, processing and sharing as a prerequisite for making informed decisions on sustainable natural resources management.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced capacity for transboundary natural resources management and monitoring and quick response</li> </ul>	Inadequate technical, financial, and human resources for effective transboundary natural resources management	The project will enhance the capacity of institutions at the national and local levels in Sierra Leone to engage with those of Liberia for transboundary management of the Gola-Mano River catchment as well as engage under the GFIP regional framework with Guinea and others to share information and lessons learned to transboundary ecosystem threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness and more efficient co-management and sharing of forest management information, peer learning and enhancing</li> </ul>	Insufficient knowledge, awareness, and access to conservation technologies that support effective management of protected areas	Capacity building undertaken to enhance protected area management.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation, review, and effective implementation of natural resource management policy and forest management plans.</li> </ul>	Inadequate information and weak policy and forest plans implementation that conserve the ecosystems	The project will facilitate the generation of information and enhance access to the information to strengthen decision-making and forest management policy implementation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The agencies responsible for forestry and protected area management will learn and benefit from each other's knowledge, skills, experiences, and best practices.</li> </ul>	Weak coordination between authorities in charge of forestry-protected area management.	Institutional coordination is enhanced and strengthened at regional, national and protected area management levels.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Climate Change Mitigation</b></li> </ul>	Land and forest degradation due to over exploitation of natural resources	Potential for carbon sequestration enhanced particularly with forest restoration and implementation community level nature-based solutions

### Lessons from past and ongoing initiatives and planned cooperation

Project Name	Duration	Funding Source	Objectives	Components and Achievements	Lessons and Leveraging Opportunities
Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project (GEF Project ID: 4953)	Feb 2017 – Feb 2022)	GEF (USD 6,336,364)	Sustainable management of forest and water resources in the Upper Guinea forest ecosystem Area of focus to address environmental issues: Biodiversity, International Waters and Land Degradation	Developed the Forest Landscape restoration opportunities and Strategic Action Programme (SAP) to address threats to four transboundary forests including transboundary Protected Areas and associated River Basins. Established MRU Committees at community, national and regional levels	Application of the recommendations of the forest landscape restoration opportunities and aspects of the SAP for MRU basin restoration and conservation based on the long-term environmental quality objective 3, and leveraging on the national and community level MRU Committees and structures for mobilization, awareness creation, intervention and sustainability.
Support programme for the preservation of forest ecosystems in West Africa (PAPFor)	2019-2024	European Union (EU) (20 million Euros)	Protection of biodiversity and priority forest ecosystems in transboundary forest landscapes of West Africa (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria), and contributing to climate change resilience and food and water security	Conducted management effectiveness of the three landscapes using the integrated Management Effectiveness tool (IMET); developed management plans; provided training, materials and equipment for biomonitoring and law enforcement; engagement of local communities in protected area management and land-use planning and mapping	Need to strengthen management effectiveness through engagement of communities especially the paramount chiefs, improvement of skills of actors through technical training; provision of relevant machinery, tools, and equipment for patrols, biomonitoring and application of spatial/land-use planning and mapping

Project Name	Duration	Funding Source	Objectives	Components and Achievements	Lessons and Leveraging Opportunities
West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change (WABICC) Transboundary projects	2015-2021	United States Agency for International Aid (USAID)  (USD 53.75 million)	Complemented the EU-funded transboundary project PAPFor project, to conserve biodiversity and reduce the threats in the Outamba-Kilimi-Madina-Oula (OKMO) Transboundary Landscape.	Increased forest landscape restoration, reduced deforestation and improved conservation, climate-resilient and low-emissions growth across West Africa	Leveraging on the forest landscape approaches to conservation and restoration of forests within and outside the protected areas
The Biodiversity and Protection Areas Management (BIOPAMA) programme	June 2017–September 2025	European Union (€60 000 000)	Improving the long-term conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and natural resources in Africa, Caribbean and Pacific regions in protected areas and surrounding communities	Demarcated forest boundaries and produced maps; provided some livelihood support to some critical Communities; constructed eco-centre in some communities	Leveraging on the established boundaries and to utilize community-based structures for awareness creation and to address forest restoration efforts.
West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development (WABILED) programs	March 1, 2023 – April 30, 2025	United States Agency for International Aid (USAID)	Conserve the unique biodiversity of the 300,000-ha Transboundary Peace Park of Sierra Leone and Liberia and sustainably manage the remaining natural forests surrounding the Park, aimed at reducing deforestation, forest degradation, biodiversity loss and greenhouse gas emissions	Adoption of grid-based patrolling and SMART mobile technology and trained eco-guards for bio-monitoring and combating wildlife trafficking and enhancing great ape conservation; implementing priority community land use plans and forest management plans, and Implement priority action points from the	There is need to build a robust law enforcement system through staff capacity building, application of SMART mobile technologies and engagement of local communities for effective management of Kambui Hills Reserve, which now face serious illegal activities



Project Name	Duration	Funding Source	Objectives	Components and Achievements	Lessons and Leveraging Opportunities
				GRNP-GFNP Transboundary Peace Park Agreement	
The Gola REDD+ Project	2012 – 2042	Carbon Financing  (Estimated Core Annual Budget: USD 1,686,117)	Strengthening effective management of the GRNP, reducing emissions from forest deforestation and forest degradation, enhancing community participation natural resource stewardship and increasing benefits and community livelihood opportunities	Sustainable funding mechanism; structured management system for effective management of GRNP; Created employment opportunities and community empowerment, including increased women participation; supported livelihoods of approx.24,000 people in edge communities.	Building on the experiences of Gola Rainforest Company, CSSL and RSPB in scaling up the REDD Project to Kambui Hills FRs for sustainable financing and enhancing community benefits.
Restoring Livelihoods and Landscapes in the Forest-Buffer Communities of the Outamba-Kilimi-Madina-Oula (OKMO) Transboundary Landscape in Guinea and Sierra Leone	2023-2025	European Cooperative for Rural Development (EUCORD)	Promoting sustainable management practices for forest and agroforestry plantations in degraded areas.	Dealing with the causes of deforestation and forest degradation (charcoal production, logging, poaching and unsustainable practices) through improved agricultural practices	Improving agricultural practices can provide alternatives for livelihoods and reduce forest and land degradation
Building Capacity to Monitor Forest Vegetation and Carbon Change in the Upper Guinea Forest	September 1, 2022 - November 30, 2024	USAID, under the West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development program.	increase capacity of institutions both at the national and local level across the remnant Upper Guinean Forest Ecosystem to combine	Capacity building for forest monitoring, data capture and archiving, tree inventory, carbon stocks, and resource use by local communities	Improving the capacity for remote sensing, biodiversity inventories and establishing biodiversity databank are important for monitoring national forest cover, species diversity & vulnerability and is



Project Name	Duration	Funding Source	Objectives	Components and Achievements	Lessons and Leveraging Opportunities
			ground and remote sensing data to track forest degradation		essential for planning and decision-making

## B. Project Description

### Theory of Change

#### PROBLEM STATEMENT

37. The Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape are faced with several environmental problems, the key ones being increasing forest and land degradation, loss of biodiversity and reduced ecological services, due to drivers such as expansion of the agricultural frontier, illegal resource extraction (logging, mining, and hunting), and charcoal production for fuelwood, all of which are exacerbated by the impacts of climate change.

#### THE JUSTIFICATION OF PROJECT INTERVENTIONS/PROPOSED APPROACH

38. The root causes of deforestation, forest degradation and loss of biodiversity include **increasing population**, which increases pressure on the resources on which a large proportion of people depend; **high levels of poverty** among the communities, and a **lack of economic alternatives to unsustainable forest uses**, which exacerbate resource destruction.

39. The main barriers to effective management of the Gola Forest Landscape include, among others, (i) Limited capacity of mandated agencies for effective conservation and sustainable management of the landscape; (ii) Limited access to sustainable livelihoods; (iii) Insufficient data to guide sustainable forest management, biodiversity conservation, land-use planning, decision-making, and strategic management; (iv) Inadequate collaboration among relevant stakeholders to address transboundary issues in the Gola landscape; (v) Weak policies, tools, standards and guidelines and legislation relating to forest governance; and (vi) Weak monitoring and evaluation systems to track ecosystem management performance. By addressing these root causes and barriers, the Project will improve the management of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape, including the protected areas, transboundary resources and areas outside the protected areas.

40. The proposed project's integrated approach directly responds to and reflects the Guinean Forests Integrated Program's Theory of Change through three transformation pathways. Specifically:

- a) **Landscape-level gender-responsive multi-stakeholder governance mechanisms and spatial planning:** By supporting landscape-scale spatial planning and gender-responsive governance mechanisms with a broad range of local, national, and regional stakeholders, the proposed child project supports more sustainable land management both in and around protected areas and other effective conservation measures, improves land use planning capacity and generates knowledge needed to better inform national and regional policies and actions.
- b) **Gender-responsive community co-management of conservation areas:** Prior investments in the Guinean Forests have demonstrated the efficacy of community co-management of areas important for conservation. This has been the case, particularly in the Greater Gola Forest region, where communities have played critical roles in co-management activities of protected areas and OECMs, notably Community Forests. The proposed project will continue to build on

prior investments in community co-management, improving protected area management, and biodiversity conservation and contributing to greater habitat connectivity and delivery of ecosystem services.

- c) **Investment in innovative alternative climate-resilient livelihoods:** Through this lever, the proposed project utilizes knowledge from spatial planning processes to develop integrated land-use plans, which will lay the foundation for more sustainable, climate-resilient use of natural resources and improved livelihoods. Support for improved land tenure rights and policies as well as engagement of the private sector (notably those involved in value-added/certified products) will contribute to securing more sustainable, climate-resilient, inclusive and equitable livelihoods.

#### ENABLERS

1. Favourable governance structures for the management of biodiversity and land resources - (represented in the diagram as **E1**)
2. Supportive policies and strategic planning frameworks to support biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management practices (represented in the diagram as **E2**)
3. Commitment to regional and international obligations and cooperation frameworks (MoUs) – (represented in the diagram as **E3**)
4. The interventions in the other child projects will complement one another – (represented in the diagram as **E4**)

#### ASSUMPTIONS

1. Political will and stability – the State is committed at all levels, especially top levels, to the principles of sustainable development and those underlying the Convention on Biological Diversity, rather than short-term gain. (represented in the diagram as **A1**)
2. Supportive stakeholders, including Government MDAs, NGOs, Chiefdoms, local communities, artisanal miners, etc. foster collaboration and partnerships - (represented in the diagram as **A2**)
3. There will be effective collaboration between the child projects – All executing partners involved are willing to share knowledge, technical expertise, knowledge, experiences and lessons with other child projects (represented in the diagram as **A3**).

#### IMPACT DRIVERS

41. The main pathways to transformation, therefore, consist of project interventions (impact drivers) that address the key root causes and barriers, and foster changes and impacts in the reorganization of institutional structures and systems, and reorientation of various stakeholders to value and promote sustainable and equitable approaches to forest and land management and reduce deforestation and forest and land degradation and enhance people's well-being. The following interventions will be the focus of the Project:

- (a) **Strengthening governance structures** for improved management of the Kambui Hills FR, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape. The results (Outputs) of this intervention will be:
- Implementation of Gender responsive policies, plans, tools and guidelines to support sustainable forest and land use planning and management enhanced.
  - State and non-state actors (from key government ministries, departments, agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, private sector and communities) trained to support effective management of the Greater Gola Forest landscape.
  - Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders (local communities, CSOs/NGOs and private sector) to support effective governance of the Greater Gola landscape enhanced; and

- A centre of excellence hub for capacity building and monitoring biodiversity conservation, land use planning and management for enhanced climate resilience established and functional.
- (b) ***Promoting participatory and gender-responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas*** for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods. The results (Outputs) of this intervention will be:
- Community awareness and education programs to support sustainable forest management and land use developed and implemented,
  - Collaborative forest management approaches to enhance biodiversity conservation and livelihood improvement are supported.
  - Inclusive alternative income-generating initiatives supported.
  - Innovative and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management supported; and
  - Community-based reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives to improve access to ecosystem services implemented.
- (c) ***Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests*** in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation. The results (Outputs) of this intervention will be:
- The extent of deforestation and forest degradation in Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests established and documented.
  - A participatory comprehensive spatial / landscape plan for the Greater Gola Forest landscape developed /updated and implemented using participatory approaches.
  - Forest conservation and regeneration is one of the strategies for improved ecosystem health and sustainable financing.
  - Biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use interventions in and around Kambui FR and Tiwai Wildlife Sanctuary, in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape developed and implemented.
- (d) ***Strengthening Transboundary collaboration between Sierra Leone and Liberia*** for improved management of the Mano River Watershed within the Gola Forest Landscape. The results (Outputs) of this intervention will be:
- A strategic plan for joint cross-border natural resources management reviewed and implemented.
  - National engagement on cross-border collaboration, coordination and cooperation frameworks for conserving transboundary Gola Forest undertaken.
  - Regional collaboration for policy coherence and financial sustainability in transboundary natural resource management enhanced.
- (e) ***Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons***. The results (Outputs) of this intervention will be:
- Gender-responsive and inclusive knowledge products developed and shared at landscape and national levels
  - Experiences and Lessons learned are documented and disseminated at landscape and national levels
  - A gender-responsive and inclusive knowledge-sharing platform/portal developed and linked with existing knowledge management platforms.
  - Gender-responsive and inclusive Knowledge products are developed and shared at the regional level.
  - Collaboration with the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project as well as with other regional initiatives in the landscape for capacity building/technical assistance enhanced

## OUTCOMES

42. The anticipated positive changes (or Project Outcomes) include:

- (i) Strengthened capacity of key stakeholders (state and non-state actors and communities) for effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape.
- (ii) Increased community-level climate-resilient livelihoods for reduced land degradation and enhanced biodiversity conservation.
- (iii) Strengthened biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use of the Kambui HFR and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape.
- (iv) Improved transboundary collaboration between Liberia and Sierra Leone for enhanced management of the shared Lofa-Gola-Mano Conservation Corridor.
- (v) Strengthened knowledge management, learning and sharing at landscape, national and regional levels, including the promotion of traditional knowledge for sustainable natural resource management
- (vi) A functional gender-sensitive M&E framework for the project

43. The impact pathway includes the attainment of the long-term goal of global benefits namely; terrestrial protected areas are sustainably managed for conservation of biological diversity, continuous flow of ecosystem services and climate change mitigation. The indicators of this desired change are reduced threats to biodiversity in protected areas, secured wildlife habitats, a population of threatened species increase, and sustainable resilient livelihoods enhanced. The main pre-conditions (or mid-term outcomes) are:

- i) **22,428 Ha** of Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management.;
- ii) **10,000 Ha** of land and ecosystems restored.
- iii) **35,000 Ha** of landscapes outside protected areas under improved practices
- iv) **1.57 Million metric tCO<sub>2</sub>e** Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated; and
- v) **172,630 direct beneficiaries' people** (At least 30% Women).

## TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE

44. Transformative change will be achieved by anchoring the project's interventions on the GEF's Levers of transformation as described below:

### **A. Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues:**

*Promoting multi-stakeholder dialogues at the National, Local, and Transboundary Levels:*

The Sierra Leone Guinean Forests Child Project will strengthen the coordination and collaboration of state and non-state actors operating in the sectors of forestry and natural resources management. Specifically, this project will establish and facilitate stakeholder coordination mechanisms to support inclusive, and gender-responsive effective governance of the Greater Gola Forest landscape. The composition of these committees will include at least 30% women and 70% men, ensure representation of local communities as well as marginalized and vulnerable groups, and collaborate with the Gola Transboundary Committee.

In addition to this, the project will explore opportunities to leverage innovative financing mechanisms, including nature-based solutions (NbS) that enhance ecosystem services while creating financial value. This will involve conducting feasibility studies to identify sustainable financing options through carbon markets, payment for ecosystem services, or ecotourism initiatives that link conservation efforts with economic benefits for local communities. These studies would lay the groundwork for scaling up innovative finance approaches beyond the project life.

The closed GEF-funded Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project (GEF ID: 4953), led by The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) had established interministerial, national, and community-level committees in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone to govern the Mano River Basin. However, these committees became inactive after the project concluded. To enhance multi-stakeholder dialogue, the three Guinean Forests Child Projects (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone), with support from the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project (RCP), and the European Union (EU) funded NaturAfrica Program (2021-2027) will revive and support the operationalization and institutionalization of these committees at the Mano River Union (MRU) and where possible, in relevant Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). The institutionalization process of these committees will engage the MRU, local communities, local governments, and national governments, ensuring broad-based acceptance and adherence to agreed-upon structures and operational modalities, further enhancing multi-stakeholder dialogue, coordination, and collaboration, which could ultimately unlock financing and ensure sustainable governance of the Mano watershed.

*Promoting multi-stakeholder dialogues at the Regional and Global Levels:*

With support from the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project, all the Guinean Forests Child Projects, including Sierra Leone will engage and participate in events/forums organized by GEF-Funded Critical Forest Integrated Programs (IPs) namely, the Congo Basin Integrated Program led by UNEP, the Amazon Integrated Program led by the World Bank, the Indo-Malay Integrated Program co-led by IUCN and FAO, and the Meso-Americas Integrated Program led by IUCN. These programs offer a platform for dialogues among diverse actors hence enabling Sierra Leone to share experiences, learn from other regions, and implement best practices tailored to local needs. Engaging with these regional and global initiatives will also position Sierra Leone as an active participant in the regional and global conversation on forest conservation and climate resilience.

**B. Learning and Innovation:**

Technical training: The Project will undertake training that will build the technical capacity of stakeholders on various aspects related to forestry, land use planning and natural resources management including forest inventories and zonation.

Given the importance of land use planning in achieving long-term transformational change, the project will prioritize comprehensive data collection and analysis. This will include Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and remote sensing technologies to gather accurate data on land use patterns and ecosystem health. These data-driven approaches will guide land use decisions, ensuring that interventions are targeted and effective in reducing land degradation and supporting biodiversity.

Participation in relevant learning and knowledge-sharing events/forums organized by GEF-funded and non-GEF-funded initiatives: Sierra Leone will participate in the learning and knowledge-sharing events organized by the GEF-Funded Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project. Additionally, CI, through the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project will coordinate with Lead Agencies of selected GEF-Funded Integrated programs such as the Critical Forests IPs, planetGOLD IP, and Ecosystem Restoration IP among others to ensure that the Guinean Forests Child Projects, including Sierra Leone, participate in their learning and knowledge-sharing events. These IPs provide an important multi-stakeholder platform where Countries learn and share lessons, learn from biodiversity experts and build an understanding of the national commitments of other countries with regard to unlocking financing, Sustainable Forest Management (SFM), Sustainable Land Management (SLM) for biodiversity conservation as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation. This collaborative approach will foster innovation and continuous learning, enhancing the overall effectiveness and sustainability of forest management efforts at various levels.

Representation of marginalized and vulnerable groups from Sierra Leone in events organized by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project (RCP) and other Critical Forests IPs (sponsored by the Guinean Forests RCP): It is anticipated that the Guinean Forests Child Project Countries, including Sierra Leone, will nominate a representative (s) marginalized and vulnerable groups from their countries to be sponsored by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project to participate in various learning and knowledge-sharing events. Participation of marginalized and vulnerable groups in knowledge and learning-sharing events will yield the following benefits: a) Inclusive Decision-Making since their participation ensures that the perspectives and needs of all community segments are considered, leading to more inclusive and equitable decision-making processes; b) Enhanced Relevance and Effectiveness of policies, legislative frameworks and initiatives because they will incorporate the experiences and insights of those who are directly impacted by environmental and social issues; c) Empowerment of local communities, marginalised and vulnerable groups since their involvement in these events gives them a voice and an opportunity to influence decisions that affect their lives and communities; d) Social cohesion through bridging gaps between different community groups and promoting mutual understanding and respect; e) Capacity Building by provision of opportunities for marginalized and vulnerable groups to gain new skills, knowledge, and networks, which can enhance their capacity to engage in and contribute to future initiatives and; f) Sustainable Solutions since proposed interventions/initiative factor in the input of all key stakeholders.

A national gender-responsive centre of excellence hub for capacity building and monitoring biodiversity conservation, land use planning and management for enhanced climate resilience will be operationalized.

Innovative Nature-Based Solutions: This project will deploy innovative and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management support, ensuring gender equality in participation, access and benefits.

### **C. Governance and Policy:**

The Sierra Leone project will foster effective governance of the Gola Forest by fostering policy coherence; and establishing and operationalizing a coordination and collaboration mechanism that will convene diverse stakeholders e.g., local communities, CSOs/NGOs, private sector and Gola Transboundary Committee etc. to support inclusive, and gender-responsive effective governance of the Greater Gola landscape; and embedding gender-responsive approaches into forest and land use planning. In addition, the review and implementation of inclusive and coherent policies, along with comprehensive training for state and non-state actors, will foster effective, gender-responsive management of the Greater Gola Forest landscape. The Sierra Leone Child Project will enhance the governance of the Gola Forest by promoting policy alignment, inclusive stakeholder engagement, and gender-responsive planning. The project will support policy reviews and strengthen coordination between state and non-state actors in the forestry and natural resource management sectors. Training programs for both state and non-state actors will bolster these efforts, while the establishment of a National Centre of Excellence will provide ongoing capacity-building opportunities beyond the project's duration. Furthermore, community awareness initiatives will empower local communities to engage in sustainable forest management practices and strengthen their resilience to climate change. Furthermore, the operationalization of the National Centre of Excellence will provide continuous tailored capacity building hence ensuring that technical capacity for biodiversity conservation and protection is built and strengthened at national and local levels. Lastly, developing and implementing gender-sensitive community awareness and education programs will empower local communities, promoting sustainable forest management and informed responses to climate change impacts. Together, these measures will create a robust forest governance structure that is inclusive, gender-sensitive, equitable, and sustainable.

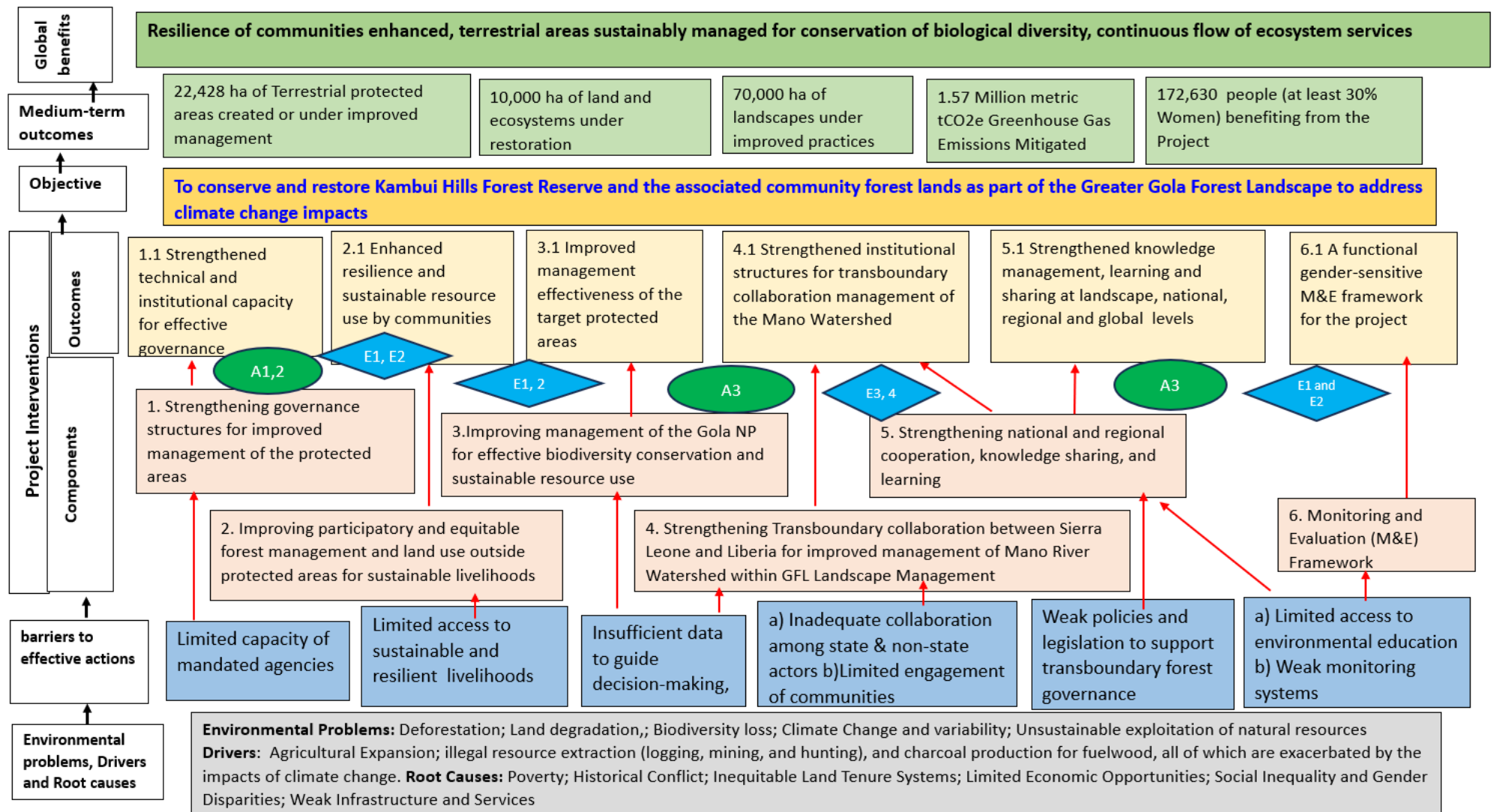
#### **D. Leveraging Financing:**

Collaborations with partners undertaking biodiversity conservation initiatives in Sierra Leone and the region will be undertaken to leverage financing. Overall, the project will contribute to an enabling policy and legislative environment for biodiversity conservation, transboundary watershed management and improved natural resources management as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation which may attract climate and conservation financing in Sierra Leone. Notably, through the support to the implementation of aspects of the Mano River Union (MRU) Strategic Action Plan (SAP) between the MRU countries, this project may mobilize the private sector actors and local communities to participate in biodiversity conservation. In the long run, this could result in increased investments from the private sector as well as civil society organizations.

Moreover, scoping studies will be conducted to assess opportunities for further investments in conservation finance, ensuring that a strategic approach is taken to mobilize additional resources over the project's lifespan. These efforts will contribute to an enabling policy and legislative environment for biodiversity conservation, transboundary watershed management, and improved natural resource management, thereby attracting climate and conservation financing.



Figure 4: Theory of Change



## Project Components

45. **Project Objective:** To conserve and restore Kambui Hills Forest Reserve (FR) and the associated community forest lands in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape in order to address climate change impacts.
46. **Project Duration:** 62 months (6 months implementation set up; Actual project execution 48 months; 8 months Terminal Evaluation and closeout)

### **COMPONENT 1: Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills FR, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape**

**OUTCOME 1.1:** *Strengthened coordination and capacity of key stakeholders (state and non-state actors and communities) for effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape*

**Targets 1.1:** At least one coordination mechanism put in place for effective collaboration among state and non-state actors in the Gola Landscape.

47. This component seeks to foster gender-responsive policy coherence and strengthen multi-stakeholder collaboration, and coordination for effective governance of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape. The Gola Forest Landscape consists of a wide array of stakeholders, including Government and non-government actors, functioning in different sectors (forestry, wildlife and tourism, water, land, agriculture, mining, local governments, etc.). The project will take an integrated approach to engage the diverse stakeholders in order to effectively address the challenges of deforestation and forest degradation, loss of biodiversity, land degradation and the negative impacts of climate change. In particular, this Component will focus on addressing the main factors limiting the management effectiveness of protected areas in the Gola Forest landscape, including the weak institutional and technical capacity of the mandated government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs); weak coordination between state and non-state actors; weak and incoherent policies and legislation relating to forest governance and limited availability of standards and guidelines. This support will result in improved performance of mandated MDAs to manage protected areas; and strengthen coordination amongst diverse actors which could potentially unlock financing, and; enhance gender-responsive mainstreaming of biodiversity and climate change in land-use planning, policies and strategic planning frameworks.
48. Component 1 builds on the previous capacity-building efforts in the landscape by integrating lessons from projects which strengthened the management effectiveness of Gola Rain Forest National Park (GRFNP) (PAPFor, 2024,<sup>27</sup> and PAPFor, 2022<sup>28</sup>), and those that improved the skills of actors through technical training; provision of relevant machinery, tools, and equipment for patrols, biomonitoring and law enforcement; strengthening biodiversity conservation and spatial/land-use planning; bio-

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<sup>27</sup> PAPFor, 2024. Protecting the Gola Rainforest in Sierra Leone through Community Engagement and Awareness Raising. Website: [https://www.papfor.org/Protecting-the-Gola-Rainforest-in-Sierra-Leone-through-Community-Engagement-and?utm\\_source=brevo&utm\\_campaign=Newsletter%20March%202024%20anglophones&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.papfor.org/Protecting-the-Gola-Rainforest-in-Sierra-Leone-through-Community-Engagement-and?utm_source=brevo&utm_campaign=Newsletter%20March%202024%20anglophones&utm_medium=email). Accessed on March 17 2024 19.14 Hrs

<sup>28</sup> The PAPFor Great Gola Landscape programme, 2022. Great Gola Landscape Factsheet. Website: [https://papfor.org/IMG/pdf/fact-sheet-gola\\_foya.pdf](https://papfor.org/IMG/pdf/fact-sheet-gola_foya.pdf) Accessed on 23 February 2024 1000 HRS.

economy studies; conservation-related enterprise development through the Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, 2021<sup>29</sup>, which was implemented in Kambui South and the work of the Environmental Foundation for Africa in Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary. These interventions will be scaled up to Kambui Hills FR to improve its management effectiveness, whose status is being raised to the World Heritage Site.

49. Component 1 will also mainstream gender and promote the participation of vulnerable groups, such as young people. This will include activities such as a) analysing existing policies and legislative frameworks to identify gaps and opportunities related to gender and inclusion aspects; b) where possible, advancing gender equality aspects in at least one of the policy tools supported by the project; c) promote women's leadership and meaningful participation in the multi-stakeholder dialogue platform.
50. Enhanced coordination and collaboration among stakeholders, including local communities, CSOs/NGOs, the private sector, and Gola Transboundary Committees, is essential for effective and inclusive governance of the Gola Forest. A coordination mechanism will be established and operationalised under this Component, and it is expected to enhance communication and cooperation among diverse stakeholders leading to a unified strategy for forest management, reducing conflicts and promoting synergistic efforts that reinforce policy coherence. Subsequently, this outcome will build the capacity of state and non-state stakeholders and strengthen management systems and structures to improve their performance and coordination for effective integration of biodiversity conservation and sustainable land use in decision-making processes at national and landscape levels, build climate resilience and ensure gender responsiveness and inclusiveness.
51. This outcome will be delivered through the outputs under Component 1, which are intrinsically interlinked, collectively advancing policy coherence and gender equity. For instance, the implementation of gender-responsive policies ensures that management strategies align with national goals and local practices, integrating gender considerations at all levels (**Output 1.1.1**). Training diverse actors in these practices promotes consistent policy application and fosters an understanding of the importance of coherent policies (**Output 1.1.2**), while enhanced coordination and collaboration between state and non-state actors through a structured and formalised coordination mechanism ensures that all stakeholders work towards unified goals including working together to pursue opportunities and financing (**Output 1.1.3**). Lastly, the National Centre of Excellence hub for capacity building and monitoring biodiversity conservation, land use planning and management for enhanced climate resilience will tie these efforts together by providing a continuous flow of knowledge and capacity building, ensuring that gender-responsive and inclusive governance principles are maintained and advanced (**Output 1.1.4**). In the long run, Component 1 will contribute to the creation of a conducive environment that promotes policy coherence, gender equality and inclusion, and partnerships hence potentially unlocking financing and enhancing sustainability and impact of initiatives in the Gola Landscape.
52. The state actors that will be will be involved in the delivery of this Outcome include, but not limited to the following: The Environment Protection Agency (EPA), The National Protected Area Authority (NPAA), Forestry Department (FD), Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, the National Water Resources Management Agency, the Conservation Trust

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<sup>29</sup> The Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, 2021. Community-based Forest Management at Kambui Hills Forest Reserve: putting theory into practice.

Fund, Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources, National Minerals Agency, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, and Njala University.

53. The non-state actors that could potentially be involved in the delivery of this Outcome include, but not limited to the following: Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL), The Environmental Foundation for Africa (EFA), Gola Rainforest Conservation – Limited by Guarantee (GRC-LG), The Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD), Shout Climate Change Africa (SCCA), the Chiefdom Authorities in Sierra Leone, Moawoma Rural Women Development Organization, Kpayama Women Association, Youth Emergency Auxiliary service – SL (YEAS-SL), Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), The African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) and any other that may be identified during the project implementation phase.

**Output 1.1.1:** *Gender-responsive policies, plans, tools and guidelines to support sustainable forest and land use planning and management reviewed and implemented.*

54. The effective governance of the Gola Forest will be significantly enhanced through the implementation of coherent and gender-responsive policies, plans, tools, and guidelines. By ensuring these frameworks are reviewed and implemented, all aspects of forest and land use planning and management will reflect the needs and contributions of women, youth and other vulnerable groups who are often marginalized in traditional governance structures. This inclusive approach will lead to more sustainable and equitable decision-making processes, directly benefiting the forest's management by integrating diverse perspectives.
55. Activities required to achieve policy coherence through Output 1.1.1 include a) conducting comprehensive reviews of existing policies to identify gaps in gender responsiveness, climate change and biodiversity conservation; b) engaging stakeholders in participatory policy formulation processes to ensure inclusivity; c) developing standardized guidelines that incorporate gender perspectives, and c) providing training and capacity-building for policymakers and practitioners on gender-sensitive approaches, biodiversity, and climate change mainstreaming. Additionally, establishing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the implementation and impact of these policies ensures that they are consistently applied and adjusted as necessary to remain effective and coherent across the board. The project will review, where they exist, and develop, where they do not, several policies, plans, tools, and guidelines. This includes developing relevant forest management plans for Kambui Hills Forest Reserve (FR), community forests, and Other Effective-based Conservation Measures (OECMs); guidelines for land-use planning; guidelines for sustainable forest management; guidelines for exploratory inventory; guidelines for management inventories; developing biodiversity conservation economics as a tool for effective management; and guidelines for mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable land use in sector policies and planning frameworks. A description of the activities is provided below:
- a) **Establish a functional Task Force** to identify and review the policy, legal and institutional framework for effective management of Kambui Hills FR. The legal study on forestry revealed that there were often conflicting mandates of various forestry and biodiversity regulatory institutions that create “tough wars” that effectively paralyze significant action on the ground to protect biodiversity, (FAO, 2023)<sup>30</sup>. This observation was also highlighted during the national stakeholder

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<sup>30</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 2023. Legal Study on Forests in Sierra Leone: Strengthening the forestry legal framework to address transboundary challenges and degradation trends in the Upper Guinean Forest ecosystem. Project “Global Transformation of Forests for People and Climate: A Focus on West Africa”. GCP /GLO/977/SWE

workshop held in Kenema on 6th – 7th March 2024. In particular, the duo-management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve designating NPAA and Forest Division-SL as responsible for conservation forests and commercial forests respectively raised concern. Also, uncertainty was expressed about the legal status of Kambui Hills. Such uncertainty creates potential pockets of inter-institutional conflicts that limit management effectiveness. During the project implementation phase, dialogue among the relevant institutions will be initiated to clarify their mandates, remove discretionary powers that undermine the protection of forestry and biodiversity and prevent conflict in operational areas, in line with the recommendations of the said study. This intervention will be implemented through a special Task Force consisting of senior officials appointed by the Minister responsible for forestry, in consultation with EPA and FD, to elaborately review the administrative, policy and legal processes related to institutional mandates, to establish a higher protection status for Kambui Hills Forest Reserve. The terms of reference will be developed by the EPA/the Project Management Unit (PMU) during project implementation.

- b) **Undertake biodiversity economic studies to guide the decision-making:** Both Tiwai Island and Kambui Hills FR have significant potential to act as economic engines within the landscape. Sierra Leone's Vision 2025 provides a critical foundation for mainstreaming of biodiversity in the economy as it underscores the urgent need for sustainable natural resource management and a high-quality environment. However, limited understanding on the role and status of biodiversity is a key barrier. Limited technical capacity, a lack of readily available evidence, knowledge products and insufficient political will provide additional barriers. It is critical to address these barriers for effective integration of biodiversity and ecosystems in development planning and implementation. Fundamental to addressing these barriers is the development of tools and information products to inform policy and capacity enhancement of appropriate agencies and officials to drive this work. The premise is that, if stakeholders responsible for development and conserving biodiversity and ecosystems can build strong cases for the value of biodiversity to development, and have effective pathways to influence policies for development, then policy makers and other stakeholders will have increased understanding and capacity to make informed choices backed by adequate and improved planning and investment decisions that conserve and protect rather than degrade biodiversity and ecosystem services, leading to sustainable development underpinned by nature-based economies that safeguard ecosystems and biodiversity, and better quality of life for people.

The Gola landscape presents a prime opportunity to establish a replicable model for the entire country. In partnership with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, AWF, the African Leadership University and Environment Foundation for Africa – Sierra Leone are facilitating a process towards assessment of the status of Sierra Leone's Biodiversity Economy. The resulting report will form a strategic body of evidence and knowledge to raise awareness and understanding on the socio-economic role of biodiversity, development of the sector, and its incorporation into the country's development planning.

To generate tangible evidence and knowledge products to support policy processes, AWF/EFA will collaborate with the appropriate government agencies, research institutions, local communities, private sector, civil society and other stakeholders to assess the biodiversity economy in the Gola Landscape. The assessment will provide a comprehensive picture of biodiversity's contribution to socio-economic activities and goals in the landscape, interface with other economic sectors and development projects. This work will provide successful case studies profiling the positive impact of biodiversity on the local and national economy, job creation, and sustainable conservation.

Eco-tourism which has been developed to some extent in both PAs present the immediate opportunity on the value of biodiversity. Further engagement to support development of comprehensive business plans aimed at optimising not only ecotourism but the biodiversity economy potential in and around these reserves through biodiversity studies will be supported and efforts will be directed at improving the economic potential through improvement of tourism planning, broadening and improving touristic activities, improving facilities and access infrastructure, and tourism management including customer service and payment systems as well as exploring payment for ecosystem services.

- c) **Policy Analysis:** Several policies, plans, tools and guidelines will be reviewed, (where they exist), and developed (where they do not exist). The project will focus on developing relevant forest management plans for Kambui Hills FR, community forests and OECMs; guidelines for land-use planning; guidelines for sustainable forest management, guidelines for exploratory inventory, guidelines for management inventories, developing biodiversity conservation economics as a tool for effective management, and guidelines for mainstreaming gender, biodiversity conservation and sustainable land use in sector policies and planning frameworks.
- d) **Legal services:** There is a developing consensus that the governance of Gola Forest will be significantly enhanced through elevation to protected area (PA) / National Park status. This will require legal opinions and following a due process in the country. By ensuring proper frameworks are reviewed and followed, all aspects of forest and PA management will be reflected and so the needs key stakeholders will be addressed. The Project will engage the services of legal practitioners to provide the technical legal opinion on issues related to policy and legal framework development and any operational/functional concerns as that may be necessary.
- e) **Undertake site-specific gender analysis** to support the update of the Gender Mainstreaming Plan (GMP): Stakeholder collaboration and good governance, based on strong systems of accountability, effectiveness, efficiency, fairness/equity, participation and transparency are fundamental to successful conservation efforts. This is a multi-stakeholder project including that involves local communities, CSOs/NGOs and private sector and thus their roles and responsibilities will vary but all groups need to be empowered to participate in governance and management for effective management of protected and conservation areas. Gender analysis will thus be undertaken as creating the right platforms is fundamental to driving coordination and collaboration among stakeholders. All activities outlined in the project such as land use planning can only be carried out through platforms that are inclusive and allow participation and representation of perspectives, interest and aspirations of all concerned stakeholders. Progressive gender analysis will thus be undertaken to support inclusiveness and update the GMP.
- f) **Develop/update 10 coherent, climate-proof and gender-responsive policies, plans, tools and guidelines to support Sustainable Forest Management (SFM), land-use planning, and climate resilience.** The project will support the development/updating of priority policies, management plans, tools and guidelines based on the gaps identified during gap analysis and aligned with the actual needs on the ground. At least 10 priority policies, plans, tools and guidelines will be identified during the project implementation phase, which may include among others the following:
  - Guidelines for sustainable natural forest management
  - Guidelines for biological diversity inventories
  - Guidelines for management inventories



- Biodiversity conservation economics as a tool for effective management
  - Guidelines for mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable land use in sector policies and planning frameworks.
- g. **Training and capacity-building for policymakers and practitioners on gender-sensitive approaches, biodiversity, and climate change mainstreaming.** This will also be an opportunity to raise awareness and obtain buy-in for the 10 coherent, climate-proof and gender-responsive policies, plans, tools and guidelines that would have been developed/updated with support from the project.

**Output 1.1.2:** *State and non-state actors (from key government ministries, departments, agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, private sector and communities) trained to support inclusive and gender-responsive effective management of the Greater Gola Forest landscape.*

56. Training will target state and non-state actors from various sectors, including key government ministries, local governments, civil society organizations, the private sector, and communities. The training will focus on providing knowledge and skills to ensure that the principles of inclusive and gender-responsive governance are widely understood and applied. Shared understanding and improved capacity will foster effective collaboration and enhanced governance, which is crucial for the forest's long-term sustainability.
57. Improved knowledge, skills and technical capacity of actors will enable them to perform effectively in the delivery of their mandated services related to natural resource management. It is expected that subject to reviews during implementation, most of the training will be done in collaboration with the School of Natural Resources Management, Njala University, which will offer a training/academic environment (instead of a hotel setting). The trainers will also use a mix of in-person and virtual sessions to ensure wider reach and flexibility. Practical exercises e.g., on forest inventories, Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) and Sustainable Land Management (SLM) will best be done in a selected forest within the landscape. The output will be delivered by the following activities:
1. **Stakeholder mapping** will be conducted to identify stakeholders and their roles. It is from this exercise that a **list of potential trainees** will be obtained
  2. **Conduct comprehensive skills and technological capacity needs assessment** to ascertain the gaps within the state and non-state actors and propose the interventions that are necessary to address them for the improvement of management effectiveness of the forest and land resources in the landscape. The needs assessment on the involvement of women and youth will be conducted to guide the effective mainstreaming of gender in the management of the Greater Gola Landscape.
  3. **Identify trainees (multi-sectoral and from state and non-state institutions).** The target number of trainees is at least 140 of which 30% are women: 80 people from state agencies and 60 from non-state agencies
  4. **Develop capacity-building platforms and Training Materials:** This will involve the development of tailored training modules in English and local dialect on Tuesday (if needed) that cover the prioritised topics listed below (the list is not exhaustive). The trainers will utilize interactive and participatory methods such as case studies, group discussions, role-plays, and simulations to enhance learning and practical application.
  5. **Organize Workshops and Training Sessions.** Working with the PMU, the trainers will schedule a series of workshops and training sessions at national, provincial, and local levels..



- Conduct training on biological diversity inventories, monitoring and reporting
  - Build the capacity of stakeholders in sustainable forest management and forest certification
  - Conduct training of national institutions on environment and climate modelling in relation to biodiversity conservation and natural resource utilization
  - Conduct training on mainstreaming gender issues in policies, plans, tools and guidelines for biodiversity conservation and land-use planning. The Project places gender mainstreaming as an integral component of implementing project activities. Gender mainstreaming entails identifying gender gaps and making women's, men's, girls' and boys' concerns and experiences and integrating them into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all sectors of life to ensure that they benefit equally. Therefore, there will be a deliberative effort to ensure that they respond to gender needs, as well as address the relevant technical aspects of sustainable forest management and land-use planning. A gender expert will be engaged to support gender mainstreaming. The project will build the capacity of key actors involved in project implementation, (both State and non-state), on mainstreaming gender issues in sustainable forest management and land-use planning.
  - Build Capacity for developing and implementing a national biodiversity financing framework.
  - Conduct training on mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use into policies and planning frameworks of relevant state and non-state institutions. The training will focus on building the capacity of state and non-state actors, especially Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies to mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use into their policies and decision-making processes, allowing for improved planning, management and selection of priority areas for intervention. Mainstreaming biodiversity and sustainable resource use will entail, among others:
    - Identifying the biodiversity and natural resource issues, concerns or opportunities related to an organization, integrating them into the development vision, mission and goals of the organization, and adapting the core activities of such organization to the realities of those issues, concerns or opportunities.
    - Identifying potential adverse impacts of the activities of the organization on biodiversity conservation and providing mitigation measures.
    - Identifying potential positive impacts of the activities of an organization and providing interventions to enhance them.
    - Budgeting for biodiversity conservation interventions and mitigation measures;
    - Stating indicators for mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and proposing a monitoring and evaluation plan
    - Monitoring the implementation of and evaluation of biodiversity conservation interventions in an organization, including mitigation activities to reduce potential negative impacts or enhance positive ones.
6. **Continuous Support and Mentorship:** A support and mentorship program to assist stakeholders in implementing what they have learned will be established.
7. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** The trainers will develop a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to assess the effectiveness of the training programs. Through this M&E Framework, the trainers and PMU will collect feedback from participants to improve future

training sessions and track the implementation of new policies and practices to measure impact.

8. **Knowledge Sharing and Best Practices:** The Trainers will foster a community of practice to maintain engagement and continuous learning.

**Output 1.1.3:** *Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders (local communities, CSOs/NGOs, private sector and Gola Transboundary Committees) enhanced to support inclusive, and gender-responsive effective governance of the Greater Gola landscape.*

58. There are many stakeholders working within Gola landscape, with potential duplication and conflicting roles. Improved coordination and collaboration will ensure harmonization of working relationships and enhance achievement of common goals. The project will strengthen the technical capacity, coordination and collaboration of mandated agencies for effective conservation and sustainable management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forest lands and OECMs. Collaboration among government agencies, NGOs, private sector actors, and local communities will help to promote sustainable forest management practices, including knowledge sharing, technical assistance and training and sustainable agriculture practices that can reduce pressure on the forest reserve. Furthermore, collaboration and linkages will also be maintained with the Gola Transboundary Committees of the Gola Forest Landscape to inform decision-making on transboundary natural resources management. The stakeholders will participate through representation to multi-sectoral fora (Steering Committee, inter-institutional arrangements and technical team).
59. The output will be delivered through: the establishment of a National-Local multi-sectorial multi-stakeholder dialogue platform for enhancing the mainstreaming of biodiversity, climate change, gender and community rights operationalized (with at least 30% women representation). This platform will coordinate closely with the Gola Transboundary Committee.
60. The project will strengthen coordination between decision-makers at national and local levels, through the establishing and **operationalizing the National-Provincial-Local multi-sectorial multi-stakeholder dialogue platform that enhances the mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation, climate change, gender, and community rights into policies and decision-making processes at both national and local levels.** By undertaking the activities below, the project will operationalize a robust and inclusive dialogue platform that fosters collaboration and mainstreaming of critical environmental and social considerations into policy and decision-making processes across national and local levels. Activities that will be undertaken to operationalize the National-Provincial-Local Multi-Sectorial Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue Platform include, but are not limited to the following:
  - a. **Stakeholder Mapping and Analysis:** a) Identification and mapping of key stakeholders across sectors (e.g., government agencies, NGOs, local communities, private sector, academic institutions).; b) Conducting a stakeholder analysis to understand their interests, influence, and potential contributions to the platform.
  - b. **Update/Establish Governance Structure:** Update/develop the governance framework for the platform, including roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes. The selection of the exact structure and list of sectors/stakeholders included will be done, under the leadership of EPA, during the project inception phase, and based on existing multi-sectorial platforms. It will include at least 30% women representation.

- c. **Engage and Mobilize Stakeholders:** The PMU will work closely with EPA to organize initial meetings to introduce the platform concept and objectives to stakeholders as well as facilitate discussions to align on common goals, expectations, and commitments.
- d. **Update/develop Terms of Reference (ToR):** Update/develop ToR for the platform, detailing its purpose, scope, operational procedures, and frequency of meetings. The ToR will be inclusive and reflect the priorities of biodiversity, climate change, gender, and community rights.
- e. **Capacity Building:** a) training will be provided to stakeholders on effective participation, collaboration, and mainstreaming of key themes (biodiversity, climate, gender, community rights). B) training modules on dialogue facilitation, conflict resolution, and consensus building will be updated/developed.
- f. **Establish Communication Channels:** The PMU will support the EPA to set up formal communication channels (e.g., email lists, online platforms, regular newsletters) to facilitate information sharing and coordination. Digital tools will be used to enable virtual meetings and broader participation.
- g. **Conduct Regular Meetings and Workshops:** The PMU will support the EPA in organizing regular meetings and workshops to discuss progress, share updates, and address challenges. The PMU will ensure meetings are well-structured with clear agendas, objectives, and outcomes.
- h. **Facilitate Thematic Working Groups:** The PMU will support the EPA to create working groups focused on specific themes such as biodiversity, climate change, gender, and community rights. These groups will also be tasked to develop action plans, policy recommendations, and technical guidelines.
- i. **Develop and Implement Action Plans:** The PMU/EPA will collaborate with stakeholders to develop action plans that detail specific activities and interventions to mainstream the key themes.
- j. **Monitor and Evaluate Platform Activities:** A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system to track the performance and impact of the platform will be updated/established. Feedback from stakeholders will be collected continuously to improve the platform's effectiveness.
- k. **Report and Disseminate Outcomes:** Regular reports on the platform's activities, achievements, and lessons learned will be prepared and disseminated to all stakeholders. These reports will also be used to advocate for policy changes and resource allocation.
- l. **Secure Funding and Resources:** Through the support of the PMU/EPA, stakeholders will identify funding sources and secure resources necessary for the platform's sustainability. The PMU will also support the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change in exploring partnerships with international organizations, donors, and private-sector entities that could ensure the sustainability of the platform.

**Output 1.1.4:** *A national gender-responsive centre of excellence hub established and functional to build capacity for enhanced forest management, biodiversity conservation monitoring and land use planning for climate resilience.*

- 61. A functional hub for biodiversity monitoring is aimed at addressing the gaps in data on landcover classification, biological inventories and maps, as well as information on trends in landcover change, which are required for guiding decision-making. There is increasing recognition of the importance of the use of available evidence-based biodiversity data to guide, benefit, and improve decision-making processes by both Government and non-government actors in the country. The EPA-SL have piloted a centre for environmental statistics, data and innovation centre, linked to the Directorate of Research, Policy and Innovations. It is aimed at bridging the gaps in environmental data needs and capacities, which are required for guiding planning and decision-making, as well as improving the capacities among national stakeholders for evidence generation and utilization. However, the centre

lacks the trained personnel and equipment to provide effective solutions to the vast knowledge and data needed for decision-making. The intent of support for establishing the hub is to enhance access and use of environmental data for decision-making, and consequently improve management effectiveness of the natural resources.

62. The hub will be anchored within the centre of excellence for environmental statistics, data and innovation, located within the EPA-SL head office in Free Town, being the Focal Point for the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UN CBD). It will provide Geographic Information System/ Remote Sensing tools and equipment to capture, store and manage geographic or spatial data to support management effectiveness for the Greater Gola landscape. Through this hub, the Project will help in developing a Biodiversity Databank to provide a one-stop centre for accessing data and information on biodiversity and practical, “beyond-normal university class experience” information for management decision-making. The project will also build on the initiative under the GEF CBIT project, *“Building and strengthening the capacity of Sierra Leone’s national capacity to implement transparent reporting”* (GEF Project ID 10027), which supports building the capacity of staff in GIS application. The establishment of the hub will provide the opportunity for continuous staff capacity building and, therefore, address the risk of frequent turnover of governmental personnel/staff at different levels in the Ministries, Departments and Agencies<sup>31</sup>, which tends to undermine the country's proper implementation of environmental management activities.
63. Collaboration with other institutions such as Njala University and RCMRD will be sought to build the capacity of stakeholders in other sectors to capture and share data with the Biodiversity Databank as a central repository, as well as enable the youth in the university to acquire practical skills, building the skills of the youthful University students through internship. RCMRD will be engaged in establishing the hub and training stakeholders, based on their expertise and long experience in building individual and institutional capacity in RS/GIS as well their current engagements with EPA-SL. It will also be necessary to acquire dedicated transport means to facilitate field data collection as well as supervision monitoring and evaluation of project activities because of the current limitations within EPA.
64. Because of the hub's importance to national development, EPA-SL will co-invest with the EIA license fees and other resources generated that are financially self-sustaining and generate enough revenues through the implementation of a business sustainability framework that will be developed for the centre during the course of the project. As an example, the hub will in the long run generate additional revenue from the sale of products such as maps or data sets as the demand from various actors grows. The framework will help improve the center’s financial stability and ensure efficient use of resources to maintain its long-term viability. It will map out potential risks and define strategies for eliminating or minimizing their impact, as well as the mechanisms to effectively monitor and evaluate them.
  - a) Procure and install GIS and RS laboratory equipment and materials
  - b) Establish a dedicated computer room for practical instructor-led training in Information Communication Technology (ICT), Global Positioning/Navigation Systems (GPS), Remote Sensing (RS) and Geographical Information Systems (GIS).

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<sup>31</sup> UNEP GEF PIR Fiscal Year 2021, Building and strengthening Sierra Leone’s national capacity to implement the transparency elements of the Paris Agreement, GEF Project ID: 10027. Website: <https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/projects/10027>. Accessed 12 June 2024. 0500 Hr.

- c) Procure one (1) 4WD Vehicle and three (3) motorcycles to facilitate, supervision, monitoring the implementation of field activities and stakeholder coordination
- d) Design, implement and maintain a database that provides robust information to support management decisions and a research program that allows GRNP to become recognized as an international centre of excellence.
- e) Train and mentor stakeholders in Remote Sensing (RS) & Satellite Image Processing/Interpretation Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Global Positioning/Navigation Systems (GPS) including their applications. At least 10 persons will be trained/mentored - (at least 30% of whom are women) – from EPA (5), Forest Department (2) and other institutions determined during the implementation phase (3).
- f) Provide expert support supervision for the establishment and operationalization of the Centre of Excellence.
- g) Software upgrade and recalibration of GIS/RS equipment.

**COMPONENT 2: Promoting participatory and gender-responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods**

**OUTCOME 2.1.:** *Enhanced sustainable resource use by communities adjacent to targeted PAs within the Gola landscape*

**Target 2.1:** At least 70, 000 Hectares of the landscape under improved practices by communities adjacent to the targeted PAs within the Gola landscape

- 65. Under Component 2, the project will establish and strengthen the protection of key forest biodiversity areas and other ecologically sensitive zones through community-based conservation, centred on climate-smart livelihood interventions that enhance climate resilience. Incentives and corresponding management and action plans will be grounded in participatory spatial land-use planning that takes into consideration gender considerations with respect to natural resource use. Incentives such as support for livelihood strengthening will be linked to conservation commitments in community-led management and action plans and may be aligned with efforts to formalize land tenure rights.
- 66. This component will also contribute to the incorporation of a gender-responsive approach, by: a) sensitizing traditional leaders (mostly men) on the importance of meaningfully engaging women in decision-making on the use of natural resources; b) providing tailored capacity building to women and youth on leadership skills to strengthen their ability to participate meaningfully in decision-making and community forest management structures; c) securing women's and youth's participation and benefitting from the sustainable livelihood activities. The details of this component are described below:
- 67. The project will support the restoration of ecosystems through the establishment and management of community forests and integrated agroforestry and afforestation interventions. Community forests within the landscape provide significant ecosystem services, including conservation of biodiversity, improvement of water supplies, regulation of local climate and reduction of risks from weather-related disasters such as floods, droughts and landslides. The targeted areas will include the community forests and adjacent Chiefdoms between Kambui Hills FR and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary and between Tiwai and Southern GRNP, including the Bunumbu Community Forest; Koya community forest and Bojene Hills Reserve. Other community forests may be determined during project implementation through inclusive participatory processes. In addition, alternative livelihood

opportunities will be explored as incentives to the communities to produce on-farm forest products and services to enhance their well-being and adopt conservation practices. However, transformative approaches will be required to change the mindset of local communities from the unacceptable practices of shifting cultivation systems and artisanal mining. This outcome will build on lessons from earlier efforts on supporting local community initiatives (e.g. AWF/EFA around Tiwai Wildlife Sanctuary, and CSSL/GRC-LG around the Gola Rainforest National Park), aimed to enhance the livelihoods of people whilst effectively contributing to protected area management.

68. In summary, the outputs under Component 2 are interlinked in a way that each builds on the previous one, creating a comprehensive framework for sustainable resource use. Community awareness and education on sustainable forest management, land use planning and climate change adaptation (**Output 2.1.1**) leads to informed, inclusive land use planning (**Output 2.1.2**) and behavioural change with a focus on the sustainable utilization of natural resources through **Output 2.1.3 and Output 2.1.4**, which support the adoption of sustainable and resilient income-generating initiatives, and pro-nature enterprises respectively. Finally, practical reforestation and rehabilitation efforts (**Output 2.1.5**) coupled with community awareness and sensitization on environmental aspects (**Output 2.1.1**), resilient and sustainable alternative livelihoods (**Outputs 2.1.3 and 2.1.4**) ensure that the ecosystem remains healthy and resilient, providing a sustainable foundation for the community's long-term well-being. This integrated approach ensures that men, women, youth, and marginalised groups are empowered and engaged in sustainable resource management, leading to more effective and enduring outcomes.

**Output 2.1.1:** *Gender-sensitive community awareness and education programs to support sustainable forest management, land use planning and climate change adaptation developed and implemented.*

69. This output will raise awareness and educate communities about sustainable resource use practices, forest management, land use planning, and climate change adaptation. By ensuring that the awareness and education programs are inclusive, gender-sensitive and incorporate traditional knowledge on Natural Resource Management, this output will ensure that men, women, youth, marginalised and vulnerable groups are equally informed engaged and empowered. This broad-based understanding sets the stage for active, knowledgeable participation, making the community more likely to adopt and support sustainable resource use practices, thereby laying the groundwork for the effective implementation of subsequent outputs hence ownership of project results by beneficiaries and stakeholders.
70. Environmental and natural resource management in the Gola Landscape involves many stakeholders at local, national, and international levels, including the Mano River Union (MRU), chiefdoms, local communities, and various government and non-government actors. Many of these local stakeholders are poorly informed about sustainable forest management practices, land-use planning, and climate change resilience. To address this, the community awareness and education program will provide comprehensive gender-sensitive information on the need to address deforestation, forest degradation, biodiversity loss, and land degradation. It will highlight the benefits of land-use planning and addressing climate change issues. The strategy will also share information about conserving protected areas, transboundary watershed management, community forests, forestry on agricultural lands, and climate resilience, as well as the roles and responsibilities of different actors. The project will collaborate closely with the Gola Transboundary Committees at national and local levels, leveraging their experience in mobilizing and convening communities. This awareness creation will enable stakeholders to make informed decisions and participate inclusively in project activities, based



on the principle of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC). The output will be delivered by the following activities:

- a) Develop a gender-sensitive information, communication and education strategy
- b) Produce and disseminate gender-sensitive information, communication and education materials
- c) Disseminate gender-sensitive information through radio programs
- d) Develop and implement a gender-sensitive community outreach programme - awareness-raising equipment and materials

***Output 2.1.2.: Gender-responsive participatory spatial / landscape plans for the Greater Gola Forest landscape developed /updated and implemented***

- 71. The communities, including the local government leaders and the chiefdoms, will be supported to undertake participatory land-use planning that brings up the needs of different stakeholders on the ground within the landscape, including women. Land-use planning will be based on participatory resource assessments, to identify the spatial location of forest land, agricultural land, and ecologically fragile sites (steep slopes, along water courses, areas that naturally flood and around critical water bodies, etc.).
- 72. The land-use plans will cover the area within 5Km adjacent to the PAs in the 14 chiefdoms that are adjacent to the protected areas, namely Tunkia, Koya, Dama, Nangowa, Lower Bambara, Dodo, Small Bo, Kandu Leppiama, Niawa, Langrama, Barri, Pejeh/Futa peje, and Makpele. The participation of the chiefdoms and the National and community-level Transboundary Committee members will be instrumental in the identification of these areas, based on their experience and knowledge of their local areas.
- 73. The participatory approach will enable communities to identify the issues related to their land and associated resources and empower them to plan the use of their land according to specific objectives, while being sensitive to gender issues, through dialogue, negotiation and a collective decision-making process. The intervention will build on and utilize the land-use planning experience and expertise of RCMRD in resource mapping, and CSSL, EFA, MRU and IUCN in participatory land-use planning exhibited during the implementation of projects such as PapFor (Support programme for the preservation of forest ecosystems in West Africa), funded by the European Union and the GEF-IUCN IWRM project (GEF ID: 4953). The Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) interventions developed under the GEF-funded IWRM project (GEF ID: 4953) identified three main land uses in the MRU transboundary landscape, (i.e. areas planned for forests as the dominant land use; areas for agricultural land, used for food production, livestock and other goods; and protective or buffer lands, mainly ecologically fragile sites that are vulnerable to, or critical in safeguarding against, catastrophic events (e.g. floods, landslides, etc.). These land-use categories will be the building blocks to guide the participatory land-use planning process. The output will be delivered by the following activities:
  - a) Undertake a participatory spatial mapping of the project area
  - b) Select the priority areas within the project area for participatory land-use planning
  - c) Establish community-based structures to coordinate participatory land-use planning
  - d) Undertake gender-responsive training of stakeholders in land-use planning practices
  - e) Develop participatory and gender-responsive community land-use plans



- f) Support the implementation of gender-responsive sustainable land management (SLM) practices

**Output 2.1.3.:** *Gender-responsive and climate-resilient alternative income-generating initiatives supported, ensuring inclusive participation and equitable benefits for all genders while promoting sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.*

74. A range of options for alternative income generation and community livelihood improvement is already available and known, based on previous interventions in several places within the landscape. These include, among others, beekeeping especially within the buffer/community forest areas; eco-tourism; growing of cocoa, inland valley swamp rice, cassava, groundnuts, potatoes, etc.; and animal husbandry, (e.g. goat rearing) among others. In addition, providing cooling facilities to the fishing communities on Tiwai Island is considered a good opportunity for women and men to increase the value of fish. These and any other emerging livelihood options will serve as a menu from which targeted communities will select the appropriate alternatives that may apply to the specific needs of the communities. The selection will be determined during project implementation through an inclusive participatory approach. It is expected that about 500 households will benefit from the livelihood schemes. The output will be delivered by the following activities:

- a) **Community mobilisation, sensitization and organization** - to establish rapport and secure approval of local leaders (Paramount Chiefs) and other influential stakeholders and raise awareness, which engages the local people (the main beneficiaries)
- b) **Participatory selection of priority community livelihood improvement initiatives** - The beneficiary groups will make formal applications indicating the livelihood improvement initiative of their interest.
- c) **Train communities in group savings and loan facilities to promote the saving culture and encourage credit season.** Some of the proceeds from sales were added to their savings in their successful microfinance loan scheme, which some of the communities have established. They have also started a rice farm this year in addition to their groundnut farm. Almost every household has started growing groundnuts because they have realized the economic potential and how it can help to alleviate poverty.
- d) **Support the implementation of income-generating initiatives** - based on the initiatives selected, the project will provide funds to support the community groups to implement the livelihood initiatives. A transparent, equitable and gender-sensitive criteria will be established to guide the selection of beneficiaries of income-generating activities.
- e) **Provide supportive supervision of income generating initiative** – the field staff will be facilitated to give support, advisory and monitoring services to ensure effective implementation.
- f) **Disseminate gender-sensitive best-case practices and lessons learnt**

**Output 2.1.4.:** *Innovative, equitable and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management supported.*

75. The project aims to promote the adoption of innovative alternative climate-resilient livelihoods as one of the transformative approaches. In this respect, the communities will be supported to transform and improve their land-use practices, especially from the unsustainable agricultural practices (slash and burn) and the destructive exploitation of natural resources (logging, mining and wildlife trade), and to introduce environmentally friendly economic enterprises. Site-specific nature-based enterprises will be determined in a participatory manner, taking into consideration community needs

and ensuring gender inclusiveness and equity. The output will therefore focus on the following activities:

- a) Sensitize the communities about pro-nature income generation activities for the benefit of women, youth, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.
- b) Undertake participatory and inclusive selection of priority pro-nature income-generating activities and establish community-based structures for implementation
- c) Build the capacity of the members of each pro-nature enterprise
- d) Provide gender-sensitive technical support for the effective implementation of the enterprises.
- e) Provide seed funding for enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management.
- f) Supportive supervision of pro-nature enterprise implementation
- g) Disseminate gender-sensitive best-case practices and lessons learnt

**Output 2.1.5:** *Inclusive community-based reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives to improve access to ecosystem services implemented.*

76. Reforestation and improved land management will be implemented within 5Km adjacent to the PAs, within the 14 chiefdoms that are adjacent to the protected areas, namely Tunkia, Koya, Dama, Nangowa, Lower Bambara, Dodo, Small Bo, Kandu Leppiama, Niawa, Langrama, Barri, Pejeh/Futa peje, and Makpele. The reforestation interventions will be based on the land-use plans developed under **Output 2.1.2** and the recommendations of the MRU forest landscape restoration (FLR) interventions, including:

- a) Areas planned for forests as the dominant land use – with or without existing trees. Such areas will be the focus of forest restoration interventions, including planting forests/woodlots, natural regeneration or improved management practices (silviculture).
- b) The agricultural land mainly managed to produce food, livestock and other goods. Sustainable land management (SLM) practices, agroforestry, silvi-pastures and other agroecological approaches will be used to enhance soil health, restore ecosystem values and services, improve productivity, reverse or prevent land degradation, supply forest products to the communities and increase climate resilience.
- c) Protective land and buffers – mainly ecologically fragile sites. The project will restore the forest cover on very steep sloping land, along water courses, in areas that naturally flood, and around critical water bodies aimed at reducing erosion and surface runoff, improving water quality and increasing overall connectivity from Kambui Hills North, Kambui Hills South, Tiwai wildlife sanctuary and South GRNP, which is essential for the survival of many species.

This output will be delivered by the following activities

- a) **Identify sites to undertake reforestation, within 5 km from the PAs (Kambui, Tiwai and South GRNP).** A criterion will be developed for this task.
- b) **Identify the tree species to restore and as needed procure inputs** e.g., seedlings etc. Traditional knowledge will be leveraged during the selection of the tree species
- c) **Identify community members and Community Leads/Champions who will support reforestation activities.** Marginalised groups including women, youth will also be engaged
- d) **Support reforestation of areas designated for forest land-use purposes within 5 km of the PAs (Kambui, Tiwai and South GRNP).** Forest restoration will be implemented through

- planting commercial forests (commodity plantations) and woodlots (for fuelwood and poles) and promoting assisted natural regeneration of degraded forests.
- e) **Support implementation of sustainable land management (SLM) practices on agricultural lands whilst incorporating traditional knowledge on natural resource management** – including advocating for change from the slash-and-burn agricultural practices, promoting the adoption of soil and water conservation technologies to reduce soil erosion, encouraging water retention, improve soil health, and promote the integration of trees on-farm through agroforestry. A variety of tree species for diverse uses including food, medicine, fibre, and timber will be planted. Special consideration will be made to address the needs of women and children who usually depend on forest and tree products, e.g. fuelwood and building poles.
  - f) **Support the establishment of protective lands and buffers within 5Km of the PAs (Kambui, Tiwai and South GRNP)** – the ecologically fragile areas are important as watershed areas suitable for watershed management and therefore are implemented as water management intervention under Output 4.1.3.
  - g) **Disseminate gender-sensitive best-case practices and lessons learnt**

**COMPONENT 3: Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation**

**OUTCOME 3.1: Strengthened biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use of the Kambui Hills FR and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape**

**Target 3.1a:** 22,428 Ha of protected areas with at least 80% improvement in METT Score (hence the target is reaching at least 270 METT Score)

**Target 3.1b:** 1.57 million tCO<sub>2e</sub> of greenhouse gas emissions mitigated

77. This component aims at strengthening the management of the Kambui Hills Forest reserve and associated community forest lands and 'Other effective area-based conservation measures' (OECMs) in the Gola Forest landscape, in order to maintain or increase habitat availability and connectivity for the conservation of biodiversity and production of ecosystem services to support community livelihoods. The current management status of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve has not been effective in clamping down illegal logging, illegal artisanal mining, and encroachment of communities who are undertaking agricultural activities, hence the forest area is threatened with rapid deforestation and degradation. The project will build on and scale up similar interventions by the Programme on Forests (ProFor) and REDD+ initiatives that are supporting management effectiveness in Gola Rainforest National Park, including strategic spatial planning that integrates conservation with local/national development.
78. The focus on Kambui Hills, Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary and associated community forests was emphasized by stakeholders during the PPG consultations, to address ongoing management effectiveness challenges. This component will include actions to mainstream gender such as a) inclusion of gender aspects in training activities of the protected areas staff and collaborating agencies; b) guaranteeing female and male staff will have equal opportunities to participate in capacity building and associated empowerment activities.

79. The greater Gola Forests have historically been managed as a production forest and gone through a period of timber harvesting through concessions, with poor attention to management planning and inadequate conservation management. Recent project support to improve management effectiveness, (e.g., PAPFor and REDD+ projects) is helping the protection and management of GRNP. Under the PAPFor Project, the role of local communities in the management and protection of protected areas was recognized, and eco-guards were recruited from the neighbouring communities to participate in law enforcement and biomonitoring. The Child Project will build on the approach, structure and experience from PAPFor and REDD+ Projects to improve the management effectiveness of the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and community forests, especially in increasing capacity for geospatial mapping – landscape level mapping and assessments - to generate information that guides planning and decision making law enforcement, biodiversity research and monitoring to actively engage biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of the protected areas.
80. To guide resource management, it will be necessary to obtain relevant spatial data, develop land-use plans, identify and restore/rehabilitate degraded habitats and ecosystems and develop interventions that promote sustainable utilization of the forest resources within the landscape. The restoration of the degraded forests will contribute to the implementation of the roadmap for Mano Forest Landscape Restoration interventions (IUCN, 2022).<sup>32</sup>

**Output 3.1.1:** *Extent of deforestation and forest degradation in Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests established, documented and restoration implemented.*

81. It is estimated that **10,000 ha** of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve will be targeted for restoration, reflecting the area degraded through artisanal mining, agricultural activities, settlement and other anthropogenic activities. The actual area will be determined during the project implementation phase. The restoration approach will be assisted by natural regeneration (enrichment planting) using native tree species. Necessary resources and appropriate technical support will be provided to ensure the right silvicultural practices to facilitate the effective survival and growth of the planted materials. In particular, the project will facilitate the **procurement of seedlings and other planting materials** and the **training of stakeholders in basic silvicultural practices**. The capacity of local communities, including marginalised groups will be built in tree nursery management as a strategy for sourcing the seedlings and other planting materials for forest restoration. This output will be delivered through the following activities:
- a) Assess the extent of deforestation and forest degradation of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve (FR). It was established during the PPG Phase that part of the Tiwai Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS) and part of the Kambui Hills FR are still intact. During the implementation phase, the exact area that has been affected by deforestation will be established through a study.
  - b) Procure tree seedlings and other planting materials, mainly of native species, for forest restoration. Traditional knowledge will be leveraged during the execution of this task
  - c) Train stakeholders, including women, youth and other representatives from marginalised and vulnerable groups in basic tree nursery and natural forest silvicultural practices.
  - d) Undertake restoration/rehabilitation of degraded areas within the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve.
  - e) Disseminate gender-sensitive best-case practices and lessons learnt

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<sup>32</sup> International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), 2022. Forest Landscape Restoration Opportunities Assessment in the Mano River Union. Project document.

**Output 3.1.2:** *Forest conservation and regeneration as one of the strategies for improved ecosystem health and sustainable financing promoted.*

82. Sustainable forest resource management of protected areas requires putting in place systems that ensure regulated utilization of the resources without compromising the future availability of such resources. Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, as well as the Greater Gola forests, have historically been managed for timber production through concessions and continue to face challenges from slash-and-burn agricultural practices, artisanal mining, wildlife trade and other human-induced activities. Under this output, the data/information needed to guide decision-making on effective law enforcement, forest zoning, developing/updating forest management plans and sustainable forest management practices will be collected and utilized. The Project will facilitate the development and their implementation during the project period. The project will strengthen law enforcement within the PAs, especially for Kambui Hills FR, to reduce the human-induced pressures that have contributed to deforestation and forest degradation. The interventions will build on the experiences from the PAPFor Programme, which supported the capacity strengthening of the Protected Area management systems for GRNP.
83. The project aims to improve the management effectiveness of Kambui Hills FR by avoiding deforestation and restoring the target areas through improved management of the Reserve, reforestation and afforestation. These activities will contribute to increasing carbon sequestration and/or reduce GHG emissions. The sale of emissions reduction credits (ERCs) will contribute to sustainable financing for sustainable ecosystem management. The project will build on the experiences of the Gola REDD Project, which is still ongoing, especially in the application of the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) and Community, Climate and Biodiversity (CCB) standard for validating and verifying REDD+ projects, and the calculations using the FAO EX-ANTE Carbon-Balance Tool. It is estimated that through forest conservation and regeneration tradable emission reduction credits (ERCs), approximately **1.57 million tCO<sub>2</sub>e** will be mitigated within 20 years. The local stakeholders, (including paramount chiefs, section and village chiefs, landowners, and forest-edge communities), will be involved in project development because they will be directly involved with the implementation of activities throughout the lifetime of the project. The Output will be delivered through the following activities:
- a) Establish a robust system for tracking illegal activities and improve the integrity of the protected areas, including through patrolling, monitoring and reporting with community participation. The system will entail recruitment of community-based patrol teams, application of the Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool, SMART Mobile and camera traps for Biomonitoring and provide training for the users
  - b) Support coordination and training of key law enforcement agencies, including relevant Forest Division, NPAA, Police and judicial officials
  - c) Support implementation of biodiversity inventories and tree stock assessments for Kambuyi Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests
  - d) Undertake forest zoning for Kambui Hills FR – the concept is to identify areas of high conservation value and the production areas within the FR (based on the biological inventories) and spatially demarcating them for management under these regimes. The management of the production areas will be guided by the tree stock assessment, especially in determining the priority areas for harvesting, tree species to be removed, sustainable annual allowable cut (AAC), etc. The relevant guidelines developed under Output 1.1.2 will be a useful resource.

- e) Develop and/or update and implement forest management plans – The target is to develop the management plans for Kambui Hills FR, and the implementation of the Forest Management Plan for Tiwai Wildlife Sanctuary.
- f) **Develop implement collaborative forest management (CFM) approaches between the communities/chiefdoms and protected area management agencies** – the protected area managers (FD and NPAA) will pilot collaborative forest management approach in at least three selected sites of Kambui Forest Reserve, Tiwai and GRNP. This intervention will explore the potential of communities/chiefdoms to contribute to sustainable forest management. The actual sites will be determined during project implementation. The collaborative forest management Agreement will define clear goals and objectives for the management of the forest, clarify the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, establish a fair and equitable decision-making process, benefit sharing arrangement and a monitoring and evaluation system to track the progress of implementation.
- g) Undertake a feasibility study on opportunities and readiness for forest certification
- h) Build capacity for forest certification that embrace social, economic and environmental aspects of responsible forest management. This will entail undertaking a feasibility study on opportunities and readiness for certification, the identification and sensitization of stakeholders on certification through FSC standard, developing the Interim/National Forest Stewardship Standard for Sierra Leone.
- i) Project documentation and design for the application of the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) and Community, Climate and Biodiversity (CCB) standard for validating and verifying REDD+ projects
- j) Stakeholder engagement and consultations with local stakeholders, (including paramount chiefs, section and village chiefs, landowners, and forest-edge communities)
- k) Develop Environmental Management and Safeguard Framework for conservation and ecosystem management for the REDD+ process.
- l) Disseminate gender-sensitive best-case practices and lessons learnt from the REDD+ process.

#### **COMPONENT 4: Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management**

**Outcome 4.1:** Strengthened institutional structures for transboundary collaboration between Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia for improved management of the Mano Watershed

**Target 4.1a:** At least 1 strengthened institutional structure in place to facilitate joint transboundary management of the Mano Watershed.

**Target 4.1b:** At least 5 gender-responsive knowledge management products shared on the International Waters (IW) platform<sup>33</sup> (at least 1 per year)

84. This component aims to enhance collaboration and coordination between Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone as they execute activities promoting sustainable management of selected transboundary watersheds and forest landscapes. The Mano River basin is one of the planet's most biodiverse sub-regional watersheds in the world that include Niger, the Amazon and Congo basins among others. The Mano River ecosystem is an important watershed known for its contribution to water resource needs within the Gola Forest Landscape and contributes to the region's socioeconomic well-being.

85. Interventions under this Component are aligned with the GEF-8 Programming directions under the International Waters (IW) Thematic Area while building on the countries' transboundary collaboration

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<sup>33</sup> LEARN <https://iwleart.n.net/>



aspirations provided in the Strategic Action Program (SAP) of Mano River Union Basins (MRU, 2023)<sup>34</sup>. The development of the SAP was funded by the GEF, under the IUCN-led International Waters project titled: Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) (GEF ID: 4953). In particular, the SAP provides for the operationalization of the MRU Transboundary Committees and emphasizes the importance of water catchment protection and the need for evidence-based decision-making for transboundary natural resources management.

86. With regards to the GEF-8 Programming directions, this Component responds to the GEF-8 IW Objective 3 and the activities below were ranked high priority during the PPG Phase:

- a) Build capacity to gather and synthesize scientific, local and people science and mainstream them into decision-making processes.
- b) Nature-based Solutions to improve water quality, and freshwater ecosystem health, including wetlands and curb floods, droughts, climate change impacts, river/lake shoreline deterioration and further aquifer recharge.
- c) Implementation of SAP priorities through regional and national actions. Operationalization and institutionalization of the Transboundary Committees established under the IUCN-led GEF-funded IWRM Project (GEF ID: 4953) and ensuring their sustainability will lay the foundation for implementation of the Mano River Union SAP (2023).

87. In 2011, the governments of Liberia and Sierra Leone signed an MoU to conserve the transboundary Gola Forest. This agreement was amended in 2020, reaffirming their commitment to joint forest management and biodiversity protection of their two adjoining protected areas as the Gola Forest Peace Park, (MRU, 2011; and PAPFor, 2022). In 2019, the Governments of Liberia and Guinea signed a bilateral agreement for collaboration in the management of the Ziama-Wonegizi-Wologizi forest complex. The project will build on the policy commitments in these MoUs to further consolidate transboundary collaboration.

88. The IUCN-led GEF-funded IWRM Project (GEF ID: 4953) established Interministerial, National and Community-level committees in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, however, these committees became inactive after the IWRM project concluded. Recognizing that these committees are essential for supporting the MRU and the countries in governing the Mano watershed, the three Guinean Forests Child Projects will reactivate their respective committees and support their operationalization and institutionalization to ensure they can function sustainably beyond the project's lifespan. The institutionalization process will involve the MRU, local communities, local governments, and national governments to secure broad-based acceptance of and adherence to agreed-upon structures and operational modalities. With support from the **Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project, the three Guinean Forests Child projects will collaborate with the European Union (EU) Funded NaturAfrica Program (2021-2027)**, which is also working towards supporting the countries to revive and operationalize these committees.

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<sup>34</sup> Mano River Union, 2023. Strategic Action Program (SAP) of Mano River Union Basins. The Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management Project implemented by IUCN, with the Mano River Union (MRU) as the executing agency. Project GEF ID 4953.



**Output 4.1.1:** *The functioning of the committees established under the IUCN-MRU-IW Project to support improved management and sustainable use of river basin resources operationalized and institutionalized within MRU.*

89. The three Guinean Forests child projects in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone with support from MRU and the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project (RCP) will collaborate with the six-year EU-funded NaturAfrica Program (2021-2027) to revive, operationalize and institutionalize the Transboundary Committees that were established under the MRU through the IWRM Project (GEF ID: 4953). Specifically, these are the MRU Ministerial Council, the National Consultative Platform for Water Users and the community-based Basin Management Committees.
90. Each country will convene national and community level meetings to determine transboundary issues that are priority at the local and national levels (based on the SAP), to inform regional engagements. This approach will ensure ownership and continuity in implementing country-level agendas for transboundary natural resources management and promote lesson sharing among countries of the MRU.
91. The community-level Basin Management Committees will meet at least twice a year to set priority actions to be implemented as well as assess progress in implementation against the developed monitoring framework. Specific to this project, the Committees will identify the specific priority nature-based solutions to be actioned under Output 4.1.3, whilst considering factors such as feasibility, cost-effectiveness, scalability, and co-benefits. The Project will provide resources to facilitate the operationalization of their respective Committees and ensure complementarity between the interventions by the child projects as well as with earlier PAPFor interventions.
92. Concerning the MRU Ministerial Council, the MRU and the three child projects will liaise with the Guinean Regional Coordination Project and the NaturAfrica Program to convene this committee. Through this meeting, the MRU and the countries will learn and share lessons and best-case practices as well as discuss how the three 3 committees will be institutionalised in order to ensure their sustainability. The output will be delivered by the following activities:
  - a) **Develop/review the ToRs for the Transboundary Committees at regional, national and community levels.** This will entail, among others, reviewing the transboundary governance landscape and addressing gaps by reinforcing existing governance and advisory structures and probably establishing new technical subcommittees to guide management, enforcement and work on any aspects that may be important for effective transboundary watershed management.
  - b) **Orientation meeting for the three Transboundary Committees.** The committees have been generally inactive. Meetings will be organized to update them on their expected roles and responsibilities and develop work plans in a process of institutionalization within MRU.
  - c) **Determining priority national and community-level watershed management interventions** – the local communities, including chiefdoms, as well as the Transboundary Committees will participate in determining the priority watershed management interventions at national and community levels. Previous participation of the Transboundary Committees during the implementation of the MRU-IWRM Project will add value to discussions related to watershed management. This activity is linked to Activity (c) under **Output 2.1.5**, which addresses areas of fragile ecosystems that are considered important targets for watershed management, and the two will be implemented under one budget.
  - d) **Monitoring the implementation of watershed management interventions** at national and community levels facilitated by the project.

- e) **Institutionalization of the 3 committees at MRU** to ensure they are functional beyond the life of the child projects.
- f) **Disseminate gender-sensitive best-case practices and lessons learnt**

**Output 4.1.2:** *Capacity for applied research to inform decision-making processes for transboundary watershed and forest management enhanced.*

93. Technical and institutional capacity building is necessary to support decision-making processes for transboundary natural resource management. The Guinean Forests RCP will address this from a regional point of view by providing tailored technical assistance and capacity-building content and tools to meet the national needs of the three MRU countries participating in the GFIP. Collaboration between the NaturAfrica Program and the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination project will also be explored to action this output. The aim is to enhance their capacity for collaborative management of the shared transboundary Mano River watershed and associated forest landscape. During project implementation, training for applied research will focus on priority areas that require technical support as determined by the countries, but in general, these may include, among others, the protocols to ease movements through the corridor; enhanced transboundary patrols and enforcement; and technical guidance and tools for transboundary management, with associated capacity building. The RCP will build on the work of WABiLED and others with MRU, including the interventions identified in the SAP. The output will be delivered by the following activities:

- a) Participate in the RCP's capacity needs assessment for applied research needs to inform decision-making processes for watershed management
- b) Sponsor/Facilitate stakeholder participation in capacity-building training events on applied research to inform decision-making processes for watershed management that are led by the RCP.
- c) Sponsor/Facilitate participation in regular exchanges of knowledge and lessons learned between member countries and with the MRU Secretariat with a focus on marginalised groups such as IPLCs, Women, Youth etc.
- d) Provide guidance related to gender and inclusion, such as strategies to target women as recipients of technical assistance and capacity-building.
- e) Disseminate gender-sensitive best-case practices and lessons learnt

**Output 4.1.3:** *Nature-based solutions to improve freshwater ecosystem health and mitigate climate change impacts and riverbank deterioration implemented.*

94. Nature-based Solutions are actions that enhance the protection, sustainable management and restoration of both natural and modified ecosystems, and address global challenges such as climate change, human health, food and water security, natural disasters and biodiversity loss. Although the concept of nature-based solutions may seem to be new to some actors, there are several examples of such actions that are of importance within the Great Gola Forest Landscape. Sustainable cocoa production has been supported by the partnership of CSSL, the national government, BirdLife International, and the RSPB for many years. The cocoa trees are grown among larger trees that provide shade and as a system help to reduce the threat from intensive agriculture, mining, logging and slash-and-burn agriculture of the greater Gola Forest Landscape, as well as enhancing the livelihood of the local communities and contribute the national economy of Sierra Leone. Forest restoration with specific local tree species and wildlife conservation also provide multiple societal benefits.

95. Experience from the implementation of the West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development (WABiLED) Project indicate that there are other priority commodity value chains among the communities in the landscape, which include honey, cocoa, ecotourism, livelihood opportunities like rice growing, ground-nut growing. However, it is noted that the communities are not well informed about the importance of these interventions and linking the interventions to the improvement of natural resource management, increasing climate resilience and enhancing human wellbeing. The output will therefore focus on the following activities:

- a) **Sensitize communities on nature-based solutions** - The details of these may be developed during project implementation. There is a need to sensitize stakeholders about nature-based solutions.
- b) **Selection of priority nature-based solutions for implementation** - The community-level Consultation platforms for users of water resources in basins will spearhead the identification and selection of priority nature-based solutions through a gender-inclusive process guided by the FPIC principles whilst considering factors such as feasibility, cost-effectiveness, scalability, and co-benefits. Examples of nature-based solutions that might be considered will include, but are not limited to honey, cocoa, ecotourism and other livelihood opportunities.
- g) **Support restoration of ecologically fragile areas (steep slopes, riparian sites, etc within 5 km of the PAs (Kambui, Tiwai and South GRNP).** The restoration of ecosystems is considered an important nature-based solution. The ecologically fragile areas identified through resource mapping and participatory land-use plans under Outcome 2.1 will be restored through watershed protection and erosion control. In particular, forests will be established on very steep sloping land, along water courses, in areas that naturally flood and around critical water bodies. Such areas will constitute protective lands and buffers that will enhance connectivity with the protected areas. – see also activity (c) under **Output 2.1.5**. Budget combined.
- c) **Support implementation of other selected nature-based solutions.**
- d) **Monitoring and reporting on the performance of the nature-based solution(s) being implemented** – there will be biannual monitoring and reporting on the progress of implementing the nature-based solutions to establish performance, and any social, economic and environmental impacts and updates shared in the community-based committees to inform adaptive management. Approaches will be adjusted as needed based on feedback, changing conditions, and new insights
- e) **Document the process, outcomes, and lessons learned from implementing nature-based solutions** and share this knowledge with relevant stakeholders at community, national and regional levels (also at the committees) to promote learning and replication in other contexts.

## **COMPONENT 5: Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons**

**OUTCOME 5.1:** Strengthened coordination, capacity building, knowledge management, learning and sharing between the Sierra Leone Child Project and initiatives at landscape, national and regional levels including the GEF-8 Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project

**Target 5.1:** Sierra Leone Guinean Forests Child Project coordinating, learning and sharing with at least 2 initiatives in the Greater Gola Landscape and at least 1 initiative in the broader Guinean Forests Biome (through the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project)

96. Component 5 focuses on strengthening coordination and collaboration at local, national, and regional levels through learning and knowledge sharing. Specifically, the project will undertake knowledge

management, sharing of lessons learned, and best practices through south-south exchanges and participation in national, regional, and international platforms/forums, including the Gola Transboundary Committee. The project will foster knowledge sharing, coordination of activities and synthesis of learning with other country child projects, other countries in the Guinean Forests Biome, and other stakeholders working on the conservation and sustainable management of critical forests in other regions.

97. Critical to achieving this aim will be knowledge sharing with other Integrated Programs (IP) and their Child Projects such as the Congo Basin IP, Amazon IP, Meso Americas IP, Indo-Malay IP, Ecosystem Restoration IP, and planetGOLD IP; developing linkages between the Guinean Forest Integrated Program (GFIP) for technical support and assistance as needed. This linkage will offer opportunities to amplify West Africa's collective voice in international policy processes through participation in periodic joint meetings and exchange visits to other regions.
98. The project will establish lines of communication and forums for exchange and prepare knowledge products that synthesize learnings. Knowledge sharing is expected to increase learning among stakeholders at landscape, national and regional levels. This component will also seize opportunities to advance gender equality by a) promoting the creation of a gender-sensitive Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy; and b) developing knowledge products that incorporate gender and inclusion considerations.

**Output 5.1.1:** *A project Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy developed (including gender, equality and inclusion aspects)*

99. A gender-sensitive and inclusive knowledge Management and Communications Strategy will be developed and implemented. The Strategy will ensure that Project-relevant information is captured, curated and made publicly available in a systematic way with wide-reaching access, including local, national, regional and international bodies. Given the Project's emphasis on issues related to gender, equality and inclusion, the Strategy will highlight how knowledge will be made widely accessible to traditionally marginalized groups. Moreover, the Strategy will identify how the Project will coordinate knowledge sharing with government and NGO partners, regional entities such as the MRU, ECOWAS, and AFR100 and GEF's Critical Forest IPs (notably for the Congo Forests), planetGOLD IP, and Ecosystem Restoration IP.

**Output 5.1.2:** *Participation in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project 3-day Annual Forums.*

100. As part of the GEF-8 Guinean Forests Integrated Program, the Sierra Leone Child Project is expected to actively participate in both virtual and in-person events organized by CI through the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project. To support this involvement, the Sierra Leone Child Project will sponsor 10 Sierra Leone officials (50% women) over 5 years (2 officials per year for 5 years), to participate in the three-day annual forum organized by CI.

**Output 5.1.3:** *Learning and exposure visits facilitated with the Sierra Leone Child Projects (and where applicable coordinated by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project).*

101. The Sierra Leone Child Project will sponsor 10 Sierra Leone officials (50% women) over 5 years (2 Sierra Leone officials attending each year for 5 years), to participate in Learning and exposure visits

that could be organized by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project or the Regional Projects of the other Critical Forests Integrated Programs (IP) namely:

- Congo Basin Regional Coordination Project
- Amazon IP led by the World Bank
- Indo-Malay IP -led IP by IUCN and FAO
- Meso America IP led by IUCN.

102. The Sierra Leone Child Project could also opt to sponsor officials to participate in learning and knowledge exchange visits to any of the child project countries under the above-mentioned 4 Critical Forests IPs. Selected beneficiaries from state and non-state actors, including representatives of local communities and chiefdoms, will participate in cross-learning events in other countries to learn their practices in sustainable forest and land management interventions.

103. Lastly, it is expected that CI, through the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project, will sponsor a representative from Sierra Leone's marginalized and vulnerable groups within the local community, such as women, youth, the elderly, and people with special needs, to participate in the Guinean Forests Regional Forum and/or other forums organized by the other Critical Forests Integrated Programs.

**Output 5.1.4:** *Knowledge management products integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects generated, and disseminated at landscape, national and regional levels (integrating lessons learnt and best-case practices on traditional knowledge for natural resource management, and information on the project as a model for Nature-Based-Solutions)*

104. The implementation of the project will provide a wealth of experiences and lessons to participating stakeholders, which will be shared through lessons-learning events. **Gola Transboundary Committee** will provide platforms for the dissemination of knowledge management products at the landscape, national and regional levels. The women, mostly operating at the community level in the management of forest resources outside the protected areas, will be provided with an opportunity to share their gender-related experiences during the project period. During implementation, the project will explore possible options for establishing and maintaining an inclusive knowledge-sharing platform/portal that may be linked to other existing management platforms.

105. Knowledge products that incorporate gender, equality, and inclusion aspects will be developed and distributed at local, national, and regional levels. These gender-sensitive knowledge products will include lessons learned, best practices on traditional knowledge for natural resource management, and information about the project as a model for Nature-Based Solutions. They will be shared through various channels, including the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project's platform/website as well as on the website of the 4 other Critical Forests Integrated Programme. The output will be delivered by the following activities:

- a) **Gender-responsive documentation of project implementation and experiences** - Newsletters, fact sheets, and a short film will be useful in information sharing. Quarterly newsletters and periodic fact sheets will be developed by project management to ease the sharing of experiences. These documents will capture lessons learnt, best case practices, challenges and opportunities, highlighting the participation and benefit for women, youth and the people abled differently.

- b) **Disseminate knowledge and lessons learned.** The documents be circulated widely at local and national levels, through channels that will effectively maintain project visibility. The project will engage a communication specialist to design and implement appropriate information-sharing methods (both in-person and virtual), with clear objectives and an understanding of participants' expectations, for effective information dissemination at community, landscape and national levels.
- c) **Organize women's, youth, or marginalised and vulnerable group's knowledge exchange/learning events.** The project will organize separate women, youth and marginalised and vulnerable groups events, focused on bringing together their representatives from various project sites as an opportunity to share experiences and challenges that they face in biodiversity conservation, land-use planning, impacts of climate change and promoting climate resilient livelihood. The knowledge shared will inform the project implementation process for adaptive management and ensure that the concerns of women are effectively addressed throughout the project life.
- d) **Establish lines of communication and forums for knowledge sharing and dissemination of lessons learned at landscape, national and regional levels.** During implementation, the project will maintain communication and knowledge-sharing forums, including linkage with the MRU Transboundary Committees at regional, national and community levels; the Regional Coordination Project, the regional child projects and other international online knowledge-sharing platforms/portals.

## **COMPONENT 6: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**

**OUTCOME 6.1.:** An effective and gender-sensitive M&E system for the project

**Target 6.1:** 5 Annual Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) approved by CI-GEF and submitted to the GEF.

106. The component will facilitate setting up a project gender sensitive Monitoring and Evaluation framework which will enhance transparency and accountability; ensure effective resource allocation, provide quantifiable results that will promote adaptive management through learning from project successes and challenges; improve project performance by tracking indicators, and identifying effective tools to measure and analyze the progress of the interventions, as well as the progress made towards achieving the target outputs and outcomes. As part of M&E, the project will submit periodic technical and financial reports to the CI-GEF Agency. Additionally, the CI-GEF Agency will commission a Terminal Evaluation of the project.

107. Lastly, the project will collaborate with the GEF International Waters Program to ensure its case studies align with the IW-Learn system. Overall, this project will increase Sierra Leones' engagement with the IW: LEARN platform through the publication of gender-responsive knowledge management products emanating from the results of Component 4. The mode of coordination will be detailed in the project's Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy.

### **Output 6.1.1:** *Periodic M&E reports submitted to CI-GEF Agency.*

108. As part of M&E, the project is required to conduct periodic monitoring and prepare technical and financial reports. The generated reports will be submitted to CI-GEF and shared with other relevant stakeholders (Quarterly, PIR, MTR, and Terminal Evaluation report). This output will be achieved by the following activities:



- a) **Inception workshop and report:** An inception workshop will be held to launch the project after which, an inception workshop report will be prepared and submitted to CIGEF. At least 40% of the participants in the workshop will be women and youth.
  - b) **Review monitoring and evaluation Framework:** The Project Management Unit (PMU) will review and update the monitoring and evaluation framework (**Annex J**) at the start of the project implementation and periodically as needed to ensure that the proposed targets and indicators are gender inclusive and realistic or proposed where they need to be adjusted.
  - c) **Implement the monitoring and evaluation framework:** The agreed-upon monitoring and evaluation framework will be effectively and efficiently implemented.
  - d) **The Biodiversity Tracking Tool** will be updated at the start of the project and at the end when preparing to submit to the GEF.
  - e) **The Core Indicator sheet** will be updated and submitted to the GEF at the end of the project.
  - f) **Other activities:**
    - Annual plan and Budget, Quarterly progress reports, and Annual progress and implementation reports (PIR) will be prepared by the PMU and submitted to CI-GEF for review and approval.
    - The Project Steering Committee Meetings will convene annually.
    - Financial audits will be conducted annually.
    - CI-GEF Project Agency will conduct Annual supervision missions.
109. The Committees below will be set up as part of M&E to guide the implementation of the project
- a) **Annual National Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings.** The National Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be appointed by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change to provide overall strategic oversight of project implementation. The Steering Committee will be composed of senior decision-makers from relevant Government, Civil Society Organizations, the private sector, and local communities/chiefdoms. At least 30% of the members will be women, in line with the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Act (2022). The PSC will meet annually to review and approve budgets and work plans and provide strategic guidance.
  - b) **Annual inter-institutional coordination and collaboration meetings** - The coordination and collaboration among state and non-state actors will be strengthened to improve cooperation for effective management of the PAs, ensure harmony, bridge gaps and avoid duplication of interventions while executing during project implementation. The project will mobilize and organize annual meetings with the relevant state and non-state actors, represented by senior officials appointed by the executive leaders of the institutions. The Gola Transboundary Committee members may participate as stakeholders with a stake in the Gola Forest Landscape. Where the need arises, instruments of cooperation such as inter-institutional Agreements or memoranda of understanding (MoUs) or any similar arrangements will be developed by EPA/PMU to formalize the cooperation/collaboration. The areas of cooperation will include, for example, collaboration in executing joint activities such as law enforcement (which brings together the law enforcement agencies), participatory activity monitoring and evaluation, supportive supervision of field activities, etc.
  - c) **Quarterly Project Technical Coordination Team Meetings** – A Technical Coordination Team will be established, composed mainly of the Implementing Partners, to periodically review and provide technical guidance on the implementation of planned activities. At least 30% of the members of the team will be women.

**Output 6.1.2: Independent evaluations conducted in accordance with the GEF and CI-GEF Evaluation Policies**

110. Conservation International General Counsel Office in close coordination with the CI-GEF Agency will recruit an independent Mid Term Reviewer (MTR) and Terminal Evaluator (TE) Consultant to assess project performance. This output will be achieved by the following activities:

- a) **CI's General Counsel Office, as an independent unit, will prepare the Terms of Reference and procure independent evaluators in coordination with the CI-GEF Agency.**
- b) **The MTR and Terminal evaluation will be undertaken with support from CI-GEF, PMU, the Executing agency, and all key stakeholders.** The PMU, executing agency and all key stakeholders including the Sierra Leone Operational Focal Point (OFP) will support the independent evaluation service provider by providing candid feedback about the project, participating in the virtual inception and validation workshop of the MTR and TE workshop, and providing input in the MTR Report and TE report.
- c) **CI-GEF submits the MTR and TE report to the GEF Independent Evaluation Office (IEO)**

**Global Environmental Benefits**

111. This project is a direct contribution to the long-term goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework as it is intended to address improved management effectiveness, forest restoration and connectivity between the PAs of Kambui, Tiwai and Gola.

112. Improved management of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape in Sierra Leone (Gola Rainforest National Park, Kambui Forest Reserve and extensions, and the Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary) will make the ecosystem resilient to the growing threats to biodiversity and surrounding agricultural lands. The strengthened resilience will conserve biodiversity and sustain ecosystem functioning and provisioning. In addition, the project will contribute to SDG 15 - Life on land (protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and biodiversity loss) through improved management, reforestation and land restoration interventions. The project will contribute to GEBs through the realization of the GEF core indicator targets below:

- a. Core Indicator 1: Improved management of **22,428 Ha of terrestrial protected areas**, namely Kambui Hills FR, Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary and Kambui South Forest Reserve.
- b. Core Indicator 3: At least **10,000 Ha of forest land** under restoration
- c. Core Indicator 4: Sustainable landscapes through improved management practices in approximately **35,000 Ha (outside protected areas)**.
- d. Core Indicator 6: Improved Forest conservation, which is expected to result in Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigation estimated at **1.57 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e** (this is an initial rough estimate based on the EX-ACT tool starting in 2025 and will be recalculated, based on data to be compiled at the Project inception phase).
- e. Core Indicator 7: Increase Sierra Leone's engagement on the IW: LEARN platform to **Level 2** through participation and delivery of key products
- f. Core Indicator 11: The project aims to benefit directly at least **172,630 (30% women)** people through learning and knowledge-sharing events, improved practices and engagement in resilient and sustainable livelihoods

## Stakeholders

113. Stakeholder participation and consultation were given priority from project inception and PPG process as it provided an opportunity to create awareness about the project, solicit views from various actors as well as clarify the roles of key stakeholders in project formulation and implementation, promote ownership of the project, and ensure the project responds to the needs of the landscape and stakeholders. The stakeholders were mapped, analyzed and categorized into Government institutions, local governments, civil society organizations and non-government organizations (CSO/NGOs), the private sector, the academia and local communities.
114. Government institutions play important roles as mandated institutions responsible for environmental management, the management of protected areas, (i.e. national parks, forest reserves, wildlife sanctuaries, etc.), and forest resources outside the protected areas. Specifically, the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for the overall management of the environment including landscapes for purposes of enhancing capacity and guiding policy decisions at the national level. The National Protected Area Authority (NAPPA) is responsible for the management of forests under conservation (national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, including GRNP and Tiwai Wildlife Sanctuary), while the Forest Department (FD) is responsible for the management of commercial forest reserves and community forests. The three institutions are housed within the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC). A list of the key Government institutions that will be involved in the project implementation is tabulated below.
115. There are also non-state actors that play various roles as elaborated below, and these will be scrutinized further during project implementation, identifying those which will work closely with the Government institutions to implement the project, as well as those that will support project activities differently.

### **List of the key Government institutions that will be involved in the project implementation**

1. Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
2. Environment Protection Agency
3. National Protected Area Authority
4. Forestry Division/Department
5. Conservation Trust Fund
6. National Water Resources Management Agency
7. Ministry of Water Resources
8. Ministry of Gender and Children Affairs
9. Ministry of Finance
10. Ministry of Planning and Economic Development
11. Ministry of Local Government and Community Affairs
12. Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources
13. National Minerals Agency
14. Ministry of Justice
15. Ministry of Internal Affairs
16. Ministry of Youth Affairs
17. Sierra Leone Meteorological Agency
18. District and Municipal Councils of Kenema
19. District Council of Kono
20. Ministry of Education
21. Universities
22. Ministry of Defense
23. Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs

**Table 8: Non-state actors and their roles in project implementation and benefits from the project**

Stakeholder	Primary Role(s) Relevant to the Project	Benefit from Project
<b>Non-government organizations (NGO)</b> – e.g. CI, The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL); The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB); Environmental Foundation for Africa (EFA); Shout Climate Change Africa (SCCA), IUCN, FAO, UNEP, World Bank, Africa Wildlife Foundation (AWF), Birdlife International, Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Public awareness, communication education and advocacy for sustainable management and inclusive and equitable access and utilization of natural resource</li> <li>- Contributing to the improvement of management effectiveness of protected areas</li> <li>- Carrying out reforestation and restoration of degraded lands</li> <li>- Community mobilization and empowerment to sustainably utilize the natural resource endowment</li> <li>- Service delivery to support the implementation of community-based alternative income-generating activities and improve livelihoods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual and institutional technological capacity building for effective biodiversity conservation and improved land management</li> <li>- increase of forest cover and halting deforestation and forest degradation</li> <li>- Contribution to sustainable biodiversity conservation</li> <li>- improved carbon sequestration through project interventions to reduce the negative impacts of greenhouse gases (GHG) and climate change</li> <li>- reduced land degradation through the application of transformative sustainable land management practices</li> <li>- Contribution to sustainable financing through carbon offsets to support local development</li> <li>-</li> </ul>
<b>Paramount Chiefs and Local Communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community-level mobilization, information sharing and implementation of project interventions</li> <li>- Collaboration in land matters for reforestation and land restoration outside the protected areas, including the buffer zones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transformative income generation through innovative interventions</li> <li>- Halting deforestation and forest degradation</li> </ul>
<b>Regional and global initiatives</b> , e.g. Africa Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100); Forest Stewardship Council (FSC); European Union, USAID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resource mobilization for enhancing governance systems</li> <li>- Support efforts to enhance collaboration and coordination of different actors</li> <li>- Technical capacity building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhanced stakeholder coordination</li> <li>- Increased resources</li> <li>- Increased knowledge-sharing and learning</li> </ul>
<b>Private sector</b> – e.g. artisanal miners, loggers, Companies limited by Guarantee,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- invest in reforestation, agroforestry, agriculture, forest protection</li> <li>- Participation in sector developments in close collaboration with relevant Government Ministries, Departments and agencies, in forestry sector development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased forest cover, improvement of soil fertility, poverty reduction and return on investment.</li> <li>- Technological capacity building for sustainable forest management</li> <li>- Ecological benefits</li> </ul>

Stakeholder	Primary Role(s) Relevant to the Project	Benefit from Project
<b>Academia</b> – especially Njala University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research and to increase knowledge on</li> <li>- Capacity building in areas of biodiversity conservation and land restoration technologies and approaches</li> <li>- Promoting community-based appropriate livelihood efforts based on forest-friendly interventions</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaboration in practical training/ attachments of students for fieldwork</li> <li>- Improvement of tools and protocols for biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and participatory approaches to resource management</li> <li>- Technical capacity building, especially equipping the youth for sustainable human resource development in the areas of biodiversity conservation, sustainable</li> </ul>

## Policy Coherence

116. The different mandates of state actors present different policy approaches lead to overlap and duplication of interventions, inter-institutional conflicts and high transaction costs undermine effective governance. Policy coherence will entail identifying policies, regulations, or guidelines to create harmonized approaches and synergies among mandated agencies towards achieving agreed objectives. Policy coherence will enhance coordination and collaboration and increase management effectiveness. Policy coherence can be delivered through these project's interlinked outputs by ensuring that all aspects of forest and land use planning and management are approached with a consistent gender-responsive framework. **Output 1.1.1** lays the foundation by reviewing and implementing gender-responsive policies, plans, tools, and guidelines, which establish a standardized approach to integrating gender considerations into sustainable practices across sectors. Additionally, the policy review process is an opportunity to identify gaps, omit conflicting aspects and impediments to policy coherence and mainstream cross-cutting priorities such as gender, climate, biodiversity conservation, and mobilization of financing among others. The review and implementation of these policies will ensure that there is a consistent approach to sustainable management practices that consider both environmental and social dimensions, promoting coherence between gender equality and environmental sustainability. Lastly, the development and dissemination of guidelines under Output 1.1.1 will provide standardized approaches for stakeholders, reducing conflicts and overlaps in policy implementation. **Output 1.1.2** will build on the foundation laid by Output 1.1.1 by training state and non-state actors, including government bodies, civil society organizations, the private sector, and communities, to effectively apply coherent and gender-responsive strategies in managing the Greater Gola Forest landscape. Output 1.1.2 will therefore build and foster a unified approach among diverse stakeholders since their capacity would have been built to understand and apply similar principles and practices which is critical to harmonizing actions across different sectors and levels of governance, promoting coherent policy implementation. **Output 1.1.3** will further enhance policy coherence by fostering coordination and collaboration among diverse stakeholders, such as local communities, CSOs/NGOs, the private sector, and transboundary committees, hence ensuring

that all parties work together towards inclusive and effective governance. Notably, convening diverse stakeholders will promote integrated governance approaches that consider diverse perspectives and needs, ensure a unified vision, and that policies are coherent and mutually supportive, whilst resolving conflicts and inconsistencies between different stakeholder groups. Finally, **Output 1.1.4** will strengthen the aforementioned integrated approach by establishing a national gender-responsive centre of excellence hub, dedicated to capacity building and monitoring biodiversity conservation, land use planning, and management. This hub will serve as a central resource for knowledge sharing and continuous improvement, thereby enhancing climate resilience and ensuring that gender-responsive strategies are consistently applied across all levels of policy and practice in the Greater Gola Landscape.

117. **Table 9** provides a summary of the project’s consistency and alignment with the national and regional priorities.

**Table 9: Consistency with National Priorities, Plans, and Policies**

National Priorities	Gola Landscape Project Consistency with the National Priorities
<b>Sierra Leone</b>	
<p><b>The Constitution of Sierra Leone</b></p> <p>The 1991 constitution of Sierra Leone is built on the Recognition and Protection of Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms of the Individual. It is guaranteed in section 21. (1) that “No property of any description shall be compulsorily taken possession of, and no interest in or right over property of any description shall be compulsorily acquired” except where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the taking of possession or acquisition is necessary in the interests of defence, public safety, public order, public morality, public health, town and country planning, and the development or utilization of any property in such a manner as to promote the public benefit or the public welfare of citizens of Sierra Leone.</li> </ol> <p>This includes the Land and its forest; thereby giving the owners through their Paramount Chiefs and the Landholding families their right over their property in consonance with the Nagoya Convention.</p> <p>However, the state has authority over natural resources according to Chapter 2, section 4 subsection 2(1) and has the right to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. harness all the natural resources of the nation to promote national prosperity and an efficient, dynamic and self-reliant economy.</li> </ol>	<p>The Project is designed to support collaborative management of natural resources and strengthen forest resources protection. This project values the people’s rights to their land and the plan is to work with them through the Government (both the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change and the Environment Protection Agency and related line ministries) to sustainably “harness the forest resources” of the Grater-Gola Forest, Kambui Hills and Tiwai Island “to promote national prosperity and an efficient, dynamic and self-reliant economy” that comes with associated Forest co-conservation benefits from tourism to forest Carbon credit.</p> <p>The government's commitment to addressing climate change will be manifested by this project (and the scores of others) which is in line with the Paris Agreement Climate Action of the SDG13.</p>



National Priorities	Gola Landscape Project Consistency with the National Priorities
<p><b>National Vision:</b>  The Medium-Term National Development Plan up to 2039 is geared towards:  The goal of achieve middle-income status by 2039 through “inclusive growth that is sustainable and leaves no one behind”.  There are four (4) key national goals that were identified after the series of nationwide consultative processes and grounded in the developmental state model – for the plan period.  Goal 1: A diversified, resilient green economy  Goal 2: A nation with educated, empowered, and healthy citizens capable of realizing their fullest potential  Goal 3: A society that is peaceful, cohesive, secure, and just  Goal 4: A competitive economy with a well-developed infrastructure</p>	<p>Conservation of the country’s forests and its associated Biodiversity and Ecosystems will enhance the country’s Green Growth where an increase in forest carbon and associated carbon credits will go to improve the life of the people as well as other benefit of tourism, and accompanying natural serenity that the forest provides.</p> <p>The project is a developmental initiative that will better the lives of the forest-edge communities and their chiefdoms through the development of community forests with associated economic forest trees like cocoa, coffee, oranges, cashew nuts etc. The provision of alternative livelihood and community infrastructures like schools and health centres are signs of community progress that are mostly absent in some of the forest communities.</p>
<p><b>National Policies and laws related to forestry resource management, including the conservation and management of Protected areas</b></p> <p><b>A. Forestry Act of 1998 as amended in 2022 Its accompanying 1988 Forestry Regulations,</b>  specified among others the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proper Management of classified forests.</li> <li>• The compilation of a Forest Inventory.</li> <li>• The provision of national forest management plans together with its “Area Forest management plans” and also designated “Special Protected Forest areas and Protected trees”</li> </ul> <p><b>B. The National Protected Area Authority and Conservation Trust Fund Act, 2012</b> was established provide and/or to promote</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. biodiversity conservation, wildlife management, research, to provide</li> <li>ii. for the sale of ecosystem services in the National Protected Areas</li> <li>iii. and to provide for other related matters.</li> </ol> <p><b>C. The Environment Protection Agency-SL Act of 2008</b> was set up to provide for the “effective protection of the environment and for other related matters”.  Key among them are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise the Minister on the formulation of policies on all aspects of the environment</li> </ul>	<p>A: The project will enhance the protection of specific forest areas of the Grater-Gola/Kambui Hills and the Tiwai Island thereby protecting specific national tree resources of interest some of which are endangered and unique to only Sierra Leone.</p> <p>B: The project will sustainably manage the project landscape and related target forests, biodiversity and ecosystem habitats.</p> <p>C: The project falls within the EPA mandate of protection and sustainable management of the country’s natural resources and monitors compliance with this provision for sound environmental standards. The EPA-SL coordination role will strengthen the enhancement of the project’s governance structure for smooth implementation.</p>

National Priorities	Gola Landscape Project Consistency with the National Priorities
<p>and in particular make recommendations for the protection of the environment;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate the activities of bodies concerned with the technical or practical aspects of the environment and serve as a channel of communication between such bodies and the Minister.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>National Policies and laws related to Wildlife management, including the management of Protected/wildlife conservation area</b></p> <p><b>A: The Environment Protection Act of 2008</b> works in collaboration with stakeholders to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• secure, in collaboration with such persons as it may determine the control and prevention of the discharge of waste into the environment and the protection and improvement of the quality of the environment;</li> <li>• issue environmental permits and pollution abatement notices for controlling the volume, types, constituents and effects of waste discharges, emissions, deposits or other sources of pollutants and substances which are hazardous or potentially dangerous to the quality of the environment or any segment of the environment;</li> <li>• ensure compliance with any laid down environmental impact assessment procedures in the planning and execution of development projects, including compliance with respect to existing projects;</li> <li>• act in liaison and cooperation with government agencies, local councils and other bodies and institutions to control pollution and generally protect the environment;</li> <li>• conduct investigations into environmental issues and advise the Minister thereon;</li> <li>• promote studies, research, surveys and analyses for the improvement and protection of the environment and the maintenance of a sound ecological system;</li> </ul> <p><b>B:</b> Sierra Leone is a signatory to the “Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)” and therefore</p>	<p><b>A:</b> The project provides for EPA as the executing agency and thus EPA-SL has the opportunity to implement its mandate and ensure that the project activities fall within the Act’s expectation of sustainable management of the environment. As a conservation project, it surely meets the required standard of sound environmental standards of EPA.</p> <p>Sierra Leone is a signatory to the protection of endangered species including plants and animals.</p> <p><b>B:</b> The project’s conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem restoration of some parts of the project will help the government of Sierra Leone in meeting its obligation of the above protection.</p>

National Priorities	Gola Landscape Project Consistency with the National Priorities
<p>helps to persecute people and organisations involved in the above trade.</p>	
<p><b>National Policies and laws related to environmental management</b></p> <p><b>The EPA-SL Act of 2008 which was amended in 2022 is backed by Sierra Leone Environmental Law in the document titled “Sierra Leone’s Environmental Laws: A Legal Framework”</b></p> <p>It requires the periodic production of the Agency’s Strategic and Action Plan and the documentation of the Agency’s benchmark achievement. The Policy mainly deals with the issues of monitoring and necessary actions for environmental violations and penalties for compliance.</p>	<p>The project will support the development of forest management plans in a consultative manner. The project itself was developed in a participatory manner in conformity with the EPA processes and was in cognizance of the EPA Act and Policies. The Agency sees the current project as enhancing its policy on environmental protection including biodiversity conservation.</p>
<p><b>National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP):</b></p> <p><b>The main aspect of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)</b> is that Sierra Leone’s “natural resources are managed effectively and sustainably for the benefit of the country’s biodiversity, people’s livelihoods, quality of life for all Sierra Leoneans and is a model for West Africa”.</p>	<p>This project is in compliance with the main aspect of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). This project is one of the means to achieve the aspirations of Sierra Leone with respect to sustainable management of natural resources and conservation of biodiversity for the benefit of the people.</p>
<p><b>Policies and laws on mining:</b></p> <p><b>A: The National Mineral Agency “administers and enforces the Mines and Minerals Act 2009, and other Acts related to the trade in minerals and related regulations and make recommendations to the government.</b></p> <p>As a regulator, it works in collaboration with EPA for the observance of the Agency’s environmental standards. They do not issue licenses for mining in Protected areas</p> <p><b>B: The November 2018 Artisanal Mining (AM) Policy for Sierra Leone</b></p> <p>The goal of this AM Policy is to set out a clear framework that will guide actions leading to the improvement of artisanal mining sector governance and management and promote alternative livelihood skills for miners, improve sustainable artisanal mining practices, enhance environmental protection, community and occupational health and safety safeguards, ensure that miners get a fair deal for their winnings; and strengthen linkages between artisanal mining and other sectors of the economy of Sierra Leone.</p> <p>The Mines and Minerals Act 2009 creates the legal framework for artisanal miners to operate. In</p>	<p>A: The project is designed to build EPA’s capacity for effective oversight and coordination of the environment management activities particularly the forests and associated landscapes. The project’s outputs and activities are targeted to improve the protection of forests as well as strengthen the coordination of natural resource management agencies.</p> <p>B: The project is to support forest inventories, and information collection to support forest management decision making including zonation of areas for various management approaches. They will thus in due course provide information as to why specific areas may not be suitable to include mining as an activity.</p>

National Priorities	Gola Landscape Project Consistency with the National Priorities
<p>addition, there are operational, social and environmental regulations that guide AM operations. Sierra Leone subscribes to international and regional conventions and standards that impact the AM operations. Despite existing legal and regulatory frameworks as well as international conventions and standards, insufficient attention has been given to regulatory oversight of artisanal mining in Sierra Leone.</p>	
<p><b>National Gender Policy and Laws:</b>  <b>Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act 2022</b>, Is an Act to address gender imbalances by making provision for increased appointment of women to decision-making positions and structures so as to achieve at least 30% representation, to provide for the promotion of gender equality in employment and training, to provide for the implementation of gender mainstreaming</p>	<p>The project's Gender Management Plan and the focus on gender considerations and representation is in line with the 2022 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act of the country. The project will address the issues of low women participation both in terms of development and representation.</p>
<p><b>REDD+ Strategy and Action Plan:</b>  <b>A: REDD+ Strategy and Action Plan</b> is a National Climate Change Mitigation Strategy for Sierra Leone that advises the GOSL on the implementation of REDD+ on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Forest carbon credits otherwise known as REDD (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation in Developing Countries) is the foundation of the strategy and main tool with which the climate change abatement economy will be accomplished.</li> <li>2. The government of Sierra Leone must set up an anti-deforestation task force that must vigorously work to control illegal logging and other drivers of deforestation to achieve a sustainable outcome of the ongoing ban on timber logging and export.</li> </ol> <p><b>B: The Vision for Sierra Leone's REDD+ Programme is for Sierra Leone</b> to have 2.5 million hectares of forest lands developed and managed, within the next 10 years, for climate change abatement activities including carbon, non-timber forest products, sustainable tree crops and ecotourism.</p>	<p>A: The Project design with respect to support for forest conservation is in line with the country's REDD+ strategy and actions. It will promote a process towards a subsequent inclusion of the Kambui Hills and Tiwai Island wildlife sanctuary into the REDD+ programme for the generation of the necessary carbon credits that the community can benefit from.</p> <p>B: The project's target of the restoration of over 17,000 hectares of forest will contribute to the country's progress towards meeting the REDD+ goal of 2.5 million hectares.</p>
<p><b>Nationally Determined Commitments (NDCs):</b>  <b>The Paris Agreement (Article 4, paragraph 2) in 2015 required each "Party to prepare, communicate and maintain successive Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) that it intends to achieve" in meeting the Global</b></p>	<p>The Project is a climate change mitigation project that hopes to harness the forest carbon sink in line with the country's climate actions as proposed in the mid-term development plan as well as contribute to targets set in the country's NDC.</p>

National Priorities	Gola Landscape Project Consistency with the National Priorities
<p><b>Emission reduction goal. Parties shall pursue domestic mitigation measures, with the aim of achieving the objectives of such contributions</b></p> <p>The updated or Second Nationally Determined contribution (NDC2) version is consistent with Sierra Leone's Medium-Term Development Plan (2019-2023) and National Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, represents Sierra Leone's commitment and a road map to address climate change and greenhouse gas emissions threats, in compliance with the goals of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Paris</p>	
<b>Regional Integration</b>	
<p><b>ECOWAS Environmental Policy and Action Plan: ECOWAS adopted a Common Environmental Policy (ECOWEP) in 2008</b> and developed an Environmental Action Plan (EAP) for the period 2008-2014 to implement this policy. Scientific studies have highlighted the impact of climate change on West African economies due to their strong reliance on the primary production sectors (agriculture, fishing, livestock production, and forestry resources) which in itself is very vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.</p>	<p>The support for forest restoration including the planting of economic trees in the project landscape community forests is in line with boosting ECOWAS' agricultural development plans, and the approach will also be addressing the current climate change challenges.</p>
<p><b>Convergence Plan for the Sustainable Management and Utilization of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa</b>, (adopted in 2013 by 15 member states): provides opportunities for regional engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance and Policy Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Multi-stakeholder platform for decision-support, policy reforms and alignment</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Innovative finance for priority actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Blended finance, leveraging climate finance, Nature-positive financing</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Knowledge Management and Learning Tools and practices, scaling actions, south-south exchange.</li> </ul>	<p>The project design includes a component on enhancing transboundary natural resources management and thus promoting lesson sharing and improving sustainable management and utilization of shared forest resources.</p>
<p><b>African Convention on Nature and Natural Resources:</b> African Convention on Nature and Natural Resources headed by H.E. Mr. Paul Kagame,</p>	<p>This project contributes to and will enhance the conservation drive of the African Convention on Nature and Natural Resources and ensure better protection and</p>

National Priorities	Gola Landscape Project Consistency with the National Priorities
<p>President of the Republic of Rwanda, was established to lead the AU institutional reforms process with a pan-African committee of experts to review who submitted proposals for a system of governance for the AU that would ensure the Organisation better placement to address the continent's challenges by implementing programmes that have the highest impact on Africa's growth and development for it to deliver on the vision of Agenda 2063.</p> <p>The studies led to the "African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources" sighted among others the "management of wildlife populations inside designated areas according to the objectives of such areas and also manage exploitable wildlife populations outside such areas for an optimum sustained yield, compatible with and complementary to other land uses.</p>	<p>management of the landscape ecosystem and biodiversity.</p>
<p><b>AFR100:</b> AFR100 (the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative) is a country-led effort to bring 100 million hectares of land in Africa into restoration by 2030. This was domesticated in the "Vision for Sierra Leone's REDD+ Programme" as already stated above</p>	<p>The restoration of 10,000 Ha by the project will highly complement this AFR100 drive.</p>
<p><b>Mano River Declaration (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone):</b> <b>The Mano River Union (MRU)</b> is an international association initially established between Liberia and Sierra Leone by 3 October 1973 known as the Mano River Declaration. Guinea joined shortly after the declaration and later Ivory Coast. Among others, it hopes to secure a fair distribution of the benefits from economic cooperation.</p>	<p>The project's transboundary management approaches and collaboration (particularly with respect to the Gola Forest National Park) will foster the tourism economy cooperation and the necessary experience sharing through lessons that will be learnt from the other three national child projects and member states.</p>
<p><b>Forest Stewardship Council Standards for Forest Certification:</b> <b>Forest Stewardship Council Standards for Forest Certification</b> is a Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC Certification). The Forest Stewardship Certification (FSC) is an international non-profit organization that guarantees to your customers that FSC-certified products have come from a forest supply chain that has been managed responsibly. The FSC trademark allows consumers throughout the world to recognize products that support the growth of responsible forest management.</p>	<p>This project is designed to include forest certification capacity building and will build on what the Gola Forest and Community Forest of the Forest-edge Communities were able to achieve towards FSC certification by gradually extending it to the Kambui hills and the Tiwai Island wildlife sanctuary.</p>



## Innovation

### Technical Training

118. The Project will undertake innovative training designed to build the technical capacity of stakeholders in various aspects of forestry, land use planning, and natural resources management, including advanced techniques in forest inventories and zonation. These trainings will leverage cutting-edge technologies and methodologies to enhance efficiency and accuracy in resource management.

### Fostering landscape connectivity through the project's interventions

119. With a clear objective to maintain forest cover across the Landscapes (and thus beyond PAs) and with the critical importance, from a long-term conservation perspective, to maintain good connectivity, this project contributes to ensuring connectivity of the PAs by building on the IWRM project to prevent further loss of forest and restore forest connectivity. Noting that surrounding communities benefit from significant tourism activities in Tiwai, which itself almost entirely relies on the long-term survival of primates and pygmy hippos, the approach to ensure maintaining connectivity is an appreciable innovation approach. The use of nature-positive solutions to address land degradation has been proposed and the major innovation is the targeting of a buffer area for connectivity of the protected areas. Under the GEF-funded MRU/IUCN IWRM project (GEF ID: 4953) a buffer of 5km around a PA was found to be reasonable to promote protection of the PA. This has been adopted and will be a focus to ensure connectivity of Kambui, Tiwai and Gola. Over the past years, support was provided to Gola RFNP to improve protected area management effectiveness and generate carbon sales. This approach of connectivity will improve the sustainability of the landscape forests. This work can be scaled up progressively and transform the entire landscape if there is access to greater and more flexible funding to make it possible for the managers of the forest reserves to innovate and incur the risks of SLM support to new sites. In close collaboration with Guinean Forests child projects, sharing on the application of nature-based solutions can be scaled up, emphasis will be placed on creating and demonstrating the value of community involvement in protected area management and biodiversity conservation and how improved land productivity can impact conservation of PAs and inform decision-making and policy formulation.

### Sierra Leone's participation in relevant Learning and Knowledge-Sharing Events/Forums at National, Regional and Global Levels

120. Sierra Leone will actively participate in learning and knowledge-sharing events organized by the GEF-Funded Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project. Furthermore, Conservation International (CI), through the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project, will coordinate with Lead Agencies of selected GEF-Funded Integrated Programs (IP) such as the Critical Forests IPs, planetGOLD IP, and the Ecosystem Restoration IP. This coordination will ensure that the Guinean Forests Child Projects, including Sierra Leone, engage in these platforms, hence learning and sharing with countries from other regions located in Critical Forest Biomes. These integrated programs offer a dynamic multi-stakeholder environment where countries can share lessons, learn from biodiversity experts, and understand the national commitments of other countries regarding financing, Sustainable Forest Management (SFM), and Sustainable Land Management (SLM) for biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation and adaptation. This collaborative and innovative approach fosters continuous learning and improvement, enhancing the overall effectiveness and sustainability of forest management efforts at various levels.

*Representation of marginalized and vulnerable groups from Sierra Leone in events organized by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project (RCP) and other Critical Forests IPs (sponsored by the Guinean Forests RCP):*

121. The Guinean Forests Child Project Countries, including Sierra Leone, will nominate representatives from their country's marginalized and vulnerable groups to participate in learning and knowledge-sharing events. Sponsored by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project, these representatives will benefit from inclusive decision-making processes that consider the perspectives and needs of all community segments, leading to more equitable policies and initiatives. This participation will empower local communities by giving them a voice in decisions affecting their lives, enhance social cohesion by bridging gaps between different groups, and build capacity through new skills, knowledge, and networks. It will also ensure that proposed project interventions are sustainable by incorporating the input of all key stakeholders.

*Operationalization of a National Gender-Responsive Centre of Excellence Hub:*

122. A national gender-responsive centre of excellence hub for capacity building and monitoring biodiversity conservation, land use planning, and management for enhanced climate resilience will be operationalized by the project. This hub will serve as an innovative platform for continuous learning and capacity building, supporting gender equality and effective resource management across Sierra Leone, including the Gola Landscape.

*Deployment of Innovative Nature-Based Solutions:*

123. The project will deploy innovative and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that support sustainable forest management. These enterprises will ensure gender equality in participation, access, and benefits, promoting sustainable and equitable solutions to environmental challenges.

*Promoting Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues at the National, Local, and Transboundary Levels through leveraging diverse platforms as follows:*

- a. The Sierra Leone Guinean Forests Child Project will innovate by strengthening the coordination and collaboration of state and non-state actors in forestry and natural resources management through the **establishment and operationalization of a stakeholder coordination mechanism to support inclusive, gender-responsive governance of the Greater Gola Forest landscape.** This coordination mechanism will be composed of at least 30% women and 70% men, ensuring representation from local communities, marginalized, and vulnerable groups and collaboration with the Gola Transboundary Committee.
- b. Building on the precedent set by the GEF-funded Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project (GEF ID: 4953), which established interministerial, national, and community-level committees in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone for the management of the Mano River Basin. With support from the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project (RCP) and the EU-funded NaturAfrica Program (2021-2027), the **three Guinean Forests Child Projects (Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone) will reactivate these committees and institutionalize them at the Mano River Union (MRU) and where possible, within relevant Government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs).** The institutionalization process will engage the MRU, local communities, local governments, and national governments to ensure broad-based acceptance and adherence to agreed-upon structures and

operational modalities, enhancing multi-stakeholder dialogue, coordination, and collaboration. This approach will potentially unlock financing and ensure sustainable governance of the Mano watershed.

- c. The project will leverage the **Sierra Leone Gola Forest Transboundary Committee** to facilitate ongoing engagement and cooperation among national and local stakeholders. This committee will serve as a platform for local communities, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations to share insights, address concerns, and coordinate conservation activities. This continuous engagement fosters a cohesive approach to managing the Gola Forest, enhancing collaboration and innovation in conservation efforts.
- d. Through this project, **Sierra Leone will facilitate the elevation of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve to a National Park through a multi-stakeholder engagement with the Forestry Department working closely with the NPAA.** Rather than each institution operating separately, some of the project funds will be utilized to build the capacity for sectors to engage more proactively under the overall guidance of the EPA and this will create an environment for future collaboration. The establishment of a Centre of Excellence hub at EPA as an information centre is an innovation since biodiversity conservation and climate change are cross-sectoral issues. The centre will have the ability to integrate data sets from various sources including external ones.

## Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Projects

### Global and Regional Initiatives

<p><b>Amazon, Congo and Critical Forests Integrated Program</b></p> <p>This project is anchored on the <u>GEF-8 Amazon, Congo and Critical Forests Integrated Program</u> whose goal is to <i>“maintain the integrity of the globally important critical tropical forests in order to maximize multiple global environment benefits related to carbon and biodiversity”</i>.</p> <p>The Sierra Leone Child Project's objective and interventions are designed to align with the <b>Guinean Forests Integrated Program's</b> interventions with the expectation that the successful delivery of the project will contribute to the Program's target outcomes/results. On this basis, per the Program's objective and targets, the interventions under the Sierra Leone Project will promote effective governance of the Gola Forest which is part of the Guinean Forests of West Africa. Notably, the Guinean Forests RCP will support its child projects to coordinate and collaborate with the 4 other Critical Forests IPs under this Program, namely, Congo Basin IP, Amazon, IP, Indo-Malay IP, and Meso-America IP</p>
<p><b>The Bonn Challenge</b></p> <p>Objective - a global effort to restore 150 million hectares of degraded land by 2020, and a further 200 million hectares by 2030</p>
<p><b>The African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100)</b></p> <p>Objective: to restore 100 million hectares by 2030.</p> <p>Area of focus to address environmental issues: Climate change mitigation through forest restoration and tree planting on agricultural lands.</p> <p>Important achievements, lessons, gaps and to build on: The issue of collaboration with other initiatives was seen as essential that the project would pursue. This project can benefit from collaborating with existing AFR 100 structures to implement land restoration initiatives in the project focus area.</p>
<p><b>Title of Program: NaturAfrica Program</b></p> <p><b>NaturAfrica</b>, funded by the EU, is a 6-year (2021-2027) €310 million initiative to support biodiversity conservation in Africa by structuring support around landscapes that are crucial for conservation and human development. The Guinean Forests biome is identified as a priority “mega-landscape,” and the regional coordination unit is</p>

scheduled to commence in late 2023, with work in the 11 landscapes to begin in 2024. With support from the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project (RCP) and the EU-funded NaturAfrica Program, the **three Guinean Forests Child Projects (Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone) will reactivate the committees that were established under the IWRM Project (GEF ID: 4953).**

**Title of Project: Mano River Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project**

The Project was implemented by IUCN, with The Mano River Union (MRU) as the executing agency. MRU is an intergovernmental organization established in 1973 between Sierra Leone and Liberia and later joined by Guinea (1980) and Côte d'Ivoire (2008) and takes its name from River Mano, which runs along the border between Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Objectives: Sustainable management of forest and water resources in the Upper Guinea forest ecosystem

Area of focus to address environmental issues: Biodiversity, International Waters and Land Degradation

Geographical scope: Regional/Multi-country: Mano River Union area (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone)

Donor: GEF

Duration: January 2017 – December 2020 (5 years)

Project Status and Lessons Learned: The Project developed a Strategic Action Programme to address problems that threaten the health and productivity of four transboundary forests including Protected Areas and four Transboundary River Basins. The long-term environmental quality objective 3 deals with restoring and conserving the ecological integrity and the sustainable management of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems in the MRU basins.

Estimated Budget: 6,970,000

**Title of Project: Support programme for the preservation of forest ecosystems in West Africa (PAPFor)**

Objectives: aims to promote an endogenous, sustainable and inclusive development of West African forest areas, responding to the challenges of climate change and the maintenance of biodiversity. The specific objective was to effectively and efficiently protect biodiversity and priority forest ecosystems in West Africa, contributing to climate change resilience and food and water security.

Area of focus to address environmental issues: Biodiversity, land degradation.

Geographical scope: Six transboundary forest landscapes in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria. In August 2020, the Project was rolled out in Sierra Leone and Liberia to conserve the Gola Forest.

In Sierra Leone, the three-year programme is being implemented by the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL), a Birdlife Partner and the Gola Rainforest Company Limited by Guarantee (GRC-LG). The main geographic area is Gola Rainforest National Park and the associated communities, especially the Gaura Chiefdom.

Donor: European Union (EU), through the 11th European Development Fund, under the supervision of CEDEAO (ECOWAS) and UEMOA, representing the beneficiary countries

Duration: 5 years (2019-2024); Estimated Budget: 20 million Euros.

Project Status and lessons learnt:

- Provided technical support to the management structures, including training materials and equipment for patrols, biomonitoring and law enforcement.
- Supported biodiversity monitoring (bio-monitoring) - the program promoted the use of standardized tools for monitoring management effectiveness such as IMET or METT. Training on the Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool, SMART Mobile and camera traps for Biomonitoring was conducted.
- Supported the development of management plans to ensure that each protected area is equipped with a plan developed with the participation of all stakeholders.
- Facilitated the involvement of local communities in the management of protected areas – e.g. through recruitment, training and deploying community eco-guards in patrol monitoring activities. CSSL reached out to engage with communities, produced radio programmes for community radio stations, and trained community and traditional leaders as educators to influence the behaviour of community members and raise awareness and knowledge regarding conservation best practices.

- By working with the Ministry of the Environment and Gola Rainforest Company Limited by Guarantee (GRC-LG), they arranged to set up and run seven Community Forests and exercises in Land Use Planning and Mapping in the entire GRNP landscape.

It is understood from project reports that rural populations within the Gola landscape are growing significantly, placing more pressure on the Gola rainforest block. Mining and logging interests as well as illegal hunting have also increased in the area and present major challenges for the future of the landscape. The project proposes the rearing of breeding Cane rats and cattle in order to stop the hunting of wild animals because if the forest edge communities are capacitated in this economic livelihood, they will help the Forest Management to control the hunting. This may be an activity to replicate in this project.

**Title of Project: West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change (WABICC) Transboundary projects.**

Objectives: To improve conservation and climate-resilient, low-emissions growth across West Africa

Area of focus to address environmental issues: It is understood that this grant helped to expand on and complement an ongoing EU-funded transboundary project PAPFor project, to conserve biodiversity and reduce the threats in the OKMO landscape. It also helped to mitigate climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and deforestation and increasing forest landscape restoration.

Geographical scope: Regional - West Africa

Donor: United States Agency for International Aid (USAID)

Duration: 2015-2021; Estimated Budget: USD 53.75 million

Project Status and lessons learnt: The project supported improved forest protection in the region. The conservation and restoration of forests hosting biodiversity at the regional level also helped to increase regional collaboration and engagement.

**Title of Project: West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development (WABILED) programs**

Objectives: Conserve the unique biodiversity of the 300,000-ha Transboundary Peace Park of Sierra Leone and Liberia and sustainably manage the remaining natural forests surrounding the Park. Specifically, the project aims at combating wildlife trafficking and enhancing great ape conservation; reducing deforestation, forest degradation, and biodiversity loss in key transboundary forest landscapes; reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing carbon sequestration from forestry and land use.

Area of focus to address environmental issues: Biodiversity conservation

Geographical scope: The grant will be implemented within the 350,000-hectare Greater Gola transboundary forest landscape, which spans the Sierra Leone/Liberia border and is part of the largest remaining blocks of the once extensive Upper Guinean Forest Ecosystem. Project partners working in communities and relevant government agencies have supported the establishment and protection of four protected areas (PAs) within the landscape: Gola Rainforest National Park (GRNP), Gola Forest National Park (GFNP), Foya Proposed Protected Area (FFPA: gazettelement in progress) and Kambui Hills Forest Reserve (KHFR), as well as legally recognized community forests

Donor: USAID; Duration: March 1, 2023 – April 30, 2025

Project Status and lessons learnt:

1. Facilitate the adoption of grid-based patrolling and SMART mobile technology by all rangers/eco-guards patrolling the target landscapes to identify illegal activity and monitor priority species. Additionally, staff from partners and sub-grantees will download patrol data, generate reports and manage other landscape data to inform patrol deployment.
2. Establish a specialist bio-monitoring team from SCNL and a team of trained eco-guards who have the capacity to use camera trap technology to investigate the movement and behaviour of biodiversity in the landscape. Furthermore, TIWS eco-guards will have the capacity to use higher specification camera traps to better support ecotourism, and SMART mobile technology to inform monitoring of illegal activities.
3. Adopt and implement priority actions of two pilot community land use plans (LUP)/forest management plans (FMP), one in Sierra Leone and the other in Liberia.

4. Implement priority action points from the GRNP-GFNP Transboundary Peace Park Agreement.

**Title of Project: The Gola REDD Project.**

The project is implemented by Gola Rainforest Conservation Company Limited by Guarantee (GRCLG), a non-profit organization formed by 3 partners: the Government of Sierra Leone, represented by the Ministry of Environment, the Conservation Society for Sierra Leone (CSSL) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB).

**Objectives** The Project is registered with the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) Program and the CCBA (Climate, Community and Biodiversity Alliance). The Project Proponent is the Gola Rainforest Company – Limited by Guarantee, and the implementing Partner is the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), which is a member of the GRC-LG.

Area of focus to address environmental issues: Gola Rainforest National Park

Geographical scope: Gola Rainforest National Park, in southeast Sierra Leone.

Duration: 2012 – 2042; Estimated Budget: 926,739

Project Status and lessons learned: On-going. The crediting period is renewable after every 10 years. The current crediting period is 2019 – 2028

- The project has contributed to the effective management of GRNP - conserving more than 70,000 hectares of rainforest;
- Supported the livelihoods of 122 forest edge communities, consisting of approximately 24,000 people.

**Title of Project: Restoring Livelihoods and Landscapes in the Forest-Buffer Communities in the Outamba-Kilimi-Madina-Oula Landscapes.**

**Objectives:** The project was to establish a demonstration nursery to serve as an incubator and learning centre in the OKMO landscape. Promote sustainable management practices for forest and agroforestry plantations in degraded areas.

Undertake forest landscape restoration through tree plantations and natural ecological regeneration.

Sensitize communities on the importance of maintaining biodiversity and how to effectively coexist with native flora and fauna, and, Facilitate market access for non-timber products.

Area of focus to address environmental issues: The project tackled charcoal production, legal and illegal logging, poaching, and support to agriculture which are major causes of deforestation and forest degradation in Guinea and Sierra Leone. These activities lead to biodiversity loss, soil erosion, and the overall depletion of natural resources. By addressing these issues, the project was enhancing the protection of the forest biodiversity resources.

**Geographical scope:** The Soyah Penselli and Sabouyah Forest Reserves, located within the Madina-Oula landscape in Guinea, and the Kuru Hills Forest Reserve, situated within the Outamba-Kilimi National Park in Sierra Leone

**Donor:** European Cooperative for Rural Development (EUCORD) Duration: On-going.

Project Status and lessons learnt: Dealing with charcoal production, legal and illegal logging, poaching, and support to agriculture that are major causes of deforestation and forest degradation may protection of the forest biodiversity resources and could be replicated by this project.

**Title of Project: Building Capacity to Monitor Forest Vegetation and Carbon Change in the Upper Guinea Forest**

**Objectives:**

1. Develop the capacity of forestry, national park service, university staff, and students in long-term forest monitoring and train same in data archiving in international databases.
2. Quantify tree biodiversity, carbon stocks, and resource use by local communities along a disturbance gradient in four forest landscapes.



3. Use tree inventory data and focus group discussions to identify the status of tree species red-listed by the CITES and IUCN, the degree to which they are used by local communities, and the effect of resource use on the species' population structure.

4. Develop a simple learning and decision-making tool and disseminate it to stakeholders along with results; and make data accessible to others contributing to broader studies of West African forests.

Area of focus to address environmental issues: The focus is to increase the capacity of institutions both at the national and local level across the remnant Upper Guinean Forest Ecosystem to combine ground and remote sensing data to track forest degradation and plan accordingly.

Geographical scope: It is a Research Project that focuses on study work in four transboundary forest landscapes including protected areas across the four Mano River Union (MRU) Member States (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Côte d'Ivoire) targeting key transboundary biodiversity hotspots, namely Gola National Parks between Liberia and Sierra Leone, Tai-Grebo-Krahn-Sapo between Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, Zياما Wonegizi-Wologizi between Liberia and Guinea, and Outamba- Kilimi-Madina-Oula between Sierra Leone and Guinea.

Donor: USAID; Duration: September 1, 2022 - November 30, 2024

Project Status and Lessons learnt: The major lesson is that research may be utilized to enhance regional collaboration and promote transboundary natural resources management. That aspect may be replicated under this project.

**The GEF-funded Global Opportunities for Long-term Development of Artisanal Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM) Sector Plus (planetGOLD) program** seeks to reduce the use of mercury in the ASGM sector in participating countries by facilitating access to finance for artisanal miners and mining communities to introduce low and non-mercury technologies and techniques, and through the development of sustainable ASGM gold supply chains. Mercury use in the ASGM sector contributes to environmental degradation in the West Africa region. **Within the region, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, and Sierra Leone** are participating in the planetGOLD program, seeking to formalize the ASGM sector and stimulate the adoption of improved practices and elimination of mercury use, presenting opportunities for coordination with GFIP through the RCP to avoid duplication of effort and seek synergies in addressing this threat to forest ecosystems. The Guinean Forests RCP will explore opportunities for Child Projects to participate in planetGOLD learning and dissemination events.

**The project also will build on the current GEF-funded Food Systems, Land Use, and Restoration Impact Program (FOLUR).** This \$345 million, seven-year (~2020-2027) global IP (GEF-7) is led by the World Bank, intended to transform food and land use systems to the benefit of human well-being and biodiversity and other ecosystem services. FOLUR works in 27 countries; **in West Africa, these include Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, and Liberia**, providing a relevant foundation of critical learning and prior work both in the field and on policy, including capacity building, greening commodity value chains (esp. palm oil and cocoa), strengthening of community governance and cooperatives, and spatial land use planning. The Global Component of FOLUR has three pillars focused on capacity strengthening, policy and value chain engagement, and knowledge management and communications. As needed, the Guinean Forests RCP will support child projects to engage with the FOLUR Program

## National Initiatives

There are some initiatives specifically at the national level in the project participating countries and they are presented in **Table 10**.

**Table 10: Baseline initiatives at the national level in the project's participating countries**

National initiatives in Project countries			
Project/Initiative	Objectives and Thematic Focus for addressing environment issues	Geographical Scope and Status	Source of Funds and Budget amount (USD)
Ministry of Environment, Forestry Department and EPA-SL, two Million Tree planting initiatives across Sierra Leone	To replant some of the areas that have been deforested	Nation-wide: undertaken in collaboration with various CSOs/CBOs that were used in selected chiefdoms at District Levels in the country.	Funds from the Sierra Leone Government budget to the tune of USD 450,000
"The Sensitisation, Public Awareness and Education to Address the Destruction of the Gola Forest for the Sustainable Management of the Forest through the Provision of Alternative Livelihood and Proper Enhancement of Necessary Bye-Laws for Protection of the Forest Ecosystem and Biodiversity" project	Work with communities to put in place mechanisms to address the destruction of Forests and wildlife through the formulation of necessary bylaws that can be implemented at the chiefdom level.	Seven Chiefdoms make up the Gola Forest National Park buffer areas	The Small Grant Programme of GEF for Non-State Actors USD 300,000 Some 10 CSOs participated with at least USD 30,000 per CSO per chiefdom.

## Institutional Arrangement and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Projects

124. **Project duration is 62 months:** 6 months implementation set up; Actual project execution 48 months; 8 months Terminal Evaluation and closeout.

### A. Execution Arrangements and Partners

#### Implementing Agency (IA):

125. Conservation International is the GEF Implementing Agency (CI-GEF) of this project. The overall role of the CI-GEF Implementing Agency includes technical and financial project oversight and supervision, assuring compliance of the project with GEF policies and procedures as well as monitoring and evaluation of the project activities. Finally, CI-GEF will make recommendations to optimize project performance and will arbitrate and ensure the resolution of any execution conflicts. Specifically, CI-GEF will undertake the following tasks:

- Facilitate interactions with the GEF.
- Coordinate the Sierra Leone Child Project with the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project. This also entails ensuring that the Sierra Child Project participates in events organized by CI through the Guinean Regional Coordination Project (RCP).
- Coordinate and manage the relationship between the Sierra Leone Child Project and other key GEF-funded Integrated Programs (IPs) such as the Congo Basin IP, Indo-Malay IP, Meso-America IP, Amazon IP, Ecosystem Restoration IP, planet GOLD IP among others. This also entails ensuring that the Sierra Leone Child project participates in events organized by relevant IPs, especially the critical forests IPs.
- Provide technical and financial oversight to the Executing Agency (EPA)
- Oversee and monitor implementation of the project including reviewing quarterly technical and financial project reports, undertaking annual project site visits, and monitoring the implementation of and compliance with safeguards.
- Ensure that project management practices (technical, financial, and administration) comply with GEF requirements.
- Monitor the project's implementation and achievement of the project outputs, ensure proper use of GEF funds
- Review and approve procurement plans, budgets, and work plans.
- Quality assurance including ensuring that audits are undertaken by external auditors –
- Oversee preparation of the annual Project Implementation Report (PIR) for submission to GEFSEC.
- Commission Mid-term and Terminal project evaluations.

#### Executing Agency

126. **The Sierra Leone Environment Protection Agency (EPA-SL)** will oversee project execution, with CI-GEF providing oversight. The National Protected Areas Authority (NPAA) and the Forestry Division (FD) of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC) will co-execute, focusing on protected area activities and guidance. **The EPA, supported by NPAA and FD, will lead project implementation, provide daily guidance, and host the Project Management Unit (PMU) in its regional office located in Kenema.** Additionally, the EPA will manage execution, administration, and monitoring, facilitate knowledge sharing, and coordinate stakeholders. Lastly, overall, the EPA will be accountable to CI-GEF for timely project results, reporting, and effective use of GEF resources per policy requirements. The summarized tasks of the Executing Agency (EPA) include:

- Host and manage the Project Management Unit (PMU) including the provision of technical input across components and guidance on operations.
- With guidance from CI-GEF, the EA will be accountable for the day-to-day project management and overall guidance of the project.
- The EA will guide overall project coordination and ensure that key executing partners and service providers deliver efficiently and effectively.
- Ensure Sierra Leone is represented in events organized by CI under the Guinean Forests Integrated Program, as well as other important events including those organized by other GEF Integrated Programs
- The EA will chair the Project Steering Committee (PSC).
- Guide the preparation of procurement plans.
- Guide the preparation of the Terms of reference and procurement packages, obtaining approvals from CI-GEF and internally as required.
- Maintenance of records of all project-related documentation
- Guide the preparation and dissemination of knowledge management products.
- Amplify stakeholder engagement, learning, and knowledge sharing, and support executing partners as well as the Gola Transboundary Committee to convene meetings/workshops.
- Establish granting policies and processes to subsequently manage pass-through funds via partner agreements, work plans and financial reporting to ensure their compliance with the ESMF framework, GFMS, and other GEF requirements
- Ensure that all named and unnamed sub-grantees undergo capacity assessments and mitigation measures are added. Award to each grantee is conditional upon the assessment and negotiation of agreements with all the necessary GEF and CIGEF flow-down requirements.
- Provide financial documentation as requested by CI-GEF
- Provide financial and technical reports to CI-GEF
- Monitoring and evaluation of project interventions.
- Effective use of GEF resources.

#### The Project Management Unit (PMU)

127. A **Project Management Unit (PMU)** will be recruited by the EPA, with support from CI, the NPAA, and the FD. The PMU will be hosted at EPA's regional office in Kenema, in the vicinity of the project target areas. The PMU will consist of three staff and the composition will include:

- a) Project Manager
- b) Finance and Grants Officer

128. The PMU will coordinate directly as needed with the CI-GEF Agency and will report to the EPA. Additionally, the PMU will work closely with executing partners, external sub-grantees, and service providers. Overall, the PMU will supervise, monitor progress, and coordinate and support the executing partners and service providers as needed to ensure efficient and effective delivery of the project's target results.

129. As needed, consultants will be hired to provide technical assistance for specific tasks requiring expertise that cannot be undertaken by the Project staff and the executing partners identified at the PPG Phase. **International service providers and organizations will only be recruited where national capacities are insufficient.** The specific roles of the PMU include:

- Secretariat for the Project Steering Committee (PSC) – Vice Chair and Rapporteur
- Procurement of all services, goods, and equipment
- Handling and safeguarding of the equipment.
- Financial management, disbursements, reporting and record-keeping.
- Project technical guidance, monitoring and reporting.
- Preparation and submission of all technical and financial reports.
- Monitoring and reporting the materialization of
  - to CI-GEF.
- Actively coordinate the flow of inputs, procurement, outputs, and work streams to ensure the project runs smoothly and delivers the specified outputs and overall objectives.
- Organizing and facilitating workshops and travel.
- Identification of potential risks to project activities and implementation of mitigation measures to overcome them.
- Knowledge Management.
- Setting up, monitoring, and reporting implementation progress of environmental and social safeguards.
- Ensuring the smooth running of the project through continuous monitoring, coordination, and communication among partners, consultants, stakeholders, etc.
- Assisting in organizing and reporting on the Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings.
- Maintenance of records of all project-related documentation
- Liaise with stakeholders to prepare and disseminate knowledge management products.
- Share project progress with the Sierra Leone GEF Operational Focal Point (OFP) e.g., via email, a copy of the bi-annual published reports and policy briefs detailing lessons learned, best case practices, challenges, and opportunities.
- Ensure Sierra Leone is represented in events organized by CI under the Guinean Forests Integrated Program, as well as other important events including those organized by other GEF Integrated Programs

#### Technical Support Team

In addition to the PMU, the project team will include a **technical support team** comprising:

- a. Environmental, Social Safeguards and Gender Officer
- b. Biodiversity Conservation Specialist
- c. Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
- d. Communication Officer (part-time)
- e. Driver (This position is co-financed fully by the EPA)

130. Detailed Terms of Reference (ToRs) for staff positions charging to Components and Project Management Costs (PMCs) are provided in **Appendix N**.

#### The National Project Steering Committee (PSC)

**Role of the PSC:** Overall strategic guidance to the project

**Frequency of meetings:** Annually/As needed (in-person)

- EPA – Chair
- Vice Chair – Rotational either NPAA or FD
- Rapporteur – EPA (PMU)

131. The Gola Landscape Project **National Project Steering Committee (PSC)** will play a key oversight role in guiding the project and ensuring successful execution. The PSC will provide continuous ad-hoc oversight and feedback on project activities and respond to inquiries or requests for approval from the Project Management Unit or Executing Agency. The PSC will comprise technical persons from relevant government sectors, Executing partners, CI, representatives from the private sector, the Gola Transboundary Committee, civil society, academia, district authorities and local communities/chiefdoms. For example, the GEF operational focal point, representatives from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, National Protected Area Authority, Forest Department of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Ministry of Gender, the Gola Transboundary Committee, EFA, CSSL, GRC-LG, representative of the paramount chiefs among others. At least 30% of the members of the team will be women. The Sierra Leone UN CBD Focal point, based at the EPA is the proposed chairperson of the National Project Steering Committee.

### **The Project Technical Coordination Team (PTCT)**

**Role of the PTCT:** Technical review, guidance and harmonization of the project

**Frequency of meetings:** Quarterly/As needed (virtual and in-person)

- EPA – Chair
- Vice Chair – Rotational either NPAA or FD
- Rapporteur – EPA (PMU)

132. A Technical Coordination Team will be established, composed mainly of the executing Partners, to periodically review and provide technical guidance on the implementation of planned activities. CI will participate on a needs basis. The Technical Coordination team will provide day-to-day overall guidance and coordination to the Project staff for the implementation of activities at the national and sub-national levels. At least 30% of the members of the team will be women. The Team will meet physically at least twice a year, with virtual meetings arranged as often as may be required to address urgent issues.

### **GEF Operation Focal Point (OFP)**

133. The GEF Operational Focal Point (OFP) is the government official who is the principal point of contact for GEF-funded activities in their respective country, in this case, Sierra Leone. The OFP also serves as the country's main contact point for the GEF Secretariat, GEF Agencies and stakeholders. Per the GEF guidelines, OFPs need to be informed, involved and consulted throughout the lifecycle of a GEF project including receiving updates on the details of project implementation, results and impacts. The Sierra Leone Child project will coordinate and involve the Sierra Leone OFP as follows:

- Invite the OFP to participate in the Project Steering Committee Meetings.
- Inform and consult the OFP about the planning, execution, and findings of the Mid-Term and Terminal Evaluation of the Project.
- Project Monitoring and Evaluation reports will be shared with the Sierra Leone OFP e.g., PIR, Project Mid-Term Evaluation Report, and Project Terminal Evaluation Report.
- Selected knowledge management products will be shared with the Sierra Leone OFP

## **Project Executing Partners:**

134. **The National Protected Area Authority (NPAA)** is a Government Agency with the mandate to manage protected areas (National Parks) in Sierra Leone and has had a long presence in the Gola Landscape as the major management agency for the Gola Rainforest National Park. Their experience in the REDD+ process will be valuable for peer capacity building of the Forest Division. The NPAA currently manages the Gola Forest National Park together with GRCLG (a conservation concession agreement consortium of Government, CSSL and RSPB (BirdLife UK) and with 7 Gola Forest chiefdoms). NPAA are in discussions with stakeholders to have Kambui Hills Forest reserve protection status upgraded as well. The National Protected Area Authority and Conservation Trust Fund Act (2012) passed in 2012 established the NPAA and Conservation Trust Fund (CTF), to promote biodiversity conservation, wildlife management and research, as well as provide for the sale of ecosystem services in national protected areas<sup>35</sup>. The participation of NPAA in the project will promote peer learning between NPAA and FD and this may enhance capacity for biodiversity conservation in the country.
135. **The Forest Department of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC)** is a Government Department with the official mandate to manage the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve. Currently, they have inadequate capacity to execute this function. This project will support addressing some of the challenges, which, coupled with the lack of effective enforcement and protection by forest guards employed by the Forestry Department (FD) significantly reduced the function of the forest as a protected reserve. Sierra Leone has committed to maintaining forest areas as a crucial carbon sink, restoring degraded forest lands, fostering community participation in the management of national forests and transboundary parks, protecting community rights and forest tenure security, and increasing the contribution of forests to local livelihoods<sup>36</sup>. The Forest Department is key in ensuring these commitments are met. The government has additionally taken significant steps to meet these commitments by developing a more robust institutional ecosystem around forest management and biodiversity conservation, such as establishing the National Protected Area Authority (NPAA) in 2012 and the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change in 2020, as well as developing the 2010 Forest Policy and the National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan (NBSAP). Under the current forestry legislation, the Forestry Department is the one responsible and is required to compile a national inventory of forest resources as well as prepare a national forest management plan. The Forestry Department will therefore be supported to work with NPAA to more effectively manage Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and elevate its status to a National Park (**Outcomes 1.1 and 3.1**).
136. **The Environment Foundation for Africa (EFA)** is a non-governmental organization that aims to protect and restore the environment in West Africa. It was established in 1992 to inspire and enable community-led programs for sustainable environmental management as a basis for poverty alleviation in Sierra Leone and neighbouring Liberia. EFA achieves this through advocacy, awareness

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<sup>35</sup> Legal Study on Forests in Sierra Leone: Strengthening the forestry legal framework to address transboundary challenges and degradation trends in the Upper Guinean Forest ecosystem; <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/cffcc60f-36f3-4418-91c3-ce2ef695a818/content>; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Rome, 2023; Website accessed on 3rd May 2024 at 0808hrs.

<sup>36</sup> Legal Study on Forests in Sierra Leone: Strengthening the forestry legal framework to address transboundary challenges and degradation trends in the Upper Guinean forest ecosystem; <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/cffcc60f-36f3-4418-91c3-ce2ef695a818/content>; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Rome, 2023; Website accessed on 3rd May 2024 at 0808hrs.



raising, education programs and practical actions that conserve the integrity of nature and protect ecosystem services. EFA is registered in Sierra Leone as a national NGO and a registered charity in England and Wales (1057788)<sup>37</sup>. EFA has a long-standing presence in the Gola landscape particularly working on Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary and has participated in developing documentation towards designating Tiwai as a UNESCO World Heritage site. EFA has been implementing programs and practical actions that conserve the integrity of nature and protect ecosystem services in Tiwai in partnership with the **African Wildlife Foundation (AWF)** and their expertise and experience in the area will benefit the delivery of this project in the Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary and the nearby Kambui HFR. EFA/AWF will implement activities under Outcomes 1.1, 2.1 and 4.1.

137. **The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL)** was established in 1986 to promote a better life for all in tune with the environment<sup>38</sup>. The main mission is to preserve nature and ensure wise and sustainable use of our precious natural resources for the benefit of the country's biodiversity, people's livelihood, and the quality of life of all people in Sierra Leone. The society is a membership-based national non-governmental, non-profit organization with a focus on biodiversity conservation. CSSL's main objective is to promote the wise use and management of Sierra Leone's natural resources through education, policy development and implementation as well as through advocacy, research and site action to conserve important and critical sites. CSSL has been working in the Gola landscape for over 20 years, particularly Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, Gola Rain Forest National Park and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary and provides an opportunity to deliver some of the project outputs. Both Tiwai Island and Kambui Hills FR have significant potential to act as economic engines within the Gola landscape but their protection will hinge greatly on community participation. CSSL has a long history of working with communities in the area and their expertise and experience provide an opportunity for their engagement with this project. CSSL has been undertaking advocacy, community awareness, and forest inventories and has been a partner to most initiatives in the area such as with WABiLED, PAPfor and RSPB. CSSL has comparative expertise to build capacity for local communities particularly working with community groups, micro-enterprises, government agencies, and civil society organizations to help build their capacities for sustainable land management as well as participation in biodiversity inventories and forest management plan development among others. They will also dialogue with local stakeholders in the area on land use and conservation planning processes, conservation of IBA sites and shape innovative livelihood and enterprise initiatives that respond to local challenges and opportunities.
138. **The Gola Rainforest Conservation Limited by Guarantee (GRC-LG)** - a government-NGO partnership, manages the National Park (GRNP) in Sierra Leone, financed by the REDD+ project and donors. The GRC-LG experience in the landscape will be utilized particularly in developing livelihood interventions that meet forest-friendly, climate-smart criteria, with a focus on food and protein for local consumption and income-generating value chains such as cocoa, honey, ecotourism, and improved access to markets.
139. **The Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD)**<sup>39</sup> : The RCMRD will work closely with the Environment Protection on the establishment of a centre of excellence hub as a one-stop centre for biodiversity, environment and natural resources management information as well as on land use and Capacity Building activities in under Components 2 and 3. The centre will also collaborate with other project participating partners to provide support for national and sub-national

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.efasl.org/> Website accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024 at 0727 hrs.

<sup>38</sup> <https://cs-sl.org/> Website accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2024 at 1340hrs.

<sup>39</sup> About the Regional Centre for Mapping Resources for Development (RCMRD): <https://www.rcmr.org/>

capacity building related to data collection, processing, storage and submission to the EPA data centre. Furthermore, RCMRD will provide remotely sensed data and maps for training and information sharing, demonstrative capacity building at the field level in resource surveys, carbon measurements and data processing. While specific details will be finalized at project inception, the RCMRD may, for example, support the use of assessment tools to establish the relationship between population increase and forest vulnerability to reveal hotspot areas for prioritization in the conservation and forest restoration efforts.

140. **The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)** is a sustainable forestry solution to help protect healthy and resilient forests, for all, forever. The FSC leads the world's most rigorous and trusted forest certification system, trusted by NGOs, consumers, and businesses alike. With more than 160 million hectares of forests managed to FSC standards around the world, FSC-certified forests are managed to strict environmental, social, and economic standards. Forest operators can obtain FSC's Forest Management Certification which verifies that the forest is managed in a way that is environmentally responsible, socially beneficial, and economically viable. FSC will support capacity building towards forest certification including undertaking a feasibility study on opportunities and readiness for certification. There is potential for FSC Forest Management certification of at least 100,000 hectares of protected areas, and FSC Forest Management certification of 20,000 hectares outside protected areas in the Gola landscape. Besides, capacity building will enable any future needs for certification to be undertaken particularly when a national FSC standards process is initiated in the country.

### Project Execution Organizational Chart

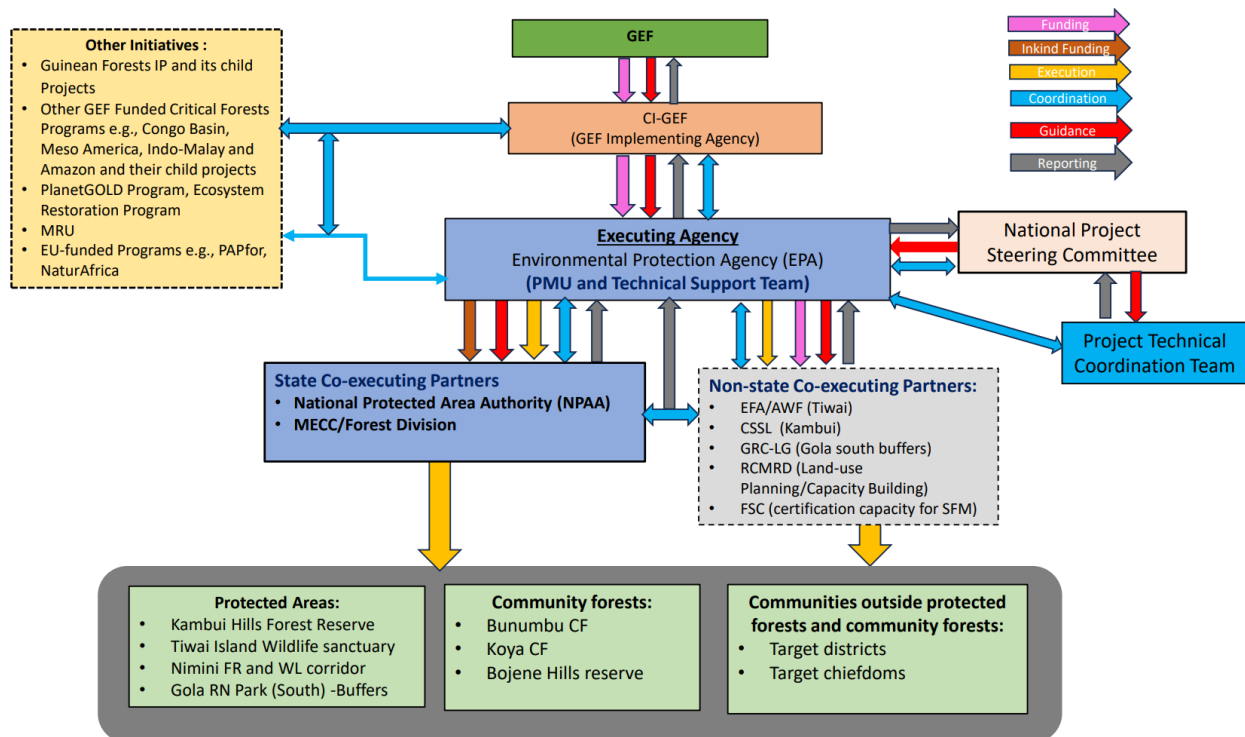


Figure 5: Project execution organizational chart.

141. Technical consultants will be hired to implement some of the forest activities, Capacity Building or community livelihoods activities in **Components 1,2,3 and 4**. The consultants will collaborate with EPA, NPAA, FD and other project partners to provide support for activities related to forestry surveys and inventory, sustainable land management, forest restoration, capacity building for forest certification and possibly documentation and sharing of lessons.

**Table 11: Project Executing Partners and Summary of their Roles**

Grantee/ Subgrantee/Partner	Specific Role	Rationale
<b>Executing Agency:</b> The Sierra Leone Environment Protection Agency (EPA)	As the <b>Executing Agency</b> the EPA will provide overall guidance and the day-to-day running of the project. EPA will host the PMU whose offices will be located in Kenema near the focus sites. The guidance provided by EPA will be in line with the GEF's and the Implementing Agency's (CIGEF) policies and guidelines.	The EPA has longstanding experience in coordinating and reporting on various UNFCCC, BD, UNCCD and other convention activities and hence brings on board general oversight expertise to complement project work. The EPA holds the mandate for coordinating climate change as well as Environment and Natural resources management issues in the country. The EPA has had a longstanding presence in the management of various aspects of the Gola landscape including participation in decision-making for transboundary natural resources management and they have a regional office in Kenema.
<b>Executing agency support partner:</b> National Protected Areas Authority (NPAA)	NPAA will work closely with EPA, MECC and other partners in implementing Components 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. NPAA has a mandate to manage the Gola Rain Forest National Park (GRNP) and will collaborate closely with the Forest Department towards the transition of Kambui Hills FR to a National Park during the project implementation period ( <b>Output 1.1.1</b> ), and establish a robust system for tracking illegal activities and improve the integrity of the protected areas, including through patrolling, monitoring and reporting, support coordination of training of key law enforcing personnel and conducting biodiversity inventories, ( <b>Output 2.1.4 and Output 3.1.2</b> )	NPAA is a Government Agency with a mandate to manage protected areas in Sierra Leone and has had a long presence in the Gola Landscape as the major management agency for the Gola Rainforest National Park. Their experiences in the REDD+ process will be valuable for peer capacity building of the FD of MECC.
<b>Executing Agency Support Partner:</b> Forestry Department of Ministry of Environment and Climate Change).	The Forest Department will collaborate closely with NPAA to transition Kambui Hills FR to a National Park during the project implementation period, ( <b>Output 1.1.1</b> ), and establish a robust system for tracking illegal activities and improving the integrity of the protected areas, including through	The Forestry Department (FD) of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC) and the National Protected Area Authority (NPAA) have the official mandate, to manage Kambui FR. While they have inadequate capacity to execute this function, this project will support addressing some of the challenges, which, coupled with the lack of effective

	<p>patrolling, monitoring and reporting, support coordination of training of key law enforcing personnel and conducting biodiversity inventories, <b>(Output 3.1.2)</b>. The Department will also engage more effectively in extension services around the FR, as well as undertake restoration/rehabilitation of degraded areas within the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve <b>(Output 3.1.1)</b></p>	<p>enforcement and protection by forest guards employed by the Forestry Department (FD) significantly reduced the function of the forest as a protected reserve.</p>
<p><b>Executing Partners:</b> Environmental Foundation for Africa (EFA)</p>	<p>Environment Foundation for Africa, in partnership with AWF, brings experience and expertise to bolster the management capacities of protected areas in Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary and Kambui Hills Forest Reserve. AWF's multifaceted approach will build on EFA's work to enhance existing co-management partnerships between local stakeholders and protected area agencies for effective governance of the conservation areas. This approach will ensure local communities are well integrated and actively involved in decision-making shaping the future and management of the PAs, particularly in Tiwai and Kambui HFR. EPA will participate in the delivery of biodiversity economic studies and training on environment and climate modelling <b>(Output 1.1.2)</b>, and building the capacity of local communities particularly working with community groups, micro-enterprises, government agencies, civil society organizations to help build their capacities for sustainable land management, promotion of income generating initiatives and innovative pro-nature enterprises, <b>(Outputs 2.1.2, 2.1.3, and 2.1.4)</b> and restoration of the degraded lands outside the protected areas <b>(Output 2.1.5/4.1.3)</b>.</p>	<p>The EFA was established in 1992 to inspire and enable community-led programs for sustainable environmental management as a basis for poverty alleviation in Sierra Leone and neighbouring Liberia. They have had a long-standing presence in the Gola landscape particularly working on Tiwai and Kambui areas. EFA has been implementing advocacy, awareness raising, education programs and practical actions that conserve the integrity of nature and protect ecosystem services in Tiwai and their expertise and experience in the area, coupled with their partnership with AWF, will be very helpful in the delivery of this project in the Tiwai Island Wildlife sanctuary and the nearby Kambui HFR.</p>
<p><b>Executing Partners:</b> Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL)</p>	<p>CSSL will participate in the delivery of build capacity for local communities particularly working with community groups, micro-enterprises, government agencies, and civil society organizations to help build their</p>	<p>CSSL's main mission is to preserve nature and ensure wise and sustainable use of natural resources for the benefit of the country's biodiversity, people's livelihood, and the quality of life of all people in Sierra Leone. The society has been working in the</p>

	<p>capacities for sustainable land management. They will also dialogue with local stakeholders in the area on land use and conservation planning processes, conservation of IBA sites and shape innovative livelihood and enterprise initiatives that respond to local challenges and opportunities (<b>Outputs 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.1.5</b>). They will also initiate collaborative forest management approaches between the Forest Department and the local communities in the management of community forests around Kambui Hills Reserve (<b>Output 3.1.2</b>)</p>	<p>Gola landscape for over 20 years, particularly Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, Gola Rain Forest National Park and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary and provides an opportunity to deliver some of the project outputs. CSSL has a long history of working with communities in the area and their expertise and experience provide an opportunity for their engagement with this project.</p>
<p><b>Executing partners:</b> Gola Rainforest Conservation – Limited by Guarantee (GRC-LG).</p>	<p>GRC -LG will be utilized in building capacity to scale up the carbon value chain towards Kambui and Tiwai based on the Gola REDD+ model (<b>Output 3.1.2</b>). The GRC-LG experience will also be utilized in the buffer areas around the Gola South, particularly with respect to community engagement and in developing livelihood interventions that meet forest-friendly, climate-smart criteria, with a focus on food and protein for local consumption and income-generating value chains such as cocoa, honey, ecotourism, and improved access to markets (<b>Output 4.1.3</b>). Lessons from the close collaboration of the Forestry Department, NPAA, CSSL and RSPB, will be shared at the project level towards a way forward for the future sustainability of the connectivity of Kambui, Tiwai to Gola focusing not only on biodiversity conservation but also on sustainable resource management and working to improve local livelihoods.</p>	<p>The Gola Rainforest Conservation Limited by Guarantee (GRC-LG)<sup>40</sup> - a government-NGO partnership, manages the National Park (GRNP) in Sierra Leone, financed by the REDD+ project and donors. The GRC-LG experience in the landscape will be utilized particularly in developing livelihood interventions that meet forest-friendly, climate-smart criteria, with a focus on food and protein for local consumption and income-generating value chains such as cocoa, honey, ecotourism, and improved access to markets. Gola Rainforest Company Limited by Guarantee (GRC -LG) was established in 2014 to act as the project proponent and enable the sale of carbon credits, to assure sustainability. This joint venture solidified the partnership between the Forestry Department of the Government of Sierra Leone, CSSL, and RSPB. GRC-LG works directly with the local communities to ensure everyone benefits from the conservation of the rainforest (RSPB, 2015)<sup>41</sup>.</p>
<p><b>Executing Partners:</b> RCMRD (Land use/capacity)</p>	<p>RCMRD will undertake capacity building for land use planning and facilitate the establishment of the hub of excellence for monitoring biodiversity conservation. RCMRD will also be engaged in supporting the establishment of the centre of</p>	<p>The RCMRD has great expertise in land use planning and mapping. It is a premier centre for training in land use planning, surveying, mapping and remote sensing and offers advisory services on problems relating to resource surveying and mapping to the governments and many</p>

<sup>40</sup> <https://golarainforest.org/grnp-history> From exploitation to conservation; Website accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024.

<sup>41</sup> Royal Society for the protection of Birds (RSPB), 2015. The Gola REDD Project Monitoring & Implementation Report I RSPB, 2015. The Gola REDD Project Monitoring & Implementation Report

	<p>excellence hub at EPA and training stakeholders, based on the expertise and long experience of building individual and institutional capacity in RS/GIS establishment (<b>Output 1.1.4</b>). Has experience in implementing biodiversity conservation projects building from the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) programme. for improving technical and institutional approaches to conserve biodiversity, in protected and conserved areas, through regional cooperation and capacity-building activities, and will undertake assessment and mapping of the degradation of Kambui Forest reserves (<b>Outputs 3.1.1</b>) and watershed management areas (<b>Output 4.1.2</b>).</p>	<p>other institutions. The Center's strengths in participatory mapping are to be utilized in land use planning and the capacity building aspects of the project as well as building capacity of the Centre of Excellence hub at the EPA with respect to natural resource management data collection, collation and analysis. RCMRD has been working with EPA and hence positive to provide support. The experience from implementing the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) programme on improving technical and institutional approaches to conserve biodiversity, in protected and conserved areas will be useful in this project.</p>
<p><b>Executing Partner:</b> FSC (certification capacity for SFM)</p>	<p>FSC will support capacity building towards forest certification including undertaking a feasibility study on opportunities and readiness for certification (<b>Output 1.1.2, Output 2.1.4 and 3.1.2</b>). There is potential for FSC Forest Management certification of at least 100,000 hectares of protected areas, and FSC Forest Management certification of 20,000 hectares outside protected areas.</p>	<p>The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is a sustainable forestry solution to help protect healthy and resilient forests, for all, forever. The FSC leads the world's most rigorous and trusted forest certification system, trusted by NGOs, consumers, and businesses alike. With more than 160 million hectares of forests managed to FSC standards around the world, FSC-certified forests are managed to strict environmental, social, and economic standards.</p>

Will the GEF Agency play an execution role in this project?

☐ Yes ☒ No

## Cooperation and collaboration with ongoing initiatives and projects

142. This project builds on the experience and lessons from previous initiatives and is designed to benefit from cooperation with ongoing initiatives and projects including the sharing of expertise and lessons. The Table below indicates some previous and ongoing GEF and non-GEF projects from which lessons can be drawn.

**Table 12: Potential for lessons from completed projects and cooperation with ongoing initiatives.**

S/No	Project/Initiative Name	Period of performance	Lessons and Leveraging Opportunities
<b>GEF Funded Projects/Initiatives</b>			
1.	<b>Amazon, Congo and Critical Forests Integrated Program</b> This project is anchored on the <u>GEF-8 Amazon, Congo and Critical Forests Integrated Program</u> whose goal is to <i>"maintain the integrity of the globally important critical tropical forests in order to maximize multiple global environment benefits related to carbon and biodiversity"</i> .	2025-2030 (estimate)	The Sierra Leone Child Project's objective and interventions are designed to align with the <b>Guinean Forests Integrated Program's</b> interventions with the expectation that the successful delivery of the project will contribute to the Program's target outcomes/results. On this basis, per the Program's objective and targets, the interventions under the Sierra Leone Project will promote effective governance of the Gola Forest which is part of the Guinean Forests of West Africa. Notably, the Guinean Forests RCP will support its child projects to coordinate and collaborate with the 4 other Critical Forests IPs under this Program, namely, Congo Basin IP, Amazon, IP, Indo-Malay IP, and Meso-America IP
2.	Enhancing the formalization and Mercury reduction in Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM) Sierra Leone (GEF ID: 10838) The GEF-funded GOLD/GOLD+ Program: The Global Opportunities for Long-term Development (GOLD+) of Artisanal Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM) sector seeks to reduce the use of mercury in the ASGM sector in the participating countries through facilitating access to finance to artisanal miners and mining communities for the introduction of low and non-mercury technologies and techniques and through the development of sustainable ASGM gold supply chains.	On-going 2023 – 2028	There is great potential for collaboration and Lessons sharing from this project that may help implementation of the Gola landscape project particularly with respect to stakeholder participation and community engagements. Mercury use in the ASGM sector is one of the drivers of environmental degradation in West Africa. Sierra Leone is participating in the GOLD+ Framework, and work under the GFIP will be coordinated with the GOLD+ work to seek synergies and prevent duplication of efforts. The GOLD+ in Sierra Leone is to also operate in the vicinity of the Gola Landscape and synergies on community participation will be sought.
3.	The "Sensitization, Public Awareness and Education to Address the Destruction of the Gola Forest for the Sustainable Management of the Forest through the Provision of Alternative Livelihood and Proper Enhancement of Necessary By	Some activities are still ongoing – It was a Small Grant Programme of GEF for Non-	There are great lessons as to how to work with local communities to put in place mechanisms that will address the destruction of the Kambui Forest and wildlife through the formation of necessary bylaws that can be implemented at the chiefdom level. Some



S/No	Project/Initiative Name	Period of performance	Lessons and Leveraging Opportunities
GEF Funded Projects/Initiatives			
	laws for Protection of the Forest Ecosystem and Biodiversity” project	State Actors \$300,000	10 CSOs participated with at least \$30,000 per CSO per chiefdom supporting seven Chiefdoms making up the Gola Forest.
4.	Mano River Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM)Project (GEF Project ID: 4953)	On-going but about completed 2020-2024	Forest Landscape Restoration Opportunities Assessment and implementation in the Mano-River Gola landscape. The project provides some lessons about the forest situation/conditions of the four Mano River Union Countries and potential areas for national action. The project also provides lessons on how research data could be used to direct actions/policy direction.
B. Non-GEF initiatives			
1.	<b>Title of Program: NaturAfrica Program</b> NaturAfrica, funded by the EU, is a 6-year (2021-2027) €310 million initiative to support biodiversity conservation in Africa by structuring support around landscapes that are crucial for conservation and human development.	2021-2027	The Guinean Forests biome is identified as a priority “mega-landscape,” and the regional coordination unit is scheduled to commence in late 2023, with work in the 11 landscapes to begin in 2024. With support from the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project (RCP) and the EU-funded NaturAfrica Program, the three Guinean Forests Child Projects (Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone) will reactivate the committees that were established under the IWRM Project (GEF ID: 4953).
2.	West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change (WABICC) Transboundary projects. It was intended to improve conservation and climate-resilient, low-emissions growth across West Africa. Funded by the United States Agency for International Aid (USAID). The project helped to expand on and complement an ongoing EU-funded transboundary project PAPFor project, to conserve biodiversity and reduce the threats in the OKMO landscape.	Completed: 2015-2021	The project provides lessons on regional approaches and national actions to conservation of biodiversity and strategies to reduce the threats in forest landscapes. It also provides lessons towards how to mitigate climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and deforestation and increasing forest landscape restoration.
3.	Support programme for the preservation of forest ecosystems in West Africa (PAPFor): aims to promote sustainable and inclusive development of West African forest areas, responding to the challenges of climate change and the maintenance of biodiversity. The specific objective is to effectively and efficiently protect biodiversity and priority forest	Still ongoing	From the project, it is learnt that rural populations within the landscape are growing significantly, placing more pressure on the Gola rainforest block. Mining and logging interests as well as illegal hunting have also increased in the area and present major challenges for the future of the landscape: This project could utilize the approaches that the PAPFor

S/No	Project/Initiative Name	Period of performance	Lessons and Leveraging Opportunities
GEF Funded Projects/Initiatives			
	ecosystems in West Africa, contributing to climate change resilience and food and water security. Funded by EU -In August 2020, the Project was rolled out in Sierra Leone and Liberia to conserve the Gola Forest. In Sierra Leone, the three-year programme is being implemented by the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL), a BirdLife Partner		project proposes to encourage the rearing of breeding Cane rat and cattle in order to stop the hunting of the wild animal, because if the forest edge communities are capacitated in this economic livelihood, they could help the Forest Management authorities to control wildlife hunting.
4.	West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development (WABiLED) programs. WABiLED is a four-year program funded by USAID with three core objectives: combat wildlife trafficking and enhance great ape conservation; reduce deforestation, forest degradation, and biodiversity loss in key transboundary forest landscapes; and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase carbon sequestration from forestry and land use	On-going: July 2021 – July 2025	The project provides lessons to build on particularly recent and ongoing regional approaches to forest conservation. Lessons include how to strengthen the capacity of national and regional networks and institutions to enforce and prosecute wildlife trafficking laws; enhance regional and transboundary forest cooperation and conservation strategies using best practices, and improve capacity for economically viable low-emissions development strategies
5.	West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development: Promote biodiversity conservation and climate resilient, low emissions development in West Africa. The project is intended to strengthen the capacity of national and regional networks and institutions to enforce and prosecute wildlife trafficking laws; enhance regional and transboundary forest cooperation and conservation strategies using best practices; and improve capacity for economically viable low emissions development strategies. Funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).	On-going and towards completion	Lessons include approaches to the conservation and restoration of forests. It was also learnt that forests are crucial to Maintain West Africa's biological heritage for future generations and to meet global carbon emissions reduction targets and ultimately, reduce the extent and effects of climate change. While measurable progress has been made to reverse past trends, efforts have been hampered by constraints including limited intra-regional coordination and inadequate information and awareness at the general public and policy-maker levels.
6.	Ministry of Environment, Forestry Department and EPA-SL, two Million Tree planting initiative, nationwide, across Sierra Leone. Funded from the Sierra Leone Government budget at USD 450,000	Still ongoing: To replant some of the areas that have been deforested	Lessons would be utilized in partnership with communities for forest restoration. Various CSOs/CBOs were used in selected chiefdoms at District Levels in the country.
7.	Enhance Habitat Regeneration, Conservation, and Biodiversity in the Outamba-Kilimi-Madina-Oula Transboundary Landscape. The objective	On-going - and in final stages of completion: September 1,	The lesson is the possibility of utilizing field-level partners in forest restoration. The restoration of the habitats/ecosystem is to provide additional Ha of carbon sink

S/No	Project/Initiative Name	Period of performance	Lessons and Leveraging Opportunities
GEF Funded Projects/Initiatives			
	is to help in the restoration of the ecosystem and in the preservation of biodiversity in the project landscape (Funded by USAID through WABILED)	2022 - February 29, 2024	as well as enhance reducing further loss of the current forests.
8.	Building Capacity to Monitor Forest Vegetation and Carbon Change in the Upper Guinea Forests. (Funded by USAID through WABILED). It is a Research Project that focused on study work in four transboundary forest landscapes including protected areas across the four Mano River Union (MRU) Member States (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Côte d'Ivoire) targeting key transboundary biodiversity hotspots, namely Gola National Parks between Liberia and Sierra Leone, Tai-Grebo-Krahn-Sapo between Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, Zياما Wonegizi-Wologizi between Liberia and Guinea, and Outamba-Kilimi-Madina-Oula between Sierra Leone and Guinea.	On-going: September 1, 2022 - November 30, 2024	This project provides an opportunity how to undertake demonstrative capacity building. The focus was to increase the capacity of institutions both at the national and local level across the remnant Upper Guinean Forest Ecosystem to combine ground and remote sensing data to track forest degradation and plan as appropriate.
9.	Restoring Livelihoods and Landscapes in the Forest-Buffer Communities in the Outamba-Kilimi-Madina-Oula Landscapes (Funded by EUCORD - the European Cooperative for Rural Development). Implemented in the Soyah Penselli and Sabouyah Forest Reserves, located within the Madina-Oula landscape in Guinea, and the Kuru Hills Forest Reserve, situated within the Outamba-Kilimi National Park in Sierra Leone.	Ongoing	The lessons learned will be used in approaches to address the threats of forest degradation. The project tackled Charcoal production, legal and illegal logging, poaching, and agriculture which are major causes of deforestation and forest degradation in Guinea and Sierra Leone. These activities lead to biodiversity loss, soil erosion, and the overall depletion of natural resources. By addressing these issues, the project is enhancing forest protection and biodiversity conservation.

### Risks to Project Implementation (Key Risks)

143. **Table 13** below summarizes risks that might affect the project implementation phase and the mitigation strategies the project will undertake to address them.

Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk to outcomes and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category? **YES** (See table below.)

Are mitigation measures clearly identified and realistic? **YES** (See table below.)

Is there any omission? **NO** (See table below.)

Is the rating provided reflecting the residual risk to the likely achievement of intended outcomes after accounting for the expected implementation of mitigation measures? **YES** (See table below.)

Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately assessed and rated and consistent with the requirements set out in SD/PL/03? **YES** (See table below.)

144. Risks that might affect the project implementation phase are and what are summarized in the table with the corresponding mitigation strategies that the project will undertake to address them. The risk rating reflects the overall risk to project outcomes considering the country setting and ambition of the project. The rating scale is *High, Substantial, Moderate, and Low*.

**Table 13: Project's risks and mitigation measures**

RISK DIMENSION AND CATEGORIES*	RATING	PLANNED MITIGATION MEASURES
<b>CONTEXT</b>		
<i>Climate: SUBSTANTIAL</i>		
Extreme Weather Events: Although Sierra Leone is vulnerable to extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, and storms, this is not considered high risk with respect to the project. Nevertheless, the introduction of alternative resilient livelihood activities can be significantly impacted by extreme weather events, as these events can disrupt initial implementation efforts, damage infrastructure, and reduce resource availability. For instance, severe storms, floods, or droughts can destroy crops, livestock, and facilities, making it challenging for communities to establish and sustain new livelihoods. Additionally, the focus on immediate recovery and rebuilding after extreme weather events can divert resources and attention away from long-term livelihood development initiatives, hindering their success and resilience.	<b>Substantial</b>	The mitigation measures will be to ensure the project's interventions are resilient, and better planning with respect to the timing of introduction of alternative livelihoods, and field activities. Vulnerable areas will be identified, and project activities planned with climate resilience in mind.
<i>Environment and Social: MODERATE</i>		
Safeguard screening was conducted during the PPG Phase and the project was classified as a category B, which means that project activities have the potential to cause negative environmental and social impacts. However, the impacts are anticipated	<b>Moderate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Full-time Safeguards specialist to be part of the project staff.</li> <li>b. Safeguards Specialist (supported by the project team) to update the safeguard plans, within 6 months of the start of the implementation phase.</li> </ul>

RISK DIMENSION AND CATEGORIES*	RATING	PLANNED MITIGATION MEASURES
to be less adverse than those of Category A projects, site-specific, and mitigation measures can be designed more readily than for Category A projects. The project completed a GMP, AGM and SEP during the PPG phase, but it is required to update the GMP and SEP during the start of implementation. The project is also required to complete an ESMP and IPP within the first six months of implementation.		c. Safeguards specialist to oversee the implementation of the mitigation measures, monitor and report on the progress of the safeguard indicators throughout project implementation.
Shift to sustainable livelihoods and practices may clash with the communities' traditional practices and culture.	Low	Activities related to supporting the shift to sustainable livelihoods and practices will be developed based on an in-depth consultation process with the local communities and their traditional leadership.
The risk of positive impacts of the project triggering negative impacts such as maladaptation, deforestation leakage i.e., improved forest protection/conservation in one area leading to more deforestation in other or new areas .	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To mitigate these risks, the Sierra Leone Child project has developed environmental and social safeguards which were informed by in-depth safeguards screening at the PPG Phase. The safeguards screening as well as the safeguard plans will be validated by the PMU during the implementation phase.</li> <li>With respect to unintended consequences such as displacing deforestation from project areas to other areas, the key mitigation measures are the promotion of landscape-level planning and management approaches; support for efforts to enhance wider policy coherence and tracking this dynamic within M&amp;E frameworks to trigger/inform adaptive management.</li> </ul>
<b>Political and Governance: MODERATE</b>		
There may be a potential lack of political will to support the implementation of some project activities, particularly with respect to policy coherence and reduced access to resources by the communities and coordination with other stakeholders.	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One of the mitigation measures undertaken at project design and will also be actioned at the implementation phase is the engagement and inclusion of decision makers and leadership at various levels including chiefdoms, local government and national government.</li> <li>The stakeholder coordination mechanism that will be established</li> </ul>

RISK DIMENSION AND CATEGORIES*	RATING	PLANNED MITIGATION MEASURES
		and operationalized under <b>output 1.1.3</b> will be integral in ensuring that all stakeholders are consulted and engaged.
<b>INNOVATION</b>		
<i>Institutional and Policy: LOW</i>		
The risk could be institutional changes, such as changes in leadership or staff turnover that can disrupt project implementation and continuity. With respect to policy, the risk could be policy misalignment and inconsistencies between project goals and existing policies and regulations. The policy framework has however been assessed and found to be aligned unless there will be changes during project implementation particularly concerning transboundary natural resources management.	<b>Low</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional mitigation measures include developing strong institutional memory through documentation and knowledge management practices that have been built into the project design.</li> <li>• With respect to policy, the mitigation is thus undertaken through thorough policy assessments and stakeholder consultations to ensure alignment with national priorities, biodiversity conservation frameworks, climate change policies, and development strategies. Proactive engagements will also be undertaken during project implementation.</li> </ul>
<i>Technological: SUBSTANTIAL</i>		
Inadequate adoption of any relevant technology as part of the introduction of alternative livelihoods and effective management of the protected areas	<b>Substantial</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Comprehensive training and capacity-building programs to ensure communities understand and can effectively use the relevant technology.</li> <li>b. Involve local stakeholders in the planning, and selection of the technology and decision-making process that can enhance buy-in and adoption.</li> <li>c. Strengthening local institutions and ensuring consistent technical support can also help sustain the use of technology. Integrating traditional knowledge with modern technology and providing financial incentives or subsidies can encourage adoption.</li> <li>d. For effective management of protected areas, establishing clear regulations, fostering community-led conservation initiatives, and ensuring continuous monitoring and adaptive management practices are crucial.</li> </ol>
<i>Financial and Business Model: MODERATE</i>		
The risk includes inflation and exchange rate pressures- High inflation rates can	<b>Moderate</b>	The mitigation measures with respect to financial inflation pressures will relate to

RISK DIMENSION AND CATEGORIES*	RATING	PLANNED MITIGATION MEASURES
increase project costs, affecting budgeting, procurement, and overall project implementation.		Regularly monitoring and reviewing inflation and exchange rates to adjust financial planning accordingly including contingency budgeting.
Failing to secure continued long-term financial support after project completion, can risk the sustainability of critical Project Outcomes.	High	The project includes Outputs aimed at establishing long-term financial sustainability.
<b>EXECUTION</b>		
<i>Capacity for implementation: SUBSTANTIAL</i>		
The potential risk could be environmental and natural resources management sectors not being well coordinated with civil society partners and other stakeholders to implement the project activities, however, the EPA, the project executing agency has the mandate for overall coordination of environment management in the country and regular engagement through the project steering committee will enhance coordination.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mitigation measures include the already inbuilt capacity-building activities that the project will address as well as regular meetings of the project steering committees.</li> <li>Mentoring will also be undertaken through regular interaction between the implementing agency and the executing agency to address any potential lack of capacity in project management.</li> </ul>
The limited capacity of the EA (EPA) to manage the many sub-grantees and contracts	Substantial	Dedicated/full-time Finance & Grants Officer officer included as part of the project staff
Inconsistent and uncoordinated project implementation due to the lack of standardized procedures and understanding of GEF guidelines and operational modalities by the project team, executing partners and other key stakeholders	Substantial	A Project Operations Manual will be developed within 8 months of the start of project implementation. This manual will ensure that all team members and executing partners are aligned in their approach, reducing conflicts and communication breakdown hence enhancing the overall efficiency and effectiveness of project activities.
<i>Fiduciary: Financial Management and Procurement: SUBSTANTIAL</i>		
Insufficient capacity of the EA for effective financial management and procurements may be a barrier to effective project implementation. Bureaucratic processes may also delay the procurement and contracting processes.	Moderate	The finance team in the EPA is committed to supporting the project, however also has many other commitments. The project PMU will have both a full-time finance lead and grant/partner manager to address capacity. The Grants Manager will have a minimum of 3-5 years of experience managing public funding and grantees. To minimize delays, terms of reference should be developed at the beginning of the project and the PMU will follow the annual procurement plan.



RISK DIMENSION AND CATEGORIES*	RATING	PLANNED MITIGATION MEASURES
Due diligence of the Executing partners was not conducted by EPA/CI during the PPG Phase.	Substantial	<p>This task will be completed within the first 6 months of the implementation phase.</p> <p><b>Financial Due Diligence will be conducted by the EPA (with support from CI) before granting it to any selected partners.</b> Granting will only be done when partners have met the requirements based on the financial risk assessment. The outputs of this assessment will be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners identified and their respective detailed ToRs defining their roles developed and approved by the EPA.</li> <li>Financial Due Diligence (FDD) of partner institutions conducted, and applicable mitigation measures put in place/captured in their respective grant agreements</li> <li>Grant Agreements signed (to include the mitigation measures from the FDD).</li> </ol>
<b>Stakeholders: SUBSTANTIAL</b>		
Stakeholder resistance or opposition can hinder project progress and create challenges for implementation. Additionally, per the baseline assessment, there has been limited engagement of local communities, and marginalized and vulnerable groups in past projects in this landscape.	Substantial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been developed to guide the engagement of local communities as well as ensure the active involvement of all stakeholders in project implementation.</li> <li>The stakeholder coordination mechanism that will be established and operationalized by this project will be integral in ensuring that all stakeholders are consulted and engaged.</li> </ul>
<b>OVERALL RISK RATING</b>	<b>MODERATE</b>	The overall risk rating for this project is moderate because the likelihood that substantial risks will occur is potentially negligible and there is stakeholder willingness and appropriate mitigation measures in place to execute and deliver this project.

\*adopted from GEF/C.66/13, the GEF Risk Appetite <https://www.thegef.org/council-meeting-documents/gef-c-66-13>

## Safeguards Rating (endorsement level)

A safeguard screening was undertaken during the PPG Phase and this project was ranked as **Category B**<sup>42</sup>.

### C. Institutional Alignment

#### Alignment with GEF-8 Programming strategies and country/regional priorities.

145. This project is anchored on the GEF-8 Amazon, Congo and Critical Forests Integrated Program whose goal is to “*maintain the integrity of the globally important critical tropical forests in order to maximize multiple global environment benefits related to carbon and biodiversity*”. It is against this backdrop that the CI-led Guinean Forests Integrated Program, on which the Sierra Leone Child Project is anchored, founded the following objective: “*To protect and improve the effective governance of the Guinean Forests in order to maximize global environmental benefits, contribute to the health of the planet and flow of vital ecosystem services that underpin human well-being.*” On this basis, per the objective and targets of the Guinean Forests IP, the interventions under the Sierra Leone Child Project will *conserve and restore Kambui Hills Forest Reserve (FR) and the associated community forest lands in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape in order to address climate change impacts*. The alignment between the Guinean Forests Integrated Program and The Sierra Leone Child Project is highlighted below and details are provided in the child project’s Results Framework.

**Guinean Forests Program Outcome 2.2:** Improved management effectiveness of existing protected areas and OECMs, including gender and inclusion considerations.

Sierra Leone Project Outcome 3.1: Strengthened biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use of the Kambui Hills FR and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape

**Guinean Forests Program Outcome 3.2:** Improved gender-responsive and inclusive access to local livelihoods and nature-friendly enterprises

Sierra Leone Project Outcome 2.1: Enhanced sustainable resource use by communities adjacent to targeted PAs within the Gola landscape

**Guinean Forests Program Outcome 3.3:** Strengthened gender-responsive and inclusive community forest governance

Sierra Leone Project Outcome 4.1: Strengthened institutional structures for transboundary collaboration between Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia for improved management of the Mano Watershed

**Guinean Forests Program Outcome 1.1:** Updated and expanded data and information base available;

**Guinean Forests Program Outcome 1.2:** Integrated, participatory land-use, and spatial plans developed;

**Guinean Forests Program Outcome 4.1:** Improved policy framework for gender-responsive and inclusive, participatory land-use planning and **Guinean Forests Program Outcome 4.2:** Improved policies to foster a gender-responsive and inclusive economic environment conducive to forest conservation, e.g., incentives, reduction of perverse subsidies

Sierra Leone Project Outcome 1.1.: Strengthened coordination and capacity of key stakeholders (state and non-state actors and communities) for effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape

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<sup>42</sup> CIGEF ESMF **Category B** Projects: The proposed project activities have the potential to cause adverse environmental and social impacts. However, the impacts are anticipated to be less adverse than those of Category A projects, site-specific, and mitigation measures can be designed more readily than for Category A projects.

**Guinean Forests Program Outcome 5.1:** Gender-sensitive knowledge generation and exchange, including public awareness/communications and **Guinean Forests Program Outcome 5.2:** Enhanced coherence and synergies between projects and regional initiatives

*Sierra Leone Project Outcome 5.1:* Strengthened coordination, capacity building, knowledge management, learning and sharing between the Sierra Leone Child Project and initiatives at landscape, national and regional levels including the GEF-8 Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project

**Guinean Forests Program Outcome 6.1:** A functional gender-sensitive M&E framework in place

*Sierra Leone Project Outcome 6.1:* An effective and gender-responsive M&E system for the project

146. The Sierra Leone Gola project contributes to several strategies and multilateral environmental agreements, which aim to address biodiversity conservation, land degradation and climate change actions. Internationally, Sierra Leone is a party to the relevant major multilateral environmental agreements (e.g., CBD, CITES, UNFCCC, and Minamata). The country's 2021 Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 update is committed to using Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs) to restore key ecological systems. At COP 26, the country committed to planting 25 million trees (restoring approximately 960,000 ha) by 2030 as part of a national effort to restore and protect key ecosystems. At the regional level, the country is a party to a number of agreements, including ECOWAS (whose 15 member states have adopted the Convergence Plan for the Sustainable Management and Use of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa), while at the sub-regional level, Sierra Leone is one of four countries in the Mano River Union (MRU), which has defined a coordination framework for the management of ecosystems shared between the MRU States. The Gola project therefore contributes to, among others:

- i) The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan: Sierra Leone's Second National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2017-2026 emphasizes that by 2026, all strategies and programmes geared towards biodiversity conservation will be implemented and significant progress made and manifested by improved status of its diverse ecosystems and wildlife, with lasting benefits to the local communities and the people of Sierra Leone.
- ii) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC): The Gola project aligns with Sierra Leone's participation in the UNFCCC processes. It assists the country in meeting its climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts and strengthens its capacity to engage in international climate negotiations.
- iii) Sierra Leone National Adaptation Plan (NAP): As part of Sierra Leone's efforts to adapt to the impacts of climate change, the Gola project enhances the capacity to support community resilience and progress towards NAP goals.
- iv) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Biodiversity conservation, addressing land degradation and Climate mitigation and adaptation actions, which the Gola project facilitates through capacity building, sustainable land management and forest restoration activities are closely linked to several SDGs.
- v) The Convention for the Conservation of Biological Diversity (CBD): Sierra Leone became a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in 1994 in the Bahamas<sup>43</sup>, and has developed national action plans and strategies to enhance biodiversity conservation. This project is one of the efforts towards the conservation of biodiversity at the landscape level.

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<sup>43</sup> Sierra Leone's second NBSAP, 2017-2026.

#### Alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework:

147. The project is a multi-focal area project, including biodiversity, land degradation and climate change mitigation focal areas. This project is a direct contribution to the long-term goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework as it is intended to address improved management effectiveness, forest restoration and connectivity between the PAs of Kambui, Tiwai and Gola. The project contributes to 14 out of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (Targets: 1,2,3,4,5,8,10,11,12,14,20,21,22, and 23). Forests and Protected areas generally remain the cornerstone for conservation and the primary strategy implemented to halt the decline in biodiversity. Forest lands contribute to biodiversity conservation by removing extraction pressures from an area and by supporting the management of threats within and around protected areas.
148. Components 1, 2 and 3 have a focus on participatory land use planning as well as participatory approaches to PA management thereby contributing to Target 1 of the GBF which asks countries to ensure that all areas are under participatory, integrated and biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning and/or effective management processes addressing land- and sea-use change. Target 2 of the GBF on ensuring ecosystems are under effective restoration, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity is addressed under component 3. This project is targeting the restoration of at least 10,000ha of forest land while focusing on connectivity (GBF Target 3, 4 and 12) between ecosystems. GBF targets 5, 8, 10 and 11 are contributed to, through the implementation of component 2 activities. Capacity building activities under component 1 contribute to GBF Targets 14, 20, 21, 22 and 23.

#### **Consistency and Alignment with CI Institutional Priorities**

149. The project is well aligned with CI's institutional priorities, in particular, the "Southern Cross" (2020)<sup>44</sup>. The latter is a framework of four current institutional priorities, specifically: a) Sustainable Landscapes and Seascapes (SLS); b) Nature for Climate; c) Ocean Conservation at Scale, and c) Innovation in Science and Finance. The linkage between this project and CI's Southern Cross is provided below:
- a. **NATURE FOR CLIMATE:** CI is working towards supporting the world to "*avoid 5+ gigatonnes (Gt) CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per year by preventing the loss of high-carbon ecosystems, with zero loss of all irrecoverable carbon by 2030*". The Guinean Forest Biome is a high-carbon ecosystem hence this CI-Led Sierra Leone Project will enhance its effective conservation and governance and prevent its destruction resulting in zero loss of its irrecoverable carbon. CI also seeks "*to mitigate 5+ Gt CO<sub>2</sub> per year through restoration and sustainable management of natural ecosystems by 2030*". Through this project, CI will support Sierra Leone to mitigate at least **1.57 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2029; restore approximately 10,000 Hectares of land**; ensure at least **35,000 Hectares of land (excluding protected areas)** are under improved practices and ensure a total of **22,428 Ha** covering Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, Kambui South Forest Reserve and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary are under improved management. Lastly, it is expected that the project will benefit at least **172,630 direct beneficiaries, of which 30% are women**.
- b. **SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES AND SEASCAPES:** Under this focus area, CI seeks to protect essential ecosystems and unlock sustainable financing. The Greater Gola Landscape that is part of the Guinean

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<sup>44</sup> CI. 2020. Conservation International's Southern Cross

Forests of West Africa is a globally recognized critical ecosystem by being an Intact Forest Landscape hence CI's involvement in its conservation and governance is imperative and feeds into the objective of this focus area.

- c. **INNOVATION AND FINANCE:** CI proactively deploys targeted innovative solutions to complex and ever-changing environmental problems to achieve sustainable impact through systemic transformative change. CI will contribute to finding innovative tangible financial solutions to challenging environmental problems in the Greater Gola Landscape including from various seed funds. Through this project, Sierra Leone will also engage in transboundary natural resources management by implementing nature-based solutions for the protection of a shared Mano water catchment as well as the Gola Transboundary Landscape.

#### **D. Policy requirements**

##### **Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:**

We confirm that gender dimensions relevant to the project have been addressed during Project Preparation as per GEF Policy and are clearly articulated in the Project Description **(Section B)**.

☒ Yes ☐ No (If –and only if– NO is selected, a pop-up field should open for the Agency to provide an explanation)

1) Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women's empowerment?

☒ Yes ☐ No

If the project expects to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment, please indicate in which results area(s) the project is expected to contribute to gender equality:

- ☒ closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources;  
☒ improving women's participation and decision-making; and/or  
☒ generating socio-economic benefits or services for women.

2) Does the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-responsive indicators?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ tbd

*The Gender Mainstreaming Plan (GMP) is attached.*

##### **Stakeholder Engagement**

We confirm that key stakeholders were consulted during Project Preparation as required per GEF policy, their relevant roles to project outcomes have been clearly articulated in the Project Description (Section B) and that a Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been developed before CEO endorsement.

☒ Yes ☐ No

**Select what role civil society will play in the project:**

Consulted only; ☐ Yes ☒ No

Member of Advisory Body; Contractor; ☒ Yes ☐ No

Co-financier; ☒ Yes ☐ No

Member of project steering committee or equivalent decision-making body; ☒ Yes ☐ No

Executor or co-executor; ☒ Yes ☐ No

Other (Please explain) ☐ Yes ☒ No

*The Stakeholder Engagement Plan is attached.*

## Private Sector

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

☒ Yes ☐ No

And if so, has its role been described and justified in section B “project description”?

☒ Yes ☐ No

## E. Other requirements

### Knowledge management

150. Component 5 of this project focuses on knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons. This project will support the **coordination, learning and sharing of knowledge with other initiatives in close collaboration with the regional project**. It is expected that the regional coordination project will be a one-stop source of information for countries in the Guinean Forests Biome.

151. **Promoting knowledge Management, Learning and knowledge sharing at National, Local, and Transboundary Levels:** The Sierra Leone Guinean Forests Child Project will strengthen coordination and collaboration among state and non-state actors in forestry and natural resources management. The project will establish and facilitate a stakeholder coordination mechanism to support inclusive and gender-responsive governance of the Greater Gola Forest landscape at the National and Local levels. Additionally, the project will revive and institutionalize previously inactive committees from the GEF-funded IWRM Project, engaging the Mano River Union (MRU), local communities, and governments to ensure sustainable governance and multi-stakeholder dialogue.

152. **Promoting knowledge Management, Learning and knowledge sharing at Regional and Global Levels:** Sierra Leone will participate in knowledge-sharing events organized by the GEF-Funded Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project and other initiatives. This will foster innovation and continuous learning, enhancing forest management efforts. Additionally, with support from the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project, Sierra Leone will engage in events and forums organized by GEF-Funded Critical Forest Integrated Programs. This will enable Sierra Leone to share experiences, learn best practices, and participate in global conservation dialogues.

153. **Representation of Sierra Leone’s Marginalized and Vulnerable Groups in Learning and Knowledge sharing events at various levels (sponsored by CI through the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project):** The Sierra Leone Guinean Forests Child Project will ensure participation of

marginalized and vulnerable groups in learning events, promoting inclusive decision-making, policy relevance, empowerment, social cohesion, and capacity building. This will lead to sustainable solutions by incorporating diverse perspectives.

154. Further, the Sierra Leone Gola Forest Transboundary Committee will be utilized to facilitate continuous engagement among stakeholders, acting as a platform for sharing insights, addressing concerns, and coordinating conservation activities.
155. The knowledge generated by the project will benefit project stakeholders by improving their understanding of sustainable forest management, climate change, land restoration and increasing their capacity to implement biodiversity conservation initiatives and improving their data and information management and sharing. The knowledge generated by the project will also benefit future projects by providing replicable forest management approaches, lessons learned and best practices. The budget for knowledge management will be drawn from the allocation under component 5.

Knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons

- a. **Website of the government institutions involved in the Project and CI's Website:** The EPA and other relevant sector institutions already have platforms for outreach such as websites which are avenues for users to obtain information about the project. Other than the websites, increasing awareness about the project amongst relevant government institutions and departments as well as the civil society and private sector will be continuously done during the implementation phase of the project. Project updates and implementation progress will thus be communicated through various platforms such as the EPA Website, Conservation International's website, the MECC website and the NPAA Website.
- b. **Engagement with the Guinea Forest Regional Coordination and Learning Project (GFRCLP):** This project will collaborate closely with the **GFRCLP** as a source of information for cross-learning with other child projects in various meetings and forums organized by the **GFRCLP**. The project will then actively provide updates and participate in engagements with the **GFRCLP**. The appointed Project manager/coordinator or the PSC chairman will represent Sierra Leone at the regional project meetings, sharing lessons via Webinars hosted by **GFRCLP** and uploading project information on the **GFRCLP website**.
- c. **Publication of project reports and policy briefs:** Throughout project implementation, this Project will publish at least 5 publications (handbooks, posters, fact sheets, community guides, etc.) annually to share knowledge. These documents will capture lessons learnt, best case practices, challenges, and opportunities and will be circulated widely.
- d. **Training (workshops):** Training workshops, meetings, and conferences will be held to build the capacity of stakeholders both at landscape and national levels. Training organized by the regional coordination project will provide a great opportunity for lesson sharing. The project will also arrange technical training and awareness sessions with relevant government and non-state entities and departments at the national level. With the training, the project will get feedback from participants on how the project is performing, their expectations, and suggestions on how to make the project achieve greater success in the country. Notably, an annual stakeholder lesson-sharing meeting may be held between EPA and other sectors.
- e. **Peer exchange/ Exposure trips:** Selected beneficiaries from the project implementing partners and the executing entity will, in close collaboration with the regional coordination project,



participate in Exposure trips/peer exchange visits to other child project countries and/or global forums such as the CBD CoP where Sierra Leone can learn and share lessons.

- f. **Learning and sharing across the Conservation International Projects:** Through platforms such as Zoom, Teams, and the CI-GEF/ **GFRCLP** WhatsApp group, this project will interact and share lessons with other ongoing biodiversity conservation projects that are implemented by Conservation International.

**Table 14: Knowledge management outputs with associated timelines and indicative budget allocation**

Knowledge management outputs	Timeline	Budget (USD)
<b>Output 5.1.1:</b> A project Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy developed (including gender, equality and inclusion aspects)	It Starts Q4 of Year 1 and into the end of Year 5	84,569
<b>Output 5.1.2:</b> Participation in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project 3-day Annual Forums.		17,814
<b>Output 5.1.3:</b> Learning and exposure visits facilitated by the Sierra Leone Child Project (and where applicable coordinated by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project)		17,814
<b>Output 5.1.4:</b> Knowledge management products integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects generated, and disseminated at the landscape, national and regional levels including in the (integrating lessons learnt and best-case practices on traditional knowledge for natural resource management, and information on the project as a model for Nature-Based-Solutions)	It Starts Q4 of Year 2 and into the end of Year 5	171,272
	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>291,469</b>

**156. How the knowledge management approach will contribute to the overall impact of the project:**

This project will generate, store, and disseminate information related to Land use planning, Forest management planning, Forest inventories, climate resilience and livelihoods, sustainable land management practices and nature-based solutions hence in the process: (i) raise awareness about the status of forest restoration and SLM practices in the country, (ii) share lessons learnt and recommendations that will address the barriers impeding achievement of forest biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management in Sierra Leone, and (iii) raise awareness about the natural resources management support received by Sierra Leone to date. Through this information, the key stakeholders, as well as donors, will be able to pinpoint and understand the key gaps and interventions required to improve biodiversity conservation and overall environment and sustainable natural resources management in Sierra Leone. This information, which will be harnessed at the Center of Excellence hub at EPA, can be used to improve the design of future initiatives and catalyze climate finance from donors which will result in new projects that will further strengthen the national capacity to manage natural resources in the country.

**157. Plans for strategic communications in the knowledge management approach:** A communications specialist will be employed, on a part-time basis, to implement the project's communications component and will aim to ensure critical knowledge is tailored to the target audience and disseminated on platforms accessible to the target audience. Strategic communication in knowledge management will be used as a tool to influence policy, improve the design and implementation of natural resources management projects and initiatives in the country, prompt innovation, and generate more impact on biodiversity conservation at landscape and national as well as at transboundary, regional, and global levels. The key target audience includes the following priority stakeholder groups:

- Government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies working in land management as well as in Forestry/biodiversity and natural resources conservation sectors.
- Private sector
- CSOs
- Academia, and
- Donors e.g., the GEF.

158. **Monitoring and evaluation of the knowledge management and communications component:**

Bi-annually, the PMU will undertake M&E to establish the effectiveness of the implementation of the knowledge management and communications component. The following criteria will be used to evaluate and update the tabulated communications strategy below:

- Progress on the activity plan in the project document and associated work plans
- Assess the size and type of the audience through hit counts on websites, views, and comments on social media posts, and the number of publications shared on external platforms.
- Audience Engagement: number of shares and likes on social media handles, comments on blogs, and feedback on conference presentations.

159. The table below will be updated by the PMU with support from the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) and Conservation International. The information in this table will guide the project's strategic communications in knowledge management.

**Table 15: Draft communication Approach for the Gola Forests Landscape project**

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PRODUCT	DESCRIPTION	SPECIFY THE TARGET AUDIENCE	DISTRIBUTION CHANNEL/PLATFOR M	RESPONSIB LE (LEAD)	SUPPORT	ACHIEVEMENTS
Presentations	Presentation of the project's achievements, lessons learnt, and recommendations	<i>Project partners, Community meetings, PSC and others as opportunity prevails</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webinar with the regional Coordination project unit</li> <li>• Zoom</li> <li>• Microsoft Teams</li> </ul>	PMU	CBD focal point from the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) and Conservation International	<i>This column will be updated bi-annually</i>
1-2 pager bi-annual progress updates (including lessons learnt)	1 -2 pager bi-annual progress updates (including lessons learnt)	<i>PSC, Regional project coordination unit, National level BD conservation and CC stakeholders and Chiefdoms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CI Website and social media handles e.g., Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn</li> <li>• The Environment Protection Agency Website, NPAA and MECC/FD websites and social media handles e.g., Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn</li> </ul>	PMU	Biodiversity focal point from the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) and Conservation International and project implementing partners	

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PRODUCT	DESCRIPTION	SPECIFY THE TARGET AUDIENCE	DISTRIBUTION CHANNEL/PLATFORM	RESPONSIBLE (LEAD)	SUPPORT	ACHIEVEMENTS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other project partners' websites and social media handles</li> </ul>			
Policy Briefs	Bi-annual or quarterly policy briefs on lessons learnt and recommendations	<i>Regional Project Coordination Unit, MRU, PSC, National level BD conservation and other stakeholders including Chiefdoms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CI Website and social media handles e.g., Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn</li> <li>The Environment Protection Agency (EPA) Website and social media handles e.g., Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn</li> <li>NPAA/ FD and other project partner's websites and social media handles</li> </ul>	PMU	Biodiversity focal point from the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) and Conservation International and project implementing partners	
Social media posts	Any key update on the project	<i>PSC, Project implementing partners and other National level stakeholders</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CI social media handles</li> <li>The Environment Protection Agency (EPA) social media handles</li> <li>Other project partner's social media handles</li> </ul>	PMU	EPA communications specialist, BD focal point, other relevant sector leads, and Conservation International.	
Blog posts	Any key update on the project	<i>PSC, Project implementing partners and other National level stakeholders</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CI social media handles</li> <li>The Environment Protection Agency (EPA) social media handles</li> <li>Other project partner's social media handles</li> </ul>	PMU	EPA communications specialist, BD focal point, other relevant sector leads, and Conservation International.	
Banner	A banner about the project	<i>For visibility towards key national and regional</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meetings</li> <li>CI social media handles</li> </ul>	PMU	EPA communications specialist, BD focal point, other relevant	

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PRODUCT	DESCRIPTION	SPECIFY THE TARGET AUDIENCE	DISTRIBUTION CHANNEL/PLATFORM	RESPONSIBLE (LEAD)	SUPPORT	ACHIEVEMENTS
		<i>stakeholders</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The EPA's social media handles</li> <li>Other partner's social media handles</li> </ul>		sector leads, and Conservation International.	
Flyers	In summary of the project	<i>Awareness</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dissemination during workshops/peer visits with other child projects, and any exchange programs</li> </ul>	PMU	EPA communications specialist, BD focal point, other relevant sector leads, and Conservation International.	

160. The CI logo shall be displayed in project publications in accordance with the CI Logo Use Guidelines following written approval by CI. All other uses of the logo or the name of CI are subject to the execution of a separate licensing agreement. All uses of the GEF logo outside of the GEF Communication and Visibility Policy require prior written approval by CI.

161. The Executing Agency and Partners shall share knowledge management materials with CI, to the extent legally permissible, non-sensitive results data and work products collected, procured or otherwise developed under this project as well as lessons learned that might be beneficial to the design and implementation of similar projects shall be made publicly available. The Executing Agency, Partners, and/or CI-GEF Agency shall share such materials through the CI-GEF website or other appropriate online fora as well as with local beneficiaries and stakeholders.

We thus confirm that an approach to Knowledge Management and Learning has been clearly described during Project Preparation in the Project Description that these activities have been budgeted and an anticipated timeline for delivery of relevant outputs has been provided.

☒ Yes

### Socio-economic Benefits

We confirm that the project design has considered socio-economic benefits to be delivered by the project and these have been clearly described in the Project Description and will be monitored and reported on during project implementation (at MTR and TER).

162. At the 1992 Earth Summit, the governments of the world agreed on a new agenda for sustainable development which included the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) which, among others, called on governments to establish systems of protected areas and to manage these in support of conservation, sustainable use and equitable socio-economic benefit sharing<sup>45</sup>. The governments

<sup>45</sup> IUCN 1998. Economic Values of Protected Areas: Guidelines for Protected Area Managers. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK.

recognized protected areas as socio-economic institutions which have a key role to play in the alleviation of poverty and maintenance of the global community's critical life-support systems. This vision for protected areas requires an awareness and understanding of the socio-economic values of protected areas and ensuring their protection.

163. The Global Biodiversity framework provides that four overarching goals are targeted to be achieved by 2050 and focus on ecosystem and species health including to halt human-induced species extinction, the sustainable use of biodiversity, equitable sharing of benefits, and on implementation and finance. Among the twenty-three targets to be achieved by 2030 include 30 per cent conservation of land, sea and inland waters, and 30 per cent restoration of degraded ecosystems, among others and these lead to enhancing socioeconomic benefits<sup>46</sup>.
164. Delivery of socio-economic benefits to local communities and at the national level is an integral aspect of GEF-funded projects. Demonstrating the socio-economic importance of protected areas in this project will significantly increase political and stakeholder support, help resolve conflicts between different interest groups, lead to positive changes in policies and decision-making and unravel alternative and sustainable sources of financing the management of the protected area<sup>47</sup>. Insights provided by this project will help to identify a combination of actions and land-use practices that best support sustainable and equitable access to, and utilization of socio-economic benefits derived from forest landscapes while retaining the conservation goals.
165. Forest reserves and Protected areas (PAs) are a cornerstone of biodiversity conservation<sup>48</sup>. This project recognizes the role of reserved land in the protection of species and ecosystems and will contribute to the achievement of Global Biodiversity Framework goals and Convention on Biodiversity's Aichi strategic Goals A, B, C, D, and E and Targets 1, 11, and 12<sup>49</sup> that will, in turn, enhance the socio-economic benefits of protected areas' species and ecosystems.
166. Given the dependence of the national economy on natural resources in Sierra Leone and the Guinea-Liberia-Sierra Leone landscapes generally, improved management of the resources will enhance benefits to the economy and the local population. In protected areas where local communities receive direct socio-economic benefits through established benefit-sharing arrangements in the form of support to alternative livelihoods and improved agricultural methods, such as in this Gola landscape, improved management will enhance the socio-economic benefits through the sustainable generation of revenue.
167. The project will improve forest landscape management approaches, enhance adaptive capacity, reduce the vulnerability of the protected area and enhance resilience. In this regard, resilience refers to the ability of a protected area system and its component parts to anticipate, absorb, accommodate, or recover from the effects of a hazardous event trend or disturbance in a timely and efficient manner,

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<sup>46</sup> Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework -Accessed at: [https://www.unep.org/resources/kunming-montreal-global-biodiversity-framework?gclid=CjwKCAjwkY2qBhBDEiwAoQXK5YYLFD9IVrL9aTJ5Gyf8hyJ6w3cABgg\\_WK3du1s\\_COYwYyWz0BAE-BoCPEQQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.unep.org/resources/kunming-montreal-global-biodiversity-framework?gclid=CjwKCAjwkY2qBhBDEiwAoQXK5YYLFD9IVrL9aTJ5Gyf8hyJ6w3cABgg_WK3du1s_COYwYyWz0BAE-BoCPEQQAvD_BwE) on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 at 1428hrs.

<sup>47</sup> Institute of European Environmental Policy 2013. Social and economic benefits of protected areas. Accessed from website <https://ieep.eu/news/social-and-economic-benefits-of-protected-areas--1223> on 02 November 2023.

<sup>48</sup> Visconti, P., Bakkenes, M., Smith, R. J., Joppa, L., & Sykes, R. E. (2015). Socio-economic and ecological impacts of global protected area expansion plans. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 370(1681), 20140284.

<sup>49</sup> CBD 2010. Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Accessed from website <https://www.cbd.int/sp/> on 02 November 2023.

including by ensuring the preservation, restoration, or improvement of its essential basic structures and functions while maintaining the capacity for adaptation, learning, and transformation<sup>50</sup>. Three dimensions of resilience that will be considered in this project are buffer capacity (resources that will buffer shocks and stresses); self-regulation (the degree to which protected area managers will direct their actions and outcomes), and learning (experimenting, innovating, and integrating experiences into action)<sup>51</sup>.

168. In order to deliver the socio-economic benefits of the project, the following will be taken into account during project implementation:

- **Climate Resilience:** In the context of this project, climate resilience is the ability of protected area managers to anticipate, prepare for, and respond to hazardous events, trends, or disturbances related to climate. Improving climate resilience of protected areas involves assessing how climate change will create new, or alter current, climate-related risks, and taking steps to better cope with these risks<sup>52</sup>. Climate change is a fundamental phenomenon in protected area management because it results in ecologically significant changes in species abundance, composition, diversity, physiology, community composition, biotic interactions, and behaviour including feeding and breeding success which the project interventions will help to support<sup>53</sup>. Wild animals, therefore, face new challenges for survival because of differential responses by species to climate change which alter the ecosystems and habitats<sup>54</sup>.
- **Ecological resilience:** is the capacity of a system to undergo disturbance and reorganize so as to still maintain essentially the same functions, structures, and controls<sup>55</sup>. Effective management of protected areas requires an understanding of the ecosystem's response to stressors and disturbances in order to guide management actions<sup>56</sup>. This project provides the additional ability for managing protected areas and associated community forests to enhance their resilience to cope with stressors and disturbances<sup>57</sup>. The project will facilitate capacity building and enhance transboundary collaboration, which will deepen understanding of the factors influencing the ecological resilience of the landscape, interactions of biological resources, their variability, and the capacity to support habitats and species across borders. Effective management (particularly enhanced collaboration) and monitoring and analysis of the status of resources will contribute to a sustained flow of ecological goods and services and the attendant benefits to the stakeholders.
- **Social-ecological resilience:** this connotes the capacity to continue functioning despite stresses or shocks. To ensure ecological resilience to environmental change, protected area managers will

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<sup>50</sup> IPCC, 2012: Glossary of terms. In Field, C.B. et al., Edited, Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation. A Special Report of Working Groups I and II of IPCC. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.

<sup>51</sup> Balvanera, P., Daw, T. M., Gardner, T. A., Martín-López, B., Norström, A. V., Speranza, C. I., ... & Kittinger, J. N. (2017). Key features for more successful place-based sustainability research on social-ecological systems: a Programme on Ecosystem Change and Society (PECS) perspective. *Ecology and Society*, 22(1).

<sup>52</sup> Centre for climate and energy solutions 2020. Climate Resilience Portal. Accessed from website <https://www.c2es.org/content/climate-resilience-overview/> on 02 November 2023 at 1014 hours.

<sup>53</sup> Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2001a. *Climate Change 2001: The Scientific Basis*. J. T. Houghton, Y. Ding, D. J. Griggs, M. Noguer, P. J. van der Linden, and D. Xiaosu (Eds.), Contribution of Working Group I to the Third Assessment Report of the IPCC. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>54</sup> Root, T. L., & Schneider, S. H. 2002. Climate change: overview and implications for wildlife. *Wildlife responses to climate change: North American case studies*, 10(2002), 765-766. Island Press, Washington D.C.

<sup>55</sup> Zaccarelli, N., Petrosillo, I., & Zurlini, G. (2008). Retrospective analysis. *Current Opinion in Plant Biology*, 7, 254-261.

<sup>56</sup> Pecl, G. T., Araújo, M. B., Bell, J. D., Blanchard, J., Bonebrake, T. C., Chen I. C., et al. (2017). Biodiversity redistribution under climate change: impacts on ecosystems and human well-being. *Science* 355, 1389–1400.

<sup>57</sup> Curtin, C. G., & Parker, J. P. (2014). Foundations of resilience thinking. *Conservation Biology*, 28(4), 912-923.

require a proactive response to new conditions that will maintain ecosystem functionality, connectivity, and adaptive capacity<sup>58</sup>.

- **Improved management frameworks:** The project will enhance decision-making and planning for improved management, resource use, and sustainability of socio-economic activities such as tourism and ecotourism. Building human capacity through training and technical support to collect, assess and report quality data and to identify, respond and manage the current and future threats will increase science-based decision-making thus enhancing the coping strategies of the adjacent local communities.
- **Food security:** Food and nutrition security is a critical socio-economic parameter of livelihoods and food insecurity can drive local people to engage in illegal resource harvesting. The project will support improved land management in the PA buffer area surrounding communities and thus enhance land productivity. In addition, the intervention will increase the capacity of management institutions to plan, monitor, analyze and link protected area data to agricultural production and productivity in the surrounding areas which largely account for sustainable food and nutrition security. Furthermore, forestry and related natural resources are critical to socio-economic development as they provide environmental support to food production, biodiversity conservation, protection of water catchments, and soil and water conservation among others. Health is interrelated with the environment, climate, water, and food and nutrition security. A combination of these factors increases local communities' resilience to the effects of climate change impacts and related shocks that may affect the protected areas in their proximity.

## F. Environmental and Social Safeguards

We confirm that we have provided information regarding Environmental and Social risks associated with the proposed project or program, including risk screenings/ assessments and, if applicable, management plans or other measures to address identified risks and impacts (this information should be presented in **Annex H**).

☒ Yes ☐ No (If –and only if– NO is selected, a pop-up field should open for the Agency to provide an explanation)

Please provide overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PROJECT CATEGORY	Category A	Category B	Category C
		X	
<i>Justification: The proposed project has the potential to cause adverse environmental and social impacts on human populations or environmentally or socially important areas. However, these impacts are site-specific; few if any of them are irreversible; and in most cases, mitigation measures can be designed more readily than for Category A projects.</i>			

<sup>58</sup> Herbert, R. J., Ross, K., Whetter, T., & Bone, J. (2020). Maintaining ecological resilience on a regional scale: Coastal saline lagoons in a northern European marine protected area. In *Marine Protected Areas* (pp. 631-647). Elsevier.



169. Apart from the safeguard policy, this project is required to comply with the GEF's policies on Accountability and Grievance, Gender mainstreaming, and Stakeholder Engagement<sup>59</sup>. As such, the project developed the Accountability and Grievance Mechanism; a Gender Mainstreaming Plan (GMP) and a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP).

### **Gender Mainstreaming**

170. To ensure that the project complies with the GEF's Gender Policy, a **Gender Mainstreaming Plan (GMP)** was prepared during the PPG process. Sex disaggregated data and gender information will be collected and analyzed to inform gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation. The following minimum gender indicators will be monitored and reported on:

- (i) Number of men and women that participated in project activities (e.g., meetings, workshops, consultations).
- (ii) Number of men and women that received benefits (e.g., employment, income-generating activities, training, equipment, leadership roles) from the project; as relevant.
- (iii) Number of strategies, plans (e.g., management plans and land use plans), and policies derived from the project that are gender inclusive.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

171. To ensure that the project complies with the GEF's Stakeholders' Engagement Policy, the EA (EPA) supported by the PPG consultant developed a **Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)**. The EA through effectively supervising the PMU will monitor and report on the following minimum stakeholder engagement indicators:

- (i) Number of government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector actors, academia and other stakeholder groups that have been involved in the project implementation phase on an annual basis.
- (ii) Number of persons (sex-disaggregated) that have been involved in the project implementation phase (quarterly basis); and
- (iii) Number of engagement activities (e.g., meetings, workshops, consultations) with stakeholders during the project implementation phase (quarterly basis).

### **Accountability and Grievance Mechanism (AGM)**

172. To ensure that the project complies with CI-GEF's AGM Standard, an **AGM plan** was developed to ensure that the people directly or indirectly affected by the project can bring their grievances for consideration and redress. The main centres for handling the complaints include at the country level where the Project Focal Person (the Project Manager/coordinator housed within EPA) and the National Project Steering Committee will provide the first level of redress. At the regional level, Conservation International will be the centre of grievance redress. The mechanism will be in place before the start of project activities and disclosed to all stakeholders at inception and throughout

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<sup>59</sup> Guidelines on GEF's Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards (GEF/C.55/Inf.05) Accessed on website: [https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/guidelines\\_gef\\_policy\\_environmental\\_social\\_safeguards.pdf](https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/guidelines_gef_policy_environmental_social_safeguards.pdf) on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 1027hrs.

project implementation in a language, manner, and means that best suit the local context. The EA will monitor and report on the following minimum accountability and grievance indicators:

- (i) Number of times/events the grievance mechanism is disseminated to stakeholders.
- (ii) Percentage of conflict and complaint cases reported to the project's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism that have been addressed.

## ANNEXES

### ANNEX A: Financing Tables

#### I. GEF Financing Table

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

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country Name/Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)		
					GEF Project Financing (a)	Agency Fee (b)	Total (c)=a+b
CI	GEF TF	Sierra Leone	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	2,233,224	200,990	2,434,214
CI	GEF TF	Sierra Leone	Climate Change	CC STAR Allocation	893,290	80,395	937,685
CI	GEF TF	Sierra Leone	Land degradation	LD STAR Allocation	446,645	40,198	486,843
CI	GEF TF	Sierra Leone	BD	BD IP Matching Incentives	744,408	66,996	811,404
CI	GEF TF	Sierra Leone	CC	CC IP Matching Incentives	297,763	26,798	324,561
CI	GEF TF	Sierra Leone	LD	LD IP Matching Incentives	148,882	13,399	162,281
CI	GEF TF	Sierra Leone	International Waters IP contributions	International Waters IP Contributions	786,094	70,749	856,843
<b>Total GEF Resources</b>					<b>5,550,306</b>	<b>499,525</b>	<b>6,049,831</b>

#### II. Project preparation grant (PPG)

Was Project Preparation Grant requested? Yes ☒ No ☐ If no, skip item E.1.

**PPG AMOUNT REQUESTED BY AGENCY(IES), TRUST FUND, COUNTRY(IES) AND THE PROGRAMMING OF FUNDS**

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/Regional/Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)		
					PPG (a)	Agency Fee (b)	Total c = a + b
CI	GEF TF	Sierra Leone	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	60,354	5,432	65,786
CI	GEF TF	Sierra Leone	Climate Change	CC STAR Allocation	24,142	2,173	26,315
CI	GEF TF	Sierra Leone	Land degradation	LD STAR Allocation	12,071	1,086	13,157
CI	GEF TF	Sierra Leone	BD	BD IP Matching Incentives	20,117	1,811	21,928

CI	GEF TF	Sierra Leone	CC	CC IP Matching Incentives	8,047	723	8,770
CI	GEF TF	Sierra Leone	LD	LD IP Matching Incentives	4,023	362	4,385
CI	GEF TF	Sierra Leone	International Waters IP contributions	International Waters IP Contributions	21,245	1,912	23,157
<b>Total PPG Amount</b>					<b>149,999</b>	<b>13,499</b>	<b>163,498</b>

DOES THE PROJECT INCLUDE A “NON-GRANT” INSTRUMENT? **NO**

### III. Sources of Funds for Country STAR Allocation

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/Global	Focal Area	Source of Funds	Total
CI	GEF TRUST FUND	Sierra Leone	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	2,500,000
CI	GEF TRUST FUND	Sierra Leone	Climate Change	CC STAR Allocation	1,000,000
CI	GEF TRUST FUND	Sierra Leone	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation	500,000
<b>Total GEF Resources</b>					<b>4,000,000</b>

### IV. Focal/Non-Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
		GEF Project Financing	Co-financing
IP-West Africa	GEF Trust Fund	5,550,306	<b>7,996,441</b>
<b>Total Project Cost</b>		<b>5,550,306</b>	<b>7,996,441</b>

## V. Confirmed Sources of Co-financing for the project by name and by type

Please include evidence for each co-financing for the project with this form.

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount (\$)
GEF Agency	Conservation International	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	826,441
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (Forestry and Wildlife Department)	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	300,000
Recipient Country Government	Environment Protection Agency of Sierra Leone (EPA-SL)	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	4,000,000
Recipient Country Government	The National Protected Areas Authority (NPAA)	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	300,000
Civil Society Organization (Government-NGO partnership)	The Gola Rainforest Conservation Limited by Guarantee (GRC-LG)	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	100,000
Civil Society Organization (CSO)	The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	20,000
Civil Society Organization (CSO)	Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL)	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	500,000
Civil Society Organization (CSO)	Africa Wildlife Foundation (AWF)/Environment Foundation for Africa (EFA)	In-Kind	Recurrent Expenditures	500,000
		Grant	Investment mobilized	1,000,000
Multilateral Agency	The Regional Center for Mapping Resources for Development (RCMRD)	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	250,000
Civil Society Organization (CSO)	The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	In-Kind	Recurrent Expenditures	200,000
<b>Total Co-financing</b>				<b>7,996,441</b>

### Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

The \$1,000,000 grant-co-financing breakdown is below. Materialization of this amount will be reported annually for the next 5 years in line with the project period.

1. European Union NaturAfrica program's investments to the Gola Landscape: **\$180,000**
2. Support for the Sierra Leone Biodiversity Economy Process: **\$240,000**. Breakdown below.
  - AWF Unrestricted Sources (Current): \$40,000
  - Additional Fundraising Target over 2 Years: \$200,000
3. Tiwai Island conservation and biomonitoring resources individual donors, foundations, corporates to AWF: **\$90,000**
4. Support for Tiwai Island Ecotourism Revenue Generation: **\$150,000**. Breakdown below.
  - AWF Current Annual Revenue: \$30,000
  - AWF/EFA tourism product enhancements: \$100,000
  - EFA Contribution: \$20,000
5. UNESCO's support for Joint Management Plan Development for Gola and Tiwai: **\$100,000**
6. Rainforest Trust's support for Tiwai Island Conservation Status Upgrade: **\$240,000**

## ANNEX B: Project Results Framework

<b>Objective:</b>	To conserve and restore Kambui Hills Forest Reserve (FR) and the associated community forest lands in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape <sup>60</sup> in order to address climate change impacts
<b>Indicator(s):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Area of Terrestrial Protected Areas (PAs) created or under improved management (GEF Core Indicator 1.2): Target: 22,428 ha</li> <li>b. Area of forest and forest land under restoration (GEF Core Indicator 3.1): Target: 10,000 ha</li> <li>c. Area of landscapes under improved practices (GEF Core Indicator 4.1 and 4.5): Target 70,000 ha</li> <li>d. Metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated (GEF Core Indicator 6): (Target: 1.57 million tCO<sub>2</sub>e)</li> <li>e. Number of direct beneficiaries from GEF-financed investments disaggregated by sex (GEF Core Indicator 11): Target: 172,630 people of which 30% Women</li> <li>f. Level of engagement in IW: LEARN through participation and delivery of key products (GEF Core Indicator 7.4): Target: Level 2</li> </ul>

Expected Outcomes and Indicators	Project Baseline for Outcome Indicators	End of Project Target for Outcome Indicators	Expected Outputs, with Indicators and targets
<b>Component 1:</b> Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills FR, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape			
<b>Outcome 1.1.:</b> Strengthened coordination and capacity amongst key stakeholders (state and non-state actors and communities) for effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape  <b>Indicator 1.1:</b> <i>Number of coordination mechanisms among state and non-state agencies in the Greater Gola Landscape to improve biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management</i>	<b>Baseline 1.1:</b> Limited coordination between state and non-state agencies governing the Gola Forest.	<b>Outcome Target 1.1:</b> At least one coordination mechanism in place for effective collaboration among state and non-state actors in the Gola Landscape.	<b>Output 1.1.1.:</b> Gender-responsive policies, plans, tools and guidelines to support sustainable forest and land use planning and management reviewed and implemented. <b>Indicator 1.1.1:</b> <i>Number of gender-responsive policies, plans, tools and guidelines to support sustainable forest and land-use planning and management reviewed and implemented.</i> <b>Target 1.1.1.:</b> <i>At least 4 gender-responsive policies, plans, tools and guidelines to support sustainable forest and land-use planning management enhanced.</i>  <b>Output 1.1.2.:</b> State and non-state actors (from key government ministries, departments, agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, private sector and communities) trained to support inclusive and gender-responsive effective management of the Greater Gola Forest landscape. <b>Indicator 1.1.2:</b> <i>Number of state and non-state actors (from key government ministries, departments, agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, private sector and communities) trained</i>

<sup>60</sup> For purposes of this Project, the Greater Gola Forest Landscape includes the Protected areas (Gola Forest NP, Kambui Hills FR and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary) and the surrounding communities in Eastern and Southern Provinces of Sierra Leone, as part of the Guinean Forest Biome

Expected Outcomes and Indicators	Project Baseline for Outcome Indicators	End of Project Target for Outcome Indicators	Expected Outputs, with Indicators and targets
			<p>to support inclusive, and gender-responsive effective management of the Gola Forest Landscape.</p> <p><b>Target 1.1.2.:</b> At least 20 state and 40 non-state actors (from key government ministries, departments, agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, private sector and communities) trained to support inclusive, and gender-responsive effective management of Gola Forest Landscape (Target at least 140 trainees of which 30% women: 80 people from state agencies and 60 from non-state agencies)</p> <p><b>Output 1.1.3:</b> Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders (local communities, CSOs/NGOs, private sector and Gola Transboundary Committees) to support inclusive, and gender-responsive effective governance of the Greater Gola landscape enhanced.</p> <p><b>Indicator 1.1.3:</b> Number of coordination mechanisms (e.g. steering committees, interministerial committees, etc.) established and facilitated to support inclusive, and gender-responsive effective governance of the Greater Gola Forest landscape, with at least 30% women and 70% men, and representation of local communities</p> <p><b>Target 1.1.3.:</b> At least one coordination mechanism established and implemented to support inclusive, and gender-responsive effective governance of the Gola Forest landscape</p> <p><b>Output 1.1.4:</b> A national gender-responsive centre of excellence hub established and functional to build capacity for enhanced forest management, biodiversity conservation monitoring and land use planning for climate resilience..</p> <p><b>Indicator 1.1.4:</b> Number of national gender-responsive hubs established to support inclusive, capacity building and monitoring biodiversity conservation, land use planning and management for enhanced climate resilience</p> <p><b>Target 1.1.4:</b> At least one national gender-responsive hub established to support inclusive capacity building and monitoring</p>



Expected Outcomes and Indicators	Project Baseline for Outcome Indicators	End of Project Target for Outcome Indicators	Expected Outputs, with Indicators and targets
			<i>biodiversity conservation, land use planning and management for enhanced climate resilience</i>
<b>Component 2:</b> Promoting participatory and gender-responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods			
<p><b>Outcome 2.1.:</b> Enhanced sustainable resource use by communities adjacent to targeted PAs within the Gola landscape</p> <p><b>Indicator 2.1.:</b> Area of landscapes under improved practices by communities adjacent to the targeted PAs within the Gola landscape</p>	<p><b>Baseline 2.1:</b> The area adjacent to the Gola landscape is subjected to degradation through unsustainable practices/resource use by local communities</p>	<p><b>Target 2.1:</b> At least 70,000 Hectares of the landscape under improved practices by communities adjacent to the targeted PAs within the Gola landscape</p>	<p><b>Output 2.1.1:</b> Gender-sensitive community awareness and education programs to support sustainable forest management, land use planning and climate change adaptation developed and implemented.  <b>Indicator 2.1.1:</b> Number of gender-sensitive community awareness/education initiatives implemented  <b>Target 2.1.1:</b> Target 2.1.1: At least 5 gender-sensitive community awareness/education initiatives implemented per chiefdom reaching out to at least 149,000 people within the chiefdoms, of which 30% are women.</p> <p><b>Output 2.1.2.:</b> Gender-responsive participatory spatial / landscape plans for the Greater Gola Forest landscape developed /updated and implemented  <b>Indicator 2.1.2.:</b> Number of gender-responsive participatory spatial/landscape plans for the Greater Gola Forest Landscape developed/updated and implemented using participatory approaches  <b>Target 2.1.2.:</b> At least two (2) gender-responsive participatory spatial/landscape plans for the Greater Gola Forest Landscape developed or updated and implemented using participatory approaches.</p> <p><b>Output 2.1.3.:</b> Gender-responsive and climate-resilient alternative income-generating initiatives supported, ensuring inclusive participation and equitable benefits for all genders while promoting sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.  <b>Indicator 2.1.3a.:</b> Number of gender-responsive and climate-resilient alternative income-generating initiatives supported.  <b>Target 2.1.3a.:</b> At least 3 gender-responsive and climate-resilient alternative income-generating initiatives supported.</p>

Expected Outcomes and Indicators	Project Baseline for Outcome Indicators	End of Project Target for Outcome Indicators	Expected Outputs, with Indicators and targets
			<p><b>Indicator 2.1.3b.:</b> Number of people (segregated by gender) who are direct beneficiaries of gender-responsive and climate-resilient alternative income-generating initiatives.</p> <p><b>Target 2.1.3b:</b> At least 22,940 people (30% women) benefiting from gender-responsive and climate-resilient alternative income-generating initiatives</p> <p><b>Output 2.1.4.:</b> Innovative, equitable and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management supported.,</p> <p><b>Indicator 2.1.4a.:</b> Number of innovative and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management.</p> <p><b>Target 2.1.4a.:</b> At least 3 innovative inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management.</p> <p><b>Indicator 2.1.4b.:</b> Number of people (segregated by gender) who are direct beneficiaries of pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management.</p> <p><b>Target 2.1.4b.:</b> At least 500 people (30% women) are direct beneficiaries of pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management</p> <p><b>Output 2.1.5:</b> Inclusive community-based reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives to improve access to ecosystem services implemented.</p> <p><b>Indicator 2.1.5:</b> Area (Hectares) of landscapes under improved practices</p> <p><b>Target 2.1.5:</b> At least 70, 000 Hectares of the landscape under improved practices</p>
<b>Component 3:</b> Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation			

Expected Outcomes and Indicators	Project Baseline for Outcome Indicators	End of Project Target for Outcome Indicators	Expected Outputs, with Indicators and targets
<p><b>Outcome 3.1.:</b> Strengthened biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use of the Kambui Hills FR and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape</p> <p><b>Indicator 3.1.:</b> Number of Hectares of protected areas with improved METT Score</p> <p><b>Indicator 3.1b:</b> Number of metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated</p>	<p><b>Baseline 3.1a:</b> Insufficient capacity to effectively manage the Kambui Hills FR, Kambui South Forest Reserve and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary. At the PPG Phase, the cumulative METT Score of the 3 Target protected areas is 150 and this is provided in the Biodiversity Tracking Tool.</p> <p><b>Baseline 3.1b:</b> No metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e mitigated by the Sierra Leone Guinean Forests Child Project</p>	<p><b>Target 3.1a:</b> 22,428 Ha of protected areas with at least 80% improvement in METT Score (hence the target is reaching at least 270 METT Score)</p> <p><b>Target 3.1b:</b> 1.57 Million tCO<sub>2</sub>e of greenhouse gas emissions mitigated</p>	<p><b>Output 3.1.1.:</b> Extent of deforestation and forest degradation in Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests established, documented and restoration implemented.</p> <p><b>Indicator 3.1.1.:</b> Number of assessments undertaken to determine the level of deforestation and forest degradation of Kambui Hills FR and associated community forests to guide management interventions</p> <p><b>Target 3.1.1.:</b> At least one assessment undertaken to determine the level of deforestation and forest degradation of Kambui Hills FR and associated community forests to guide management interventions.</p> <p><b>Output 3.1.2:</b> Forest conservation and regeneration as one of the strategies for improved ecosystem health and sustainable financing promoted.</p> <p><b>Indicator 3.1.2a:</b> Area (hectares) under improved management effectiveness</p> <p><b>Target 3.1.2a:</b> At least 22,428 hectares under improved management effectiveness.</p> <p><b>Indicator 3.1.2b:</b> Area (hectares) under land and ecosystems restoration</p> <p><b>Target 3.1.2b:</b> At least 10,000 hectares of land and ecosystems under restoration</p>
<b>Component 4: Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management</b>			
<p><b>Outcome 4.1.:</b> Strengthened institutional structures for transboundary collaboration between Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia for improved management of the Mano Watershed</p> <p><b>Indicator 4.1a:</b> Number of strengthened institutional structures in place to facilitate transboundary management</p>	<p><b>Baseline 4.1a:</b> Coordination and institutional structures for governance of the Mano watershed are weak. The committees established under the Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management Project (GEF ID: 4953) have not been operationalized and need to be revitalized and</p>	<p><b>Target 4.1a:</b> At least 1 strengthened institutional structure in place to facilitate joint transboundary management of the Mano Watershed.</p> <p><b>Target 4.1b:</b> At least 5 gender-responsive knowledge management products shared on the</p>	<p><b>Output 4.1.1:</b> The functioning of the committees established under the IUCN-MRU-IW Project to support improved management and sustainable use of river basin resources operationalized and institutionalized within MRU.</p> <p><b>Indicator 4.1.1:</b> Number of committees supported to undertake actions for joint cross-border natural resource management.</p> <p><b>Target 4.1.1.:</b> At least three (3) committees supported to undertake actions for joint cross-border natural resource management.</p> <p><b>Output 4.1.2:</b> Capacity for applied research to inform decision-making processes for transboundary watershed and forest management enhanced.</p>

Expected Outcomes and Indicators	Project Baseline for Outcome Indicators	End of Project Target for Outcome Indicators	Expected Outputs, with Indicators and targets
<p><i>of the Mano watershed (leveraging the regional committee that was established by the Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management Project)</i></p> <p><b>Indicator 4.1b:</b> Level of engagement in IW: LEARN<sup>61</sup> through participation and delivery of key products</p>	<p>institutionalized to function effectively. In addition, there are capacity-building gaps with respect to gathering and synthesizing scientific, local and people science and mainstreaming it into decision-making processes.</p> <p><b>Baseline 4.1b:</b> Limited participation and delivery of key products on the IW: LEARN platform by Sierra Leone</p>	<p>IW platform<sup>62</sup> (at least 1 per year)</p>	<p><b>Indicator 4.1.2.:</b> Number of trainings undertaken by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project on applied research to inform decision-making in watershed and forest management.</p> <p><b>Target 4.1.2.:</b> At least 20 people trained (30% women) in three 3 training events undertaken by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project on applied research to inform decision-making in watershed and forest management.</p> <p><b>Output 4.1.3:</b> Nature-based solutions to improve freshwater ecosystem health and mitigate climate change impacts and riverbank deterioration implemented.</p> <p><b>Indicator 4.1.3.:</b> Number of nature-based initiatives implemented in the watershed to improve ecosystem health and reduce riverbank deterioration.</p> <p><b>Target 4.1.3.:</b> At least three nature-based initiatives implemented in the watershed to improve ecosystem health and reduce riverbank deterioration</p>
<b>Component 5: Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons</b>			
<p><b>Outcome 5.1:</b> Strengthened coordination, capacity building, knowledge management, learning and sharing between the Sierra Leone Child Project and initiatives at landscape, national and regional levels including the GEF-8 Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.1:</b> Number of initiatives at various levels</p>	<p><b>Baseline 5.1:</b> Weak coordination, learning and sharing between projects and programs at various levels in the Greater Gola Landscape and the Guinean Forests Biome as a whole</p>	<p><b>Target 5.1:</b> Sierra Leone Guinean Forests Child Project coordinating, learning and sharing with at least 2 initiatives in the Greater Gola Landscape and at least 1 initiative in the broader Guinean Forests Biome (through the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project)</p>	<p><b>Output 5.1.1:</b> A project Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy developed (including gender, equality and inclusion aspects)</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.1.1:</b> Number of Knowledge Management and Communications Strategies developed (including Gender, equality and inclusion aspects)</p> <p><b>Target 5.1.1:</b> At least one Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy (including gender, equality and inclusion aspects) developed and implemented</p> <p><b>Output 5.1.2:</b> Participation in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project 3-day Annual Forums.</p>

<sup>61</sup> IW:LEARN Platform: <https://iwleart.n.net/>

<sup>62</sup> LEARN <https://iwleart.n.net/>

Expected Outcomes and Indicators	Project Baseline for Outcome Indicators	End of Project Target for Outcome Indicators	Expected Outputs, with Indicators and targets
coordinating and sharing with the Sierra Leone Guinean Forests Child Project			<p><b>Indicator 5.1.2:</b> Number of Sierra Leone participants in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project 3-day Annual Forums</p> <p><b>Target 5.1.2:</b> At least 2 Sierra Leone participants in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project Annual Forum (1 rep from the government of Sierra Leone and 1 rep from the PMU, both sponsored by the project), [Total 10 participants (2 per year for 5 years, 50% female)]</p> <p><b>Output 5.1.3:</b> Learning and exposure visits facilitated by the Sierra Leone Child Project (and where applicable coordinated by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project)</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.1.3:</b> Number of Learning and Exposure Visits</p> <p><b>Target 5.1.3:</b> At least 5 learning and exposure trips (1 trip per year, 2 representatives from the Government of Sierra Leone per year), [Total 10 participants (2 people per year for 5 years), 50% women]. This output will also support Sierra local communities to participate in peer exchange visits within the Gola Landscape (2 people per year for 5 years), 50% women]</p> <p><b>Output 5.1.4:</b> Knowledge management products integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects generated, and disseminated at the landscape, national and regional levels including in the (integrating lessons learnt and best-case practices on traditional knowledge for natural resource management, and information on the project as a model for Nature-Based-Solutions)</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.1.4:</b> Number of policy briefs, fact sheets and storytelling videos (integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects) prepared and disseminated by the end of the project</p> <p><b>Target 5.1.4:</b> At least 5 policy briefs, 5 fact sheets and 5 storytelling videos integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects prepared and disseminated by the end of the project</p>
<b>Component 6: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&amp;E) Framework</b>			

Expected Outcomes and Indicators	Project Baseline for Outcome Indicators	End of Project Target for Outcome Indicators	Expected Outputs, with Indicators and targets
<p><b>Outcome 6.1:</b> An effective and gender-responsive M&amp;E system for the project</p> <p><b>Indicator 6.1:</b> Number of gender-responsive M&amp;E systems established and implemented for the project.</p>	<p><b>Baseline 6.1:</b> No M&amp;E framework for the Project.</p>	<p><b>Target 6.1:</b> 5 Annual Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) approved by CI-GEF and submitted to the GEF.</p>	<p><b>Output 6.1.1:</b> Periodic M&amp;E reports submitted to CI-GEF Agency.  <b>Indicator 6.1.1.:</b> Number of periodic M&amp;E Reports submitted to CI-GEF Agency.  <b>Target 6.1.1.:</b> 20 quarterly technical reports; Five (5) annual financial reports; two (2) Biodiversity Tracking tool (METT); 1 Final Project Report submitted to CI-GEF Agency</p> <p><b>Output 6.1.2.:</b> Independent evaluations conducted in accordance with the GEF and CI-GEF Evaluation Policies  <b>Indicator 6.1.2.:</b> Number of Mid-Term Evaluation and Terminal Evaluation Reports  <b>Target 5.1.2.:</b> One Mid-Term Evaluation and One Terminal Evaluation Report approved by CI-GEF and submitted to the GEF</p>

## ANNEX C: Project Timeline

	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
Start-up Activities																								
(i) Signing Partnership Contracts																								
(ii) Recruitment of project staff (PMU)																								
(iii) Inception Meetings for awareness and project ownership)																								
(iv) Establish the Project Steering committee (PSC)																								
Component 1: Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills FR, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape																								
Outcome 1.1.: Strengthened coordination amongst key stakeholders (state and non-state actors and communities) for effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape																								
Output 1.1.1: Gender responsive policies, plans, tools and guidelines to support sustainable forest and land use planning and management reviewed and implemented.																								
a) Establish a functional Task Force to review the policy, legal and institutional framework for effective management of Kambui Hills FR.																								
b) Undertake biodiversity economic studies to guide the decision making																								



	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
c) Develop 10 priority policies, plans, tools and guidelines to support SFM, land-use planning, climate resilience.																								
d) Legal services																								
e) Undertake site-specific gender analysis to support the update of the Gender Mainstreaming Plan (GMP).																								
Output 1.1.2: State and non-state actors (from key government ministries, departments, agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, private sector and communities) trained to support effective management of the Greater Gola Forest landscape																								
a) Conduct a comprehensive skills and technological capacity needs assessment																								
b) Conduct training on biological inventories, monitoring and reporting																								
c) Build the capacity of stakeholders in sustainable forest management and forest certification																								

	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
d) Conduct training of national institutions on environment and climate modelling in relation to biodiversity conservation and natural resource utilization																								
e) Conduct training on mainstreaming gender issues in policies, plans, tools and guidelines for biodiversity conservation and land-use planning																								
f) Conduct training on mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use into policies and planning frameworks of relevant state and non-state institutions																								
g) Build Capacity for developing and implementing national biodiversity financing framework																								
Output 1.1.3 Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders (local communities, CSOs/NGOs and private sector) to support effective governance of the Greater Gola landscape enhanced.																								

	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
a) Annual National Project Steering Committee meetings																								
b) Annual inter-institutional coordination and collaboration meetings																								
c) Bi-annual Project Technical Coordination Team Meetings																								
d)																								
Output 1.1.4: A center of excellence hub for capacity building and monitoring biodiversity conservation, land use planning and management for enhanced climate resilience established and functional																								
a) Procure and install GIS and RS Laboratory equipment and materials																								
b) Establish a dedicated computer room for to practical instructor-led training in ICT, GPS, RS and GIS																								
c) Procure one (1) 4WD Vehicle and three (3) motorcycles to facilitate, supervision, monitoring the implementation of field activities and																								

	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
stakeholder coordination																								
d) Design, implement and maintain a database and Information Management System																								
e) Train and mentor stakeholders in ICT, GPS, RS and GIS																								
f) Software upgrade and recalibration of GIS/RS equipment																								
Component 2: Promoting participatory and gender responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods																								
Outcome 2.1.: Enhanced sustainable resource use by communities adjacent to targeted PAs within the Gola landscape																								
Output 2.1.1: Gender sensitive and responsive community awareness and education program to support sustainable forest management, land-use planning and climate change developed and implemented																								
a) Develop an information, communication and education strategy																								
b) Produce and disseminate information, communication and education materials																								
c) Disseminate information through radio programs																								

	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
d) Develop and implement community outreach programme - awareness raising equipment and materials																								
Output 2.1.2.: Gender-responsive participatory spatial / landscape plans for the Greater Gola Forest landscape developed /updated and implemented																								
a) Undertake a spatial mapping of the project area																								
b) Select the priority areas within the project area for participatory land-use planning																								
c) Establish community-based structures to coordinate participatory land-use planning																								
d) Undertake training of stakeholders in land-use planning practices																								
e) Develop participatory community land-use plans																								
f) Support implementation of sustainable land																								

	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
management (SLM) practices																								
Output 2.1.3.: Gender-responsive and climate resilient alternative income-generating initiatives supported, ensuring inclusive participation and equitable benefits for all genders while promoting sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.																								
a) Community mobilization, sensitization and organization																								
b) Participatory selection of priority community livelihood improvement initiatives																								
c) Train communities in group savings and loans facilities to promote the saving culture and encourage credit season.																								
d) Support the implementation of income generating initiatives																								
e) Provide supportive supervision of income generating initiative																								
Output 2.1.4 Innovative and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management supported, ensuring gender equality in participation, access and benefits.																								
a) Sensitize the communities about																								

	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
pro-nature income generation activities.																								
b) Undertake selection of priority pro-nature income generating activities																								
c) Build the capacity of the members of each pro-nature enterprise																								
d) Provide technical support for effective implementation of the enterprises.																								
e) Provide seed-funding for the enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management.																								
f) Supportive supervision of pro-nature enterprise implementation																								
Output 2.1.5: Inclusive community-based reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives to improve access to ecosystem services implemented																								
a) Support reforestation of areas designated for forest land-use purpose within 5Km of the PAs (Kambui, Tiwai and South GRNP)																								



	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
b) Support implementation of sustainable land management (SLM) practices on the agricultural lands																								
c) Support the establishment of protective lands and buffers within 5Km of the PAs (Kambui, Tiwai and South GRNP) – see Output 4.1.3																								
Component 3: Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation																								
Outcome 3.1.: Strengthened biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use of the Kambui Hills FR and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape																								
Output 3.1.1.: Extent of deforestation and forest degradation in Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests established, documented and restored																								
a) Undertake an assessment of the extent of deforestation and forest degradation of Kambui Hills Forest reserve.																								
b) Procure tree seedlings and other planting materials for forest restoration																								

	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
c) Train stakeholders in basic tree nursery and natural forest silvicultural practices.																								
d) Undertake restoration/ rehabilitate of degraded areas within the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve.																								
Output 3.1.2: Forest conservation and regeneration as one of the strategies for improved ecosystem health and sustainable financing promoted.																								
a) Establish a robust system for tracking illegal activities and improve the integrity of the protected areas, including through patrolling, monitoring and reporting																								
b) Support coordination and training of key law enforcement agencies, including relevant Forest Division, NPAA, Police and judicial officials																								
c) Support implementation of biodiversity inventories and tree stock assessments for																								

	Timeline																						
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6		
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3
Kambuyi Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests																							
d) Undertake forest zoning for Kambui Hills FR																							
e) Develop and/or update and implement forest management plans																							
f) Develop implement collaborative forest management (CFM) approaches between the communities/chiefdoms and protected area management agencies.																							
g) Undertake a feasibility study on opportunities and readiness for forest certification																							
h) Build capacity for forest certification that embrace social, economic and environmental aspects of responsible forest management																							
i) Prepare a REDD+ Project Proposal for the																							

	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
Kambui Hills FR and associated community land																								
j) Stakeholder engagement and consultations in REDD+ Project Proposal Preparation																								
k) Develop Environmental Management and Safeguard Framework for conservation and ecosystems management																								
Component 4: Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management																								
Outcome 4.1.: Strengthened institutional structures for transboundary collaboration between Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia for improved management of the Mano Watershed																								
Output 4.1.1: The functioning of the committees established under MRU to support improved management and sustainable use of river basin resources operationalized and institutionalized within MRU.																								
a) Develop/review the ToRs for the Transboundary Committees at regional, national and community-levels. –																								
b) Orientation meeting for the three Transboundary Committees																								

	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
c) Determine priority community level watershed management interventions																								
d) Monitoring the implementation of watershed management interventions at national and community levels																								
e) Institutionalization of the 3 committees at MRU to ensure they are functional beyond the life of the child projects																								
Output 4.1.2: Capacity for applied research to inform decision-making processes for watershed management enhanced through the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project																								
a) Participate in capacity needs assessment for applied research needs to inform decision-making processes for watershed management																								
b) Sponsor/Facilitate stakeholder participation in																								

	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
capacity-building training events on applied research to inform decision-making																								
c) Sponsor/Facilitate participation in regular exchanges of knowledge and lessons learned between member countries and with the MRU																								
d) Develop and share country- and basin-level information for use and monitoring impacts of both the SAP and the RCP																								
e) Provide guidance related to gender and inclusion, such as strategies to target women as recipients of technical assistance and capacity building																								
Output 4.1.3: Nature-based solutions to improve freshwater ecosystem health and mitigate climate change impacts and river bank deterioration implemented.																								
a) Sensitize communities on nature-based solutions																								

	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
b) Selection of priority nature-based solutions for implementation																								
c) Support restoration of ecologically fragile areas (steep slopes, riparian sites, etc within 5Km of the PAs (Kambui, Tiwai and South GRNP).																								
d) Support implementation of other selected nature-based solutions																								
e) Monitoring and reporting on the performance of the nature-based solution(s) being implemented																								
f) Document the process, outcomes, and lessons learned from implementing nature-based solutions																								
Component 5: Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons																								
Outcome 5.1.: Strengthened coordination, capacity building, knowledge management, learning and sharing between the Sierra Leone Child Project and initiatives at landscape, national and regional levels including the GEF-8 Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project																								
Output 5.1.1.: A project Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy developed (including gender, equality and inclusion aspects)																								
a) Develop a gender inclusive Project																								



	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
Knowledge Management and Communication Plan s																								
Output 5.1.2: Experiences and Lessons learned documented and disseminated at landscape, national and regional levels																								
a) Support the participation of at least two (2) representatives to attend Annual Forum organized by the Regional Coordination and Learning Project																								
Output 5.1.3.: Learning and exposure visits facilitated with the Sierra Leone Child Projects (and where applicable coordinated by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project)																								
a) Participate in peer-learning exchange events																								
Output 5.1.4: Knowledge management products integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects generated, and disseminated at landscape, national and regional levels (integrating lessons learnt and best-case practices on traditional knowledge for natural resource management, and information on the project as a model for Nature-Based-Solutions)																								
a) Gender-responsive documentation of project implementation and experiences																								
b) Disseminate knowledge and lessons learned																								
c) Annual National stakeholder leaning exchange events																								
d) Organize national women knowledge																								

	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
exchange/learning events																								
e) Establish lines of communication and forums for knowledge sharing and dissemination of lessons learned at landscape, national and regional levels																								
Component 6: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework																								
Outcome 6.1.: An effective and gender-responsive M&E system for the project																								
Output 6.1.1: Periodic M&E reports submitted to CI-GEF Agency																								
a) Inception workshop and report																								
b) Review project Results Monitoring Plan																								
c) Update the Biodiversity Tracking Tool/Protected Area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT), as well as bespoke tracking tools on subjects such as gender mainstreaming and civil society institutional capacity																								
Output 6.1.2: Mid-Term Evaluation and Terminal Evaluation commissioned by CI-GEF																								

	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
a) Prepare the Terms of Reference and procure the independent evaluation service providers for mid-term review and Terminal Evaluation.																								
b) Undertake the Mid-term Review of the project																								
c) Commission the Terminal evaluation with support from CIGEF																								
d) CIGEF submits the Mid-term Review and TE reports to the GEF Independent Evaluation Office (IEO)																								
Close-up activities																								
a) Technical Reporting - Final APR, PIR and other Technical Reports (A Comprehensive consolidated final CBIT Project report and policy)																								
b) Financial Reporting																								
c) Mid-Term Review																								
d) Terminal Evaluation (Starts after project																								

	Timeline																							
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				Year 6			
	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	
implementation officially ends – Year 5)																								

**ANNEX D: Status of utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG)**

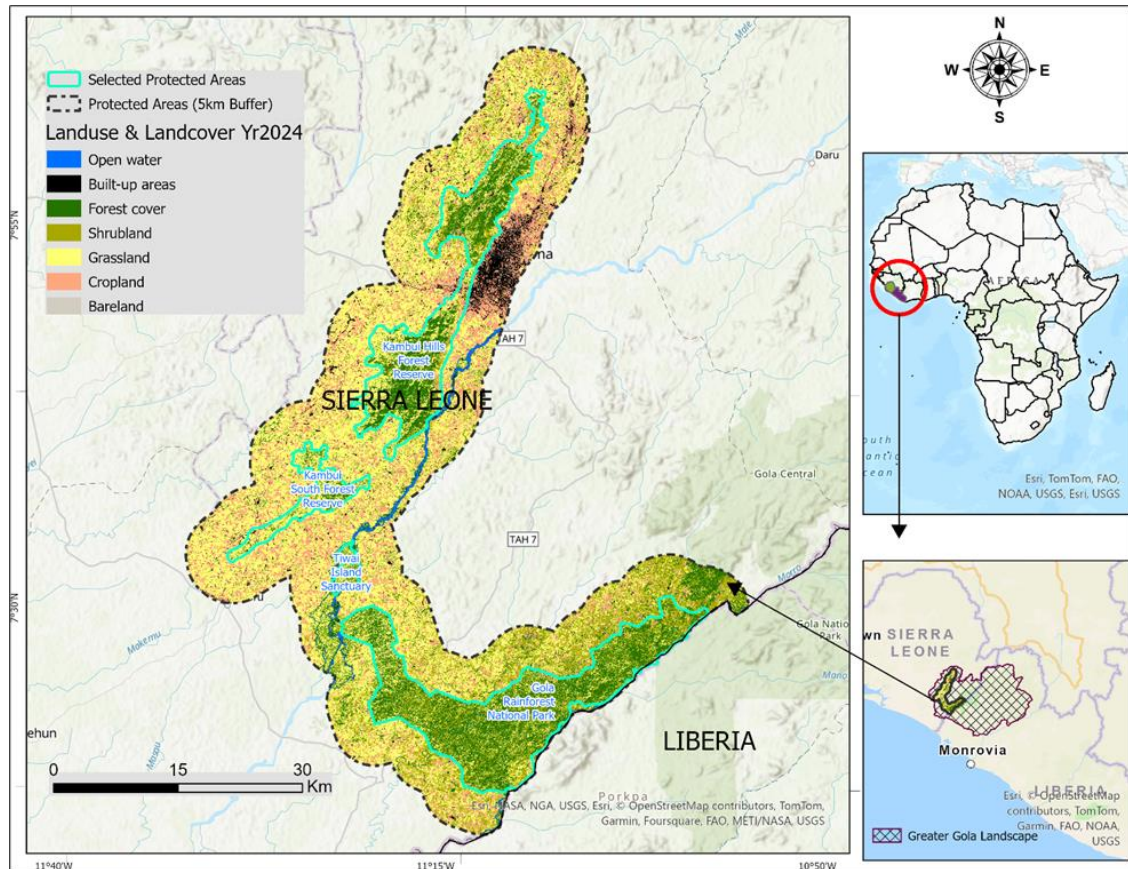
Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status in the table below:

<b><i>Project Preparation Activities Implemented</i></b>	<b><i>GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount (\$)</i></b>		
	<b><i>Budgeted Amount</i></b>	<b><i>Amount Spent to Date</i></b>	<b><i>Amount Committed</i></b>
International Consultant - International and Local Consultants for ProDoc Development	70,000	40,400	29,600
Personnel - coordination and stakeholder engagement	50,000	41,729	8,271
Travel, Meetings, Workshops and supplies e.g., banners etc.	29,999	7,621	22,378
<b>Total</b>	<b>149,999</b>	<b>89,750</b>	<b>60,249</b>

## ANNEX E: Project Map and Coordinates

Please provide geo-referenced information and a map of where the project interventions will take place.

<b>Geo Name ID</b> <i>Required field if the location is not an exact site</i>	<b>Location Name</b> <i>Required field</i>	<b>Latitude</b> <i>Required field</i>	<b>Longitude</b> <i>Required field</i>	<b>Location Description</b> <i>Optional text field</i>	<b>Activity Description</b> <i>Optional text field</i>
2570752	Kambui Hill Forest Reserve	7.7734	-11.2777		
2570754	Kambui South Forest Reserve	7.6243	-11.3694		
2403387	Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary	7.5444	-11.3493		



**Figure 6: The Proposed project Target Protected Areas and associated proposed buffer area**



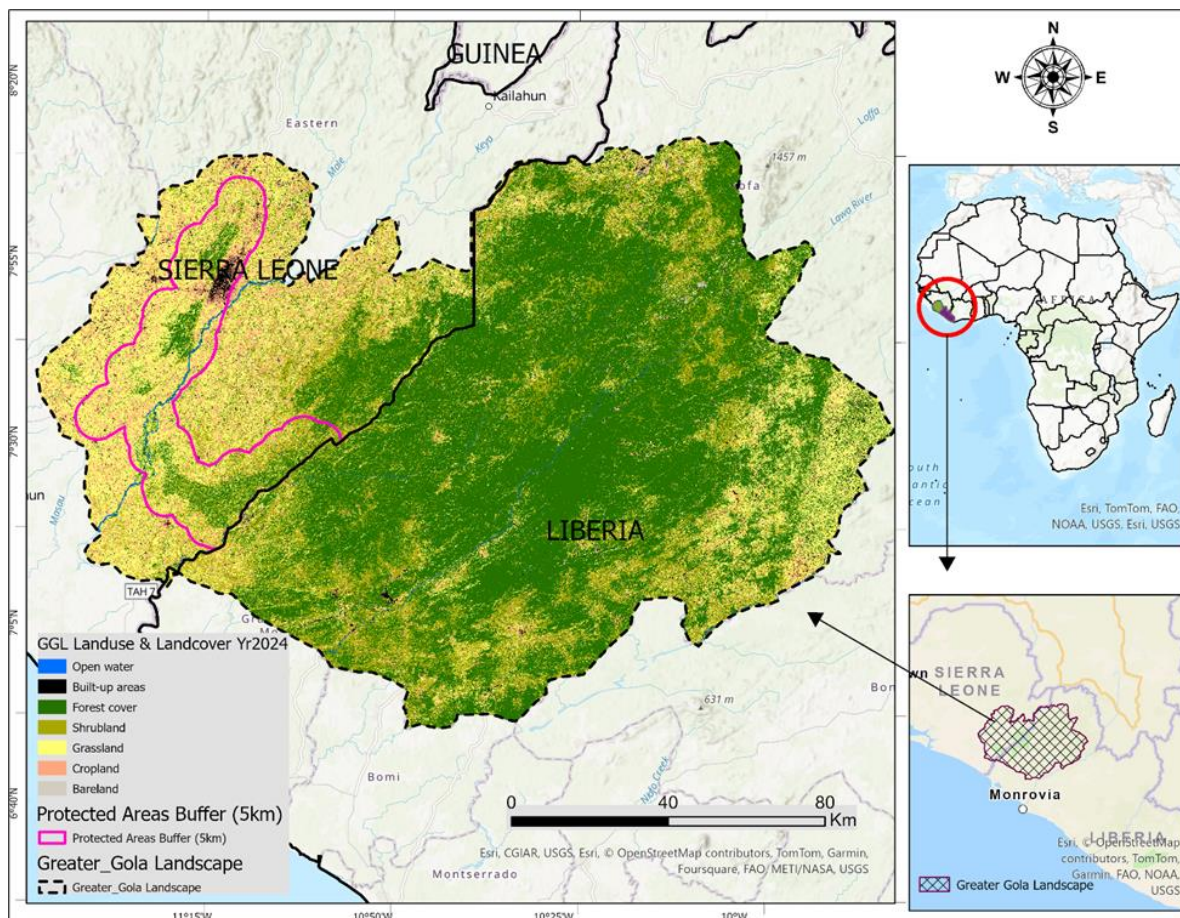


Figure 7: Land use/Land cover types in the proposed target project sites

## ANNEX F: Environmental and Social Safeguards Screening Report (including ESS Risk Categorization)

This section includes:

- a. **The Safeguards Screening Form**
- b. **The Safeguards Screening Analysis Report:** Outlines the Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) Categorization, safeguard triggered, and mitigation plans required.

### Safeguards Screening Analysis Report

☐ Preliminary Screening (Conceptual Stage)    ☒ Second Screening (Proposal Stage)

#### I. PROJECT INFORMATION

##### A. Basic Project Profile

<b>Countries:</b> Sierra Leone	<b>GEF Project ID:</b>
<b>Project Title:</b> Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone's critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape	
<b>Program:</b> West Africa, Amazon, Congo, and Critical Forest Biome (Integrated Program)	
<b>Executing Agency (EA):</b> Environment Protection Agency of Sierra Leone (EPA)	
<b>GEF Focal Area:</b> Multi (Biodiversity, Climate Change, Land Degradation, International Waters)	
<b>GEF Project Amount:</b> USD\$5,550,306	
<b>CI-GEF Project Manager:</b> Charity Nalyanya	
<b>ESS Analysis Performed by:</b> Ian Kissoon, Senior Director of ESMF, CI-GEF Project Agency	
<b>Date of Analysis:</b> June 19, 2024	

##### B. Summary of Project Risk Categorization, ESS Standards Triggered and Mitigation Plans Required

Project Category:	Category A	Category B	Category C
		X	
<i>The proposed project activities have the potential to cause negative environmental and social impacts. However, the impacts are anticipated to be less adverse than those of Category A projects, site-specific, and mitigation measures can be designed more readily than for Category A projects.</i>			
<b>ESS Standards Triggered:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental & Social Impact Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Heritage		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Protection of Natural Habitats and Biodiversity Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Labour and Working Conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Community Health, Safety and Security		

<input type="checkbox"/> Resett. & Physical/Economic Displacement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indigenous Peoples <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Efficiency & Pollution Prevention	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector Direct Investments and Financial Intermediaries <input type="checkbox"/> Climate Risk and Related Disasters
<b>Mitigation Measures Required:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Limited or Full ESIA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental & Social Management Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Plan for Natural Habitat Protection and Biodiversity Conservation <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary Resettlement Action Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Process Framework <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traditional Peoples & Local Communities Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Resource Efficiency & Poll. Prevention Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Heritage Management Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Labour Management Procedures <input type="checkbox"/> Community Health, Safety and Security Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental and Social Management Framework/System <input type="checkbox"/> Climate and Disaster Risk Management Plan

**C. Project Objective:**

To conserve and restore Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and the associated community forest lands as part of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape to address climate change impacts.

**D. Project Description:**

To achieve the project objective, the project is organized under the following components:

**Project Components and Main Activities Proposed:**

**Component 1: Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape**

Capacity-building of key government and non-government stakeholders (including the private sector) in the Gola Forest landscape will focus on mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use into policies and decision-making, allowing for improved planning, management and selection of priority areas. Capacity-building will improve protected area management capacity on the part of government (the National Protected Area Authority and Forest Department), and improve the capacity of chiefdom-level authorities to better participate in processes (including alignment between chiefdom committees and co-management committees). Lessons learned from the project will be widely shared, thereby allowing replication in other critical areas, both in Sierra Leone as well as the wider Guinean Forest region

This support will result in improved stakeholder coordination, increased synergies, reduced conflicts over land use, and landscape-scale spatial planning that will allow for the strategic selection of priority areas for further protection and restoration. Transnational stakeholder coordination will be overseen by the IP's Regional Level Platform, which is tasked with promoting coherence and synergies for all regional initiatives.

*Outcome 1.1: Strengthened capacity of key stakeholders (state and non-state actors and communities) for effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape*

- **Output 1.1.1:** Gender responsive policies, plans, tools and guidelines to support sustainable forest and land use planning and management reviewed and implemented.
- **Output 1.1.2:** State and non-state actors (from key government ministries, departments, agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, private sector and communities) trained to support effective management of the Greater Gola Forest landscape.
- **Output 1.1.3:** Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders (local communities, CSOs/NGOs and private sector) to support effective governance of the Greater Gola landscape enhanced.
- **Output 1.1.4:** A national gender-responsive centre of excellence hub for capacity building and monitoring biodiversity conservation, land use planning and management for enhanced climate resilience established and functional.

## **Component 2: Promoting participatory and gender responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods**

Under Component 2, the project will support community participation in forest management and land use planning in and around Kambui Forest reserve<sup>63</sup> and other key forest biodiversity areas and other ecologically sensitive zones through incentives for community-based conservation centred on climate-smart livelihood interventions that enhance climate resilience. Forest management and land use action plans will be grounded in participatory spatial land-use planning that takes into consideration gender considerations with respect to natural resource use. Incentives such as support for livelihood strengthening will be linked to conservation commitments in community-led management action plans.

*Outcome 2.1: Enhanced sustainable resource use by communities adjacent to targeted PAs within the Gola landscape.*

- **Output 2.1.1:** Gender-sensitive community awareness and education programs to support sustainable forest management, land use planning and on climate change impacts developed and implemented.
- **Output 2.1.2:** Gender-responsive participatory spatial / landscape plans for the Greater Gola Forest landscape developed /updated and implemented.
- **Output 2.1.3:** Gender-responsive and climate resilient alternative income-generating initiatives supported, ensuring inclusive participation and equitable benefits for all genders while promoting sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.
- **Output 2.1.4:** Innovative and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management supported, ensuring gender equality in participation, access and benefits.
- **Output 2.1.5:** Inclusive community-based reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives to improve access to ecosystem services implemented.

## **Component 3: Improving management of Kambu Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation.**

This component aims at strengthening multi-stakeholder co-management of Kambui Hills Forest reserve and associated community forest lands and 'other effective area-based conservation measures' (OECMs) in the Gola Forest landscape to support effective natural resources management and strategic spatial planning that integrates conservation with local/national development mechanisms developed through prior investments.

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<sup>63</sup> A buffer area of 5km has been designated around the PAs following assessments undertaken and recommendations made by the MRU implemented IWRM project.

Development and/or update of forest management plans will be undertaken including support to implementation of key forest management activities such as biodiversity inventories and tree stock assessments, forest zonation and support to forest regeneration including enrichment planting to enhance biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use. Lessons learned from the proposed project activities will be widely shared, thereby allowing replication in other critical areas, both in Sierra Leone as well as the wider Guinean Forest region. Improved forest management may include deliberate focus on protecting specific water catchment areas.

*Outcome 3.1: Strengthened biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use of the Kambui Hills FR and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape.*

- **Output 3.1.1:** Extent of deforestation and forest degradation in Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests established, documented and restoration implemented.
- **Output 3.1.2:** Forest conservation and regeneration as one of the strategies for improved ecosystem health and sustainable financing promoted.

#### **Component 4: Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management**

The purpose of this component (which is shared by Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone country child projects) is to ensure collaboration, coordination and joint conduct of management activities to conserve trans boundary forest landscapes shared by Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Activities under this component will address gaps in forest management and enforcement along the borders between the countries, and will also pursue sustainable financing solutions to maintain joint management efforts beyond the Guinean Forests Integrated Program. Activities and governance will involve local communities, local governments and national governments to secure broad-based acceptance of and adherence to agreed-upon measures.

*Outcome 4.1: Strengthened institutional structures for transboundary collaboration between Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia for improved management of the Mano Watershed.*

- **Output 4.1.1:** The functioning of the committees established under the IUCN-MRU-IW Project to support improved management and sustainable use of river basin resources operationalized and institutionalized within MRU.
- **Output 4.1.2:** Capacity for applied research to inform decision making processes for transboundary watershed and forest management enhanced.
- **Output 4.1.3:** Nature-based solutions to improve freshwater ecosystem health and mitigate climate change impacts and river bank deterioration implemented.

#### **Component 5: Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons**

This component will focus on strengthening coordination and collaboration at local, national, and regional levels through learning and knowledge sharing. Specifically, the project will undertake knowledge management, sharing of lessons learned, and best practices through south-south exchanges and participation in national, regional, and international platforms/forums. Also, learning and sharing with other IP Child Projects such as the Congo Basin IP and GOLD/GOLD+ will be encouraged. The project will also liaise with the GFIP Regional Coordination project for technical support and assistance as needed.

*Outcome 5.1: Strengthened coordination, capacity building, knowledge management, learning and sharing between the Sierra Leone Child Project and initiatives at landscape, national and regional levels including the GEF-8 Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project.*

- **Output 5.1.1:** A project Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy developed (including gender, equality and inclusion aspects)



- **Output 5.1.2:** Participation in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project 3-day Annual Forums
- **Output 5.1.3:** Learning and exposure visits facilitated with the Sierra Leone Child Projects (and where applicable coordinated by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project).
- **Output 5.1.4:** Knowledge management products integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects generated, and disseminated at landscape, national and regional levels (integrating lessons learnt and best-case practices on traditional knowledge for natural resource management, and information on the project as a model for Nature-Based-Solutions)

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

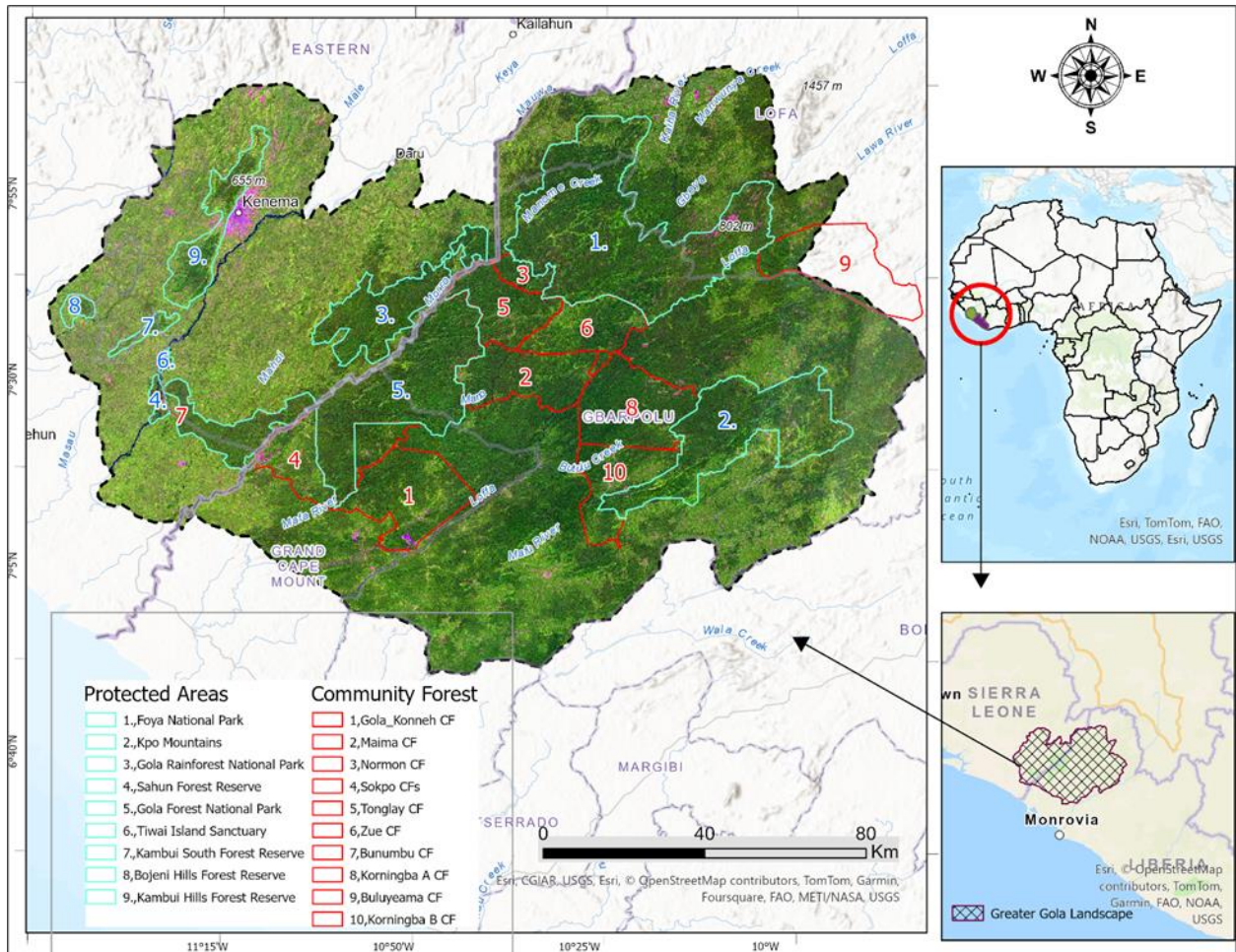
A functional gender-sensitive M&E Framework will be established through this component. The M&E tools are key for adaptive management and will inform/improve the design of future projects. The tool will be used to capture and track progress on the project's results, adherence to the results framework, application of safeguards plans, materialization of co-financing, and program functioning as an integrated effort. The standard GEF monitoring tools, such as the Biodiversity Tracking Tool/Protected Area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT), as well as bespoke tracking tools on subjects such as gender mainstreaming and civil society institutional capacity will be utilized. The M&E framework will also entail the preparation of quarterly and annual technical and financial reports.

*Outcome 6.1: An effective and gender-responsive M&E system for the project.* This outcome is intended to ensure that the monitoring and evaluation framework of the project is implemented effectively and efficiently.

- **Output 6.1.1:** Periodic M&E reports submitted to CI-GEF Agency
- **Output 6.1.2:** Mid-Term Evaluation and Terminal Evaluation commissioned by CI-GEF

#### **E. Project location, biophysical and socio-economic characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis:**

The project will be implemented in Sierra Leone, specifically in the Gola landscape which includes Sierra Leone's Gola National Park as well as the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, the Tiwai Island wildlife sanctuary and the extended Lofa-Gola-Mano Conservation Corridor (as defined by CEPF) that extends into Guinea and Liberia (*Figure 1*).



**Figure 1: Protected Areas and some community forests in the Gola-Foya-Kpo Mts (Sierra Leone and Liberia) – This child project focusses on the Sierra Leone part of the landscape but proposed as a trans boundary project. The specific focus of project activities are the Kambui Hills Forest reserves and the associated community forests as well as the Tiwai Wildlife sanctuary connecting to the southern part of the Gola Forest National Park**

The project area includes the largest single intact forest block in the Upper Guinea Forest, making its protection essential to conserving the region's biodiversity. The Mano River runs through the Gola landscape along the Sierra Leone-Liberia border, with the basin being the third-most biodiverse sub-regional watershed in the world after the Amazon and Congo basins. The Mano River ecosystem is an important watershed known for its contribution to water resource needs within and the Gola Forest Landscape and contributes to the region's social-economic well-being. In addition to biodiversity and watershed ecosystem services, the proposed project's landscape is among Sierra Leone's largest natural carbon sinks, making it a prime focal area for REDD+ projects. The specific focus of project activities are the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests, Tiwai Islands wildlife sanctuary and ensuring connectivity to the southern patch of the Gola Forest National Park.

The target project area is the proposed Key Landscape for Conservation and Development (KLCD) – the Gola-Foya-Kpo Mts. that straddles the Sierra Leone-Liberia border along the Mano River, forming one of the largest remaining blocks of the Upper Guinea Forest. In Sierra Leone, it encompasses the Gola Rainforest National Park (GRNP), Kambui Hills Forest Reserve (North and South) and Tiwai Island



Wildlife Sanctuary. In Liberia, it includes the Gola Forest National Park (GFNP) and the Foya PPA (Proposed Protected Area). It includes surrounding community forests (about 160 communities); now extended to include the Kpo Mountains PPA (potential NP) in Liberia south of Foya (part of Kpelle Forest KBA ). These important forests (with no major roads or barriers) can link via forest corridors to the rest of the KLCD.

The KLCD is home to threatened species including zebra duiker and Jentink's duiker, red colobus, western pied colobus, pangolin, pygmy hippopotamus, forest elephant and others, many endemic to Guinea forests. It holds the world's second largest population of western chimpanzee, 31 species of fish, 600 species of butterflies and 43 amphibian species. Over 300 bird species have been recorded in Gola and its buffer zones, including the threatened white-necked Picathartes, white-breasted guineafowl, rufous fishing-owl, and Gola malimbe. The key forests are Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs).

The Gola Transboundary Peace Park covers 3,500 km<sup>2</sup> (350,000 Hectares) straddling the Sierra Leone and Liberia border and incorporating the two contiguous PAs: Gola Rainforest National Park (GRNP) in Sierra Leone, and the Gola Forest National Park (GFNP) and Foya PPA in Liberia. Considered a hotspot for biodiversity, these common forests are home to more than 899 vascular plants, and 49 mammals. Unfortunately, many of these species of fauna and plants are threatened or critically endangered, including the forest elephant, chimpanzee verus, bay colobus, dwarf hippo and rosewood. The diverse ecosystems of the area give rise to an exceptional and unique landscape that provides shelter to an array of fauna species with strong endemism.

The current population in the overall Gola Forest landscape is approximately 250,000 people, distributed among several chiefdoms. In the immediate vicinity of Gola National Park, there are approximately 125 communities with roughly 25,000 inhabitants, most of which adhere to customary communal land tenure systems overseen by local and chiefdom-level authorities. Spatial planning is currently underway in the landscape, as are efforts to improve land administration systems. Combined, these both provide the proposed project the opportunity to support formal recognition of Community Forests and collective land tenure, thereby strengthening local communities' ability to effectively manage the landscape's forests and mitigate threats, notably those around Gola National Park.

The Mende are a local tribe that forms most of the forest adjacent local communities, consisting of five clans: the Kpa-Mende, who are predominantly in the Moyamba district to the south; the Golah-Mende, who inhabit the Gola forest between Kenema and Pujehun districts, crossing into Liberia; Sewa-Mende, who settled along the Sewa River; the Vai-Mende, who are also in Liberia and the Pujehun district of Sierra Leone; and the Koh-Mende, who are a dominant tribe in Kailahun district. The Mende are one of the two largest ethnic groups in Sierra Leone. Their neighbours, the Temne people, constitute the largest ethnic group (35.5% of the total population), followed by the Mende (31.2%). The Mende are mostly farmers and hunters.

The main economic activities in the focus area are farming and mining, with a small percentage engaged in small businesses or petty trading in the private sector. Women provide more than 80% of farm labour for food production, processing, distribution, and food preparation. Women are generally responsible for food security at family and community levels and are primarily the home managers, community organizers, and caregivers for children, the sick, and the elderly. It is not therefore surprising that women work longer hours at their multiple roles than men, often with uncertain and more limited resources, lower rewards, and public recognition. According to the World Bank's

development indicators for Sierra Leone, women account for over 53% of labour in the crop farming subsector and 52% in the poultry subsector. In the informal sector where women predominate, the main activities include soap making, tie-dying, and petty trade where generally the reward is very low. In farming, women are engaged mainly in food production, (subsistence farming), where cash returns are much lower than from cash crops where men dominate. There are more male-headed households (72%) compared to female-headed households in Sierra Leone (28%). Female household heads increase as one moves from the villages to the towns and eventually the urban cities where women's empowerment and working life make it easier for them to take care of their children, parents, and dependents.

Women have access to land, credit, and the opening of bank accounts on their own. After the war, various commercial banks and credit financial institutions added to the country's financial services. They went to various parts of the country including some chiefdoms' headquarters towns to bring financial services to the farmers in isolated communities. They provided normal banking services of saving, current accounting, and other needed commercial services. Some micro-credit financial institutions also surfaced in the country. Notable among them are BRA, LAPO, and Finance Salone. Each provides credit facility to small groups of business organizations, especially women's business organization for weekly to monthly interest. The services business groups range from five to twenty members. The loan given usually falls between Five Hundred Thousand Leones (Le500,000) and three Million Leones (Le3,000,000) per member of the organization. The interest rate of 20-25% is considered by women as very high which is one of the factors preventing their use. The interest together with the loan is paid weekly with the hope of repaying the loan in three to six months, but the person is encouraged to continue the payment for an equal period within which the loan and interest were paid. If the person did not default in payment, she is upgraded and her personal saving now will be given to other groups with half of the interest coming to the owner and the other half to the financial institution. It must be noted that the upscaling is a fresh account following the first loan model. If the women are able to complete the third or fourth upscaling, her total saving will be enough to set her on a better road to business progress. However, many who were not able to invest in a proper profitable business that could enable them to repay the weekly amount faced different types of recovery embarrassment. Some even fled from their communities to save face.

Gender-based violence (GBV) and Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Sexual Harassment (SEAH) are acts deeply rooted in gender inequality and remain one of the most notable human rights violations in all societies around the world. It is violence that is directed against a person because of his/her gender. Results from the 2021 Gender-Based Violence Survey for the Republic of Sierra Leone indicate a higher prevalence of this type of violence, with between 30 and 39 percent of women reporting having experienced at least one form of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) throughout their lives. It is important to note that female genital mutilation (FGM) is a ubiquitous practice in Sierra Leone, and while the country's legal framework does not explicitly prohibit FGM, policies implemented by the Government have recognized it as a form of SGBV. According to data from 2019, 83% of women aged 15-49 have undergone FGM, and most at a very young age, with 71% circumcised before the age of 15. Sixty one percent (61%) of ever-married women have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence by their current or most recent husband/partner, up from 51% in 2013; 50% experienced such violence in the 12 months preceding the 2019 Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey (SLDHS). Even though both women and men experience GBV, most victims are women and girls. On the positive side, there is increased gender awareness among stakeholders, some institutions have been established to prevent GBV such as the Family Support Unit and some legal reforms have taken place to rectify gender-based injustices, which have resulted in the enactment of laws such as the

three Genders Justice Acts. According to the UNFPA review of 24 November 2021, an estimated 62% of women aged 15-49 report having experienced physical or sexual violence according to the Sierra Leone demographic health survey which is corroborated by the Sierra Leone global database on violence against women. ([www.unwomen.org/sl](http://www.unwomen.org/sl)). In Sierra Leone, prevention of and reductions in levels of domestic violence have been placed on the national transformation agenda as one of the country's priorities. The Sierra Leone Domestic Violence Act, 2007 was designed to protect women from domestic violence by providing accessible legal instruments aiming to prevent further incidents of abuse within domestic relationships. Under this act, violence against women is classified as a public crime allowing women to secure a protection order from the courts.

At the Gola landscape level, men are the landlords and the statistics reflected at national level with respect to SGBV levels manifest when women are not towing the approaches preferred by their male counterparts. Male governance is engrained in all forms of decision-making in the Gola landscape. They manifest in the family institutions, educational sector, labour market, politics and social service institutions. Although, this situation is improving, there is more work to be done to ensure fair representation. The Government of Sierra Leone put in place a legislation – the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act, (2022) and this is providing a basis for redress.

With in the project context, the priority needs for men and women at the landscape level are related to access to forestry and biodiversity resources. The women focus is mainly on biomass energy particularly firewood and charcoal as well as some non-timber forest products particularly fruits, vegetables and medicinal herbs while men are more focused on commercial products particularly commercial charcoal burning and timber resources through logging. The project interventions need to be implemented in a participatory and not to seem to disempower either gender. The intention to promote regulated access to ensure sustainability of the target resources may otherwise impact on relationships. Discussions at both national stakeholder consultation workshop and the validation workshop indicated that there is no substantial use of Kambui for spiritual purposes. The biggest activities in Kambui forests are logging and charcoal burning.

Risks of social instability, as evidenced by the August 2022 violent riots that left 27 people dead, include rising public discontent and the uncertainties related to elections. Recently in November 2023 there have been some limited reported civil discontent leading to more drastic security measures by the Government. The project shall ensure continuous risk assessment and threat monitoring including continuous engagement with local law enforcement. To enable business continuity the project shall embrace improved IT usage for effective management.

COVID-19 posed a big problem for people in both developed and developing countries coupled with the current War in Ukraine and the escalating conflict between Israel and the Palestinians that has resulted in major economic challenges that the increase in the oil price triggered. Any such issues of global significance (with major fallout to Sierra Leone and other developing countries) will have dire consequences on the project, since the current budget estimate for various activities/goods and services may not be enough in such envisaged economic disturbances.

Sierra Leone is relatively a young, populated country that is likely to suffer from high staff turnover of the highly trained and intelligent government workers to be replaced with novice with absolutely no work experiences. Such instances are used to disrupt project implementation. The project is to emphasize implementation based on institutional mandates rather than on individual expertise only.

Natural disasters are an occurrence that can greatly impact project progress. The case of Ebola outbreak in 2016 in Kenema. Droughts, fires, floods, and storms are likely events with the climate change phenomena. This calls for purposive selection of project sites to be implemented in a bit widely apart locations that may not be feasible for the occurrence of such multiple threats in all the places that are apart from each other.

During the implementation, emerging issues like myths and misinformation may come up that would require continuous engagement of the leadership in the chiefdoms so as to get better buy-in of the local communities worked with.

Crop damage is the most prevalent form of human-wildlife conflict across the African conflict. The results of this conflict include others like; animal deaths, loss of human life, injuries/loss to people, injuries/loss to wildlife and livestock depredation. Once they occur, they might influence project implementation progress. The project suggests community engagement as vital to the success of local conservation in addition to conservation planning and management, including land use planning and prioritization of species for continued monitoring in light of changing threats at GRNP.

#### **F. Executing Agency (EA)'s Institutional Capacity to Implement ESMF:**

The EPA-SL is the main government agency in charge of all issues related to the environment and climate change in the country. EPA-SL also serves as the National Focal Point for the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and also for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Sierra Leone. The Agency has responsibilities to ensure compliance and enforcement of environmental impact assessment procedures.

The EPA-SL has a Gender Unit (4 personnel-3 female and 1 male) and uses a policy of at least 30% women representation in all departments and units of the agency. The unit expertise will be utilized to enhance PMU supervision for ensuring addressing of project gender considerations. The Environmental Safety Unit (12 Personnel-7 Male and 5 female) is responsible for the issuance of the Environmental Impact Assessment License, as well as supervising/monitoring the adherence to the Environmental, Social, and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) that includes the necessary social safeguards for members and the communities.

## **II. ESS STANDARDS TRIGGERED BY THE PROJECT**

Based on the information provided in the ESS Screening Form, the following ESS Standards have been triggered:

ESS Standard	Yes	No	TBD	Justification
<b>1. Environmental &amp; Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)</b>		<b>X</b>		<i>Adverse environmental and social impacts are not anticipated.</i>
<b>2. Protection of Natural Habitats and Biodiversity Conservation</b>	<b>X</b>			<i>The project will take place in Natural/Critical Habitats, and the project intends to implement restoration activities e.g. Outputs 3.1.1 and 2.1.5.</i>

<b>3. Resettlement and Physical and Economic Displacement</b>		<b>X</b>		<i>While the project will not involve resettlement, the implementation of community-based reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives and land use planning could cause economic displacement. However, these activities are designed with a participatory and community-led approach.</i>
<b>4. Indigenous Peoples</b>	<b>X</b>			<i>The project intends to work in lands or territories traditionally owned, customarily used, or occupied by traditional peoples and/or local communities e.g. Mende people.</i>
<b>5. Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention</b>			<b>X</b>	<i>There are no proposed activities related to the use of banned, restricted or prohibited substances, chemicals or hazardous materials. However, the project intends to implement livelihood interventions in agriculture and agroforestry.</i>
<b>6. Cultural Heritage</b>			<b>X</b>	<i>Activities related to land use planning and alternative livelihoods may be in areas with cultural heritage resources. "Mende as local communities do have some historical attachment to the area of the project".</i>
<b>7. Labour and Working Conditions</b>			<b>X</b>	<i>The EA indicated that they have in place the necessary policies, procedures, systems and capabilities to meet ESS7.</i>
<b>8. Community Health, Safety and Security</b>		<b>X</b>		<i>CHSS risks have been identified and assessed as Medium. Some of these risks include natural disasters and weather events, civil unrest, disease outbreaks and safety/security. Appropriate mitigation measures have been identified.</i>
<b>9. Private Sector Direct Investments and FIs</b>		<b>X</b>		<i>The project does not plan to invest GEF funds in any financial mechanisms but rather promote forest conservation and regeneration as one of the strategies for improved ecosystem health and sustainable financing (Output 3.1.2)</i>

10. Climate Risk and Related Disasters		X	<p><i>Exposures to climate change in Sierra Leone include extreme weather events, changes in rainfall patterns, and temperature increases. These factors can lead to disruptions in transportation systems, damage to infrastructure, and safety concerns for individuals traveling to attend project meetings. As such, the following mitigation measures have been identified and incorporated into the design of the project/planned for the implementation phase:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. Scheduling meetings and trainings using information from seasonal forecasts and long-term climate projections.</i></li> <li><i>2. Scheduling demonstrative trainings and data collection exercises using information from seasonal forecasts and long-term climate projections.</i></li> <li><i>3. Scheduling project equipment delivery using information from seasonal forecasts and long-term climate projections.</i></li> <li><i>4. Data digitization starts immediately after project inception.</i></li> <li><i>5. Data storage on Cloud Technology and making use of existing technologies in the country.</i></li> <li><i>6. Use of climate-proof data collection and storage equipment</i></li> <li><i>7. Flexible meeting schedule with options for undertaking online meetings.</i></li> <li><i>8. Flexible demonstrative filed training schedule with options for undertaking online trainings.</i></li> <li><i>9. Consider better planning for forest restoration closely lasing with weather forecast agencies to ensure timely planting of trees and any livelihood programmes.</i></li> <li><i>10. Set up project locations, especially demonstrative field locations in areas least affected by floods.</i></li> </ol>
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**Note:** Other ESS Standards may be triggered at any time during the project cycle.

### III. PROJECT CATEGORIZATION

Based on the ESS Standards triggered, the project is categorized as follows:

PROJECT CATEGORY	Category A	Category B	Category C
		X	
<p><i>The proposed project activities have the potential to cause negative environmental and social impacts. However, the impacts are anticipated to be less adverse than those of Category A projects, site-specific, and mitigation measures can be designed more readily than for Category A projects.</i></p>			

### IV. MANAGEMENT OF ESS STANDARDS TRIGGERED

## ESS2. Protection of Natural Habitats and Biodiversity Conservation

*The project is required to develop an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) describing the risks, mitigation, management, monitoring, and institutional actions to be implemented by the project, particularly as it relates to restoration activities.*

## ESS4. Indigenous Peoples (Traditional Peoples and Local Communities)

*The project is required to develop a Traditional Peoples and Local Communities Plan and outline how Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) would be sought as well as how the project will avoid negative impacts on traditional peoples and local communities, ensure their full and effective participation in decision making related to the project, and to provide traditional peoples and local communities with culturally appropriate social and economic benefits that have been negotiated with them. The Plan must also take into consideration the traditional peoples and local communities cultural heritage that is material to the identity and/or cultural, ceremonial, or spiritual aspects, and provide measures to mitigate any adverse impact on the affected traditional peoples and local communities' lives or cultural heritage.*

### **Other Plans**

Apart from the ESS Policy, the project will be required to comply with the CI-GEF/GCF's Accountability and Grievance Policy, Gender Policy, and Stakeholder Engagement Policy by preparing and submitting for review and approval to the CI-GEF/GCF during the project development stage, the following plans:

#### I. Accountability and Grievance Mechanism (AGM)

*To ensure that the project meets CI-GEF Project Agency's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism Policy, the EA is required to develop an Accountability and Grievance Mechanism (template provided) that will ensure people affected by the project are able to bring their grievances to the EA for consideration and redress. The mechanism must be gender-sensitive, in place before the start of project activities, and disclosed to all stakeholders in a language, manner and means that best suits the local context.*

*In addition, the EA is required to monitor and report on the following minimum accountability and grievance indicators:*

- 1. Number of times/events the AGM is disclosed to project stakeholders; and*
- 2. Percentage of conflict and complaint cases reported to the project's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism that have been addressed.*

#### II. Gender Mainstreaming Plan (GMP)

*The GMP (template provided) should include a gender analysis including the role of men and women in decision-making, and appropriate interventions with gender-related outcomes to ensure that men and women have equal opportunities to participate and benefit from the project.*

*Further, the project should examine the extent of Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Sexual Exploitation and Harassment (SEAH), the likelihood of project activities contributing/exacerbating GBV and SEAH, and proposed mitigation measures as needed.*

*In addition, the EA is required to monitor and report on the following minimum gender indicators:*

- 1. Number of men and women that participated in project activities (e.g. meetings,*



*workshops, consultations);*

2. *Number of men and women that received benefits (e.g. employment, income generating activities, training, access to natural resources, land tenure or resource rights, equipment, leadership roles) from the project; and if relevant*
3. *Number of strategies, plans (e.g. management plans and land use plans) and policies derived from the project that include gender considerations.*

### III. Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

*To ensure that the project complies with the CI-GEF/GCF's Stakeholders' Engagement Policy, the EA is required to develop a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (template provided).*

*In addition, the EA is required to monitor and report on the following minimum stakeholder engagement indicators:*

1. *Number of government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector, indigenous peoples and other stakeholder groups engaged in the project implementation phase;*
2. *Number persons (sex disaggregated) engaged in project implementation phase; and*
3. *Number of engagement (e.g. meeting, workshops, consultations) with stakeholders during the project implementation phase*

## V. DISCLOSURE

Following approval of the plans, the EA must disclose the plans to stakeholders no later than 30 days from date of approval.

## The Safeguards Screening Form

☐ **Preliminary Screening** (check if performed at the project/program conceptual stage)

☒ **Secondary Screening** (check if performed at proposal development stage i.e. PPG/PPF)

### Guidance Notes

1. This ESS Screening Form is guided by the CI-GEF/GCF Agencies' Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguard Standards, which forms part of the [CI-GCF/GEF Agencies Environmental and Social Management Framework \(ESMF\)](#).
2. The CI-GCF/GEF Agencies undertake environmental and social safeguard screening for every project or program to determine the risk categorization for the project, the ESS Standards triggered by the project, and the mitigation measures to be implemented by the project.
3. ESS screenings are performed at (i) conceptual stage (Preliminary Screening) using the finalized versions of the PIF/PFD/CN; and (ii) proposal development stage i.e. PPG/PPF (Secondary Screening) using the project document when details of activities, project intervention areas and executing arrangements, among others, have been finalized. Additional screenings may be performed at any time when significant changes have emerged including but not limited to new proposed activities, changes in local/national context of project intervention areas, and where environmental and social risks have increased.
4. The CI-GCF/GEF Agencies classify the project into one of three categories, depending on the type, location, sensitivity and scale of the project and the nature and magnitude of its potential

environmental and social impacts. The descriptions of the categories and lists of types of projects identified in Appendix II of the CI-GCF/GEF's ESMF. These descriptions are meant to serve as guidance and are not exhaustive.

5. The CI-GCF/GEF Agencies do not fund projects that involve the construction or rehabilitation of large or complex dams, and resettlement of people. The CI-GCF/GEF Agencies cannot support projects that contradict CI's mission and policies.
6. The Executing Agency/Entity is responsible for fully completing and providing accurate responses to each question in this Screening Form, and to submit the completed Form to the CI-GCF/GEF Agencies in a timely manner.
7. The CI-GCF/GEF Agencies is responsible for ensuring that the project complies with the CI-GCF/GEF Policy on Environmental and Social Safeguards, and will use the completed Screening Form to determine the mitigation measures for the Executing Agency/Entity to implement.
8. In addition to preparing and implementing mitigation measures for the environmental and social safeguard standards triggered, the Executing Agency/Entity will also need to comply with CI-GCF/GEF's policies on gender, stakeholder engagement and accountability and grievance mechanism. As such the Executing Agency/Entity will be required to prepare a Gender Assessment and Action Plan, a Stakeholder Engagement Plan, and an Accountability and Grievance Mechanism (see to ESMF for details).
9. The Executing Agency/Entity is responsible for informing the CI-GCF/GEF Agencies in a timely manner, if at any time during the preparation and implementation of the project, the information provided in this Screening Form changes in a way that results in the risks of the project being increased.
10. For additional information/clarification, please contact Ian Kissoon, Senior Director of ESMF, CI-GCF/GEF Agencies at [ikissoon@conservation.org](mailto:ikissoon@conservation.org) or your GEF/GCF Project Manager.

I. PROJECT INFORMATION		
<b>GCF/GEF Project ID:</b>	<b>Country:</b> Sierra Leone	
<b>Project Title:</b> Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone's critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape		
<b>Name of the Executing Agency/Entity:</b> Environment Protection Agency of Sierra Leone (EPA)		
<b>Length of Project:</b> 62 months	<b>Anticipated Start date:</b> January 2025	<b>Anticipated End date:</b> December, 2030
<b>GCF Results Area(s) / GEF Focal Area(s):</b> Multi-Focal Area (Biodiversity, Climate Change, and Land Degradation)		
<b>GCF/GEF Project Amount:</b> USD 5,550,306	<b>Co-Financing Amount:</b> USD 7,996,441	
<b>Project Objectives:</b> To conserve and restore Kambui Hills FR and the associated community forest lands as part of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape to address climate change impacts		
<b>Project Components and Main Activities Proposed:</b>  <b>Component 1: Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape.</b> Capacity-building of key government and non-government stakeholders (including the private sector) in the Gola Forest landscape will focus on mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use into policies and decision-making, allowing for improved planning, management and selection of priority areas. Capacity-building will improve protected area management capacity on the part of government (the National Protected Area Authority and Forest Department), and improve the		

capacity of chiefdom-level authorities to better participate in processes (including alignment between chiefdom committees and co-management committees). Lessons learned from the project will be widely shared, thereby allowing replication in other critical areas, both in Sierra Leone as well as the wider Guinean Forest region

This support will result in improved stakeholder coordination, increased synergies, reduced conflicts over land use, and landscape-scale spatial planning that will allow for the strategic selection of priority areas for further protection and restoration. Transnational stakeholder coordination will be overseen by the IP's Regional Level Platform, which is tasked with promoting coherence and synergies for all regional initiatives.

**Outcome 1.1: Strengthened capacity of key stakeholders (state and non-state actors and communities) for effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape**

- **Output 1.1.1:** Gender responsive policies, plans, tools and guidelines to support sustainable forest and land use planning and management reviewed and implemented.
- **Output 1.1.2:** State and non-state actors (from key government ministries, departments, agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, private sector and communities) trained to support effective management of the Greater Gola Forest landscape.
- **Output 1.1.3:** Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders (local communities, CSOs/NGOs and private sector) to support effective governance of the Greater Gola landscape enhanced.
- **Output 1.1.4:** A national gender-responsive centre of excellence hub for capacity building and monitoring biodiversity conservation, land use planning and management for enhanced climate resilience established and functional.

**Component 2: Promoting participatory and gender responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods.**

Under Component 2, the project will support community participation in forest management and land use planning in and around Kambui Forest reserve<sup>64</sup> and other key forest biodiversity areas and other ecologically sensitive zones through incentives for community-based conservation centred on climate-smart livelihood interventions that enhance climate resilience. Forest management and Land use action plans will be grounded in participatory spatial land-use planning that takes into consideration gender considerations with respect to natural resource use. Incentives such as support for livelihood strengthening will be linked to conservation commitments in community-led management action plans.

**Outcome 2.1: Enhanced sustainable resource use by communities adjacent to targeted PAs within the Gola landscape.**

- **Output 2.1.1:** Gender-sensitive community awareness and education programs to support sustainable forest management, land use planning and on climate change impacts developed and implemented.
- **Output 2.1.2:** Gender-responsive participatory spatial / landscape plans for the Greater Gola Forest landscape developed /updated and implemented.
- **Output 2.1.3:** Gender-responsive and climate resilient alternative income-generating initiatives supported, ensuring inclusive participation and equitable benefits for all genders while promoting sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.

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<sup>64</sup> A buffer area of 5km has been designated around the PAs following assessments undertaken and recommendations made by the MRU implemented IWRM project.

- **Output 2.1.4:** Innovative and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management supported, ensuring gender equality in participation, access and benefits.
- **Output 2.1.5:** Inclusive community-based reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives to improve access to ecosystem services implemented.

**Component 3: Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation.**

This component aims at strengthening multi-stakeholder co-management of Kambui Hills Forest reserve and associated community forest lands and 'Other effective area-based conservation measures' (OECMs) in the Gola Forest landscape to support effective natural resources management and strategic spatial planning that integrates conservation with local/national development mechanisms developed through prior investments.

Development and/or update of forest management plans will be undertaken including support to implementation of key forest management activities such as bio diversity inventories and tree stock assessments, forest zonation and support to forest regeneration including enrichment planting to enhance biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use. Lessons learned from the proposed project activities will be widely shared, thereby allowing replication in other critical areas, both in Sierra Leone as well as the wider Guinean Forest region. Improved forest management may include deliberate focus on protecting specific water catchment areas.

**Outcome 3.1: Strengthened biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use of the Kambui Hills FR and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape.**

- **Output 3.1.1:** Extent of deforestation and forest degradation in Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests established, documented and restoration implemented.
- **Output 3.1.2:** Forest conservation and regeneration as one of the strategies for improved ecosystem health and sustainable financing promoted.

**Component 4: Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management**

The purpose of this component (which is shared by the Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone country child projects) is to ensure collaboration, coordination and joint conduct of management activities to conserve trans boundary forest landscapes shared by Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Activities under this component will address gaps in forest management and enforcement along the borders between the countries, and will also pursue sustainable financing solutions to maintain joint management efforts beyond the Guinean Forests Integrated Program. Activities and governance will involve local communities, local governments and national governments to secure broad-based acceptance of and adherence to agreed-upon measures.

**Outcome 4.1: Strengthened institutional structures for transboundary collaboration between Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia for improved management of the Mano Watershed.**

- **Output 4.1.1:** The functioning of the committees established under the IUCN-MRU-IW Project to support improved management and sustainable use of river basin resources operationalized and institutionalized within MRU.
- **Output 4.1.2:** Capacity for applied research to inform decision making processes for transboundary watershed and forest management enhanced.
- **Output 4.1.3:** Nature-based solutions to improve freshwater ecosystem health and mitigate climate change impacts and river bank deterioration implemented.

**Component 5: Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons.**

This component will focus on strengthening coordination and collaboration at local, national, and regional levels through learning and knowledge sharing. Specifically, the project will undertake knowledge management, sharing of lessons learned, and best practices through south-south exchanges and participation in national, regional, and international platforms/forums. Also, learning and sharing with other IP Child Projects such as the Congo Basin IP and GOLD/GOLD+ will be encouraged. The project will also liaise with the GFIP Regional Coordination project for technical support and assistance as needed.

**Outcome 5.1: Strengthened coordination, capacity building, knowledge management, learning and sharing between the Sierra Leone Child Project and initiatives at landscape, national and regional levels including the GEF-8 Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project.**

- **Output 5.1.1:** A project Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy developed (including gender, equality and inclusion aspects)
- **Output 5.1.2:** Participation in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project 3-day Annual Forums
- **Output 5.1.3:** Learning and exposure visits facilitated with the Sierra Leone Child Projects (and where applicable coordinated by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project).
- **Output 5.1.4:** Knowledge management products integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects generated, and disseminated at landscape, national and regional levels (integrating lessons learnt and best-case practices on traditional knowledge for natural resource management, and information on the project as a model for Nature-Based-Solutions)

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

A functional gender-sensitive M&E Framework will be established through this component. The M&E tools are key for adaptive management and will inform/improve the design of future projects. The tool will be used to capture and track progress on the project's results, adherence to the results framework, application of safeguards plans, materialization of co-financing, and program functioning as an integrated effort. The standard GEF monitoring tools, such as the Biodiversity Tracking Tool/Protected Area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT), as well as bespoke tracking tools on subjects such as gender mainstreaming and civil society institutional capacity will be utilized. The M&E framework will also entail the preparation of quarterly and annual technical and financial reports.

**Outcome 6.1: An effective and gender-responsive M&E system for the project.** This outcome is intended to ensure that the monitoring and evaluation framework of the project is implemented effectively and efficiently.

- **Output 6.1.1:** Periodic M&E reports submitted to CI-GEF Agency
- **Output 6.1.2:** Mid-Term Evaluation and Terminal Evaluation commissioned by CI-GEF

**ESS Screening Form Completed by:** Green Approaches Limited (GAL)

**Date of Submission/Resubmission of Completed Form to CI-GEF/GCF:** March 2024

**CI-GEF/GCF Comments:**

## **II. PROJECT CONTEXT**

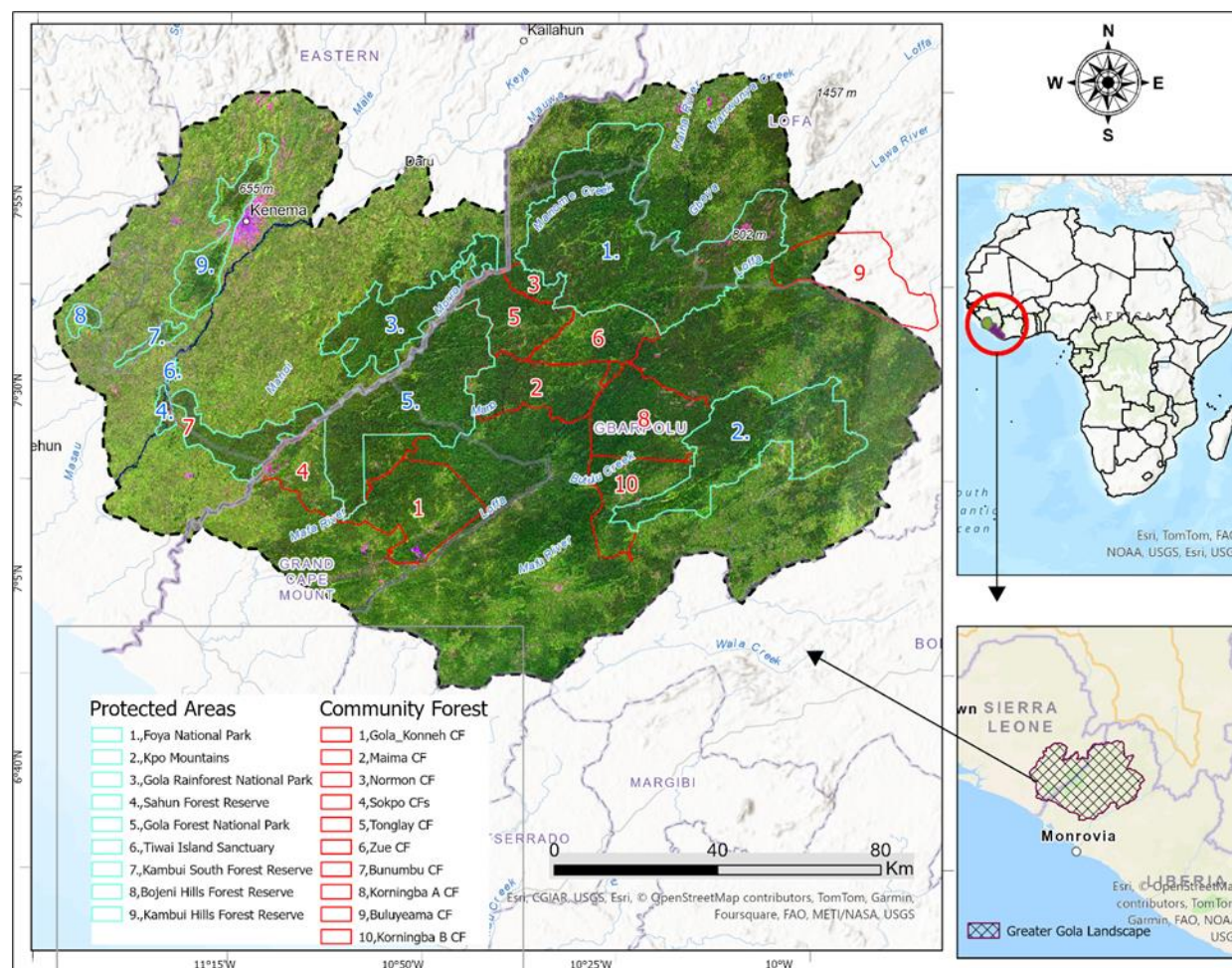
### **Project Location**

The project will be implemented in Sierra Leone, specifically in the Gola landscape which includes Sierra Leone's Gola National Park as well as the Kambui hills forest reserve, the Tiwai Island wildlife sanctuary



and the extended Lofa-Gola-Mano Conservation Corridor (as defined by CEPF) that extends into Guinea and Liberia (*Figure 1*).

The project area includes the largest single intact forest block in the Upper Guinea Forest, making its protection essential to conserving the region's biodiversity. The Mano River runs through the Gola landscape along the Sierra Leone-Liberia border, with the basin being the third-most biodiverse sub-regional watershed in the world after the Amazon and Congo basins. The Mano River ecosystem is an important watershed known for its contribution to water resource needs within and the Gola Forest Landscape and contributes to the region's social-economic well-being. In addition to biodiversity and watershed ecosystem services, the proposed project's landscape is among Sierra Leone's largest natural carbon sinks, making it a prime focal area for REDD+ projects. The specific focus of project activities are the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests, Tiwai Islands wildlife sanctuary and ensuring connectivity to the southern patch of the Gola Forest National Park.



**Figure 1: Protected Areas and some community forests in the Gola-Foya-Kpo Mts (Sierra Leone and Liberia) – This child project focusses on the Sierra Leone part of the landscape but proposed as a trans boundary project. The specific focus of project activities are the Kambui Hills Forest reserves and the associated community forests as well as the Tiwai Wildlife sanctuary connecting to the southern part of the Gola Forest National Park**

#### Socio-economic Context of Project Area

Sierra Leone is categorized among poor African nations and it exhibits inequality in income distribution. The country's recent history is marked by a civil war from 1991-2002 and a two-year Ebola crisis in 2014-2016. These events and political instability have led to severe socio-economic repercussions and contributed to the underlying vulnerabilities that are persisting today. While it possesses substantial mineral, agricultural, and fishery resources, its economic and social infrastructure is not well developed, and serious social disorders continue to hamper economic development. About two-thirds of the working-age population engages in subsistence agriculture. The country is one of the poorest countries in sub-Saharan Africa and globally, with a GDP per capita of US\$499 in 2017. It ranked 182 out of 188 countries on the United Nations 2020 Human Development Index, below the average for countries with similar GDP per capita<sup>65</sup>. The overall poverty rate in Sierra Leone is 57 percent, with 10.8 percent of the population living in extreme poverty<sup>66</sup>.

The current population in the overall Gola Forest landscape is approximately 250,000 people, distributed among several chiefdoms. In the immediate vicinity of Gola National Park, there are approximately 125 communities with roughly 25,000 inhabitants, most of which adhere to customary communal land tenure systems overseen by local and chiefdom-level authorities. Spatial planning is currently underway in the landscape, as are efforts to improve land administration systems. Combined, these both provide the proposed project the opportunity to support formal recognition of Community Forests and collective land tenure, thereby strengthening local communities' ability to effectively manage the landscape's forests and mitigate threats, notably those around Gola National Park.

Seventy-three percent of poverty in Sierra Leone is found in rural areas and two of the three districts where the project will be based are recognized as the poorest districts in Sierra Leone. The underlying causes of poverty are attributed to wide ranging factors including the lack of availability of social services (healthcare, education, safe water and sanitation), lack of agricultural inputs, market access and low incomes from the sale of produce, weak infrastructure (bad road networks), lack of economic and employment opportunities and social barriers (such as large family sizes). There are more male-headed households (72%) compared to female-headed households in Sierra Leone (28%). Female household heads increase as one moves from the villages to the towns and eventually the urban cities where women's empowerment and working life make it easier for them to take care of their children, parents, and dependents.

The Mende are a local tribe that forms most of the forest adjacent local communities, consisting of five clans: the *Kpa-Mende*, who are predominantly in the Moyamba district to the south; the *Golah-Mende*, who inhabit the Gola forest between Kenema and Pujehun districts, crossing into Liberia; *Sewa-Mende*, who settled along the Sewa River; the *Vai-Mende*, who are also in Liberia and the Pujehun district of Sierra Leone; and the *Koh-Mende*, who are a dominant tribe in Kailahun district. The Mende are one of the two largest ethnic groups in Sierra Leone. Their neighbours, the Temne people, constitute the largest ethnic group (35.5% of the total population), followed by the Mende (31.2%). The Mende are mostly farmers and hunters.

The main economic activities in the focus area are farming and mining, with a small percentage engaged in small businesses or petty trading in the private sector. Women provide more than 80% of farm labour for food production, processing, distribution, and food preparation. Women are generally responsible for food security at family and community levels and are primarily the home managers, community

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<sup>65</sup> UNDP 2020

<sup>66</sup> Government of Sierra Leone 2019



organizers, and caregivers for children, the sick, and the elderly. It is not therefore surprising that women work longer hours at their multiple roles than men, often with uncertain and more limited resources, lower rewards, and public recognition. According to the World Bank's development indicators for Sierra Leone, women account for over 53% of labour in the crop farming subsector and 52% in the poultry subsector. In the informal sector where women predominate, the main activities include soap making, tie-dying, and petty trade where generally the reward is very low. In farming, women are engaged mainly in food production, (subsistence farming), where cash returns are much lower than from cash crops where men dominate.

Women have access to land, credit, and the opening of bank accounts on their own. After the war, various commercial banks and credit financial institutions added to the country's financial services. They went to various parts of the country including some chiefdoms' headquarters towns to bring financial services to the farmers in isolated communities. They provided normal banking services of saving, current accounting, and other needed commercial services. Some micro-credit financial institutions also surfaced in the country. Notable among them are BRA, LAPO, and Finance Salone. Each provides credit facility to small groups of business organizations, especially women's business organization for weekly to monthly interest. The services business groups range from five to twenty members. The loan given usually falls between Five Hundred Thousand Leones (Le500,000) and three Million Leones (Le3,000,000) per member of the organization. The interest rate of 20-25% is considered by women as very high which is one of the factors preventing their use. The interest together with the loan is paid weekly with the hope of repaying the loan in three to six months, but the person is encouraged to continue the payment for an equal period within which the loan and interest were paid. If the person did not default in payment, she is upgraded and her personal saving now will be given to other groups with half of the interest coming to the owner and the other half to the financial institution. It must be noted that the upscaling is a fresh account following the first loan model. If the women are able to complete the third or fourth upscaling, her total saving will be enough to set her on a better road to business progress. However, many who were not able to invest in a proper profitable business that could enable them to repay the weekly amount faced different types of recovery embarrassment. Some even fled from their communities to save their face.

Gender-based violence (GBV) and Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Sexual Harassment (SEAH) are acts deeply rooted in gender inequality and remain one of the most notable human rights violations in all societies around the world. It is violence that is directed against a person because of his/her gender. Results from the 2021 Gender-Based Violence Survey for the Republic of Sierra Leone, conducted by Statistics Sierra Leone<sup>67</sup> (Stats SL) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), indicate a higher prevalence of this type of violence, with between 30 and 39 percent of women reporting having experienced at least one form of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) throughout their lives. It is important to note that female genital mutilation (FGM) is a ubiquitous practice in Sierra Leone, and while the country's legal framework does not explicitly prohibit FGM, policies implemented by the Government have recognized it as a form of SGBV. According to data from 2019, 83% of women aged 15-49 have undergone FGM, and most at a very young age, with 71% circumcised before the age of 15. Sixty one percent (61%) of ever-married women have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence by their current or most recent husband/partner, up from 51% in 2013; 50% experienced such violence in the 12 months preceding the 2019 Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey (SLDHS). Even though both women and men experience GBV, most victims are women and girls. On the positive side, there is increased gender awareness among stakeholders, some institutions have been

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<sup>67</sup> Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey, 2019.

established to prevent GBV such as the Family Support Unit and some legal reforms have taken place to rectify gender-based injustices, which have resulted in the enactment of laws such as the three Genders Justice Acts. According to the UNFPA review of 24 November 2021, an estimated 62% of women aged 15-49 report having experienced physical or sexual violence according to the Sierra Leone demographic health survey which is corroborated by the Sierra Leone global database on violence against women. ([www.unwomen.org/sl](http://www.unwomen.org/sl)). In Sierra Leone, prevention of and reductions in levels of domestic violence have been placed on the national transformation agenda as one of the country's priorities. The Sierra Leone Domestic Violence Act, 2007 was designed to protect women from domestic violence by providing accessible legal instruments aiming to prevent further incidents of abuse within domestic relationships. Under this act, violence against women is classified as a public crime allowing women to secure a protection order from the courts.

At the Gola landscape level, men are the landlords and the statistics reflected at national level with respect to SGBV levels manifest when women are not towing the approaches preferred by their male counterparts. Male governance is engrained in all forms of decision-making in the Gola landscape. They manifest in the family institutions, educational sector, labour market, politics and social service institutions. Although, this situation is improving, there is more work to be done to ensure fair representation. The Government of Sierra Leone put in place a legislation – the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act, (2022)<sup>68</sup> and this is providing a basis for redress.

With in the project context, the priority needs for men and women at the landscape level are related to access to forestry and biodiversity resources. The women focus is mainly on biomass energy particularly firewood and charcoal as well as some non-timber forest products particularly fruits, vegetables and medicinal herbs while men are more focussed on commercial products particularly commercial charcoal burning and timber resources through logging. The project interventions need to be implemented in a participatory and not to seem to disempower either gender. The intention to promote regulated access to ensure sustainability of the target resources may otherwise impact on relationships.

Discussions at both national stakeholder consultation workshop and the validation workshop indicated that there is no substantial use of Kambui for spiritual purposes. The biggest activities in Kambui forests is logging and charcoal burning.

### **Institutional Capacity**

The Environment Protection Agency of Sierra Leone (EPA-SL) is the executing agency of the Sierra Leone Child Project. The EPA-SL is the main government agency in charge of all issues related to the environment and climate change in the country<sup>69</sup>. The Agency has six core functions as described in Section 12 of Part Three of the EPA Act of 2008, as amended in July 2010. These functions include developing plans and programs for addressing environment management issues, that can be funded from multiple funding sources. The broad mandate of the Agency is to effectively protect and manage the environment; monitor and regulate companies with environment impact assessment (EIA) Licenses and illegal operations that have an impact on the environment and advise the Minister of Environment on all environmental matters. Among others, the Agency has responsibilities to ensure compliance and

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<sup>68</sup> The National Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act (GEWE) (2022).

<sup>69</sup> <https://epa.gov.sl/> Website accessed at 1556 hours on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

enforcement of environmental impact assessment procedures and pursue environmental education for the creation of public awareness-raising of the environment and its importance to the economic and social life of Sierra Leone.

The Agency is well established and governed by a Board of Directors which is the overall governing body of the Agency. The Executive Chairman executes the Board policies, oversees and facilitates the day-to-day administrative activities and management of resources of the Agency. The Executive Chairman is assisted by the Director, four Deputy Directors, and three Assistant Deputy Directors who also supervise and discipline the staff of the Agency<sup>70</sup>. The Agency has six main departments segregated into Units to undertake specific responsibilities. EPA-SL also serves as the National Focal Point for the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and also for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Sierra Leone.

Environmental Officers and Regional Environmental Officers under the supervision of the Deputy Directors implement the technical functions and manage the operations of the Agency in the field to ensure the sustainable utilization of the environment and its natural resources by people in the provinces. At the provincial level, EPA-SL has established two main offices in the provincial towns of Makeni and Bo to undertake effective routine environmental monitoring countrywide educate and sensitize the entire populace on the functions of the Agency and the need for environmental protection and management in the country. The EPA-SL has a whole unit known as the Gender Unit (4 personnel- 3 female and 1 male) and uses a policy of at least 30% women representation in all departments and units of the agency. The unit expertise will be utilized to enhance PMU supervision for ensuring addressing of project gender considerations. The Environmental Safety Unit (12 Personnel-7 Male and 5 female) is responsible for the issuance of the Environmental Impact Assessment License, as well as supervising/monitoring the adherence to the Environmental, Social, and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) that includes the necessary social safeguards for members and the communities. From time-to-time various college/university students come over to assist during their internship periods in various environmentally related training ranging from general administration (through project financial management) to specialized environment issues like ESHIA, Chemical Control, Climate change, etc.

The EPA-SL has a wealth of experience in implementing projects and programmes since its establishment in 2008. They have supervised the implementation of all the country's past three National Communications (NC1 to NC3), the various then National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) from the Climate Smart Agricultural Project to the Climate Change Information and Early Warning Services (CIEWS). They were involved in the implementation of the various Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA) including the formation of the Nationally Protected Area Authority (NPAA) that is safeguarding the Gola Forest (the only transboundary conserved and adequately managed forest in West Africa).

**Co-executing Partners:**

- (i) National Protected Area Authority (NPAA) is the mandated institution for managing National Parks in Sierra Leone. The NPAA currently manages the Gola Forest National Park and are in discussions to have Kambui Hills Forest reserve protection status upgraded as well.

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<sup>70</sup> <https://epa.gov.sl/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/2012-2016-EPA-STRATEGIC-PLAN.pdf> website accessed on 27th November 2023 at 1615hours.

- (ii) Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC) – The forest Department in the Ministry of Environment and climate change manages the forest reserves and provides extension services to support management of community forests.

#### **Additional Information**

Risks of social instability, as evidenced by the August 2022 violent riots that left 27 people dead, include rising public discontent and the uncertainties related to elections. Recently in November 2023 there have been some limited reported civil discontent leading to more drastic security measures by the Government. The project shall ensure continuous risk assessment and threat monitoring including continuous engagement with local law enforcement. To enable business continuity the project shall embrace improved IT usage for effective management.

COVID-19 posed a big problem for people in both developed and developing countries coupled with the current War in Ukraine and the escalating conflict between Israel and the Palestinians that has resulted in major economic challenges that the increase in the oil price triggered. Any such issues of global significance (with major fallout to Sierra Leone and other developing countries) will have dire consequences on the project, since the current budget estimate for various activities/goods and services may not be enough in such envisaged economic disturbances.

Sierra Leone is relatively a young, populated country that is likely to suffer from high staff turnover of the highly trained and intelligent government workers to be replaced with novice with absolutely no work experiences. Such instances are used to disrupt project implementation. The project is to emphasize implementation based on institutional mandates rather than on individual expertise only.

Natural disasters are an occurrence that can greatly impact project progress. The case of Ebola outbreak in 2016 in Kenema. Droughts, fires, floods, and storms are likely events with the climate change phenomena. This calls for purposive selection of project sites to be implemented in a bit widely apart locations that may not be feasible for the occurrence of such multiple threats in all the places that are apart from each other.

During the implementation, emerging issues like myths and misinformation may come up that would require continuous engagement of the leadership in the chiefdoms so as to get better buy-in of the local communities worked with. Crop damage is the most prevalent form of human-wildlife conflict across the African continent. The results of this conflict include others like; animal deaths, loss of human life, injuries/loss to people, injuries/loss to wildlife and livestock depredation. Once they occur, they might influence project implementation progress. The project suggests community engagement as vital to the success of local conservation in addition to conservation planning and management, including land use planning and prioritization of species for continued monitoring in light of changing threats at GRNP.

### **III. ESMF EXCLUSIONS**

This section will help the CI-GEF/GCF Agencies to determine whether they can support a project. Please provide accurate answers and details including supporting documents, where requested. If you answered “Yes” to any of the questions (i-xiii) then the CI-GEF/GCF Agencies cannot support the project.

Will the project:	Yes	No
I. Contravene major international and regional conventions on environmental issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
II. Propose to create or facilitate significant degradation and/or conversion of natural habitats of any type (forests, wetlands, grasslands, coastal/marine ecosystems, etc.) including those that are legally protected, officially proposed for protection, identified by authoritative sources for their high conservation value, recognized as protected by traditional local communities, or have significant negative socioeconomic and cultural impacts that cannot be cost-effectively avoided, minimized, mitigated and/or offset?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
III. Involve adverse impacts on critical natural habitats, including forests that are critical natural habitats, including from the procurement of natural resource commodities, except for adverse impacts on a limited scale that result from conservation actions that achieve a net gain of the biodiversity values associated with the critical natural habitat?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
IV. Propose to carry out <i>unsustainable</i> harvesting of natural resources -animals, plants, timber and/or non-timber forest products (NTFPs)- or the establishment of forest plantations in <i>critical natural habitats</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
V. Propose the introduction of alien species that can potentially become invasive and harmful to the environment, unless there is a mitigation plan to avoid this from happening?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
VI. Involve <i>involuntary resettlement, land acquisition, and/or the taking of shelter and other assets</i> belonging to local communities, individuals or Indigenous Peoples?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
VII. Contravene major international and regional conventions on human rights, including rights specific to indigenous peoples?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
VIII. Propose activities that result in the exploitation of and access to outsiders to the lands and territories of indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation and in initial contact?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
IX. Propose the use and/or procurement of materials deemed illegal under host country laws or regulations or international conventions and agreements, or subject to international phase-outs or bans, such as: a. ozone depleting substances, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and other specific, hazardous pharmaceuticals, pesticides/herbicides or chemicals; and b. wildlife or products regulated under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species or Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

x. Propose the use and/or procurement of pesticides and hazardous materials that are unlawful under national or international laws, the generation of wastes and effluents, and emissions of short- and long-lived climate pollutants?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
xi. Involves the removal, alteration or disturbance of any non-replicable or critical cultural heritage, or the use of any intangible cultural heritage without the Free, Prior and Informed Consent of the communities who it belongs to?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

IV. SIMPLIFIED APPROVAL PROCESS (GCF Projects ONLY)		
<p>Questions XIV through XXII are <b>ONLY for GCF Projects</b> pursuing the Simplified Approval Process (SAP). If you answer “Yes” to any of the questions below, your project will undergo further review to determine eligibility for the Simplified Approval Process.</p>		
Will the project:	Yes	No
xii. Involve associated facilities <sup>71</sup> and require further due diligence of such associated facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xiii. Involve trans-boundary impacts including those that would require further due diligence and notification to downstream riparian states?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xiv. Adversely affect working conditions and health and safety of workers or potentially employ vulnerable categories of workers including women or child labor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xv. Generate hazardous waste and pollutants including pesticides and contaminate lands that would require further studies on management, minimization and control and compliance to the country and applicable international quality standards?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xvi. Involve the construction, maintenance, and rehabilitation of critical infrastructure (i.e. dams, water impoundments, coastal and river bank infrastructure) that would require further technical assessment and safety studies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xvii. Involve the resettlement and dispossession, land acquisition, and economic displacement of persons and communities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xviii. Be located in protected areas and areas of ecological significance including critical habitats, key biodiversity areas and internationally recognized conservation sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xix. Affect Indigenous Peoples that would require further due diligence, free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) and documentation of development plans?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xx. Be located in areas that considered to have archeological (prehistoric), paleontological, historical, cultural, artistic, and religious values or contains features considered as critical cultural heritage?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<sup>71</sup> Associated facilities are those that are not funded as part of the project, and that would not have been constructed or expanded if the project did not exist and without which the project would not be viable.

## V. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS (ESS) SCREENING

This section will help the CI-GEF/GCF Agencies to determine the category of the project and the ESS Standards triggered by the project. Please provide accurate answers and details including supporting documents, where requested.

### ESS1: Environmental and Social Impact Assessment

Will the project potentially:

- (a) cause significant adverse environmental and social impacts (which may affect an area broader than the project area) that are sensitive, diverse, or unprecedented.
- (b) cause adverse environmental and social impacts (which are site-specific and few if any of them are irreversible) on human populations or environmentally or socially important areas?

☒ NO (to all of the above)

☐ TO BE DETERMINED

☐ YES (to any of the above)

If TBD or Yes, please provide details here.

- (c) Has a full or limited ESIA that covers the proposed project already been completed?

☒ NO

☐ YES (If Yes, answer the following)

(d) Is the assessment a: <input type="checkbox"/> A FULL ESIA <input type="checkbox"/> A LIMITED ESIA	Yes	No
(e) Does the assessment meet its terms of reference, both procedurally and substantively?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(f) 3. Does the assessment provide a satisfactory assessment of the proposed project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(g) 5. Does the assessment describe specific environmental and social management measures (e.g., avoidance, minimization, mitigation, compensation, monitoring, and capacity development measures)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(h) 6. Does the assessment identify capacity needs of the institutions responsible for implementing environmental and social management issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(i) 7. Was the assessment developed through a consultative process with key stakeholder & rightsholder engagement, including issues related to gender mainstreaming and Indigenous Peoples?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(j) 8. Does the assessment assess the adequacy of the cost of and financing arrangements for environmental and social management issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

For any "no" answers, describe below how the issue has been or will be resolved or addressed.



## ESS 2: Protection of Natural Habitats and Biodiversity Conservation

Will the project:

- (a) involve adverse impacts on Critical Habitats<sup>72</sup>, including forests that are Critical Habitats, including from the procurement of natural resource commodities, except for adverse impacts on a limited scale that result from conservation actions that achieve a Net Gain of the Biodiversity values associated with the Critical Habitat?
- (b) contravene applicable international environmental treaties or agreements?
- (c) involved the utilization of genetic resources?
- (d) introduce or use potentially invasive alien species?
- (e) affect species identified as threatened at the local and/or global levels?
- (f) implement habitat restoration activities?

☐ NO (to all of the above)

☐ TO BE DETERMINED (TBD)

☒ YES (to any of the above)

*If TBD or Yes, please provide details here. In the case of Protected Areas, provide name, location, area size, management category, governance arrangement, and current management activities of protected areas being affected by the project.*

The Gola Forest landscape is affected by deforestation which occurs in the buffer zone of the PAs and surrounding community lands as a result of the expansion of subsistence agriculture. Forest degradation also occurs due to selective logging and artisanal mining (for gold and diamonds), facilitated by improved road access. The project therefore intends to improve the management of at least 22,428 ha of protected area, of which restoration is for at least 10,000 ha degraded forests in the PAs of the Gola Forest landscape. The specific affected areas include the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, (North and South) as well as the Tiwai Islands Wildlife Sanctuary and the surrounding communities. The project will thus develop an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) related to the proposed restoration activities.

## ESS 3: Resettlement, Physical and Economic Displacement

Will the project

- (a) involve the voluntary or involuntary resettlement of people? Resettlement including relocation or loss of shelter.
- (b) restrict land use and access?

<sup>72</sup> Critical Habitat means a Habitat with high Biodiversity value, including (i) Habitats of significant importance to Critically Endangered or Endangered species, as listed on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of threatened species or equivalent national approaches, (ii) Habitats of significant importance to endemic or restricted-range species, (iii) Habitats supporting globally or nationally significant concentrations of migratory or congregatory species, (iv) highly threatened or unique ecosystems, and (v) ecological functions or characteristics that are needed to maintain the viability of the Biodiversity values described in (i) to (iv).

(c) cause economic displacement of people? Economic displacement, including the loss of access to natural resources that lead directly or indirectly to the loss of traditional/subsistence livelihoods, including assets, social capital, cultural identity, among other impacts.

- ☒ NO (to all of the above)  
☐ TO BE DETERMINED (TBD)  
☐ YES (to any of the above)

If TBD or Yes, please provide details here.

The project may restrict some aspects of land use and access particularly in relation to the PAs namely: Kambui Hills Forest reserve, Tiwai Island and the Gola rainforest National Park. These are however to be measures to improve management and control in protected areas that already exist such as reduction in offtakes of timber and non-timber forest products. No new protected areas are to be opened up apart from those existing. Using the management plans in place/updated land use planning shall be enforced using the already existing mechanisms but agreed upon by the local communities during the planning meetings.

#### ESS 4 : Indigenous Peoples <sup>73</sup>

Will the project:

- (a) work in lands or territories traditionally owned, customarily used, or occupied by indigenous peoples?
- (b) cause impacts on land and natural resources, including restrictions on land use or loss of access to natural resources, subject to traditional ownership or under customary use or occupation, or the location of a project or program on such land or the commercial development of such natural resources?
- (c) cause relocation of Indigenous Peoples from land and natural resources subject to traditional ownership, or under customary use or occupation?
- (d) cause significant impacts on an Indigenous People's cultural heritage that is material to the identity and/or cultural, ceremonial, or spiritual aspects of the affected Indigenous People's lives, or the use of such cultural heritage for commercial purposes?
- (e) include the commercial development of lands and natural resources central to Indigenous Peoples' identity and livelihood, or commercial use of Indigenous Peoples' Cultural Heritage?
- (f) restrict the access of Indigenous Peoples to parks and protected areas?
- (g) Work in territories where there is Indigenous Peoples in voluntary isolation or could result in undesired contact with IPs?

<sup>73</sup> According to CI Policy on Indigenous Peoples, "CI identifies indigenous peoples in specific geographic areas by the presence, in varying degrees, of: a) Close attachment to ancestral and traditional or customary territories and the natural resources in them; b) Customary social and political institutions; c) Economic systems oriented to subsistence production; d) An indigenous language, often different from the predominant language; and f) Self-identification and identification by others as members of a distinct cultural group".

- ☒ NO (to all of the above)  
☐ TO BE DETERMINED (TBD)  
☐ YES (to any of the above)

If TBD or Yes, please provide details here.

The project might restrict the use or have controlled access of the local communities to parks and protected areas particularly to the Kambui hills and the Tiwai Island wildlife sanctuary as a means towards enhancing regeneration of the natural forests. This could cause limited loss of access to natural resources that may have been traditionally used by the communities as open access resources. This is however a means of improved management through regulated utilization and not a new gazettelement.

#### ESS 5: Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention

Will the project:

- (a) promote the trade in or use of any substances listed under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, or other chemicals or hazardous materials subject to international bans, restrictions or phaseouts due to high toxicity to living organisms, environmental persistence, potential for bioaccumulation, or potential depletion of the ozone layer, consistent with relevant international treaties and agreements?
- (b) generate wastes and effluents, and emissions of short- and long-lived climate pollutants?
- (c) involve pest management measures, Integrated Pest Management or Integrated Management of Vectors and Intermediate Hosts?
- (d) procure pesticides?
- (e) use energy, water and other resources and material inputs, where significant water consumption is involved and would cause adverse impacts on communities, other water users, and the environment?

- ☒ NO (to all of the above)  
☐ TO BE DETERMINED (TBD)  
☐ YES (to any of the above)

If TBD or Yes, please provide details here.

#### ESS 6: Cultural Heritage<sup>74</sup>

<sup>74</sup> *Cultural Heritage means both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, including movable or immovable objects, sites, structures, natural features and landscapes that have archaeological, paleontological, historical, architectural, religious, aesthetic, or other cultural significance, located in urban or rural settings, above ground, underground or under water; as well as practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, or skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups, and in some cases individuals, recognize as part of their heritage, as transmitted from generation to generation and constantly recreated by them in response to nature and a shared history*

Will the project implement activities that affect cultural heritage (both tangible and/or intangible), including archaeological, paleontological, historical, architectural, and sacred sites including graveyards, burial sites, and sites with unique natural values?

☒ NO

☐ TO BE DETERMINED (TBD)

☐ YES

If TBD or Yes, please provide details here.

Local communities may feel some regulated resource use of the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve with respect to improved management; and information is that while the Mende are believed to be having strong cultural beliefs attached to the use of the forests, current forest degradation has limited their use. To this extent the Mende as local communities do have some historical attachment to the area of the project but continuous engagement through the chiefdoms will be of paramount importance during project implementation. Discussions at both the national consultation workshop in March 2024 and at the validation workshop in June 2024 indicate that there is no noticeable use of Kambui forests for spiritual purposes. The biggest use of the forests is logging and charcoal burning as well as collection of water and firewood resources.

#### **ESS 7: Labor and Working Conditions**

Does the EA/EE have in place the necessary policies, procedures, systems and capabilities to ensure that:

- (a) the fundamental rights of workers, consistent with the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work are respected and protected?
- (b) written labor management procedures are established in accordance with applicable national laws?
- (c) workers are provided with clear and understandable documentation of employment terms and conditions, including their rights under national law to hours of work, wages, overtime, compensation and benefits?
- (d) workers are provided regular and timely payment of wages; adequate periods of rest, holiday, sick, maternity, paternity, and family leave; and written notice of termination and severance payments, as required under national laws and the labor management procedures?
- (e) decisions relating to any aspect of the employment relationship, including recruitment, hiring and treatment of workers, are made based on the principles of non-discrimination, equal opportunity and fair treatment, and not on the basis of personal characteristics unrelated to inherent job requirements?
- (f) appropriate measures are in place to prevent harassment, intimidation, and exploitation, and to protect vulnerable workers, including but not limited to women, children of working age, migrants and persons with disabilities?

- (g) workers who participate, or seek to participate, in workers' organizations and collective bargaining, do so without interference, are not discriminated or retaliated against, and are provided with information needed for meaningful negotiation in a timely manner?
- (h) forced labor and child labor are not used in connection with the project or program?
- (i) occupational health and safety (OHS) measures are applied to establish and maintain a safe and healthy working environment, including supply chain workers?
- (j) workers are informed of applicable grievance and conflict resolution systems provided at the workplace level?
- (k) workers may use these mechanisms without retribution, and the grievance and conflict resolution systems does not impede access to other judicial or administrative remedies available under the law or through existing arbitration procedures, or substitute for grievance systems provided through collective agreements?

☐ NO (to any of the above)

☐ TO BE DETERMINED (TBD)

☒ YES (to all of the above)

If TBD or Yes, please provide details here.

The Environmental Protection Agency of Sierra Leone (EPA-SL), the National Protected Area Authority (NPAA) and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC) are subject to the country's legislation. Sierra Leone's government has prescribed the minimum wage rate as 500,000 Sierra Leonean Leones per month for all the employees. An employee is entitled to decent working conditions including provisions for leave days such as the following paid leaves in a year according to their term of service: 1 to 5 years of service - 19 paid leaves. 5 to 10 years of service - 22 paid leaves<sup>75</sup>.

Sierra Leone has established laws and regulations to govern employment practices. The Employment Act (2023)<sup>76</sup> outlines the rights and responsibilities of both employers and employees, covering areas such as minimum wage, working hours, leave entitlements, and occupational health and safety. Under the Employment Act, the standard working hours for adults are set at 48 hours per week, with a maximum of 8 hours per day. Overtime work beyond the standard working hours should be compensated at a higher rate.

The Factories Act and the Employers and Employed Rules are the two main Acts containing provisions in relation to occupation safety and health, and more details can be found in particular in the Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection Act<sup>77</sup>. They cover areas such as workplace inspections, hazard identification, safety training, and workers' compensation in case of accidents or injuries. It's worth noting that enforcement and implementation of the acts can vary, and some sectors or informal work settings may have less stringent compliance. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security is responsible

<sup>75</sup> <https://sierralii.gov.sl/akn/sl/act/2023/15/eng@2023-05-11> website accessed on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 1843hours.

<sup>76</sup> <https://sierralii.gov.sl/akn/sl/act/2023/15/eng@2023-05-11> (Accessed on 27 November 2023 at 18h45GMT)

<sup>77</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/legosh/en/f?p=14100:1100:0::NO::P1100\\_ISO\\_CODE3,P1100\\_SUBCODE\\_CODE,P1100\\_YEAR:SLE,,2015](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/legosh/en/f?p=14100:1100:0::NO::P1100_ISO_CODE3,P1100_SUBCODE_CODE,P1100_YEAR:SLE,,2015) (Accessed on 27 November 2023 at 18h51GMT)

for overseeing occupational safety and health in Sierra Leone. The ministry conducts regular inspections of workplaces to assess compliance with the relevant regulations. The project executing partners are subject to these regular inspections and as such ensures compliance since non-compliance leads penalties and enforcement.

While Sierra Leone has established laws and regulations to protect workers' rights, challenges persist in terms of enforcement, particularly in the informal sector. Limited resources, inadequate staffing of labour inspectors, and a lack of awareness among workers about their rights can hinder effective implementation.

Internationally, Sierra Leone has been a member of the International Labour Organization (ILO) since 1961<sup>78</sup>, and has ratified 30 international labour conventions and the following eight ILO fundamental conventions:

- C029 - Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)<sup>79</sup>.
- C087 - Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948 (No. 87)<sup>80</sup>.
- C098 - Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)<sup>81</sup>.
- C100 - Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)<sup>82</sup>.
- C105 - Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)<sup>83</sup>.
- C111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)<sup>84</sup>.
- C138 - Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) - Minimum age specified: 14 year)<sup>85</sup>.
- C182 - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)<sup>86</sup>.

Sierra Leone has domesticated ILO international labour conventions and core conventions through legislative, administrative, and policy measures. By domesticating these conventions, the country demonstrates its commitment to upholding international labour standards and protecting the rights of workers.

## ESS 8: Community Health, Safety and Security

<sup>78</sup> <https://www.ilo.org/africa/countries-covered/sierra-leone/lang--en/index.htm#:~:text=Sierra%20Leone%20has%20been%20a,including%20the%20%20fundamental%20conventions>. (Accessed on 27 November 2023 at 18h59GMT)

<sup>79</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100\\_INSTRUMENT\\_ID:312174:NO](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312174:NO) (Accessed on 22 November 2023 at 12h22GMT)

<sup>80</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100\\_INSTRUMENT\\_ID:312232:NO](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312232:NO) (Accessed on 22 November 2023 at 12h24GMT)

<sup>81</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100\\_INSTRUMENT\\_ID:312243:NO](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312243:NO) (Accessed on 22 November 2023 at 12h26GMT)

<sup>82</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100\\_INSTRUMENT\\_ID:312245:NO](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312245:NO) (Accessed on 22 November 2023 at 12h28GMT)

<sup>83</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100\\_INSTRUMENT\\_ID:312250:NO](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312250:NO) (Accessed on 22 November 2023 at 12h30GMT)

<sup>84</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100\\_INSTRUMENT\\_ID:312256:NO](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312256:NO) (Accessed on 22 November 2023 at 12h32GMT)

<sup>85</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100\\_INSTRUMENT\\_ID:312283:NO](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312283:NO) (Accessed on 22 November 2023 at 12h34GMT)

<sup>86</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100\\_INSTRUMENT\\_ID:312327:NO](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312327:NO) (Accessed on 22 November 2023 at 12h36GMT)

Please complete the following Risk Assessment Tool to determine community health, safety and security risks and their mitigation measures. Guidance on how to complete the Tool can be found in Appendix IX of the ESMF (Version 7). Try to identify risks in a way that recognizes diversity, disadvantaged groups that might be disproportionately affected or affected in different ways to others. For example, elderly and people with disabilities will be more impacted by natural hazards, or women having more exposure to accidents from having less access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Some of the CHSS risks may include but are not limited to:

- Natural hazards/disasters such as flooding, drought, wildfires, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, typhoons and hurricanes;
- Climate change and ecosystem service stress such as increased temperatures;
- Exposure to Hazardous Materials such pesticides and banned chemicals;
- Exposure to communicable/vector-borne disease such as Ebola, COVID-19, and Malaria;
- Security related risk such as working in areas of conflict or post-conflict or with illegal activities (e.g. poaching, growing illicit crops), context with ongoing human rights violations, human-wildlife conflict, frequent and violent protests/demonstrations, working with armed rangers;
- Safety related risks such as failure of structural elements or infrastructure built by the project, lack of PPE; and
- Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH).

Community Health, Safety and Security Threat	Likelihood	Impact	Risk	Risk Rating	Mitigation Measures
1. The potential exposure to natural disasters	Likely (4)	Major (4)	Natural Disasters (e.g., floods, landslides)	High (16)	Design or adopt early warning systems, creating disaster response plans
2. Exposure of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups	Likely (4)	Major (4)	Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Sexual Assault	High (16)	Operationalisation of the AGM to facilitate the reporting of incidents of GBV and handling of the incidents in appropriate ways and working/cooperating with relevant Government agencies and security services to ensure project's compliance to applicable laws, policies and regulations



3. Threats to human security	Likely (4)	Major (4)	Insecurity and Civil unrest	Medium (12)	Collaborating with security agencies, local authorities and communities to enhance project security. Implementing security measures to protect project assets and equipment.
4. Exposure to health risks	Possible (3)	Major (4)	Disease Outbreaks e.g. malaria, Ebola etc	Medium (12)	Follow ministry of health advisories, protocols and guidelines throughout the project.
5. Current and projected effects of climate change	Likely (4)	Major (4)	Climate change – induced Extreme Weather Events (e.g., heavy rainfall heat waves)	High (16)	Raising awareness on risks of climate change on the project. Development of climate risk mitigation strategies
Total				72	
Average				14.4	
Overall risk rating to project-affected communities				<b>Medium</b>	

#### ESS 9: Private Sector Direct Investments and Financial Intermediaries

Will the project make either direct investments in private sector firms or Endowment Funds, or channels funds through Financial Intermediaries (FIs)?

☒ NO

☐ TO BE DETERMINED (TBD)

☐ YES (to any of the above)

If TBD or Yes, the proposed fund/FI/firm would be required use this Screening Form to conduct a screening on the portfolio of the proposed investment.

#### ESS 10: Climate Risk and Related Disasters

Please refer to guiding questions in Appendix A to help answer the questions below:

Describe the climate projections for the country or region, or if possible, for the specific location of the project for the next 30 years from the start date of the project.

Climate projections for Sierra Leone indicate potential changes in temperature, precipitation patterns, and other climate variables. These projections are based on climate models and scenarios developed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) sixth assessment report<sup>87</sup>. Overall, Sierra Leone is expected to experience increasing temperatures in the coming decades. The magnitude of temperature change may vary across regions, but average temperature rise is projected to be around 1-2 degrees Celsius by mid-century, compared to the baseline period (1961-1990). The average annual temperature of Sierra Leone for the period 1961 to 2015 based on observed data from meteorological stations was about 26.9°C. Combining this average annual temperature with the 2\*CO<sub>2</sub> output from the Global Circulation Model (GCM), the average annual temperature for Sierra is projected to increase.

Projections for precipitation in Sierra Leone are more uncertain compared to temperature. However, there is a tendency for increased variability and changes in rainfall patterns. It is projected that northern and eastern regions of the country may experience increased rainfall as well as the coastal areas. Extreme rainfall events, including intense storms and prolonged dry spells, are expected to become more frequent.

Climate change poses challenges for agriculture and food security in Sierra Leone. Changes in temperature and rainfall patterns can affect crop yields, water availability, and the prevalence of pests and diseases. Shifts in suitable agro-ecological zones may require adjustments in crop choices and farming practices. Changes in precipitation patterns can impact water availability and quality in the country. Increased rainfall intensity may lead to more runoff and flooding, affecting water infrastructure and causing waterborne diseases. Conversely, reduced rainfall in some regions can lead to water scarcity and increased competition for water resources. Integrated water resource management, including rainwater harvesting, watershed protection, and efficient water use, is important for adapting to these changes.

Describe the relevant potential hazards (e.g. heavy rainfall leading to flood, low rainfall leading to drought, temperature changes which could lead to heat waves, sea-level rise, or changes in other extreme events such as hurricanes and cyclone) that could prevent the project from achieving its objectives and/or outputs.

Climate change poses various potential hazards and impacts in Sierra Leone. These have been extensively discussed in the sixth IPCC assessment report for Africa<sup>88</sup> and the sixth IPCC assessment report on impacts, adaptation, and vulnerability<sup>89</sup>. Increased frequent and intense extreme weather events such as storms, heavy rainfall, and floods. These events can result in flash floods, destruction of infrastructure, loss of lives, displacement of populations, and damage to crops and livestock.

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<sup>87</sup> <https://www.ipcc.ch/assessment-report/ar6/> (Accessed on 27 November 2023 at 13h00GMT)

<sup>88</sup> [https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC\\_AR6\\_WGII\\_Chapter09.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGII_Chapter09.pdf) (Accessed on 22 November 2023 at 13h30GMT)

<sup>89</sup> [https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC\\_AR6\\_WGII\\_SummaryVolume.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGII_SummaryVolume.pdf) (Accessed on 22 November 2023 at 13h50GMT)

Climate change can disrupt rainfall patterns, leading to changes in the timing, duration, and intensity of rainfall. This can result in droughts, reduced water availability, and challenges for agricultural production, water supply, and hydropower generation. Rising temperatures can contribute to heatwaves and prolonged periods of extreme heat. Heatwaves can have adverse effects on human health, especially vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children, and those with pre-existing health conditions.

Changes in rainfall patterns and increased evaporation can lead to water scarcity in some regions of the country. This can affect water availability for drinking, sanitation, and agricultural activities, leading to challenges in meeting basic needs and increasing the risk of waterborne diseases. Climate change can affect agricultural production in Sierra Leone. Changes in temperature, rainfall patterns, and the prevalence of pests and diseases can reduce crop yields and livestock productivity. This can have significant implications for food security, livelihoods, and the economy.

Climate change can influence the geographic distribution and prevalence of vector-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever. Changes in temperature and rainfall patterns can affect the habitats and breeding patterns of disease-carrying mosquitoes, potentially expanding the range of these diseases.

Describe the current and projected exposures, vulnerabilities, and adaptive capacities (e.g. technical, institutional, financial) and how these could prevent the project from achieving its objectives and/or outputs.

Exposures to climate change in Sierra Leone include extreme weather events, changes in rainfall patterns, and temperature increases. These factors can lead to disruptions in transportation systems, damage to infrastructure, and safety concerns for individuals traveling to attend project meetings.

Sierra Leone's vulnerabilities to climate change, such as limited resources and infrastructure, high poverty levels, and inadequate healthcare systems, can indirectly affect project meetings. For instance, limited resources may hinder the availability of appropriate venues, transportation, and accommodation necessary for conducting meetings as well as affecting ecosystem restoration activities. Vulnerabilities can also lead to increased health risks, making it necessary to prioritize the well-being and safety of meeting attendees and field level workers.

Sierra Leone's adaptive capacities, including technical, institutional, and financial resources, play a crucial role in mitigating climate change impacts and facilitating project work. However, constraints in these areas can hinder the ability to adapt effectively. Limited technical resources may make it challenging to ensure reliable infrastructure, such as stable power supply and internet connectivity, which are essential for conducting meetings. Institutional capacities, such as the availability of dedicated climate change departments or agencies, can influence the level of support and guidance provided for climate adaptation and event planning. Financial resources are crucial for investing in

climate-resilient infrastructure, transportation systems, and health measures to enable safe execution of project activities.

Considering the exposures, vulnerabilities, and adaptive capacities mentioned above, several factors can prevent or influence the feasibility of project activities in Sierra Leone:

- Infrastructure: Climate change impacts, such as damage to roads, bridges, and buildings due to extreme weather events, can disrupt transportation routes and access to meeting venues and implementation of forest level activities.
- Safety Concerns: Extreme weather events, including storms, heavy rainfall, or heatwaves, may pose safety risks for individuals implementing project activities. These risks need to be carefully assessed to ensure the well-being of project stakeholders.
- Health Risks: Climate change can impact health risks, including the spread of vector-borne diseases or waterborne illnesses. Project meetings require proper health and sanitation measures to minimize these risks.
- Technological Limitations: Limited technical resources can affect the availability of reliable internet connectivity, audiovisual equipment, and other essential technical requirements for conducting successful project meetings as well as implementation of ecosystem level project work.
- Financial Constraints: Limited financial resources can make it challenging to invest in climate-resilient infrastructure, transportation, or health measures that would facilitate safe implementation of project activities.

What mitigation measures have been identified and incorporated into the design of the project/planned for the implementation phase to reduce the likelihood and/or consequences of risks or to respond to consequences so as to ensure that the project achieves its objectives and/or outputs?

The following mitigation measures have been identified and incorporated into the design of the project/planned for the implementation phase to reduce the likelihood and/or consequences of risks or to respond to consequences to ensure that the project achieves its objectives and outputs:

11. Scheduling meetings and trainings using information from seasonal forecasts and long-term climate projections.
12. Scheduling demonstrative trainings and data collection exercises using information from seasonal forecasts and long-term climate projections.
13. Scheduling project equipment delivery using information from seasonal forecasts and long-term climate projections.
14. Data digitization starts immediately after project inception.
15. Data storage on Cloud Technology and making use of existing technologies in the country.
16. Use of climate-proof data collection and storage equipment
17. Flexible meeting schedule with options for undertaking online meetings.
18. Flexible demonstrative field training schedule with options for undertaking online trainings.
19. Consider better planning for forest restoration closely liaising with weather forecast agencies to ensure timely planting of trees and any livelihood programmes.

20. Set up project locations, especially demonstrative field locations in areas least affected by floods.

If one or more risks are accepted, please provide a justification.

N/A

**Appendix A.** Climate risk and related disaster assessment tool (adapted from FAO).

The checklist below presents some guiding questions on hazards, exposure, vulnerability and adaptive capacity (see definitions in Appendix XI of the ESMF Version 7) for completing the climate screening section of the Safeguard Screening Form:

Existing Hazards Guiding Questions:	Yes	No	TBD
<b>Observed climate and weather hazards in the project area:</b>			
Extreme temperature (heat/cold)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extreme precipitation and flooding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural Droughts and/or dry spells	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Storms (Tropical storms, snowstorms, hailstorms, dust storms, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Winds (Typhoons, Cyclones, Hurricanes, Tornadoes, Harmattan)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sea level rise (from global warming and storm surges)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Other natural hazards observed in the project area:</b>			
Earthquakes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tsunamis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Volcanic eruptions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Landslides or avalanches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wildfires	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Salinization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ocean acidification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Projected Hazards Guiding Questions	Yes	No	N/A
<b>Do future climate scenarios foresee an incremental increase of potential hazards and climate change compared to the baseline that may affect the project over its lifetime?</b>			
Extreme temperature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extreme precipitation and flooding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural Droughts and/or dry spells	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Change in temperature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Change in rainfall	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exposure Guiding Questions	Yes	No	N/A
<b>Is the project located in high exposure areas?</b>			
Low-lying areas (valleys or coastal zones)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arid and semi-arid zones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mountains zones and permafrost areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Are the agricultural systems (crops, livestock, fisheries, forests) targeted by the project affected by climate related hazards?</b>			
Is crop productivity affected by rainfall variability, changes in temperature or pests and diseases?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is livestock productivity affected by rainfall variability, changes in temperature or parasites and diseases?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is fisheries productivity affected by ocean acidification, changes in sea temperature or variation of water salinity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is forest productivity affected by wildfires, diseases, rainfall variability or changes in temperature?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is any stage of the agricultural value chain (production, storage, processing and marketing) affected by climate related hazards?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vulnerability Guiding Questions	Yes	No	TBD
Is the target population in the project area living below poverty line?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the livelihoods of the target population sensitive to climate change?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the target population income exclusively from agriculture?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the population migrating due to food insecurity as a consequence of climate change?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Is the project targeting sensitive groups (indigenous people or other marginalized groups) that are likely to be affected by climate change?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is climate change affecting certain groups more than others in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Adaptive Capacity Guiding Questions:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>TBD</b>
Does the target population have access to climate information?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Are there any early warning systems in the project area to anticipate and respond to climate-related events and disasters or climate-driven pest and diseases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the government or other institutions support the target population/communities with the necessary social and economic resources to prepare for or respond to climate-related events?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the target population carrying out self-adaptation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do policies exist that make financial credit, loans and agricultural insurance available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Project Modulation of Risks Guiding Questions:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>TBD</b>
<b>1. Policies and planning</b>			
Does the project support the integration of climate into national policies and planning?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the project support the increased use of climate data and information in national long term and strategic planning?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2. Capacity building, training and outreach</b>			
Would the project invest in institutional development and capacity-building for national institutions involved in climate related activities?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Would the project invest in increased information and dissemination of climate-related information to target groups?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the project have opportunities to strengthen rural and indigenous climate risk management capabilities?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the project support capacity of target groups to utilize and apply climate services at the farm level?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3. Data gathering, monitoring and information management</b>			
Will the project support the infrastructure and technology necessary to monitor climate variables and collect data required from climate impact assessment and modelling?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will the project support the national institutions to develop the skills required to monitoring and collect climate related information?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will the project support development of databases and repositories of climate information?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4. Mitigation</b>			
Will the project invest in measures that will reduce or mitigate emissions of GHGs from the energy sector?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will the project invest in measures to reduce or mitigate emissions of GHGs from livestock or agricultural production (e.g. rice production)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will the project invest in measures to reduce or mitigation emissions of GHGs through reforestation or land use change?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the project invest in renewable energy and green technologies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will the project invest in other measures to reduce or mitigate GHG emissions?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>5. Adaptation</b>			
Will the project invest in climate smart agriculture activities?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the project promote climate resilient practices for crops, livestock and fisheries?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the project promote sustainable natural resources management?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the project support Nature-based Solutions for climate change and disaster risk reduction?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the project invest in agricultural insurance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



**ANNEX G: Budget Table**

Please upload the budget table here\*

	Component	Component	Component	Component	Component	M&E	PMC	Total budget
	1	2	3	4	5			
Personnel and Professional Services	177,242	119,538	175,508	161,000	136,926	143,456	189,474	1,103,144
Travel, meetings, and workshops	223,773	0	10,197	112,989	94,818	5,953	5,000	452,730
Grants & Agreements	675,000	757,000	1,527,756	720,125	0	0	0	3,679,881
Equipment	27,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	19,724	81,724
Other Direct Costs	9,000	105,000	6,000	5,000	52,725	5,000	50,102	232,827
<b>TOTAL GEF FUNDED PROJECT</b>	<b>1,112,015</b>	<b>988,538</b>	<b>1,726,461</b>	<b>1,006,114</b>	<b>291,469</b>	<b>161,409</b>	<b>264,300</b>	<b>5,550,306</b>

## ANNEX H: Safeguards Compliance Plans

This section covers the Safeguards Plans to manage the Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) triggered as well as the Accountability and Grievance Mechanism (AGM), Gender Mainstreaming Plan (GMP) and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP).

### Accountability and Grievance Mechanism (AGM)

The CI-GEF/GCF Project Agencies require all project to have an Accountability and Grievance Mechanism in place so that project-affected communities and other stakeholders may raise a grievance at all times to the Executing Agency/Entity, CI, the GEF or GCF on non-compliance with the ESMF. Affected communities should be informed about this possibility and contact information of the respective organizations at relevant levels should be made available publicly. Affected communities should also be assured that their grievances will be addressed in a timely manner, they will not face retaliation for submitting a grievance, and they have the option to request confidentiality.

### SECTION I: PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT TITLE:	Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone’s critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape		
GEF/GCF PROJECT ID:		PROJECT DURATION:	62 months
EXECUTING AGENCY/ENTITY:	The Sierra Leone Environmental Protection Agency (EPA-SL)		
PROJECT START DATE:	January 2025	PROJECT END DATE:	January 2030
AGM PREPARED BY:		Green Approaches Limited	
DATE OF (RE)SUBMISSION TO CI-GEF/GCF:		June, 2024	
AGM APPROVED BY:		Ian Kissoon, Senior Director, ESMF, CI-GEF Agency	
DATE OF CI-GEF/GCF APPROVAL:		June 19, 2024	
<p>The Project being considered under this AGM is “<i>Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leon’s critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape</i>”. The project’s objective is to conserve and restore Kambui Hills FR and the associated community forest lands as part of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape to address climate change impacts. The Project comprises six components described below.</p> <p><b><u>Component 1: Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills FR, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape.</u></b> This component consists of one Outcome, namely: <i>Outcome 1.1. Strengthened capacity of key stakeholders (state and non-state actors and communities) for effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape.</i> The outcome is to be achieved through four (4) outputs as outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Output 1.1.1.:</b> Gender responsive policies, plans, tools and guidelines to support sustainable forest and land use planning and management reviewed and implemented.</li><li>• <b>Output 1.1.2.:</b> State and non-state actors (from key government ministries, departments, agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, private sector and communities) trained to support</li></ul>			

inclusive effective management of the Greater Gola Forest landscape.

- **Output 1.1.3:** Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders (local communities, CSOs/NGOs, private sector and Gola Transboundary Committees) to support inclusive, effective governance of the Greater Gola landscape enhanced.
- **Output 1.1.4:** A national gender-responsive centre of excellence hub for capacity building and monitoring biodiversity conservation, land use planning and management for enhanced climate resilience established and functional.

**Component 2:** Promoting participatory and gender responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods. This component consists of one Outcome, namely, *Outcome 2.1.: Enhanced sustainable resource use by communities adjacent to targeted PAs within the Gola landscape.* The outcome is to be achieved through five (5) outputs as outlined below:

- **Output 2.1.1:** Gender-sensitive community awareness and education programs to support sustainable forest management, land use planning and on climate change impacts developed and implemented.
- **Output 2.1.2:** Gender-responsive participatory spatial / landscape plans for the Greater Gola Forest landscape developed /updated and implemented.
- **Output 2.1.3:** Gender-responsive and climate resilient alternative income-generating initiatives supported, ensuring inclusive participation and equitable benefits for all genders while promoting sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.
- **Output 2.1.4:** Innovative and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management supported, ensuring gender equality in participation, access and benefits.
- **Output 2.1.5:** Inclusive community-based reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives to improve access to ecosystem services implemented.

**Component 3:** Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation. This component consists of one Outcome, namely, *Outcome 3.1.: Strengthened biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use of the Kambui Hills FR and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape.* The outcome is to be achieved through three (3) outputs as outlined below:

- **Output 3.1.1:** Extent of deforestation and forest degradation in Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests established, documented and restoration implemented.
- **Output 3.1.2.:** Forest conservation and regeneration as one of the strategies for improved ecosystem health and sustainable financing promoted.

**Component 4:** Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management. This component consists of one Outcome, namely, *Outcome 4.1: Strengthened institutional structures for transboundary collaboration between Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia for improved management of the Mano Watershed.* The outcome is to be achieved through three (3) outputs as outlined below:

- **Output 4.1.1:** The functioning of the committees established under the IUCN-MRU-IW Project to support improved management and sustainable use of river basin resources operationalized and institutionalized within MRU.
- **Output 4.1.2:** Capacity for applied research to inform decision making processes for transboundary watershed and forest management enhanced.
- **Output 4.1.3.:** Nature-based solutions to improve freshwater ecosystem health and mitigate climate change impacts and river bank deterioration implemented.

**Component 5:** Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons. This component consists of one (1) Outcome as described below: *Outcome 5.1: Strengthened coordination, capacity building, knowledge management, learning and sharing between the Sierra Leone Child Project and initiatives at landscape, national and regional levels including the GEF-8 Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project.* The outcome is to be achieved through four (4) outputs as outlined below:

- **Output 5.1.1:** A project Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy developed (including gender, equality and inclusion aspects).
- **Output 5.1.2:** Participation in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project 3-day Annual Forums.
- **Output 5.1.3:** Learning and exposure visits facilitated with the Sierra Leone Child Projects (and where applicable coordinated by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project).
- **Output 5.1.4:** Knowledge management products integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects generated, and disseminated at landscape, national and regional levels (integrating lessons learnt and best-case practices on traditional knowledge for natural resource management, and information on the project as a model for Nature-Based-Solutions).

**Component 6:** Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework. This component consists of one (1) Outcome, namely, *Outcome 6.1: An effective and gender-responsive M&E system for the project.* The outcome is to be achieved through two (2) outputs as outlined below:

- **Output 6.1.1:** Periodic M&E reports submitted to CI-GEF Agency
- **Output 6.1.2:** Mid-Term Evaluation and Terminal Evaluation commissioned by CI-GEF

## SECTION II: SCOPE

- *What kinds of grievances (e.g. lack of engagement, non-adherence to agreements, on-going conflicts over natural resources, disadvantage groups being excluded) are anticipated? List all potential grievances even if they fall outside of the scope of the ESMF. In the next question, identify those that would be considered eligible by the project's AGM.*

The anticipated conflicts and grievances may arise from individuals, stakeholder groups, executing agencies (e.g. Environment Protection Agency, National Protected Area Agency, Forest Department, among others), direct and indirect beneficiaries (e.g. paramount chiefs and local communities), and policy makers (i.e., the country Ministries, Departments or Agencies (MDAs) responsible for forest management, biodiversity conservation, climate change land management and administration). The specific potential areas of dissatisfaction, conflicts, friction or risks during project formulation and implementation are highlighted below.

- a) *Grievances related to the execution of project activities and tasks*
- i) Limited involvement of stakeholders e.g. some stakeholders may feel that they have been denied or given limited opportunity to participate in consultations during the PPG phase, project awareness activities and project implementation in general.
  - ii) Unbalanced and gender insensitive composition and selection of the National Project Steering Committee, the technical working groups and any other functional committees, working groups and

Project Management Team.

- iii) Unbalanced and gender insensitive selection of project beneficiaries, especially the trainees, paramount chiefs and chiefdoms, local communities.
- iv) Inefficient and ineffective project implementation.
- v) Unsatisfactory project transport reimbursement and per diem rates (the project rates may not tally with each institution's rates).

b) Grievances related to Institutional policies, mandates and coordination

- i) Unclear roles and responsibilities of local and central Government agencies, non-government organizations, the civil society organizations, women organizations, the youth and the private sector in the project implementation framework causing conflicts and confusion. The roles and institutional mandates should thus be clearly defined and communicated to avoid conflicts within institutions.
- ii) Unsatisfactory mitigation of project implementation risks such as lack of cooperation by some stakeholders or inadequate acceptance of some project approaches.
- iii) Inconsistencies and gaps in national laws and policies related to protected area management and social-economic development – e.g. competition for land for agriculture versus forest conservation, unfair or inadequate handling of wildlife crimes such as illegal hunting.

c) Resource access and utilization

- i) Restriction of freedom of movement and access to resources in protected areas.
- ii) Prohibition of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife products.
- iii) Unsatisfactory benefit sharing arrangements for communities living adjacent to protected areas who usually suffer losses from crop raids and other harmful impacts.
- iv) Disputes over sharing of common pool resources such as pasture and watering points by wildlife, livestock and humans that promote transmission of diseases between humans and wildlife and cause public health risks.
- v) Transmission of diseases from wildlife to domestic animals that decimate livestock populations and vice versa.

d) Human-Wildlife conflicts within communities living in proximity to wildlife conservation areas

- i) Crop raids and damage to property leading to food insecurity, poverty, human suffering and discontent amongst the adjacent communities
- ii) Incidences of livestock depredation and predation and killing of people by wild animals creating anger, frustration, bitterness and resentment
- iii) Negative attitudes and hostility towards conservation and the forestry management authorities.

e) Non-compliance with Environment and Social Management Framework

- i) perceived failure to properly consult, finalize, disclose and implement the stakeholder engagement plan, and the gender mainstreaming plan
- ii) Grievances related to failure to comply with the requirement to undertake an ESIA.
- iii) No restoration of disturbed sites particularly areas planned for replanting as may have been identified from surveys of altered the ecosystem habitats.

• **What grievances are eligible and would be received?**

The Project is likely to receive a wide range of complaints from the affected stakeholders. People affected by a development project may raise their grievances and dissatisfactions about actual or perceived impacts in order to find a satisfactory solution. Grievance refers to *any discontent or dissatisfaction arising when a person*

(or a group of persons) thinks, believes or even feels to be unfair, unjust or inequitable leading to a feeling of discontent or dissatisfaction (Keerthi, D. 2021).<sup>90</sup> Any form of grievance in general bears negative influence on the participation, cooperation and collaboration of stakeholders to support project implementation. It is important that affected persons (APs) are enabled to raise their grievances, given an adequate hearing and satisfactory solutions are found. The Accountability and Grievance Mechanism (AGM) aims at anticipating emergence of different grievances that are likely to affect project implementation and thus providing a legitimate, reliable and transparent institutional mechanism to respond to stakeholder complaints. The AGM is an opportunity for stakeholders to make inquiries, raise their complaints or seek clarifications. It also gives opportunity to the Project to receive and respond appropriately to mitigate, manage, resolve potential negative impacts and create positive relationships between the Project and the stakeholders. More than that, it also provides opportunity to apply rights-based approaches to address grievance in accordance with the requirements of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights<sup>91</sup>.

The Accountability and Grievance Mechanism (AGM) applies to grievance that are categorized as eligible by the Project staff and stakeholders during a joint meeting at the start of the project. The eligible grievances are those that are largely related to the *“Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone’s critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape”* Project activities, as well as those which are related to affected stakeholders that are external to the project implementing agencies. Grievances raised by internal stakeholders such as the Project Management Unit (PMU) staff and Project Implementation agencies, are not considered eligible under this AGM; their grievance resolution mechanism is usually described in their recruitment contracts or Terms of Reference. Eligible grievances are project related and include those related to, for example, non-compliances with planned stakeholder community engagements or inadequate attention to addressing environmental and social safeguards requirements of the project. Further details of eligibility will be discussed during the inception period.

- **How will the mechanism ensure transparency and fairness?**

*The independent panel is constituted by CI with technical personnel knowledgeable in the issues (environmental & Social Safeguards) raised and hears grievances based on already set criteria without being biased. The whole process is managed by the senior Director of Compliance and Risk Management in CI sitting in the General Counsel’s Office.*

The AGM provides a transparent system that enables any dissatisfied person or complainant to freely pronounce himself or herself upon any matter of grievance and ensures that any issues raised are attended to or, where they are not, clear explanation is given to the complainant. In line with the principles of good practice in grievance management, the AGM ensures that all grievances are resolved in the shortest time possible by the responsible persons at the office where they are received and registered namely at the Environment Protection Agency of Sierra Leone (EPA-SL) Within EPA-SL, the Director of Biodiversity and natural resources management will be the immediate staff to resolve the grievance. But where there is no conclusive resolution, a responsible staff at EPA SL, the Director for Natural resources Management - who is the immediate supervisor of the PMU, shall refer the matter to the next level of management, the Chief Director, for resolution.

The AGM is also built on the core principles of good practice that ensure transparency and fairness. These

<sup>90</sup> Keerthi, D. 2021. Grievance. Article accessed from website <https://www.economicdiscussion.net/human-resource-management/grievance/grievance/32442>

<sup>91</sup> United Nations 1949. United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.

<https://www.jus.uio.no/lm/en/pdf/un.universal.declaration.of.human.rights.1948.portrait.letter.pdf> accessed 3rd Dec 2023 12:53 Hrs.

principles include the following:

- a) **Fairness:** Grievances are treated confidentially, assessed impartially, and handled transparently.
- b) **Objectivity and independence:** The AGM will be operationalized objectively and independently of all interested parties to guarantee fair and impartial treatment of each case. The responsible staff members shall have adequate means and powers to investigate grievances and their decisions will be receiving the support of the participating institutional hierarchy.
- c) **Simplicity and accessibility:** Procedures to file grievances and seek remedy will be simple and easy for project stakeholders and beneficiaries to understand based on the following:
  - Responsiveness and efficiency: The Project will develop specified timelines for responding to grievances received. These timelines may form part of the monitoring and evaluation performance of the project. Timelines range from duration before acknowledgement of the grievance to addressing the complaint. Complaints will be screened every week and so acknowledgement will be within a week. Therefore, grievances will be addressed within at least 30 days. Records will be kept of all grievances. The records will be kept for 3 years after the project implementation grant expiration date as per CI-GEF Project Agency guidelines.
  - Speed and proportionality: All grievances will be resolved as quickly as possible while ensuring that the process is decisive and constructive.
  - Participatory and social inclusion: The Project will encourage all stakeholders including the non-state actors and those with special needs, to access the AGM.
  - Competence of Grievance Management staff: The project will designate a staff member, with conflict resolution skills, to be responsible for addressing the grievances. He/she may be given an inhouse training in receiving and analyzing grievances, gathering information, providing feedback, and others.
- d) **Processes:** Grievance redress processes will be transparent and short as justice delayed is justice denied. A measured approach will be applied keeping in mind the intent to confirm if the grievance is valid or not.
- e) **Analysis:** the grievances will be analyzed based on information and facts gathered or provided in order to gain insight into its nature, scope and gravity so as to guide the decision to be made within a reasonable time frame.

- **Will the mechanism receive anonymous grievance?**

*In protecting the identity of the complainants, information shall be received and investigated from all persons/groups and kept confidential if they request to be anonymous especially so with disadvantaged groups.*

The AGM will provide stakeholders with anonymous channels to report their grievances. These will include, among others, a suggestion box, telephone, postal address, as well as face-to-face verbal communication on request for anonymity. These channels encourage affected stakeholders to express themselves freely and without fear of reprisal or denial of justice and fairness.

### SECTION III: AWARENESS AND ACCESSIBILITY

This section intends to understand how the project plans to ensure that their different methods to socialize and access the AGM is appropriate to the project's stakeholders. The project should place a special effort in securing accessibility to their AGM especially for women and those from disadvantaged groups (elderly, young people, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ, indigenous/traditional peoples, those with lowest literacy levels, among others). These groups usually are in disadvantage within their own communities and may have additional or different barriers to access given channels of communication. In the next table, the project must ensure that they identify these differentiated barriers and include methods and accessibility adaptations intended to address them, closing gaps in accessibility to project AGM.



Method of Socialization	Intended Audience	Accessibility adaptations	Frequency of the action/channel	Budget
<i>How will the project disseminate the AGM to stakeholders? What channels will be used? (e.g. via the project's website, at the inception meeting with stakeholders, printed and posted on notice board in community centre, radio announcement, flyers, posters, SMS/text/WhatsApp messages, illustration/animated video, at the end of every presentation or community engagement)</i>	<i>Who are the stakeholders the project is intending to reach using each different channel? (e.g. government officials, indigenous/traditional peoples, etc.)</i>	<i>What adaptations to cater diverse groups (especially disadvantaged/vulnerable groups) will be in place for every method/channel? (e.g. translated versions for local languages, infographics for those with low literacy levels, traditional communication methods, post-in of information in high traffic areas of affected stakeholders, women's gathering spaces)</i>	<i>When and how often will the project disseminate/socialize the AGM to stakeholders? (The EA is required to continuously socialize the AGM with all stakeholders involved at different stages of project implementation)</i>	<i>Indicate the estimated costs to socialize the AGM and make it accessible to diverse groups and be culturally appropriate. Please work with the finance lead to ensure that the budget costs are included in the project's overall budget.</i>
The AGM will be communicated to all stakeholders during the Project Inception workshops and the planned stakeholder awareness workshops. The project will inform AGM users about their right to lodge their complaints/grievances, and how to appeal if they are dissatisfied with the decision	The General public, the project beneficiaries present at the Project Inception, MDAs, Donors, CSOs, Local communities.	Information shall be translated in the local languages. Infographics shall be used to cater for the diversity	Quarterly basis	\$1,000 per quarter

Relevant print materials will be disseminated to all stakeholders during the workshops, and the entire project implementation phase, through appropriate means preferred by the stakeholders e.g. social media platforms such as WhatsApp, emailed or posted via regular mail. Each sectoral focal person will also have soft copy and hard copies of the AGM, short messages, posters, brochure, etc. that he will be routinely share with stakeholders in his/her sector.	MDAs, CSOs, Donors	Soft and hard copies shall be disseminated. Translations shall be made to cater for the diversity and looking out for different fora for vulnerable and disadvantaged people	Quarterly basis	\$1,000 per quarter
The Project will also utilize national structures such as lower government administrative centres and community organizations to disseminate print materials to ensure that the hard-to-reach places or vulnerable groups (women, youth, elderly, and physically challenged persons) receive the information in the most easily understood language and in timely manner.	Project community beneficiaries, CSOs,	Radios shall equally be explored to complement other dissemination methodologies for the hard-to-reach areas.	Quarterly basis	\$1,000 per quarter

The project staff may also use local FM Radio stations to talk in the local language for the benefit of the illiterate about the AGM and other related issues	Project Staff, Project community beneficiaries	Local radio stations and meetings shall be explored to communicate issues.	Monthly basis	\$1,000 per quarter
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*Please reply to the questions below, which are intended to address the adaptations and capacity of the AGM to be gender-responsive and has adaptations in place to address differentiated needs from disadvantaged groups:*

- Are the persons responsible of the GRM aware and knowledgeable of the commitment of the mechanism to be gender responsive and inclusive of those in disadvantaged groups? Explain your answer.

Yes, they are aware and knowledgeable of the commitment of the mechanism. This is the more reason why CI deliberately has an AGM policy in place and also an independent office in the General Counsel's Office where the Senior Director of Compliance and Risk Management manages all the processes of the AGM. In addition, the Executing Agency, Environment Protection agency (EPA – SL) is mandated to manage environmental issues in the country with the expertise to ensure gender responsive and inclusion of those in disadvantaged groups.

- Are the formats in place and channels available gender-sensitive and inclusive of those in disadvantaged groups? For example, the different formats ask the grievant to specify if they prefer mediators of a certain gender or with context-specific gender expertise so that they feel more comfortable, particularly if there are instances of SEAH involved. Explain your answer.

These are available in line with the GEF AGM principles and guidelines as well as the CI AGM policy. One of the principles for the AGM is being **Participatory and social inclusion**: The project will encourage people and all stakeholders to provide their feedback on the project. Special attention is given to ensure that stakeholders, including the non-state actors and those with special needs, can access the AGM. This mechanism shall ensure both men and women feel comfortable accessing the AGM for example through;

1. Assurance about confidentiality
2. Assurance about anonymity
3. Assurance about no discrimination and no retaliation policy and describe the measures in place to protect them against retaliation
4. Assurance about respecting the privacy of the grievant
5. Accommodate and respect the beliefs, religion, and cultures of the grievant e.g., in some cultures, men only speak business matters to other men hence in this situation, a male PMU staff would handle the matter, while if it is from a woman, still a woman member of staff shall be available.
6. In a face to face physical or virtual meeting/telephone conversation, the PMU staff will also do the following:
  - a. inquire if the grievant would feel more comfortable if a person of similar sex handled the matter

- b. inquire if the grievant would prefer a person of similar sex to be present in the meeting room or virtual meeting.
- c. ensure the phone call or meeting is scheduled at a day, time, location, venue, or a virtual platform that is convenient to the grievant

The vulnerable groups (e.g. people with disabilities, women, youth, or elderly) will not be deterred from lodging a grievance. If and when needed, an interpreter will be available to translate the language verbally and written if needed, interpret sign language, etc. The interpreters will be encouraged to exercise impartiality.

#### SECTION IV: CHANNELS FOR RECEIVING/REPORTING/REGISTERING GRIEVANCES

Please list all the channels that will be part of the AGM of the project, this can include boxes or reporting points, virtual channels, or other any other applicable channels.

The channels for the AGM process include:

- i) Suggestion boxes at the PMU offices in Kenema
- ii) Email contact at: [info@epa.gov.sl](mailto:info@epa.gov.sl) (with the email clearly labelled “Gola landscape Child Project-Kenema”).
- iii) Grievance boxes at field level for each of the partners; namely EFA for Tiwai Island Wildlife sanctuary, CSSL for Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and GRC-LG for the southern Gola Forest areas.

In the meantime, the main contact for grievance redress will be a dedicated toll-free line prepared at the project inception but the institutional contact is detailed below:

Physical address(es) of project office or location(s) of grievance reporting point:	38 Freetown Road, Wilberforce, Freetown as well as at the EPA Regional office in Kenema at plot 249 Hangha Road, Kenema.
Mailing address(es):	
Telephone/Fax Number(s):	+232-88-90-89-51
Email address(es):	<a href="mailto:info@epa.gov.sl">info@epa.gov.sl</a>
Website(s)/software application(s):	<a href="https://epa.gov.sl/about-epa-sl/">https://epa.gov.sl/about-epa-sl/</a>
Radio Frequency, if applicable:	N/A
Other:	Suggestion box placed at the PMU offices in Kenema

#### SECTION V: PROCESSING AND DOCUMENTATION

##### Processing

*Describe how your mechanism will handle and process the grievances.*

- *How will the grievance be screened to ensure it is related to the GEF/GCF project?*

*This shall be done as per laid down GEF grievance policy using Environmental and Social Safeguards (2020) in an independent, transparent, fair, accessible, and effective manner*

Upon receipt of the complaints, the Project persons responsible for the implementation of safeguard

plans will screen the complaints to sort out those grievances that are related to the Project, and those that are not, and in this way identify the eligible grievances for which the Project Management will be responsible. The grievances will be screened objectively and risk wise to determine their merits, based on the design of the project and its expected outcomes. The grievance screening will be undertaken weekly and a response provided to the grievant acknowledging receipt of the grievance. In particular, the screening will consider whether the claims are related to the Project or not. Where necessary, proof of grievance may be required to rule out falsehoods, fabrications and hear-say. The Gender Mainstreaming Plan includes measures to ensure that the project does not contribute to or exacerbate gender-based violence.

- *How will the mechanism deal with confidentiality?*

- *The detailed information on grievances will be documented and kept in strict confidence by an officer/staff who will swear an oath of confidentiality. However, where the information is to be shared with the public, e.g., through publication, the personal details shall not be disclosed.*
- *Ensure a Complainant's or party request for confidentiality, including confidentiality of identities.*
- *Indicate publicly when it has restricted disclosure of information in response to such a request from a party.*
- *In cases where a Problem-Solving case is transferred to the Compliance Review process, confidential information received during the Problem-Solving process will not be shared with the Compliance Review process, unless explicit permission to do so is provided by the relevant parties. This is to ensure that participants can engage openly and frankly during the Problem-Solving process without compromising their position, should a compliance review later be conducted.*
- *Maintain records on all cases and issues brought forward, with due regard for the confidentiality of Complainants' identity and of information.*

- *How will the mechanism protect grievants from retaliation for submitting a grievance?*

*The official party who is responsible for AGM implementation shall take good international principles and measures to be an independent, transparent, credible, accessible, and equitable mechanism that provides a predictable process. These shall include;*

- *Maintain objectivity, impartiality and fairness throughout the investigative process and conduct its activities competently and with the highest levels of integrity.*
- *Perform its duties independently from those responsible for, or involved in, CAF operational activities and from staff members related to an investigation.*
- *Investigations will be free from improper influence and fear of retaliation.*

- *How will the mechanism handle oral/verbal grievances?*

- *These shall equally be welcomed and recorded for transparency purposes.*

- *How will the mechanism deal with grievances that are ineligible?*

- *Should be noted that the Accountability Mechanism only applies to potential issues of non-compliance in CI-GEF financed projects regarding the CI-GEF Project Environmental and Social Safeguards (2020) or any specific environmental and social commitments related to these safeguards in a CI-GEF financed project; and subject to the specific eligibility of who may file a complaint.*

- *If the Project Ombudsperson (OP) or designate decides the Complaint is not eligible or specifically excluded from the CI-GEF Project Accountability Mechanism, the OP will inform the Complainant and provide the rationale for the decision.*
- *How will your mechanism acknowledge receipt of the grievance? How long will it take for this receipt to be given to the grievant?*
  - *Receipt of any grievances shall be responded to within 15 working days. Executing Entity must attempt to resolve all reasonable grievances raised and provide a written response to grievances within 30 days.*
- *How long will your mechanism take to provide a resolution to the grievant?*
  - *An attempt shall be made to ensure that feedback is provided within 30 days after lodging of a complaint. An online submission as a good practice, shall ensure that feedback on progress is provided within 24 hrs on receipt about the progress.*
- *Do you plan to provide periodic updates throughout the process to the grievant?*
  - *Periodic updates are a good practice to ensure transparency and accountability during the process and this shall be explored.*
- *Will there be a tiered system where grievances get classified/escalated depending on their seriousness or ability to be resolved? A tiered system could be to first address the grievance at the field level; second level can be at the Project Management Unit; third level can be at the Project Steering Committee level; and fourth level can be CI's Ethics Point Hotline.*
  - *A tiered system of grievances mechanism will be best suited for the project to ensure that all stakeholders participate in the process as well as strengthen conflict resolution early in time.*
- *How will the grievance be verified? Will there be site visits, face-to-face meeting, etc.*
  - *To verify grievances all avenues that are most practical shall be explored to ensure that issues are resolved amicably.*
- *What's the institutional/organizational structure to handle grievances? Will the grievance be assigned/directed to a specific project staff or committee to deal with the grievance?*
  - *An organizational structure under the executing entity closely working with CI - Senior Director of Compliance and Risk Management office shall be established to follow conflict resolution framework with a designated person or committee to deal with grievances.*
- *If the project fails to address the grievance, what steps would be taken to achieve a resolution? Will the project set up an arbitration process? Are there national mechanisms that the project can use? If there are national processes, do the communities and other stakeholders have faith in them, know about them and have easy access to them, and are they likely to use them?*
  - *A Project solving process could be initiated. The Project Solving process will start with the designated Problem-Solving Facilitator (PSF) performing a preliminary review to assess the potential for problem solving related to the complaint. As part of this preliminary review, the PSF may request additional information from the complainant or other applicable stakeholders and discuss potential options and outcomes. National and local mechanisms do exist for example among the chiefdoms and these shall be explored to the extent possible.*

- Please note that if the process does not result in resolution of the grievance, or if the grievant prefers, s/he may choose to file a claim through CI's Ethics Point Hotline at <https://secure.ethicspoint.com>. Alternatively, the grievant may file a claim with the Director of Compliance (DOC) who is responsible for the CI Accountability and Grievance Mechanism and who can be reached at: Director of Compliance, Conservation International 2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 600 Arlington, VA 22202, USA. This information must be contained in the AGM and disseminated to all project stakeholders. It should be noted that sensitive grievances need to be communicated to the CI-GEF Agency as soon as possible.

#### Documentation

- How will grievances be recorded, including verbal ones? Will there be a grievant form? Will there be a register/book of records of grievances received?
  - All grievances shall be recorded whether verbal or not. A structured form shall be used to record all grievances and adequately recorded immediately before processing.
- How and where would these records be stored? And for how long will they be kept?
  - To ensure confidentiality, the records shall be safely stored under the grievances office by a delegated person for as long as the life of the project and beyond.
- How will the personal identifiable information of the grievant be kept secure, and who within the team will have access to it?
  - The complainant shall be asked if s/he needs confidentiality and this shall be accorded as per the request of the complainant. The delegated person(s) shall be the only one(s) having access to this information.

## SECTION VI: MONITORING AND REPORTING

Describe how will you track and ensure that the mechanism is working. It is important to recognize that lack of grievances does not mean that there are none, it may indicate that the mechanism is not working properly. Describe how you will account for this possibility.

The project is expected to report on a quarterly basis (using the CI-GEF Quarterly Reporting template), progress made towards the implementation of the grievance mechanism, including the number of grievances received and the outcome of the grievance process.

On an annual basis and using the CI-GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR) template, the following CI-GEF's minimum indicators are to be reported. The project can include other appropriate accountability and grievance indicators in addition to the CI-GEF/GCF's indicators.

Indicator	Baseline	Target
1. Number of times the Accountability and Grievance Mechanism is communicated/disseminated to stakeholders	0	011 <sup>92</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Once during the inception workshop, and thereafter at least twice a year during training workshops and during the annual stakeholder information sharing events.



2. Percentage of conflict and complaint cases reported to the project's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism that have been resolved	N/A	100%
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Person responsible for implementing and monitoring the AGM:	Provide name and designation of that person. <b>Mr. Joseph Turay</b> <b>Director – Biodiversity and Natural Resources</b> <b>Management Environment Protection Agency of Sierra Leone (EPA-SL)</b> <b>Freetown.</b>
Budget Summary	See details in budget - Project Management Costs (in USD) <sup>93</sup>

## The Gender Mainstreaming Plan (GMP)

The **Gender Mainstreaming Plan** provides information, analysis, and specific actions to ensure that gender dimensions are fully integrated into the project. It consists of two parts: (1) a Gender Analysis/Assessment and (2) a Gender Action Plan. The **Gender Analysis/Assessment** identifies and describes relevant gender differences, gender-differentiated impacts and risks, and opportunities to address gender gaps and promote the empowerment of men and women within the project context. The **Gender Action Plan** details any corresponding gender-responsive measures to address those differences, impacts and risks, and opportunities. Completion of a Gender Analysis/Assessment and Gender Action Plan is a requirement for all GEF and GCF-funded projects as described under the CI-GEF/GCF Project Agency's Policy on Gender Mainstreaming.

The CI-GEF/GCF Agency recognizes the wide range of projects and this GMP is designed to be flexible and adaptable to the project size, scope, and context. For additional guidance on gender requirements within GEF + GCF projects, please also refer to:

Guidance to Advance Gender Equality in GEF Projects + Programs:

<https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/GEF%20Guidance%20on%20Gender.pdf>

Mainstreaming Gender in GCF Projects:

[https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/guidelines-gcf-toolkit-mainstreaming-gender\\_0.pdf](https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/guidelines-gcf-toolkit-mainstreaming-gender_0.pdf)

## SECTION I: Project Information

PROJECT TITLE:	<b><i>Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone's critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape</i></b>		
GEF/GCF PROJECT ID:		PROJECT DURATION:	62 Months

<sup>93</sup> This is under component 1 (output 1.1.1) – providing for printing materials on AGM for dissemination during the stakeholder engagement workshop, as indicated in the text above.

<b>EXECUTING AGENCY/ENTITY:</b>	The Sierra Leone Environmental Protection Agency (EPA-SL)		
<b>PROJECT ANTICIPATED START DATE:</b>	January 2025	<b>PROJECT END DATE:</b>	January 2030
<b>GMP PREPARED BY:</b>	Green Approaches Limited		
<b>DATE OF (RE)SUBMISSION TO CI-GEF/GCF:</b>	June, 2024		
<b>GMP APPROVED (CONDITIONALLY) BY:</b>	Ian Kissoon, Senior Director, ESMF, CI-GEF Project Agency		
<b>CONDITIONS:</b>	This GMP is to be revised during the first 6 months of implementation, specifically to define more meaningful targets/outputs relating to benefits that go beyond merely “30%” participation target in all of the activities.		
<b>DATE OF CI-GEF/GCF APPROVAL:</b>	June 19, 2024		
<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE GMP:</b>	<b>Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):</b> Project Manager supported by the M&E specialist and supervised by a Director in EPA.		
<b>HOW/WHERE WILL THE APPROVED GMP BE DISCLOSED<sup>94</sup>:</b>	At the inception meeting with stakeholders, printed and translated in language the stakeholders can easily understand.		
<b>WHEN WILL THE APPROVED GMP BE DISCLOSED:</b>	At the start of the implementation phase.		

## SECTION II: Gender Analysis/Assessment

The project team is expected to conduct a Gender Analysis or Assessment that identifies and describes any gender differences, gender differentiated impacts and risks, and opportunities to address gender gaps and promote the empowerment of women as they relate to the project context. The completion of the Gender Analysis should be done or guided by a gender or social specialist (e.g., through a consultant or in-house, depending on capacity).

The Analysis will vary in detail depending on project size, scope, and context. Furthermore, this Analysis should acknowledge and incorporate the concept of intersectionality and ensure that the specific needs of sub-groups (particularly those most vulnerable) have been taken into account (e.g., girls and boys, women and men with disabilities, elder men and women, widows).

Information on gender roles and cultural context specific to the site should be gathered through (a) primary sources such as field visits, focus groups, interviews, meetings and consultations with target groups and local experts, and surveys, as well as (b) secondary sources such as a desktop/literature review. For additional guidance on how to collect this type of information, please consult CI’s Gender and Social Equity Guidelines.

### The general state of gender

<sup>94</sup> Approved Safeguard plans are to be disclosed to stakeholders in a manner and form that they will understand and that is culturally appropriate. This may require translation of the document.

Sierra Leone is a small country located along the West Coast of Africa between Latitudes 70 and 100 North, and Latitudes 10.50 and 13.180 West Africa. It has a diverse socio-economic context shaped by various factors such as history, government policies, natural resources, and regional dynamics. Based on the population growth rate of 2.13%, the current Sierra Leone population is estimated at 8,977,972 people<sup>95</sup> while the population census data indicated a population of 7,092,113 out of which 3,601,135 are women. 4,187,016 people live in rural areas (59%) and 2,905,097 people living in urban areas (41%)<sup>96</sup>. The population has been on the increase since the 1963 census, with an average annual growth rate of 3.2% between 2004 and 2015. The population is youthful, with more than 40% under age of 15. According to the 2015 Population and Housing Census, the population in the country is projected to be 10.3 million in 2030. The population aged 6-17 years is expected to increase from 2.2. million in 2016 to 2.8 in 2030.

Each ethnic group has its own unique language, culture, and traditions. Muslim is the dominant religion in Sierra Leone. There are more male-headed households (72%) compared to female-headed households in Sierra Leone (28%). Female household heads increase as one moves from the villages to the towns and eventually the urban cities where women's empowerment and working life make it easier for them to take care of their children, parents, and dependents

Sierra Leone is an agricultural country<sup>97</sup>. About eighty percent of the people are exclusively dependent on farming for their livelihood and more than 90 percent of the farming population cultivate rice. Unfortunately, the sector suffers from low levels of government over-reliance on rain-fed agricultural practices and minimal government investment.

Sierra Leone's cultural set-up is a complex interplay of traditional norms, social expectations, and ongoing efforts to address gender-based violence and sexual exploitation. Sierra Leone society has traditionally been patriarchal<sup>98</sup>, with distinct gender roles and expectations. Men have historically held positions of power and authority, while women have been primarily assigned domestic and caregiving roles<sup>99</sup>. However, these roles are not static, and there are variations across different ethnic groups and regions within Sierra Leone.

At the project landscape level, the target chiefdoms that include Koya, Dodo, Small Bo and others as indicated in Table 1 have a total population of 438,396 with 51% men and 49% women.

**Table 1: Population statistics of chiefdoms of the project area (surrounding Kambui Hills)**

No	Chiefdom	No of Male	No of Female	Total Population
1	Nongowa	33,676	33,891	67,567
2	Small Bo	20,447	21,298	41,745
3	Koyas-Kenema	9,641	6,697	16,338
4	Niawa	6,393	6,434	12,827
5	Dodo	10,730	10,413	21,143

<sup>95</sup> Sierra Leone Population trends 1950-2024;

[https://www.google.com/search?q=what+is+the+population+of+sierra+leone+2024&og=What+is+the+population+of+Sierra&gs\\_lcrp=EgZiaHJv bWUqBwgDEAAyAQyBwgAEAAyAQyBggBEEUYOTIHCAIQABiABDIHCAHQABiABDIHCAUQAABiABDIHCAQABiABDIHCACQABgW GB4yCAGIEAAYFhgeMggICRAAGBYHtIBCjIwMzA3ajBqMTWoAgiwAgE&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8](https://www.google.com/search?q=what+is+the+population+of+sierra+leone+2024&og=What+is+the+population+of+Sierra&gs_lcrp=EgZiaHJv bWUqBwgDEAAyAQyBwgAEAAyAQyBggBEEUYOTIHCAIQABiABDIHCAHQABiABDIHCAUQAABiABDIHCAQABiABDIHCACQABgW GB4yCAGIEAAYFhgeMggICRAAGBYHtIBCjIwMzA3ajBqMTWoAgiwAgE&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8)

<sup>96</sup> Open Data Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census (2015).

<sup>97</sup> Sierra Leone Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

<sup>98</sup> <https://ke.boell.org/en/2022/09/16/breaking-patriarchal-norm-conformity> (Accessed on 22 June 2023 at 10h56GMT)

<sup>99</sup> <https://scholarworks.smith.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1625&context=theses> (Accessed on 22 June 2023 at 11h15GMT)

<b>6</b>	Kandu Lappiama	<b>11,657</b>	<b>11,065</b>	<b>22,722</b>
<b>7</b>	Wandor	<b>11,212</b>	<b>10,770</b>	<b>21,982</b>
<b>8</b>	Goroma-Mende	<b>24,437</b>	<b>23,859</b>	<b>48,296</b>
<b>9</b>	Barri	<b>25,327</b>	<b>25,415</b>	<b>50,742</b>
<b>10</b>	Nimiyama	<b>22,129</b>	<b>20,528</b>	<b>42,657</b>
<b>11</b>	Nimikor	<b>42,104</b>	<b>38,371</b>	<b>80,475</b>
<b>12</b>	Goroma-Kono	<b>6,941</b>	<b>4,961</b>	<b>11,902</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>224,694</b>	<b>213,702</b>	<b>438,396</b>

Source: Website <https://www.citypopulation.de/en/sierraleone/admin/>

Women provide more than 80% of farm labour for food production, processing, distribution, and food preparation. Women are generally responsible for food security at family and community levels and are primarily the home managers, community organizers, and caregivers for children, the sick, and the elderly. It is not therefore surprising that women work longer hours at their multiple roles than men, often with uncertain and more limited resources, lower rewards, and public recognition. According to the World Bank's development indicators for Sierra Leone, women account for over 53% of labour in the crop farming subsector and 52% in the poultry subsector. In the informal sector where women predominate, the main activities include soap making, tie-dying, and petty trade where generally the reward is very low. In farming, women are engaged mainly in food production, (subsistence farming), where cash returns are much lower than from cash crops where men dominate.

Sexual exploitation, including commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), is a grave concern in Sierra Leone. Factors such as poverty, unequal power dynamics, and limited educational and economic opportunities contribute to the vulnerability of individuals, particularly women and children, to sexual exploitation. Various organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, are working to combat sexual exploitation in Sierra Leone. These efforts include raising awareness, providing support services for survivors, strengthening legal frameworks, and improving access to education and economic opportunities.

Gender-based violence (GBV) and Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Sexual Harassment (SEAH) are acts deeply rooted in gender inequality and remain one of the most notable human rights violations in all societies around the world. It is violence that is directed against a person because of his/her gender. Results from the 2021 Gender-Based Violence Survey for the Republic of Sierra Leone, conducted by Statistics Sierra Leone<sup>100</sup> (Stats SL) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), indicate a higher prevalence of this type of violence, with between 30 and 39 percent of women reporting having experienced at least one form of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) throughout their lives. It is important to note that female genital mutilation (FGM) is a ubiquitous practice in Sierra Leone, and while the country's legal framework does not explicitly prohibit FGM, policies implemented by the Government have recognized it as a form of SGBV. According to data from 2019, 83% of women aged 15-49 have undergone FGM, and most at a very young age, with 71% circumcised before the age of 15. Sixty one percent (61%) of ever-married women have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence by their current or most recent husband/partner, up from 51% in 2013; 50% experienced such violence in the 12 months preceding the 2019 Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey (SLDHS). Even though both women and men experience GBV, most victims are women and girls. On the positive side, there is increased gender awareness among stakeholders, some institutions have been established to prevent

<sup>100</sup> Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey, 2019.

GBV such as the Family Support Unit and some legal reforms have taken place to rectify gender-based injustices, which have resulted in the enactment of laws such as the three Genders Justice Acts. According to the UNFPA review of 24 November 2021, an estimated 62% of women aged 15-49 report having experienced physical or sexual violence according to the Sierra Leone demographic health survey which is collaborated by the Sierra Leone global database on violence against women ([www.unwomen.org/sl](http://www.unwomen.org/sl)).

In Sierra Leone, prevention of and reductions in levels of domestic violence have been placed on the national transformation agenda as one of the country's priorities. The Sierra Leone Domestic Violence Act, 2007 was designed to protect women from domestic violence by providing accessible legal instruments aiming to prevent further incidents of abuse within domestic relationships. Under this act, violence against women is classified as a public crime allowing women to secure a protection order from the courts. GBV and SEAH are acts deeply rooted in gender inequality and remain one of the most notable human rights violations in all societies around the world. It is violence that is directed against a person because of his/her gender. Even though both women and men experience GBV, most victims are women and girls. On the positive side, there is increased gender awareness among stakeholders, some institutions have been established to prevent GBV such as the Family Support Unit and some legal reforms have taken place to rectify gender-based injustices, which have resulted in the enactment of laws such as the three Genders Justice Acts.

The Sierra Leone Gola Landscape project places gender mainstreaming as an integral component for implementing project activities. Training on the collection and dissemination of gender-disaggregated data, building gender responsive cooperation partnerships, and establishing appropriate institutional coordination mechanisms for ensuring gender responsiveness during implementation are some of the proposed project interventions in response to the Sierra Leone Gender Policy, while also strengthening gender responsiveness in the approaches to sustainable land management, forestry, environment and natural resources management.

There is a base to build on for gender mainstreaming and women empowerment in the landscape as there are already initiatives of women empowerment in the landscape. There already an umbrella organisation mobilising women for development. It is named "*Moawoama Women's Organisation*" and comprises of women in the chiefdoms of the Gola Forest landscape districts of Pujehun, Kailahun and Kenema. It has grown from covering three chiefdoms, namely; Gaura, Tunkia and Numor to now almost the entire Gola landscape.

It is an umbrella organisation comprising dozens of smaller women community-based organisations in each of the chiefdoms of the Gola Forest Landscape. It has a membership of over ten thousand and operates as an advocacy, pressure and lobby organisation on behalf of members, communities and their chiefdoms. The organisation works with development partners to roll out community initiatives of projects within their areas of membership whenever needed. The member organisations contribute monthly/annual to the organisation and parts of the money is given to member organisations to undertake development activities ranging from agriculture to small scale business. The organisation works with the Gola Forest Management Company to provide micro-credit to both membership organisations and individual members through a revolving credit scheme that has been sustainable over the past four years since its introduction.

The organisation has been a hub for communities and development partners in developing community tree establishment (economic trees outside the buffer zone of the Gola Park) to reduce pressure off the Gola Rain Forest National Park.

*Moawoama Women's Organisation* has a well-structured administrative mechanism where the membership of every community organisation is represented on the management of the Organisation and meets quarterly for reporting on progress or planning and approving the next quarter activities. It is registered with the respective District Councils, Ministry of Gender and Development and has Service-Level-Agreements (SLA) and MOUs with the Ministries of Agriculture, Internal Affairs, Environment, Transport, Trade, Gender and Social Welfare. Having worked with various projects that have implemented activities in the Gola Forest communities especially for the advocacy and alternative livelihood activities, it may provide a good opportunity to genderise project activities as well as mainstream gender issues in field level interventions particularly nature-positives approaches.

**Project-level gender considerations**

*Drawing on primary and secondary information sources, consider how gender considerations are relevant to the specific project by responding to each of the following questions (at a minimum). If a project has multiple sites with different social + environmental contexts, this section will need to be completed for each site.*

1. *How do women and men currently utilize the natural resources that this project impacts? How might that change during and after the project?*

Women and men utilize natural resources in distinct ways shaped by existing socio-cultural norms. In the Gola forest landscape, women are often more involved in subsistence farming, collection of firewood, water and harvesting of non-timber forest products while men typically engage in commercial agriculture, logging, charcoal burning and hunting. However, these roles are not fixed, for example in some cases women also undertake pole charcoal burning and pole cutting. There is a growing recognition of the need to empower women with equal access and participation in natural resource management, particularly with respect to collaborative forest management in which they can contribute to decision making on managing resources. With the implementation of the Greater Gola Landscape project, there is a potential for transformative change. This will be through capacity-building efforts, co-management, and participatory approaches in natural resources governance, sustainable land management particularly in engaging communities to participate in nature positive enterprises in implementing nature positive agriculture approaches, the project can empower women to participate more actively in sustainable natural resource management and climate action initiatives. This will result in a more balanced and equitable distribution of resource access and benefits between genders, enhancing women's involvement in decision-making processes and fostering greater gender equality within the landscape.

2. *How will women and men be impacted (positively or negatively) by project activities, including on their livelihoods, workload, control over resources, etc.?*

The Greater Gola Landscape Project in Sierra Leone has the potential to exert both positive and negative impacts on women and men in the region. The agriculture sector stands as a critical pillar of the economy. Yet, it remains highly susceptible to the adverse impacts of climate change, primarily due to its heavy reliance on rain-fed production methods. Recognizing this vulnerability, the Gola Landscape project is set to play a transformative role, by facilitating capacity-building endeavors and implementing robust systems for land-use planning, sustainable land management and participatory natural resources management, the project is poised to significantly augment Sierra Leone's ability to enhance biodiversity conservation and mitigate and adapt to climate change. Such capacity-building and improved sustainable land management approaches lead to improved agricultural productivity, enhanced climate resilience and better livelihoods, particularly for women who often play critical roles in subsistence agriculture. This is expected to be an indirect benefit considering the actions anticipated to result from the project. In areas such as Gola landscape where men are the landlords some impact on relationships may be witnessed resource access and use such where land use change may be required and either gender is not in agreement particularly with respect to engagement in alternative income generating activities on land and so the project may have to employ proactive stakeholder engagement as and when needed. Another aspect is in relation to sharing of benefits accruing from such land use interventions.

3. *To what extent do women and men participate in decision-making processes about those natural resources and is that likely to carry over into project decision-making? What are the constraints (social,*



*cultural, economic, political) that restrict women's active participation in household, community and project-level decision-making processes?*

The Sierra Leone society largely embraces a patriarchal system with a strong culture of male dominance, including critical decision making<sup>101</sup>, and other socio-cultural factors interplay to influence the interactions between the genders and social groups. These inequalities have resulted in some cases, the exclusion of women, girls, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups from actively participating in certain sectors and at certain levels of the development process of the country. Information emerged during stakeholder consultations that there are fewer women involved in decision making with respect to forestry activities and so some deliberate efforts may be focused on encouraging traditional governance structures at chiefdom level to enable women participate more.

In Sierra Leone, prevention of and reductions in levels of domestic violence have been placed on the national transformation agenda as one of the country's priorities. The Sierra Leone Domestic Violence Act, 2007 was designed to protect women from domestic violence by providing accessible legal instruments aiming to prevent further incidents of abuse within domestic relationships. Under this act, violence against women is classified as a public crime allowing women to secure a protection order from the courts

GBV and SEAH are acts deeply rooted in gender inequality and remain one of the most notable human rights violations in all societies around the world.

The Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Act (2022) addresses gender imbalances by providing for at least 30% representation of women to decision-making positions and structures. The Sierra Leone Gola landscape project contributes to enhancing women's involvement in forestry and sustainable land management as well as climate change initiatives, including the decision to ensure the participation of women in all project implementation activities by at least 30 percent.

4. *Do women and men have equal access to information and opportunities necessary to participate and benefit fully from the activities of the project? How do gender-related barriers/challenges potentially limit women's ability to fully participate, make decisions and benefit from the project? How will the project overcome them?*

Public access to information in Sierra Leone has been significantly advanced through the enactment of the Access to Information act. This pivotal legislation (Right to Access Information Law in 2013), passed in 2013, empowers citizens and interested persons free access to information primarily in the hands of government and non-state actors. While strides have been made towards gender equality in Sierra Leone, disparities persist in terms of access to information and opportunities between women and men. Cultural norms and socio-economic factors often contribute to limited access to education and economic resources for women, impeding their ability to fully participate in various sectors. Some gender related barriers to information access specifically in the Gola landscape seem to relate to the patrilineal male dominance in which it seems men and women are not equally participating in public knowledge sharing forums to get the opportunity to give their views regarding

<sup>101</sup> <https://ke.boell.org/en/2022/09/16/breaking-patriarchal-norm-conformity> (Accessed on 29 September 2023 at 11h05GMT)

issues that forestry resources management. The Sierra Leone Gola landscape child project will ensure that 30% of people benefiting from training and knowledge sharing opportunities and any initiatives arising from the project must be women, by encouraging institutions taking part in the project to identify and nominate relevant women staff for respective project interventions. This provision in the Gola landscape project is deliberate to achieve gender mainstreaming in all its activities. The project also provides for separate national women knowledge exchange/learning events, focused on bringing together the women from various project sites as an opportunity to share experiences and challenges that they face as women in biodiversity conservation, land-use planning, impacts of climate change and promoting climate resilient livelihood. The knowledge shared will inform project implementation process for adaptive management and ensure that the concerns of women are effectively addressed through the project life.

5. *What are the different interests, needs and priorities of men and women within the project context? How will the project be able to address their respective needs and priorities?*

In all patriarchal societies, like Sierra Leone, male governance is engrained in all forms of decision-making. They manifest in the family institutions, educational sector, labour market, politics and social service institutions. To overcome the challenge of gender discrimination against women in the formal sector of employment, the Government of Sierra Leone put in place a legislation – the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act, (2022)<sup>102</sup>. Although, this situation is improving, there is more work to be done to ensure fair representation. The Gola landscape project will support and empower women by ensuring participation of women in all project implementation activities by least 30 percent.

With in the project context, the priority needs for men and women are related to access to forestry and biodiversity resources. The women focus is mainly on biomass energy particularly firewood and charcoal as well as some non-timber forest products particularly fruits, vegetables and medicinal herbs while men are more focussed on commercial products particularly commercial charcoal burning and timber resources through logging. The project interventions will address each of these through the planned participatory land use planning and collaborative forestry management. The intention is to promote regulated access to ensure sustainability of the target resources.

6. *How might project activities create new opportunities (economic, leadership, etc.) for women?*

The Sierra Leone Gola landscape child project provides training and skills development in various aspects of environment and natural resources management. Trainings under outcomes 1.1 and 2.1 will build capacities of state and non-state actors in natural resources management to mainstream gender considerations in their operations, and therefore increase opportunities for women participation, promoting gender equality and improving women's access to opportunities. The project will support local community-based income generating activities and development of nature-based solutions, which provide opportunities for women to diversify their livelihoods. Collection of gender-disaggregated data will contribute to informing pro-women decision-making. The acquisition of skills

<sup>102</sup> The National Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act (GEWE) (2022).

and formulation of a new road map for gender mainstreaming in these sectors will open also opportunities for women in these institutions to grow professionally and take on leadership roles.

7. *Is there a possibility that project activities may perpetuate/increase inequalities, including gender-based violence? (why or why not)*

No. The project plans to promote full and equitable representation in community awareness meetings, the livelihood capacity building workshops, training on nature positive approaches and other capacity-building and field level activities. The Sierra Leone Gola landscape child Project will build its gender strategies on the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act, (2022)<sup>103</sup>, whose overall objective is to achieve gender equity and women empowerment as an integral part of the national development process through enhancing participation of women and men, girls and boys for sustainable and equitable development and poverty reduction. In order to stem any potential resistance or negative response, particularly with respect to livelihood capacity building interventions, the project will work with men in the prioritizing the nature positive interventions in the landscape and especially focusing on site specific gender related priorities.

8. *What is the level of gender awareness and capacity to address gender issues amongst local authorities, project partners and project staff?*

The level of gender awareness and capacity to address gender issues amongst authorities in Sierra Leone varies, with some authorities having a better understanding of gender issues and being more committed to addressing them than others. The Government of Sierra Leone has made significant strides in addressing gender awareness and building capacity to tackle gender-related issues. Over the years, concerted efforts have been made to sensitize and educate various stakeholders, including policymakers, community leaders, and civil society, on the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment. This has been achieved through a range of initiatives such as workshops, training programs, and advocacy campaigns. As a result, there is a growing understanding of the complexities surrounding gender dynamics and the imperative to adopt inclusive policies and practices, and establishment of some women groups and associations. However, traditional gender roles and norms, as well as a lack of resources, are two of the challenges in addressing gender issues in Sierra Leone. An advantage to address this aspect in this project is the use of project partners that have had a long experience in community activities in this landscape. The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) staff awareness and capacity to address gender issues in the Gola landscape has been developed over the years with their participation in implementing the European Union (EU) funded *Support programme for the preservation of forest ecosystems in West Africa* (PAPFor) project as well as their participation in the Mano River Union Integrated Water Resources management (MRU IWRM) project. These partners have been working in the landscape for over 20 years. The Environment Foundation for Africa-Africa Wild life Foundation (EFA/AWF) partnership has similarly been working for a long time (mostly more closely since 2018) together in and around Tiwai Island

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<sup>103</sup> The National Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act (GEWE) (2022).

Wildlife sanctuary. This project builds on the work of the Gola Rain Forest Conservation – Limited by Guarantee (GRC-LG) that are working on the Gola Rain Forest National Park (GRFNP). This combined experience of partners and staff on community engagement in the area is a great opportunity for addressing gender issues.

9. *Describe the methods (interviews, desktop research, focus groups, surveys, etc.) were used to collect information for the Gender Analysis/Assessment.*

Desktop research method was adopted to collecting information for gender analysis, a widely used and effective methodology for review of existing data, publications, and research for information relevant to a project's needs. This involved collating, reviewing, and deriving Gola landscape project gender mainstreaming information from a variety of publications, including government reports, government policies, NGO/CBO reports, and reports from donor agencies like World Bank. In addition, engagements were undertaken with key stakeholder staff during and after the national stakeholder consultation workshop as well as engagement with paramount chiefs of the target areas; and, the men and women to understand gender issues that are specific to the Gola landscape area. It was noted, for example, during the national consultative workshop that women have not had tremendous interest in participating in forestry resources management. Focus group discussions with the key project partners such as EFA, CSSL and the GRC-LG provided great insight into the gender perceptions at field level within the Gola Project landscape and the partner experience will be very useful in gender mainstreaming during project implementation.

10. *Describe lessons learnt during the development of the GMP during the PPG/PPF Phase. E.g. Did you have to hold meetings separately for women? Did the location/time of meetings affect women's participation?*

The decision to hold meetings in Kenema, an area near the project site and for the project team to travel there, along with the organization of the validation workshop in Kenema, was central to facilitating equal participation by both men and women. This approach eliminated the necessity to hold separate meetings based on gender, as it ensured that all participants, regardless of their location or gender, had equal access to engagement opportunities. The experience of project executing support partners provided additional information to understand if there are any specific gender matters for particular project attention. However, because of the inadequate time to engage specific site community level groups, this GMP will be strengthened at implementation phase. Specific information on gender roles and relations that are relevant to the project activities, as well as baseline information that supports target setting will further be collated at inception. An activity and budget has been included aiming to develop site specific gender analysis to support updating of this plan during implementation.

## SECTION III: Gender Action Plan

*Using the results of the Gender Analysis, and considering the project context, scope and components, the Gender Action Plan details how the project will ensure the active and meaningful participation of both women and men, equal access to opportunities, resources and benefits from the project, and avoid perpetuating social inequalities.*

<b>Component 1:</b> Component 1: Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills FR, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape				
<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Activities to Mainstream Gender into Output</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Resources Required</b>	<b>Budget (USD)</b>
<b>Output 1.1.2.:</b> State and non-state actors (from key government ministries, departments, agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, private sector and communities) trained to support effective management of the Greater Gola Forest landscape.	The project targets to engage at least 30% of women in all project activities in line with the provisions of the Gender Equity and Women Empowerment Act, 2022. The assumption is that because it is statutory Government commitment the employed staff in the target state and non-state institutions are at that ratio. Selection of participants to focus on gender consideration – social inclusion. However, an activity and budget has also been included to develop site specific gender analysis to support updating of this plan during implementation.	At least 30% of stakeholders engaged are women (as far as possible depending on personnel appointed in those positions)	Lead: EPA/PMU Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administrative appointment of representatives</li> <li>Training materials</li> </ul>	<b>10,000</b>
<b>Output 1.1.4:</b> A national gender-responsive centre of excellence hub for capacity building and monitoring biodiversity conservation, land use planning and management for enhanced climate resilience established and functional.	Set a target of at least 30% women participating in the centre of excellence activities. Deliberately consider social inclusion in the selection of capacity building and recruitment to the hub.	At least 30% women participating in the centre of excellence activities	Lead: EPA/PMU Resources: Administrative appointment of representatives.	<b>TBD</b>
<b>Component 2:</b> Promoting participatory and gender responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods				
<b>Output 2.1.1:</b> Gender-sensitive community awareness and education programs to support sustainable forest	Conduct a gender-sensitive selection of stakeholders involved in the community awareness programmes.	At least 30% of participants in community awareness and education	Lead: EPA/PMU Resources: Partner costs and/or Consultancy fees	<b>TBD</b>

management, land use planning and on climate change impacts developed and implemented.	Ensure that interests of men and women and the differential knowledge and practices regarding natural resources are recognized in awareness. Promote messages that target both men and women and the mode of delivery to suit social inclusion, for example, to arrange meetings at times that are suitable for both genders.	programs to support sustainable forest management are women.		
<b>Output 2.1.2.:</b> Gender-responsive participatory spatial / landscape plans for the Greater Gola Forest landscape developed /updated and implemented	Conduct a gender-sensitive selection of stakeholders involved in the participatory spatial / landscape planning process. An assessment of specific gender roles and relations that are relevant to the project activities will provide direction on how the project will ensure that land use planning is inclusive and responds to the specific needs of women and disadvantaged groups. Undertake gender assessments at community level on land use planning interests and promote social inclusion in land use planning	At least 30% of participants in land use planning are women.	Lead: EPA/PMU Resources: Partner costs and/or Consultancy fees  Assessment methodology	<b>TBD</b>
<b>Output 2.1.3.:</b> Gender-responsive and climate resilient alternative income-generating initiatives supported, ensuring inclusive participation and equitable benefits for all genders while promoting sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.	Conduct a gender-sensitive selection of stakeholders involved in alternative income generating activities. An activity on assessment of specific information on gender roles and relations that are relevant to the project activities will provide direction on how the project will ensure	At least 30% of the participants in climate resilient alternative income-generating initiatives <b>are women.</b>	Lead: EPA/PMU Resources: Partner costs and/or -Consultancy fees for assessments	<b>4,500<sup>104</sup></b>

<sup>104</sup> The cost here is an estimate as part of the overall cost of consultancy or partner costs of implementing alternative income generating activities.

	that alternative income generating activities are actually inclusive and respond to the specific needs of women and disadvantaged groups. Promote social inclusion in the selection of participants for involvement in climate resilient alternative income-generating initiatives.			
<b>Output 2.1.4.:</b> Innovative and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management supported, ensuring gender equality in participation, access and benefits.	Conduct a gender-sensitive selection of stakeholders involved in the pro-nature enterprises. Consideration of specific needs of different community groups in prioritization of pro-nature enterprises. An activity on assessment of specific information on gender roles and relations that are relevant to the project activities will provide direction on how the project will ensure that pro-nature enterprises are actually inclusive and respond to the specific needs of women and disadvantaged groups	At least gender sensitive selection undertaken.	Lead: EPA/PMU Resources: Partner costs and/or Consultancy fees	<b>TBD</b>
<b>Output 2.1.5:</b> Inclusive community-based reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives to improve access to ecosystem services implemented.	Conduct a gender-sensitive selection of stakeholders involved in reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives <sup>105</sup> .	At least one gender sensitive selection undertaken.	Lead: EPA/PMU Resources: Partner costs and/or Consultancy fees	<b>TBD</b>
<b>Component 3:</b> Improving management of Kambu Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation				
<b>Output 3.1.1:</b> Extent of deforestation and forest degradation in Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and	Consideration of specific needs of community groups in prioritization of degraded lands for	At least 30% of participants in restoration activities are	Lead: EPA/PMU Resources: Partner costs and/or	<b>20,000</b>

<sup>105</sup> An assessment of specific gender roles and relations that are relevant to the project activities will provide direction on how the project will ensure that awareness, alternative income activities, land use planning as well as restoration activities are inclusive and respond to the specific needs of women and disadvantaged groups.



associated community forests established, documented and restoration implemented.	recovery, spatial targeting of restoration activities, selection of restoration methods (i.e., use of local plant species with particular household/livelihood value), and participation in the activities themselves	women	Consultancy fees	
<b>Output 3.1.2:</b> Forest conservation and regeneration as one of the strategies for improved ecosystem health and sustainable financing promoted.	This activity will be undertaken after starting output 2.1.1 to follow from sensitization and awareness to all to bring on board those who currently occupy decision-making. Consideration of specific needs of different community groups in prioritization of climate resilient biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use conservation interventions	At least 30% of participants in sustainable resource use interventions are women (depending on composition of the communities)	Lead: EPA/PMU; Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable resource use intervention costs</li> </ul> Partners	<b>40,000</b>
<b>Component 4: Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management</b>				
<b>Output 4.1.1:</b> The functioning of the committees established under the IUCN-MRU-IW Project to support improved management and sustainable use of river basin resources operationalized and institutionalized within MRU.	Create awareness in project implementation partners to appreciate importance of social inclusion in committee meetings on improving management and sustainable use of river basin resources. Encourage state and non-state stakeholders to select representatives by diverse groups (i.e. women, youth, elderly, and other vulnerable and/or marginalized groups).	At least 30% of participants are women (as far as possible depending on personnel appointed in the committee positions)	Lead: EPA/PMU Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meetings costs</li> </ul>	<b>29,190</b>
<b>Output 4.1.2:</b> Capacity for applied research to inform decision making processes for transboundary watershed and forest management enhanced.	Deliberately consider gender interests in the selection of participants to the applied research capacity building initiatives.	At least 30% of participants are women (as far as possible depending on personnel appointed in the positions)	Lead: EPA/PMU Resources: Capacity building costs	

<b>Output 4.1.3.:</b> Nature-based solutions to improve freshwater ecosystem health and mitigate climate change impacts and riverbank deterioration implemented.	Consideration of specific needs of different community groups in prioritization of Nature-based solutions to improve freshwater ecosystem health. Create awareness among project partners on importance of social inclusion in selection and spatial targeting of restoration activities, selection of restoration methods (i.e., use of local plant species with particular household/livelihood value), and participation in the activities as part of the community to address water degradation.	At least 30% of participants are women	Lead: EPA/PMU Resources: Partner implementation costs	<b>30,000</b>
<b>Component 5: Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons.</b>				
<b>Output 5.1.1:</b> A project Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy developed (including gender, equality and inclusion aspects)	Develop Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy that includes gender, equality and inclusion aspects Create awareness in project partners to appreciate importance of social inclusion in the knowledge management and communication strategy.	At least one Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy that includes gender, equality and inclusion aspects	Lead: EPA/PMU Resources: • Costs of development and printing	<b>1,700</b>
<b>Output 5.1.2:</b> Participation in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project 3-day Annual Forums.	Set criteria for social inclusion in all trainings. Create awareness in project partners to appreciate importance of social inclusion in trainings.	At least 30% the participants at the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project 3-day Annual Forums are women	Lead: EPA/PMU Resources: • Cost of attendance at the forum	<b>12,000</b>
<b>Output 5.1.3:</b> Learning and exposure visits facilitated with the Sierra Leone Child Projects (and where applicable coordinated by the Guinean Forests Regional	Set criteria and deliberately include a focus on social inclusion in all exposure visits. Create awareness in project partners to appreciate importance of	At least 30% of the participation in the learning and exposure visits are women	Lead: EPA/PMU Resources: Cost of attendance	<b>10,000</b>

Coordination and Learning Project)	social inclusion in all aspects of learning including in exposure visits			
<b>Output 5.1.4:</b> Knowledge management products integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects generated, and disseminated at landscape, national and regional levels (integrating lessons learnt and best-case practices on traditional knowledge for natural resource management, and information on the project as a model for Nature-Based-Solutions)	Deliberately consider gender interests in the production and dissemination of knowledge products and communication materials by diverse groups (i.e. women, youth, elderly, and other vulnerable and/or marginalized groups). -Prioritise to include topics related to gender and social inclusion issues Prioritise and include knowledge and experience from the site communities, women-led organizations and those led by other disadvantaged groups in the landscape. Promote and undertake gender- related capacity building and training for all Project personnel and project implementing partners.	At least 30% of Knowledge management products integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects generated are disseminated to women	Lead: EPA/PMU Resources: Cost of Knowledge management products and their dissemination	<b>10,000</b>
<b>Component 6: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&amp;E) Framework</b>				
<b>Output 6.1.1.:</b> Periodic M&E reports submitted to CI-GEF Agency.	Deliberately set criteria to focus on inclusion of women and other social groups such as the youth in the inception workshop and project meetings. Undertaken sensitive among project partners and create awareness for them to appreciate the importance of social inclusion in all aspects of project engagements	At least 30% women participation in the inception workshop and annual Project Steering Committee Meetings (as far as possible depending on personnel appointed in those positions)	Lead: EPA/PMU Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshop and PSC meetings costs</li> </ul>	<b>4,430</b>
<b>Output 6.1.2.</b> Mid-Term Evaluation and Terminal Evaluation commissioned by CI-GEF.	Develop gender – sensitive Terms of Reference for independent evaluation service providers	At least two gender – sensitive Terms of Reference for independent evaluation	Lead: CI-GEF Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>personnel cost</li> </ul>	<b>1800</b>

		service providers developed.		
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>195,920</b>

## SECTION IV: Monitoring and Reporting

The GEF/GCF Gender Mainstreaming Policy requires the collection and analysis of sex- disaggregated data and gender information to inform gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation. The project is expected to report on a quarterly basis (using the CI-GEF/GCF Quarterly Reporting template), progress made towards the achievement of gender mainstreaming activities identified in the Gender Action Plan above. The project is also expected to report on an annual basis and using the CI-GEF/GCF Project Implementation Report (PIR) or Annual Performance Report (APR) template, the following CI-GEF/GCF minimum indicators:

Indicator	Baseline			Target <sup>106</sup>		
	Men	Women	Other <sup>107</sup>	Men	Women	Other
3. Number of persons (disaggregated by gender) who received benefits in the project implementation phase.	35 <sup>108</sup>	5	0	11,500	11,441	0
4. Number of documents (disaggregated by type) derived from the project that included gender considerations or address gender gaps. <sup>109</sup>	0			8 <sup>110</sup> 2 land use plans, 1 restoration plan; 5		

In addition to the minimum indicators above, projects are strongly encouraged to provide additional gender indicators specific to their projects.

## SECTION V: Considerations for the Implementation of the GMP

### 1. Alignment + integration

The activities, budget and staffing outlined in this action plan must be integrated into the project's overall Project Document + Results Framework. Please confirm that:

- The activities identified in this Action Plan have been integrated into the project's proposal document including the results framework. (Y/N)
- The necessary budget for activities identified in this Action Plan have been integrated into the project's overall budget. (Y/N)

### 2. Staffing capacities

*Describe the project's capacities to implement this Gender Mainstreaming Plan. Who will be responsible for*

<sup>106</sup> As per PRF targets and details provided in the Project document.

<sup>107</sup> This will apply or not according to the specific cultural, social and political context of the project.

<sup>108</sup> Number of men/women at PPG phase.

<sup>109</sup> Disaggregation by type: Strategy, Framework, Plan (e.g., management plans, and land use plans), Policy paper Knowledge product, Other.

<sup>110</sup> These are Land use plans, a restoration plan and knowledge management products.

*overseeing the implementation of the actions? Will that person need to be hired or is s/he already on staff? Does that person have the technical background and skills appropriate for the level of complexity of this GMP? If not, how will this be addressed? What percentage of that person's time will be focused on implementation of this GMP?*

The Sierra Leone Gola landscape child project will hire an Environment and Social Safeguards Officer, who will have both the technical capacity and experience in reviewing and implementing the Gender Mainstreaming Plans and support the periodic monitoring and evaluation progress of implementation and impacts. S/he will be supported by the Gender Specialist within the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, and the M&E specialist within the PMU.

## Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) outlines the differentiated measures that the Executing Agency/Entity will implement to ensure the effective participation of key project stakeholders, including both men and women and those identified as disadvantaged or vulnerable stakeholders. The level of detail in the SEP will vary; it must be scaled to the scope of the project, numbers of stakeholders involved, and potential risks and impacts present.

The SEP includes a **Stakeholder Analysis** (Section III) to identify all actors who directly or indirectly may affect or be affected by a project and their varying interests. The SEP also outlines stakeholder engagement throughout the project lifecycle, including: **Stakeholder Engagement in PPG/PPF Phase** (Section IV), **Stakeholder Engagement in Implementation Phase** (Section V), and **Monitoring and Reporting** (Section VI). These sections outline the appropriate methods for engagement, including through neutral/third party facilitators, when necessary. They also detail required public disclosure of information on project scope and impacts, a grievance redress mechanism, the budget to complete stakeholder engagement, indicators, and learning throughout the project cycle.

Each revision of the plan requires further disclosure to stakeholders.

## SECTION I: Project Information

<b>PROJECT TITLE:</b>	<i><b>Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone's critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape</b></i>		
<b>GEF/GCF PROJECT ID:</b>		<b>PROJECT DURATION:</b>	62 months
<b>EXECUTING AGENCY/ENTITY:</b>	The Sierra Leone Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)		
<b>PROJECT START DATE:</b>	January 2025	<b>PROJECT END DATE:</b>	January 2030
<b>SEP PREPARED BY:</b>	Green Approaches Limited		
<b>DATE OF (RE)SUBMISSION TO CI-GEF/GCF:</b>	May, 2024		
<b>SEP APPROVED (CONDITIONALLY) BY:</b>	Ian Kissoon, Senior Director, ESMF, CI-GEF Project Agency		
<b>CONDITIONS:</b>	This SEP is to be updated during the first 6 months of implementation, particularly regarding the targets which are quite low for number of engagements and number of persons engaged considering that this is a 5-year project		

	and that there are approximately 125 communities with roughly 25,000 inhabitants in the immediate vicinity of Gola National Park, and also to further address CI-GEF's comments on engagement with vulnerable groups.
<b>DATE OF CI-GEF/GCF APPROVAL:</b>	June 19, 2024

## SECTION II: Introduction (1 page)

The Project “*Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone’s critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape*” aims to conserve and restore Kambui Hills FR and the associated community forest lands as part of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape to conserve biodiversity, restore degraded land as well as address climate change impacts.

The main root causes and barriers to effective management of the Gola Forest Landscape include, among others, (i) Limited capacity of mandated agencies for effective conservation and sustainable management of the landscape; (ii) Limited access to sustainable livelihoods; (iii) Insufficient data to guide sustainable forest management, biodiversity conservation, land-use planning, decision-making, and strategic management; (iv) Inadequate collaboration among relevant stakeholders to address transboundary issues in the Gola landscape; (v) Weak policies, tools, standards and guidelines and legislation relating to forest governance; and (vi) Weak monitoring and evaluation systems to track ecosystem management performance. By addressing these root causes and barriers, the Project aims at improving management of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape, including the forest protected areas, trans-boundary resources and areas outside the protected areas.

The project objective is to conserve and restore Kambui Hills FR and the associated community forest lands as part of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape to address climate change impacts. This will result in strengthened capacity of key stakeholders (state and non-state actors and communities) for effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape. The Project components are:

### **Component 1: Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills FR, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape**

This component aims at strengthening multi-stakeholder collaboration, coordination and commitment for improving the management effectiveness of the protected areas in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape. The Gola landscape consists of a wide array of stakeholders, including Government and non-government actors, functioning in different sectors (forestry, wildlife and tourism, water, land, agriculture, mining, local governments, etc.). The project will take an integrated approach to engage the diverse stakeholders in order to effectively address the challenges of deforestation and forest degradation, loss of biodiversity, land degradation and the negative impacts of climate change. In particular, addressing the main factors limiting management effectiveness for protected areas in the Gola Forest landscape, (including weak institutional and technical capacity of the mandated agencies; weak coordination within and between state and non-state actors; weak policies and legislation relating to forest governance and limited availability of standards and guidelines as operational tools for decision making), will be the focus of this Component. This support will result in improved performance of mandated agencies to manage protected areas, increase stakeholder coordination, build synergies and leverage, reduced conflicts, and enhance mainstreaming biodiversity and land-use planning in policies and strategic planning frameworks of sectors

such as agriculture and mining.

**Outcome 1.1:** Strengthened capacity of key stakeholders (state and non-state actors and communities) for effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape. This outcome will be achieved through four outputs namely:

- **Output 1.1.1:** Gender responsive policies, plans, tools and guidelines to support sustainable forest and land use planning and management reviewed and implemented.
- **Output 1.1.2:** State and non-state actors (from key government ministries, departments, agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, private sector and communities) trained to support inclusive and gender responsive effective management of the Greater Gola Forest landscape.
- **Output 1.1.3:** Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders (local communities, CSOs/NGOs, private sector and Gola Transboundary Committees) to support inclusive and gender responsive effective governance of the Greater Gola landscape enhanced.
- **Output 1.1.4:** A national gender-responsive centre of excellence hub for capacity building and monitoring biodiversity conservation, land use planning and management for enhanced climate resilience established and functional.

## **Component 2: Promoting participatory and gender responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods**

Under Component 2, the project will establish and strengthen the protection of key forest biodiversity areas and other ecologically sensitive zones through community-based conservation, centred on climate-smart livelihood interventions that enhance climate resilience. Incentives and corresponding management and action plans will be grounded in participatory spatial land-use planning that takes into consideration gender considerations with respect to natural resource use. Incentives such as support for livelihood strengthening will be linked to conservation commitments in community-led management and action plans and may be aligned with efforts to formalize land tenure rights. The details of this component are described below:

**Outcome 2.1:** Enhanced sustainable resource use by communities adjacent to targeted PAs within the Gola landscape. This outcome will be achieved through five outputs namely:

- **Output 2.1.1:** Gender-sensitive community awareness and education programs to support sustainable forest management, land use planning and on climate change impacts developed and implemented.
- **Output 2.1.2:** Gender-responsive participatory spatial / landscape plans for the Greater Gola Forest landscape developed /updated and implemented.
- **Output 2.1.3:** Gender-responsive and climate resilient alternative income-generating initiatives supported, ensuring inclusive participation and equitable benefits for all genders while promoting sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.
- **Output 2.1.4:** Innovative and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management supported, ensuring gender equality in participation, access and benefits.
- **Output 2.1.5:** Inclusive community-based reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives to improve access to ecosystem services implemented.

## **Component 3: Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation**



Component aims at strengthening the management of Kambui Hills Forest reserve and associated community forest lands and 'Other effective area-based conservation measures' (OECMs) in the Gola Forest landscape. The current management status of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve has not been effective in prohibiting logging, artisanal mining, and encroachment by agricultural activities, and the forest area is threatened with rapid deforestation and degradation. The project will build on and scale up similar interventions by ProFor and REDD+ that are supporting management effectiveness in Gola Rainforest National Park, including strategic spatial planning that integrates conservation with local/national development. The focus on Kambui Hills, Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary and associated community forests was emphasized by stakeholders during the PPG consultations, to address ongoing management effectiveness challenges.

**Outcome 3.1:** Strengthened biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use of the Kambui Hills FR and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape. This outcome will be achieved through four outputs namely:

- **Output 3.1.1:** Extent of deforestation and forest degradation in Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests established, documented and restoration implemented.
- **Output 3.1.2:** Forest conservation and regeneration as one of the strategies for improved ecosystem health and sustainable financing promoted.

#### **Component 4: Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management**

The purpose of this component (which is shared by Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone country child projects) is to ensure collaboration, coordination, and joint conduct of management activities to conserve the transboundary watershed and forest landscapes in the Lofa-Gola-Mano Conservation Corridor shared by Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. The Mano River basin is the third-most biodiverse sub-regional watershed in the world after the Amazon and Congo basins. Eighty percent (80%) of the water resources that feed West Africa derive from this region, making maintenance of the watershed essential for ecosystem function and the region's socioeconomic well-being. This Component builds on the achievements of the earlier Project, and consolidates transboundary collaboration aspirations provided in the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) that was developed under the aegis of the Mano River Union (MRU), also building on the GEF-funded Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project, (MRU, 2023) <sup>111</sup>. In particular, the SAP provides for operationalization of the Transboundary Committees, importance of the water catchment protection and the need for evidence-based decision-making for transboundary natural resources management.

**Outcome 4.1:** Strengthened institutional structures for transboundary collaboration between Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia for improved management of the Mano Watershed.

- **Output 4.1.1:** The functioning of the committees established under the IUCN-MRU-IW Project to support improved management and sustainable use of river basin resources operationalized and institutionalized within MRU.
- **Output 4.1.2:** Capacity for applied research to inform decision-making processes for transboundary watershed and forest management enhanced.
- **Output 4.1.3:** Nature-based solutions to improve freshwater ecosystem health and mitigate climate change impacts and riverbank deterioration implemented.

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<sup>111</sup> Mano River Union, 2023. Strategic Action Program (SAP) of Mano River Union Basins. The Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management Project implemented by IUCN, with the Mano River Union (MRU) as the executing agency. Project GEF ID 4953.

### **Component 5: Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons**

This component will focus on strengthening coordination and collaboration at local, national, and regional levels through learning and knowledge sharing. Specifically, the project will undertake knowledge management, sharing of lessons learned, and best practices through south-south exchanges and participation in national, regional, and international platforms/forums. The project fosters knowledge sharing, coordination of activities and synthesis of learning with other country child projects, other countries in the Guinean Forests region, and other stakeholders working on the conservation and sustainable management of critical forests. Critical to achieving this aim will be knowledge sharing with other IP Child Projects such as the Congo Basin IP and GOLD/GOLD+, developing linkages between the Guinean Forest Integrated Program (GFIP) Regional Coordination Secretariat for technical support and assistance as needed, and harnessing learning from intervention under the other parts of the Amazon, Congo, and Critical Forest Biomes IP and other related integrated programmes such as the Wildlife Conservation for Development, Ecosystem Restoration. This linkage will offer opportunities to amplify West Africa's collective voice in international policy processes through participation in periodic joint meetings and exchange visits to other regions. The project will establish lines of communication and forums for exchange and prepare knowledge products that synthesize learnings. Knowledge sharing is expected to increase learning among stakeholders at landscape, national and regional levels.

**Outcome 5.1:** Strengthened coordination, capacity building, knowledge management, learning and sharing between the Sierra Leone Child Project and initiatives at landscape, national and regional levels including the GEF-8 Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project. This outcome will be achieved through four outputs namely:

- **Output 5.1.1:** A project Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy developed (including gender, equality and inclusion aspects).
- **Output 5.1.2:** Participation in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project 3-day Annual Forums.
- **Output 5.1.3:** Learning and exposure visits facilitated with the Sierra Leone Child Projects (and where applicable coordinated by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project).
- **Output 5.1.4:** Knowledge management products integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects generated, and disseminated at landscape, national and regional levels (integrating lessons learnt and best-case practices on traditional knowledge for natural resource management, and information on the project as a model for Nature-Based-Solutions).

### **Component 6: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**

A functional gender-sensitive M&E Framework will be established through this component. The M&E tools are key for adaptive management and will inform/improve the design of future projects. The tool will be used to capture and track progress on the project's results, adherence to the results framework, application of safeguards plans, materialization of co-financing, and program functioning as an integrated effort. The standard GEF monitoring tools, such as the Biodiversity Tracking Tool/Protected Area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT), as well as bespoke tracking tools on subjects such as gender mainstreaming and civil society institutional capacity will be utilized. The M&E framework will also entail the preparation of quarterly and annual technical and financial reports. This component has one outcome namely:

**Outcome 6.1:** An effective and gender-responsive M&E system for the project. This outcome will be achieved through two outputs namely:

- **Output 6.1.1:** Periodic M&E reports submitted to CI-GEF Agency
- **Output 6.1.2:** Mid-Term Evaluation and Terminal Evaluation commissioned by CI-GEF.

### **Overview of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan**

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) was prepared in consultation with key stakeholders and is in line with the CI-GEF Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF). During stakeholder consultation processes, the main stakeholders were mapped and their potential roles in the project identified. These included Government Ministries, Departments, Agencies and Local governments; CSOs/NGOs; local communities (Paramount chiefs, land owners), the private sector; The objective of this SEP is to provide a road map that ensures that stakeholders are adequately mobilized and facilitated to participate in project development, implementation, and monitoring. The preparation of this GEF project has been participatory and its implementation is expected to be stakeholder driven, country-led and country-driven as well.

Stakeholder participation is important for creating awareness about the project, providing opportunity for the various actors to contribute their views, clarifying the roles of key stakeholders in project formulation and implementation, and ensuring ownership of the project. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) was prepared in response to GEF Policy requirement, guided by the CI-GEF Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF). In particular, the EMSF provides for the following as the minimum stakeholder engagement indicators that the project is required to monitor and report on.

1. Number of government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector, Forest Dependent peoples, and other stakeholder groups that have been involved in the project implementation phase on a quarterly basis.
2. Number of people (sex dis-aggregated) that have been involved in project implementation phase (on a quarterly basis).
3. Number of engagements (e.g., meetings, workshops, and consultations) with stakeholders.

In addition to responding to the GEF policy requirement, the SEP is intended to strengthen the stakeholder engagement processes that started with the PPG phase, and define modalities to build, strengthen and sustain the stakeholder engagement processes through the implementation of this project

The process for elaboration of the project through development of the Project document package involved representatives of all major stakeholders, including at national level by relevant sectoral Government agencies, local governments, relevant CSOs, relevant academia, the Private Sector, and, at the PPG preparation level by the key partners including CI and EPA. The SEP provides for:

- (i) Mapping of the stakeholders in the Forestry, Environment and natural resources management sectors of the country.
- (ii) Strategies and actions for ensuring effective and inclusive engagement at all levels and across sectors.

The overall goal of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is *“Forestry, Environment and natural resources management sectors as well as Climate change stakeholders in Sierra Leone effectively contributing to the project document formulation process”*. This goal obligates CI-GEF and the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) to; i) ensure that stakeholders are adequately mobilized and facilitated to participate in the entire ProDoc development process and project implementation ii) objectively listen to stakeholders aiming at securing ownership of the outputs from the project development process and project outcomes during implementation phase. Therefore, the purpose of the SEP is to provide a road map for ensuring an effective structured engagement of stakeholders during project development process and implementation phase, enhance inclusivity and ensure improved understanding of priority intervention areas within the Forestry,

Environment and natural resources management sectors in the country for enhancement of management of the Gola landscape and thus conserve biodiversity resources while enhancing climate resilience and mitigation. The SEP recognizes that involvement of stakeholders, (CI-GEF, EPA, NPAA, FD and other forestry and land management stakeholders at national and sub national levels in biodiversity conservation issues), is critical for strengthening ownership and ensuring relevance to the recommended project objectives and priorities.

The SEP elaborates on the stakeholders engaged in the PPG phase and those to be engaged in Implementation Phases, Stakeholder interests, capacity and information needs that are necessary for effectiveness in participating in the project development and implementation process, stakeholder engagement approaches, strategies and interventions.

The SEP recommends several engagement approaches that include Face to Face meetings, Focused Group Discussion meetings, dialogue platforms/workshops and via electronic communications at successive stages of the project development process. Different approaches will be applied for purpose of:

- Information sharing for effective participation in consultative and dialogue sessions of the project development process. This approach aims to ensure that stakeholders are prepared for participation and are provided opportunity to participate and provide knowledge and or ideas.
- Analysis of issues through dialogue platforms (workshops, meetings) or through providing comments and inputs into various reports.
- Securing stakeholder commitments to own and implement the project Strategy and actions through negotiations and consent platforms aiming at ensuring that the project strategy options and actions reflect institutional/stakeholder interests and consent.
- Providing technical and policy oversight and monitoring role (by the CI-GEF, EPA and project implementing partners) during the project development process.

### SECTION III: Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder Name and Function <i>Name of the key stakeholder, and their main purpose/function</i>	Stakeholder's Interest <i>What are the stakeholder's main interests in and concerns about the project?</i>	Impact of Project on Stakeholder <i>How will the stakeholder be affected (both positively and negatively) by the project?</i>	Influence of Stakeholder <i>How can the stakeholder affect the project? Can they hinder or contribute to the success of the project?</i>	Risk Management <i>(Is this a low, medium or high-risk stakeholder? And how would you manage medium/high risk stakeholders)</i>
<b>Government and Local Authorities</b> <i>(Add rows as necessary)</i>				
<b>Ministry of Environment and Climate Change</b>	Mainstreaming climate change into national and sectoral	The successful implementation of the Project will	Influence on high-level decisions related	<b>High</b>  Participation in PPG

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<b>(MECCA)</b> Government Ministry responsible for environment and climate change policies, plans and programmes and to coordinate, monitor, regulate, supervise and advice on all issues of the environment and climate change in Sierra Leone	plans, policies and programmes	contribute to improvement of institutional and technical capacity of MECCA for effective management environment and climate change in Sierra Leone	to forestry-policies and investment priorities, project location and linkage with other	process: Consultations, Participation in the national level stakeholder consultation workshop, representation at the regional coordination meetings.
<b>Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</b>  i) Government agency responsible for the protection of the environment and effective management of natural resources in Sierra Leone	Policy and technical guidance on the protection and management effectiveness of protected areas. Focal point for Conservation of Biological Diversity	Improved institutional and technical capacity for effective management of environment and natural resources, within and outside the protected areas. Improved management of biological diversity	Influence on high-level decisions related to environment and natural resource management. forestry-policies and investment priorities, project location and linkage with other stakeholders at national and sub-national levels. The staff at district levels link closely with the Chiefdoms and therefore the local communities.  Source of vital	<b>High</b> Participation in PPG process: Consultations, Participation in the national level stakeholder consultation workshop, representation at the regional coordination meetings.  Participation in project implementation as executing partner

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			information at PPG phase and a potential partner at project implementation	
<b>National Protected Area Authority (NPAA)</b>  <i>Government agency responsible for oversight over National Parks and Protected Areas designated for conservation purposes so as to protect the fauna and flora in its natural state, promote sustainable land use practices and environmental management</i>	<p>The protection of natural ecosystems and threatened biodiversity in Sierra Leone, including the establishment and maintenance of representative and sustainable samples</p> <p>oversee the management of local and private nature reserves and sanctuaries throughout Sierra Leone including zoos and wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centres</p> <p>Effective implementation of the national REDD+ Strategy and promoting REDD+ Projects in Sierra Leone as a source of sustainable financing for Protected Area Management</p>	<p>Improved protection of the Gola Rainforest National Park and the Tiwai Sanctuary, and hence increased landscape forest protection, habitat restoration and biodiversity conservation, including rare, threatened and endangered species</p> <p>Resource mobilization through carbon financing</p> <p>Increased collaboration with local communities in the management of protected areas.</p>	<p>Key Government institution responsible for high-level decision making for protected area management and linkage with relevant stakeholders, including Chiefdoms and the private sector in the conservation sector, e.g. tourism.</p> <p>Source of vital information at PPG phase and a potential partner at project implementation</p> <p>Potential source of Government co-financing</p>	<p><b>High</b></p> <p>Participation in PPG process: Consultations, Participation in the national level stakeholder consultation workshop, representation at the regional coordination meetings.</p> <p>Participation in project implementation as executing partner</p>
<b>Forest Division of the Government of Sierra Leone, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change</b>	<p>Efficient management and rational utilization of the country's forestry resources</p> <p>the preservation of the</p>	<p>Capacity building for effective management of forestry resources</p> <p>Contribution to</p>	<p>Key Government institution responsible for high-level decision making for forestry-</p>	<p><b>High</b></p> <p>Participation in PPG process: Consultations, Participation in the national level</p>

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<b>(MECC)</b>  <i>Responsible for sustainable management of the forest resources outside the National Parks. The main focus is on commercial, conservation and community forests (forests on community land but with the Forest Division managing them). Staff also at District levels</i>	<p>forest environment and the environmental role of forest land</p> <p>promoting and assisting the practice of forestry in agricultural, pastoral and other areas of the country in order to ensure the continued local supply of forest products and the protection of soil and water resources;</p> <p>afforestation and silvicultural treatment</p>	<p>afforestation and reforestation efforts</p> <p>Improving collaboration with stakeholders in forestry resource management</p> <p>Development of tools to support sustainable forest management, e.g., standards for responsible forest management</p> <p>Mobilization of resources for forestry management</p>	<p>related policies and investment priorities, project location and linkage with other stakeholders at national and sub-national levels. The staff at district levels link closely with the Chiefdoms and therefore the local communities.</p> <p>Source of vital information at PPG phase and a potential partner at project implementation</p> <p>Potential source of Government co-financing</p>	<p>stakeholder consultation workshop, representation at the regional coordination meetings.</p> <p>Participation in project implementation as executing partner</p>
<b>Ministry of Internal Affairs</b> <i>Government body responsible for overseeing the agencies involved in coordinating the policy and strategy for ensuring the maintenance of internal safety and security. These</i>	<p>Ensures effective internal security and a peaceful law-abiding environment that leads to economic growth and stability</p> <p>.</p>	<p>Improvement of knowledge and skills in environment-related law enforcement in the environment sector.</p> <p>Environment and natural resources management is an area of specialty that is</p>	<p>Provides recourse for redress of environmental offences/crimes and a mechanism for holding decision makers, public officials and agencies responsible for their actions or</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p> <p>ii) Sensitization and information sharing</p> <p>iii) Capacity building – training in environmental law enforcement</p> <p>iv) Collaboration and coordination in</p>



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include Police, Prisons Department, Immigration, National Fire Force and the National Registration Secretariat		increasingly recognized as a source of conflict and insecurity	failures to protect the environment.	law enforcement
<b>Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development</b> <i>Government body responsible for local councils and the Local Government</i>	Supports capacity building initiatives for local authorities and coordinate key actors at the local level; strengthen coordination between and among Ministries, Local Councils and Service Delivery Agencies; coordinate chiefdom governance reforms in line with the decentralization framework	Information sharing; Capacity building; Local community welfare improvement; enhanced forest products and environmental benefits to local communities	Community mobilization, sensitization and stakeholder coordination. Influencing project support and implementation among local governance structures	<b>Medium</b> Information sharing; consultation during PPG and project implementation phases
<b>Ministry of Gender and Childrens' Affairs</b> <i>Government's agency responsible for responding to social needs pertaining to Gender inequalities, social depravity of groups like the disabled, women rights, child rights, Religious Rights, etc.</i>	Development, implementation and monitoring of the policy and legal framework for issues relating to Women and to children below 18; development and monitoring of policies related to Gender and Children issues; actions to achieve full participation of women in development; addressing issues of violence against Women and Children; mainstreaming gender in Ministries, Departments and Agencies and non-state actors; ensuring a	Ensuring that gender and children issues are mainstreamed in project interventions; Promoting gender inclusiveness.	Require government ministries and agencies to mainstream gender; government Gender specialists are recruited in Government Ministries, including MECC to promote gender inclusiveness and guide mainstreaming gender-related	<b>Medium</b> Supporting capacity building in mainstreaming gender concerns during project implementation

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	Gender and Child responsive national development framework		actions in project. These will also provide training of the project staff and other implementing partners in issues related to gender	
<b>National Water Resources Management Agency</b> under the Ministry of Water Resources Management is responsible to regulate, utilize, protect, conserve, control and generally manage water resources throughout Sierra Leone	Sustainable water resource management  Interested in a functional Water Catchment Area Management Committee to develop and implement water Catchment Area management strategies.	Information sharing; collaboration in designing interventions for integrated watershed management.  Support the functioning of the Water Catchment Area Management Committee and implementation of priority watershed management options	Supporting Integrated Watershed Management initiatives. Mobilization of stakeholders and resources for the restoration of forests within the Gola Forest landscape as a contribution to sustainable watershed management.	<b>Medium</b> Participation in stakeholder consultation workshop. Collaboration and partnership in watershed management during project implementation
<b>Conservation Trust Fund</b> Established under the National Protected Area Act.	Mobilizing funds for financing the establishment and operation and effective management of the National Protected Area Authority and biodiversity conservation in Sierra Leone generally  Effective management of the Protected areas	Resources mobilized through the project for management effectiveness of protected areas	Information sharing, collaboration in project preparation and implementation	<b>Low</b>

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<b>CSOs/NGOs (Add rows as necessary)</b>				
<b>The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL)</b>  <i>Oldest environmental non-governmental organization with technical expertise in the conservation and wise use of the country's natural resources. Provides policy advice, undertake environmental education, facilitate learning and advocacy about good conservation practices, implement conservation and sustainable livelihoods projects and facilitate biodiversity research</i>	Promoting effective management of the Gola Landscape in Sierra Leone and Liberia through a cross-border partnership between Government, Civil-Society Organisations, and Communities. The key activities include: v) Participatory land use planning vi) Capacity building in community forestry management vii) community participation in conservation by implementing a co-management mechanism in conserving the GRNP and KHFR viii) Shared learning with other sister country projects and incorporate learning into the implementation	Building synergies Sharing knowledge and experiences Continued engagement in protected area management and promotion of community livelihoods	Knowledge sharing and lessons learned  Source of information for PPG  Wide experience in managing GRNP, KHFR and the surrounding communities	<b>High</b>  Participation in PPG process, including consultations, participation in the national stakeholder workshop.  Potential project executing partner, especially for GRF NP and Kambui Hills Forest Reserve
<b>The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)</b> <i>BirdLife International Partner in UK. RSPB has been supporting conservation efforts in the Gola</i>	Provides technical assistance, capacity and funding support to CSSL in Sierra Leone and SCNL in Liberia.	Resources mobilized through the project for management effectiveness of protected areas	Information sharing, collaboration in project preparation and implementation	<b>Low</b>

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<i>Rainforest for over 30 years, working closely with local partners to study and monitor different wildlife species and improve the opportunities for people living on the forest edge. Partner in GRC-LG (see in "private sector" below.</i>				
<b>BirdLife International/ Africa</b>  <i>Lead partner in the NGO-govt. consortium (BirdLife – GRC – CSSL – SCNL - RSPB)</i>	Implementing EU-PAPFor, USAID-WABiLED, other current/ upcoming donor programmes in the Gola transboundary Forest Landscape (SL + Liberia)	Effective management of the Protected areas Resources mobilized through the project for management effectiveness of protected areas	Information sharing, collaboration in project preparation and implementation	<b>Low</b>
<b>Environmental Foundation for Africa (EFA)</b>  <i>A local NGO registered in Sierra Leone in 1992 to inspire and enable community-led programs for sustainable environmental management as a basis for poverty alleviation in Sierra Leone and</i>	Advocacy, awareness raising, education programs and practical actions that conserve the integrity of nature and protect ecosystem services  Helping to conserve and protect the richly bio-diverse and threatened ecosystems of West Africa, especially Sierra Leone	Increased stakeholder collaboration  Knowledge sharing  Strengthening community participation in natural resource management for livelihood enhancement	Working with local communities to restore pristine ecosystems, restore degraded environments, and to contribute to poverty reduction through environmental education and advocacy protection and	<b>High</b>  Participation in PPG process: Consultations, Participation in the national level stakeholder consultation workshop, representation at the regional coordination meetings.  Participation in project

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<i>neighbouring Liberia.</i>			management of Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary and promoting ecotourism activities for sustainable livelihoods in forest-edge communities	implementation as executing partner, especially in and around Tiwai Wildlife sanctuary
<b>Shout Climate Change Africa (SCCA)</b>  <i>Non-state actors, not-for-profit, voluntary entities formed by people in the social sphere, with a wide range of interests and ties, including community-based interests.</i>	Works with local radios, televisions, newspapers and other organizations to jointly address community and environmental related problems  Encouraged communities to prioritize tree planting and reforestation activities.	Provides opportunity for increased knowledge generation and information sharing on biodiversity conservation, sustainable land management and climate change issues and community development	Creating awareness on deforestation and forest degradation, biodiversity conservation, sustainable land management and climate change issues amongst stakeholders at all levels including at community level	<b>Medium</b>  Participation in consultation meetings/workshops during project preparation or implementation phase
<b>Africa Wildlife Foundation (AWF)</b>	enhance existing co-management partnerships between local stakeholders and protected area agencies for effective governance of the conservation area	Increased collaboration in biodiversity conservation and supporting community livelihoods	Long experience working in Tiwai Wildlife Sanctuary and surrounding communities Strengthening biodiversity conservation with expertise in spatial/land-use planning, bio-economy studies, conservation	<b>Medium</b> Participation in consultation meetings/workshops during project preparation or implementation phase

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			related enterprise development and close working relationship with Government agencies like MECC, EPA and NPAA, non-government organizations like EFA and the local communities (chiefdoms).	
<p><b>Africa Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100)</b></p> <p><i>Secretariat – African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD)</i></p> <p><i>Managing Partner: Global Restoration Initiative of World Resources Institute (WRI)</i></p> <p><i>AFR100 responds to the African Union mandate to bring 100 million hectares of degraded land into restoration by</i></p>	<p>Assisting countries to establish AFR100 national multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder platforms or committees to bring together a range of actors to collaboratively address land and natural resource governance</p> <p>Knowledge generation and dissemination</p> <p>Advocacy and awareness raising</p> <p>Support member states to restore their targets, and as part of the AFR100 drive, and monitoring and verifying the hectares restore.</p>	<p>Increased state collaboration to contribute to the achievement of target of bringing 100 million hectares of deforested and degraded landscapes across Africa into restoration by 2030</p>	<p>Has convening power of the African Union and works with African Governments to implement Agenda 2063 of the African Union</p> <p>Support the establishment of AFR100 national stakeholder platforms to increase the coordination of FLR activities among actors</p> <p>Assist in resource mobilization for forest landscape restoration to</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p> <p>Participation in PPG process: Consultations, Participation in the national level stakeholder consultation workshop, representation at the regional coordination meetings.</p> <p>Participation in project implementation as executing partner</p>

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2030.			achieve Sierra Leone's commitment of restoring 17,433 ha of deforested or degraded areas	
<b>Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)</b>  <i>An independent, not for profit, nongovernment organization established to promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.</i>	Promoting to sustainable forest management  Supporting countries to develop FSC Standards – Interim Standard and Country Standards	Expanding area of forests managed under FSC standards around the world	Capacity building in sustainable forest management approaches, and where applicable, forest certification.	<b>Medium</b>  Participation in PPG process.
<b>ProForest</b>  <i>It is a non-profit organization specializing in sustainable production and responsible sourcing of agricultural and forest commodities. They work with companies, governments, NGOs and other partners to</i>	Providing practical solutions for industries like palm oil, soy, timber, and other commodities to minimize environmental impact and support communities  Building capacity, and facilitating multi-stakeholder processes for policy dialogue, joint learning, knowledge sharing and practical implementation.			



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<i>develop and implement strategies for sustainable supply chains, promoting environmental conservation and social responsibility</i>				
<b>Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD)</b> <i>was established in 1975 under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Union (AU). It is an inter-governmental organization and currently has contracting Member States in the Eastern and Southern Africa Regions</i>	Providing services and building individual and institutional capacity in Remote Sensing (RS) & Satellite Image; Processing/Interpretation. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Global Positioning/ Navigation Systems (GPS) including their applications;  Supports development of spatial/land cover landscape plans	An opportunity for expanding capacity building, skills development, networking and information sharing	Very resourceful to capacity building requirements for the implementation of the project, based on the wide expertise. Information sharing. High potential for resource mobilization	<b>Medium</b> Participation consultations and information sharing.
Conservation International (CI)	Support the country to develop decision making conservation tools, information sharing and leveraging financial resources for environments and natural resources management	Increased field knowledge, experience, exposure and field skills and improving quality and diversity of management	Monitoring of project implementation to ensure timely delivery of project output. Maintaining oversight of all	<b>Low</b>  CI will be involved as the project implementing agency, responsible for the overall financial flow and

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		information;	technical and financial management aspects	project oversight
International Union for Nature Conservation (IUCN)	Supports countries to develop decision making conservation tools, information sharing and leveraging financial resources for biodiversity conservation environments and natural resources management	Increased field knowledge, experience, exposure and field skills and improving quality and diversity of data; sharing experiences	Sharing information on project implementation of the Guinea child project and supporting peer learning	<b>Low</b> IUCN will be involved as the project implementing agency of the Guinea child project and responsible for experience sharing and peer learning
<b>The Mano River Union (MRU)</b> <i>is an intergovernmental organization with a Secretariat based in Freetown, Sierra Leone. It was established in October 1973 by the presidents of Liberia and Sierra Leone, taking its name from a river that runs along the border between the two countries (Mano River). Guinea joined the MRU in 1980 and Côte d'Ivoire in 2008. These four countries together constitute the MRU subregion</i>	Provides cohesion in the transboundary management of the mano river catchment by the four countries that together constitute the MRU subregion. The MRU supports the countries to develop decision making conservation tools, information sharing and leveraging financial resources for biodiversity conservation environments and transboundary natural resources management	A secretariat for collation of information, Increased field knowledge, experience, exposure and field skills and improving quality and diversity of data; sharing experiences	Sharing information and sharing lessons on project implementation of the IWRM project and supporting peer learning	<b>Low</b> MRU will be involved as support for peer learning sharing experiences from the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) project implementation experience.

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<b>Local communities</b> <i>(Add rows as necessary)</i>				
<b>The local communities</b> <i>The local community own the land, but also include the intrinsic governance structure of paramount chiefs at various levels, and formal and informal community-based organizations e.g., the Gola Community Development Committees</i>	The local communities are the owners of land, and their interest is in productive utilization of their land and natural resources to support livelihoods, development and climate resilient. Interested in initiatives that will empower the communities for enhanced productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building the capacity of the communities in sustainable land-use</li> <li>• Stimulating nature-friendly alternative income generating solutions</li> <li>• Promotion of gender equity and inclusiveness</li> </ul>	The cooperation and participation of communities and their leaders at all levels will be the cornerstone for the success of the project activities, including forest landscape restoration and livelihood initiatives	<b>High</b> Participation in PPG process: Consultations, Participation in the national level stakeholder consultation workshop.  Engagement of local communities during project implementation will be in line with Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) principles
<b>Chiefdom Authorities in Siera Leone - the chiefdoms</b>  <b>East Province, Kenema District</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Gaura</li> <li>ii) Nomo</li> <li>iii) Nangowa</li> <li>iv) Dama</li> <li>v) Lower Bambara</li> <li>vi) Dodo</li> <li>vii) Small Bo</li> <li>viii) Niawa</li> <li>ix) Koya</li> <li>ix) Tunkia</li> </ul> <b>East Province, Kailahun District</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Kandu</li> </ul>	Improving community wellbeing through initiatives that help to build sustainable economic opportunities, social services and ensuring sustainable land and forest resource management.  Benefitting from conservation initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits from community participation in the co-management of the protected areas</li> <li>• Alternative livelihood opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitization, awareness creation and education on forest conservation</li> <li>• Training and skills development on conservation of forests</li> <li>• Alternative livelihood opportunities</li> <li>• Improvement of the management of community forests</li> <li>• </li> </ul>	They are the traditional custodians of ALL lands in their chiefdoms and influence access and use for development purpose.  Strong opinion leaders that influence community participation in community-based initiatives	<b>High</b> Participation in PPG process: Consultations, Participation in the national level stakeholder consultation workshop, representation at the regional coordination meetings.  Participation in project implementation as executing partner

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<p>Leppiyama</p> <p><b>South Province, Pujehun District</b></p> <p>i) Barri ii) Peje iii) Makpele</p> <p><i>The local community own the land, and the Paramount Chief are the custodians. The PCs are the traditional custodians of ALL lands in their chiefdoms and signs all land agreement before it become legal and therefore very important. The community forests are on the community lands, with Forestry Division managing them</i></p>				
<p><b>Youth Emergency Auxiliary service – SL (YEAS-SL)</b> <i>provides auxiliary service support to both Government and Non-Governmental Organizations in combating climate change and environmental</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addressing challenges related to desertification and land degradation</li> <li>Promoting reforestation and afforestation</li> <li>Promoting biodiversity conservation and ecotourism</li> <li>Develop tools for</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information sharing</li> <li>Capacity building in afforestation and reforestation practices</li> <li>Capacity building in sustainable land</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Influencing youth participation in project activities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Medium</b></p> <p>Consultation during PPG</p> <p>Information sharing</p>

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problems	adapting to climate change	management		
<b>Indigenous Peoples</b> <i>(Add rows as necessary)</i>				
There are no indigenous peoples as defined under the United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)  (Stakeholder consultations at national and community levels affirmed that and extensively discussed at the validation workshop. It was noted they are all local communities)				
<b>Private Sector</b> <i>(Add rows as necessary)</i>				
<b>Gola Rainforest Conservation Company, Limited by Guarantee (GRC-LG)</b>  <i>A not-for profit business limited by guarantee, established in 2015 and registered in Sierra Leone</i>  <i>A partnership with the Forestry</i>	Working with the surrounding communities to protect and manage the biodiversity of the Gola Rainforest National Park.  - Protection of over 70,000 ha of high biodiversity forest, - contribution to the fight against climate change, and - supporting livelihood development of 122 forest edge	Increased support and partnership in the management of the Greater Gola landscape, (especially Kambui Hills and Golan Rainforest National Park) and the forest-edge communities	Play a key role in investing in cleaner technologies and provision of green jobs. Government can provide incentives for this and promote public-private partnerships to take this forward. Furthermore,	<b>High</b>  Participation in PPG process: Consultations, Participation in the national level stakeholder consultation workshop, representation at the regional coordination meetings.  Participation in

Stakeholder Name and Function <i>Name of the key stakeholder, and their main purpose/function</i>	Stakeholder's Interest <i>What are the stakeholder's main interests in and concerns about the project?</i>	Impact of Project on Stakeholder <i>How will the stakeholder be affected (both positively and negatively) by the project?</i>	Influence of Stakeholder <i>How can the stakeholder affect the project? Can they hinder or contribute to the success of the project?</i>	Risk Management <i>(Is this a low, medium or high-risk stakeholder? And how would you manage medium/high risk stakeholders)</i>
<i>Division (Government of Sierra Leone), the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL), the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (UK), and Gola Chiefdoms (a Paramount Chief representing the 7 Gola Chiefdoms). Company established in 2015, but the collaborative partnership has been in existence for almost 30 years to protect the Gola Rainforest.</i>	communities (24,000 people) and the wider 7 Gola chiefdoms.		the private sector should take an active part in decision making on climate change initiatives.	project implementation as executing partner
<b>Academia</b> <i>(Add rows as necessary)</i>				
University of Sierra Leone Njala University African Leadership University Fourah Bay College	The institutions are involved training and research on biodiversity conservation, land-use and climate and climate change-related fields	<p>Opportunity for collaboration with other actors for research and knowledge generation and dissemination,</p> <p>Opportunity for capacity building in areas of biodiversity conservation, participatory land-use planning, and community livelihoods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improvement of tools and protocols for biodiversity conservation, sustainable land-use and participatory approaches to resource management</li> <li>- Technical capacity building, especially equipping the youth for sustainable</li> </ul>	<b>Medium</b> Representation at the National Stakeholder Consultative meeting; Possible collaboration in capacity building initiatives

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			human resource development in the areas of biodiversity conservation, sustainable	
<b>Disadvantaged/Vulnerable<sup>112</sup> Groups</b> <i>(Add rows as necessary)</i>				
<b>Moawoma Rural Women Development Organization</b> - <i>An umbrella women organization in the Gola chiefdoms of the Pujehun District, with a membership of over 10,000.</i>	Advocacy, pressure and lobby on behalf of members, the communities and their chiefdoms.  Works with development partners to roll out community initiatives of projects within their areas whenever needed	Improving women participation, equity and empowerment for development, resource access and use and climate resilient livelihoods	The organisation has a well-structured administrative mechanism which can be support women organizations to pull out of poverty and	<b>High</b> Participation in consultative meetings at national level during project development phase, and meaningful engagement women empowerment initiatives during project implementation phase
<b>Kpayama Women Association</b>	Promotion of agri-based income generating activities, especially from production (rice and vegetable gardens) to marketing. It works with other micro credit organisations from BRA to LAPPO as well as the commercial banks.  They are responsible for the cultivation of series of inland valley swamps (IVS) in the region around the	Capacity building for land-use planning to support sustainable and climate-resilient agricultural productivity and natural resource use; Empowering communities to develop alternative income	The organisation has hands-on experience with mobilization and empowering women for meaningful income generation interventions that the project can build on to address community challenges to	<b>High</b> Participation in consultative meetings at national level during project development phase, and meaningful engagement in women empowerment initiatives during project implementation phase

<sup>112</sup> Disadvantaged/Vulnerable refers to those who may be more likely to be adversely affected by the project impacts and/or more limited than others in their ability to take advantage of a project's benefits. Such an individual/group is also more likely to be excluded from/unable to participate fully in the mainstream consultation process and as such may require specific measures and/or assistance to do so. This will take into account considerations relating to age, including the elderly and minors, and including in circumstances where they may be separated from their family, the community or other individuals upon which they depend.



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	Kumbui hills.	generating initiatives, including agri-based and nature-based solutions	improve their livelihoods	

## SECTION IV: Stakeholder Engagement During PPG/PPF Phase

a.

Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
<i>Name the key stakeholder contacted during PPG in this column. Add rows as necessary.</i>	<i>When and where did you meet? Was it a meeting, consultation, workshop, etc? What steps were taken to seek consent, if needed? How was the engagement documented?</i>	<i>What was the aim/rationale? What was discussed? What decisions were made, if any? How did this contribute to or was captured in the design of the project? How were the contributions of men and women captured, consistent with Gender Action Plan? If/how do they want to be engaged during the implementation phase?</i>
<b>Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chief Director Mr Bendu</li> <li>the Hon. Minister</li> <li>the Permanent Secretary</li> <li>the Assistant secretary.</li> <li>Alpha</li> </ul>	<u><b>Date:</b> 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023</u> <u><b>Location:</b></u> Ministry Headquarters <u><b>Method of engagement:</b></u> Face-to-face meeting	<p>The purpose was to brief the Minister about the development of the Project, “Sierra Leone in “Strengthening Conservation and Effective Governance of Sierra Leone’s Critical Forests in the Gola Forest Landscape”, including the elements of the Draft Project Result Framework. The meeting was also to seek the buy-in and guidance of the Ministry and during the PPG phase. The focus of the Project was a landscape approach in the management of the Gola Rainforest National Park in Sierra Leone, but also covers the Gola Forests of Liberia. However, the details of the project would be shaped through the ongoing stakeholder consultation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Minister welcomed the project initiative and gave assurance of his support and guidance.</li> <li>He assigned Mr Bendu as the contact point for the</li> </ul>

<sup>113</sup> Method of engagement can be face-to-face meeting, telephone call, workshop, consultation, survey, etc.

Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
		ministry's contribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow-up meetings will be organized with Mr. Bendu</li> </ul>
<b>Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr Peter Allele – FSC International</li> <li>Robert Nabanyumya – GAL</li> <li>Stephen Khaukha - GAL</li> </ul>	12 <sup>th</sup> December 2023 Virtual meeting	<p>The virtual meeting aimed at discussing the possible collaboration with FSC in the design and implementation of the Child Project, and therefrom the perceived roles and contributions of FSC. It was understood that the FSC leads the world's most rigorous and trusted forest certification system, trusted by NGOs, consumers, and businesses alike. With more than 160 million hectares of forests managed to FSC standards around the world, FSC-certified forests are managed to strict environmental, social, and economic standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forest operators can obtain FSC's Forest Management Certification, the world's most trusted mark of sustainable forestry</li> <li>Forest managers can also group together and share their efforts, which makes it easier for community and family forests to become FSC-certified</li> <li>Communities, families, and smallholders who manage small or low-intensity managed forests (SLIMF) can benefit from the FSC's commitment to sustainable ecosystems.</li> <li>FSC-certified forests protect and strengthen forest ecosystems, and the positive impact of their responsible forest stewardship can be measured and verified as Ecosystem Services Claims. Corporations and others can sponsor responsible forestry projects that address climate change, biodiversity loss, and other challenges.</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FSC was willing to be a partner to the Project</li> <li>FSC would contribute effectively to Component 3, on improving forest management;</li> <li>The potential areas of interest for FSC includes promoting forest certification, based on FSC Principles and criteria that embrace social, economic and environmental aspects of responsible forest management;</li> <li>The specific anticipated targets include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feasibility study on opportunities and readiness for certification</li> <li>FSC Forest Management certification of 100,000 hectares of protected areas</li> <li>FSC Forest Management certification of 20,000 hectares outside protected areas.</li> <li>Verified Impact; climate &amp; ecosystem services impact through a total of Six Ecosystem Services claims verified in protected areas.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Verified climate &amp; ecosystem services impact through a total of 3 Ecosystem Services claims verified outside protected areas.</li> <li>○ Sustainable financing: Four Ecosystem Services claims compensated in protected areas and two Ecosystem Services claims compensated outside protected areas.</li> </ul> <p>Overall, the compliance with principles and criteria of FSC certified forests, guarantees sustainability of the outcomes of investments towards protection and restoration of landscapes. Once certified, the landscapes will continue to be managed in a way that preserves biological diversity and benefits the lives of local people and workers, while ensuring it sustains economic viability</p>
<b>African Wildlife Foundation (AWF)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edwin Tambara</li> <li>• Per Karlsson</li> <li>• Charly Facheux</li> </ul>	21 <sup>st</sup> December 2023 Virtual meeting	<p>The virtual meeting aimed at discussing the possible collaboration with AWF in the design and implementation of the Child Project, and therefrom the perceived roles and contributions of AWF. Robert Nabanyumya of Green Approaches gave a brief background about the Proposed Project components to stimulate the discussion. Edwin briefed the participants about the current engagements of AWF in Sierra Leone and the experiences so far, amassed through working with different Government and non-government agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working in Tiwai Island in partnership with the Environmental Foundation for Africa (EFA), where they have been involved in landscape-level conservation processes, participatory and inclusive land-use planning that brings up the needs of different stakeholders on the ground within the landscape. They have been working with local communities to obtain community buy-in and based on sound interventions</li> <li>• Promoting bio-economy/wildlife economy approaches – how biodiversity contributes to national economy and livelihoods. The Biodiversity Assessment Reports produced fills the gaps on lack of data and limited understanding of the concepts at all levels, and building evidence of how biodiversity contributes to national economy to influence prioritization of biodiversity management interventions</li> <li>• AWF can bring value to the Child Project in the following aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Knowledge and experience working in Protected areas, and with local communities and other stakeholders to strengthen protection, promote conservation-based enterprises such as tourism and livelihood enterprise development</li> <li>○ Experience in capacity building, and hence can</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
		<p>support the implementation of Component 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Has expertise in the area of spatial/land-use planning, which fits well under Component 2 of the Draft Project Results Framework</li> <li>○ Protected area management, including developing Conservation and Development Masterplan, which contributes to Component 3 – improvement of protected area management.</li> <li>○ They have a working relationship with Government agencies like MECC, EPA and NPAA, non-government organizations like EFA and the local communities (chiefdoms). And therefore, there is strong rapporteur with these institutions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environmental Protection Agency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director Sheku Mark Kenneth – Director EPA</li> <li>• Victor Esendi - CI</li> <li>• Robert Nabanyumya - GAL</li> <li>• Stephen Khaukha - GAL</li> </ul>	<p>15<sup>th</sup> January 2024 Virtual meeting 4.30 – 5.00 pm EAT</p>	<p>The objective of the meeting was to provide a brief update on the progress so far, and plan for National Stakeholder Consultative Workshop.</p> <p>Briefs by Robert Nabanyumya of Green Approaches Ltd:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The draft Theory of Change and Project Results Framework have been developed, based on best available information, including literature review and initial stakeholder consultations.</li> <li>• The objective of the Project is, <i>“To conserve and restore Gola National Park and the surrounding community lands as part of the transboundary Gola Forest Peace Park and Lofa-Gola-Mano Conservation Corridor”</i></li> <li>• The Components are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Gola NP and OECMs in the Gola Forest landscape</li> <li>ii. Improving participatory and equitable forest management and land use outside protected areas for sustainable livelihoods</li> <li>iii. Improving management of the Greater Gola Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use</li> <li>iv. Strengthening Transboundary collaboration between Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea for improved management of Mano River Watershed within the Gola Forest Landscape</li> <li>v. Strengthening Knowledge Sharing and Learning</li> <li>vi. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Planning for the National stakeholder workshop:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We agreed to hold a two-day National Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> February</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
		<p>2024, most likely at Kenema to enable the participation of key stakeholders around the Great Gola Forest Landscape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The workshop will be an opportunity for various stakeholders to discuss and provide input to the project documents, and address any gaps</li> <li>• Robert to draft a letter of invitation to the workshop participants, including the tentative program, and share it with Director Sheku by Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024. The draft program should reflect the gaps that need to be addressed during the workshop</li> <li>• To get about 20 participants that should attend</li> <li>• EPA already has a list of participants that attended similar previous stakeholder participatory meetings</li> <li>• The national consultant should work with EPA to select the potential workshop participants, based on the already existing list from previous workshops that targeted a similar group. A draft list should be shared with key individuals for comments.</li> </ul> <p><b>Way Forward:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed to hold bi-weekly catch-up meets on the progress every Tuesday at 4.30 pm – 5.00 pm EAT (13.30 – 14.00 Hrs Sierra Leone local time)</li> <li>• Robert and team should continue populating the ProDoc to ensure much information is provided. Some information gaps may be addressed during such meetings.</li> <li>• The document should be shared with EPA for review at least two days before the National Stakeholders Workshop</li> </ul>
<p>The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Alade Adeleke – from RSPB</li> <li>2. Richard Dickson – from RSPB</li> <li>3. Nick Folkard – from RSPB</li> <li>4. Fomba – from GRC-LG</li> <li>5. Robert Nabanyumya – from GAL</li> <li>6. Stephen Khaukha – from GAL</li> <li>7. Alpha Bockari – GAL (National</li> </ol>	<p>23rd January 2024 Virtual meeting – 19.00 EAT</p>	<p>The meeting was aimed at introducing the Project to RSPB and provide understanding of the mandate of RSPB, the areas of interest and discussion of the possible contribution of the organization in the design and implementation of the Project. The key issues discussed included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The components of the project were determined through the review of available literature, including the PIF, and initial stakeholder consultations. The details were still evolving with continued consultations and more information being accessed</li> <li>• Noted that all the Components mentioned were being implemented through the REDD+ Project and the EU-funded ProFor Project</li> <li>• The project scope should include Kambui Hills because of their importance and the challenges related to management effectiveness. Three of the components are relevant to Kambui, e.g.,</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
Consultant)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Improving management effectiveness and proper ecosystem management-related systems to address conservation interests amidst crime</li> <li>– Transboundary issues – the Transboundary Committee in place – but need to be expanded to meet needs.</li> <li>– A long-term strategy has been developed under REDD+ programme</li> <li>• The components are good, but there is need to clarify on the actions to avoid ambiguity. Get specific actions that fit to the components.</li> <li>• There is need to ensure that there is collaboration among actors to avoid duplication. e.g. developing joint tools. Mandated institutions should aim at collaboration and cooperation, identifying the gaps, issues, and any capacity building needs. E.g. Component 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Identify the gaps that need to be filled (community forest plight; collaborative best practices to be used</li> <li>– Community land-use planning</li> <li>– Community forest management – there is increasing illegalities in the buffer zones (4 Km radius)</li> <li>– How much involvement in livelihood initiatives – e.g. honey, ecotourism, cocoa</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Transboundary aspects – there is a collaborative framework – a lot done so far. We need to understand in practical terms what the GEF project will do to fill the gaps and avoid duplications</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion:</b> After interacting with many stakeholders, we shall decide to hold more regular meetings to shape the project</p>
<b>Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL)</b> 1. Sheku Kamara – Executive Director 2. Roert Nabanyumya 3. Stephen Khaukha 4. Nonie 5. Alpha	24 <sup>th</sup> January 2024 Virtual meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objective was to collect information to facility project development</li> <li>• The focus of the Project is now more on the Greater Gola Landscape, and hence the need for consulting CSSL as key stakeholders with working experience in Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and the surround communities.</li> <li>• Brief on the draft PRF was provided by Robert, highlighting the key Components, and the focus on improving the management of protected areas, including possible activities such as zoning the forests (conservation and commercial areas), inventories to collect data for guiding management, ecosystem assessment studies</li> <li>• CSSL works in collaboration with RSPB/Birdlife</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
		<p>International as supporting partners to implement activities within the Gola Landscape, the Forest Division of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change. CSSL is a member to the NPAA Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been a lot of engagement with Government actors and communities, especially in the development of the REDD+ Strategy to address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. CSSL has supported communities and kingdoms around the NP, and especially involved</li> <li>• CSSL is well aligned to the implementation of Components 2 (on enhancing community livelihoods and economic development), as well as Component 4 (on addressing transboundary challenges. CSSL has been participating in transboundary actions, including transboundary meetings, steering committee meetings. There is need to build on the efforts so far to strengthen the frameworks developed. This may include harmonizing the policies to facilitate better collaboration and cooperation between Sierra Leone and Liberia. The MoUs signed 4 years ago need to be reviewed</li> <li>• CSSL was requested to share any documents of relevance to the PPG process</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment Foundation for Africa</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Tonny Garnet</li> <li>2) Robert Nabanyumya</li> <li>3) Stephen Khaukha</li> </ol>	<p>26<sup>th</sup> January 2024 Virtual meeting</p>	<p>The meeting was to introduce the Project to EFA, learn about EFA's area of interest and the potential contribution to project design and implementation. Robert provided a brief background of the Project and the components</p> <p>Tonny explained that EFA is in position to implement Component 1 (Strengthening governance structures for improved management of protected areas), and Component 2 (community engagement for strengthening participatory natural resource management.</p> <p>Background on EFA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EFA has been focusing on the management of Tiwai Island with 8 communities engaged in participatory land-use planning</li> <li>• EFA started as the Environmental Foundation for Sierra Leone before the war in 1995. Later registered as Environmental Foundation of Africa</li> <li>• Worked with refugees – planted trees in camps and returnee communities/ raised awareness about dangers of shifting cultivation</li> <li>• 2001-2002 started focusing on Tiwai Island. Have undertaken community sensitization and education, biological research, land restoration, primate studies. There has been high-level engagement with</li> </ul>



Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
		<p>Government institutions to influence policies and planning frameworks, including environmental safeguards related to extractives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoted the establishment of connectivity between Gola ad Tiwi Island, both of which are have been nominated as World Heritage sites</li> <li>• GRNP – the focus for implementing the REDD Project, and are getting money from carbon credits</li> <li>• Shifting cultivation still remains as a challenge, and Government institutions do not have the capacity to protected the forests, which are continuing to disappear</li> <li>• Tiwas is a small island (12 Km2, but rich in biodiversity. As population increases, more forests are destroyed. The communities are supported with seedlings and some resources to to establish trees on their land and engage in alternative income generating activities. This is slowly changing the culture of shifting cultivation among the communities</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendations from EFA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is need to address trans-boundary matters, especially related to trade in wildlife products</li> <li>• There is need to consolidate real actions to buffer the protected areas, especially in Kenema, Barri, etc., and establish connectivity through ecosystem restoration and community engagement in developing buffer zones</li> <li>• Provide incentives to communities, including supporting tree growing</li> <li>• There is need to increase community awareness and education. CBOs like Shout Climate Change has been instrumental</li> <li>• Focus on gender inclusiveness</li> <li>• There is need to strengthen collaboration among the different actors within the landscape, and avoid duplication of interventions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Meeting with the National Protected Area Authority and Gola Rainforest Company Limited by Guarantee:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Barar Turay – Head Terrestrial Ecosystems/ NPAA</li> <li>2. Fomba Kenneh – Head GRC (Kenema)</li> </ol>	<p>31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 Virtual meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robert provided a brief about the Project proposal, which targeted the three protected areas (GRNP, Kambui Hills FR and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary. Explained the five components in the draft document, and sought input about any ongoing initiatives, if there were any forest management plans, and the potential roles of NPAA in the implementation of the project</li> </ul> <p><b>Feedback from National Protected Area Authority and GRC-LG</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noted that there have been interventions around Kambui Hills, e.g., management plans under PAPFor</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
3. Backery – NPAA – Kambui Hills 4. Robert – GAL 5. Stephen – GAL 6. Sarah Mujabi - GAL		and BIOPAMA projects; IMETT Tool developed to assess the management effectiveness of the three protected areas, and reports were available <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That there were efforts to apply for nomination of Gola RNP and Tiwai Wildlife Sanctuary as World Heritage Sites</li> <li>• Livelihood activities supported for communities within the landscape, involving the Paramount Chiefs. But more support required. Key areas so far include rehabilitation of cocoa trees, promoting certification of cocoa, agroforestry. Have also supported training in Village Savings and Loan Schemes</li> <li>• Most of the communities adjacent to the PAs need land-use plans so that they can be guided on how to establish trees on their lands as well as establish buffer zones to the PAs.</li> <li>• Communities / land owners are engaged through the Paramount chiefs. Beneficiary agreements developed that spell out the area that communities can access and define the rights</li> <li>• Recently boundaries for Kambui have been opened, and further consultations with communities needed</li> </ul>
Meeting with the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD), <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Emmanuel Nkurunziza</li> <li>• Rose Waswa</li> <li>• Abednico Maphuru</li> <li>• Josphat Makanga</li> <li>• Robert Nabanyumya</li> <li>• Stephen Khaukha</li> <li>• Sarah Mujuzi</li> <li>• Paul Nteza</li> <li>• Alpha Bockari</li> </ul>	16 <sup>th</sup> February 2024 Virtual meeting	GAL provided the background to the Child Project, including the overview of the objective and elaborated the 5 main component components. Requested RCMRD to identify any area of focus which is likely to be in line with their competencies and interests and their likely roles in project design and implementation. RCMRD are of interest includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geospatial mapping – landscape level mapping and assessments - to generate information that guides planning and decision making</li> <li>• Establishing the earths changes as well as assess the trends and drivers of the changes and hotspots.</li> <li>• Knowledge management -specialized in developing portals for sharing information</li> <li>• Good at participatory mapping and planning – with the communities</li> <li>• Able to train the stakeholders at various levels in all the above.</li> <li>• RCMRD has had a long history of working with EPA and therefore willing to participate and support the implementation of the proposed project</li> <li>• Has experience in implementing the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) programme in the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, which aims to assist in developing a framework for improving technical and institutional approaches to conserve biodiversity, in protected and conserved</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
		<p>areas, through regional cooperation and capacity building activities.</p> <p>Way Forward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GAL to share documents (the Results Framework for RCMRD to review and provide informed opinion on where they are likely to have positive impact</li> <li>• RCMRD requested to share with GAL any relevant documents that could inform the project development</li> <li>• Further interactions expected to firm up any issues of project development and implementation</li> </ul>
<p>West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development (WABiLED) programs - USAID</p> <p>Bessike Balinga</p> <p>Michael</p> <p>Stephen Kelleher</p> <p>Robert Nabanyumya - GAL</p> <p>Stephen Khaukha - GAL</p> <p>Nonie – GAL support</p>	<p>19<sup>th</sup> February 2024</p> <p>Virtual meeting</p>	<p>The objective was to reflect on lessons from and build on the implementation of the WABiLED Project to inform the PPG process. Robert gave the overview of the PPG process, and the outline of Objectives and Components of the PRF.</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grants to RSPB, Tiwai</li> <li>• Gola may not be a focus for PAPFor</li> <li>• We do not need to duplicate</li> <li>• WABiLED is to end in July 2024</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PAPFOR – initiated the integrated management effectiveness tool – IMETT. These manage capacity is in place and on-going. Limited resources available</li> <li>• Working on community initiatives – community forests, land tenure,</li> <li>• Restoration assessment opportunity – done by IUCN and provides priorities for restoration</li> <li>• Transboundary – initiated as peace park. meetings held</li> <li>• The absorption capacity of the patterns is high for most of them who have been involved</li> </ul> <p>Michael</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five different thematic areas noted</li> </ul> <p><b>Governance structures</b> – consider issues of international and regional processes, as they influence national actions – e.g. the 30 by 30 processes; ECOWAS developing strategies to combat wildlife crime – wildlife enforcement strategy and how will it contribute to the regional efforts</p> <p><b>Manu River Union – the issue of trans-boundary security and linkages to biodiversity conservation</b> – to strengthen coordination with the other agencies – e.g. police. Mou signed in 2019.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mou has the 20-30 border security committees. Inform the</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These links are not yet strong, and there is need to strengthen them so that they are reinforce</li> </ul> <p><b>Community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grantees for livelihood opportunities and enterprises. Can we develop the ecotourism to contribute to local and national economies and contribute to management of the protected areas</li> </ul> <p><b>Management of the PA</b> – IMETT; Manuals developed to be used as training tools and materials for the various actors e.g. the rangers, also for the private sector to ensure compliance to national and regional legislation. They have these resources and can share with GAL. work on the private sector has begun, but Sierra Leonne is not part of it. But you can find on the website for West African TWIX – a tool that facilitates information exchange on wildlife trade, to understand more on this</p> <p>May be useful to work with Manu River Union</p> <p>Where do we zoom in?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance structures – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ There is need to strengthen training curricula for Natural Resource Management. This is lacking in-country</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Nouhou Ndam has been working at landscape level, and should be useful to engage him to provide more information related to the landscape. Also, with Darlington Tuagben who has been working on the climate change resilience and value chains. These will be invited for the next meeting</li> <li>• Subgrantees with communities- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Which subgrantees/executing partners should we focus on</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Community initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Prioritizing the value chains – Honey, Cocoa, ecotourism, which can be</li> <li>◦ Livelihood opportunities – rice growing, g-nut farming and cocoa</li> <li>◦ Absorption capacity -</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sharing the manual for training</li> <li>• Timeframe – GEF 30<sup>th</sup> June target</li> <li>• Budget envelope – USD 6 million, 5-year project</li> <li>• Next meeting – Robert should send an email to invite in response to today's</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
<b>Manu River Union (MRU)</b> 1. Endamana Dominique – IUCN Regional 2. Gbanyangbe Gondo 3. Abdoulaye Doumbia 4. Greg Love - EcoAdvisor 5. Jan 6. Nonie 7. Diallo MRU 8. Laureen Cheruiyot - CI 9. Sagno Richard Labilo 10. Valentine Ebua - CI 11. Toushi Itoka - EcoAdvisor 12. Charity Nalyanya – CI 13. Robert Nabanyumya – GAL 14. Stephen Khaukha -GAL 15. Paul Nteza -GAL 16. Sara Mujabi - GAL 17. Patrick Masuba - MRU	26 <sup>th</sup> February 2024 Virtual meeting	<p>Laureen provided a background as the implementation agency for the Guinea Forest Integrated Program. CI has also designed the regional program</p> <p>The purpose: to understand from MRU in the implementation of the watershed project – what are the areas of support, what are the gaps, and what are those aspects which this project and national projects can take on.</p> <p>Hear about MRU: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Strategic Action Programme (SAP) of Mano River Basins is available – outlines the entry points for the child project</li> <li>• the MRU does not have a monitoring plan for basin</li> </ul> <p>What are the priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each country has a Strategic Action Plan (SAP)</li> <li>• Key elements related to the management situation (i) knowledge of the catchment (ii) there is need for each country to look at the SAP to determine country-specific priority strategies that can be implemented</li> <li>• CI has developed an output on Mano River watershed management that should be used to guide the development of specific strategies and actions for the project</li> <li>• Each country could aim at implementing start-up activities, learning events, capacity building events, and in the budget, cater for travel to attend these events</li> <li>• At the local level all countries have their action Plans and then there is a transboundary action plan</li> <li>• MRU Committees have been established at local, national and regional levels - Doumbia responsible. Masuba will send all the relevant documents</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <p>Way-forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charity and Laureen to share the documents on the joint output</li> <li>• Doumbia and Masuba to share project documents</li> <li>• Next catchup meeting next Thursday.</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
<b>National Stakeholder Consultation Workshop</b> Was attended by the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paramount chiefs from Gola Forest Landscape – <b>7</b></li> <li>• Local communities from Kenema and Pujehun Districts – <b>23</b></li> <li>• Land owners – <b>18</b></li> <li>• CSOs/NGOs working within the Gola landscape – <b>11</b></li> <li>• <b>Total - 59</b></li> </ul>	6 <sup>th</sup> and 7 <sup>th</sup> March 2024 at Kenema, Sierra Leone (Physical Meeting)	<p>This was planned as a National dialogue and held close to the landscape target sites in Kenema. The specific objectives of the workshop were to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Obtain input in the design of the project especially on the Theory of Change; Results framework (RF) - outcomes, outputs, and targets; Gender Mainstreaming, and Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) related aspects.</li> <li>2. Establish systemic challenges and the specific environmental threats and associated drivers in the Gola landscape that must be addressed.</li> <li>3. Explore opportunities for landscape connectivity.</li> <li>4. Establish synergies by mapping stakeholders operating in the Landscape and mapping past, ongoing, and planned initiatives that could benefit this project/co-financing opportunities.</li> <li>5. Explore the potential role of specific stakeholder groups/institutions in the project.</li> </ol> <p>A National consultation Report is attached separately. But the key outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strong plea by the participants for the Sierra Leone Child Project to refocus attention towards improving the management of Kambui Hills FR, rather than Gola Rainforest National Park. It was observed that, “What will get Gola to survive is to ensure that other forests around it are kept well”.</li> <li>• restore the integrity of Kambui Hills FR and establish forest connectivity with GRNP and Tiwai Wildlife Sanctuary.</li> <li>• The participation of Paramount Chiefs and the local communities is important for the success of the projects</li> <li>• Supporting alternative income generating interventions to benefit the chiefdoms around Gola Rainforest National Park, Tiwai and Kambui HFR</li> </ul>
<b>Proforest</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• James Parker</li> <li>• Abraham Boffoe</li> <li>• Afua Prempeh</li> <li>• Robert Nabanyumya</li> <li>• Stephen Khaukha</li> </ul>	17.04.2024 Virtual meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After self-introductions, Robert provided background information to the project, highlighting the Project Results Framework – Components, Outcomes and outputs, and requested Proforest to identify any areas of potential collaboration and making synergies</li> <li>• It was clarified that the project was still being prepared for approval, and that it was still the right time to identify potential implementing partners and their roles, based on the Components – institutional capacity, community -based forestry, interventions in the protected areas, transboundary watershed resource management, and knowledge sharing.</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was noted that Profor has two arms, one of collaboration in a landscape level, normally funded by development partners, and the second through providing services based on the expertise, where we do not have offices (staff). Have been working with CSSL in Sierra Leone, and also provides expert services in several fields, including community engagement, participatory land-use planning, sustainable commodity supply value chains and development of policies.</li> <li>• The selection of executing partners is usually based on their comparative advantage in what they are able to offer to achieve the delivery of project outcomes/outputs. Proforest has been supporting communities especially in developing commodity supply value chains. But specifically advised that the Project should undertake a quick assessment on the ground to establish what commodities are relevant to the needs of the local communities. A scoping study should be integrated as one of the activities to be undertaken in the Child Project so that it can inform decision making during project implementation. Emphasized that communities can put in their efforts where they have participated in making decisions</li> <li>• GAL should continue with interacting with Proforest to make informed decisions on the potential for and nature of participation in the Child Project.</li> <li>• Proforest to share with GAL any documents that provides more information about their profile.</li> </ul>
<p><b>EPA-SL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director Sheku Mark Kenneth</li> <li>• Lovetta</li> <li>• Joseph Turray</li> <li>• Victor Esendi</li> <li>• Robert Nabanyumya</li> <li>• Stephen Khaukha</li> </ul>	<p>19<sup>th</sup> April 2024 Virtual meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The objective of the meeting was to review and make decisions on the Project Results Framework, the Implementation Framework, propose the PMU staffing and set up the date for the Validation Workshop. These were important in guiding the Consultant to on the activities to be included in the project strategy, start working on the project budget, ascertain the key executing partners and prepare for the Project Validation.</li> <li>• A number of proposals were made for the PRF: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Output 3.1.3 – Forest conservation and regeneration as one of the strategies for improved ecosystem health and sustainable financing promoted. The suggestions were that in the narrative, restoration should be emphasized.</li> <li>○ Output 3.1.4 – Biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use interventions in and around Kambui FR and Tiwai Wildlife Sanctuary, in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape developed and implemented. It would be useful to mention</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
		<p>inventories, enrichment planting with indigenous trees and zoning as part of the detailed narration for activities as that has been lacking in Kambui FR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Component 2 – Output 2.1.1 – provide for awareness creation on climate change in the output, to read: “Community awareness and education program to support sustainable forest management, land use planning and <b>climate change</b> developed and implemented”. Add a text on climate change/climate resilience under the Baseline column.</li> <li>○ On awareness creation, provide for the purchase of LED Box Truck to be used in the awareness raising campaign. This is necessary for reaching out and sensitizing communities</li> <li>○ It was agreed that the proposed Output 4.1.3 on “Early warning systems for flood and drought, as well as disaster risk management plans developed” should be deleted because it was not applicable to Sierra Leone</li> <li>○ Output 4.1.4 – Nature-based solutions – The details of these may be developed during project implementation. There is need to sensitize stakeholders about nature-based solutions..</li> <li>○ Output 1.1.3 – Emphasis was made about the need to establish a hub as a centre of excellence to provide data/ information essential for guiding decision making in environment and natural-resource related sectors, especially to support biodiversity conservation, land-use planning and climate resilience. It was noted that the country lacks relevant data/information, or whatever is available is not easily accessible and restricted to individual organizations. The information hub will improve access to vital information as well as support data collection, processing, storage and sharing amongst state and non-state actors. Transport facility in form of a vehicle and motorcycles should be procured to support the operationalization of the information hub.</li> <li>○ Trans-boundary Committees: These are three – the regional, National and Community/District-level Committees.</li> <li>● Implementation arrangement – this was discussed and the organogram amended <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The PMU – should consist of six staff, namely – Project Manager/Coordinator, the Climate and Environment Specialist; the Biodiversity Conservation Specialist, Finance and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
		<p>Administration Officer, M&amp;E Specialist and Communication specialist (part-time)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The non-government co-executing agencies were reviewed and reduced to five, namely: EFA, CSSL, GRC-LG, RCMRD and FSC. The participation of any other partners will be made possible through activity-based contracts. The reduction will make it easier in terms of the flow of funds and the associated supervision.</li> <li>● Validation Workshop; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Due to various commitments of the EPA officials, it is not possible to hold the validation workshop in May as had been proposed before</li> <li>○ It was agreed to hold a two-day validation workshop on 12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024 in Kenema.</li> <li>○ EPA will book the venue in time</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><i>BD Tracking Tool and METT discussions</i></p> <p>Joseph Turay Fomba Kanneh Sheku Kamara Amos Kamara Stephen Khaukha Tommy Garnett</p>	<p><i>May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024: Virtual Discussions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The meeting was held to address the METT requirements for the Gola landscape project target PAs. The METT for Kambui Hills FR, Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary and Southern Gola were discussed and filled; some explanations for the choice of the rating discussed, and the meeting agreed to follow up with other institutional staff for consolidation.</li> <li>● Follow up discussions held and agreed that the final completed METT scores would be shared by email and consolidated.</li> <li>● Forest management and co-management plans for Kambui Hills Forest Reserve were shared and discussed to inform the METT scoring particularly discussing progress being made in implementing the management plans.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Technical working session – Meeting to discuss partners roles and responsibilities</i></p> <p><b>Attendance:</b> Director Shekuh - EPA Charity Nalyanya -CI Elizabeth Mast Juliana Rios Stephen Khaukha Robert Nabanyumya Sheku Mark Kanneh Joseph Turay Tommy Garnett Sheku Kamara Fomba Kanneh Maphuru</p>	<p><i>Wednesday May 22<sup>nd</sup> – Virtual discussions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● This was planned and held as a Sierra Leone Guinean Forests Child Project virtual Technical Working Session on Wednesday, 22nd May 2024. It was held with a structured set of agenda namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Introductions</li> <li>-Overview of Guinean Forests Integrated Program + Q&amp;A</li> <li>-Presentation of the draft results framework and partner roles and responsibilities + Plenary</li> <li>-Presentation of the draft Project Management Unit, the flow of funds, Institutional arrangements + Plenary</li> <li>-Environmental and Social Safeguards and gender mainstreaming discussion + Plenary, and,</li> <li>- discussions of next steps</li> </ul> </li> <li>● A PPT presentation was made by Robert Nabanyumya of Green Approaches Limited together with the draft results framework, excel sheet outlining roles and responsibilities for each partner, draft institutional</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
Josphat makanga Peter Alele Valerie Osodo Per Karlsson Cobbina - FSC		<p>arrangement, and flow of funds/ The PPT was later shared with all the participants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions were held for two and half hours and the partners agreed on next steps as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All partners are to review the draft roles and responsibilities Excel sheet and confirm their approval with CI-GEF and Robert of Green Approaches Limited (GAL) by Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2024.</li> <li>All partners are to review the revised drafts and share their comments/feedback with CI-GEF and Robert (GAL), by 29th May.</li> <li><i>Budget Development and Cofinancing Letters:</i> With a near-final draft results framework and nearly finalized partner roles and responsibilities, the GAL team had developed an activity-based draft budget, earmarking budget caps based on each partner's activities. This will be discussed and agreed upon by each partner and feedback provided.</li> <li>Validation Workshop: The validation workshop will take place in Kenema, Sierra Leone on the 12th and 13th of June. The venue, agenda, and official invites finalised.</li> <li>GAL to present the draft budget to Director Sheku (EPA - SL) and hold detailed discussions</li> <li>GAL to hold discussions with partners individually to review activities and budget allocations, aiming to conclude the process by 7th June.</li> <li>Partners are to begin populating the cofinancing letters using the template and share them with CI-GEF by 7th June.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><i>Discussions with EPA</i></p> <p>Attendance: Director Shekuh Joseph Turay Stephen Khaukha Robert Nabanyumya</p>	<i>Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May- As a follow up to the Partners meeting</i>	<p>This meeting was made as a follow up to the partner discussions held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> may 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussed and agreed on the project management structure.</li> <li>Discussed and made additional adjustments to the detailed project Budget particularly with respect to field level activities, staffing levels and salary rates.</li> <li>Discussed and agreed on the roles and responsibilities of project partners particularly with respect to site specific activities.</li> </ul>
<p><i>National Stakeholder Validation Workshop</i></p> <p>Was attended by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies – 14</li> </ul>	<i>12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024 Kenema</i>	<p>The key outcomes included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Project was presented to stakeholders, subjected to open and fruitful discussions and accepted and validated as clear representation of the aspirations of the Gola community and the people of Sierra Leone in general.</li> <li>Roles and responsibilities of project implementation</li> </ol>

Stakeholder Names	Dates, Locations and Methods of Engagement <sup>113</sup>	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CBOs NGOs – 6</li> <li>• Paramount Chiefs – 8</li> <li>• Land owners – 3</li> <li>• CBOs including women organizations – 2</li> <li>• <b>Total: 33</b></li> </ul>		<p>partners were reviewed and budget reallocations agreed to reflect comparative capacity to implement activities.</p> <p>3. Safeguards were disclosed to stakeholders and reviewed particularly reflecting on how they will be implemented.</p> <p>4. The project was unanimously approved after a proposal for approval was made by Hon. Paramount Chief Saffa of Makipele chiefdom.</p> <p>A validation workshop report is attached separately.</p>

## b. Project Disclosure

Disclosing project information is essential for meaningful consultation on project design and for stakeholders to understand the potential opportunities of the project, and the risks and impacts of the project.

Confirm that the following information was shared with stakeholders in a timely manner and in an appropriate form and language during the PPG/PPF Phase:

Information	When, How and Where this was shared?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The purpose, nature and scale of the project	During the stakeholder consultation meetings through written briefs, emails, national consultant face-to-face and virtual meetings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The duration of proposed project activities	During the stakeholder consultation meetings through written briefs, emails, face-to-face and virtual meetings
<input type="checkbox"/> Information from the environmental and social safeguard screening process, regarding potential risks and impacts of the project on stakeholders, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposals for mitigating risks and impacts</li> <li>• Potential risks and impacts that might disproportionately affect vulnerable and disadvantaged groups</li> <li>• Description of differentiated measures to be taken to avoid and minimize disproportionate risks and impacts</li> </ul>	During the inception workshop, other stakeholder meetings as well as through written briefs, emails, face-to-face and virtual meetings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The proposed stakeholder engagement process, highlighting ways in which stakeholders can participate and contribute during project design and/or implementation	During the inception workshop, other stakeholder meetings as well as through written briefs, emails, face-to-face and virtual meetings
<input type="checkbox"/> The time and venue of proposed public consultation meetings, and the process by which meetings will be notified, summarized and reported	During stakeholder consultation meetings through written briefs, emails, face-to-face and virtual meetings
<input type="checkbox"/> The process and means by which grievances can be raised and addressed	<i>Will be shared during the Project Inception period</i>

## c. Reporting of Indicators During PPG/PPF

Number of stakeholder entities (disaggregated by type) involved in the project PPG phase	Government actors: <b>14</b> CSOs/NGOs: <b>7</b> Private sector: <b>2</b> Staff/implementors of previous Projects with the Gola Forest Landscape: <b>3</b> Paramount chiefs and other community members: <b>8</b> Total: <b>34</b>
Number of persons (disaggregated by gender) who participated in the project PPG phase	Men: <b>35</b> Women: <b>05</b> Total: <b>40</b>
Number of stakeholder engagements (disaggregated by type of engagement. <sup>114</sup> ) involved in the project PPG phase	Workshops: <b>2</b> Consultations: Meetings: <b>4</b> Interviews: Virtual meetings: <b>12</b> Conferences: 0 Surveys: 0 Other: 0

#### d. Lessons Learned during PPG/PPF:

What went well and did not go well during the stakeholder engagements? What would you continue to do or do differently during implementation phase to have better stakeholder engagements?

1. **Continuous engagement with stakeholders will be necessary during project implementation** – there were great results in engaging the stakeholders during the PPG, largely because of the enthusiasm. Further stakeholder engagements will be necessary for further awareness creation, particularly with respect to restoration activities and nature-based solutions.
2. During the PPG, we found that stakeholder engagement demands a lot of time. During implementation, we need to plan more time for meaningful engagements for such a field-based project.
3. **Stakeholder engagement limited by resource availability:** Effective engagement of stakeholders require both financial resources and time. Because of limited funds and time, it was not possible to engage all identified High- and medium-risk stakeholders in the PPG phase. Timeframe for the deliverables limits reaching out all intended stakeholders
4. **Limited interest of stakeholders to participate:** Although some stakeholders are rated as high or medium risk, and therefore they should be engaged, they do not look at natural resources management issues as of urgency.
5. **Gender inclusiveness should be promoted during project implementation** – fewer women than men participated in the consultation process.
6. **Country documents should be uploaded on the Internet for ease of access and information sharing** – whereas web-based country documents are good sources of information to supplement submissions from a consultant, it was challenging to find documents. Project partners and agencies need to be encouraged

<sup>114</sup> Disaggregation by type of engagement includes the following categories: In-person meetings, Virtual meetings, Trainings, Workshops, Consultations, Conferences/ Events, Activities to collect information, Other activities.

to upload institutional and country documents on websites to ease information access and sharing.

7. **Coordination of the project is possible through virtual meetings** – Stakeholder engagement was possible through virtual platforms during the PPG phase and it should, therefore, be possible to use the same platforms, as much as possible, during project implementation.

## SECTION V: Stakeholder Engagement in the Implementation Phase

Stakeholder Name	Method of Engagement	Location and Frequency	Resources Required	Budget
<i>Name the key stakeholder and group type to be engaged. Add columns as necessary.</i>	<p><i>How will you involve and engage this stakeholder? (meeting, consultation, workshop, discussion, etc)</i></p> <p><i>What special measures would be taken to include disadvantaged/vulnerable individuals/groups? (e.g. women, minorities, elderly, youth, etc.)?</i></p> <p><i>What steps would be taken to seek consent, if needed.</i></p> <p><i>Who will engage the stakeholders e.g. project staff, facilitators, etc.?</i></p> <p><i>Reminder: Disclosure of project information continues throughout implementation so be sure to cater for this.</i></p>	<i>Where and When will you engage with this stakeholder?</i>	<p><i>What materials (presentations, websites, brochures, surveys, translation) are needed?</i></p> <p><i>What personnel are needed to lead and monitor these engagements?</i></p>	<i>How much will this engagement cost? Consider resources required, staff, transportation, etc.</i>
Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inception Workshop</li> <li>• Steering Committee Meetings</li> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Face-to-face / phone call discussions</li> <li>• Virtual meetings</li> <li>• Official letters/memos</li> <li>• Emails</li> </ul>	Inception Workshop in Kenema, one in the 2nd quarter in Year 1; The project steering committee meets in Free Town or Kenema, once a year and a budget is provided. Other meetings that require policy guidance and	<p>Presentations, Printed project information packs/briefing notes</p> <p>Internet connection</p> <p>Websites</p> <p>Led by Project Staff (PMU)</p>	<p>Staff time in the project's budget</p> <p>Captured in the project's Inception workshop budget <b>(USD 5,953)</b> as well as the knowledge management budget <b>(USD 316,856)</b>, where relevant information will be provided</p>

Stakeholder Name	Method of Engagement	Location and Frequency	Resources Required	Budget
		intervention will be arranged as need arises		
Forest Department of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (FD-SL/MECC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inception Workshop</li> <li>• Steering Committee Meetings</li> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Face-to-face / phone call discussions</li> <li>• Virtual meetings</li> <li>• Official letters/memos</li> <li>• Emails</li> </ul>	Freetown and in Kenema (during the 2 <sup>nd</sup> week of Year 1. FD-SL will be one of the executing partners, and there will be frequent formal and informal consultations and sharing of information	Presentations, Printed project information packs Internet connection Websites  Led by Project Staff (PMU) and Project Counterpart staff	Staff time in the project's budget  Captured in the project's Inception workshop budget <b>(USD 5,953)</b> as well as the knowledge management budget <b>(USD 316,856)</b> , where relevant information will be provided
National Protected Area Agency (NPAA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inception Workshop</li> <li>• Steering Committee Meetings</li> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Face-to-face / phone call discussions</li> <li>• Virtual meetings</li> <li>• Official letters/memos</li> <li>• Emails</li> </ul>	Freetown and in Kenema. NPAA as one of the implementing will be engaged in other workshops as indicated the text. CSSL is an implementation partner	Presentations, Printed project information packs Internet connection Websites  Led by Project Staff (PMU) and Project Counterpart staff	Staff time in the project's budget  Captured in the project's Inception workshop budget <b>(USD 5,953)</b> as well as the knowledge management budget <b>(USD 316,856)</b> , where relevant information will be provided
Environment Protection Agency of Sierra Leone (EPA-SL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inception Workshop</li> <li>• Steering Committee Meetings</li> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Face-to-face / phone call discussions</li> <li>• Virtual meetings</li> <li>• Official letters/memos</li> <li>• Emails</li> </ul>	Freetown and in Kenema EPA-SL as the Executing Agency will engage with executing partners and other stakeholders frequently, including the PMU located in Kenema	Presentations, Printed project information packs/briefing notes Internet connection Websites  Led by Project Staff (PMU) and Project Counterpart staff	Staff time in the project's budget  Captured in the project's Inception workshop budget <b>(USD 5,953)</b> as well as the knowledge management budget <b>(USD 316,856)</b> , where relevant information will be provided
Environment Foundation of Africa (EFA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inception Workshop</li> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Face-to-face / phone call discussions</li> </ul>	In Freetown, Kenema, Bo or any other appropriate site	Presentations, Printed project information packs Internet connection	Staff time in the project's budget  Captured in the



Stakeholder Name	Method of Engagement	Location and Frequency	Resources Required	Budget
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Virtual meetings</li> <li>Official letters/memos</li> <li>Emails</li> </ul>	to be decided upon. Note that EFA will be engaged in other workshops as indicated the text.	Websites  Led by Project Staff (PMU) and Project Counterpart staff	project's KM budget <b>(USD 316,856)</b>
Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inception Workshop</li> <li>Consultation</li> <li>Face-to-face / phone call discussions</li> <li>Virtual meetings</li> <li>Official letters/memos</li> <li>Emails</li> </ul>	In Freetown, Kenema, Bo or any other appropriate site to be decided upon. Note that CSSL will be engaged in other workshops as indicated the text. CSSL is an implementation partner	Presentations, Printed project information packs/briefing notes Internet connection Websites  Led by Project Staff (PMU) and Project Counterpart staff	Staff time in the project's budget  Captured in the project's KM budget <b>(USD 316,856)</b>
Gola Rainforest Company Limited by Guarantee (GRC-LG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inception Workshop</li> <li>Consultation</li> <li>Face-to-face / phone call discussions</li> <li>Virtual meetings</li> <li>Official letters/memos</li> <li>Emails</li> </ul>	In Freetown, Kenema or any other appropriate site to be decided upon. Note that GRC-LG will be engaged in other workshops as indicated the text.	Presentations, Printed project information packs/briefing notes Internet connection Websites  Led by Project Staff (PMU) and Project Counterpart staff	Staff time in the project's budget  Captured in the project's KM budget <b>(USD 316,856)</b>
Paramount Chiefs, as representatives of the local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inception Workshop</li> <li>Consultation</li> <li>Face-to-face / phone call discussions</li> <li>Virtual meetings</li> <li>Official letters/memos</li> <li>Emails</li> </ul>	In Freetown, Kenema or any other. Participation Community-level meeting as needed under Component 2	Presentations, Printed project information packs/briefing notes Internet connection Websites  Led by Project Staff (PMU) and Project Counterpart staff	Captured in the project's Inception workshop budget <b>(USD 5,953)</b> as well as the Steering Committee meetings and the knowledge management budget <b>(USD 316,856)</b> , where relevant information will be provided

## SECTION VI: Monitoring and Reporting

The project will report on a quarterly basis (using the CI-GEF Quarterly Reporting template), progress made towards the implementation of the SEP.

On an annual basis and using the CI-GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR) template, the following CI-GEF's minimum indicators are to be reported. The project can include other appropriate stakeholder engagement indicators in addition to the CI-GEF's indicators.

Indicator	Baseline	Target
5. Number of stakeholder entities (disaggregated by type) involved in the project implementation phase	Government actors: <b>14</b> CSOs/NGOs: <b>7</b> Private sector: <b>2</b> Staff/implementors of previous Projects with the Gola Forest Landscape: <b>3</b> Paramount chiefs and other community members: <b>8</b> Total: <b>34</b>	Government actors: <b>18</b> NGOs: <b>10</b> Private sector: <b>3</b> Staff/implementors of other Projects operating in the Gola Forest Landscape: <b>3</b> Paramount chiefs and other community members: <b>10</b> Total: <b>44</b>
6. Number of persons (disaggregated by gender) who participated in the project implementation phase	Men: <b>54</b> Women: <b>12</b> Total: <b>66</b>	Men: <b>65</b> Women: <b>30</b> Total: <b>95</b>
7. Number of engagements (disaggregated by type of engagement) with stakeholders in the project implementation phase.	Workshops: <b>2</b> Consultations: <b>4</b> Meetings: <b>4</b> Interviews: <b>12</b> Virtual meetings: <b>12</b> Conferences: <b>12</b> Surveys: <b>12</b> Other: <b>12</b>	Workshops: <b>11</b> Consultations: <b>11</b> Meetings: <b>8</b> Interviews: <b>15</b> Virtual meetings: <b>15</b> Conferences: <b>15</b> Surveys: <b>15</b> Other: <b>15</b>

<b>Person responsible for implementing and monitoring the SEP:</b>	The Environment and Social Safeguards Specialist, a full-time staff of the PMU ( <b>directly budgeted under the PMU staffing</b> ). <i>* The Environment and Social Safeguard Specialist will be supported by the Project Manager, the M&amp;E specialist as well as the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) as the Executing Agency.</i>
<b>How/Where will the approved SEP be disclosed<sup>115</sup>:</b>	During the project inception meeting and the stakeholder awareness workshops, through presentations, discussions, and distribution of printed awareness materials
<b>When will the approved SEP be disclosed:</b>	At the launch of the project – During the third quarter of Project Implementation.

<sup>115</sup> Approved Safeguard plans are to be disclosed to stakeholders in a manner and form that they will understand and that is culturally appropriate. This may require translation of the document.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It was not possible to consult all stakeholders during PPG Phase due to financial and time constraints. As a result, the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) might have some gaps. Further consultations will be undertaken by the Environment and Social Safeguard Specialist recruited under the PMUA as full-time staff. **During project set-up, this SEP will be reviewed and updated to integrate any emerging issues related to and for improvement of the quality of stakeholder engagement including identifying and engaging of vulnerable and marginalized groups..**

- The Executing agency, utilizing the Project Manager and the M&E specialist, should finalize consultations with other state and non-state actors in-order to get a better understanding of the requirements as well as the aspects of collaboration with other stakeholders and thus mitigate any potential conflicts.

## Stakeholders consulted at the PPG Phase

*Attached separately.*

## ANNEX I: Rio Markers

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

*<< Rio Markers may be expanded in GEF 8 beyond markers for CCM and CCA>>*

### JUSTIFICATION:

The project interventions have been intentionally designed to address climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation, and land degradation in Sierra Leone. Based on these considerations, the Rio Marker Significant 1 for Desertification and Adaptation, and Principal 2 for Biodiversity Conservation and Mitigation. The justification is outlined below:

These interventions will directly contribute to climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation, and the prevention of land degradation. Through the restoration of 10,000 hectares of forest and forest land (GEF Core Indicator 3.2), the project will rehabilitate key ecosystems in the Gola Forest Peace Park, part of the larger Lofa-Gola-Mano Conservation Corridor. This restoration effort, combining passive and active measures, will ensure the protection of critical habitats, improving ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration and water regulation. Improved management practices will be implemented on 35,000 hectares of community lands surrounding the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary (GEF Core Indicator 4.1). These efforts, focusing on sustainable land use, will benefit biodiversity by reducing pressure on protected areas while promoting agricultural and forestry practices that enhance soil health and increase carbon capture.

Greenhouse gas emissions mitigation is a significant goal of this project. The restoration and improved management of forest landscapes are projected to sequester approximately 1.57 million metric tons of

CO2 equivalent (GEF Core Indicator 6.6), addressing climate change by directly reducing atmospheric greenhouse gases. Transboundary cooperation will be fostered through the shared management of the Mano Watershed, engaging Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia (GEF Core Indicator 7.4). This collaboration, supported by the IW: LEARN platform, will facilitate the exchange of best practices and build capacity for sustainable water and forest management across national borders.

Finally, the project will directly benefit an estimated 172,630 individuals, 30% of whom will be women (GEF Core Indicator 11). By promoting gender inclusivity, the project ensures that both men and women participate in and benefit from conservation and restoration activities, driving social equity alongside environmental resilience. These comprehensive measures will foster long-term biodiversity conservation, strengthen climate resilience, and support sustainable livelihoods for local communities in Sierra Leone.

## **ANNEX J: Monitoring and Evaluation Plan**

Project monitoring and evaluation will be conducted in accordance with established Conservation International and GEF procedures by the project team and the CI-GEF Project Agency. The project's M&E plan will be presented and finalized at the project inception workshop, including a review of indicators, means of verification, and the full definition of project staff M&E responsibilities.

### **Section A. Monitoring and Evaluation Roles and Responsibilities**

The Project Management Unit on the ground will be responsible for initiating and organizing key monitoring and evaluation tasks. This includes the project inception workshop and report, quarterly progress reporting, annual progress and implementation reporting, documentation of lessons learned, and support for and cooperation with the independent external evaluation exercises.

The project Executing Agency is responsible for ensuring the monitoring and evaluation activities are carried out in a timely and comprehensive manner, and for initiating key monitoring and evaluation activities, such as the independent evaluation exercises.

Key project executing partners are responsible for providing any and all required information and data necessary for timely and comprehensive project reporting, including results and financial data, as necessary and appropriate.

Executing Agency and Partners shall keep all pertinent records, both financial and technical, relating to the grant for a period of three (3) years following the expiration/termination of the project.

The Project Steering Committee plays a key oversight role for the project, with regular meetings to receive updates on project implementation progress and approve annual work plans. The Project Steering Committee also provides continuous ad-hoc oversight and feedback on project activities, responding to inquiries or requests for approval from the Project Management Unit or Executing Agency.

The CI-GEF Project Agency plays an overall assurance, backstopping, and oversight role with respect to monitoring and evaluation activities.

The CI Internal Audit function is responsible for contracting and oversight of the planned independent external evaluation exercises at the mid-point and end of the project.

### **Section B. Monitoring and Evaluation Components and Activities**

The Project M&E Plan should include the following components (see M&E table below):

a. **Inception workshop**

**The project** inception workshop will be held within the first three months of the project start with the project stakeholders. An overarching objective of the inception workshop is to assist the project team in understanding and taking ownership of the project's objectives and outcomes. The inception workshop will be used to detail the roles, support services and complementary responsibilities of the CI-GEF Project Agency and the Executing Agency.

b. **Inception Workshop Report - The Executing Agency should produce** an inception report documenting all changes and decisions made during the inception workshop to the project's planned activities, budget, results framework, and any other key aspects of the project. The inception report should be produced within one month of the inception workshop, as it will serve as a key input to the timely planning and execution of project start-up and activities.

c. **Project Results Monitoring Plan** (Objective, Outcomes, and Outputs)

A Project Results Monitoring Plan will be developed by the Project Agency, which will include objective, outcome and output indicators, metrics to be collected for each indicator, methodology

for data collection and analysis, baseline information, location of data gathering, frequency of data collection, responsible parties, and indicative resources needed to complete the plan. Appendix IV provides the Project Results Monitoring Plan table that will help complete this M&E component.

In addition to the objective, outcome, and output indicators, the Project Results Monitoring Plan table will also include all indicators identified in the Safeguard Plans prepared for the project, thus they will be consistent and timely monitored. The monitoring of these indicators throughout the life of the project will be necessary to assess if the project has successfully achieved its expected results.

Baseline Establishment: in the case that all necessary baseline data has not been collected during the PPG phase, it will be collected and documented by the relevant project partners ***within the first year*** of project implementation.

- d. **GEF Core Indicator Worksheet:** The relevant section of the GEF Core Indicator Worksheet was updated for the CEO endorsement submission. This worksheet will also be updated i) prior to mid-term review, and ii) prior to the terminal evaluation.
- e. **Project Steering Committee Meetings:** Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings will be held annually, semi-annually, or quarterly, as appropriate. Meetings shall be held to review and approve the project's annual budget and work plans, discuss implementation issues and identify solutions, and increase coordination and communication between key project partners. The meetings held by the PSC will be monitored and results adequately reported.
- f. **CI-GEF Project Agency Field Supervision Missions:** The CI-GEF PA will conduct annual visits to the project country and potentially to project field sites based on the agreed schedule in the project's Inception Report/Annual Work Plan to assess firsthand project progress. Oversight visits will most likely be conducted to coincide with the timing of PSC meetings. Other members of the PSC may also join field visits. A Field Visit Report will be prepared by the CI-GEF PA staff participating in the oversight mission and will be circulated to the project team and PSC members within one month of the visit.
- g. **Quarterly Progress Reporting:** The Executing Agency will submit quarterly progress reports to the CI-GEF Project Agency, including a budget follow-up and requests for disbursement to cover expected quarterly expenditures.
- h. **Annual Project Implementation Report (PIR):** The Executing Agency will prepare an annual PIR to monitor progress made since the project start and in particular for the reporting period (July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>). The PIR will summarize the annual project results and progress. A summary of the report will be shared with the Project Steering Committee.
- i. **Final Project Report:** The Executing Agency will draft a final report at the end of the project.
- j. **Independent External Mid-term Review:** The project will undergo an independent Mid-term Review within 30 days of the mid-point of the grant term. The Mid-term Review will determine progress being made toward the achievement of outcomes and will identify course corrections if needed. The Mid-term Review will highlight issues requiring decisions and actions and will present initial lessons learned about project design, implementation, and management. Findings and recommendations of the Mid-term Review will be incorporated to secure maximum project results and sustainability during the second half of project implementation.
- k. **Independent Terminal Evaluation:** An independent Terminal Evaluation will take place within six months after project completion and will be undertaken in accordance with CI and GEF guidance. The terminal evaluation will focus on the delivery of the project's results as initially planned (and

as corrected after the mid-term evaluation if any such correction took place). The Executing Agency in collaboration with the PSC will provide a formal management answer to the findings and recommendations of the terminal evaluation.

- I. **Financial Statements Audit:** Annual Financial reports submitted by the executing Agency will be audited annually by external auditors appointed by the Executing Agency and approved by CIGEF.

The Terms of References for the evaluations will be drafted by the CI-GEF PA in accordance with GEF requirements. The procurement and contracting for the independent evaluations will be handled by CI's General Counsel's Office. The funding for the evaluations will come from the project budget, as indicated at project approval.



## M&E Plan Summary

Type of M&E	Reporting	Responsible	Indicative Budget
	Frequency	Parties	from GEF (USD)
a. Inception Workshop	Within three months of signing of CI Grant Agreement for GEF Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Team</li> <li>Executing Agency</li> <li>CI-GEF PA</li> </ul>	5,953
b. Inception Workshop Report	Within one month of inception workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Team</li> <li>CI-GEF PA</li> </ul>	-
c. Project Results Monitoring Plan (Objective, Outcomes and Outputs)	Annually (data on indicators will be gathered according to monitoring plan schedule shown on Appendix IV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Team</li> <li>CI-GEF PA</li> </ul>	29,568
d. GEF Core Indicator Tracker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Project development phase;</li> <li>ii) prior to project mid-term evaluation;</li> <li>and iii) project completion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Team</li> <li>Executing Agency</li> <li>CI-GEF PA</li> </ul>	13,141
f. CI-GEF Project Agency Field Supervision Missions	Approximately annual visits by CI-GEF team*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CI-GEF PA</li> </ul>	-
h. Annual Project Implementation Report (PIR)	Annually for year ending June 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Team</li> <li>Executing Agency</li> <li>CI-GEF PA</li> </ul>	16,427
i. Final Project Report	Upon project operational closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Team</li> <li>Executing Agency</li> </ul>	6,320
j. Independent External Mid-term Review	Approximate mid-point of project implementation period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CI Evaluation Office</li> <li>Project Team</li> <li>CI-GEF PA</li> </ul>	40,000
k. Independent Terminal Evaluation	Evaluation field mission within three months prior to project completion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CI Evaluation Office</li> <li>Project Team</li> <li>CI-GEF PA</li> </ul>	50,000.0
Summary M&E total			<b>161,409</b>

### Project Management Costs (PMC) Summary

Type of PMC	Reporting	Responsible	Indicative Budget
	Frequency	Parties	from GEF (USD)
e. Project Steering Committee Meetings	Annually	· Project Team	15,000
		· Executing Agency	
		· CI-GEF PA	
g. Quarterly Progress Reporting	Quarterly	· Project Team	224,300
		· Executing Agency	
I. Financial Statements Audit	Annually	· Executing Agency	25,000
		· CI-GEF PA	
Summary PMC total			<b>264,300</b>

ANNEX K: Project Results Monitoring Plan							
Indicators	Metrics	Methodology	Baseline	Location	Frequency	Responsible Parties	Indicative Resources <sup>116</sup>
Objective:							
Indicator a: Number of Hectares of Terrestrial Protected Areas (PAs) created or under improved management (Target: 22,428 ha)	Area of Terrestrial Protected Areas (PAs) created or under improved management (Hectares)	Review of progress reports.	Area of PA under SFM and improved management at project start	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD)	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD)	Staff time
Indicator b: Number of Hectares of land and ecosystems under restoration (Target: 10,000 ha)	Area of land and ecosystems under restoration (Hectares)	Review of progress reports.	Area of land and ecosystems under restoration at project start	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD)	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD)	Staff time
Indicator c: Number of Hectares of landscapes under improved practices (Target 35,000 ha)	Area of landscapes under improved practices (Hectares)	Review of progress reports.	Area of landscapes under improved practices at project start	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD)	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
Indicator d: Number of metric tons of CO2e of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated (Target: 1.571M tCO2e)	Metric tons of CO2e of GHG emissions mitigated	Review of progress reports.	Metric tons of CO2e of GHG emissions mitigated at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Twice over the project period (mid-term and at end of the project)	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
Indicator e: Number of people benefiting from GEF-financed investments disaggregated by sex (Target: Direct beneficiaries: 172,630 people - 30% Women)	Number of people	Review of progress reports.	Number of people at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
Indicator f: Level of engagement in IW: LEARN through participation and delivery of key products (Target: 2)	Level of engagement	Review of progress reports.	Level of engagement at project start	EPA and Regional Project	Annually	EPA, Ministry of water and Regional Project	Staff time

<sup>116</sup> Refer to M&E costs in the project budget

Component 1: Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills FR, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape							
Indicator 1.1: Number of coordination mechanisms among state and non-state agencies in the Greater Gola Landscape to improve BD conservation and SLM	Number of coordination mechanisms among state and non-state agencies in the Landscape on BD conservation and SLM	Review of progress reports.	Number of state and non-state actors participating in BD conservation and SLM activities at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
Indicator 1.1.1: Number of gender responsive policies, tools and guidelines to support sustainable forest and land-use planning and management that are enhanced.	Gender responsive policies, tools and guidelines to support sustainable forest and land-use planning and management	Review of progress reports.	Number of gender responsive policies, tools and guidelines to support SFM and land-use planning and management at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Twice – mid-term and end of project	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
Indicator 1.1.2: Number of state and non-state actors (from key government ministries, departments, agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, private sector and communities) trained to support inclusive and gender responsive effective management of the Gola Forest Landscape.	Number of key state and non-state actors trained to support inclusive and gender responsive effective management of the Gola Forest Landscape	Review of progress reports.	Number of state and non-state actors trained to support inclusive and gender responsive effective management of the Gola Forest Landscape at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Twice – mid-term and end of project	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
Indicator 1.1.3.: Number of coordination mechanisms (e.g. steering committees, interministerial committees, etc.) established and facilitated to support inclusive and gender responsive effective governance of the Greater Gola Forest landscape, with at least 30% women and 70% men, and representation of local communities.	Coordination mechanisms (e.g. steering committees, interministerial committees, etc.) established and facilitated to support inclusive and gender responsive effective governance of the Greater Gola Forest landscape, with at least 30% women and 70% men, and representation of local communities	Review of progress reports.	Number of Coordination mechanisms that support inclusive and gender responsive effective governance of the Greater Gola Forest landscape, with at least 30% women and 70% men, and representation of local communities at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Twice – mid-term and end of project	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time

Indicator 1.1.4.: Number of national gender-responsive hubs established to support inclusive, capacity building and monitoring biodiversity conservation, land use planning and management for enhanced climate resilience.	Number of hubs supporting capacity building and monitoring BD conservation, land use planning and management for enhanced climate resilience.	Review of progress reports.	Number of hubs supporting capacity building and monitoring BD conservation, land use planning and management for enhanced climate resilience at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Twice – mid-term and end of project	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
<b>Component 2: Promoting participatory and gender responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods</b>							
Indicator 2.1: Area of landscapes under improved practices by communities adjacent to the targeted PAs within Gola landscape	Area of landscapes under improved practices by communities adjacent to the targeted PAs within Gola landscape	Review of progress reports.	Area of landscapes under improved practices by communities adjacent to the targeted PAs within Gola landscape at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Twice – mid-term and end of project	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
Indicator 2.1.1: Number of gender-sensitive community awareness/education initiatives implemented and number of people reached.	Number of gender-sensitive community awareness/education initiatives implemented and number of people reached	Review of progress reports.	Number of gender-sensitive community awareness/education initiatives implemented and number of people reached at project start	EPA, CSSL, EFA, GRC-LG and PA agencies	Twice – mid-term and end of project	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
Indicator 2.1.2.: Number of gender-responsive participatory spatial/landscape plans for the Greater Gola Forest Landscape developed/updated and implemented using participatory approaches.	Number of gender-responsive participatory spatial/landscape plans for the Greater Gola Forest Landscape developed/updated and implemented using participatory approaches.	Review of progress reports.	Number of gender-responsive participatory spatial/landscape plans for the Greater Gola Forest Landscape at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Twice – mid-term and end of project	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
Indicator 2.1.3a.: Number of gender-responsive and climate resilient alternative income-generating initiatives supported.	Number of gender-responsive and climate resilient alternative income-generating initiatives supported.	Review of progress reports	Number of gender-responsive and climate resilient alternative income-generating initiatives at project start	EPA, CSSL, EFA, GRC-LG and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time

Indicator 2.1.3b: Number of people (segregated by gender) who are direct beneficiaries of gender-responsive and climate resilient alternative income-generating initiatives.	Number of people (disaggregated by gender) benefiting from alternative income generating initiatives	Review of progress reports.	Number of people (disaggregated by gender) benefiting from alternative income generating initiatives at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
Indicator 2.1.4a.: Number of innovative and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management.	Number of innovative and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management.	Review of progress reports	Number of innovative and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management.	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
Indicator 2.1.4b: Number of people (segregated by gender) who are direct beneficiaries of pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management.	Number of people (segregated by gender) who are direct beneficiaries of pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management	Review of progress reports.	Number of people (segregated by gender) who are direct beneficiaries of pro-nature enterprises at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
Indicator 2.1.5: Area (Hectares) of landscapes under improved practices	Area (Hectares) of landscapes under improved practices	Review of progress reports.	Area (Hectares) of landscapes under improved practices at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
<b>Component 3:</b> Improving management of Kambu Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation							
Indicator 3.1a: Number of Hectares of protected areas with improved METT Score	Number of Hectares of protected areas with improved METT Score	Review of progress reports.	Number of Hectares of protected areas with improved METT Score at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
Indicator 3.1b: Number of metric tons of CO <sub>2</sub> e of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated	Metric tons of CO <sub>2</sub> e of GHG emissions mitigated	Review of progress reports.	Metric tons of CO <sub>2</sub> e of GHG emissions mitigated at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Twice over the project period (mid-term and at end of the project)	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time

Indicator 3.1.1.: Number of assessments undertaken to determine the level of deforestation and forest degradation of Kambui Hills FR and associated community forests to guide management interventions	Number of assessments undertaken and restoration interventions implemented	Review of progress reports.	Area (Hectares) of land and ecosystems under restoration at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
Indicator 3.1.2a: Area (hectares) under improved management effectiveness	Area (Hectares) of land under improved management effectiveness	Review of progress reports.	Area (Hectares) of under improved management effectiveness at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
Indicator 3.1.2b: Area (hectares) under land and ecosystems restoration	Area (Hectares) under land and ecosystems restoration	Review of progress reports.	Area (Hectares) of land under land and ecosystems restoration at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
Indicator 3.1.2c: Greenhouse gas emissions mitigated.	Metric tons of CO2e of GHG emissions mitigated	Review of progress reports.	Metric tons of CO2e of GHG emissions mitigated at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Twice over the project period (mid-term and at end of the project)	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) as well as CSSL and EFA	Staff time
<b>Component 4: Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management</b>							
Indicator 4.1a: Number of strengthened institutional structures in place to facilitate transboundary management of the Mano watershed (leveraging the regional committee that was established by the Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management Project)	Number of institutional structures in place to facilitate transboundary management of the Mano watershed	Review of progress reports.	Number of institutional structures in place to facilitate transboundary management of the Mano watershed at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) and the Guinea RCP PMU	Staff time
Indicator 4.1b: Level of engagement in IW: LEARN through participation and delivery of key products	Level of engagement in IW: LEARN through participation and delivery of key products	Review of progress reports	Level of engagement in IW: LEARN through participation and delivery of key products at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) and the Guinea RCP PMU	Staff time



Indicator 4.1.1.: Number of committees supported to undertake actions for joint cross-border natural resource management.	Number of committees supported to undertake actions for joint cross-border natural resource management	Review of progress reports.	Number of committees supported to undertake actions for joint cross-border natural resource management at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) and the Guinea RCP PMU	Staff time
Indicator 4.1.2.: Number of trainings undertaken by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination Project on applied research to inform decision-making in watershed and forest management.	Number of trainings undertaken towards applied research to guide decision-making in transboundary natural resources management	Review of progress reports.	Number of applied research initiatives undertaken to guide decision-making in transboundary natural resources management at project start	RCP, EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) and the Guinea RCP PMU	Staff time
Indicator 4.1.3.: Number of nature-based initiatives implemented in the watershed to improve ecosystem health and reduce riverbank deterioration	Number of nature-based initiatives implemented in the watershed to improve ecosystem health and reduce riverbank deterioration	Review of progress reports.	Number of nature-based initiatives implemented in the watershed to improve ecosystem health and reduce riverbank deterioration at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) and the Guinea RCP PMU	Staff time
<b>Component 5: Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons</b>							
Indicator 5.1: Number of initiatives at various levels coordinating and sharing with the Sierra Leone Guinean Forests Child Project	Number of initiatives at various levels coordinating and sharing with the Sierra Leone Guinean Forests Child Project	Review of progress reports.	Number of initiatives at various levels coordinating and sharing with the Sierra Leone Guinean Forests Child Project at project start	RCP, EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD)	Staff time
Indicator 5.1.1.: Number of Knowledge Management and Communications Strategies developed (including Gender, equality and inclusion aspects)	Number of Knowledge Management and Communications Strategies developed (including Gender, equality and inclusion aspects)	Review of progress reports.	Number of Knowledge Management and Communications Strategies developed (including Gender, equality and inclusion aspects) at project start	RCP, EPA and PA agencies	Annually	RCP, EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD)	Staff time

Indicator 5.1.2: Number of Sierra Leone participants in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project 3-day Annual Forums	Number of Sierra Leone participants in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project 3-day Annual Forums	Review of progress reports.	Number of Sierra Leone participants in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project 3-day Annual Forums at project start	RCP, EPA and PA agencies	Annually	RCP, EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD)	Staff time
Indicator 5.1.3.: Number of Learning and Exposure Visits	Number of Learning and Exposure Visits	Review of progress reports.	Number of Learning and Exposure Visits at project start	RCP, EPA and PA agencies	Annually	RCP, EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD)	Staff time
Indicator 5.1.4.: Number of policy briefs, fact sheets and storytelling videos (integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects) prepared and disseminated	Number of policy briefs, fact sheets and storytelling videos (integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects) prepared and disseminated	Review of progress reports.	Number of policy briefs, fact sheets and storytelling videos (integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects) prepared and disseminated at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	EPA and PA agencies (NPAA and FD) and the Guinea RCP PMU	Staff time
<b>Component 6: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&amp;E) Framework</b>							
Indicator 6.1: Number of gender-responsive M&E systems established and implemented for the project.	Number of gender-responsive M&E systems established and implemented for the project.	Review of progress reports.	Number of gender-responsive M&E systems established and implemented for the project at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	CIGEF and EPA	Staff time
Indicator 6.1.1.: Number of periodic M&E Reports submitted to CI-GEF Agency.	Number of periodic M&E Reports submitted to CI-GEF Agency.	Review of progress reports.	Number of periodic M&E Reports submitted to CI-GEF Agency at project start.	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	CIGEF, EPA and PA agencies as well as co-executing partners (CSSL, EFA, RCMRD and GRC)	Staff time
Indicator 6.1.2.: Number of Mid-Term Evaluation and Terminal Evaluation Reports	Number of Mid-Term Evaluation and Terminal Evaluation Reports	Review of progress reports.	Number of Mid-Term Evaluation and Terminal Evaluation Reports at project start	EPA and PA agencies	Annually	CIGEF and EPA	Staff time
<b>Safeguard Plans:</b>							

AGM Indicator 1: Number of times the Accountability and Grievance Mechanism is communicated/disseminated to stakeholders	Number of times the Accountability and Grievance Mechanism is communicated/disseminated to stakeholders	Review of minutes of project Accountability and Grievance Mechanism	n/a	EPA/PMU and Project counterparts	Annually	CI, EPA	Staff time
AGM Indicator 2: Percentage of conflict and complaint cases reported to the project's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism that have been resolved	% of conflict and complaint cases reported and resolved	Review of minutes of project Accountability and Grievance Mechanism	n/a	EPA/PMU and Project partners	Annually	CI and EPA	Staff time
SEP Indicator 1.: Number of stakeholder entities (disaggregated by type) involved in the project implementation phase	Number of stakeholder entities (disaggregated by type) involved in the project implementation phase	Review of progress reports	Base on existing establishment staffing	CI, EPA/PMU	Annually	CI, EPA	Staff time
SEP Indicator 2.: Number of persons (disaggregated by gender) who participated in the project implementation phase	Number of persons (disaggregated by gender) who participated in the project implementation phase	Review Reports	Zero	CI, EPA PMU and Project partners.	Annually	CI, EPA	Staff time
SEP Indicator 3.: Number of engagements (disaggregated by type of engagement) with stakeholders in the project implementation phase.	Number of engagements (disaggregated by type of engagement) with stakeholders in the project implementation phase.	Review project reports	Base on existing establishment staffing	CI, EPA PMU and Project partners.	Biennial	CI, EPA PMU and Project partners.	Staff time
GMP Indicator 1: Number of persons (disaggregated by gender) who received benefits in the project implementation phase.	Number of persons (disaggregated by gender) who received benefits in the project implementation phase.	Surveys	N/A	CI, EPA PMU and Project partners.	Annually	CI and EPA PMU	Staff time
GMP Indicator 2.: Number of documents (disaggregated by type) derived from the project that included gender considerations or address gender gaps.	Number of documents (disaggregated by type) derived from the project that included gender considerations or address gender gaps.	Surveys and project reports	N/A	CI, EPA PMU and Project partners.	Annually	CI, EPA PMU and Project partners.	Staff time

## ANNEX L: Project Taxonomy

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

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender Mainstreaming		
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beneficiaries	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Women groups	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex-disaggregated indicators	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender-sensitive indicators	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender results areas		
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Access and control over natural resources	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participation and leadership	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Access to benefits and services	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Capacity development	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Awareness raising	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Knowledge generation	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focal Areas/Theme			
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Integrated Programs		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Commodity Supply Chains ( <sup>117</sup> Good Growth Partnership)	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Commodities Production
			<input type="checkbox"/> Deforestation-free Sourcing
			<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Screening Tools
			<input type="checkbox"/> High Conservation Value Forests
			<input type="checkbox"/> High Carbon Stocks Forests
			<input type="checkbox"/> Soybean Supply Chain
			<input type="checkbox"/> Oil Palm Supply Chain
			<input type="checkbox"/> Beef Supply Chain
			<input type="checkbox"/> Smallholder Farmers
			<input type="checkbox"/> Adaptive Management
		<input type="checkbox"/> Food Security in Sub-Sahara Africa	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Resilience (climate and shocks)
			<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Production Systems
			<input type="checkbox"/> Agroecosystems
			<input type="checkbox"/> Land and Soil Health
			<input type="checkbox"/> Diversified Farming
			<input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Land and Water Management
			<input type="checkbox"/> Smallholder Farming
			<input type="checkbox"/> Small and Medium Enterprises
			<input type="checkbox"/> Crop Genetic Diversity
			<input type="checkbox"/> Food Value Chains
			<input type="checkbox"/> Gender Dimensions
			<input type="checkbox"/> Multi-stakeholder Platforms
		<input type="checkbox"/> Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Food Systems
			<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Restoration
			<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Commodity Production
			<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehensive Land Use Planning
			<input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Landscapes
			<input type="checkbox"/> Food Value Chains
			<input type="checkbox"/> Deforestation-free Sourcing
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Smallholder Farmers
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Cities	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Integrated urban planning
			<input type="checkbox"/> Urban sustainability framework
			<input type="checkbox"/> Transport and Mobility
			<input type="checkbox"/> Buildings
			<input type="checkbox"/> Municipal waste management

		<input type="checkbox"/> Green space
		<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Biodiversity
		<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Food Systems
		<input type="checkbox"/> Energy efficiency
		<input type="checkbox"/> Municipal Financing
		<input type="checkbox"/> Global Platform for Sustainable Cities
		<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Resilience
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Protected Areas and Landscapes
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Terrestrial Protected Areas
		<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal and Marine Protected Areas
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Productive Landscapes
		<input type="checkbox"/> Productive Seascapes
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Based Natural Resource Management
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mainstreaming
		<input type="checkbox"/> Extractive Industries (oil, gas, mining)
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forestry (Including HCVF and REDD+)
		<input type="checkbox"/> Tourism
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture & agrobiodiversity
		<input type="checkbox"/> Fisheries
		<input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure
		<input type="checkbox"/> Certification (National Standards)
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Certification (International Standards)
		<input type="checkbox"/> Species
		<input type="checkbox"/> Illegal Wildlife Trade
		<input type="checkbox"/> Threatened Species
		<input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife for Sustainable Development
		<input type="checkbox"/> Crop Wild Relatives
		<input type="checkbox"/> Plant Genetic Resources
		<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Genetic Resources
		<input type="checkbox"/> Livestock Wild Relatives
		<input type="checkbox"/> Invasive Alien Species (IAS)
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biomes
		<input type="checkbox"/> Mangroves
		<input type="checkbox"/> Coral Reefs
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sea Grasses
		<input type="checkbox"/> Wetlands
		<input type="checkbox"/> Rivers
		<input type="checkbox"/> Lakes
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tropical Rain Forests
		<input type="checkbox"/> Tropical Dry Forests
		<input type="checkbox"/> Temperate Forests
		<input type="checkbox"/> Grasslands
		<input type="checkbox"/> Paramo
		<input type="checkbox"/> Desert
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Financial and Accounting
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Payment for Ecosystem Services
		<input type="checkbox"/> Natural Capital Assessment and Accounting
		<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation Trust Funds
		<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation Finance
		<input type="checkbox"/> Supplementary Protocol to the CBD
		<input type="checkbox"/> Biosafety
		<input type="checkbox"/> Access to Genetic Resources Benefit Sharing
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forests	

		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forest and Landscape Restoration	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Forest	<input type="checkbox"/> REDD/REDD+
			<input type="checkbox"/> Amazon
			<input type="checkbox"/> Congo
			<input type="checkbox"/> Drylands
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Degradation		
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Land Management	
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ecosystem Approach
			<input type="checkbox"/> Integrated and Cross-sectoral approach
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community-Based NRM
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Livelihoods
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Income Generating Activities
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Agriculture
			<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Pasture Management
			<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Forest/Woodland Management
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques
			<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Fire Management
			<input type="checkbox"/> Drought Mitigation/Early Warning
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Degradation Neutrality	
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Productivity
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Cover and Land cover change
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carbon stocks above or below ground
		<input type="checkbox"/> Food Security	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International Waters		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Ship	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Freshwater	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Aquifer
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> River Basin
			<input type="checkbox"/> Lake Basin
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learning	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Fisheries	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Persistent toxic substances	
		<input type="checkbox"/> SIDS : Small Island Dev States	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Research	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Pollution	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Persistent toxic substances
			<input type="checkbox"/> Plastics
			<input type="checkbox"/> Nutrient pollution from all sectors except wastewater
			<input type="checkbox"/> Nutrient pollution from Wastewater
		<input type="checkbox"/> Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Plan preparation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Action Plan Implementation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Large Marine Ecosystems	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Aquaculture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Protected Area	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Biomes	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Mangrove
			<input type="checkbox"/> Coral Reefs



		<input type="checkbox"/> Seagrasses
		<input type="checkbox"/> Polar Ecosystems
		<input type="checkbox"/> Constructed Wetlands
	<input type="checkbox"/> Chemicals and Waste	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Mercury
		<input type="checkbox"/> Artisanal and Scale Gold Mining
		<input type="checkbox"/> Coal Fired Power Plants
		<input type="checkbox"/> Coal Fired Industrial Boilers
		<input type="checkbox"/> Cement
		<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Ferrous Metals Production
		<input type="checkbox"/> Ozone
		<input type="checkbox"/> Persistent Organic Pollutants
		<input type="checkbox"/> Unintentional Persistent Organic Pollutants
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sound Management of chemicals and Waste
		<input type="checkbox"/> Waste Management
		<input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous Waste Management
		<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Waste
		<input type="checkbox"/> e-Waste
		<input type="checkbox"/> Emissions
		<input type="checkbox"/> Disposal
		<input type="checkbox"/> New Persistent Organic Pollutants
		<input type="checkbox"/> Polychlorinated Biphenyls
		<input type="checkbox"/> Plastics
		<input type="checkbox"/> Eco-Efficiency
		<input type="checkbox"/> Pesticides
		<input type="checkbox"/> DDT - Vector Management
		<input type="checkbox"/> DDT - Other
		<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Emissions
		<input type="checkbox"/> Open Burning
		<input type="checkbox"/> Best Available Technology / Best Environmental Practices
		<input type="checkbox"/> Green Chemistry
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Change	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Change Adaptation
		<input type="checkbox"/> Climate Finance
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Least Developed Countries
		<input type="checkbox"/> Small Island Developing States
		<input type="checkbox"/> Disaster Risk Management
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sea-level rise
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Resilience
		<input type="checkbox"/> Climate information
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ecosystem-based Adaptation
		<input type="checkbox"/> Adaptation Tech Transfer
		<input type="checkbox"/> National Adaptation Programme of Action
		<input type="checkbox"/> National Adaptation Plan
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mainstreaming Adaptation
		<input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector
		<input type="checkbox"/> Innovation
		<input type="checkbox"/> Complementarity
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community-based Adaptation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Livelihoods
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Change Mitigation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture, Forestry, and other Land Use
		<input type="checkbox"/> Energy Efficiency
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Urban Systems and Transport
		<input type="checkbox"/> Technology Transfer
		<input type="checkbox"/> Renewable Energy
		<input type="checkbox"/> Financing

			<input type="checkbox"/> Enabling Activities
		<input type="checkbox"/> Technology Transfer	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Poznan Strategic Programme on Technology Transfer
			<input type="checkbox"/> Climate Technology Centre & Network (CTCN)
			<input type="checkbox"/> Endogenous technology
			<input type="checkbox"/> Technology Needs Assessment
			<input type="checkbox"/> Adaptation Tech Transfer
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> United Nations Framework on Climate Change	
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nationally Determined Contribution
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Finance (Rio Markers)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paris Agreement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Development Goals  <input type="checkbox"/> Climate Change Mitigation 1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Change Mitigation 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Change Adaptation 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Climate Change Adaptation 2

## **ANNEX M: Terms of Reference for Partners**

This Annex elaborates on the terms of reference (TORs) for each partner involved in the implementation of the project. The role of each partner has been defined based on the capacity, expertise and operations comparative advantage that they bring for effective delivery of the project.

### **1. Terms of Reference for The Environment Protection Agency of Sierra Leone (EPA-SL)**

The Agency is well established and governed by a Board of Directors which is the overall governing body of the Agency. The Executive Chairman executes the Board policies and oversees and facilitates the day-to-day administrative activities and management of resources of the Agency. The Executive Chairman is assisted by the Chief Director, four Deputy Directors, and three Assistant Deputy Directors who also supervise and discipline the staff of the Agency. The Agency has six main departments segregated into Units to undertake specific responsibilities. EPA-SL also serves as the National Focal Point for the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Sierra Leone.

Environmental Officers and Regional Environmental Officers under the supervision of the Deputy Directors implement the technical functions and manage the operations of the Agency in the field to ensure the sustainable utilization of the environment and its natural resources by people in the provinces. At the provincial level, EPA-SL has established two main offices in the provincial towns of Makeni and Bo to undertake effective routine environmental monitoring countrywide educate and sensitize the entire populace on the functions of the Agency and the need for environmental protection and management in the country. The EPA-SL has a whole unit known as the Gender Unit (4 personnel female and 1 male) and uses a policy of at least 30% women representation in all departments and units of the agency. The Environmental Safety Unit (12 personnel male and 5 female) is responsible for the issuance of the Environmental Impact Assessment License, as well as supervising/monitoring the adherence to the Environmental, Social, and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) that includes the necessary social safeguards for members and the communities. From time to time various college/university students come over to assist during their internship periods in various environmentally related training ranging from general administration (through project financial management) to specialized environment issues like ESHIA, Chemical Control, Climate change, etc.

The EPA-SL has a wealth of experience in implementing projects and programmes since its establishment in 2008. They have supervised the implementation of all the country's past three National Communications (NC1 to NC3), and the various National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) activities from the Climate Smart Agricultural Project to the Climate Change Information and Early Warning Services (CIEWS). They were involved in the implementation of the various Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) including the formation of the Nationally Protected Area Authority (NPAA) that is safeguarding the Gola Forest (the only transboundary conserved and adequately managed forest in West Africa). The EPA therefore provides a great center of coordination for the Gola landscape management project. EPA will participate in managing project activities, monitoring project progress, managing project staff and associated funds, and carrying out other day-to-day project management functions. EPA will host the PMU and the roles and responsibilities include:

- Providing coordination and support to the PMU and offering guidance and technical expertise to project management functions in conjunction with CI.
- Participating in the internal monitoring and evaluation of the Project.
- Offering a supervisory role in the development of project work plans and budgets as well as executing project activities and ensuring proper use of and accountability for funds.

- Managing project staff, and associated financial resources and carrying out other project management functions as well as facilitating project steering committee functions.
- Participating in monitoring the project's implementation progress to ensure the logical execution of activities, achievement of milestones and delivery of outputs.
- Participating in the provision of project assurance, including support to project implementation by maintaining oversight of technical and financial management aspects, and other forms of assistance upon request of the GEF implementing Agency.
- Overseeing procurement of project goods and services.
- Approving project operating procedures for the PMU and participating in the resolution of any conflicts that may arise during project implementation.

The details of the activities to be undertaken by EPA-SL and roles are indicated in Annex C II (the Project Timeline) and will be carried out in close collaboration with other partners, and with consultants' inputs.

## **2. Terms of Reference for the Forestry Division in the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC)**

The Forestry Division in the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC) oversees forestry management and has the overall mandate to coordinate any forestry extension work, particularly forest harvesting and utilization issues in the country. The Forest Department (FD) will, in close collaboration with NPAA, work closely with EPA-SL which is the Executing agency. The Forest Department guides and leads project implementation of forest-related activities. In this project, the FD will among others:

- Be the central partner for coordination of the project activities relating to elevating Kambui Hills Forest Reserve to a National Park, ensuring that each relevant partner receives the necessary information to participate in the process.
- Ensure effective collaboration with the other project-executing partners around Kambui Hills Forest Reserve.
- Host meetings that will support quality control and validation of the process of elevating Kambui Hills FR to a national park.
- Support capacity building for forestry inventories, restoration as well as environmental monitoring.
- Support effective delivery of project start-up activities, close-out activities as well as outcomes 3.1 and 5.1 in close collaboration with other stakeholders.

The FD will thus play a major role under Components 1 and 3.

## **3. Terms of Reference for The Environmental Foundation for Africa (EFA)/Africa Wildlife Foundation**

The Environmental Foundation for Africa was established in 1992 to inspire and enable community-led programs for sustainable environmental management as a basis for poverty alleviation in Sierra Leone and neighbouring Liberia. EFA achieves this through advocacy, awareness raising, education programs and practical actions that conserve the integrity of nature and protect ecosystem services. EFA is registered in Sierra Leone as a national NGO, and a registered charity in England and Wales (1057788).

EFA has been working in and around Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary and provides an opportunity to deliver some of the project outputs.

EFA in collaboration with AWF will support implementation of the co-management plan developed through support from EFA and Njala University in 2018-2020. EFA and Njala conducted community-wide consultations as part of efforts to develop the 2020-2030 Co-management Plan for Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary.

Both Tiwai Island and Kambui Hills FR have significant potential to act as economic engines within the Gola landscape. Eco-tourism which has been developed to some extent in both PAs presents an immediate opportunity. In this regard, EFA in collaboration with AWF and other partners will support the development of comprehensive business plans aimed at optimizing not only ecotourism but the biodiversity economy potential in and around these reserves. Efforts will be directed at improving the eco-tourism offering through the improvement of tourism planning, broadening and improving touristic activities, improving facilities and access infrastructure, and tourism management including customer service and payment systems, particularly with respect to Tiwai.

Taking account of the current operating context in Sierra Leone, where there is a major assault on natural resources across the country, (especially forests, agricultural lands and rivers), against the backdrop of a changing climate, and the cyclical shocks caused by various factors (Ebola, COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing youth bulge and economic pressure), the need to accelerate environmental awareness and concrete action has never been greater.

Sierra Leone's Vision 2025 provides a critical foundation for mainstreaming biodiversity as it underscores the urgent need for sustainable natural resource management and a high-quality environment. Because EFA has been undertaking Eco-tourism promotion around Tiwai, it has become a partner of choice for community engagement with respect to alternative approaches to relieve pressure off the natural forests. In this regard EFA will participate in the delivery of **components 1, 2 and 3** and will among others:

- (i) Support a comprehensive situational analysis in Tiwai and Kambui Hills – Gola Landscape employing user-friendly geospatial tools to visually represent biodiversity, threats, trends and nature-based economic opportunities and interface with other sectors and development agendas.
- (ii) Help build the capacity of local communities and institutions to develop biodiversity and ecosystem service assessment and approaches non-consumptive use of biodiversity.
- (iii) Work with community groups, micro-enterprises, government agencies, and civil society organizations to help build their capacities for mobilizing financial resources including proposal development targeting financing facilities and agencies such as the GEF Small Grants Program.
- (iv) Operationalize the Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary Co-Management Plan to fully empower the eight (8) host communities surrounding the sanctuary (Boma, Jene, Kambama, Mapuma, Ngiema, Niahun, Sahun and Segbema).
- (v) Dialogue with local stakeholders in these areas on land use and conservation planning processes, and biodiversity economy assessments to inform and shape innovative livelihood and enterprise initiatives that respond to local challenges and opportunities.
- (vi) Support farmers in adopting sustainable agriculture methods that use less land while increasing output
- (vii) Assess value chains and private sector partners operating in the Tiwai and Kambui Hills - Gola landscape for the development of sustainable and formal value chains around crops such as cocoa, palm oil, agroforestry, plantain, cassava, and maize among others.
- (viii) In close collaboration with the districts and chiefdoms, ensure effective implementation of land-use plans regularly monitor the implementation of bylaws and address any challenges that arise.

- (ix) Provide information to EPA towards developing an information management system and geospatial portal at the centre of excellence hub within EPA.
- (x) Participate in the project M & E activities as appropriate.

#### 4. Terms of Reference for The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (SCCL)

The Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) was established in 1986 to promote a better life for all in tune with the environment. Our main mission is to preserve nature and ensure wise and sustainable use of our precious natural resources for the benefit of the country's biodiversity, people's livelihood, and the quality of life of all people in Sierra Leone. CSSL has been working in the Gola landscape for over 20 years, particularly Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary and provides an opportunity to deliver some of the project outputs.

Both Tiwai Island and Kambui Hills FR have significant potential to act as economic engines within the Gola landscape but their protection will hinge greatly on community participation. CSSL has a long history of working with communities in the area and their expertise and experience provide an opportunity for their engagement with this project.

Taking account of the current operating context in Sierra Leone, where there is a major assault on natural resources across the country, (especially forests and agricultural land), there is a need to accelerate environmental awareness and concrete action.

Because CSSL has been undertaking advocacy, community awareness, and forest inventories and has been a partner to most initiatives in the area such as with WAbiled, PAPfor and RSPB, it has become a partner of choice for community engagement with respect to alternative approaches to relieve pressure off the natural forests. In this regard CSSL will participate in the delivery of **components 1, 2 and 3** and will among others:

- (a) Help build the capacity of local communities and institutions to develop biodiversity and ecosystem service assessment and approaches non-consumptive use of biodiversity.
- (b) Work with community groups, micro-enterprises, government agencies, and civil society organizations to help build their capacities for sustainable land management.
- (c) Dialogue with local stakeholders in the area on land use and conservation planning processes, conservation of IBA sites and shape innovative livelihood and enterprise initiatives that respond to local challenges and opportunities.
- (d) Support farmers in adopting sustainable agriculture methods that use less land while increasing output
- (e) Assess value chains and private sector partners operating in the Tiwai and Kambui Hills - Gola landscape for the development of sustainable and formal value chains around crops such as cocoa, palm oil, agroforestry, plantain, cassava, and maize among others.
- (f) In close collaboration with the districts and chiefdoms, ensure effective implementation of land-use plans regularly monitor the implementation of bylaws and address any challenges that arise.
- (g) Provide information to EPA towards developing an information management system and geospatial portal at the centre of excellence hub within EPA.
- (h) Participate in the project M & E activities as appropriate.

## **5. Terms of Reference for the Regional Center for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD)**

The RCMRD is a premier centre for training in land use planning, surveying, mapping and remote sensing and offers advisory services on problems relating to resource surveying and mapping to the governments and many other institutions. The Center has a dedicated Unit on land use planning and the strengths in participatory mapping could be utilized in land use planning and the capacity building aspects of the project as well as build capacity of the Centre of Excellence hub at the EPA with respect to natural resource management data collection, collation and analysis. The RCMRD could, for example, support the use of assessment tools to establish the relationship between population increase and forest vulnerability to reveal hotspot areas for prioritization in the conservation and forest restoration efforts. There are considerable mining activities that support surrounding communities with livelihood but the actual value of the minerals and cost of mining related to degradation and forest loss caused by mining may need to be established. Ecosystem valuation using participatory mapping allows the communities to discuss what they consider ecosystem services and prop up their knowledge with sensitization on intangible ecosystem services that may be supported by RCMRD. Details of activities will be fully discussed at project inception. The RCMRD will thus work closely with EPA on the land use planning Capacity Building activities in Components 1, 2 and 3. RCMRD will, among others, undertake the following:

- In collaboration with the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) provide support to national and subnational capacity building related to land use planning and mapping.
- Provide support to the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) in the set of the centre of excellence hub in natural resources data collection, processing, storage and sharing especially with natural resource management institutions.
- Provide support for field-level demonstrative capacity building in resource surveys, carbon measurements, data processing and storage.
- Provide remotely sensed data and maps for training and information sharing.
- Provide technical backstopping in resource mapping and surveying to project participating partners whenever needed.
- Provide technical support in the establishment of facilities for data capture, processing, storage and sharing among project participating partners.
- Under component 3 RCMRD will, for example, support the use of assessment tools to establish the relationship between population increase and forest vulnerability to reveal hotspot areas for prioritization in the conservation and forest restoration efforts

Regional Center for Mapping and Resource Development is to undertake demonstrative training and assessment activities mainly under Components 2 and 3; and specifically focusing on demonstratively building capacity for land use planning, biodiversity information collation as well as forestry and natural resources management. RCMRD will work closely with EPA and other project partners.

## **6. Terms of Reference for The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)**

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is a sustainable forestry solution to help protect healthy and resilient forests, for all, forever. The FSC leads the world's most rigorous and trusted forest certification system, trusted by NGOs, consumers, and businesses alike. With more than 160 million hectares of forests managed to FSC standards around the world, FSC-certified forests are managed to strict environmental, social, and economic standards. Forest operators can obtain FSC's Forest Management Certification which verifies that the forest is managed in a way that is environmentally responsible, socially beneficial, and economically viable. FSC will support capacity building towards forest certification including undertaking



a feasibility study on opportunities and readiness for certification. There is potential for FSC Forest Management certification of at least 100,000 hectares of protected areas, and FSC Forest Management certification of 20,000 hectares outside protected areas in the Gola landscape. Besides, capacity building will enable any future needs for certification to be undertaken particularly when a national FSC standards process is initiated in the country.

## **7. Terms of Reference for Forestry planning and restoration Consultancies**

This project will rely on the inputs of personnel specialized in forestry inventories and management planning development. A series of consultants will be recruited to provide the services outlined below among others:

- Undertake training needs assessments and facilitate the development of options for targeted training.
- Train to strengthen institutionally and facilitate behavioural changes within the participating sectors to enhance forest management planning and biodiversity inventories.
- Develop a long-term capacity-building strategy and human resource infrastructure needed to support the implementation of forest restoration activities.

The consultants will undertake training and other activities under Components 1, 2 and 3; as indicated in Annex C II (the Project Timeline) - and specifically focusing on building capacity for forest carbon assessments and forest restoration.

## ANNEX N: Terms of Reference for Project Staff

### PROJECT MANAGER | FULL-TIME

**Project Objective:** To conserve and restore Kambui Hills FR and the associated community forest lands as part of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape to address climate change impacts.

The Project Manager, based at the Environment Protection Agency (EPA), will be the lead person for the Gola Landscape project in Sierra Leone and will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation of project activities, including the preparation of work plans, budgets and reports. S/he will prepare and supervise the implementation of periodic work plans as per the approved Sierra Leone Gola landscape child project document. S/he will ensure the project team timely delivers project goals to conserve and restore Kambui Hills FR and the associated community forest lands as part of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape to address climate change impacts. S/he will lead all project capacity-building activities to strengthen governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills FR, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape. This will help Sierra Leone to promote participatory and gender-responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods as well as improve management of Kambu Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation. S/he will act as the secretary for the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and represent the project to the GoS, the regional coordination unit, Conservation International, and other partners as required.

S/he will ensure the smooth running of the project through monitoring and communication with the PSC, Districts, Chiefdoms, contractors, consultants, community-level stakeholders and other engaged ministries, agencies, institutions, and individuals.

#### Duties and Responsibilities

The position will provide technical inputs, direction, oversight, and reporting to components 1, 2, 3, and 4, as well as components 5 & 6 (M&E), and PMC. Specific activities by project component, M&E, and PMC are below.

COMPONENT 1:	Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills FR, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape.	
<b>Outcome 1.1:</b> Strengthened coordination and capacity of key stakeholders (state and non-state actors and communities) for effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape.	<b>Output 1.1.1:</b> Provide technical support and facilitation for the achievement of the output:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Execute the creation of specific gender-responsive plans, tools, and guidelines that support sustainable forest and land use planning and management.</li><li>• Carry out specialized technical assessments on land management practices directly linked to output goals.</li><li>• Build and coordinate stakeholder relationships</li><li>• Design and deliver training sessions aligned with project outputs, ensuring stakeholder alignment with project objectives.</li><li>• Carry out the development of technically robust and inclusive contributions to project plans.</li></ul>
	<b>Output 1.1.2:</b> State and non-state actors (from key government ministries, departments, agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, private	

	sector and communities) trained to support effective management of the Greater Gola Forest landscape.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out activities relating to the identification of key stakeholders for training through stakeholder mapping</li> <li>• Collaborate with technical teams to develop training platforms and materials tailored to the Greater Gola Forest landscape management needs.</li> <li>• Provide targeted feedback to ensure alignment with project objectives and inclusivity.</li> <li>• Organize and participate in training workshops to ensure that content aligns with project objectives and supports operational goals.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Output 1.1.3:</b> Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders (local communities, CSOs/NGOs and private sector) to support effective governance of the Greater Gola landscape enhanced. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve coordination for harmonization and relationship building of stakeholders and other partners working in the region</li> <li>• Maintaining awareness of landscape activities and other projects to avoid duplication of efforts for greater impact.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Output 1.1.4:</b> A centre of excellence hub for capacity building and monitoring biodiversity conservation, land use planning and management for enhanced climate resilience established and functional. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out data collection and analysis on climate resilience activities</li> <li>• Make decision-making to improve the management of natural resources</li> <li>• Build relationships and collaboration with universities and other partners</li> </ul>	
<b>COMPONENT 2:</b>	Promoting participatory and gender-responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods	
<b>Outcome 2.1:</b> Increased community-level climate-resilient livelihoods for reduced land degradation and enhanced biodiversity conservation	<b>Output 2.1.1:</b> Community awareness and education programs to support sustainable forest management, land use planning and climate change impacts developed and implemented. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping and coordination of stakeholders</li> <li>• Develop programs and training materials</li> </ul>	
	<b>Output 2.1.2:</b> Gender-responsive participatory spatial / landscape plans for the Greater Gola Forest landscape developed /updated and implemented. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out technical activities plans and review for the inclusivity of all stakeholders</li> </ul>	
	<b>Output 2.1.3:</b> Gender-responsive and climate-resilient alternative income-generating initiatives supported, ensuring inclusive participation and equitable benefits for all genders while promoting sustainable and environmentally friendly practices. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping and coordination of stakeholders especially the local communities/chiefdoms</li> </ul> Analyze data that inform decisions on priority livelihood investments	
	<b>Output 2.1.4.:</b> Innovative and inclusive pro-nature enterprises that reinforce sustainable forest management supported, ensuring gender equality in participation, access and benefits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee and provide input to the seed funding for forest-sustainable enterprises</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement capacity-building initiatives and conduct training for pro-nature enterprises</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Output 2.1.5:</b> Inclusive community-based reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives to improve access to ecosystem services implemented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mapping and coordination of stakeholders especially the local communities/chiefdoms</li> <li>Plan and execute the implementation of SLM Plans</li> </ul>
<b>COMPONENT 3:</b>	Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation.
<b>Outcome 3.1:</b> Strengthened biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use of the Kambui HFR and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape	<p><b>Output 3.1.1.:</b> Provide technical support and facilitation for the achievement of the output: Extent of deforestation and forest degradation in Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests established, documented and restoration implemented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the improvement of the land use plans, providing technically sound input</li> </ul> <p><b>Output 3.1.2.:</b> Forest conservation and regeneration as one of the strategies for improved ecosystem health and sustainable financing promoted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze results of studies on forest conservation and related materials and studies</li> <li>Participate in trainings to local communities and help ensure that traditional knowledge is collected</li> </ul>
<b>COMPONENT 4:</b>	Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management
<b>Outcome 4.1:</b> Improved transboundary collaboration and coordination for enhanced management of the shared Lofa-Gola-Mano Conservation Corridor	<p><b>Output 4.1.1:</b> Facilitate and operationalize the functioning of the committees established under the IUCN-MRU-IW Project to support improved management and sustainable use of river basin resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage relationship with partners</li> <li>Participate in coordination events related to the GEF – 8 programming</li> <li>Capture lessons learned, synthesizing local knowledge and incorporate into decision making processes</li> </ul> <p><b>Output 4.1.2:</b> In collaboration with the regional coordination project, facilitate the enhancement of capacity for applied research to support decision-making processes for transboundary natural resource management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out tasks related to decision-making and collaboration for both country-level projects and the regional coordination project.</li> <li>Carry out tasks relating to the RCP's capacity needs assessments</li> <li>Carry out tasks relating to knowledge management and exchanges and communicate lessons learned</li> <li>Capture lessons learned and knowledge from the RCP and ensure application to the Gola Forest</li> </ul> <p><b>Output 4.1.3.:</b> Implement Nature-based solutions activities to improve freshwater ecosystem health and mitigate climate change impacts and riverbank deterioration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in capacity-building events on nature-based solutions for local communities.</li> <li>Work with communities to determine nature-based solution priorities and guide restoration strategies</li> </ul>
<b>COMPONENT 5:</b>	Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons

<b>Outcome 5.1:</b> Strengthened coordination, capacity building, knowledge management, learning and sharing between the Sierra Leone Child Project and initiatives at landscape, national and regional levels including the GEF-8 Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project	<b>Output 5.1.1:</b> Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy (including gender, equality and inclusion aspects). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate the developed KM and Comms strategy and incorporate relevant feedback.</li> </ul>
	<b>Output 5.1.2:</b> Organize the participation of Sierra Leonian stakeholders in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project 3-day Annual Forums.
	<b>Output 5.1.3:</b> Learning and exposure visits facilitated by the Sierra Leone Child Project (and where applicable coordinated by the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize and participate in exposure visits aimed at maintaining relationships with RCP and fellow child projects</li> </ul>
	<b>Output 5.1.4:</b> Knowledge management products integrating gender, equality and inclusion aspects and have them disseminated at landscape, national and regional levels including integrating lessons learnt and best-case practices on traditional knowledge for natural resource management, and information on the project as a model for Nature-Based-Solutions). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversee the development of KM and Comms strategy and review it.</li> </ul>
<b>COMPONENT 6:</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework
<b>Outcome 6.1:</b> An effective and gender-responsive M&E system for the project	<b>Output 6.1.1:</b> Lead in the preparation of periodic M&E reports and have them submitted to CI-GEF Agency. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for generating and submitting annual PIR reports to the CI-GEF Agency</li> <li>Prepare the inception workshop including drafting the report and other materials</li> </ul>
	<b>Output 6.1.2.:</b> Support the processes to conduct independent evaluations in accordance with the GEF and CI-GEF Evaluation Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support GEF Supervision Missions</li> </ul>
<b>PMC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compile monthly, quarterly and annual administrative reports.</li> <li>Carry out quality control of monthly, quarterly and annual financial reports and submit them to CIGEF.</li> <li>Provide external auditors with materials needed to conduct audits.</li> </ul> Conduct site visits to ensure compliance and provide financial assistance support to project partners in Sierra Leone.

## FINANCE AND GRANTS OFFICER| FULL-TIME

**Project Objective:** To conserve and restore Kambui Hills FR and the associated community forest lands as part of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape to address climate change impacts.

The Financial and Grants Officer will undertake administration work and oversee the grants and financial management of the project. S/he will support achieving project outputs through fiduciary, procurements, logistical support and any administrative work including human resource management needs at the PMU and with partners as well as budgetary control, efficient resource management and timely delivery of resources in line with The Government of Sierra Leone, EPA, CI and GEF financial management/fiduciary policies and procedures. S/he will carry out due diligence and build the capacity of GEF funding recipients to ensure adherence to the GEF Minimum Fiduciary Standards. This will also include Preparing financial reports, including annual budget execution reports, and quarterly financial statements and monitoring expenditures within the approved budget.

PMC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop, monitor, and adjust the project's budget to ensure alignment with overall financial goals.</li> <li>• Verify project spending and financial practices align with donor and organizational requirements.</li> <li>• Manage cash flow, including monitoring and scheduling disbursements to ensure adequate liquidity for project activities.</li> <li>• Serve as primary contact and manage day-to-day interactions with contracted consultants, in coordination with project staff responsible for financial direction of contract.</li> <li>• Review and reconcile project expenditures, including verifying receipts, invoices, and other documentation to prevent financial discrepancies.</li> <li>• Oversee sub-grantee financial management, including reviewing financial reports, verifying expenses, and ensuring alignment with grant guidelines.</li> <li>• Coordinate procurement of goods and services, ensuring that procurement processes adhere to budget limits and compliance standards.</li> <li>• Process routine financial transactions including consultant invoices</li> <li>• Assist consultants with routine financial, compliance and system reporting questions. Provide training and support as directed.</li> <li>• Monitor contracts for compliance with service agreements and CI and GEF policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Compile monthly, quarterly and annual administrative reports.</li> <li>• Carry out quality control of monthly, quarterly and annual financial reports and submit them to CIGEF.</li> <li>• Provide external auditors with materials needed to conduct audits.</li> <li>• Provide training on financial management, compliance, and reporting to project staff and partners, ensuring they understand financial policies and requirements.</li> <li>• Conduct site visits to ensure compliance and provide financial assistance support to project partners in Sierra Leone.</li> </ul>
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## ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS AND GENDER OFFICER | FULL-TIME

**Project Objective:** To conserve and restore Kambui Hills FR and the associated community forest lands as part of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape to address climate change impacts.

The Environmental, Social Safeguards, and Gender Officer will be responsible for ensuring that the project adheres to all environmental, social, and gender inclusion policies throughout implementation. This includes overseeing compliance with environmental and social safeguards, conducting gender-sensitive analysis, and integrating these aspects into project planning and execution with all stakeholders. The Officer will work closely with the project management unit (PMU) and executing partners to establish and implement standards aligned with GEF policies, as well as Government of Sierra Leone, EPA, and CI guidelines.

<b>COMPONENT 1:</b>	Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills FR, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape.
<b>Outcome 1.1:</b> Strengthened coordination and capacity of key stakeholders (state and non-state)	<b>Output 1.1.1:</b> Ensure gender-responsive policies, plans, tools, and guidelines for sustainable forest and land use are developed, reviewed, and consistently implemented, focusing on safeguarding environmental and social standards.

actors and communities) for effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape.	<b>Output 1.1.2:</b> Conduct training sessions to empower state and non-state actors from government, civil society, the private sector, and communities to integrate inclusive and gender-responsive approaches for effective forest management.	
	<b>Output 1.1.3:</b> Facilitate collaboration and relationship-building among stakeholders to foster inclusive governance that respects environmental, social, and gender considerations for the Greater Gola landscape.	
	<b>Output 1.1.4:</b> Support the development of the center of excellence dedicated to building capacity for forest management, biodiversity monitoring, and climate-resilient land use planning.	
<b>COMPONENT 2:</b>	Promoting participatory and gender-responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods	
<b>Outcome 2.1:</b> Increased community-level climate-resilient livelihoods for reduced land degradation and enhanced biodiversity conservation.	<b>Output 2.1.1:</b> Develop and implement community awareness programs on sustainable forest management, climate resilience, and gender-sensitive land use, ensuring environmental safeguards are central.	
	<b>Output 2.1.2:</b> Advance participatory landscape planning for the Greater Gola Forest by implementing gender-responsive, inclusive spatial plans that prioritize environmental and social impacts.	
	<b>Output 2.1.3:</b> Support climate-resilient, alternative income projects that engage all genders, fostering equity and environmental responsibility in sustainable livelihood practices.	
	<b>Output 2.1.4:</b> Promote pro-nature enterprises that bolster sustainable forest management, focusing on inclusivity and equitable access to resources.	
	<b>Output 2.1.5:</b> Oversee the implementation of community-based reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives, ensuring inclusivity in ecosystem service access.	
<b>COMPONENT 3:</b>	Improving management of Kambu Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation.	
<b>Outcome 3.1:</b> Strengthened biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use of the Kambui HFR and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape	<b>Output 3.1.1:</b> Support assessments documenting deforestation and forest degradation levels in Kambui Hills, guiding restoration efforts based on environmental and social safeguard standards.	
	<b>Output 3.1.2:</b> Promote Forest conservation and regeneration strategies that enhance ecosystem health, focusing on sustainable financing and alignment with environmental safeguards.	
<b>COMPONENT 4:</b>	Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management	
<b>Outcome 4.1:</b> Improved transboundary collaboration and coordination for enhanced management of the shared Lofa-Gola-Mano Conservation Corridor	<b>Output 4.1.1:</b> Support the Institutionalization of committee functions within the MRU to support river basin management and sustainable resource use, prioritizing social and environmental standards.	
	<b>Output 4.1.2:</b> Carry out applied research capacity to guide decision-making in the transboundary watershed and forest management, incorporating environmental and gender safeguards.	
	<b>Output 4.1.3:</b> Implement nature-based solutions to protect freshwater ecosystems, mitigating climate change impacts and enhancing riverbank stability while considering social safeguards.	
<b>COMPONENT 5:</b>	Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons	
<b>Outcome 5.1:</b> Strengthened knowledge management, learning	<b>Output 5.1.1:</b> Support the development of a knowledge Management and Communications Strategy ensuring that it integrates gender, equality, and inclusion alongside environmental and social considerations.	



and sharing at landscape and national level.	<b>Output 5.1.4</b> Support the Production and dissemination of knowledge products that include gender equality, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability insights, serving as a model for nature-based solutions
<b>COMPONENT 6:</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework
<b>Outcome 6.1:</b> A functional gender-sensitive M&E framework for the project	<p><b>Output 6.1.1:</b> Periodic M&amp;E reports submitted to CI-GEF Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for supporting sub-grantee partners in the preparation of reports.</li> <li>Provide subgrantee information to CI GEF agency supervision missions</li> </ul> <p><b>Output 6.1.2:</b> Support Mid-term Review and Terminal evaluation commissioned by CIGEF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide subgrantee information for, PIRs, CI GEF agency supervision missions, and MTR</li> </ul>

## BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION SPECIALIST | FULL-TIME

**Project Objective:** To conserve and restore Kambui Hills FR and the associated community forest lands as part of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape to address climate change impacts.

The Biodiversity Conservation Specialist will focus on implementing strategies and actions to protect and enhance biodiversity within the Greater Gola Forest landscape. This role includes conducting ecological assessments, supporting biodiversity monitoring, and ensuring that conservation activities align with best practices and project goals. The specialist will provide technical expertise on habitat restoration, sustainable land management, and species protection, with particular attention to integrating gender-responsive approaches and community engagement. They will work closely with stakeholders, including local communities and conservation partners, to promote awareness and sustainable practices that support biodiversity. Additionally, they will contribute to knowledge-sharing and capacity-building initiatives to enhance conservation skills and understanding within the region.

<b>COMPONENT 1:</b>	Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills FR, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape.	
<b>Outcome 1.1:</b> Strengthened coordination and capacity of key stakeholders (state and non-state actors and communities) for effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape.	<b>Output 1.1.1:</b> Support the development, and review of policies and tools to guide sustainable forest and land management within the Greater Gola Forest landscape, prioritizing biodiversity conservation standards.	
	<b>Output 1.1.2:</b> Train state and non-state actors on effective forest management practices that integrate biodiversity conservation principles and foster inclusive, gender-responsive approaches.	
	<b>Output 1.1.3:</b> Strengthen collaboration among stakeholders, ensuring efforts align with biodiversity conservation goals and foster inclusive governance within the Greater Gola landscape.	
	<b>Output 1.1.4:</b> Support the establishment of a centre of excellence and carry out biodiversity conservation training, focusing on capacity-building for sustainable land use and forest management practices that enhance climate resilience.	
<b>COMPONENT 2:</b>	Promoting participatory and gender-responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods	
<b>Outcome 2.1:</b> Increased community-level climate-resilient livelihoods for reduced land	<b>Output 2.1.1:</b> Develop community education programs that promote sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation, incorporating climate adaptation strategies and gender-sensitive approaches.	

degradation and enhanced biodiversity conservation	<b>Output 2.1.2:</b> Implement participatory landscape planning for the Greater Gola Forest, creating spatial plans that support biodiversity conservation and address gender responsiveness.	
	<b>Output 2.1.3:</b> Carry out climate-resilient income-generating initiatives that foster biodiversity preservation, equitable participation, and sustainable practices within community livelihoods.	
	<b>Output 2.1.4.:</b> Support inclusive of pro-nature enterprises, emphasizing biodiversity-friendly approaches and reinforcing forest management efforts.	
	<b>Output 2.1.5:</b> Implement community-based reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives, improving biodiversity conservation and ecosystem service access in a gender-responsive manner.	
<b>COMPONENT 3:</b>	Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation.	
<b>Outcome 3.1:</b> Strengthened biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use of the Kambui HFR and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape	<b>Output 3.1.1.:</b> Conduct assessments on deforestation and forest degradation in Kambui Hills, guiding restoration efforts that align with biodiversity conservation standards.	
	<b>Output 3.1.2.:</b> Advance Forest conservation and regeneration as part of ecosystem health strategies, ensuring biodiversity is central to sustainable financing mechanisms.	
<b>COMPONENT 4:</b>	Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management	
<b>Outcome 4.1:</b> Improved transboundary collaboration and coordination for enhanced management of the shared Lofa-Gola-Mano Conservation Corridor	<b>Output 4.1.1:</b> Support the operationalization of committee functions within the MRU to promote sustainable river basin resource use, ensuring biodiversity conservation is prioritized.	
	<b>Output 4.1.2:</b> Research to inform decisions in transboundary watershed and forest management, focusing on biodiversity and ecosystem health.	
	<b>Output 4.1.3.:</b> Implement nature-based solutions to improve freshwater ecosystem health, mitigate climate change impacts, and support biodiversity within transboundary landscapes.	
<b>COMPONENT 5:</b>	Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons	
<b>Outcome 5.1:</b> Strengthened knowledge management, learning and sharing at landscape and national level.	<b>Output 5.1.1:</b> support the development of the Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy that emphasizes biodiversity conservation aspects.	
	<b>Output 5.1.2:</b> Participate in regional forums to share knowledge on biodiversity conservation best practices for sustainable landscape-level management.	
	<b>Output 5.1.4</b> Produce and share knowledge products highlighting biodiversity conservation outcomes, integrating lessons on sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally sound resource management.	
<b>COMPONENT 6:</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework	
<b>Outcome 6.1:</b> A functional gender-sensitive M&E framework for the project	<b>Output 6.1.1:</b> Periodic M&E reports submitted to CI-GEF Agency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for supporting sub-grantee partners in the preparation of reports.</li> <li>Provide subgrantee information to CI GEF agency supervision missions</li> </ul>	
	<b>Output 6.1.2.:</b> Support Mid-term Review and Terminal evaluation commissioned by CIGEF <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide subgrantee information for, PIRs, CI GEF agency supervision missions, and MTR</li> </ul>	

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION OFFICER | FULL-TIME

**Project Objective:** To conserve and restore Kambui Hills FR and the associated community forest lands as part of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape to address climate change impacts.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Officer will be responsible for designing, implementing, and managing the M&E framework to track project performance and ensure accountability to stakeholders, including adherence to GEF and CI standards. This role will involve conducting regular monitoring activities, collecting and analyzing data to assess project progress against defined outcomes, and providing evidence-based insights for adaptive management. The officer will prepare periodic reports, support the documentation of project impacts, and ensure timely submission of M&E documentation to the CI-GEF Agency. Additionally, the officer will lead evaluations, such as the Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation, to identify lessons learned and areas for improvement, while ensuring that gender-responsive and inclusive practices are embedded in all M&E processes.

<b>COMPONENT 1:</b>	Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills FR, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape.	
<b>Outcome 1.1:</b> Strengthened coordination and capacity of key stakeholders (state and non-state actors and communities) for effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape.	<b>Output 1.1.1:</b>	Develop and apply tools to monitor the effectiveness of gender-responsive policies, plans, and guidelines supporting sustainable forest and land use planning within the Greater Gola Forest landscape.
	<b>Output 1.1.2:</b>	Assess training impact on state and non-state actors, tracking improvements in inclusive and effective management practices for biodiversity conservation in the Greater Gola landscape.
	<b>Output 1.1.3:</b>	Measure and report on stakeholder collaboration activities to ensure coordinated, inclusive, and gender-responsive governance outcomes are achieved.
<b>COMPONENT 2:</b>	Promoting participatory and gender-responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods	
<b>Outcome 2.1:</b> Increased community-level climate-resilient livelihoods for reduced land degradation and enhanced biodiversity conservation.	<b>Output 2.1.1:</b>	Track implementation and effectiveness of community awareness programs on sustainable forest management, documenting their reach and gender-sensitive impacts.
	<b>Output 2.1.2:</b>	Evaluate participatory landscape plans to ensure gender-responsive approaches are reflected in forest management and conservation activities within the Greater Gola Forest.
	<b>Output 2.1.3:</b>	Measure the impact of alternative income-generating initiatives, focusing on participation rates and the sustainable, inclusive economic benefits of biodiversity conservation.
	<b>Output 2.1.4:</b>	monitor pro-nature enterprises for their adherence to biodiversity-friendly practices and inclusivity in sustainable forest management.
	<b>Output 2.1.5:</b>	Assess the outcomes of reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives, particularly their effectiveness in enhancing access to ecosystem services and promoting biodiversity conservation.
<b>COMPONENT 3:</b>	Improving management of Kambu Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation.	
<b>Outcome 3.1:</b> Strengthened biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use of the	<b>Output 3.1.1:</b>	Evaluate the documentation and impact of forest degradation assessments in Kambui Hills and track restoration efforts, ensuring biodiversity gains.

Kambui HFR and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape	<b>Output 3.1.2.:</b> Monitor and assess forest conservation and regeneration efforts, linking these activities to broader ecosystem health and sustainable financing objectives.
<b>COMPONENT 4:</b>	Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management
	<b>Output 4.1.2:</b> Support the operationalization of committee functions within the MRU to promote sustainable river basin resource use, ensuring biodiversity conservation is prioritized.
	<b>Output 4.1.3.:</b> Evaluate the effectiveness of nature-based solutions in improving freshwater ecosystem health and mitigating riverbank deterioration, documenting impacts on biodiversity and climate resilience.
<b>COMPONENT 5:</b>	Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons
<b>Outcome 5.1:</b> Strengthened knowledge management, learning and sharing at landscape and national level.	<b>Output 5.1.1:</b> Track the implementation and effectiveness of the Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy, especially as it incorporates biodiversity, gender, and inclusion aspects.
	<b>Output 5.1.3:</b> Monitor the outcomes of exposure visits, ensuring knowledge exchange contributes to the project's learning objectives and biodiversity conservation efforts.
	<b>Output 5.1.4:</b> Evaluate the reach and impact of knowledge products generated, focusing on their integration of gender, equality, and biodiversity conservation lessons across various scales.
<b>COMPONENT 6:</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework
<b>Outcome 6.1:</b> A functional gender-sensitive M&E framework for the project	<b>Output 6.1.1:</b> Periodic M&E reports submitted to CI-GEF Agency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for supporting sub-grantee partners in the preparation of reports.</li> <li>Provide subgrantee information to CI GEF agency supervision missions</li> </ul>
	<b>Output 6.1.2.:</b> Support Mid-term Review and Terminal evaluation commissioned by CIGEF <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide subgrantee information for, PIRs, CI GEF agency supervision missions, and MTR</li> </ul>

## COMMUNICATION OFFICER (PART-TIME)

**Project Objective:** To conserve and restore Kambui Hills FR and the associated community forest lands as part of the Greater Gola Forest Landscape to address climate change impacts.

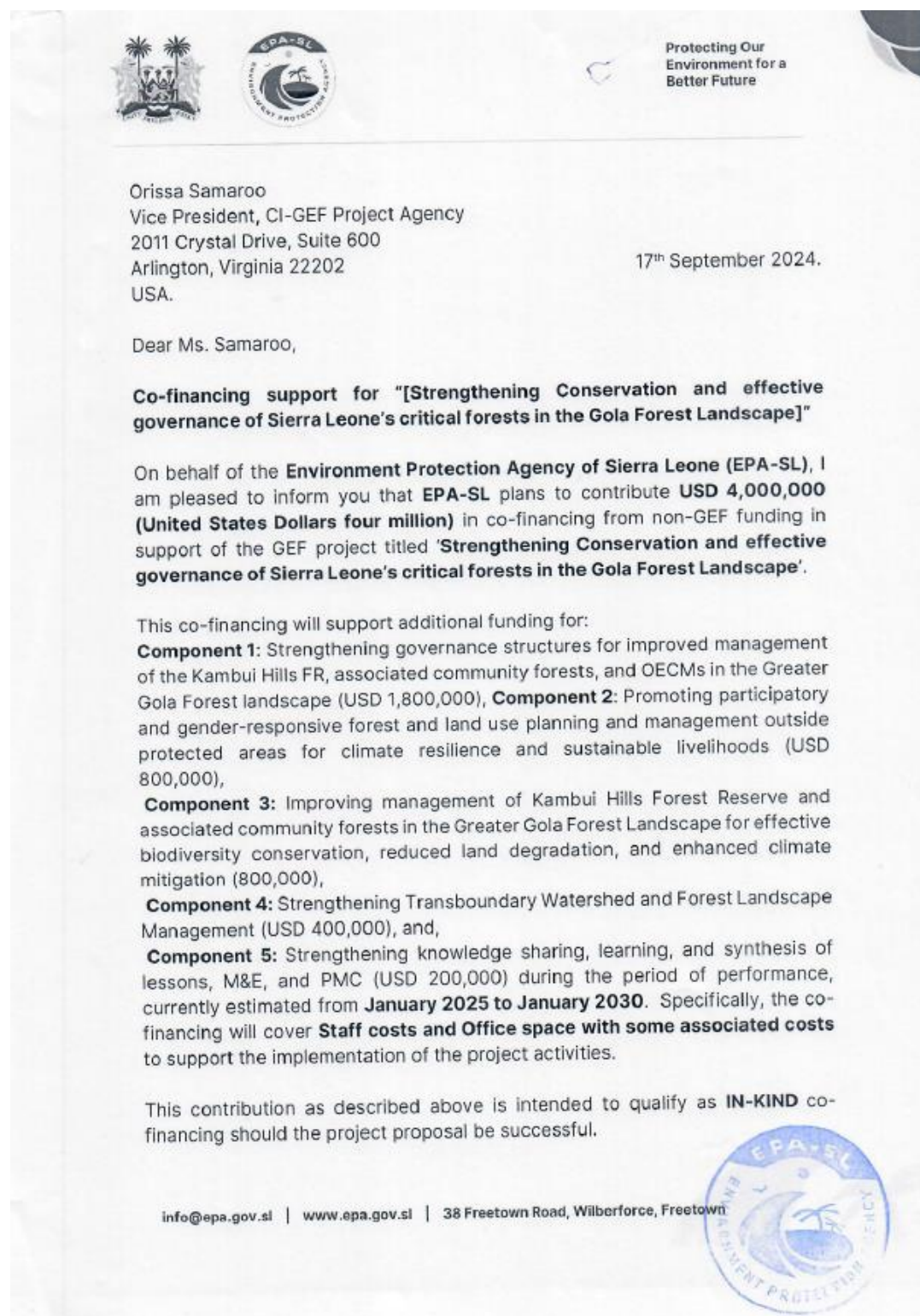
The Communications Officer will be responsible for developing and implementing communication strategies that enhance the visibility and impact of project activities across various platforms, ensuring alignment with the policies and standards of the Government of Sierra Leone, EPA, CI, and GEF. This role will involve crafting and disseminating clear, targeted messaging to support engagement with project stakeholders, including partners, communities, and funders, through public relations, social media, reports, and other communication channels. Additionally, the Communications Officer will work closely with partners to document project outcomes, success stories, and key milestones, creating materials that highlight the project's achievements and compliance with GEF's environmental and social safeguards. The officer will also support knowledge-sharing activities and collaborate with other team members to integrate gender-responsive, inclusive messaging in all communication materials.

COMPONENT 1:	Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills FR, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape.	
Outcome 1.1: Strengthened coordination and capacity of key stakeholders (state and non-state actors and communities) for effective biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use and climate resilience within the Greater Gola Forest Landscape.	Output 1.1.1:	Develop and implement communication strategies to promote gender-responsive policies and guidelines supporting sustainable forest and land use planning across the Greater Gola Forest landscape.
	Output 1.1.2:	Create and distribute communications materials that highlight the achievements and training outcomes for state and non-state actors, demonstrating improved capacity for inclusive and sustainable landscape management.
	Output 1.1.3:	Develop channels and tools to enhance communication among stakeholders, ensuring that collaborative efforts and gender-responsive governance practices are widely communicated and understood.
	Output 1.1.4:	Promote the establishment and activities of the national center of Excellence for forest management and Biodiversity Conservation, creating materials to support capacity-building and climate resilience awareness.
COMPONENT 2:	Promoting participatory and gender-responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods	
Outcome 2.1: Increased community-level climate-resilient livelihoods for reduced land degradation and enhanced biodiversity conservation .	Output 2.1.1:	Design and implement awareness campaigns on climate change adaptation and sustainable land use, ensuring materials are accessible and gender-sensitive to reach diverse community audiences.
	Output 2.1.2:	Produce and disseminate gender-responsive spatial and landscape planning tools, ensuring community involvement in sustainable forest management is communicated effectively.
	Output 2.1.3:	Develop communication materials promoting climate-resilient livelihood initiatives, showcasing inclusive participation and equitable benefits across genders.
	Output 2.1.4.:	Support visibility and engagement for pro-nature enterprises, emphasizing their role in promoting sustainability and economic inclusivity within the Greater Gola landscape.
	Output 2.1.5:	Communicate the goals and achievements of community-led reforestation and land rehabilitation initiatives, focusing on ecosystem service benefits and biodiversity conservation efforts through the development of communications products.
COMPONENT 3:	Improving management of Kambu Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation.	
Outcome 3.1: Strengthened biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use of the Kambui HFR and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape	Output 3.1.1.:	Produce reports and materials communicating the findings of deforestation assessments and the progress of restoration initiatives within Kambui Hills, aligning with conservation and biodiversity goals.
	Output 3.1.2.:	Design campaigns and other events to promote forest conservation and regeneration as strategies for ecosystem health, linking these to broader efforts in sustainable financing.
COMPONENT 4:	Strengthening Transboundary Watershed and Forest Landscape Management	
Outcome 4.1: Improved transboundary collaboration and coordination for enhanced management of the shared Lofa-Gola-Mano Conservation Corridor	Output 4.1.1:	Develop informational resources on the roles of committees established under MRU to support sustainable river basin management, ensuring consistent messaging across borders.
	Output 4.1.2:	Communicate findings from applied research initiatives, ensuring data supports transboundary decision-making processes for watershed and forest management.

		<b>Output 4.1.3.:</b> Create awareness materials promoting nature-based solutions for freshwater ecosystem health and climate resilience, emphasizing the impact on biodiversity and riverbank protection.
<b>COMPONENT 5:</b>	Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons	
<b>Outcome 5.1:</b> Strengthened knowledge management, learning and sharing at landscape and national level.	<b>Output 5.1.1:</b>	Develop the Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy, incorporating gender and inclusivity aspects to ensure alignment with project goals and stakeholder needs.
	<b>Output 5.1.2:</b>	Create and distribute promotional materials to support participation in the Guinean Forests Regional Coordination and Learning Project Annual Forums, ensuring effective knowledge-sharing.
	<b>Output 5.1.3:</b>	Produce materials documenting and communicating lessons learned, enhancing the visibility of these learning exchanges.
	<b>Output 5.1.4:</b>	Generate knowledge management products, such as reports, articles, and multimedia, to communicate gender-inclusive and biodiversity conservation lessons learned at multiple levels, incorporating traditional knowledge and nature-based solutions.
<b>COMPONENT 6:</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework	
<b>Outcome 6.1:</b> A functional gender-sensitive M&E framework for the project	<b>Output 6.1.1:</b>	Collaborate with the M&E team to prepare periodic reports and summaries for CI-GEF Agency, communicating project progress and highlighting outcomes in gender inclusivity and biodiversity conservation.
	<b>Output 6.1.2.:</b>	Support Mid-term Review and Terminal evaluation commissioned by CIGEF <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide subgrantee information for, PIRs, CI GEF agency supervision missions, and MTR</li> </ul>



## ANNEX O: Co-financing Letters





Protecting Our  
Environment for a  
Better Future

We look forward to continued partnership for the implementation of this project.

Sincerely,

*Abu-Bakar Massaquoi*

**Abu-Bakar Massaquoi (PhD)**  
**Executive Chairman, EPA -SL**





**May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

Orissa Samaroo,  
Vice President, CI-GEF Project Agency  
2011 Crystal Drive  
Suite 600  
Arlington, Virginia 22202  
USA

**Subject: Co-Financing support for “Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone’s critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape – GEF PROJECT ID 11143”**

Dear Ms. Samaroo,

On behalf of Conservation International Foundation (CI), I am pleased to inform you that CI plans to contribute **USD \$826,441** in co-financing from non-GEF funding in support of the GEF project titled **“Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone’s critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape – GEF PROJECT ID 11143”**.

The co-financing will support the project implementation and cover organizational costs such as CI’s global finance, communications, human resources, legal, and IT to support the overall effective implementation of project activities during the period of performance, currently estimated from **January 2025 to December 2029**.

This contribution as described above is intended to qualify as **IN-KIND** co-financing should the project proposal be successful.

We look forward to continued partnership for the implementation of this project.

Sincerely,



Barbara DiPietro  
Chief Financial Officer  
Conservation International Foundation

# Gola Rainforest Conservation LG



June 10<sup>th</sup> 2024

Orissa Samaroo  
Vice President, CI-GEF Project Agency  
2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 600  
Arlington, Virginia 22202  
USA

**Subject: Co-Financing support for "Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone's critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape"**

Dear Ms. Samaroo,

On behalf of **Gola Rainforest Conservation Limited by Guarantee (GRC-LG)**, I am pleased to inform you that **GRC-LG** plans to contribute **USD 100,000 (United states Dollars one hundred thousand)** in co-financing from non-GEF funding in support of the GEF project titled **'Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone's critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape'**.

This co-financing will support additional funding for: **Component 3: Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation (particularly outcome 3.1 to deliver output 3.1.2 on REDD+ readiness) during the period of performance, currently estimated from January 2025 to January 2030.** Specifically, the co-financing will cover **Staff costs** to support the implementation of the project activities.

This contribution as described above is intended to qualify as **IN-KIND** co-financing should the project proposal be successful. This co-financing is contingent upon the full execution of a grant from the non-GEF funding source.

We look forward to continued partnership for the implementation of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fomba Aamara Kanneh".

**Fomba Aamara Kanneh**  
**Head of Gola**





June 11, 2024

Ms. Orissa Samaroo  
Vice President, GEF Agency Conservation International (CI-GEF)  
2011 Crystal Drive  
Suite 600, Arlington, Virginia 22202  
USA

**Subject: Co-financing support for Strengthening Conservation and Effective Governance of Sierra Leone's Critical Forests in the Gola, Kambui, and Tiwal Landscape**

Dear Ms. Samaroo,

On behalf of the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) and the Environment Foundation for Africa (EFA), we are pleased to inform you that AWF /EFA plans to contribute **USD 1,500, 000** in co-financing from non-GEF funding in support of the GEF project titled 'Strengthening conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone's critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape.' This co-financing is contingent on alignment of the GEF 8 project and budget with AWF /EFA's existing plans in the Greater Gola Landscape.

This co-financing will support additional funding for: **Component 2:** Promoting participatory and gender responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods, **Component 3:** Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation, and, **Component 5:** Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons, M&E, and PMC during the period of performance, currently estimated from **January 2025 to January 2030**.

Specifically, the co-financing is expected to cover staff time, office space near the project site, access to motorboat for riverine transportation (provided the cost of fuel and operator is covered), conservation leadership development, policy influencing and capacity strengthening in Pan-African and regional Conservation platforms inclusive of protected area agencies and civil society organisations in Greater Gola Landscape to support implementation of project activities.

AWF/EFA will leverage grant co-finance by implementing project activities and mobilizing public and private financing towards building biodiversity economies, climate mitigation and adaptation, biomonitoring, community engagement, ecotourism development and conservation enterprise development in Tiwai Island and at the national level in Sierra Leone. The co-financing is contingent upon the full execution of a grant from a the non-GEF funding source.

As described above, this contribution is intended to qualify as a combination of **\$500,000** in kind and **\$1,000,000** Grant co-financing should the project proposal succeed.



The \$1,000,000 grant-co-financing breakdown is below. Materialization of this amount will be reported annually for the next 5 years in line with the project period.

1. EU NaturAfrica program's investments to the Gola Landscape: **\$180,000**
2. Support for the Sierra Leone Biodiversity Economy Process: **\$240,000**. Breakdown below.
  - AWF Unrestricted Sources (Current): \$40,000
  - Additional Fundraising Target over 2 Years: \$200,000
3. Tiwai Island conservation and biomonitoring resources individual donors, foundations, corporates to AWF: **\$90,000**
4. Support for Tiwai Island Ecotourism Revenue Generation: **\$150,000**. Breakdown below.
  - AWF Current Annual Revenue: \$30,000
  - AWF/EFA tourism product enhancements: \$100,000
  - EFA Contribution: \$20,000
5. UNESCO's support for Joint Management Plan Development for Gola and Tiwai: **\$100,000**
6. Rainforest Trust's support for Tiwai Island Conservation Status Upgrade: **\$240,000**

We look forward to continue partnership to implement this project.



Sincerely,  
**Charles Honyo**  
 Senior Vice President  
 Conservation Strategy, Impact & Learning  
 African Wildlife Foundation



**Tommy Gargel**  
 Executive Director  
 Environment Foundation for Africa





**Regional Centre for  
Mapping of Resources  
for Development**

**June 10<sup>th</sup> 2024**

Orissa Samaroo  
Vice President, CI-GEF Project Agency  
2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 600  
Arlington, Virginia 22202  
USA

Dear Ms. Samaroo,

**Subject: Co-Financing support for “Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone’s critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape”**

On behalf of the **Regional Center for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD)**, I am pleased to inform you that RCMRD plans to contribute **USD 250,000 (United states Dollars Two Hundred and Fifty)** in co-financing from non-GEF funding in support of the GEF project titled ‘**Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone’s critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape**’.

This co-financing will support additional funding for:

**Component 1:** Strengthening governance structures for improved management of the Kambui Hills FR, associated community forests and OECMs in the Greater Gola Forest landscape (USD 150,000), and, **Component 3:** Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation ( USD100,000), during the period of performance, currently estimated from **January 2025 to January 2030**. Specifically, the co-financing will cover **Staff costs** to support the implementation of the project activities.

This contribution as described above is intended to qualify as **IN-KIND** co-financing should the project proposal be successful. This co-financing is contingent upon the full execution of a grant from the non-GEF funding source.

We look forward to continued partnership for the implementation of this project.

Yours Sincerely,

**Dr. Emmanuel Nkurunziza**  
DIRECTOR GENERAL



Forest Stewardship Council®



June 10<sup>th</sup> 2024

Orissa Samaroo  
Vice President, CI-GEF Project Agency  
2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 600  
Arlington, Virginia 22202, USA.

**Subject: Co-Financing support for “[Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone’s critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape]”**

Dear Ms. Samaroo,

On behalf of **Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)**, I am pleased to inform you that **FSC** plans to contribute **USD 20,000 (United states Dollars twenty thousand)** in co-financing from non-GEF funding in support of the GEF project titled ‘**Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone’s critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape**’.

This co-financing will support additional funding for: **Component 1:** Promoting participatory and gender responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods; specifically outcome 1.1 (output 1.1.1 on capacity building) with (USD 10,000), and **Component 3:** Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation – Outcome 3.1 (out 3.1.3 on promoting biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use (another USD 10,000) during the period of performance, currently estimated from **January 2025 to January 2030**. Specifically, the co-financing will cover **Staff costs** to support the implementation of the project activities.

This contribution as described above is intended to qualify as **IN-KIND** co-financing should the project proposal be successful. This co-financing is contingent upon the full execution of a grant from the non-GEF funding source.

We look forward to continued partnership for the implementation of this project.  
Sincerely,

**Lieske van Santen**  
FSC Global Network Director



Ms. Orissa Samaroo  
Vice President, GEF Agency Conservation International (CI-GEF)  
2011 Crystal Drive  
Suite 600, Arlington, Virginia 22202  
USA

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Sheku Kamara  
Executive Director

Conservation Society of Sierra Leone  
86A Main Road, Congo Town  
Freetown, Sierra Leone

June 10<sup>th</sup> 2024

+232 78 434897  
Sheku.kamara@cs-sl.org

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**Subject: Co-Financing support for “[Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone’s critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape]”**

Dear Ms. Samaroo,

On behalf of **Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL)**, I am pleased to inform you that **CSSL** plans to contribute **USD 500,000 (United states Dollars five hundred thousand)** in co-financing from non-GEF funding in support of the GEF project titled **‘Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone’s critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape’**.

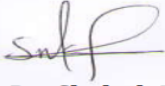
This co-financing will support additional funding for: **Component 2:** Promoting participatory and gender responsive forest and land use planning and management outside protected areas for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods (USD 200,000), **Component 3:** Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation (250,000), and, **Component 5:** Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons, M&E, and PMC (USD 50,000) during the period of performance, currently estimated from **January 2025 to January 2030**. Specifically, the co-financing will cover **Staff costs** to support the implementation of the project activities.

This contribution as described above is intended to qualify as **IN-KIND** co-financing should the project proposal be successful. This co-financing is contingent upon the full execution of a grant from the non-GEF funding source.

Conservation Society of Sierra Leone | phone: +232 75 078 832 / +232 77 588 199 | email: [info@cs-sl.org](mailto:info@cs-sl.org) | website: [www.cs-sl.org](http://www.cs-sl.org)  
Freetown: 86A Main Road, Congo Town | Kenema: 16 Ishiaka Street, IDA | Kabala: 102 Makeni Road

We look forward to continued partnership for the implementation of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'snkf', is placed over a light blue rectangular background.

**Dr. Shekuh Kamara**  
**Executive Director, CSSL**





**GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE**  
**Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change**  
**NATIONAL PROTECTED AREA AUTHORITY AND**  
**CONSERVATION TRUST FUND (NPAA & CTF)**



June 10<sup>th</sup> 2024

Orissa Samaroo  
Vice President, CI-GEF Project Agency  
2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 600  
Arlington, Virginia 22202  
USA

**Subject: Co-Financing support for “Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone’s critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape”**

Dear Ms. Samaroo,

On behalf of National Protected Area Authority (NPAA), I am pleased to inform you that NPAA plans to contribute **USD 300,000 (United states Dollars three hundred thousand)** in co-financing from non-GEF funding in support of the GEF project titled ‘Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone’s critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape’.

This co-financing will support additional funding for: **Component 3: Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated community forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation (250,000), and, Component 5: Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons, M&E, and PMC (USD 50,000) during the period of performance, currently estimated from January 2025 to January 2030.** Specifically, the co-financing will cover **Staff costs** to support the implementation of the project activities.

This contribution as described above is intended to qualify as **IN-KIND** co-financing should the project proposal be successful.

We look forward to continued partnership for the implementation of this project.

Sincerely,

  
Thomas Fayia Kamara  
Executive Director

Address: 4-6 FA John Avenue, Congo Town, Freetown.  
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In replying, please quote  
Ref.: FD/GEF/1006/24



GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

Forestry Department,  
Ministry of the Environment and  
Climate Change  
55 Wilkinson Road  
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Contact: +232-76-627-320  
Email: [majelarnett@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:majelarnett@yahoo.co.uk)  
10<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Orissa Samaroo  
Vice President, CI-GEF Project Agency  
2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 600  
Arlington, Virginia 22202  
USA

Dear Ms. Samaroo,

**SUBJECT: CO-FINANCING SUPPORT FOR “STRENGTHENING CONSERVATION AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE OF SIERRA LEONE’S CRITICAL FORESTS IN THE GOLA FOREST LANDSCAPE”**

On behalf of the **Forestry and Wildlife Department within the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MoECC)**, I am pleased to inform you that **Forestry and Wildlife Department** plans to contribute **USD 300,000 (Three Hundred Thousand United States Dollars)** in co-financing from non-GEF funding in support of the GEF Project titled ‘**Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone’s critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape**’.

This co-financing will support additional funding for: **Component 3:** Improving management of Kambui Hills Forest Reserve and associated Community Forests in the Greater Gola Forest Landscape for effective biodiversity conservation, reduced land degradation and enhanced climate mitigation (USD250,000), and, **Component 5:** Strengthening knowledge sharing, learning and synthesis of lessons, M&E, and PMC (USD 50,000) during the period of performance, currently estimated from **January 2025 to January 2030**. Specifically, the co-financing will cover **Staff costs** to support the implementation of the project activities.

This contribution as described above is intended to qualify as **IN-KIND** co-financing should the project proposal be successful. This co-financing is contingent upon the full execution of a grant from the non-GEF funding source.

We look forward to continued partnership for the implementation of this project.

Yours sincerely,

  
Kate M. B. Karemo-Garnett  
Director of Forestry



7 November 2024

Ms Orissa Samaroo  
Vice President, GEF Agency Conservation International  
(CI-GEF)  
2011 Crystal Drive  
Suite 600, Arlington, Virginia 22202  
USA



**Subject: Co-Financing support for 'Strengthening conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone's critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape'**

Dear Ms Samaroo

On behalf of **The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)**, I am pleased to inform you that **RSPB** hopes to contribute approximately **USD 200,000** in co-financing from non-GEF funding in support of the GEF project titled '**Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone's critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape**'.

This co-financing will support additional funding for **COMPONENTS 1, 2 and 3** during the period of performance, currently estimated from **January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, to February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2030**. Specifically, the co-financing will cover staff salaries, travel and subsistence, and meeting and workshop costs to support the implementation of the project activities. This co-financing is contingent upon receipt of a grant from the non-GEF funding source, and the amount may change as the proposal to that source is still in development.

This contribution as described above is intended to qualify as **IN-KIND** co-financing should the project proposal be successful.

We look forward to continued partnership for the implementation of this project.

Sincerely,

Dr Jo Gilbert  
Director, International

**RSPB Headquarters**  
RSPB The Lodge  
Potton Road  
Sandy  
SG19 2DL

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The RSPB is part of BirdLife International, a network of passionate organisations, working together to save nature across the world.

**Patron:** His Majesty The King **President:** Dr Amir Khan **Chief Executive:** Beccy Speight  
The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) is a registered charity: England and Wales no. 207076, Scotland no. SC037654.  
Registered address: The Lodge, Potton Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL

## ANNEX P: Vehicle Justification

<b>Project Title:</b>	Strengthening Conservation and effective governance of Sierra Leone's critical forests in the Gola Forest Landscape		
<b>GEF Agency:</b>	Conservation International	<b>GEF Agency Project ID:</b>	GEF:
<b>GEF Focal Area (s):</b>	Multi-Focal Area (Biodiversity, Climate Change, and Land Degradation)	<b>Geographic Scope:</b>	Fourteen participating chiefdoms within the Kambui-Tiwai-Gola landscape project area in the districts of Pujehun and Kenema, in the Southern and Eastern Provinces of Sierra Leone, respectively, near the border with Liberia.
<b>Priority Landscapes Total Project Area:</b>	Sierra Leone's Greater Gola landscape. The project sites straddle 14 chiefdoms stretching an area of 5,923,400 ha.	<b>Primary intervention sites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pujehun and Kenema districts in the Southern and Eastern Provinces of Sierra Leone</li> <li>- Target chiefdoms include: Koya, Barri, Tunkia, Nomo, Nangowa, Small Bo and Makipele among others (Table 3 in ProDoc).</li> </ul>
<b>No of Beneficiaries</b>	172,630 beneficiaries of which 30% are women	<b>Project Personnel Plan (to be hired)</b>	8 staff and 30 consultants

### PROCUREMENT REQUEST:

Procurement of one (1) 4WD vehicle and three (3) motorcycles

### PURPOSE:

To purchase a 4WD and 3 motorcycles to directly support PMU and project team transportation/mobilization in project delivery/implementation and support forest inventories and data collation for the Centre of Excellence Hub, which will be located within the Environment Protection Agency headquarters in Free Town.

### BUDGET ALLOCATION:

\$ 62,000 (\$50,000 x 1 4x4 vehicle + \$4,000 x 3 motorcycles)

### CUSTODIAN:

Professional Driver (co-financed by EPA) and PMU staff

### USERS

PMU and other project staff

### RELATION TO PROJECT OUTPUTS (Low, Medium, High)



High

## **JUSTIFICATION**

The proposed new vehicle will be utilized by the technical and PMU team to directly support them in the project delivery/implementation. The vehicles will facilitate activities such as transporting the data collection technical teams, awareness campaigns, PMU staff, community/other stakeholder engagement, partners or consultants to attend meetings, project site visits for monitoring, activity implementation or any events related to the project, or for transportation of any necessary equipment and items to the project sites.

We believe that the acquisition of new 4x4 and 3 motorcycles will be more advantageous, as it will provide more efficient, effective and timely delivery when compared with renting a single vehicle for each trip. In addition, since the project duration is 5 years, purchasing a vehicle and 3 motorcycles is more cost-effective compared with the vehicle rental cost for the 5 years.

Furthermore, in Sierra Leone, insurance covering for hired vehicle is ineffective. Most of the vehicles are using third party insurance which do not cover onboard passengers. Purchasing a new vehicle will help increase safety and security for staff and reduce risk of travelling accidents with the budgeted safety equipment. The new vehicle will also reduce the need for use of personal vehicles during work hours for staff transportation, which will greatly reduce administrative cost by eliminating the often tedious and time-consuming reimbursement process for personal vehicle mileage reimbursement. Additionally, it helps mitigate any risk that can sometimes be associated with mileage reimbursement requests.

There is no other grant co-financing for this project that can be used to cover these costs. The vehicle is essential to deliver on project outcomes that will be achieved in an expansive remote region.

Additionally, three motorcycles are requested for the project staff in Kenema as a lower cost and lower carbon footprint option when compared with purchasing additional vehicles. The project entails significant community participation and frequent travel will be required by all the project staff. These additional motorcycles will allow project staff to engage with communities and other stakeholders within the region as needed during the dryer seasons.

## **LANDSCAPE ACCESS**

Sierra Leone's Greater Gola Landscape covering fourteen participating chiefdoms around the Kambui-Tiwai-Gola project area in the districts of Pujehun and Kenema in the Southern and Eastern Provinces of Sierra Leone near the border with Liberia. Many roads in the rural areas close to the forest sites where project activities will take place are hard-to-reach and require a strong 4WD vehicle to manoeuvre the terrain.

## **SECURITY**

To follow standard vehicle management policies (insurance coverage, driving authorization, safety and security equipment in-place, etc.). Helmets and other safety equipment are included in the budget.

## EFFICIENCY

Single procurement, no need to administer annual contract (compared to rental).

## FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

Cost comparison between purchase and rental for 5 years period (based on market price and historical transaction with vendors)

### Purchase

- Vehicle US\$ 50,000 x 1 unit = US\$ 50,000
- Motorcycles 4000 x 3 units = US\$ 12,000
- Motorcycle insurance US\$ 100 x 5 x 3 = US\$ 1,500
- Motorcycle maintenance US\$ 150 x 5 x 3 = US\$ 2,250
- Insurance US\$700/year x 1 unit x 5 years = US\$ 3,500
- Maintenance US\$ 1,000/year x 1 unit x 5 years = US\$ 5,000
- **Total** = **US\$ 74,250**

### Rental (daily rate of \$ 170 excluding fuel)

Doing 15 days per month on average in the field considering the nature of field engagement in line with the project activities not including additional PMC

- Vehicle US\$ 2,550/mo. x12 mo. x 1 unit x 5 years = US\$ 153,000
- **Total** = **US\$ 153,000**

### Tax Exemption:

N/A

### Vehicle Fleet Status of EA and Partners

Partner	Vehicle Fleet Inventory	Vehicle Fleet Assignment	Vehicle Fleet Status	Justification for Vehicle Purchase

<b>Executing Partner (EPA)</b>	The vehicle fleet is 15 vehicles. 10 are driveable.	The vehicles are all dedicated to particular projects as follows: Four of the 10 available vehicles are assigned to regional offices to facilitate core EPA mandates including EIAs, monitoring, stakeholder engagements and work supervision. Two are assigned to the executive chairman and Chief Director to undertake EPA mandate management and coordination activities nationwide. Two are assigned to field operations directorates that undertake quarterly and annual monitoring and audit exercises respectively to over 200 EIA-licensed companies in Sierra Leone (Agriculture, mining, infrastructure development and manufacturing etc...)	Most of the vehicles were procured from 2013 to 2015 and are thus aged. Only 3 were procured in 2021, 2022 and 2023.	The Gola landscape project is mostly field-based and has many activities on community engagement, biological surveys and inventories as well as facilitating participatory land use planning and restoration planting; all of which depend on mobility for delivery of outputs. We note that field-based projects such as this Gola landscape project depend on mobility for success in deliverables. The aspects of the project on capacity building will also need a lot of field travels.
<b>CSSL</b>	CSSL 005 (Toyota Hilux), CSSL 006 (Toyota Land Cruiser), CSSL 010 (Toyota Landcruiser)	Lake Sonfon/Pamapana River project area, Koinadugu district and Western Area Peninsula Forest. One located in Kabala, two in Freetown	Two of them are very old: one (CSSL 006) is parked and the other (CSSL 005) is assigned to the Western Area Peninsular component at Big Water. The third one (CSSL 010) is relatively good and is assigned to the project area and based at the branch office in Kabala	The communities in the Kambui Hills Forest area are largely remote, with challenging access due to rough, uneven roads. Multiple community engagements will be required for activities such as awareness creation, community forest development, and land-use planning in these difficult-to-reach areas. This year's unusually heavy rainfall has further deteriorated the already poor road conditions.
	CSSL 007 (Toyota Landcruiser)	Assigned to the ongoing WABiLED project in the Gola landscape, Kenema district and based in our branch office in Kenema	This one is relatively old with high maintenance cost, was used in implementing the 3-year PAPFor project that	

			ended over a year ago	
	CSSL 008 (Toyota Hilux)	Currently re-assigned to the JOA project at the Scarcies River Estuary in the Kambia district and Yawri Bay in the Western Rural District	Was used for implementing the BIOPAMA project at Kambui Hills but currently re-assigned to the JOA project at the Scarcies River Estuary in the Kambia district	
<b>EFA</b>	4 Vehicles - 1 Toyota L/C station wagon procured 2011, 1 single cabin Pick up, 1 Toyota Hilux Twin Cabin (2012 for Eu project implemented 5 years), 1 Toyota Hiace minibus 15 seater ( for Education outreach since 2005 and so very old	Three of the four vehicles were all under an EU-funded project, with the S/wagon assigned to a GIZ project work thereafter although they are all aged. The 1 single cabin Pick up and 1 Toyota Hilux Twin Cabin are all over ten years (procured in 2012 for Eu project implemented for 5 years and now down)	Whenever these vehicles are driven there is a breakdown. There is a project being implemented with Save the Children in areas in Pujon and coastal regions but the organisation rents/hires vehicles for the work because the current fleet is not useable but the hire expenses are so high and so not cost-effective.	Because the project location is in the Gola landscape and remote as well as a rugged terrain area where even new vehicles struggle, it would be better to have the vehicle to facilitate the community engagement and participatory land use planning that we will be engaged in for this partnership.
<b>FD</b>	One vehicle available for the whole department (ATP 621 a Toyota Landcruiser procured in 2014.	It was assigned for the REDD+ project and still dedicated to that work.	The vehicle is now aged - 10 years	The FD will be involved in biological inventories as partners and would require mobility to the Kambui sites. The FD will thus look to EPA to provide the much need travels to sites.



## ANNEX Q: Guinean Forests PFD - Responses to comments from the GEF

Section	GEF Council Comments	Responses (How and where the comment has been addressed)
<b>a. Germany</b>		
	<p>Germany approves the following PIF in the work program but asks that the following comments be taken into account.</p> <p>Germany welcomes this proposal, as it focuses on an important forest area, which does not always get the attention it deserves. At the same time, Germany has the following comments that it suggests being addressed in the next phase of finalizing the program proposal.</p> <p>Suggestions for improvements to be made during the drafting of the final program proposal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Germany appreciates that the program is working on forest governance, having different approaches for forests inside and outside of protected areas while working on improved livelihoods for the local population.</li> <li>2) Germany suggests reconsidering if there are parts of the program that can be downsized without compromising the targeted positive effects on forests and livelihoods in order to match ambition and the potential impact.</li> <li>3) Furthermore, the success of the program relies on underfunded governmental forest and protected area management agencies. Therefore, more</li> </ol>	To be addressed at the Program Level

Section	GEF Council Comments	Responses (How and where the comment has been addressed)
	<p>emphasis should be put on capacity building and investments to enhance the infrastructure and equipment of those agencies.</p> <p>4) The European Union's PAPF and Germany's TGS program seem to have similar objectives. Germany suggests coordinating intensively with those programs.</p>	
<b>b. Canada</b>		
	<p>Deforestation/Small-Scale Farming/Soil (MSF):</p> <p>1) Recommend including a new indicator that shows the net impact of the Programs in halting and reversing ecosystem loss, in particular deforestation, in particular for the Amazon, Congo, and Critical Forest Biome Integrated Program and the Net-Zero Nature-Positive Accelerator Program.</p> <p>2) The current core indicators can show only the positive impacts of the Programs (e.g. CI3, CI4, CI5 ad CI6) but fail to consider any negative change such as deforestation leakage (i.e. improved protection/conservation in one area leading to more deforestation in other or new areas), which may be directly or indirectly related to</p>	<p>1)To be addressed at the Program Level</p> <p>2)To be Addressed at the Program Level. Additionally, the Sierra Project has addressed this in its risk table by providing the following mitigation measures proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To mitigate these risks, the Sierra Leone Child project has developed environmental and social safeguards which were informed by in-depth safeguards screening at the PPG Phase. The safeguards screening as well as the safeguard plans will be validated by the PMU during the implementation phase.</li> <li>• With respect to unintended consequences such as displacing deforestation from project areas to other areas, the key mitigation measures are the promotion of landscape-</li> </ul>

Section	GEF Council Comments	Responses (How and where the comment has been addressed)
	<p>policy reforms, a whole-of-government strategy, integrated approaches or others that the GEF Programs try to achieve.</p> <p>3) GEF should consider including a new core indicator for the two Programs, or at least a project level-indicator for the projects that aim to halt and reverse deforestation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a net change in forest area (considering both forest gain and loss) in the target landscapes, or</li> <li>• a change in area affected by deforestation in the target landscapes.</li> </ul> <p>4) Supporting smallholder farmers through the Amazon, Congo, and Critical Forest Biome Integrated Program (CFB IP):</p> <p>1) We want to underscore that supporting smallholder farmers is critical for halting deforestation and inclusive transition toward deforestation-free supply chains. And, this Program must ensure that smallholder farmers in deforestation-risk commodity chains receive as much attention as other local community groups receive through this IP. In particular for the private sector engagement, we</p>	<p>level planning and management approaches; support for efforts to enhance wider policy coherence and tracking this dynamic within M&amp;E frameworks to trigger/inform adaptive management.</p> <p>3) To be addressed by the GEF</p> <p><b>4) Inclusion of Small Holder Farmers in the Sierra Leone Child Project:</b></p> <p>Supporting smallholder farmers is critical for halting deforestation and inclusive transition toward deforestation-free supply chains: The outputs under Component 2 are interlinked in their collective focus on supporting smallholder farmers to promote sustainable agricultural practices and halt deforestation, thus facilitating an inclusive transition toward deforestation-free supply chains. Output 2.1.1, for example, aims at creating awareness among the communities and educating them about sustainable resource use practices, forest management, land use planning and climate change adaptation. Gender inclusiveness is emphasized, to encourage active participation of men, women, the youth, the marginalized and vulnerable groups, who are members of the local communities. Various communication methods will be used to ensure a wide dissemination of information, including reaching the smallholder farmers in the rural</p>

Section	GEF Council Comments	Responses (How and where the comment has been addressed)
	recommend the projects under this IP reinforce technical, financial and legal support for smallholder farmers within deforestation-risk commodity chains in order to help them adopt innovative, low-cost biodiversity-friendly practices and secure their legal rights (ToC 3).	areas, such as community-based radio broadcasts and outreach efforts. The land-use planning activities under Output 2.1.2, will support the smallholder farmers to optimally utilize available land by spatial allocation to various competing uses. Under Outputs 2.1.3 and 2.1.4, the communities are empowered to select suitable enterprises that will enable them to generate income, through marketable agricultural commodities or nature-based options that support sustainable natural resource use. the selection will be participatory and based on free, prior informed consent, which will enable the smallholder farmers to access the seed-fund to boost productivity and income generation. The farmers will also benefit from trainings, including knowledge and practice in village savings to strengthen their capacity to build their capital base. Through Output 2.1.5, the smallholder farmers will be engaged in sustainable land management and agroforestry practices to reduce land degradation and deforestation, as well as build their resilience to climate change.
<b>c. Switzerland</b>		
	The IP remains relevant, has a high potential to generate GEB, to be scaled up and replicated, contribute to sustainable development, the theory of change is comprehensible and plausible, The levels co-financing seems adequate. It is coherent and in compliance with GEF safeguards. However, regarding the institutional set up we suggest to make the link to the Forest Steward Council (FSC).	The Forest Stewardship Council is one of the executing partners in the Sierra Leone Child Project. The role of FSC is detailed in <b>Annex M</b>
<b>d. United States</b>		
	We appreciate the draft Work Programmes' focus on our planet's most critical forest ecosystems which must be conserved to meet global climate	Sustainable forest management that recognizes the need for alternative livelihoods to conserve forest ecosystems has been addressed in the Sierra Leone child project through two aspects namely a focus on land outside PAs to relieve

Section	GEF Council Comments	Responses <i>(How and where the comment has been addressed)</i>
	<p>and biodiversity goals. Given that the largest driver of tropical deforestation is land clearance for commodity production we would expect GEF projects to clearly define that problem and orient their work programs towards addressing it. We would appreciate greater emphasis on sustainable forest management that recognizes the need for alternative livelihoods to conserve global forest ecosystems. We would strongly advocate for GEF projects to clearly orient their projects around helping countries decouple commodity production from deforestation.</p>	<p>pressure off the forests but also support forest restoration to provide for regulated access. While local communities will be made to appreciate the need for sustainability in land and forest management through community awareness and training of state and non-state actors that may continue to engage with them (Output 1.1.2) through awareness creation initiatives (Output 2.1.1), that will be complemented with supporting communities to adopt sustainable land management (SLM) technologies, while integrating forests and trees on agricultural lands to provide forest and tree products on-farm and reduce the pressure on the protected areas. Land-use planning (Output 2.1.2), as well as site specific alternative income generating opportunities and pro-nature enterprises (Outputs 2.1.3 and 2.1.4) will be promoted and are aimed at empowering the communities economically so that they reduce dependence on the protected areas. Forest restoration efforts will be promoted on land outside the protected areas through agroforestry practices using species that address social, economic and environmental needs of the people, e.g. growing commercial woodlots, trees to meet fuel and medicinal needs, or other species that are important for their high conservation values such as locally or globally threatened species. In addition, the restoration of degraded areas within the Kambui Hills Forest Reserve (Output 3.1.1) and the restoration of ecologically fragile areas, including steep slopes and riparian sites, (Outputs 2.1.5 and 4.1.3) are further efforts towards enhancing the sustainability of forest resources within the Mano River basin.</p>

## ANNEX R: Guinean Forests PFD -Responses to comments from STAP

Section	STAP Comments	
<b>1. Summary of STAP's views of the project</b>		
<p>a) <b>Minor - STAP has identified some scientific and technical points to be addressed in project design</b></p> <p>b) <b>Major - STAP has identified significant concerns to be addressed in project design</b></p>	<p>This proposal presented noticeable weaknesses in a number of areas, which in some cases were quite significant. Whilst it is STAP's assessment that the cumulative impact of these weaknesses would not be enough to affect the delivery of program activities and actual results, which would otherwise warrant assigning a "major" scoring, there are still a number of areas that need attention and will need clarifying and strengthening in the next phase of program development. The issues identified include: the descriptions of the project objective and some of the components, a lack of coherence between the description of some of the outcomes and the activities related to them, and some weaknesses affecting different elements of the theory of change ToC. Further details about the issues that were identified and suggested recommendations to address these are noted below.</p>	<p>To be addressed at the Program Level</p>
<b>2. Project rationale, and project description – are they sound?</b>		
	<p>The project description was quite broad and in some places used rather generic language and phrases taken from the GEF programming document, but without providing a clear explanation of how the proposed targets, objectives and goals will be achieved in practice (<i>e.g. country projects will apply multiple levers of transformation, including an enhanced enabling environment for sustainable forest management through supportive government policy and sustainable financing solutions</i>).</p>	<p>To be addressed at the Program Level</p>

	<p>The program objective was clear but it did not appear to match the proposed activities and environmental benefits described in the same section. The description and analysis of <u>barriers</u> were clear and convincing with a good understanding of the interlinkages between the barriers and how a <u>systems approach</u> is required to address them. One of the two stated program priorities was quite vague and did not provide sufficient details on how it will be achieved (<i>e.g. facilitate work by the countries of the region towards a permanent body for ongoing alignment and harmonization of forest management policies</i>). The proposal provided a reasonable <u>baseline</u> of activities and projects that the current program plans to build upon in order to deliver its outcomes and goal. This included a good mix of international donor funded interventions, regional initiatives and GEF-funded projects.</p> <p>The proposal also included a short section on <u>key lessons</u> learned from current and past investments. This provided an acceptable description of some of the key issues, needs and things that have worked well, but could have arguably included a more detailed analysis of why issues arise and why different types of measures and 2 interventions worked or did not work. This would provide a better understanding of the context and how the program is designed to overcome obstacles experienced in previous initiatives.</p> <p>The Theory of Change (ToC) section presented a number of weaknesses in areas such as the <u>assumptions</u>, which in a number of cases are given facts and do not cover underlying assumptions that affect the intended outcomes. The <u>ToC diagram</u> is very dense and difficult to read and presents some</p>	
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	<p>inconsistencies and gaps in the logical flow between stages (i.e. lack of outputs and a stage named “desired situation”, which was unclear and did not fit the overall logical flow). The <u>narrative description</u> of the ToC is somewhat disjointed and appears to describe different types of interventions without drawing the logical connections or boundaries between them, or attempting to explain how these will be implemented as part of a coherent framework.</p> <p>The description of the program components varies in strength and clarity. <u>Components 4, 5 and 6</u> are quite clear and describe in enough detail the activities that will be implemented, as well as how these will be implemented and what outputs, results and outcomes they will generate. On the other hand, the descriptions for <u>components 1, 2 and 3</u> are weak, as they lack clarity and specificity on most of the aforementioned aspects. For example, component 1 does not provide enough detail about the activities that will be implemented; component 2 -and especially outcome 2.1- is overall quite weak and should be revised and clarified. More specifically we found that the labelling for outcome 2.1 (i.e. Expanded coverage of protected areas and OECMs) was somewhat misleading and did not match the description provided, it also did not provide any details on how the proposed targets will be achieved, i.e. how PAs and OECMs will be established. It is also not clear whether OECMs are envisaged only for areas outside PAs but where there are no production activities, or whether some of the SLM initiatives could also serve as OECMs, particularly where there is intact forest. The description for component 3 is quite broad and somewhat vague and does not</p>	
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	<p>provide enough details on what the program or projects will actually do and how. The description provided focuses entirely on describing what is needed and why, rather than what should happen and which partners would be relevant/important to achieve specific results. Along similar lines, the description for outcome 3.3 (i.e. Strengthened inclusive community forest governance) is quite broad and the activities proposed seem to be somewhat removed from front-line delivery (i.e. inform the development of mechanisms that will empower communities to deliver NMR processes and governance...), which is not ideal, as it does not match the proposed scope of the outcome.</p>	
<b>3. Specific points to be addressed, and suggestions</b>		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The ToC should be revised and improved. The areas that need attention include: the assumptions, which need to be revised and rewritten to exclude given facts; the outputs which are currently missing; the “desired situation”, which should be better explained and contextualized, as it is not currently clear how this fitted into the wider context of the ToC; and the ToC diagram, which should be revised to include outputs and address the aforementioned issues.</li> <li>2) The description of the components should be revised and improved to address the issues highlighted above in section 2 of this document.</li> <li>3) The description provided for cross-cutting programmatic areas such as multi-stakeholder engagement, knowledge</li> </ol>	To be addressed at the Program Level

	<p>management and learning and innovation should be revised to provide further clarity about the activities that will be implemented to deliver the intended outputs (i.e. provide additional details about the 'what' and the 'how').</p> <p>4) The overall style and language of further program/project documents should be considered carefully and should be focused on providing more detailed and convincing descriptions of the activities and results 3 that the these will deliver and how. The language and style used in this proposal for the description of the country child projects was much clearer and should be used as a template for future documents.</p> <p>5) In the development of the regional and country-level child projects, it would be helpful to provide greater clarity on the proposed scope for OECMs versus integrated land management. As noted in the proposal, OECMs are an evolving concept and the program could play an important role in exploring additional conceptualizations and operational models for OECMs in different land management contexts.</p>	<p>5) The ecologically fragile areas identified through resource mapping and participatory land-use plans under Output 2.1.2 will be restored through watershed protection and erosion control. In particular, forest restoration will be supported for community forests such as Bunumbu, under Output 2.1.5 and 4.1.3 for protection against watershed deterioration. Community engagement will be undertaken for establishment tree belts on fragile areas including very steep sloping land, along water courses and in areas that naturally flood and around critical water bodies. Such areas will constitute protective lands and buffers that will enhance connectivity with the protected areas.</p>
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