

**Response to Working Group Comments on the Update of the Ecosystem Profile for the Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot**

**Working Group Meeting, 18 March 2024**

<b>Working Group Comment</b>	<b>CEPF Secretariat Response</b>	<b>Page or Section in Revised Document</b>
1. Please highlight the relevance and/or applicability of support for livelihood promotion in the strategy for grant making.	Chapter 12 (CEPF Niche) and Table 12.1 explicitly incorporate livelihood promotion into the strategy. In the context of site-based conservation, Investment Priority 1.1 specifically allows for livelihood promotion. Investment Priority 2.1 includes activities that understand the links between species conservation and household income. Investment Priority 4.1 discusses building organizational capacity to better support livelihood promotion work.	Pp. 176-182, 191-192, 193-194, 197-198
2. Please highlight examples of livelihood promotion grants from Phase II and/or the current bridging phase, and how lessons from these inform the current strategy.	Chapter 3, on lessons from the previous investment phase, highlights livelihood projects.	Pp. 5-6
3. Comment on how further work to support livelihoods still allows for, does not detract from, and/or re-enforces better management of Key Biodiversity Areas.	Chapter 15 discusses how sustainable and secure livelihoods underpin conservation impacts.	Pp. 204-205
4. Discuss how the grant-making strategy can use “theories of change” to ensure that livelihood promotion efforts are directly relevant to conservation goals.	Section 12.3.2 discusses ensuring links between livelihood promotion and conservation action.	Pp. 180-181
5. In terms of livelihoods, as well as other factors, provide more explicit consideration of results from Phase II to provide further context for the anticipated results in Phase III.	Chapter 14 discusses the rationale for the anticipated results based on previous experience and the expected scope of the investment.	P. 201

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6. Discuss how mangroves as “threatened ecosystems” inform KBA identification, whether any KBAs or corridors include mangroves, and how the grantmaking strategy might support better management of these areas.	Section 5.3.5 discusses how certain ecosystems, including mangroves and tropical montane grasslands, may be under-represented and how a future gap analysis could lead to updated priorities.	Pp. 53-55
7. Discuss how a focus on KBAs will not prevent a view on achieving greater connectivity across the landscape, whether this is achieved directly by CEPF or by working with others.	Connectivity is one of the four key themes under Strategic Direction 1. Investment Priority 1.1 highlights the need for projects that promote connectivity among sites.	Pp. 190-192
8. Discuss strategies for clustering grants (e.g., geographically, temporally, thematically) and when this might be appropriate.	The discussion on the strategic focus for CEPF (Section 12.3) highlights the value of clustering grants promote a landscape approach. Investment Priority 1.1 promotes clustering of grants and facilitation of communication among a cluster of grantees is explicitly mentioned as being eligible for funding.	Pp. 185, 195-196
9. Apart from existing text on the status of NBSAPs for each country, discuss the ways that CEPF might contribute to updating these.	Section 11.2.1 notes the GEF’s support for NBSAP revision. Strategic Direction 3 notes support for promotion of NBSAP revision and Investment Priority 3.1 specifies that contributing to NBSAP revision is an eligible activity for funding.	Pp. 143-146, 194-196
10. Discuss CEPF’s goals and approaches for reaching community-based and “grassroots” organizations, whether directly or indirectly, considering further some of the limitations of such groups in the context of grants program like CEPF.	Section 12.3.2 notes the importance of grassroots groups and potential modalities for working with them. Investment Priority 1.1 discusses establishing partnerships with community groups as a core purpose of the strategic direction and highlights this as being eligible for funding.	Pp. 180-181, 191-192
11. Discuss lessons/best practices from other CEPF investment regions in relation to fostering networks and peer-to-peer learning among civil society organizations.	Table 12.1 notes the importance of peer-to-peer learning. Section 12.3.4 presents a tiered approach to capacity building and organizational development that encompasses peer-to-peer learning and networks. Peer-to-peer learning is listed as a possible modality in Table 13.8. Investment Priority 4.2 specifies this as an activity eligible for funding.	Pp. 177-178, 181-182, 197-198

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12. Comment on how goals for conservation and organizational development are not mutually exclusive, and how the latter can lead to the former.	Chapter 15 states that promoting a robust and resilient civil society does not come at the expense of conservation action.	Pp. 204-205
13. Consider further the modalities for building the capacity of "local" organizations, whatever their status (e.g., ranging from strong national organizations to smaller grassroots groups), and whether/when this might be done by the RIT versus the Secretariat versus a grantee versus any other provider.	Section 9.3.6 discusses lessons from past capacity and organizational development efforts as these inform the CEPF strategy. Strategic Direction 4 (on a robust and resilient civil society) notes that the RIT will play a key role in planning and coordinating different CB/OD approaches and funding modalities, in concert with dedicated CB/OD specialists. Investment Priority 5.1 further highlights the role of RITs in terms of strengthening grantees.	Pp. 121-127, 196-197, 199-200
14. Discuss lessons from grantees that grew/evolved over the course of support from CEPF, or other donors, and how they "graduated" to greater responsibility.	Section 9.3.4 highlights CSOs that grew through the period of their engagement with CEPF.	Pp. 119-121
15. As possible, update the chapter on Current Conservation Investment to reflect new input from the Working Group.	The discussion of fisheries in Section 7.3.2 removes unsupported statements. Section 11.2.2 includes inputs from Working Group members.	Pp. 87-88, 153-159
16. Given current events in the United States and among all donor states, please provide further context to the changing nature of development aid and conservation investment as this informs Chapter 11 and future grantmaking plans.	The text of Section 11.2.2 manages readers' expectations, noting that available information on "current" conservation investment informed the analysis in late 2024, and that the RIT and Secretariat will use updated information on conservation investment to inform proposed changes to the strategy and priorities. The text of Chapter 11 makes no overt references to changes for any single donor circa early 2025.	Pp. 153-159