



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

December 2022

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

Reference: **CEPF (2022). Long-Term Strategic Vision for the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund investment in the Guinean Forests of West Africa Hotspot. BirdLife International. December 2022. p88**

Summary of the Long-Term Vision

The Guinean Forests of West Africa (GFWA) Biodiversity Hotspot stretches across 621,705 km² from the southern part of West Africa to Central Africa north of the Congo basin. It spreads over 11 countries: Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, São Tomé and Príncipe, and the islands of Equatorial Guinea. The hotspot contains three main forest types which belong to the tropical and subtropical moist broadleaf forests group: lowland forests; mangrove and swamp forests; and submontane to montane forests. This region has remarkable levels of diversity and endemism of plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and insects.

The main causes of degradation and loss of forests and their biodiversity across the hotspot are legal and illegal logging, expansion of plantations, legal and illegal mining and related infrastructure, urbanisation, increased need for wood energy, bushmeat hunting, wildlife trafficking, slash-and-burn agriculture and large-scale agro-industrial crop development. Major drivers of these detrimental activities are a steep population growth, increased incidence of poverty and food insecurity, and changing climate conditions characterised by increased temperatures and changes in rainfall patterns with more intense rainfall events and more severe droughts.

Between 2001 and 2022, CEPF donors have invested USD18.4 million in the form of small or large grants to support civil society organisations (CSOs) in conserving forests and biodiversity in the GFWA Hotspot. This support is not intended to be permanent. Its aim is for CSOs to progressively gain independence to be able to access other resources and respond to future conservation challenges. Five graduation conditions have been previously defined by CEPF (Figure 1):

- i. conservation priorities and best practices for their management are identified, documented, disseminated and integrated into national strategies across the hotspot;
- ii. local civil society groups dedicated to conservation priorities collectively possess sufficient organisational and technical capacity to be effective advocates for, and agents of, conservation and sustainable development, and to be able to influence decision making;
- iii. adequate and continual financial resources are available to address conservation of global priorities;
- iv. institutional framework, public policies and their enforcement, and private sector business practices are supportive of biodiversity conservation; and
- v. monitoring systems are in place to measure impacts and support an adaptive approach.



Figure 1: Synthesized representation of the main conditions and criteria towards graduation.

The objective of the Long-Term Vision is to define the duration and types of investments needed to reach a point at which CEPF and its partners¹ can start to withdraw their support to CSOs. A brief analysis of the current situation in each country was undertaken, remaining priority needs were identified and a set of quantitative targets (with a timeline) were defined under each graduation condition to guide upcoming investments in the hotspot. To achieve this, a review of the literature was undertaken, 38 one-on-one interviews were organised with stakeholders, and CEPF's grantees were consulted through BirdLife/Hatch collaborative online platform and during CEPF's Final Assessment workshop.

Some of the key elements that came out from previous experiences and shall guide future investments are:

- i. peer-to-peer learning is a powerful capacity building approach that should be maximized;
- ii. CSOs must be encouraged to join forces rather than compete for funding;
- iii. there is a need to provide adequate support to CSOs a deeper understanding of the local context;
- iv. grassroots organisations require tailor-made and medium- to long-term support which requires the synchronisation of different funding sources;
- v. behavioural changes are required, so the use of creative media is an efficient approach and the collaboration with the media must be significantly strengthened;

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

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

Important gaps have been identified among existing funding sources for conservation:

- inadequate structures to support small grassroots organisations,
- insufficient funding available for science-based evidence-generation projects to inform the prioritization and design of conservation investments as well as on the long-term impacts of the investments,
- insufficient knowledge sharing and collaboration between stakeholders in the hotspot which prevents adequate complementarity.

These are key gaps that should guide CEPF's investment niche.

Civil society groups in each country have significantly grown during the last two decades. Tremendous progress was made regarding increasing capacity of CSOs and government institutions, improving policies, raising public and communities' awareness, establishing and managing Protected Areas and Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs), and supporting the adoption of nature-based sustainable livelihoods as examples. However, knowledge gaps, capacity strengthening needs, weaknesses in the policy and institutional frameworks, non-capitalised public and private financial opportunities for conservation, among others, still remain. These impede CSOs' ability to influence decision making and behaviours towards the mainstreaming of forests and biodiversity conservation efforts in their respective countries.

Despite the end of the third CEPF's funding phase in the hotspot, CEPF partners' investments are continuing and are already contributing towards achieving the Long-Term Vision's targets. The Long-Term Vision provides a tool to enable conservation actors to move away from isolated project-based approaches towards a programmatic, integrated, landscape-based approach to the conservation of forests and their biodiversity across the hotspot. The collaborative process established to design the Long-Term Vision should be maintained. Adequate systems should be established as soon as possible in order to monitor the progress towards achieving the Long-Term Vision's targets and end of goal whereby Guinean Forests landscapes will be well connected and sustainably managed, and support biodiversity conservation, communities' livelihoods and resilience to climate change.

The Long-Term Vision

The information collected during the consultations with CEPF grantees on achievements and timelines during the previous CEPF investment phases was used to define baseline levels, realistic targets/objectives and timelines for the Long-Term Vision for each criterion. In alignment with the timeline necessary to reach the targets of each of the graduation criteria, the Long-Term Vision is designed over a period of 15 years, split into 5-year implementation periods. **It is estimated that 15 years of coordinated and targeted investments are needed to enable conservation-focused CSOs working in the hotspot to have sufficient capacity, access to resources, and credibility to become enduring and effective agents of forest and biodiversity conservation, independently from the support of CEPF and its partners.** Beyond this period, CEPF and its partners should be able to lessen their support provided for CSOs' strengthening, and focus more on maintaining, reinforcing, extending and updating the systems in place as well as monitoring impacts (e.g. regularly updating Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) and Protected Areas (PA) statuses; punctual and targeted support to partner CSOs for capacity strengthening; continuously supporting the mainstreaming of

biodiversity conservation across sectors; continuously advocating for conservation and looking for opportunities to increase resources allocation for conservation; maintaining and supporting the proactivity of the platforms, networks and roundtables in place; maintaining and constantly improving monitoring systems to ensure that impacts are adequately measured).

Theory of Change

The Theory of Change is divided into two main elements. The first element is the situation analysis. It defines the conservation target – the Guinean Forests’ landscapes – which is composed of four main elements: the KBAs and their species; KBAs’ buffer zones; the biological corridors between KBAs; the production lands including agricultural lands, pastoral lands, plantations, inland and coastal fishing areas; and the communities living in these landscapes. The situation analysis presents the main direct threats identified on the Guinean Forests’ landscapes as well as the contributing factors and drivers (Figure 2). Finally, the proposed strategies (or actions) are summarised in the situation analysis to show how the identified threats will be addressed.

The second element of the Theory of Change is the Diagram of Results chains which shows how the proposed strategies/actions and their outputs will lead to the end goal of the Long-Term Vision: **connected and sustainably managed Guinean Forests Landscapes that support biodiversity conservation, communities’ livelihoods and resilience to climate change across the region**. The results chains are grouped per graduation condition (see Figures 3 to 7). The main stakeholders responsible for the specific strategy/action are specified. These include the government, CSOs, private sector as well as donors and international organisations if they are the main actor for a specific action.

The achievement of the expected results and progresses towards the end goal depends on a number of wider assumptions² (depicted by an ‘A’ in Figures 3 to 7). These assumptions are operating over different scales and at different points along the causal chains. In addition, three critical assumptions have been identified. These critical assumptions will need to be monitored during future potential investment phases. If they were found to no longer be met, CEPF and partners’ engagement in the specific country or site would have to be reconsidered.

Critical assumptions:

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

² Assumptions are external factors or conditions that need to be present for change to happen, but are beyond the power of the project to influence or address, e.g., turnover of government officials, global financial situation.

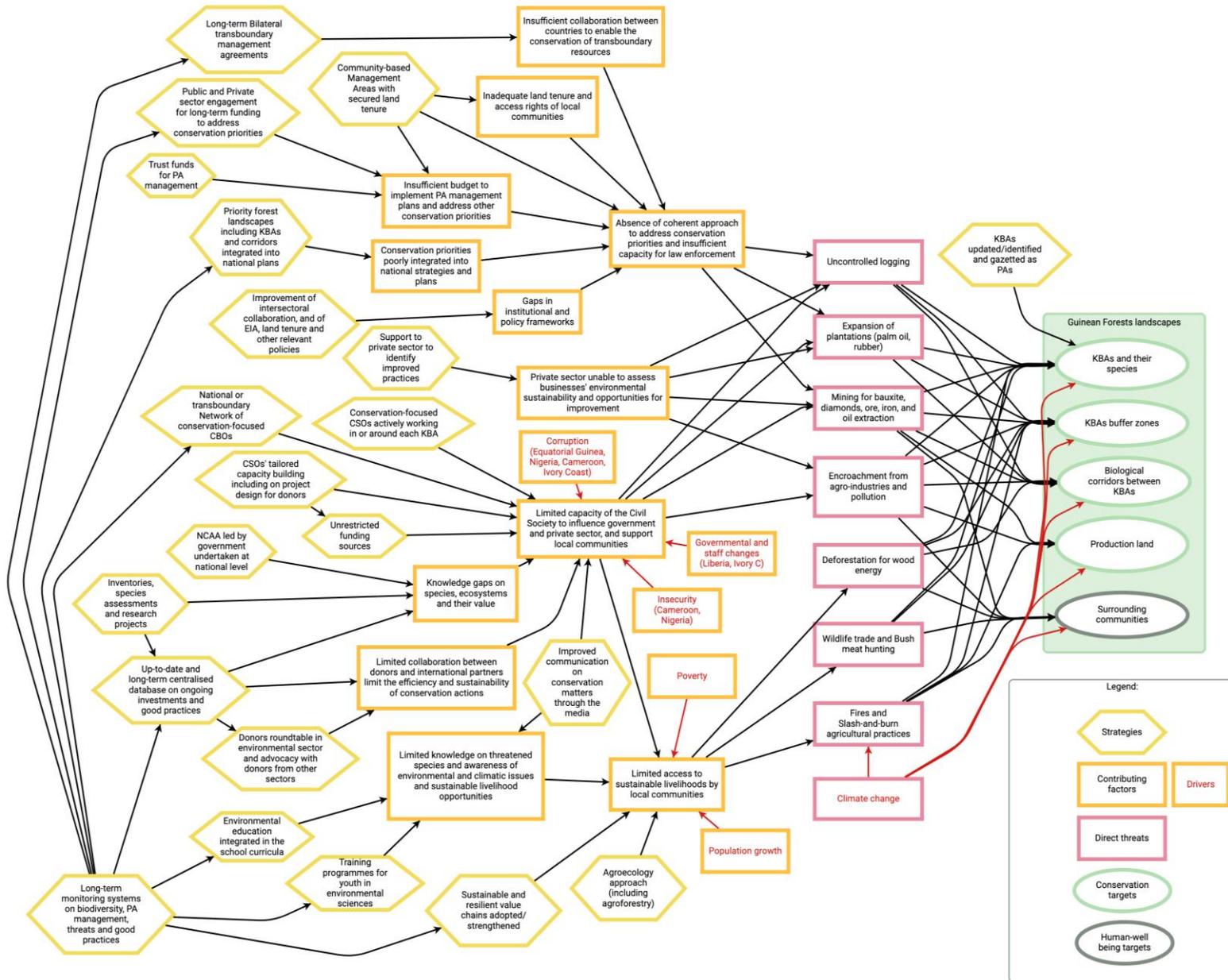


Figure 2: Situation model and proposed Strategies/Actions

Results-chains for each Graduation Condition:

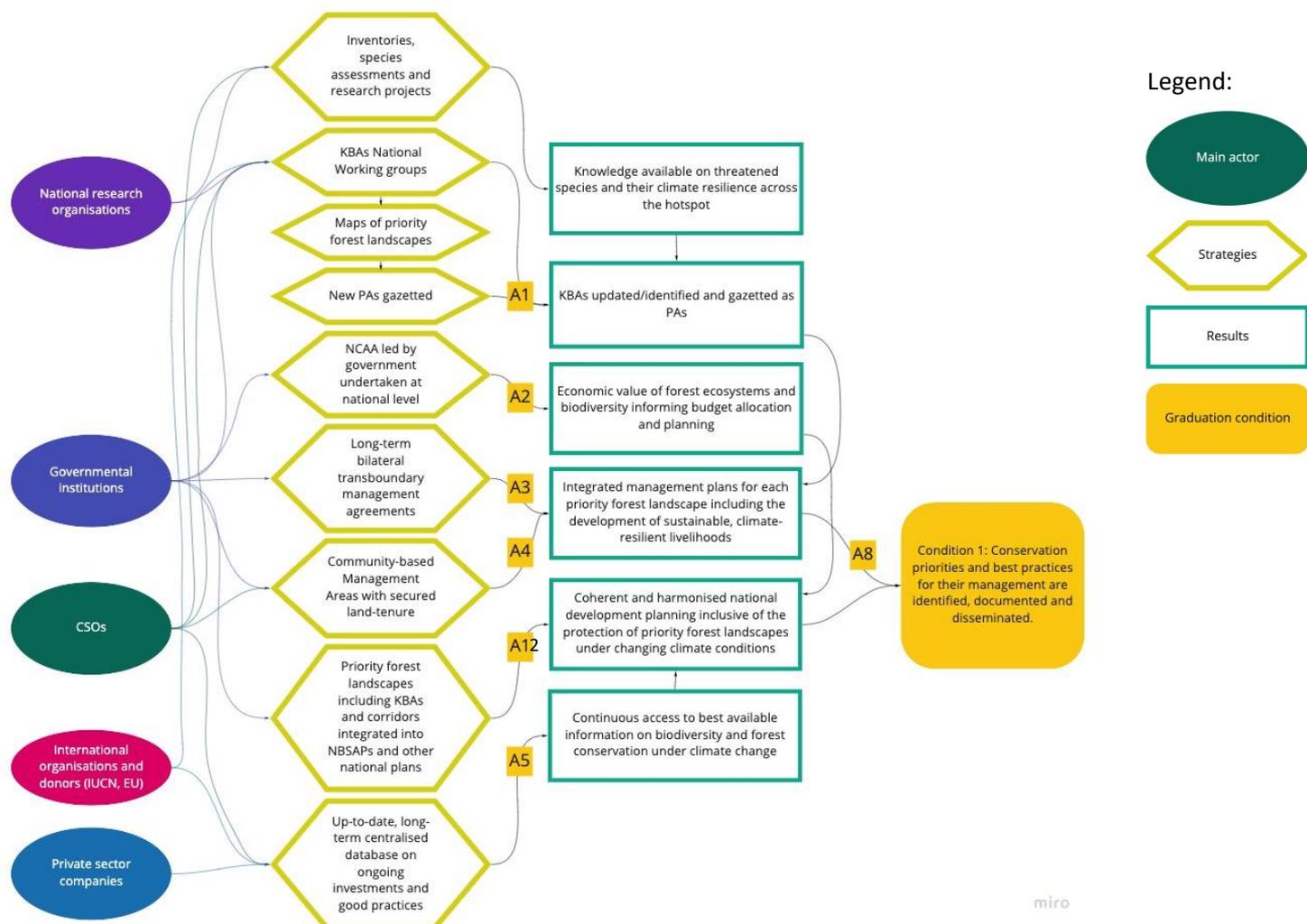


Figure 3: Results chain for Graduation Condition 1

Key Assumptions for Graduation Condition 1:

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

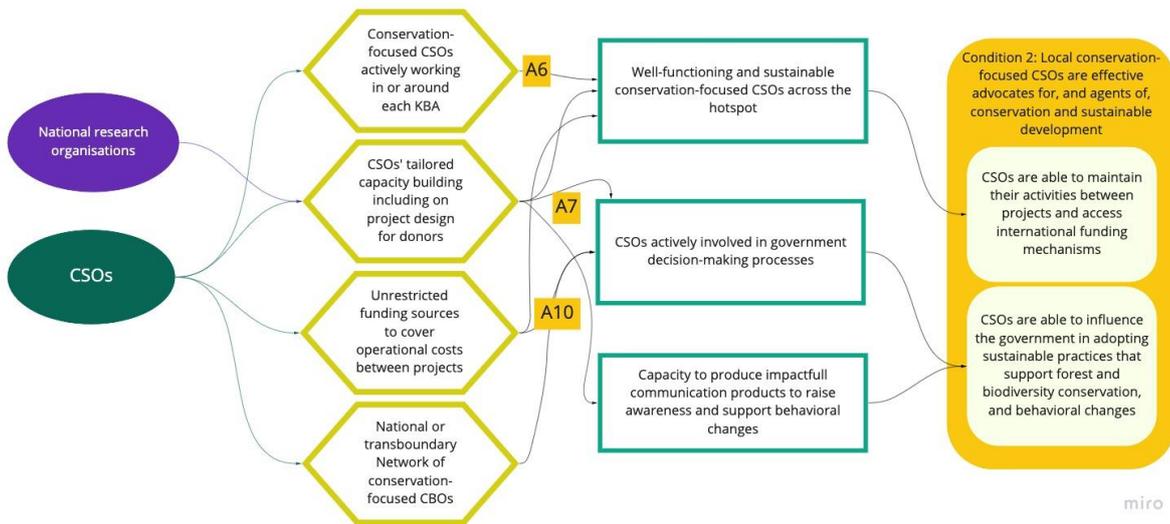


Figure 4: Results chain for Graduation Condition 2

Key Assumptions for Graduation Condition 2:

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

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

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

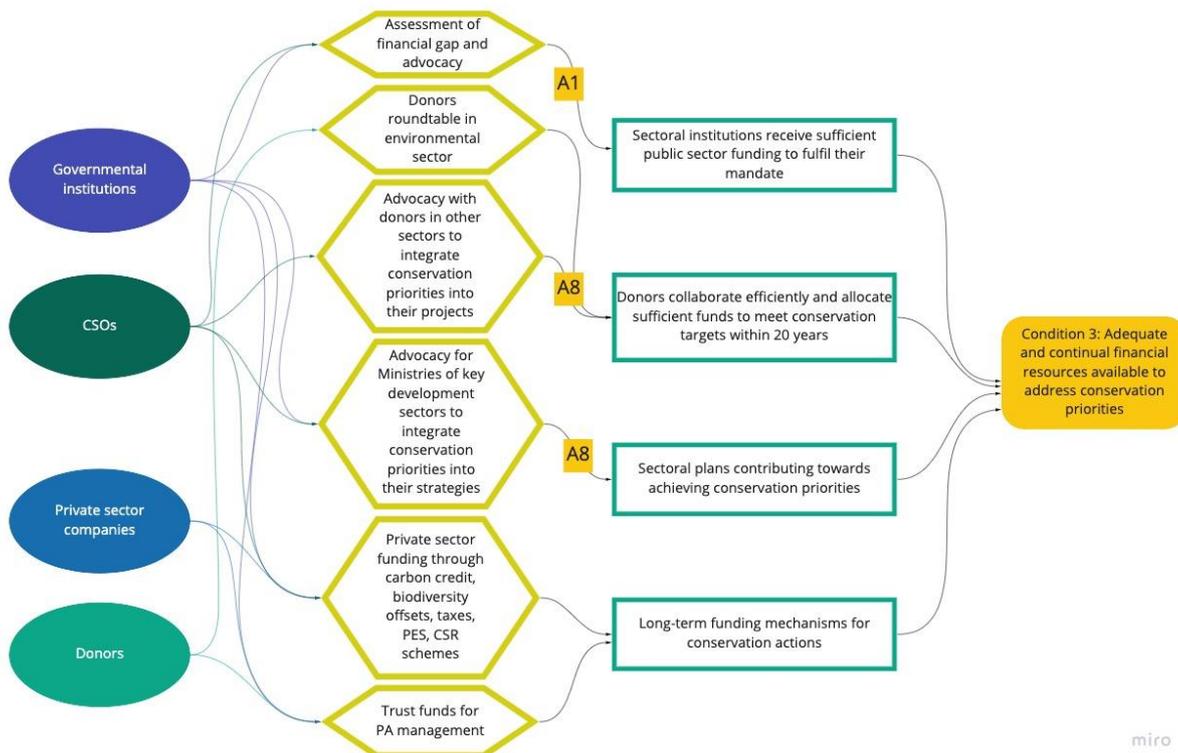


Figure 5: Results chain for Graduation Condition 3

Key Assumptions for Graduation Condition 3:

A1. Governments are supportive of forest and biodiversity conservation in alignment with their ratification to international agreements.

A8. Long-term monitoring of pilot projects by donors allows the identification of successful and sustainable models (supported by evidence-based information) for replication/upscaling.

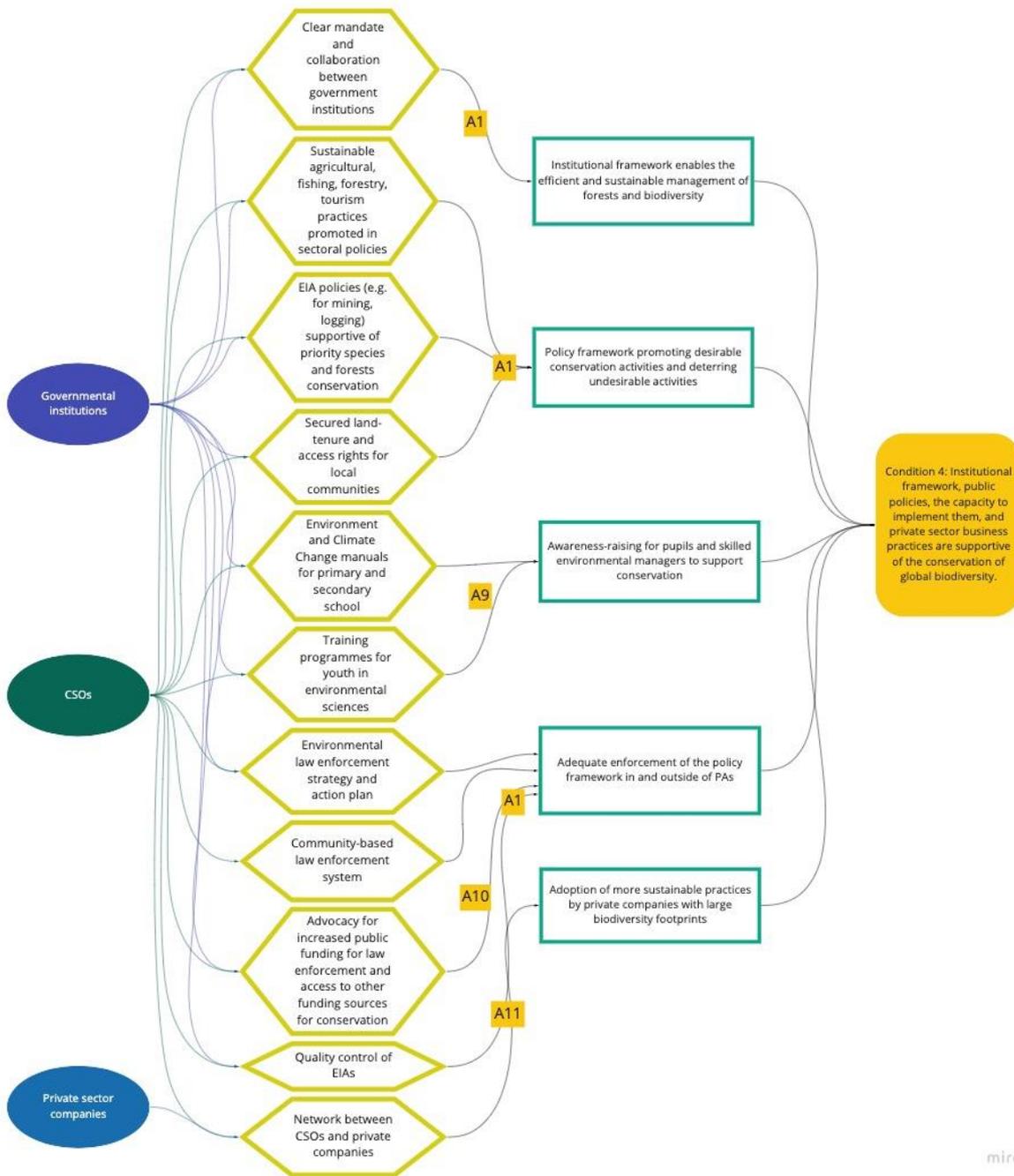


Figure 6: Results chain for Graduation Condition 4

Key Assumptions for Graduation Condition 4:

A9. National academic institutions produce graduates with the skills and perspective to respond to local conservation challenges by working with or within civil society organisations.

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

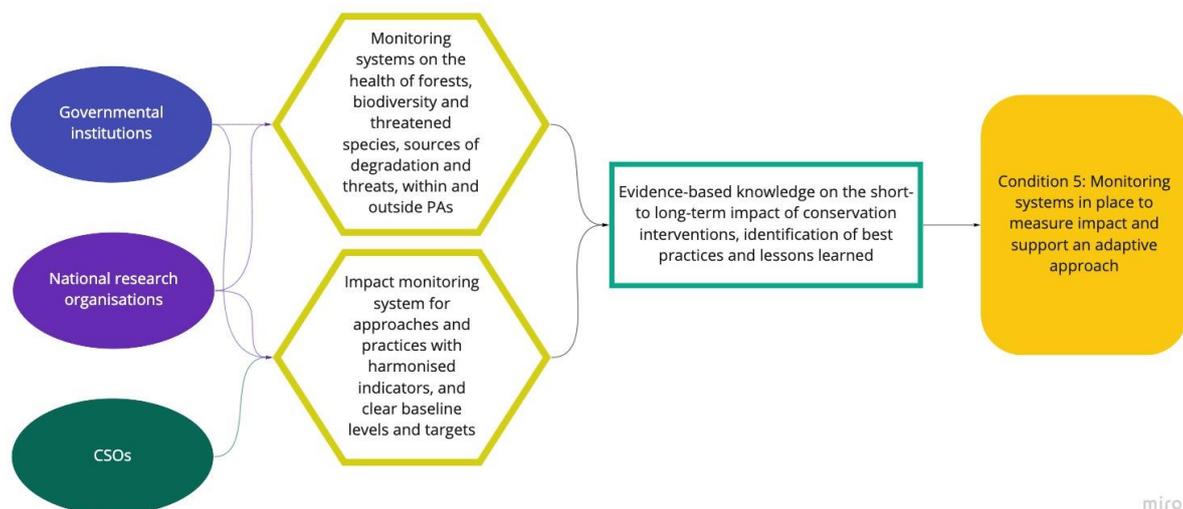


Figure 7: Results chain for Graduation Condition 5

Monitoring & Evaluation plan

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

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

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

Budget

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

Table 1: Graduation targets, milestones, and proposed strategies/actions, means of verification and suggested Impact Indicators, budget for Phase 1 (2023-2027) and for the entire 15-year period for implementation of the Long-Term Vision in the GFWA Hotspot

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
(relative to target)	(2023-2027)	(by 2037)	(where adequate, or description of responsible external factors)	(USD)	(USD)		(e.g. SDGs, CBD GBF post-2020)
<p>Graduation Condition 1. Conservation priorities and best practices: Conservation priorities and best practices for their management are identified, documented, disseminated and integrated into national strategies to guide conservation investments across the hotspot.</p> <p><i>Impact indicators:</i> <i>Core indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trend in species' population size or trend in biodiversity levels (biodiversity index, fish diversity index of NatureMetrics) Trend in forest cover (in KBAs, in biological corridors, in production land, and at the overall landscape level) Number of developed/adjusted policies deriving from NCAA implemented. <p><i>Other relevant indicators (external):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of governments' budget allocation to conservation interventions (and proportion of this budget managed by conservation-focused CSOs) Trend in climate resilience indexes <p>[Note: the indicators should be adjusted later on to maximise alignment with the CBD indicators to be updated at the Conference of the Parties i.e. (headlines) indicators for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework]</p>							
<p>Graduation criteria 1.1 Globally threatened species. Comprehensive global threat assessments conducted for all terrestrial vertebrates, vascular plants and at least selected freshwater taxa. (E: Essential)</p>							
<p>There has been significant progress in knowledge generation since the Elmina workshop of 1999 particularly on big taxonomic groups. There are important knowledge gaps remaining on plant species across the hotspot. A national forest inventory was undertaken in Liberia in 2018/2019. A national inventory of flora species is ongoing in Nigeria, no other national inventories are been identified in the hotspot countries. Some local inventories have been undertaken (e.g. Gola forest).</p> <p>There are important knowledge gaps on the impact of CC on wildlife and habitat.</p>	<p>Ecological inventories undertaken in existing KBAs (i.e. for KBAs created before 2023).</p>	<p>Species assessments – including their resilience to climate change – are completed for at least 90% of all recorded species of terrestrial vertebrate, vascular plant and at least 3 major freshwater taxa in the hotspot (based on inventories undertaken for each KBA - see Condition 1 Criteria 2), and with results incorporated onto the IUCN Red List.</p> <p>[Note: this target might have to be adjusted based on the results of the inventories to remain realistic].</p>	<p>Support national research organisations in undertaking ecological inventories across KBAs [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, IUCN Working Groups, WCS]</p> <p>Support national research organisations in undertaking species assessments to address knowledge gaps in the hotspot's KBAs [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, IUCN Working Groups, WCS]</p>	1,100,000	3,300,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KBAs' inventories Research reports on species IUCN database's updates 	<p>(i) GBF post-2020: Target 3</p> <p>(ii) SDG 6 - 6.6</p> <p>(iii) SDG 15 - 15.2</p> <p>(iv) SDG 15 - 15.5</p>

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
Some areas have never been assessed (e.g. in Guinea).							
Graduation criteria 1.2 Key Biodiversity Areas. KBAs identified in all countries and territories in the hotspot, covering, at minimum, terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems.(E)							
<p>A total of 144 KBAs exist in the hotspots' countries. At least 39% of existing KBA need to be reviewed urgently. Other KBAs (mostly created in 2015) will need to be reviewed shortly after. The need for new KBAs is unknown but some potentially rich areas are not recognized as KBAs and don't have any form of protection (e.g. Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire). RSPB is supporting an IBA/KBA transition process, where IBAs are being assessed to determine if they meet KBAs criteria.</p> <p>National KBAs' coordination groups are currently being established in Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea with support from RSPB. There is already a KBA working group in Nigeria which is also receiving training from RSPB.</p> <p>Priority forest landscapes for Chimpanzee conservation are currently being mapped in Guinea.</p>	<p>National or transboundary KBAs' coordination group established and operational in each country (meeting taking place twice a year with resources allocated annually).</p> <p>Map of priority forests landscape for biodiversity – taking current climate trends and future climate conditions into account – available for each country of the hotspot and new KBAs and biological corridors identified accordingly across terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems within the hotspot taking future climate conditions into account.</p> <p>Status of 50% of existing KBAs (prioritising the 80 KBAs assessed before 2010) reviewed across the hotspot, covering terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems.</p>	<p>National or transboundary KBAs' coordination group established and operational in each country (meeting taking place twice a year with resources allocated annually).</p> <p>Map of priority forests landscape for biodiversity – taking current climate trends and future climate conditions into account – available for each country of the hotspot and new KBAs and biological corridors identified accordingly across terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems within the hotspot.</p> <p>Status of existing KBAs (prior to 2021) reviewed across the hotspot, covering terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems.</p>	<p>Support the establishment of a KBA National Coordination Group in each of the hotspot countries based on RSPB's experience [led as much as possible by a governmental organisation] - [Potential supporting organisations: RSPB]</p> <p>Support KBA National Coordination Group members in developing a map of priority forests landscape for biodiversity (see Forest to Sea report for Upper Guinea as an example) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, RSPB]</p> <p>Support KBA National Coordination Group members in the creation of KBAs where needed based on the map of priority forests landscape for biodiversity [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, RSPB, RainForest Trust]</p> <p>Support KBA National Coordination Group members in reviewing the status of existing KBAs [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, RSPB, RainForest Trust]</p>	1,000,000	3,000,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KBA coordination groups' reports • KBAs' assessment reports • Priority forest landscapes' maps • KBA database's updates 	<p>(i) GBF post-2020: Target 3</p> <p>(ii) SDG 6 - 6.6</p> <p>(iii) SDG 15 - 15.2</p> <p>(iv) SDG 15 - 15.5</p> <p>(v) Forest Convergence Plan in West Africa - Area of intervention 1</p>
Graduation criteria 1.3 Protected Areas. KBAs gazetted as Protected Areas at the national level. (E)							
[Baseline level TBD] The proportion of natural forests and	40% of KBAs, their buffer zones and relevant	70% of KBAs and their buffer zones and	Support the KBA National Coordination Group in identifying areas of KBAs which are not	550,000	1,650,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KBA National Coordination groups' reports on KBAs' protection statuses 	(i) GBF post-2020: Target 3.

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
KBAs which are currently under protection (government protection and OECM) is currently being investigated by UNEP-WCMC (approximately 30% of terrestrial KBAs currently under protection based on the results of the Mid-Term Assessment 2019, 57% based on the KBA database).	biological corridors are gazetted as Protected Areas or OECMs.	relevant biological corridors are gazetted as Protected Areas or OECMs.	currently within a protected area, in collaboration with UNEP-WCMC [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, RSPB] Support CSOs in advocating for the gazettement of KBAs as Protected Areas or OECMs (see training to be provided under Condition 2 Criteria 2) - [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, RSPB, PPI and other partners] Support CSOs in the creation and establishment processes for Protected Areas [Potential supporting organisations: RainForest Trust and other partners]			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative documents (e.g. bye-laws, decrees) for the creation of Protected Areas', CBNRM areas and other area-based conservation measures 	(ii) SDG 6 - 6.6 (iii) SDG 15 - 15.2 (iv) SDG 15 - 15.5 v) AFR100 and Bonn challenge restoration targets
Graduation criteria 1.4 Reservoirs of natural capital. Reservoirs of natural capital identified in all countries and territories in the hotspot, covering ecosystem services particularly critical to human survival. (D: Desirable)							
NCAA for forests undertaken in Nigeria (2016) and Côte d'Ivoire with support from UNEP. An NCAA was supported by CI in Liberia in 2017 but to date it's use to inform budget allocation and development planning is limited. CI is currently undertaking another one in coastal areas. UNEP-WCMC is currently supporting a National assessment in Cameroon. Except for these four countries, no other NCAA could be identified in the targeted countries. Some local assessments have been undertaken or are ongoing in Ghana (Atewa) and Guinea (Tako-Gama).	NCAA undertaken on the demand of a line government institutions in 2 more countries (6 out of 11). National capital accounts inform development planning in at least 4 out of 11 countries. [Note: 4 because the process of integrating the results and recommendations into development planning can take time]	NCAA undertaken in at least 8 of the targeted countries (at least for forests) including the identification and mapping of reservoirs of natural capital for water provision and at least 2 ecosystem services essential to healthy, sustainable societies (e.g. climate resilience, NTFP provisioning, carbon storage, etc.) National capital accounts inform development planning in at least 8 out of 11 countries	Support advocacy for Natural Capital Assessments with government institutions [Potential supporting organisations: CI, RSPB] Financial support to undertake NCAs if led by at least 1 cross-sectoral government institution (e.g. Ministry of Planning) and with the aim to direct public (and private) resources accordingly [Potential supporting organisations: CI, RSPB] Support for the integration of the NCAA results in the budgeting exercises [Potential supporting organisations: CI, RSPB] [Note: National NCAs must be a cross-sectoral exercise lead by a government institution. Otherwise, it will not be incorporated into development planning.]	600,000	1,200,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCAA reports References to NCAA results in governments' budgeting processes Annual governments budget allocation per sector (environmental/natural resources' management/climate change adaptation sectors) 	(i) GBF post-2020: Target 8. (ii) SDG 15 - 15.9
Graduation criteria 1.5 Landscape-level integrated management plans. KBAs and buffer zones, biological corridors and reservoirs of natural capital are part of a landscape-level integrated Management Plan under implementation (E)							
At least 4 transboundary agreements already exist (Tai	At least 8 bilateral transboundary	At least 8 bilateral transboundary	Establishment and implementation of transboundary management agreements	900,000	2,700,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transboundary agreements 	(i) GBF post-2020: Target 1, 9, 10, 20, 21

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
<p>Grebo, Gola, ZWW, CocoForest partnership).</p> <p>[Current % of KBAs with management plans to be determined as part of KBA review work under Condition 1 Criteria 2] All the landscapes targeted under WABICC/WABILED have a management plan including the development of sustainable livelihoods. Several organisations are testing sustainable management planning systems locally (e.g. WCS, EU, WCF, RSPB).</p>	<p>management agreements signed and under implementation (for each transboundary KBA/important landscape) for knowledge sharing, concerted decision-making and planning, exchange visits.</p> <p>At least 40% of KBAs are integrated in Landscape-level climate-resilient management plans (including zoning of no-take areas, restricted areas such as buffer zones and biological corridors, and resilient livelihoods' development areas) that are under implementation and guide the sustainable management of KBAs and surrounding areas over the next 10 years.</p> <p>[Note: the baseline on the current % of KBAs with management plans must be determined, to be done as part of the KBA assessments under Condition 1 Criteria 2), targets to be revised accordingly]</p>	<p>management agreements signed and under implementation (for each transboundary KBA/important landscape) for knowledge sharing, concerted decision-making and planning, exchange visits.</p> <p>At least 70% of KBAs are integrated in Landscape-level climate-resilient management plans (including zoning of no-take areas, restricted areas such as buffer zones and biological corridors, and resilient livelihoods' development areas) that are under implementation and guide the sustainable management of KBAs and surrounding areas over the next 10 years.</p> <p>Each integrated landscape-level climate-resilient management plans is embedded into relevant national, sub-national and local development plans.</p>	<p>between relevant pairs of countries, and creation of a network of transboundary landscapes for information/experience sharing [Potential supporting organisations: USAID, EU, GIZ, RSPB]</p> <p>Support CSOs in establishing community-based management areas with local communities – with a particular focus on women and youth – including the design of participatory management plans, and securing access-rights to natural resources and land tenure within these areas (e.g. establishment of Community Forests [PAPFOR], Community-based conservation with village level forest conservation committees [Neil - UNEP-WCMC]) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF and other partners]</p> <p>Support CSOs in implementing sustainable livelihood projects with local communities in GFWA landscapes to generate sustainable, climate-resilient and biodiversity-friendly income with a particular focus on women and youth (e.g. agroecology practices, sustainable fisheries/aquaculture/small livestock production as protein alternatives to bushmeat, sustainable exploitation of NTFPs, ecotourism) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF and other partners]</p> <p>Support CSOs in working with national and decentralised government authorities to integrate the new management plans into existing development plans</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape-level integrated management plans and KBAs coverage • Updated national, sub-national and local development plans • Communities' surveys • Field visits • Satellite imagery (e.g. LandSat) 	<p>(ii) SDG 1 targets (2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)</p> <p>(iii) Forest Convergence Plan in West Africa - Area of intervention 3 & 4</p> <p>iv) AFR100 and Bonn challenge restoration targets</p>
<p>Graduation criteria 1.6 Conservation strategies. Conservation priorities incorporated into national conservation plans or strategies and action plans developed with the participation of multiple stakeholders. (D)</p>							
<p>NBSAPs of the hotspot's countries have all been developed between 2011 and</p>	<p>Update the NBSAPs of and other relevant national strategy</p>	<p>Threatened species, KBAs and/or landscapes are incorporated into</p>	<p>Support sectoral ministries in updating their NBSAPs of and other relevant national strategy documents to integrate updated</p>	<p>700,000</p>	<p>1,000,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NBSAPs • National strategy documents and action plans 	<p>GBF post-2020: Target 1</p>

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
2016, and need to be updated during the first investment period (except for Liberia's NBSAP that is running until 2025, and Sierra Leone's NBSAP that is running until 2026).	documents in at least 8 countries of the hotspot in alignment with the priority landscapes and updated KBAs.	the NBSAPs of and other relevant national strategy documents in each hotspot country with the participation of multiple stakeholders.	conservation priorities [Potential supporting organisations: UNDP, CI, AFD] Support countries with spatial planning (Alignment with CBD Post-2020 Framework Target 1) [Potential supporting organisations: UNEP-WCMC, AFD]			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National and/or sub-national development planning guidelines 	
Graduation criteria 1.7 Regional knowledge sharing platforms. Governmental and non-governmental organisations in each country can easily access reliable information and data to support biodiversity and forest conservation. (E)							
<p>Several formal coordination platforms including part of the hotspot exist (Mano River Union, ECOWAS, COMIFAC). None of them at hotspot's level.</p> <p>Several international organisations are working on centralising information on Protected Areas and conservation (e.g. data on biodiversity, threatened species, CC, demographics) linked to biodiversity conservation in the region (e.g. EU/BIOPAMA/OBAPAO and IUCN/MOLOA).</p>	<p>1 informal coordination platform established at hotspot level with governments, international NGOs, donors, private sector and CSOs where appropriate.</p> <p>The governmental- and non-governmental organisations of each country of the hotspot have access to a reliable, up-to-date and long-term centralised database to store all data and reports linked to biodiversity and forest conservation (including climate change, threatened species, KBAs and Protected Areas, management plans, land-use and forest cover changes, human population trends...).</p>	<p>1 informal coordination platform established at hotspot level with governments, international NGOs, donors, private sector and CSOs where appropriate.</p> <p>The governmental- and non-governmental organisations of each country of the hotspot have access to a reliable, up-to-date and long-term centralised database to store all data and reports linked to biodiversity and forest conservation (including climate change, threatened species, KBAs and Protected Areas, management plans, land-use and forest cover changes, human population trends...).</p>	<p>Establish an information coordination platform at hotspot level with relevant governmental, non-governmental and private stakeholders [GEF]</p> <p>Follow the progress with OBAPAO and MOLOA and facilitate the data gathering and management process, as well as the institutionalisation process to sustain data management and dissemination on the platforms, in the hotspot countries where appropriate [Indirect support from CEPF]</p>	100,000	100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting reports from the hotspot-level coordination platform Centralised database and usage (frequency of updates, number of visits disaggregated per country, number of documents downloads disaggregated per country, feedback from users) 	SDG 17 - 17.7

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
<p>Graduation Condition 2. Civil society capacity: Local civil society groups dedicated to conservation priorities collectively possess sufficient organizational and technical capacity to be effective advocates for, and agents of, conservation and sustainable development, while being equal partners of government agencies influencing decision making in favour of sustainable societies and economies.</p> <p><i>Impact indicators:</i> <i>Core indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trend in CSOs' capacity score (e.g. CSTT score) • Trend in additional funding leveraged by CSOs • Number of policy/strategy documents updated/developed to be more supportive of conservation • Number of conservation-focused networks and/or partnerships lasting beyond projects implementation <p><i>Other relevant indicators (external):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % access to education for girls and boys • Trend in literacy and education levels for women and men • Trend in access to family planning and in the use of contraceptives • Trend in family sizes • Trend in human well-being indices • Number and success rate of court cases against unsustainable projects won by CSOs 							
<p>Graduation criteria 2.1 Conservation community. The community of civil society organizations is sufficiently broad and deep-rooted to respond to key conservation issues and collectively possesses the technical competencies of critical importance to conservation. (E)</p>							
<p>On average, there is currently 1 or 2 leading CSOs in each country. 1 to 8 strong (stable and active) organisations working at least partly in conservation have been identified in each country (3,5 per country on average).</p>	<p>At least 2 leading CSOs per country playing a mentorship role with smaller CSOs and working with the government.</p> <p>At least 6 conservation-focused CSOs are working actively and consistently in addressing conservation issues in each country.</p>	<p>At least 12 conservation-focused CSOs are working actively and consistently in addressing conservation issues, including at least 3 playing a leadership role (e.g. mentoring smaller CSOs) in each hotspot country.</p> <p>At least 1 recognized* CSO working continuously or regularly in or around each of the identified KBAs *Recognized among partners = CSO who has successfully implemented at least 1 grant.</p>	<p>Support grantees in becoming mentors with smaller organisations in their country [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, RSPB, BirdLife]</p> <p>Support previous grantees in partnering on project proposals with other CSOs [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI]</p> <p>Targeted call for proposal and selection: focus proposal on GFWA landscapes where there are no recognized active CSO [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI]</p>	1,500,000	3,000,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from mentees, mentoring reports, exchange visits reports • Map of ongoing investments • Field visits in KBAs 	N/A

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
		[To be quantified after the review of existing KBAs and identification of new KBAs]					
Graduation criteria 2.2 Institutional capacity. Local civil society groups collectively possess sufficient institutional and operational capacity and structures to raise funds for conservation and to ensure the efficient management of conservation projects and strategies. (E)							
Less than 10% of the CSOs assessed in the hotspot have a CSTT score of 80 or more. This corresponds to 0 to 2 CSOs per country with a CSTT score of 80 or more.	At least 3 conservation-focused CSOs per country in the hotspot have a compounded capacity considered as high (e.g. CSTT score of 80 or more).	<p>At least 5 conservation-focused CSOs per country in the hotspot have a compounded capacity considered as high (e.g. CSTT score of 80 or more).</p> <p>At least 5 conservation-focused CSOs per country in the hotspot are able to access funds from international donors without support from CEPF or PPI.</p> <p>At least 50% of women participation across training courses.</p>	<p>Support capacity building of CSOs with a particular focus on Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea (which have few strong CSOs and are key for the hotspot's conservation) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, BirdLife]</p> <p>[Note: all training must be gender equal: 50% of participants must be women (each CSO must send a men and a women trainee)]</p> <p>Identified training priorities on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human resources (particularly staff experience/staff retention) financial management and financial resources (sustainability strategy/unrestricted funding/diversified funding sources) project design and management to meet expectations of international donors (e.g. training on climate change integration in projects, measuring contribution to SDGs and Aichi targets) communication to inform on their activities (particularly in Cameroon) leadership with a particularly focus on women advocacy across the hotspot <p>Basic technical training (e.g. species recognition)</p>	2,000,000	5,000,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity assessments' scores (e.g. CSTT) Training support material Attendees' lists from training sessions Accepted CSOs' project proposals (from external donors) BirdLife Quality Assurance System (QAS) 	SDG 5 - 5.5
Graduation criteria 2.3 Financial resources. Local CSOs have access to sufficient unrestricted funding sources (e.g. membership, donations, small businesses) to maintain their core operations between projects. (E)							
The large majority of the CSOs in the hotspots remain reliant on projects and have no or very limited unrestricted funding. Indeed, access to financial resources identified as a big	At least 2 CSOs in each country have access to sufficient unrestricted funding to maintain their staff and core costs	At least 5 CSOs in each country have access to sufficient unrestricted funding to maintain their staff and core	<p>Support CSOs in developing sound strategic and financial plans [MSc report, 2022] [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, BirdLife]</p> <p>Support CSOs in developing business plans</p>	500,000	1,100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business plans Annual finance reports CSOs' operational reports (staff maintenance, continuity of on-the-ground interventions) 	GBF post-2020: Target 1

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
challenge for CSOs (low CSTT score) particularly the diversification of funding sources, and financial sustainability (unrestricted funding). Human Resources and Financial Resources identified as the main two threats to their organisations by 11 out of 13 surveyed grantees (MSc report, 2022).	without relying on international donors.	costs without relying on international donors.	and developing unrestricted sources of funding (online shops, sustainable NTFP value chains, membership and national donations, ecotourism) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, IUCN NL, BirdLife]			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visits 	
Graduation criteria 2.4 Partnerships. Effective mechanisms (e.g., discussion forums, round-tables, mutual support networks, alliances, etc.) exist for conservation-focused civil society groups to work in partnership with one another. (E)							
<p>In Benin, the ProEnvironnement network (12 CSOs) was recently established and it seems to be working well. CSOs partnership exist in several other countries (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Nigeria) but they are not active. In Ghana, WACSI is currently piloting a CSOs partnership. Partnership between CSOs needs strengthening across the hotspot countries. Peer-to-peer learning has been successful in several previous initiatives and should therefore be supported as a priority (most efficient learning tool - PPI/FFEM).</p> <p>At the global level, the GEF CSO network aims to increase CSOs involvement in the GEF processes.</p>	<p>At least 6 national networks for CSOs in conservation and other relevant sectors established and active (health, social development, education) - 1 per country.</p> <p>At least 5 networks for women-led CSOs in conservation and other relevant sectors established (building on the efforts of TBA).</p> <p>At least 40% of the conservation projects are complemented by projects focused on family planning and education.</p>	<p>11 national networks for CSOs in conservation and other relevant sectors established and active (health, social development, education) - 1 per country.</p> <p>At least 7 networks for women-led CSOs in conservation and other relevant sectors established and active (building on the efforts of TBA in Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, Liberia and Sierra Leone).</p> <p>At least 80% of the conservation projects are complemented by projects focused on family planning and education.</p>	<p>Support the establishment or strengthening of CSOs networks in each of the hotspots' countries [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, BirdLife]</p> <p>Ensure the integration of peer-to-peer knowledge sharing activities in each grant [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF]</p> <p>Publish Call for Proposals for groups of CSOs (at least 2 conservation CSOs or a conservation and a development CSO (Sub-activity: encourage conservation CSOs and development CSOs to collaborate as lots of funding goes to development) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI]</p> <p>[See Criteria 2.1] Support previous grantees in becoming mentors with smaller organisations in their country and/or partnering on project proposals with other CSOs [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI]</p> <p>Support CSOs networks and groups in working with GEF Agencies to access GEF funding [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, GEF, PPI]</p>	300,000	500,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSOs' network reports Validated joint proposals (including GEF-funded proposals) Exchange visits' reports Collaboration/cofinancing agreements Activity reports from conservation, education, family planning interventions Communities' surveys Field visits Countries profile (UN agencies) 	GBF post-2020: Target 1

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
			Ensure the monitoring of the impact of peer-to-peer learning activities using a gender-sensitive approach (based on TBA experience with impact monitoring from training and adaptive approaches with CSOs) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, TBA, FFI]				
Graduation criteria 2.5 Transformational impact. Local civil society groups are able, individually or collectively, to influence public policies. (E)							
<p>The governments of the hotspot countries have different levels of democracy and openness. This has a direct impact on the influence of CSOs. CSOs have some level of influence on government decisions in Ghana and Nigeria and partly in Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire and Benin.</p> <p>CSOs and journalists have difficulties to communicate and convey clear and impactful conservation messages. Environmental matters are not in the front line often enough.</p>	<p>Decision-making and planning protocols related to forests and the environment clearly state the necessity to include CSOs in the consultations.</p> <p>At least 2 CSOs in each country are regularly consulted by the government (for decision-making, policy development and strategising processes) in each hotspot country.</p> <p>At least 1 network between the media and CSOs created in each country with training sessions for journalists on environmental issues, for CSOs on public speaking, and awareness raising of the editors in chief of the newspapers, radio channels and TV channels on environmental issues.</p>	<p>At least 3 CSOs in each country are regularly consulted by the government (for decision-making, policy development and strategising processes) in each hotspot country.</p> <p>At least 1 network between the media and CSOs created in each country with training sessions for journalists on environmental issues, for CSOs on public speaking, and awareness raising of the editors in chief of the newspapers, radio channels and TV channels on environmental issues.</p>	<p>[See Criteria 2.2] Provide training to CSOs on communication and advocacy to participate meaningfully in decision-making processes [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, BirdLife]</p> <p>Support advocacy for CSOs to be involved in all government decision-making processes [Potential supporting organisations: UNDP, IUCN NL, FFI]</p> <p>Support CSOs in collaborating with the media, and provide required training to the media, editors in chief and CSOs for improved public communication on environmental matters</p>	900,000	1,500,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government workshops' reports and attendees' lists Guiding documents for governments' decision-making processes CSOs' reports on design/updating processes for legislative documents CSOs and media networks' reports Media training sessions' reports, training material and attendees' list Communication products (radio shows, TV shows, newspapers' articles...) Occurrence of environmental matters in the headline Reports and surveys from the media and CSOs on advocacy and behavioural changes National and/or local surveys of public opinion 	GBF post-2020: Target 1
Graduation condition 3. Sustainable financing. Adequate and continual financial resources are available to address conservation of global priorities.							
<p><i>Impact indicators:</i></p> <p><i>Core indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of sustainable financing mechanisms delivering funds to biodiversity conservation <p><i>Other relevant indicators (external):</i></p>							

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trend in the proportion of the public funds allocated to conservation Trend in the budget from donor, public and private sources allocated to conservation in the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot 							
Graduation criteria 3.1 Public sector funding. Public sector agencies responsible for conservation in the hotspot have a continued public fund allocation or revenue-generating ability to operate effectively. (E)							
The Ministries of Environment in the hotspot's countries receive less than 1% of government's budget annually. It is far from being sufficient to cover for their operational costs and interventions. Some institutions have received support to develop long-term financial plans (EPA Liberia supported by UNDP to develop a 4-year budgeted workplan). Several countries have an Environmental Fund integrated in the policies but it hasn't been established (e.g. Liberia, Sierra Leone). No operational environmental fund has been identified in the hotspot's countries.	The main public sector agencies responsible for conservation in 6 countries have assessed their long-term financial needs to fulfil their mandate. At least 2 environmental funds established and operational, with a significant portion of the fund dedicated to conservation initiatives.	<p>The main public sector agencies responsible for conservation in each hotspot country have assessed their long-term financial needs to fulfil their mandate.</p> <p>The main public sector agencies responsible for conservation in each hotspot's country receive 90% of the financial resources they need.</p> <p>At least 4 environmental funds operational, with a significant portion of the fund dedicated to conservation initiatives.</p>	<p>Support governmental institutions in assessing their financial needs [Potential supporting organisations: CI, UNDP]</p> <p>Support governmental institutions in identifying and accessing opportunities to address financial gaps [Potential supporting organisations: CI, UNDP]</p> <p>[Note: Target aligned with Step 1 identified under Western Chimp Conservation Plan "Objective 9.6: By mid-2025, all national environmental agencies (NEAs) in range state countries have defined technical, logistical and financial needs of all chimpanzee conservation-related activities under their jurisdiction for the next five years. Objective 9.7: By mid-2025, all Protected Areas have published/made available a detailed report of their technical, logistical and financial needs for the next five years."]</p>	600,000	1,100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministries' financial assessments reports Annual governments' budget allocation reports Ministries' financial reports Legislative documents for the establishment of environmental funds and funds' operational reports including funding allocation Projects' proposals financed by the Environmental Funds 	GBF post-2020: Target 1
Graduation criteria 3.2 Donor funding. Donors collaborate efficiently to provide sufficient funds towards addressing conservation priorities in the hotspot. (E)							
There are lots of investments across the hotspot with multiple donors (USFWS, GEF TF, GEF SGP, EU, AFD, RainForest Trust, TNC...) and international organisations (IUCN, BL, RSPB, Noe, UNDP, FAO, FFI, WCS, UNEP-WCMC, CI, Re:wild, WCF...) supporting conservation in the hotspot. This includes some large investments projects such as WABILED and expected projects under GEF-8, NaturAfrica, and funds such as IUCN SOS, Great Ape	Donor roundtable established, and donors (and relevant international organisations) are meeting at least once a year to identify opportunities for complementarity and synergy, and maximise knowledge sharing on good practices. There is steady progress	Donors other than CEPF are committed to providing funding for conservation and sustainable development in the hotspot that, in combination with public and private funding, is sufficient to achieve the conservation objective	<p>Establish a donors (and relevant international organisations) roundtable in the environmental sector, ensure regular meetings of the members, and concerted decision making for synergy and complementarity towards achieving the same objectives (based on the experience in CEPF MED Hotspot) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, AFD, EU, USAID, RainForest Trust, GEF]</p> <p>Advocate for the consideration of biodiversity, forest conservation and climate change across donors supporting development projects, and</p>	50,000	100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting reports from the donors' roundtable Updated strategy documents, programmes' documents, budgets and activity reports of donors in other relevant sectors Annual action plans for the Long-term Vision and annual progress reports towards achieving Long-Term Vision targets 	GBF post-2020: Target 1

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
Conservation Fund and RainForest Trust. However, there is limited collaboration and coordination between these initiatives which reduced efficiency towards addressing conservation priorities.	towards addressing the drivers of forest and biodiversity loss, on track towards achieving the conservation objective.	(i.e. 0 net deforestation in KBAs).	encourage synergies and complementarity [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI] Monitor the progress towards achieving the conservation targets [CEPF, PPI, BirdLife]				
Graduation criteria 3.3 Mainstreaming of conservation goals into other sectors. Ministries of key development sectors have adopted conservation goals and integrated them into their strategies and plans. (E)							
Forest and biodiversity conservation are poorly integrated into the strategy and plans of key development sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, tourism, mining, infrastructure and energy in the hotspot's countries.	At least 2 sectoral ministries with the largest potential impact on forests and biodiversity (agriculture, fisheries, tourism, mining, infrastructure, energy) or mostly impacted by forest and biodiversity loss (water and sanitation, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, health) in at least 4 hotspot country have integrated forest and biodiversity conservation priorities and sustainable practices into their strategies and plans.	At least 2 sectoral ministries with the largest potential impact on forests and biodiversity (agriculture, fisheries, tourism, mining, infrastructure, energy) or mostly impacted by forest and biodiversity loss (water and sanitation, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, health) in at least 9 hotspot's countries have integrated forest and biodiversity conservation priorities and sustainable practices into their strategies and plans.	Support sectoral ministries with the largest potential impact on forest and biodiversity in ensuring that their strategies and plans integrate forest and biodiversity conservation priorities and sustainable practices [Potential supporting organisations: UNDP, IUCN]	400,000	900,000	Updated strategy documents, budgets and activity reports of ministries in agriculture, fisheries, tourism, mining, infrastructure, energy and other relevant sectors	(i) GBF post-2020: Target 8 (ii) SDG 15 - 15.9
Graduation criteria 3.4 Long-term mechanisms. Financing mechanisms (e.g. trust funds, revenue from the sale of carbon credits, etc.) exist and are of sufficient size to yield continuous long-term returns for at least the next 10 years. (E)							
One long-term financing mechanism (carbon credit market) established in Gola Forest in Sierra Leone. One long-term funding mechanism (PES) established in STP. One long-term funding mechanism (biodiversity offset) is under establishment in Guinea. In Liberia, CI initiated the Liberia	At least 2 types of long-term financing mechanisms (e.g. Carbon offset or biodiversity offset, CSR, PES, trust funds, tax revenue system for extractive activities) for Protected Areas and OECMs' management (including	At least 2 types of long-term financing mechanisms (e.g. carbon offset or biodiversity offset, CSR, PES, trust funds, tax revenue system for extractive activities) for Protected Areas and OECMs' management	Support government ministries and CSOs in assessing the running costs of Protected Areas and OECMs [Potential supporting organisations: IUCN NL, BirdLife International, UNDP, CI, Noe] Support CSOs – in collaboration with other partners – in the development of REDD+ programme (carbon credits and/or	1,100,000	3,300,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protected Areas and OECMs' running costs reports Legislative documents for the establishment of the financing mechanisms and operational reports Operational and financial reports of the funds 	

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
Conservation Fund in 2018. In Benin, a CSR system is currently starting. In Ghana, CREMAs system and Park de Noé are working on long-term funding mechanisms. In Nigeria, a CSR system was established by the government to fund reforestation interventions.	CEPF priority KBAs) piloted in each country to cover running costs and support the development of sustainable livelihoods in GFWA landscapes. At 10% of CEPF priority KBAs have a long-term financing mechanism in place to cover for running costs and support the development of sustainable livelihoods in GFWA landscapes.	demonstrated in each country to cover for running costs and support the development of sustainable livelihoods in GFWA landscapes. Sustainable financing mechanisms (e.g. Carbon offset, biodiversity offset, CSR, PES, trust funds) supporting the conservation of CEPF priority KBAs operate and yield funding such that financial constraints are no longer identified as a barrier to effective management for at least 90% of CEPF priority KBAs.	biodiversity offsetting) – based on the experience of RSPB in Gola – to incentivise the maintenance of forest cover [Potential supporting organisations: RSPB, WCS, Noe, CI, UNDP, EU] * Note: REDD+/Carbon credit projects/low-emission development recognized as a priority for investments among the partners [Re:Wild, WABILED, RSPB, UNEP-WCMC, M. Bakaar, Tony Atah]. Potential next landscapes for replication of the Gola experience: Eastern Nigeria/Western Cameroon, and Western Côte d'Ivoire and eastern Liberia [RSPB] Advocate with government to accrue funds for conservation from the private sector through CSR or PES systems, and implement these systems through partnerships with CSOs [Potential supporting organisations: RSPB, Re:wild, IUCN NL, UNDP] Support the establishment of other suitable long-term financing mechanism (e.g. trust funds or fiduciary funds) [Potential supporting organisations: IUCN NL, BirdLife International, UNDP, CI, Noe]				

Graduation Condition 4. Enabling policy and institutional environment: Institutional framework, public policies and their enforcement, and private sector business practices are supportive of biodiversity conservation. ["Mainstreaming"]

Impact indicators:

Core indicators:

- Number of companies adopting improved practices
- (already captured under graduation criteria 1: Number of policy/strategy documents updated/developed to be more supportive of conservation)
- Number of communities (with gender ratio of community members) empowered to better manage and benefit from their natural resources
- Trend in the management effectiveness score of Protected Areas (e.g. METT score)
- Number of men and women with increased cash benefits from the sustainable use of natural resources

Other relevant indicators (external):

- Environmental awareness/knowledge anchored in the educational system at all levels
- Trend in the number of conservation offences in Protected Areas and OECMs
- Trend in the carbon footprint of targeted companies
- Absence of inconsistent legislative framework implemented across different sectors in each country of the hotspot (e.g. mining quarries overlapping with Protected Areas)

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
Graduation criteria 4.1 Institutional framework for conservation. Adequate institutional framework in the environmental sector that enable long-term planning, implementation and maintenance of sustainable management interventions (D)							
There is some overlap, unclarity and/or partitioning in the mandate of environment-related institutions – particularly those responsible for Protected Areas' and forest resources' management – in several of the hotspot countries (e.g. STP, Benin, Nigeria) which hinders efficient collaboration and integrated approaches.	Roles and responsibilities of each sectoral institutions in forest and biodiversity management (within and outside Protected Areas) as well as collaboration systems are clearly defined in at least 6 out of 11 hotspot's countries.	Roles and responsibilities of each sectoral institutions in forest and biodiversity management (within and outside Protected Areas) as well as collaboration systems are clearly defined in all hotspot's countries.	Support government institutions in identifying and addressing weaknesses in their mandate and their complementary for the sustainable management of forests and biodiversity [Potential supporting organisations: UNDP, AFD, FFI]	420,000	770,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institution Framework assessment reports Revised ministries' organisational structure documents and tasks of each ministry/department/sub-department 	N/A
Graduation criteria 4.2 Legal environment for conservation. Laws exist that provide incentives for desirable management practices and disincentives against undesirable practices. (E)							
The countries' legislative framework is well aligned with international commitments (except for some improvement needed in STP to better integrate biodiversity protection). Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Cameroon and Benin have adequate policies to protect forests but their enforcement is an issue. [Silas, CAMGEW, BEES]. Côte d'Ivoire government for example has started to put their commitments into action. They now have adequate policies for forest protection and environment protection [WACSI]. However, some policy updates are needed to support the implementation of integrated approaches and promote good practices. EIA/SEAs policies need to be improved in most countries. Some improvements of the land and/or natural resources tenure policies to enable community-based management systems would be needed in several	<p>A review of the legislative framework is undertaken in at least 5 other countries of the hotspots (following the example of RSPB in Ghana).</p> <p>At least 1 legislative document updated or developed (biodiversity conservation, sustainable practices, EIAs, land and/or natural resources tenure, climate resilience) drafted based on the recommendations from the review of the legislative framework in each hotspot's country.</p> <p>[Note: Number of documents needed to be defined based on the results of the National Policy Reviews]</p>	<p>The legislative framework in each hotspot's country promotes biodiversity conservation (e.g. KBAs protection).</p> <p>The legislative framework incentivise good NRM practices (e.g. agroecology, sustainable harvesting rates, secured access to natural resources) and disincentivises unsustainable practices (e.g. use of chemicals, slash-and-burn, uncontrolled harvesting) – especially in GFWA landscapes – in each hotspot's country.</p> <p>National EIA policies in each country include avoidance of important</p>	<p>Support government institutions in undertaking a review of the legislative framework [Potential supporting organisations: RSPB, UNDP, FAO, CI]</p> <p>Advocate for and support the drafting of policies promoting biodiversity conservation, sustainable natural resources management practices (e.g. agriculture, fishing, forestry, tourism), CBNRM models, Land tenure security for communities with a particular focus on women and youth [Potential supporting organisations: AFD, FAO, UNDP]</p> <p>Support CSOs in working with relevant governmental agencies on improving EIAs (and SEAs) legislation [Potential supporting organisations: IUCN NL, AFD, Re:wild]</p>	600,000	1,200,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews of the legislative framework New and revised legislative documents 	<p>(i) SDG 1 - By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance</p> <p>(ii) SDG 5 - 5.6.a.</p> <p>(iii) Forest Convergence Plan in West Africa - Area of intervention 1</p>

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
<p>countries such as Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire.</p> <p>In Ghana, a National Policy Review was undertaken and led to significant policy improvements.</p>		<p>biodiversity sites, mandatory compensation, and external audits (such as in Guinea).</p> <p>Legislative framework recognizing local communities' long-term access rights to natural resources and ownership of the land, and supporting the establishment of CBNRM models (e.g. such as in Guinea) in each of the hotspot country.</p>					
<p>Graduation criteria 4.3 Education and training. Environmental and social education integrated across the curricula, and domestic programs exist that produce trained environmental managers at secondary, undergraduate, and advanced academic levels. (E)</p>							
<p>Environmental and social education is poorly integrated in the curricula of the targeted countries. There are several good initiatives of environmental programmes ongoing in schools (e.g. Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia). Many children in the hotspot's countries do not attend formal schools and receive informal education at village level.</p> <p>Re:wild is currently implementing a training programme for primatologists. USAID is supporting Masters training on CITES in Sierra Leone, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria. Several countries have a Masters' programme or professional training in biodiversity</p>	<p>Environmental and social education integrated in the curricula of primary, secondary and tertiary education and in local informal education systems in at least 3 of the hotspot's countries.</p> <p>At least 2 Masters programmes or professional trainings in the sustainable management of forest resources and/or biodiversity conservation in the region (at least 1 in French and 1 in English)</p>	<p>Environmental and social education integrated in the curricula of primary, secondary and tertiary education in each of the hotspot's countries.</p> <p>At least 3 Masters programmes or professional trainings in the sustainable management of forest resources and/or biodiversity conservation in the region (at least 1 in French and 1 in English). [Note: 1 per country will likely be too much as students must be able to find good job</p>	<p>Support CSOs in implementing environmental clubs initiatives in schools where environmental and social education is insufficient based on the experience of EFA, WCF and BirdLife [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, IDH]</p> <p>Support the development of environmental and climate change manuals, their piloting in a sub-set of schools and their integration at the national level [Potential supporting organisations: USAID, GEF]</p> <p>Support governments and research institutions in the creation/establishment/strengthening of Masters programmes and professional training courses in the hotspot [Potential supporting organisations: USAID, WCF, EFA]</p>	650,000	1,950,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised education manuals Reports from pilot schools' projects Revised national schools' curriculum Masters programmes and training material Students' lists from Masters and Professional training courses Field visits in schools Surveys with pupils Surveys with alumni to measure employment success 	<p>(i) SDG 13 - 13.3</p> <p>(ii) Forest Convergence Plan in West Africa - Area of intervention 7</p>

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
conservation (e.g. Liberia, Sierra Leone).		opportunities within the region]					
Graduation criteria 4.4 Enforcement. Local government and/or community bodies have the authority and capacity to enforce the law within and outside Protected Areas (including arrests and prosecutions). (E)							
<p>Law enforcement is an important issue across the countries of the hotspot. The majority of the required policies for forest and biodiversity protection exist but their enforcement on the ground is very limited. This is generally because of insufficient human and financial capacity of sectoral government institutions. WCF is piloting a Community Ecoguard Programme to address this enforcement gaps in some Protected Areas in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea.</p>	<p>At least 30% of gazetted Protected Areas in each hotspot's country have their boundaries demarcated on the ground, have a clear surveying system (regular patrols) and law enforcement system in place.</p> <p>At least 40% of arrests for conservation offenses (from local government and community bodies) lead to a penalty being imposed (fine, confiscation, imprisonment, etc.).</p> <p>EIA legislation is adequately applied and mitigation measures are implemented to minimise risks of degradation in KBAs, buffer zones and biological corridors in at least 3 of the hotspots countries.</p>	<p>At least 70% of gazetted Protected Areas in each hotspot's country have their boundaries demarcated on the ground, have a clear surveying system (regular patrols) and law enforcement system in place.</p> <p>At least 50% of arrests for conservation offenses (from local government and community bodies) lead to a penalty being imposed (fine, confiscation, imprisonment, etc.).</p> <p>EIA legislation is adequately applied and mitigation measures are implemented to minimise risks of degradation in KBAs, buffer zones and biological corridors in at least 6 of the hotspots countries.</p> <p>[Note: achieving more than 6 countries systematically prioritising KBA protection might be unrealistic, so the combined efforts of improved EIAs and</p>	<p>Support CSOs in establishing Community-based Management Areas including a community-based law enforcement system whereby a designated group (e.g. ecoguards) is able to enforce the law in Protected Areas and OECMs (e.g. WCF's Community Ecoguard Programme) to address gaps in law enforcement [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, WCF, WCS, RainForest Trust]</p> <p>Advocate for increased funding allocation for law enforcement within and outside of National Parks with government institutions, based on aforementioned financial needs assessment [Potential supporting organisations: UNDP, FFI]</p> <p>Support the identification of private or external funding sources for Protected Area and OECMs' management [Potential supporting organisations: Noe, CI]</p> <p>Provide training for national experts and CSOs on EIAs [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, Re:wild, IUCN NL]</p> <p>Provide training for governmental institutions on EIAs and SEAs to undertake EIAs' quality control (technical reviews) and rejecting bad quality ones, and provide training across the justice system on environmental regulations, crimes and sentences [Potential supporting organisations: Re:wild, IUCN NL]</p>	4,400,000	9,000,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments' law enforcement reports • CBRNM reports • Protected Areas and OECMs' budget reports for demarcation/fencing, patrolling and law enforcement • EIA reports • EIA mitigation plans' implementation reports • Budget reports on conservation offences' fines • Field visits to Protected Areas, OECMs and exploitation sites 	GBF post-2020: Target 3.

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
		improved collaboration with the private sector to identify more sustainable practices should enable to significantly reduce the impact of private sector projects.]					
Graduation criteria 4.5 Business practices. Private sector business practices in sectors with a (potentially) large biodiversity footprint are supportive of the conservation of natural habitats and species populations. (E)							
<p>1) 2 CSOs/Private Companies networks are in place and active in Benin (led by EcoBenin) and Ghana (led by A Rocha). Two attempts in Liberia: National Cacao Platform led by the Ministry of Agriculture, and National Oil Palm Platform between private sector and CSOs but not operational.</p> <p>2) In STP, there is good progress with private sector engagement in the agricultural sector where large footprint companies are investing to improve practices.</p>	<p>1 platform between conservation-focused CSOs and private companies established and operational in at least 5 countries to assess the impact of CC and environmental degradation on the sustainability of their businesses, and assist them in identifying and adopting more sustainable practices.</p> <p>At least 1 large company per country identified as having a large (actual or potential) biodiversity footprint (e.g. mining, logging, intensive agriculture) has introduced business practices supportive of the conservation of natural habitats and species populations across their operations.</p>	<p>At least 1 platform between conservation-focused CSOs and private companies established and operational in each country to assess the impact of CC and environmental degradation on the sustainability of their businesses, and assist them in identifying and adopting more sustainable practices.</p> <p>At least 3 large companies per country identified as having a large (actual or potential) biodiversity footprint (e.g. mining, logging, intensive agriculture) have introduced business practices supportive of the conservation of natural habitats and species populations across their operations.</p>	<p>Support CSOs in working with relevant governmental institutions to identify all upcoming private sector projects planned in the next 10 to 20 years, to assess their contribution to development and their environmental impact, and to identify ways in collaborating with the private sector to minimise this impact [Potential supporting organisations: IUCN, UNDP, CI]</p> <p>Support CSOs in engaging and establishing partnerships with the private sector [Potential supporting organisations: IUCN, UNDP, USAID]</p> <p>Support CSOs in collaborating with private sector companies in the agricultural sector to develop/strengthen sustainable agricultural value chains including improved practices (e.g. for increased vegetation cover for example in cacao, Cashew and other plantations [WABILED]) and certification systems to incentivise the adoption and maintenance of biodiversity-friendly practices [Potential supporting organisations: IUCN, UNDP, CI, USAID, BirdLife, Noé]</p> <p>Support CSOs in collaborating with private sector companies in the extractive industries such as mining and logging to minimise their impact on forests and biodiversity, and adopt mitigation practices [Potential supporting organisations: IUCN, UNDP, CI, USAID, WCS, GIZ]</p>	300,000	660,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stocktake reports on upcoming development projects and their projected impact • Meeting reports of the CSOs/private companies' platform • Updated business strategies of private companies • Reports on financial benefits generated through the adoption of value chains' certification schemes • Reports on financial benefits generated through ecotourism projects • Surveys with local producers and communities • Field visits to production sites, processing sites and ecotourism sites 	<p>(i) GBF post-2020: Target 15.</p> <p>(ii) SDG 17 - 17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships</p> <p>(iii) Forest Convergence Plan in West Africa - Area of intervention 5</p> <p>iv) AFR100 and Bonn challenge restoration targets</p>

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
			Support CSOs in establishing community-based ecotourism projects where appropriate (e.g. ecotourism development strongly needed in Tai and Grebo/and Sapo National Park in Liberia [WABILED, Neil - UNEP-WCMC]) and in collaboration with the private sector where needed [Potential supporting organisations: IUCN, UNDP, CI, USAID, WCS, GIZ]				
Graduation Condition 5. Monitoring impact: Monitoring systems in place to measure impacts and support an adaptive approach <i>Impact indicators:</i> <i>Other relevant indicators (external):</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of updates to the minimum set of high-level indicators which capture the overall scope of the goals and targets of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (with a time lag of less than five years between updates by countries, tracking national progress, as well as for tracking regional and global progress) Trend in the number of data and metadata related to the national country biodiversity indicators made publicly available Number of existing mechanisms, including for example by a member of the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership, or an intergovernmental organization, or a well-established scientific or research institution, for maintaining the indicators per country 							
Graduation criteria 5.1 Biodiversity monitoring and identification of good practices. Nationwide or region-wide systems are in place to monitor status and trends of forests, biodiversity, threats, and efficiency of conservation practices. (E)							
<p>No government-based national M&E system on forests and biodiversity, and/or on the impact of conservation practices was identified in the hotspot's countries. M&E interventions are linked to projects and often led by international institutions.</p> <p>METT or IMET are used to monitor several National Parks but governments have not yet adopted it as a monitoring tool for Protected Areas nationally.</p> <p>Integrated decision making tools (e.g. Landscape Outcome Assessment Methodology – LOAM, Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool – IMET) have not yet been adopted by the hotspot's countries.</p>	<p>Government institutions are trained in the use of M&E tools for biodiversity and threat monitoring and integrated decision-making tools in 6 hotspot countries.</p> <p>Systems are in place to monitor biodiversity and strengthened species, the trends and health of forests, the sources of degradation (e.g., forest fire, wildlife trade, invasive species, etc.) and the efficiency of conservation practices, in at least 40% of gazetted KBAs and biological corridors, and data from these systems are being</p>	<p>Systems are in place to monitor the trends and health of forests and biodiversity, main sources of degradation (e.g., forest fire, mining, wildlife trade, invasive species, Climate Change etc.) and the efficiency of conservation practices, in at least 80% of gazetted KBAs and biological corridors, and data from these systems are being used to adjust the management plans, and guide land-use planning and development control [adapted from Mainstreaming strategy].</p>	<p>Support government institutions in identifying and received training on most relevant monitoring tools [Potential supporting organisations: RSPB, UNEP-WCMC, WCF, EU/BIOPAMA]</p> <p>Support CSOs in working with government institutions to establish long-term monitoring systems [Potential supporting organisations: RSPB, UNEP-WCMC, WCF, EU/BIOPAMA]</p> <p>Support CSOs and research organisations in assessing and monitoring threats to forest ecosystems and biodiversity across the GFWA landscapes and their interactions [Potential supporting organisations: RSPB, UNEP-WCMC, WCF, EU/BIOPAMA]</p> <p>Support CSOs in working with local communities in monitoring the impact of their interventions in the long term in Community-based Management Areas [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, PPI, RSPB,</p>	1,200,000	2,200,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment reports on training needs for efficient monitoring systems Training reports on monitoring approaches and tools, and attendees' list List of suggested common indicators for the hotspot Project proposals/inception reports including S.M.A.R.T. indicators and targets, quantified baseline levels for each indicator, and monitoring approach Detailed monitoring plans at country and hotspot's levels with clear identification of the role of each organisation in data collection, compilation, analysis and sharing of the results Budget allocation and reports for monitoring Research reports 	(i) SDG 17 - 17.7 Promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed

Baseline level	Milestone Phase 1	Targets	Support actions	Budget Phase 1	Total budget	Means of Verification	Contribution to global targets
Several initiatives are proposing or have proposed common monitoring indicators on specific themes (migratory birds by RSPB, great apes in Côte d'Ivoire by WCF). BIOPAMA also provides grants for training on a set of international M&E tools.	used to adjust the management plans, and guide land-use planning and development control. Common monitoring indicators are proposed for the hotspot to facilitate knowledge sharing and the comparison of approaches.	Common monitoring indicators are adopted by at least 8 of the hotspots countries to facilitate knowledge sharing and the comparison of approaches. [Note: The knowledge generated on good practices will thereafter be shared through the improved communication streams resulting from Condition 1, at transboundary and regional levels].	UNEP-WCMC, WCF] Create synergies between the support provided by BIOPAMA on the use of monitoring tools and the support provided by CEPF (Suggestion in WCMC report 2021: Aligning the future CEPF funded projects with those receiving support from BIOPAMA would be a good way forward to share data and ensure that there is no duplication in effort) [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, EU/BIOPAMA] Promote maximised synergies between all existing M&E systems of donors working in the hotspot (e.g. AFD Facility Forest Territories indicators, OBAPAO's regional set of indicators) to facilitate knowledge sharing and comparison of approaches [Potential supporting organisations: RSPB, UNEP-WCMC, WCF, EU/BIOPAMA, IUCN, AFD] Support CSOs and research organisations in undertaking research projects on the impact of improved agricultural, forestry, fishing, harvesting practices on ecosystems health, biodiversity and local economy [Potential supporting organisations: CEPF, WCS]			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual monitoring reports at local, national, transboundary and hotspot's levels 	
TOTAL				19,870,000	45,230,000		

CEPF's implementation structure

In alignment with the lessons and recommendations provided in the document, it is suggested that CEPF's implementation structure for potential future investment phases could be structured as per Figure 8.

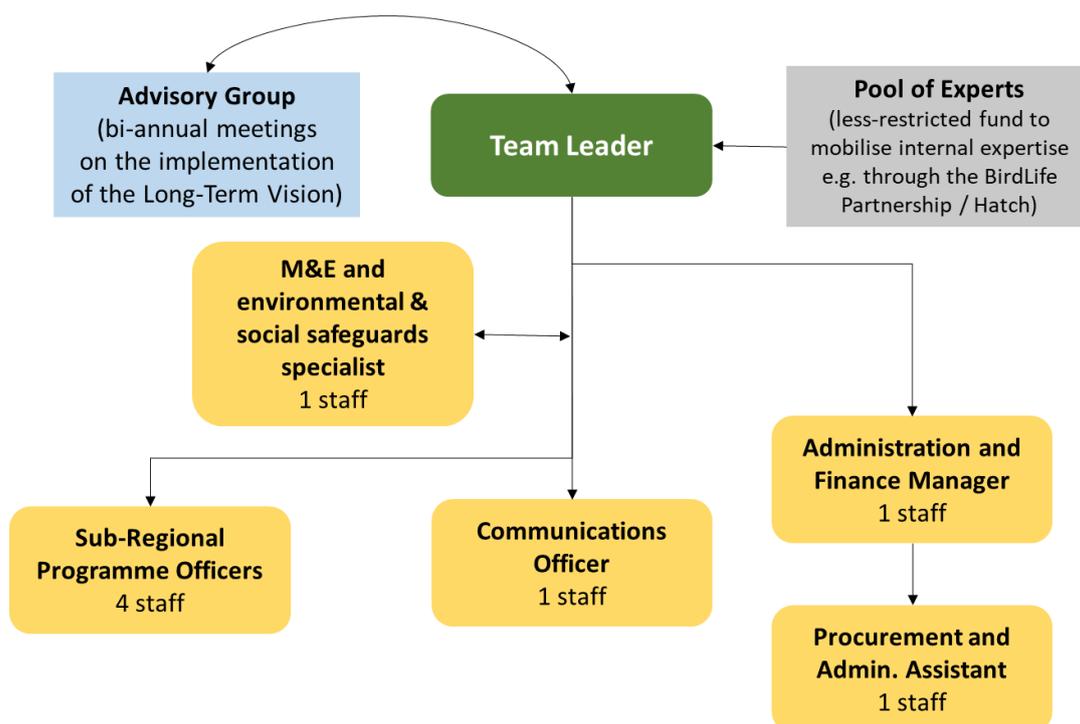


Figure 1: Proposed CEPF coordination structure

The Long-Term Vision provides a common framework to work towards. To be able to achieve the goal of supporting the graduation of CSOs in the hotspot, it is essential to clarify the role of each of the organisations in the implementation of the Long-Term Vision. Suggestions were made in the Long-Term Vision regarding potential responsible organisations for each proposed action. The list is not exhaustive. This should be taken one step further through discussions between CEPF and partners to map resources and refine the role of each organisation towards achieving each target. In the mid-term, this would be eased by regional knowledge sharing platforms. This would enable to maximise the harmonisation and complementarity of the support provided in the hotspot towards achieving the Long-Term Vision targets. It is suggested that the Advisory Group established to support the design of the Long-Term Vision should continue to meet regularly to oversee the implementation of the Long-Term Vision.

Regular meetings of the donors investing in the GFWA Biodiversity Hotspot would also enable to continuously identify opportunities for complementarity and synergy, and maximise knowledge sharing on good practices. The experience generated in the Mediterranean Biodiversity Hotspot with the establishment of a donor roundtable could be built on. In the Mediterranean Biodiversity Hotspot, seven or eight donors meet approximately every year to discuss their ongoing and future investments, and identify areas of complementarity. They have a rolling system whereby a different donor invites the others in its facilities. Each donor covers for its own travelling costs. The donors also jointly cover the costs to maintain an interactive map of the investments in the hotspot. Suggested donors to participate to the roundtable for the hotspot include EU, AFD, FFEM, GEF, USAID, US Fish&Wildlife Services and the RainForest Trust, and eventually the GCF. The Long-Term Vision would then be used as guidelines regarding the next priorities, thereby facilitating the implementation of a harmonised approach among the donors.

Risk analysis

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

Table 2: Risks assessment

Risks	Likelihood of occurrence	Impact	Mitigation measure
Civil unrest prevents the implementation of the interventions and the creation of community-based management systems.	Low to Medium	High	<p>Local risks of conflicts will be assessed carefully before validating any investment, and monitored throughout the implementation period. Conflict areas might have to be avoided as unfortunately sustainability can hardly be achieved if communities are not in a position to engage in the projects.</p> <p>Even when countries suffer from political or civil unrest, donors should not necessarily stop investing in local civil society; on the contrary, it can be beneficial to continue supporting these groups, if at all possible, in order to keep the organizations and their work going during and after the crisis.</p> <p>Instability can affect the implementation of projects in some hotspot countries, and these risks are likely to continue to affect some countries in the future. Spreading grant making across multiple eligible countries, with flexibility in terms of timing and scope of calls for proposals, can maximize donors' ability to take advantage of opportunities, while minimizing the risk of failure to meet portfolio-level targets due to political or security problems in particular countries.</p> <p>Globally, and within the hotspot, CEPF has an established track record of supporting CSOs in post-conflict countries (ex. Cameroon, Guinea, Sierra Leone), where minimal funding can make a major difference to the resurgence of a CSO community and to integrating environmental concerns into plans for reconstruction and social and economic recovery. The risks and merits of any such engagement in the case of post-conflict countries in the hotspot region would need to be carefully considered.</p>
The absence of community buy-in hinders the success and sustainability of the interventions.	Low	High	<p>Incentives from conservation for local communities and the integration of conservation interventions into development initiatives are at the forefront of the proposed vision. Communities' buy-in and ownership of the interventions will be a key condition for the projects to be supported. Sustainable sources of income for local communities will systematically be developed alongside the conservation interventions. This will offer sustainable and lucrative alternatives to detrimental practices. This is expected to empower local communities and enable them to benefit from ecosystems good and services in the long term. Social development benefits will also be accrued where adequate, based on communities' priorities.</p>
Government changes and staff turnover create delays in the interventions.	Low to Medium (depending on the country)	Medium	<p>CSOs are the main targets of CEPF's support. Their participation to decision-making processes, their communication skills and their advocacy skills will be strengthened as much as possible. This will support them in becoming more influential and being less affected by governmental changes.</p>
Turnover of staff within supported CSOs	Medium	Medium	<p>Under the proposed vision, CSOs will be empowered in several manners, including by increasing their recognition by the government, increasing their financial capacity by generating unrestricted income and increasing their capacity to access a diversity of funding sources, and raising awareness on the importance of addressing conservation matters. This will increase job security, improve their working conditions and better the way their contribution is seen by the public and the government.</p>
Future pandemics or other global crisis prevent international travels and restrict national travels.	Low	High	<p>Working with local CSOs and local communities will reduce the vulnerability of conservation actions to international travel restrictions.</p>
Conservation projects cannot be sustainable because of population growth in the hotspot.	High	High	<p>Increased collaboration with organisations in the social development sectors (CSOs within the hotspot, international NGOs and donors) is an important focus of the Long-Term Vision, which aims to encourage these organisations in implementing family planning, literacy, education and other priority interventions for community empowerment alongside conservation projects. Women empowerment through increased participation to decision making³, access to family planning, education and sustainable income sources is the first angle to approach demography issues⁴. Youth is another priority target for empowerment and livelihoods' improvement interventions in the Long-Term Vision. Demographic growth projections will be considered when evaluating project proposals. A specific indicator was added under Criteria 2.4 to monitor the implementation of interventions addressing the issue of population growth rate to complement conservation projects.</p>
Climate change and extreme climate events threaten ecosystems' health and species survival.	Medium	Medium	<p>A strong focus will be given to increasing the connectivity between KBAs to enable species to expand their distribution areas and/or migrate. Future habitat suitability under the climate scenario will be assessed and considered when identifying priority landscapes and developing management plans.</p>

³ Blackstone S. R., 2016. Women's empowerment, household status and contraception use in Ghana. Journal of Biosocial Sciences, Vol 49, p423-434

⁴ Bongaarts J., 2016. Slow down population growth. Nature, Vol 530, p409-412

Conclusion

The Long-Term Vision will bring together all partners working for biodiversity conservation in the hotspot. It provides guidance to prioritise investments towards a common goal. The entire process to design the Long-Term Vision show a strong will for a paradigm change, away from isolated investments and towards harmonised conservation efforts. It has the potential to be a robust tool for fundraising if packaged adequately to fit the audience (media, donors, public).

While CEPF will continue operating through CSOs, these CSOs will be further encouraged to increase their interactions with other stakeholders, including the private sector and cross-sectoral stakeholders like other CSOs focused on family planning. It is urgent indeed to shift from the sectoral approach where interdependent sectors function in silo towards a truly integrated approach. Addressing population growth issues is an absolute necessity. Partnering with other sectors is a challenging task, but it cannot be overlooked if environmentalists want to have a chance to have a significant impact on the conservation of forests and their biodiversity in the region.