



# PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)

PROJECT TYPE: Medium-sized Project

TYPE OF TRUST FUND: GEF Trust Fund

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## PART I: PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title:	Improve sustainability of mangrove forests and coastal mangrove areas in Liberia through protection, planning and livelihood creation- as a building block towards Liberia's marine and coastal protected areas		
Country(ies):	Liberia	GEF Project ID: <sup>1</sup>	
GEF Agency(ies):	Conservation International (select) (select)	GEF Agency Project ID:	
Other Executing Partner(s):	Environmental Protection Agency, Liberia; CI-Liberia	Submission Date:	2014-02-21
GEF Focal Area (s):	Biodiversity	Project Duration (Months)	36
Name of parent program (if applicable):		Project Agency Fee (\$):	86,759
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For SFM/REDD+ <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• For SGP <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• For PPP <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>		

### A. INDICATIVE FOCAL AREA STRATEGY FRAMEWORK<sup>2</sup>:

Focal Area Objectives	Trust Fund	Indicative Grant Amount (\$)	Indicative Co-financing (\$)
(select) BD-1	GEFTF	481,997	1,858,000
(select) BD-2	GEFTF	481,997	1,642,000
(select)			
(select) (select)	(select)		
(select) (select)	(select)		
(select) (select)	(select)		
(select) (select)	(select)		
(select) (select)	(select)		
(select) (select)	(select)		
(select) (select)	(select)		
Total Project Cost		963,994	3,500,000

### B. INDICATIVE PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

<b>Project Objective:</b> To strengthen the conservation and sustainable use of globally important mangrove forests through effective participatory land-use planning and establishment of marine and coastal protected areas in at least 35% of Liberia's mangroves						
Project Component	Grant Type <sup>3</sup>	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	Indicative Grant Amount (\$)	Indicative Cofinancing (\$)
Component 1: Enabling conditions for establishment of coastal and marine protected areas in 20% of priority mangrove forests (15% as National Protected Areas and 5% as community Conserved	TA	1.1. 15% of priority mangrove areas have been identified, delineated, and management plan to safeguard them completed  1.2. 5% of priority mangrove forest is	1.1.1. A multi-stakeholder participatory process has been established to identify and delineate national protected area.  1.1.2 Participatory management plans for	GEFTF	240,730	1,500,000

<sup>1</sup> Project ID number will be assigned by GEFSEC.

<sup>2</sup> Refer to the reference attached on the [Focal Area Results Framework and LDCF/SCCF Framework](#) when completing Table A.

<sup>3</sup> TA includes capacity building, and research and development.

Mangrove Forest)		safeguard through community based conservation agreements or other legal mechanisms;	<p>two proposed national protected areas developed and on-the-ground management activities initiated.</p> <p>1.1.3. Financial plan, including establishment and management costs in short, medium and long terms, for the inclusion of priority mangrove forests into the Protected Areas Network of Liberia, completed.</p> <p>1.1.4 Advocacy to create awareness and support for the creation of new coastal and marine protected areas within the appropriate government agencies, ministries and legislature completed.</p> <p>1.2.1. A multi-stakeholder and community process is established to identify and protect priority mangrove areas.</p>			
Component 2: Reducing pressures on an additional 15% of priority mangrove areas through integrated land-use planning, improving local community livelihoods and increasing stakeholders' capacity and awareness	TA	<p>2.1. Priority Mangrove forest land-use planning integrated and mainstreamed in the wider landscape and subjected to 5-year M&amp;E program for adaptive management</p> <p>2.2. No further deforestation within the 15% of priority mangroves and surrounding buffer areas through addressing drivers of deforestation and improving people's livelihoods</p> <p>2.3. Capacity and awareness of key</p>	<p>2.1.1. Multi-stakeholder integrated land-use planning and decision support toolkit (with key information gathered) for priority mangrove forests and immediate buffer areas in the wider landscape completed and applied to the priority mangrove areas</p> <p>2.1.2. Five-year monitoring and evaluation program for the mangrove forests developed and being implemented by the EPA</p>	GEFTF	675,092	1,800,000

		government agencies and local communities on mangrove forest conservation and sustainable use substantially improved	2.1.3. Plans for demonstration sites developed for sustainable management and restoration by local communities within 4 priority mangrove areas and implemented  2.2.1. Conservation agreements signed and being implemented with at least 10 communities providing local economic development (alternative livelihoods) and community involvement in mangrove protected areas management (governance) strengthened in and around key proposed protected areas  2.3.1. Capacity building programs, based on needs assessment, designed and delivered to at least 50 government officials and 1,000 members in 4 local communities			
	(select)			(select)		
	(select)			(select)		
	(select)			(select)		
	(select)			(select)		
	(select)			(select)		
	(select)			(select)		
	(select)			(select)		
	(select)			(select)		
		Subtotal			915,822	3,300,000
		Project Management Cost (PMC) <sup>4</sup>		GEFTF	48,172	200,000
		Total Project Cost			963,994	3,500,000

**C. INDICATIVE CO-FINANCING FOR THE PROJECT BY SOURCE AND BY NAME IF AVAILABLE, (\$)**

Sources of Cofinancing	Name of Cofinancier	Type of Cofinancing	Amount (\$)
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<sup>4</sup> To be calculated as percent of subtotal.

Other Multilateral Agency (ies)	World Bank - Forest Carbon Partnership Facility - REDD Readiness	Cash	500,000
Private Sector	CI/ Chevron	Cash	200,000
GEF Agency	CI	In-kind	800,000
National Government	Government of Liberia, Environmental Protection Agency of Liberia	In-kind	1,000,000
(select)		(select)	
GEF Agency	CI Global Conservation Fund investment into protected area trust fund	Cash	1,000,000
<b>Total Cofinancing</b>			<b>3,500,000</b>

**D. INDICATIVE TRUST FUND RESOURCES (\$) REQUESTED BY AGENCY, FOCAL AREA AND COUNTRY<sup>1</sup>**

N/A

<sup>1</sup> In case of a single focal area, single country, single GEF Agency project, and single trust fund project, no need to provide information for this table. PMC amount from Table B should be included proportionately to the focal area amount in this table.

<sup>2</sup> Indicate fees related to this project.

**E. PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)<sup>5</sup>**

Please check on the appropriate box for PPG as needed for the project according to the GEF Project Grant:

	<u>Amount Requested (\$)</u>	<u>Agency Fee for PPG (\$)<sup>6</sup></u>
• No PPG required.	-- 0--	--0--
• (upto) \$50k for projects up to & including \$1 million	_____	_____
• (upto)\$100k for projects up to & including \$3 million	91000	8190
• (upto)\$150k for projects up to & including \$6 million	_____	_____
• (upto)\$200k for projects up to & including \$10 million	_____	_____
• (upto)\$300k for projects above \$10 million	_____	_____

**PPG AMOUNT REQUESTED BY AGENCY(IES), FOCAL AREA(S) AND COUNTRY(IES) FOR MFA AND/OR MTF PROJECT ONLY**

Trust Fund	GEF Agency	Focal Area	Country Name/ Global	(in \$)		
				PPG (a)	Agency Fee (b)	Total c = a + b
GEF TF	(select)	Biodiversity	Liberia	91,000	8,190	99,190
	(select)					
(select)	(select)	(select)				0
<b>Total PPG Amount</b>				<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

MFA: Multi-focal area projects; MTF: Multi-Trust Fund projects.

<sup>5</sup> On an exceptional basis, PPG amount may differ upon detailed discussion and justification with the GEFSEC.

<sup>6</sup> PPG fee percentage follows the percentage of the GEF Project Grant amount requested.

## **PART II: PROJECT JUSTIFICATION<sup>7</sup>**

### **A. PROJECT OVERVIEW**

**A.1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION. BRIEFLY DESCRIBE THE PROJECT, INCLUDING ; 1) THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS, ROOT CAUSES AND BARRIERS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED; 2) THE BASELINE SCENARIO AND ANY ASSOCIATED BASELINE PROJECTS, 3) THE PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE SCENARIO, WITH A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECT, 4) INCREMENTAL/ADDITIONAL COST REASONING AND EXPECTED CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE BASELINE , THE GEFTF, LDCE/SCCF AND CO-FINANCING; 5) GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS (GEFTF, NPIF) AND/OR ADAPTATION BENEFITS (LDCE/SCCF); 6) INNOVATIVENESS, SUSTAINABILITY AND POTENTIAL FOR SCALING UP**

This project aims to provide the integrated land-use policies and tools to mainstream mangrove forests biodiversity conservation and to secure mangrove forest protected areas. Establishing priority mangroves as protected areas will be the first phase of a longer term process towards the ultimate establishment of a Coastal and Marine Protected Areas Network in Liberia. This project will directly address: (1) the complexity of developing and establishing new protected areas, (2) the high priority of the global environmental problem associated with mangrove forest loss, and (3) the weak institutional capacity in the Liberian government.

### **A.1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

#### **A.1.1. GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS, ROOT CAUSES AND BARRIERS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED:**

**A.1.1.1.** Liberia hosts two of West Africa's three largest remaining rainforest blocks containing many plants and animal species that are endemic and whose survival is severely threatened. These forest areas have also been internationally recognized as "biodiversity hotspots" and, therefore, are priorities for global conservation efforts.

**A.1.1.2.** Liberia's forests provide a wide range of benefits to the Liberian people and the international community such as habitat for globally important biodiversity, ecological services, ecotourism potential, timber and non-timber forest products, and significant input to the national budget through commercial forestry development. Liberia is home to approximately 125 mammal species, 590 bird species, 162 native fish species, 74 known reptiles and amphibians, over 1000 described insect species and over 2,000 plant species, of which 240 are timber species (WAPS 1999).

**A.1.1.3.** Biological diversity in Liberia has declined significantly over the years with the significant degradation of the country's ecosystems leading to the rapid loss of many species. Liberia has lost 60% of its forest cover over the last two centuries, which is particularly devastating to a forest-dependent country. Current development trends along the coast are threatening Liberia's mangrove forests; in some cases mangrove degradation and forest loss is higher than in terrestrial forests in the country. It is estimated that the rate of mangrove deforestation could be as high as 65% since 1980. Therefore, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) considers the need for more concrete data in this area to be of the highest priority.

**A.1.1.4.** In Liberia, one can find mangroves near lagoons and rivers from Cape Mesurado to Cape Palmas. Six true mangrove species are found in Liberia; the most common specie of

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<sup>7</sup> Part II should not be longer than 5 pages.

mangrove in Liberia is *Rhizophora racemosa*. Lake Piso, a very large open lagoon near the border with Sierra Leone, supports an important series of mangrove swamps. The lagoon-mangrove communities around Cape Palmas in south-eastern Liberia can grow up to three meters high and are dominated by *Conocarpus erectus* with rare specimens of *Avicennia germinans* and *Rhizophora racemosa*, as well as the more common of *Acrostichum aureum*. On the central Liberian coast estuarine mangroves occur, which include *Rhizophora harrisonii*, *Avicennia germinans* and *Conocarpus erectus*.

**A.1.1.5.** Mangrove forests of Liberia are rich in biodiversity. The mangroves provide habitat to the threatened West African manatee (*Trichechus senegalensis*, VU). They provide habitat and feeding ground for several species of birds including the African spoonbill (*Platalea alb*, LC), common pratincole (*Glareola nuchaltis*, LC) and curlew (*Numenius arquata*, NT). The Rufus fishing owl (*Scotopelia ussheri*, VU) can be found in the mangroves of the southeast. Liberia also hosts the vulnerable African dwarf crocodile (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*, VU), the Nile crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*, LC) and the African sharp-nosed crocodile (*Mecistops cataphractus*, DD). Liberia's beaches are breeding grounds for leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*, EN), loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*, EN), green (*Chelonia mydas*, EN), and olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, EN) sea turtles and the mangroves provide important nursery areas for young sea turtles. Mangroves also provide important breeding areas for many West African marine species of fish, crab, shrimp and mollusks. Three of Liberia's mangrove areas are also RAMSAR sites: Lake Piso, the Marshall Wetlands and the Mesurado Wetlands.

**A.1.1.6.** Unfortunately, much of Liberia's primary mangrove forest has been lost due to road building, landfill, fuel wood collection and urban expansion, leaving small pockets of primary mangroves and secondary growth. The greatest damage to the mangrove forests has occurred near larger towns such as Monrovia, Buchanan, Greenville, and Harper. In fact, *Rhizophora racemosa* has been extirpated in many areas due to urban growth.

**A.1.1.7.** Overall the main threat to mangroves in Liberia is habitat loss and land degradation due to agriculture or aquaculture expansion, urbanization, transportation infrastructure development, and mining and oil exploitation. A secondary cause related to habitat loss is the overuse and overexploitation of natural resources through the practices of hunting, firewood collection, charcoal production, timber extraction and the collection of species for the pet trade. Finally, pollution of the water, air and soil from chemicals released from agricultural pursuits, the potential for oil spills and the effects of climate change all contribute to the loss of mangroves in Liberia.

**A.1.1.8.** Mangroves are valued economically because of their utility as fish nurseries thus supporting traditional fisheries. In particular, the mangrove systems around Monrovia are important breeding grounds for various commercially viable aquatic species, including fish, crabs, shrimps and water snail (Wiles, 2005). The fishery sub-sector provides about 65% of the protein needs of the country and contributes about 10% to GDP (Government of Liberia, 2004). They also provide key ecosystem services such as flood control and water and soil filtration.

**A.1.1.9.** Local communities depend on mangrove wetlands for subsistence and local commerce as they have few alternatives, using the wood to provide energy supplies, food, shelter, water and medicine, ecological services and raffia palm for weaving. The economic pressures and limited employment opportunities during and after the war have compelled many families to grow rice for the first time in order to survive. This drove cultivation of land that had never previously been considered for rice production, such as the coastal mangrove swamps (UNEP 2007).

**A.1.1.10.** The current threats to Liberia's mangroves are exacerbated by a number of factors including inadequate institutional capacities to manage and monitor mangroves; inconsistencies in legislation or how it is applied; lack of integrated planning between different sectors; lack of protection, specifically lack of community involvement in protection and conservation;

inadequate law enforcement; and insufficient awareness among key decision makers and local communities.

## **A.1.2. THE BASELINE SCENARIO AND ANY ASSOCIATED BASELINE PROJECT:**

### **The baseline scenario**

**A.1.2.1.** Since peace was established nearly 11 years ago, little data has been gathered on Liberia's mangrove forests. It is clear, however, that there are many threats to Liberia's precious mangrove forests and that the rate of destruction is growing. Unfortunately still unknown is the speed in which the mangroves are being destroyed and the direct effect on loss of species, particularly endangered species that use the mangroves as a nursery for their young. Much of the baseline data needed to successfully implement this project will be gathered during the PPG phase.

**A.1.2.2.** What is known are the threats to the mangroves, which are obvious: 1) infrastructure development, such as road building and illegal structures for housing; 2) agriculture expansion, particularly for swamp rice; 3) illegal sand mining; 4) use of mangrove wood for fuel wood and charcoal; and 5) unregulated waste disposal. There is also a significant lack of general knowledge regarding mangroves and in particular the important role they play in healthy fish stocks, as storm shelters and for the communities who live in and around the mangroves.

**A.1.2.3.** Populations are also growing in these coastal areas and new infrastructure, such as roads, will only add additional pressure and increase mangrove deforestation. If left unchecked, one would expect that most, if not all, of Liberia's mangroves would eventually be cleared or degraded. The results of this loss would be devastating for the nation. It would lead to increased erosion and coastal communities would be increasingly vulnerable to storms and flooding. The lack of proper land-use planning would mean that the opportunity costs and losses would not be fully understood until it was far too late.

**A.1.2.4.** While Liberia's protected areas network has proposed four mangrove areas for inclusion, but little has been implemented to date to ensure mangrove conservation. The Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve has been established, but would still benefit significantly from the land-use planning and alternative livelihood activities proposed in this project. Even with the formal protection of inclusion in the protected area network, without proper involvement from the surrounding communities the chances for true conservation are quite slim. At the same time, if the government's capacity to enforce their own protected areas laws is not increased, legal protection will not mean anything.

**A.1.2.5.** Liberia is on the precipice of losing their mangroves and with them coastal biodiversity, sea turtle nesting beaches and migratory bird areas would be lost. Also key breeding sites for economically important marine species would drastically decline, effecting fish stocks and creating greater pressure on land based biodiversity, already under threat from the bushmeat trade. The loss of the mangrove ecosystem will have a direct and negative effect on food insecurity throughout the country.

### **Associated baseline projects**

**A.1.2.6.** There are many projects currently underway in Liberia that will also contribute to this project's baseline. These include:

**a. *WB/GEF Consolidation of the Protected areas Network (COPAN) – currently closed; Expansion of the Protected Areas Network (EXPAN)--2010-ongoing, US\$950,000;*** These two projects implemented by the Forestry Development Authority have set the framework for the Protected Areas Network, producing a document which guides all stakeholders in the creation of protected areas in Liberia. They have created the base upon which this project will build. The proposed project would add to the current protected areas network, and add

mangrove and coastal forest to the existing set of protected areas. The project would also continue to build upon lessons learned through both COPAN and EXPAN in alternative livelihoods and economic development for communities around globally significant biodiversity. In addition, CI Liberia is currently working with the *Global Conservation Fund* to establish a sustainable financing mechanism for a protected area in Nimba County. This would establish a governance *structure at the national level to which other protected areas can subscribe*.

**b. West Africa Regional Fisheries Project (WARFP) [Regional Project]—2009- ongoing, US\$12 million:** This project is supporting the development of sustainable fisheries, which inextricably is related to healthy breeding areas such as mangroves. The proposed project will build upon this regional work done to date on sustainable fisheries and continue to work with local communities on sustainable harvesting practices at the grass roots level. The project will also contribute to the WARFP activities of good governance and sustainable management, improved monitoring, and improved livelihoods.

**c. UNDP/GEF Enhancing Resilience of vulnerable coastal areas to climate change risks in Liberia—June 2010-June 2014-ongoing, US\$3.3 million:** This project seeks to develop coastal defense mechanisms. Current investments are specifically focused on the Monrovia and Buchanan areas where risks are highest. While this project primarily focuses on macro-scale infrastructure investments and some mangrove rehabilitation the proposed project will compliment these investments, working specifically with coastal and mangrove communities on local land-use plans and livelihood solutions. Putting in place mangrove protected areas will also help to address current coastal erosion issues.

**d. UNDP/GEF Strengthening Liberia’s capability to provide climate information and services to enhance climate resilient development and adaptation to climate change—October 2013-2017, US\$6.7 million:** This project aims to develop an early warning system for Liberia, thus strengthening Liberia’s capability to provide climate and hydrological information and services to enable climate resilient sustainable development. This proposed mangrove project will collaborate with this UNDP/GEF project to ensure the data collected for the early warning system developed is also included as part of local land-use plans and other development activities.

**e. The government of Liberia’s investments in mangroves and coastal areas: Through investment in the Environmental Protection Agency, the Forestry Development Authority, the Maritime Authority and other relevant stakeholders in investing in mangrove and coastal areas:** The project will build upon national investments in efforts to build awareness, improve livelihoods, monitoring efforts, sustainable lands management planning and staff salaries in key mangrove and coastal areas.

- **The Environmental Protection Agency** hosts a number of education and awareness activities related to conservation of coastal areas and biodiversity. These include hosting of the National Wetlands Day, Biodiversity Day, World Environment Day and Ozone/Climate Change Day. The total investment in these activities annually is US\$75,000. The EPA has also employed security along the 72nd Boulevard to ensure that encroachment on the wetlands and mangroves in the area are conserved. Finally, they have also placed signboards near wetlands and mangroves in Marshall, Montserrado and Bong Counties. There has been collaboration with the **Forestry Development Authority** to exchange information regarding the use of resources near these areas.
- **The Forestry Development Authority; requested budget \$US1.8 million:** The FDA is the custodian of protected areas and as such is currently providing staff to manage the existing protected areas in Liberia. Funding for activities beyond staff salaries is being provided through supportive projects like EXPAN and the proposed project.



- ***Liberia Maritime Authority: Ongoing project Reclaiming Liberia's Beaches and Waterways; 2011-2014-ongoing, US\$1.5 million/year:*** This project is currently raising awareness of the importance of coastal and mangrove areas, providing jobs for beach cleanup, and supporting small community developments such as latrines. The proposed project will build on the current investments providing additional job and livelihood creation as well as awareness specifically targeting biodiversity conservation.

**f. *CI Investments in conservation agreements globally*** (currently capitalized at US\$10 million): CI through its Conservation Stewards Program (CSP) has pioneered the use of conservation agreements to structure relationships between conservation investors and local communities. Conservation Agreements (CAs) offer direct economic benefits to resource users in exchange for commitments to changes in resource-use practices. Thus, CAs are a form of direct incentives for conservation that link conservation funders (governments, bilateral agencies, private sector companies, foundations, individuals, etc.) to resource owners whose decisions influence conservation outcomes. A key feature of CAs is that benefits are conditional on conservation performance, thus requiring effective monitoring. CSP has demonstrated that CAs are an effective way to channel private sector support for conservation. CI has been implementing the CA model since 2002, and the current CSP portfolio includes projects in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Pacific, benefitting nearly 35,000 people and protecting nearly 1.5 million hectares of natural habitat.

**g. *Conservation Agreements in Liberia:*** Conservation International is using conservation agreements to promote mangrove conservation while developing and promoting alternative livelihoods within local communities in and around the mangrove forest outside of Buchanan in the Barcoline community with the support of Chevron (US\$200,000/year). CI is also working with ArcelorMittal in Nimba County to further test conservation agreements as a key management tool to support protected areas (US\$400,000/year). CI's experiences in these projects will provide key lessons learned as to the applicability of the Conservation Agreement model. These projects are also demonstrating how the private sector can be a key contributor to Liberia's long term biodiversity conservation goals. Overall this project will build on 12 years of conservation and livelihood investments managed by CI in Liberia. xxx

**A.1.3.** The proposed project will also seek to collaborate with other projects in the region and beyond promoting similar objectives to ensure full information sharing and to build on current successes in mangrove conservation. Specifically the project will collaborate with the USAID Forest Carbon, Markets and Communities project and the USAID Coastal Sustainable Landscapes Project in Ghana. We will do this through regular contact with project managers and also through regular exchanges and site visits. CI-Liberia will also coordinate annual meetings with the other project managers and distribute a quarterly newsletter on the Liberia work to ensure coordination.

#### **A.1.4. THE PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE SCENARIO AND COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECT:**

**A.1.4.1.** Through an investment from the GEF this project will strengthen conservation and sustainable use of mangrove forests through effective participatory land-use planning, culminating in at least 20% of Liberia's priority mangrove forests being listed as marine and coastal protected areas (either through national legislation or through conservation agreements with local communities). Liberia's mangroves will be better protected, thus decreasing deforestation, through a combination of better enforcement and reduced pressures thus contributing to sustainable land management in 35% of total mangroves in Liberia (20% in protection and 15% in surrounding buffer zones).

**A.1.4.2.** To ensure this necessary result, the project will involve all related ministries and

agencies and provide capacity training to carry out and contribute to integrated land-use planning. Decision support tools will be created that provide key decision makers and other stakeholders, including effected communities, better planning tools that will prioritize biodiversity conservation and the maintenance of key ecosystems and their services. Communities will be made aware of the importance of mangrove conservation, and will also be provided with locally appropriate alternatives to current destructive behaviors. Communities will become stewards of the mangroves and coastal areas through the development of conservation agreements.

**A.1.4.3.** Although it has been noted that there is currently a great lack of baseline data, what data is available clearly indicates that there is limited protection of coastal or riverine mangroves in Liberia. Not only will this project address this lack of baseline data, and fill a capacity need with the Liberian government, but it will also build the foundation for larger investments in coastal and marine protected areas. One exception is Lake Piso, where a multiple use protected area has been created, but to date little investment has been made in ensuring mangrove forest functionality. The behavior changes envisioned through the proposed project with conservation agreements will help to address threats to mangroves thus ensuring stewardship within the mangrove ecosystems. Long-term financing plans will also be put in place through coordination with other CI investments in Liberia ensuring greater sustainability of project outcomes in the future.

**Note:** It is important to note that outcomes and targets for this project will be confirmed and refined based on the information obtained through the PPG.

**Component 1: Enabling conditions for establishment of coastal and marine protected areas in 20% of priority mangrove forests**

**A.1.4.4.** This component will provide the delineation for the establishment of a mangrove forest protected area in Liberia – protecting 15% of mangrove forests within the Protected Areas Network of Liberia, and 5% of mangrove forests as Community Conserved mangrove forests (output 1.2.1). In addition, this component will help identify the 20% of mangrove forest where project funding will be directed. This will be done through a multi-criteria analysis.

**A.1.4.5.** The criteria for selecting sites will be further refined with all stakeholders during the PPG phase, but at a minimum the criteria will include biodiversity, pattern and process (connectivity), mangrove functioning and health, community uses, and ecosystem services, such as flood control. We are estimating that 15% will be government protected areas and 5% will be managed through community protected areas, but the true breakdown of the 20% will be based on location and community willingness and government capacity to manage the protected areas.

**A.1.4.6.** Participatory management plans for two proposed national protected areas (output 1.1.2), as well as financial plans (output 1.1.3), will be developed with stakeholders for the government protected areas and the community protected areas. We are well aware that stand-alone “island” protected areas that are not incorporated into the wider landscape, or where no attempt to reduce land-use pressure has been made, will not produce our desired results.

**A.1.4.7.** Throughout the project we will increase awareness within the appropriate government agencies, ministries and the legislature to garner support and advocacy for the formal declaration of mangrove and costal protected areas (output 1.1.4).

**Component 2: Reducing pressures on an additional 15% of priority mangrove areas**

**A.1.4.8.** Component 2 will endeavor to reduce the pressures on the mangrove systems in Liberia by integrating land-use planning and improving adjacent communities’ livelihoods. The project will develop a tool kit for land-use planning for Liberian mangrove systems and develop integrated land-use plans for the mangrove areas as delineated during the PPG phase

(output 2.1.1). The project will utilize the tool-kit for land-use planning with the communities in and around the mangroves to find a solution that protects these vital forest systems while also addressing the needs of the communities. The specific decision support tools will be determined during the PPG phase. The toolkit will be designed to meet the needs of key stakeholders including the Environmental Protection Agency and the Forestry Development Authority. This will include issues of land allocation, harmonizing land use needs based on all current uses and conservation needs, among others.

**A.1.4.9.** Additional information will be gathered as necessary to ensure that land-use planning will be fully comprehensive including current extent, biodiversity and ecosystem services (carbon, flood control), aesthetic and cultural services, uses and pressures, conservation status, identification of priority areas for conservation and sustainable use. This will cover an additional 15% of areas outside of the targets in component 1. This 15% will act as a buffer zone to shield the officially protected mangrove areas from external pressures. As part of the land-use planning process, a 5-year measurement and evaluation program for mangrove restoration and protection will be developed and capacities will be built to implement this in the long run (output 2.1.2). Additional baselines will be determined during the PPG phase, but at present we expect the project to halt deforestation within all areas prioritized for project intervention.

**A.1.4.10.** The project will also introduce the conservation agreement (CA) methodology with at least 10 communities living in and around key mangrove areas (output 2.2.1). As previously noted, a CA is an explicit agreement between a group of resource users (communities around the mangroves) and an organization representing conservation investors, specifying conservation commitments on the part of the resource users and a benefit package that will be provided in return for these commitments. The benefit package is determined together with the resource users to ensure that it responds to local needs and priorities, but delivery of benefits over time depends on verified compliance with conservation commitments. xxx

CI through its Conservation Stewards Program (CSP) has demonstrated that CAs are an effective way to channel funding for conservation, with particular interest growing rapidly among private sector partners. Governments also are increasingly recognizing the value of the CA model as a tool for poverty reduction that also achieves ecosystem benefits, as in the case of Ecuador's Programa Socio Bosque.

#### CSP Program Highlights:

- Around Cambodia's Central Cardamom Protected Forest (CCPF) — part of the largest remaining intact forest block in Southeast Asia — biodiversity is threatened by shifting agriculture, hunting and trading of wildlife such as tigers and sun bears, and fishing practices that result in bycatch of the Siamese crocodile (*Crocodylus siamensis*), the most threatened crocodylian in the world, with a global population in 2006 of only about 200). In the first year of the initiative, nest protection and incubation of eggs led to the release of 20 juvenile crocodiles, representing 10 percent of the global population; such releases, accompanied by village ceremonies and blessed by monks, have yielded a steady increase in the Siamese crocodile population. Starting with CSP support for a single agreement with the community of Chumnoab in 2006, CI-Cambodia now supports conservation agreements between CI-Cambodia and 4 communities around the CCPF who have stopped deforestation and illegal hunting. In return, the communities are benefiting from investments in improved rice production, additional household income from community ranger jobs, and permanent presence of teachers in local schools.
- In South Africa, 22 communal farmers in Namaqualand signed CSP conservation agreements with CI-South Africa in 2009 to join the Biodiversity and Red Meat Initiative (BRI), taking steps to reduce overgrazing and restore ecological balance on their farmlands. These agreements represent the first payment for ecosystem services scheme for communal

lands in South Africa. The farmers commit to sound rangeland management, fire control, and non-lethal predator responses; in return, CI facilitates the purchase of stock at premium prices, maintains water pumps, and provides employment for three local monitoring officials who assist BRI members in implementing sustainable grazing and monitoring regimes. Benefits also include training opportunities in holistic rangeland management, wetland restoration, and market research. Monitoring shows that behavior change (stock reductions, avoidance of sensitive areas) has reduced pressure on grazing lands, though full biological impact will require considerable time to manifest given that measurable range conditions change very slowly over time; however, wetlands have shown rapid recovery, with marked improvement in quantity and quality of water flows. CI-South Africa now receives funding from the Government of South Africa to support some of the conservation agreements with farmers related to rangeland management.

- Since 2007, CSP has supported conservation agreements between CI-Colombia and eight indigenous and local farming communities of the lower Caquetá and Apaporis Rivers in Colombian Amazonia. The communities are committed to protecting about 300,000 hectares of lakes and forests, habitat for more than 50 fish species, including the Pirarucú (*Arapaima gigas*) and American Arowana (*Osteoglossum bicirrhosum*), and many vulnerable and endangered species such as giant otters (*Pteronura brasiliensis*), manatees (*Trichechus inunguis*), and woolly monkeys (*Lagothrix* spp.). Protected lakes provide the main source of income as well as staple protein for local people, and are important cultural sites for local communities. Populations of the two target fish species have shown sufficient increases to warrant consideration of sustainable extraction models, and increased vigilance throughout the project area has helped law enforcement authorities respond to illegal resource use, as community patrols now provide eyes and ears over a vast swath of territory that previously suffered from an enforcement vacuum. Nearly 120 families, more than 800 people, have benefited directly from the agreements through increased income, protection of fishing areas and sacred sites, and strengthened community organization.
- In addition to these three examples, CSP maintains a database of monitoring data for more than 40 other conservation agreements around the world, tracking socioeconomic trends in partner communities as well as project impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem maintenance. Monitoring data are gathered through partnerships with universities, local NGOs, and relevant government agencies, including community participation in data gathering whenever possible.

**A.1.4.11.** As noted, the details of the community benefit package are to be determined together with the community, however, based on the feasibility assessment and our global experience, we anticipate there may be components related to education, health, investment in sustainable fishing options, and a community-based vigilance and monitoring program to protect mangroves and sea turtle nests. This last component may result in the education and hiring of community members to become community rangers. A community rangers program is a valuable way to create conservation-based jobs, while also cultivating awareness and pride regarding local biodiversity among the community members. The monitoring program will rely on collaboration between community rangers, local conservation NGOs, and the Liberian government. We will design a monitoring framework that uses these three parties to ensure a set of checks and balances and third-party objectivity with respect to CA performance.

**A.1.4.12.** Of critical importance, the benefit packages design will specifically address the different resource-use roles of men and women, to ensure equitable distribution as well as effectively address all key drivers of unsustainable use. For instance, although men do the fishing, women are responsible for smoking the fish, so they are central in addressing this driver of mangrove loss. The use of mangrove wood as cooking fuel as well as to prepare fish for market is a major cause of deforestation. Therefore we will work with the community to

develop more sustainable ways to meet these needs, such as by using more efficient cook-stoves and establishing fuelwood lots. In every case, the overall intention is to ensure that community members do not lose livelihoods, but that livelihoods are strengthened through the agreements. Information on the livelihood and biodiversity baselines will be gathered through the initial phases of CA implementation.

**A.1.4.13.** Once the feasibility analyses are concluded the project will put in place at least 4 Conservation Agreement demonstrations for sustainable management and restoration. These will largely be determined through a full engagement and negotiation process, but there are currently key behaviors that threaten mangroves and surrounding areas that we will seek to address, such as the collecting of mangroves for fuel wood, which will be addressed through the development of local woodlots to supply fuel needs. Another is the current practice of harvesting sea turtle eggs, which will be addressed by creating community rangers who will be compensated more for protecting the eggs than they were making harvesting them (output 2.1.3).

**A.1.4.14.** The project will work with government officials as well as community members to determine their capacity needs to ensure full protection of their mangroves (output 2.3.1). The project will work to fulfill this capacity gap through trainings and education programs, as indicated through a needs assessment. As stated in component 1, integration with other investments will be critical to ensuring that the sustainable financing needed to secure these investments in the long run is available. The project will work with the CI's Global Conservation Fund, the private sector and the government of Liberia to ensure that additional funds are secured during the life of the work. CI has a proven track record in supporting the long-term sustainability of Conservation Agreements through our Conservation Stewards Program, but also through engaging governments to support this work. For example, the government of Ecuador, with direct support from CI-Ecuador, designed and approved the "Programa Socio Bosque" – Forest Partners Program in English – in 2008 to protect Ecuador's natural heritage by providing incentives for forest conservation. Socio Bosque provides a direct payment per hectare of native forest to landowners who agree to conserve their forest through voluntary conservation agreements that are monitored on a regular basis for compliance. In Bolivia, the national government and CI have been working together to establish a Socio Bosque-like benefits sharing program, called CONSERMBO, to compensate people for conserving pristine Amazonian forest and other valuable ecosystems. CI-Liberia has already begun this conversation with the Liberian government. Through the life of the project we will continue to ensure cohesion between the various efforts ongoing in Liberia to ensure long term financing sustainability for both protected areas and conservation agreements. We will coordinate with the Government of Liberia, the private sector, the Global Conservation Fund and other key actors working to develop a sustainable financing mechanism.

**A.1.4.15.** Without the support of the GEF, there will be no concentrated effort to preserve Liberia's mangroves, and in particular there will be no official legal protection or enforcement of current legal protections. This project will support the work of the Liberian government, who sees a great need to protect these important ecosystems, but needs dedicated support to ensure that the delineation is done well and incorporates the needs and desires of the communities.

## **A.1.5. INCREMENTAL COST REASONING AND EXPECTED CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BASELINE**

### **Outcome 1.1 Multi-stakeholder participatory process for national protected area identification, delineation and planning to safeguard at least 15% of priority mangrove areas along Liberia's coast completed and results endorsed by Government of Liberia**

**A 1.5.1.** Without GEF interventions current investments in protected areas would focus primarily on terrestrial forest areas. Little consideration would be given to the uniqueness of

the mangrove ecosystems and their protection needs. In the case where mangroves have been included in protected areas (such as Lake Piso) little attention would be given to the specific strategies needed to safeguard these ecosystems. Protected areas would continue to be established and staffed by government, but financing for real management costs would continue to be limited and each PA would be little more than a paper park. Awareness as to the importance of these areas would continue to be created by government in an ad hoc fashion but its ability to ensure protection would be limited.

**A1.5.2.** In the alternative scenario, additional funding of US\$200,000 is requested to take advantage of current investments in terrestrial conservation through the protected areas network and sustainable financing mechanisms being established. GEF investments in this project will ensure that mangroves and coastal areas are added to Liberia's protected areas network, thus increasing the additional ecosystems and species under conservation, and ensuring that mangroves and coastal ecosystems also benefit from national and international investments in a protected areas trust fund. And to ensure that mangrove conservation is planned comprehensively with PA management and financing plans developed. Targeted awareness will be carried out in order to ensure key decision makers fully appreciate the importance of mangrove ecosystems and their conservation.

**Outcome 1.2 Multi-stakeholder and community process for community conserved mangrove forests to safeguard at least 5% of priority mangroves**

**A1.5.3.** In the absence of the GEF investment, community conservation areas would only exist in areas where development partners are providing funding for the establishment of Community Forests and Conservation Agreements. The communities' ability to create and manage protected areas would still not be fully recognized as legal protection mechanisms.

**A1.5.4.** In the alternative scenario, \$149,906 is required to allow project executers to work within current legal frameworks and with the conservation agreement tool to ensure community areas are secured. This will build on Conservation International's current investments in legal and policy reviews related to conservation agreements as well as investments in community forestry by USAID. In doing so, we will be piloting new mechanisms for community conservation (e.g. conservation agreements) that could be replicated throughout the country.

**Outcome 2.1 Priority Mangrove forest land use planning integrated and mainstreamed in the wider landscape and subject to 5-year M&E program for adaptive management**

**A.1.5.5.** If the baseline scenario continues, mangrove conservation planning activities will continue to be ad hoc and piecemeal in their approaches without proper data to develop plans. Also in the absence of this project priority will continue to be given to planning of development activities rather than to the maintenance of key ecosystems. There would be continued challenges in coordination between key Ministries and Agencies as to the role each plays in mangrove conservation. Land use plans would only be developed for specific sites or with only certain considerations addressed, such as biodiversity, climate change, livelihoods, based on the limited information available. Proper monitoring systems would be absent, thus limiting stakeholder's ability to measure impact and adaptively manage activities.

**A1.5.6.** The alternative scenario put forth by this project requires a \$300,000 investment by the GEF to carry out comprehensive land use planning in all key mangrove areas. This planning will engage all key stakeholders including government ministries and agencies, development partners, local communities, and the private sector in order to identify the role of each in land use planning and decision making. Needed information will be gathered and prioritized to ensure land use planning decisions are based on the best possible information available. The project will also allow for land-use planning that prioritizes the maintenance of key ecosystems and functions rather than current investments that focus only on development priorities. A

decision support toolkit will also be created to guide these processes beyond the life of the project. The project will also work with key stakeholders building upon all associated efforts to establish a 5 year monitoring and evaluation program that will allow Liberia to properly track, assess and adaptively manage mangrove forest interventions in a collective fashion. Key priority areas will be selected through a multi-stakeholder process and prioritized for initial investment as demonstration sites for sustainable green development.

**Outcome 2.2 No further deforestation within 15% of priority mangroves and surrounding buffer areas through addressing drivers of deforestation and improving people's livelihoods.**

**A1.5.7.** In the absence of this project only selective areas are benefiting from investments in CI's conservation agreement methodology, based on specific project funds. In other areas livelihoods activities are carried out without explicit commitments to conservation actions- thus often creating competition for resources or poor planning. Also these investments usually are only for a limited time and often end as funding priorities change. This thus limited the effectiveness of these projects' to drive lasting change in deforestation and degradation. The current lack of sustainable options will continue to lead to the degradation and loss of mangroves in Liberia.

**A1.5.8.** In the alternative scenario, additional funding of \$250,000 is requested in order to expand current conservation agreement efforts and ensure that at least 10 new communities are able to benefit from livelihoods and jobs that support mangrove conservation rather than eroding them. The project will introduce the CA tool as an additional mechanism to ensure community participation in protected area management. These investments will allow project executers to tie local livelihood initiatives to sustainable sources of financing, thus ensuring their longevity.

**Outcome 2.3 Capacity and awareness of key government agencies and local communities on mangrove forest conservation and sustainable use substantially improved**

**A1.5.9** There are currently many investments in awareness and capacity building; however few of these initiatives have been designed based on a comprehensive needs assessment. Thus in the absence of the project these initiatives will continue, but will fail to achieve the needed behavior changes in order to ensure mangrove conservation.

**A1.5.10** In the alternative scenario, US\$150,826 the capacity building activities promoted under this project will take into consideration the specific needs of both government officials and community members and will ensure Liberian institutions become world class in the delivery on environmental management, something in which no other project is currently investing. At least 4 targeted communities will be engaged in a comprehensive awareness creation strategy thus increasing their access to information, understanding of the current threats to mangroves, and awareness of alternatives.

**A.1.6. GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF THIS PROJECT**

**A.1.6.1.** This project seeks to deliver the following global environmental benefits:

**a. Conservation of globally significant biodiversity:** Liberia's coastal mangrove forests are recognized internationally as key biodiversity areas, particularly as important bird areas. By protecting Liberia's mangroves and coastal areas this project will contribute significantly to the conservation of globally significant biodiversity. They provide habitat and feeding ground for several species of birds including the African spoonbill (*Platalea alb*, LC), common pratincole (*Glareola nuchaltis*, LC) and the curlew (*Numenius arquata*, NT). Rufus fishing owls (*Scotopelia ussheri*, VU) have been found to occur in the mangroves of the

southeast. Beyond birds, the mangroves provide habitat to the threatened West African manatee (*Trichechus senegalensis*, VU), as well as the vulnerable African dwarf crocodile (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*, VU), the Nile crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*, LC) and the African sharp-nosed crocodile (*Mecistops cataphractus*, DD). Liberia's beaches are breeding grounds for leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*, EN), loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*, EN), green (*Chelonia mydas*, EN), and olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, EN) sea turtles and the mangroves provide important nursery areas for young sea turtles. Mangroves also provide important breeding areas for many West African marine species of fish, crab, shrimp and mollusks.

If the fish stock were to collapse, which is a very real possibility given the current threats to the mangroves, there would be greater pressure on the bushmeat trade to supply meat to the Liberian people. This, of course, would have further implications on biodiversity in Liberia.

**b. Sustainable use of the components of globally significant biodiversity:** Through the implementation of participatory land-use planning processes and conservation agreements, the project will seek to develop sustainable harvesting practices for mangroves and associated species.

The conservation agreement approach implemented through this project is based on the premise of fair and equitable benefit sharing. By engaging resource users and all other relevant stakeholders in the planning processes of this project we ensure that they have a say in how resources are extracted sustainably and how benefits are shared.

**c. Improved provision of forest ecosystem goods and services:** This project aims to halt the ongoing destruction of globally significant mangrove ecosystems by creating both national and locally designated conservation areas. In doing so, the project will support improved ecosystems services, such as carbon sequestration, nutrient filtration, coastal and soil stabilization, and flood protection.

**d. Reduced vulnerability of mangrove forest ecosystems to climate change and other human-induced impacts:** Through improved land-use planning, livelihood development, and protection this project will reduce human induced impacts on mangrove forests.

**e. Reduced pollution and siltation of international waters:** Maintaining healthy functioning mangroves is essential to the filtration of water systems flowing to the sea, and also reducing sedimentation released into the ocean.

#### **A.1.7. INNOVATIVENESS, SUSTAINABILITY AND POTENTIAL FOR SCALING UP**

##### **Innovativeness:**

**A.1.7.1.** CI is well-known for our innovativeness globally in establishing protected areas through extensive community involvement and integrated land-use planning. With the proposed project, CI will focus on one ecosystem (mangroves) to amplify and expand Liberia's protected areas to include comprehensive marine and coastal protected areas.

**A.1.7.2.** New and innovative tools in participatory land-use planning and conservation agreements will be introduced to Liberia through the proposed project. This will draw upon CI's experiences globally, but will be adapted to the specific situation in Liberia. CI South Africa and its partners have produced a set of best practices in participatory land use planning which will be introduced through this project. CI's Conservation Stewards Program (CSP) has worked with local partners to adapt the conservation agreement approach in more than 60 communities around the world (including in Nimba County, Liberia). These tools will be used throughout the project to promote integrated management, stewardship, and improved



livelihoods within the priority mangrove areas of Liberia.

**Sustainability:**

**A.1.7.3.** The project will leverage CI's well-established system of community involvement in the development, protection and maintenance of protected areas is designed to be sustainable. With the surrounding communities involved at every stage of this project, the project will ensure "buy-in" from these communities. By incorporating alternative livelihood trainings, woodlot establishments, etc., the project will ensure that the communities will no longer require the deforestation of the mangroves for their survival, and in fact will be empowered and desire to protect these vital ecosystems.

**A.1.7.4.** The project will also work to ensure financial sustainability of both the protected areas and the conservation agreements developed, by ensuring their inclusion in a sustainable financing mechanism currently being developed by CI, the Government of Liberia, the Global Conservation Fund and the private sector. Over the project's lifetime CI will work to ensure that the funds available within this financing mechanism will cover key project areas in addition to the current targeted geographies.

**A.1.7.5.** The land-use planning decision support toolkit developed and piloted during this project will provide key decision makers and technicians with a tool that can be used beyond the life of this project, with the ability to replicate the process in other areas of the country. The project will also build institutional capacities within key government ministries and agencies to provide improved protected area management that will benefit Liberia beyond the life of the project. The conservation agreement approach seeks to build and/or enforce local governance structures that should be sustained beyond the project timeline.

**A.1.7.6.**

**Scaling-up:**

**A.1.7.7.** The baseline data collected in the PPG will identify the highest priority areas to protect at this time, but secondary priority areas will also be identified, to be addressed in this future project to establish a larger coastal and marine protected area program. The currently proposed project will be a model for integrated land-use planning in Liberia and expand the use of conservation agreements in the establishment of protected areas. The baseline data necessary to establish a REDD+ project on the carbon value of a mangrove forest will also be gathered.

**A.1.7.8.** The set of tools and activities that will be developed and implemented through this project could be replicated across Liberia and specifically, as it relates to mangroves, throughout West Africa. Of particular relevance is the land-use planning decision support toolkit and the methodology for conservation agreements.

**A.1.7.9.**

A.2. Stakeholders. Identify key stakeholders (including civil society organizations, indigenous people, gender groups, and others as relevant) and describe how they will be engaged in project preparation:

**A.2.1. Stakeholders' engagement**

**A.2.1.1.** The preparation and implementation of this project will be carried out in a participative and inclusive manner. It is expected that a wide array of national and local government agencies, private sector organizations, SCOs (including NGOs), and local communities will be involved in the project preparation and implementation phases.

**A.2.1.2.** Below we provide a list of key stakeholders for this project and a brief description of the type of engagement we expect with them:

- a. **Forestry Development Authority (FDA):** The FDA is the current custodian of the protected areas network; they will therefore be integral to this project as we look to include mangrove forests in this

network. The FDA will be a key coordinating partner throughout preparation and implementation of the project.

- b. National Bureau of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture (BNF):** The BNF is working to promote the sustainable development of the fisheries sector in Liberia, balancing the needs of ecosystem health, food security, economic growth and development within a framework of good governance. The BNF's involvement will be essential to ensuring coordination with the West Africa Regional Fisheries Program and therefore will be consulted regularly;
- c. Ministry of Internal Affairs:** Ministry of Internal Affairs is responsible for local governance and rural development and as such will be key in engaging local communities in the project priority areas. They will be engaged in project preparation and implementation;
- d. Local communities:** Local communities living in and around the mangroves are the primary users and beneficiaries of the mangroves and key to the project's success. This project will seek to evaluate the various uses and valuations of the mangroves within all key communities. Attention will be given to different user groups, such as fisherman and charcoal makers and also look at the role gender plays in mangrove use and valuation;
- e. Oil Concessionaires:** Offshore oil is currently being explored and the companies are interested in coastal communities as they are the most directly impacted by offshore oil exploration. The companies will therefore be engaged in the project and will also be evaluated for their co-financing potential. Beyond this, the concessionaires are all developing environmental mitigation plans which will involve these key coastal areas in terms of spill prevention, etc., so they have two critical roles to play in the project preparation and implementation; and
- f. Local NGOs and civil society organizations:** There are a number of local NGOs and civil society groups working with communities towards mangrove protection and alternative livelihoods. The project will seek the involvement of these groups to collaborate with the project.

#### **A.2.2. Local communities' engagement**

**A.2.2.1.** This project aims to fully engage local communities living in and around key mangrove forests affected by this project. They will be involved through participatory planning and best practice in community engagement. A focus will be placed specifically in providing locally appropriate alternatives to current unsustainable harvesting practices, these will be determined with communities during the conservation agreement engagement and negotiation phases. As two key tenants of Liberia's development strategy this project will promote income generation and job creation within communities living below the extreme poverty line.

**A.2.2.2.** The project will work with existing governance structures within the communities, strengthening and adding where needed to ensure full and appropriate representation. The project will use the recently adopted CI's stakeholder engagement toolkit to ensure that best practices, such as Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is used in ensuring community participation in the project preparation and implementation

**A.2.2.3.** To ensure that the project meets CI-GEF Project Agency's "Stakeholders' Engagement Best Practice", the Executing Agency will develop and submit, at the beginning of the PPG phase, a "Stakeholders' Engagement Plan" for the Project Agency's approval. The Project Agency will oversee the implementation of this plan throughout the duration of the project.

**A.2.2.4.** For the potential restriction of access to and use of natural resources, for example as a result of the creation of new protected areas, the land-use planning processes, and conservation agreements, and to ensure that the project meets CI-GEF Project Agency's "Involuntary Resettlement Policy #3" the Executing Agency will prepare during the PPG phase a "Process Framework" that describes the nature of the restrictions, the participatory process by which project components will be prepared, criteria by which displaced persons are eligible, measures to restore livelihoods and the means by which any conflicts would be resolved. A plan may also be developed during implementation providing more detail on the arrangements to assist affected persons to improve or restore their livelihoods.

#### **A.2.3. Indigenous Peoples' engagement**

A.2.3.1. The Environmental and Social Safeguard Screening process conducted during the preparation of this PIF did not identify the presence of indigenous peoples in the project area(s). However, to ensure that the project meets CI-GEF Project Agency’s “Indigenous Peoples Policy #4”, the Executing Agency will, with additional guidance from the Project Agency, reassess if indigenous people will be affected by the project, according to CI’s policies and guidelines, before the PPG phase begins. The Project Agency will determine then the need to prepare an “Indigenous Peoples Plan” during the PPG phase. If necessary, CI-GEF Project Agency, who will approve and oversee the implementation of this plan throughout the duration of the project;

**A.2.4. Gender mainstreaming**

**A.2.4.1.** Throughout the project the project will ensure full and equitable representation in and benefit sharing from project activities. The project will seek to engage with all stakeholders within the community including any potentially marginalized groups. The project will engage through current leadership structures and will seek to add to or strengthen these groups when key stakeholders are underrepresented. We will ensure men, women, youth and other groups are engaged and build monitoring systems that include necessary disaggregation to track this throughout the life of the project.

**A.2.4.2.** To ensure that the project meets CI-GEF Project Agency’s “Gender Mainstreaming Policy #8”, the project will develop a “Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan” during of the PPG phase that will guarantee the mainstreaming of gender issues throughout the project. The CI-GEF Project Agency, who will approve and oversee the implementation of this Strategy and Action Plan throughout the duration of the project.

A.3 Risk. Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design (table format acceptable):

**A.3.1.** Below are the main risks that might affect the performance of this project. A ranking (scale: low, medium, or high) is provided, along with the mitigation strategy to be implemented during the life of the project.

<b>Risks</b>	<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Mitigation Strategy</b>
a. Climate change, resulting in changed/increased pressures on mangrove forests	<b>Medium</b>	The project’s emphasis on conserving mangroves will confer benefits on marine and coastal ecosystems in general, due to buffering and stabilizing effect they have in the face of sea level rise and greater storm intensity and reducing pressures on an already vulnerable ecosystem.
b. Weak institutional capacities for planning, management and governance in targeted mangrove forest areas	<b>Medium</b>	The risk will be reduced by working with and strengthening diverse institutions, from the national government to local levels, thereby minimizing dependence on any one institution. The project will invest in addressing key capacity gaps; baseline analysis to be carried out during the PPG phase
c. Limited capacity, commitment and/or governance among local people in target mangrove forest areas.	<b>Medium</b>	Starting with the design phase, the project will work in a participatory manner with local communities to discuss and define the strategies to be implemented in the mangrove forest areas, in order to maximize the likelihood of ownership and uptake
d. Changes in some institutions providing co-financing could lead to their inability to do so	<b>Medium</b>	This risk will be mitigated as much as possible by working with co-financing partners through the design phase to secure their involvement and investment. Additional co-financers (such as oil companies) will also be sought in order to ensure that the levels are maintained

A.4. Coordination. Outline the coordination with other relevant GEF financed and other initiatives:

**A.4.1.** This project will work and coordinate activities with the following initiatives:

Initiative	Coordination
<p><b>a. WB/GEF Consolidation of the Protected Areas network (COPAN) and Expansion of the Protected Areas Network (EXPAN)</b></p>	<p>This project seeks to build upon the work of the WB COPAN and EXPAN projects, adding to the potential areas included within Liberia’s protected areas network. Through engagement with the FDA’s conservation department we will ensure full information exchange, lessons learned, and ongoing collaboration.</p>
<p><b>b. CLED- Project to CI Liberia in the Barcoline community</b></p>	<p>A Chevron sponsored project being implemented by CI-Liberia; it aims to protect mangroves and coastal systems by putting in place conservation agreements with local communities. The successes of the project in Barcoline will be incorporated into the proposed GEF project- specifically in Component 3.</p>
<p><b>c. West Africa Regional Fisheries Project(WARFP)</b></p>	<p>The project, part of a larger regional initiative in 9 countries, in Liberia aims to strengthen the capacity of Liberia to govern and manage targeted fisheries, reduce illegal fishing and increase local value added to fish products. Liberia was granted US\$12 million for the implementation of WARFP over five years beginning in April 2010. The proposed project will coordinate with the BNF to ensure synergies especially in promoting the conservation of key fish breeding areas along the coast (i.e. mangrove forests)</p>
<p><b>d. WB/ Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) –REDD Readiness Plan</b></p>	<p>The FCPF has approved a REDD Readiness grant of US\$3.6 million to Liberia to develop and build capacity for its national REDD Readiness Plan. This project will coordinate through the REDD Focal Point and the REDD to ensure that mangroves are included in Liberia REDD strategy</p>
<p><b>e. UNDP/ GEF Climate Change Adaptation and Agriculture Project</b></p>	<p>Coordination with the MOA will be critical in ensuring that the approach proposed by both projects are mutually reinforcing especially as it pertains to agricultural development within wetlands and mangroves. CI and EPA sit on the Steering Committee for this project and thus are well placed to ensure coordination</p>
<p><b>f. The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)</b></p>	<p>The CEPF is currently planning a new investment in the Guinean forests which would begin at the end of 2014. Funding would be made available for civil society to participate in biodiversity conservation within KBAs. In Liberia these areas will likely overlap with the project priorities and therefore could be a source of co-financing for the project. Both CI and EPA sit on the management committee developing the investment profile and as such are well placed to ensure coordination</p>
<p><b>g. Key regional and international mangrove networks such as WIOMSA Mangrove Network, Mangrove Action Project, applicable Universities, and others as identified.</b></p>	<p>Both CI and the EPA are in touch with other regional mangrove networks, associations and projects. Throughout the project we will continue to coordinate with these networks through regular contact with project managers and also through regular exchanges and site visits. We will also coordinate annual meetings with the other project managers and distribute a quarterly newsletter on the Liberia work to ensure coordination.</p>

**B. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONSISTENCY OF THE PROJECT WITH:**

B.1 National strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions, if applicable, i.e. NAPAs, NAPs, NBSAPs, national communications, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, Biennial Update Reports, etc.:

**B.1.1.** This project is highly consistent with several international/regional agreements, as well as national plans and initiatives related to the issue of biodiversity and land degradation, such as:

Agreement/Strategy/Plan	Consistency with this projects
<b>a. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)</b>	This project addresses, directly or indirectly, articles 1, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, and 19 of this convention.
<b>b. Agenda for Transformation (Liberia’s PRSP)</b>	This project will specifically address <i>Strategic Objective 6: Improve Wetlands, Water Catchments, and Coastal Management</i> within the environmental cross-cutting section of the Agenda for Transformation otherwise known as Liberia’s PRSP. It will also contribute to many other strategic objectives including climate change adaptation and mitigation, environmental governance, and mainstreaming environmental concerns into natural resource use and management policies and practice.
<b>c. Liberia’s Protected Areas Network Strategy</b>	While extensive analysis has not yet been completed to evaluate the state of mangroves in Liberia there are already four areas included within the Proposed Protected Areas Network, which includes the following coastal mangrove areas: Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve, the proposed Margibi Mangrove protected area, the proposed Cestos Senkwehn protected area, and the proposed Grand Kru –River Gee protected area. Additional areas could be added to the protected area based on the project results.
<b>d. National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)</b>	This project seeks to address the threats identified within the NBSAP and also to contribute to all 6 of the NBSAP goals namely: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To take appropriate measures to protect critical ecosystems against harmful effects or destructive practices for conservation of biological diversity;</li> <li>2. To create biodiversity awareness among sectors of the society and promote international cooperation;</li> <li>3. To commit the people to the sound and sustainable use of biological diversity to bring about socio-economic development;</li> <li>4. To promote rational utilization and conservation of biological diversity;</li> <li>5. To promote access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization</li> <li>6. To contribute to the fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals through poverty alleviation, food security, and women empowerment in biodiversity conservation by 2015.</li> </ol>
<b>e. National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA)</b>	This project addresses key issues highlighted within Liberia’s draft NAPA. Mainly it will address socioeconomic challenges of groups identified as most vulnerable and also will support the NAPA priority projects and ongoing efforts to reduce vulnerability to coastal erosion through the maintenance and regeneration of mangrove forest areas.
<b>f. National Land Reform Programs and Strategies</b>	There are currently ongoing programs being completed or supported by the Land Commission, USAID and other partners addressing land reform

	issues. It is important to ensure that these programs are in compliance with laws regarding mangrove protection.
<b>g. Abidjan Convention</b>	Coastal profile and action plans have been completed that highlight the importance of mangrove conservation in Liberia.
<b>h. National Laws, policies, and regulations</b>	This project both supports and is developed within Liberian national laws, especially the Environment Protection and Management Law of 2003 and the New Forestry Law of 2006 and the subsequent environmental and forestry management policies.

## **B.2. GEF focal area and/or fund(s) strategies, eligibility criteria and priorities:**

**B.2.1** This proposed multifocal area project is consistent with Biodiversity Objectives 1 and 2 and Land Degradation Objective 3 through its objective of strengthening the conservation and sustainable use of globally important mangrove forests through effective participatory land-use planning and establishment of marine and coastal protected areas.

**B.2.2** Specifically, the project aligns with Biodiversity Objective 1, in particular Outcome 1.1 through defining the enabling conditions for establishment of protected areas while providing the delineation for the establishment of a mangrove forest protected area in Liberia. In addition, the proposed project is consistent with BD Objective 2, Outcome 2.1 through seeking to reduce the pressures on the mangrove systems by integrating land-use planning and improving adjacent communities' livelihoods. Finally, the project is consistent with Land Degradation Objective 3, Outcome 3.2 through the introduction of conservation agreements to at least 10 communities living in and around key mangrove areas that will lead to a reduction of pressures on priority mangrove areas through integrated land use planning and create locally appropriate sustainable livelihoods that are tied directly to the conservation of biodiversity, rather than the plans currently being promoted that lead to biodiversity loss and land degradation This project strengthens the biodiversity objective with an additional integrated focus on the goals of GEF LD3.

## **B.3 The GEF Agency's comparative advantage for implementing this project:**

**B.3.1.** Conservation International has been working in Liberia since 1999 and established a Field Program in 2002. Through the work of the Liberia Field Program, there is a network of local partners to collaborate with, strong relationships with government and other key stakeholders in country and a proven track record. CI's focus in country has been on the creation of protected areas, such as East Nimba Nature Reserve, and the development of supportive community activities around these areas. In Liberia this has included working at the national- and local-scales, engaging in policy and supporting local livelihoods.

**B.3.2.** CI is a leader in the creation of protected areas- 77 and counting globally, CI developed and lead the implementation of the conservation agreement approach in over 35 countries worldwide, including pilots in Liberia. Through the Global Conservation Fund (GCF), CI makes investment decisions based on sound science to benefit the highest priority places for conservation through the creation or expansion of protected areas, supports long-term management of protected areas to ensure effective and lasting protection, and mobilizes additional financial resources to multiply and sustain results. The Global Conservation Fund is the first global fund designed to target two critical needs: creating and expanding protected areas, and ensuring effective management of those areas for the long term..

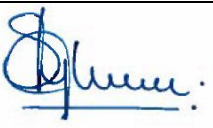
**B.3.3.** CI's Social Policy and Practice team has been leading in the engagement of indigenous and traditional peoples, as well as the integration of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), as well as a rights-based approach (RBA) throughout our work. Recently this has included working with the Liberia team to develop a best practice toolkit for all key stakeholders in Liberia, which will be heavily relied upon in this project.

**PART III: APPROVAL/ENDORSEMENT BY GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT(S) AND GEF AGENCY(IES)**

- A. **RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT (S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S):** (Please attach the [Operational Focal Point endorsement letter\(s\)](#) with this template. For SGP, use this [OFP endorsement letter](#)).

NAME	POSITION	MINISTRY	DATE (MM/dd/yyyy)
Anyaa Vohiri	Executive Director and CEO	Environmental Protection Agency - Liberia	02/14/2014

**B. GEF AGENCY(IES) CERTIFICATION**

<b>This request has been prepared in accordance with GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF policies and procedures and meets the GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF criteria for project identification and preparation.</b>					
Agency Coordinator, Agency name	Signature	DATE (MM/dd/yyyy)	Project Contact Person	Telephone	Email
Lilian Spijkerman		2/21/2014	Orissa Samaroo	202 510 4667	osamaroo@conservation.org