CI-GEF PROJECT AGENCY

GEF Project Document

Conservation and Sustainable Use of Liberia's Coastal Natural Capital

LIBERIA

June, 2019

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL

gef GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

PROJECT INFORMATION			
PROJECT TITLE:	Conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's coastal natural capital		
PROJECT OBJECTIVE:	To improve conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's coastal natural capital by mainstreaming the value of nature into Liberia's development trajectory		
PROJECT OUTCOMES:	Outcome 1.1 Decision-making improved in coastal ecosystem governance by mainstreaming natural capital accounting (NCA) into Government of Liberia (GOL) development strategy, policy and planning • At least one natural capital account (mangroves) established and embedded in key government policies and plans • At least 50 government officials and other relevant stakeholders trained on the technical aspects of NCA Outcome 2.1 Funding sources for sustainable management and restoration of coastal ecosystems increased • Financial resources for the sustainable management and restoration of coastal ecosystems increased by 50% • At least 2 new revenue streams to support the long term sustainability developed • Small grants provided to at least three local organizations Outcome 3.1 Community-level conservation and sustainable use of coastal resources improved through performance-based payments using conservation agreements • 11,975 additional hectares of mangrove ecosystems under protection across Liberia • 5,000 additional hectares of terrestrial forest ecosystems under sustainable management in coastal areas. • Income within coastal and mangrove communities targeted by the project improved by 50%		
COUNTRY(*IES*):	Liberia	**GEF ID:**	9573
GEF AGENCY(*IES*):	CI	**CI CONTRACT ID:**	
OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS:	Govt. of Liberia's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Conservation International - Liberia	**DURATION IN MONTHS:**	60
GEF FOCAL AREA(*S*):	BD-4 Program 10 LD-1 Program 1	**START DATE (*mm/yyyy*):**	
INTEGRATED APPROACH PILOT:	N/A	**END DATE (*mm/yyyy*):**	
NAME OF PARENT PROGRAM:	N/A	**PRODOC SUBMISSION DATE:**	Feb 2019
RE-SUBMISSION DATE(*S*):	June 2019		

FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT (*USD*)
GEF PROJECT FUNDING:	$3,944,220
PPG FUNDING:	$120,000
TOTAL GEF GRANT:	$4,064,220
CO-FINANCING 1: GOVERNMENT OF LIBERIA (EPA, LISGIS, LMA, FDA)	$11,000,000
CO-FINANCING 2: CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL	$194,248
TOTAL CO-FINANCING:	$11,194,248
TOTAL PROJECT COST:	**$15,258,468**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES AND MAPS

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

BNF	*Bureau of National Fisheries*
CA	*Conservation Agreement*
CBD	*Convention on Biological Diversity*
CBO	*Community-Based Organization*
CEPF	*Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund*
CI	*Conservation International*
CI-GEF PA	*CI-GEF Project Agency*
CSP	*Conservation Stewards Program*
DD	*Data Deficient*
EN	*Endangered*
EPA	*Environmental Protection Agency*
EPML	*Environmental Protection and Management Law*
ESIA	*Environmental and Social Impact Assessment*
ESMF	*Environmental and Social Management Framework*
ESWG	*Environmental Sector Working Group*
FAO	*Food and Agriculture Organization*
FAPS	*Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy and Strategy*
FCPF	*Forest Carbon Partnership Facility*
FDA	*Forestry Development Authority*
FPIC	*Free, Prior and Informed Consent*
GDP	*Gross Domestic Product*

GDSA	*Gaborone Declaration for Sustainability in Africa*
GEF	*Global Environment Facility*
GHG	*Greenhouse Gas*
GOL	*Government of Liberia*
KBA	*Key Biodiversity Area*
LC	*Least Concern*
LCAF	*Liberia Conservation Action Fund*
LCF	*Liberia Conservation Fund*
LFSP	*Liberia Forest Sector Project*
LISGIS	*Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services*
LLA	*Liberia Land Authority*
LMA	*Liberia Maritime Authority*
LPMUR	*Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve*
LSA	*Living Shorelines Approach*
M&E	*Monitoring and Evaluation*
MEA	*Millennium Ecosystem Assessment*
MFDP	*Ministry of Finance and Development Planning*
MOA	*Ministry of Agriculture*
MOU	*Memorandum of Understanding*
MPA	*Marine Protected Area*
NAP	*National Action Plan*
NAPA	*National Adaptation Program of Action*
NASA	*National Aeronautics and Space Administration*
NBSAP	*National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan*
NCA	*Natural Capital Accounting*
NCCPS	*National Climate Change Policy and Strategy*
NGO	*Non-government Organization*

NUP	*National Urban Plan*
PAPD	*Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development*
PES	*Payments for Ecosystem Services*
PIR	*Project Implementation Report*
PLUP	*Participatory Land Use Planning*
PMU	*Project Management Unit*
PPA	*Proposed Protected Area*
PPG	*Project Preparation Grant*
PSC	*Project Steering Committee*
PSUT	*Physical Supply and Use Table*
RBA	*Rights-based Approach*
REDD+	*Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and foster conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks*
SDG	*Sustainable Development Goal*
SEEA	*System of Environmental-Economic Accounting*
SGP	*Small Grant Program*
TEEB	*The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity*
UNDP	*United Nations Development Programme*
UNEP	*United Nations Environment Programme*
UNSD	*United Nations Statistics Division*
USAID	*United States Agency for International Development*
USD	*United States Dollar*
VU	*Vulnerable*
WASH	*Water, Sanitation and Hygiene*
WAVES	*Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services*

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Blue Carbon	Blue carbon is the carbon captured by the world's oceans and coastal ecosystems. The carbon captured by living organisms in oceans is stored in the form of biomass and sediments from mangroves, salt marshes, seagrasses and potentially algae.
Conservation Agreement	Communities commit to implementing conservation actions, such as patrolling activities, forgo logging and hunting and to carry out more sustainable resource extraction practices. In exchange communities receive a benefits package defined through participatory processes to address local development needs and priorities.
Environmental Impact Assessment	A process of evaluating the likely environmental impacts of a proposed project or development, taking into account inter-related socio-economic, cultural and human-health impacts, both beneficial and adverse.
Free, Prior, and informed Consent	A framework for ensuring that the rights of indigenous peoples are guaranteed in any decision that may affect their lands, territories or livelihoods. Composed of four separate components: • Free—Without coercion, intimidation, manipulation, threat or bribery. • Prior—Indicates that consent has been sought sufficiently in advance, before any project activities have been authorized or commenced, and that the time requirements of the indigenous community's consultation/consensus processes have been respected. • Informed—Information is provided in a language and form that are easily understood by the community, covering the nature, scope, purpose, duration and locality of the project or activity as well as information about areas that will be affected; economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts, all involved actors, and the procedures that the project or activity may entail. • Consent—The right of indigenous peoples to give or withhold their consent to any decision that will impact their lands, territories, resources, and livelihoods.
Green Infrastructure	Green infrastructure is a cost-effective, resilient approach to managing wet weather impacts that provides many community benefits. While single-purpose gray stormwater infrastructure—conventional piped drainage and water treatment systems—is designed to move urban stormwater away from the built environment, green infrastructure reduces and treats stormwater at its source while delivering environmental, social, and economic benefits.
Greenhouse gas	A greenhouse gas is a gas that absorbs and emits radiant energy within the thermal infrared range. Increasing greenhouse gas emissions cause the greenhouse effect. The primary greenhouse gases in Earth's atmosphere are water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and ozone.

Key Biodiversity Area	'Sites contributing significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity', in terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems. Sites qualify as global KBAs if they meet one or more of 11 criteria, clustered into five categories: threatened biodiversity; geographically restricted biodiversity; ecological integrity; biological processes; and, irreplaceability. The KBA criteria can be applied to species and ecosystems in terrestrial, inland water and marine environments. Although not all KBA criteria may be relevant to all elements of biodiversity, the thresholds associated with each of the criteria may be applied across all taxonomic groups (other than micro-organisms) and ecosystems.
Natural Capital Accounting	The process of calculating the total stocks and flows of natural resources and services in a given ecosystem or region. Accounting for such goods may occur in physical or monetary terms. This process can subsequently inform government, corporate and consumer decision making as each relates to the use or consumption of natural resources and land, and sustainable behavior.
Payment for Ecosystem Services	Payments to farmers or landowners who have agreed to take certain actions to manage their land or watersheds to provide an ecological service.
Rights-based Approach	An approach to conservation that promotes and integrates human rights into conservation policy and practice by emphasizing the positive connections between conservation and the rights of people to secure their livelihoods, enjoy healthy and productive environments, and live with dignity.
System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA)	SEEA is a framework to compile statistics linking environmental statistics to economic statistics. SEEA is described as a satellite system to the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA). This means that the definitions, guidelines and practical approaches of the SNA are applied to the SEEA. This system enables environmental statistics to be compared to economic statistics as the system boundaries are the same after some processing of the input statistics. By analyzing statistics on the economy and the environment at the same time it is possible to show different patterns of sustainability for production and consumption. It can also show the economic consequences of maintaining a certain environmental standard.

CI-GEF PROJECT AGENCY

Conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's coastal natural capital

PROJECT DOCUMENT

SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

Background

1. Coastal ecosystems are critical to maintaining human well-being and global biodiversity. In particular, mangroves provide numerous benefits and services that contribute to the overall health and function of the coastal ecosystem including protection from storm surge and sea level rise, erosion prevention, coastal water quality regulation, habitat provision for numerous commercially important and endangered marine species, and food security for coastal communities (Robertson & Alongi 1992; King & Lester 1995; Hogarth 1999; Beck et al. 2001; Kathiresan & Bingham 2001; Saenger 2002; Mumby 2006; Gedan et al. 2009; Barbier et al. 2011; Cullen-Unsworth & Unsworth 2013). Despite their benefits and services, mangroves are some of the most threatened ecosystems on earth. It is estimated that up to 67% of the historical global mangrove range has been lost. If these trends continue at current rates nearly all unprotected mangroves could be lost in the next 100 years (Pendleton et al. 2012).

2. In Liberia, the greatest threats to mangroves in Liberia include land degradation due to urbanization and transportation infrastructure development; overexploitation of natural resources, specifically around urban areas, through hunting, firewood collection, charcoal production, and timber extraction; and pollution of water, air, and soil from unregulated waste disposal as well as chemicals released from agriculture, oil exploration and mining. In addition, the effects of climate change also pose a threat to mangrove and other coastal ecosystems in Liberia.

3. Policy recognition of the importance of these systems includes declaration of Lake Piso and the Mesurado and Marshall wetlands as Ramsar sites (Spalding *et al.* 2010) and identification of several mangrove areas for eventual inclusion in Liberia's formal protected area network. However, the value of coastal ecosystems is not yet fully recognized by decision makers, and they continue to be lost and degraded. Given pressing economic development priorities, the importance of conserving natural resources to sustain human well-being in Liberia receives limited recognition in national planning and development processes. The true costs of exploiting Liberia's natural resources are not accounted for in development decision-making, which is a contributing cause to continued unsustainable exploitation.

4. This project will help account for the value that mangroves provide in Liberia, and help decision makers understand the unpriced costs of development (externalities) to improve consideration of impacts and tradeoffs of development decisions. It will build the capacity of key development and statistical agencies to collect and analyze relevant data on a regular basis and to include this information in decision making. The project will empower decision makers in the public sector to develop clear, credible, and long-term policy frameworks that support and incentivize actors in the private sector to value and report on their use of Liberia's natural capital and thereby work towards internalizing environmental costs.

5. To align coastal resource management and conservation with improved understanding of environmental costs and values, the project will also advance mechanisms to direct a steady flow of financing for long-term maintenance and sustainable use of coastal natural capital. Building on improved information and decision-making capacity, this project will seek to enhance funding flows and institutionalize benefit-sharing mechanisms to provide incentives at the local level. This three-tiered approach adapts the Conservation Agreement model developed in Liberia to elicit behavior change on the part of resource users in coastal priority sites. To date, other coastal projects have focused on northern Liberia in the area around Lake Piso, down to the Marshall Wetlands and the area around Buchanan. This project will pursue specific site-level impacts with 10 communities in the southeast of Liberia, as well as catalyze work to consolidate progress made with communities in the northwest.

Conservation Context and Project Sites

6. Liberia has a coastline of 565 km, about 90% of which consists of a narrow sand beach 20-25 meters wide, reaching 60-80 meters in some parts of southeastern Liberia. The coastal area consists of swamp-related vegetation interspersed with lagoons, including mangrove forests and wetlands that extend up to 25 miles inland. Liberia is home to around 37,142 ha of mangrove habitats (CI 2017), including three Ramsar sites and two stretches of coast in Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) sites (Kouame et al. 2012). The Liberian coast is critical habitat for four endangered species of marine turtles – Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*, EN), Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*, EN), Green (*Chelonia mydas*, EN), and Olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea,* EN). Estuaries are also important habitat for threatened West African manatees (*Trichechus senegalensis,* VU), while the mangroves harbor three species of crocodile: the African dwarf crocodile (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*, VU), the Nile crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*, LC), and the African sharp-nosed crocodile (*Mecistops cataphractus,* DD).

Project Objective, Components and Outcomes

7. Project Objective: The objective of this project is to improve conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's coastal natural capital by mainstreaming the value of nature into Liberia's development trajectory.

Component 1: Natural Capital Accounting in coastal ecosystems.

8. The first component of the project will develop Liberia's first mangrove account within a Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) framework, to ensure that the value of biodiversity and ecosystem services, particularly for coastal areas, is incorporated into national decision-making. It will also build the foundation for a comprehensive set of natural capital accounts. Like most governments that adhere to the U.N. System of National Accounts, the Government of Liberia collects data that form the basis for calculating GDP and other economic indicators. These accounts allow countries to set policy and make key macroeconomic decisions. However, indicators are limited to the production boundary of the economy and do not address sustainability objectives. To date the government has not measured the stock of natural capital in Liberia, the values of ecosystems and the services they provide, or changes in these values as ecosystems are degraded. Thus, the true costs of Liberia's natural resources and how they contribute to development are not reflected in the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD), the Liberian government's economic development plan. Incorporating natural capital into national accounts will reveal the impacts and dependencies of economic activity on the environment, and support better economic decisions in the long term. By

providing information on the true cost of natural resource use, depletion and degradation, NCA can help a country's decision makers better understand the impacts and tradeoffs of development decisions.

9. This project will strengthen conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's ecosystems, including coastal areas, by creating the enabling environment for NCA. Enabling conditions include multi-agency engagement processes, arrangements to streamline data collection efforts, and long-term funding for NCA. This will increase the capacity for data collection and analysis within the government and, as a result, Liberia will be better able to manage its ecosystems. To do so, the project will involve all related ministries and agencies and provide training to carry out and contribute to natural capital accounting; develop preliminary assessments/pilot accounts that could facilitate future accounting efforts; and recommend ways to mainstream accounting outputs into decision-making. These efforts will be concentrated around the deployment of a natural capital account for mangrove ecosystems.

Component 2: Innovative financing schemes for conserving coastal natural capital

10. The second component aims at increasing and diversifying resource flows for the sustainable management and restoration of mangrove and coastal ecosystems. Conservation finance includes an array of financing mechanisms such as tourism-related taxes and fees, debt-for-nature swaps, conservation trust funds, and payments for environmental services. Component 2 of this project will pilot the development of several mechanisms that reward good stewardship of natural resources and provide long term, sustainable financing for coastal conservation. This will involve the piloting of mechanisms through which the beneficiaries of ecosystem services such as the private sector can reward those providing ecosystem services (such as mangrove-dependent communities).

11. Two areas of promise are blue carbon and conservation-friendly enterprise development. Liberia's mangroves and coastal wetlands sequester and store significant quantities of carbon. The carbon stored in these systems can provide new incentives for prioritizing the conservation and sustainable use of coastal ecosystems and open new opportunities for sustainable financing in Liberia (e.g., carbon financing). This project will conduct preliminary feasibility assessment to determine the carbon content of coastal ecosystems in Liberia. Conservation-friendly enterprise offers an underdeveloped investment opportunity that can help conserve vital ecosystems while providing a financial return. This project will pursue a partnership with at least one enterprise that can deliver alternative sources of income to communities as well as conservation outcomes. Finally, experience in Liberia shows that small grants successfully have catalyzed conservation action by community-based organizations and local NGOs. Therefore, the project will establish a small grant mechanism building on prior experience and seek ways to embed this program within larger conservation finance mechanisms.

Component 3: Community incentives to conserve and sustainably manage natural capital in coastal ecosystems

12. Conservation finance mechanisms, such as water funds, green taxes, bioprospecting, tourism-based revenues, and carbon finance represent types of payments for ecosystem services (PES) that can motivate a shift away from conventional and unsustainable resource use practices and in favor of preservation, restoration and sustainable management. They can also provide benefits for local communities, who are often the stewards of important conservation areas. The project will

demonstrate a performance-based system that improves stewardship and management of natural capital by local communities. This step will build on integration of NCA into government decision-making processes by identifying appropriate incentives and price signals to elicit cost effective and sustained management of ecosystems at a community level.

13. The project will conduct a thorough stakeholder engagement process to identify key mangroves and other coastal ecosystem sites on the southeast coast of Liberia for community conservation, based on social, biological and economic values. The project will use the Conservation Agreement approach to design and provide conservation incentives for communities. Conservation Agreements have been used in a wide variety of contexts in Liberia, demonstrating that the model complements a diversity of strategies and project types that involve behavior change on the part of local resource users. Incentives could include livelihood support (such as agricultural and livestock extension services or enterprise development), job creation or direct payments. Incentives can also promote productive activities that address unsustainable land use, such as conservation agriculture, agroforestry and organic agriculture, based on participatory land use planning (PLUP) in which local land users play a central role in decision-making processes concerning the land and resources on which they depend.

14. Building on Conservation Agreement successes to date, and ongoing scale-up through the current GEF-5 mangrove project (ID 5712) and a project funded by the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation to establish Conservation Agreements with communities as a step to establishing the Marshall Wetlands Protected Area, CI-Liberia will design a national stewardship program to offer economic incentives to owners of land with critical natural assets to secure protection over the medium to long-term. Through this process, CI-Liberia will identify key government institutions to work with, assess and build core competencies, review legal frameworks and seek out large-scale funding for a national program that responds to the Liberian context. CI-Liberia will draw on experiences in other countries including Ecuador's *Programa Socio Bosque* and China's *Forest Eco-Compensation Fund*. The national stewardship program will link with the Liberia Conservation Fund (LCF) that has been established by CI, the Government of Liberia, the Global Conservation Fund and the private sector.

Project Safeguards Policies

15. In compliance with CI-GEF project safeguards policies and recommendations, a Process Framework, Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Gender Mainstreaming Plan, and Accountability and Grievance Mechanism have been developed.

Implementation and Execution Arrangements

16. The CI-GEF Project Agency is the Implementing Agency and will provide strategic oversight and monitoring of the project. The Environmental Protection Agency of Liberia (EPA) and CI-Liberia will be co-executing agencies. CI has a strong track record of delivering conservation outcomes around the world and is a leader in biodiversity conservation in Liberia through activities ranging from community-based resource management to capacity-building for local organizations to national policy engagement. The EPA has been deeply involved during the preparatory phase of this project and will continue to play a strong role during the execution.

17. The project has established a Project Steering Committee (PSC) composed of representatives from a range of different ministries and government agencies. CI-Liberia acts as the secretariat of the PSC while the EPA chairs the group with the Liberian Maritime Authority as co-chair. The Forestry Development Authority (FDA) will be the alternative should one of the chairs be unavailable. The principal function of the PSC is to provide guidance on project delivery to ensure alignment with national policies and laws, best practice and new initiatives. This body will ensure collaboration with other programs and avoid duplication of efforts.

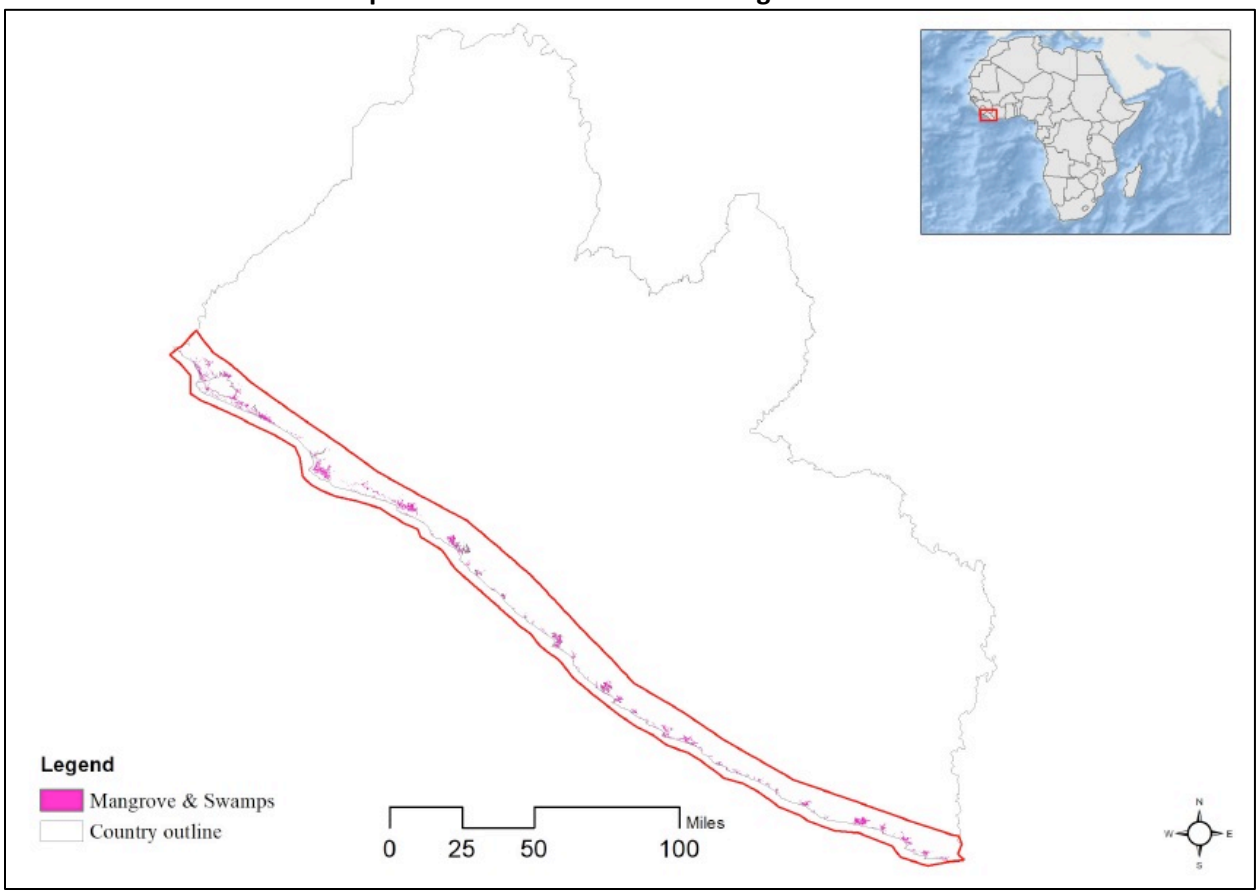
SECTION 2: PROJECT CONTEXT

A. Geographic Scope

18. Mangrove ecosystems dominate the coastal wetlands of tropical and subtropical regions throughout the world. West Africa is no exception, with mangroves extending along the coast from Mauritania in the north down to Angola in the south, covering an area of approximately 30,000 km^2. This accounts for around 16% of the total global mangrove area (Saenger & Bellan 1995, Spalding et al. 1997). Liberia is close to the northern edge of this distributional range. Mangrove stands in the region occur in a number of different forms: open shoreline (frontal), lagoonal (behind barrier islands that extend parallel to the beach), and deltaic (estuarine and fluvial) mangrove stands.

19. This project will improve conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's coastal natural capital. The design and deployment of a mangrove account as a first step in incorporating Natural Capital Accounting into Liberia's national systems of accounts relates to mangrove habitats distributed along the entirety of the country's coastline (see Map 1 below). Liberia has a coastline of 565 km, which includes about 37,142 ha of mangrove habitats (CI 2017). This constitutes the geographic scope of the first of the project's' three Components.

Map 1: Liberia's Coastline and Mangrove Habitat



20. Likewise, the design and demonstration of new financing mechanisms and funding flows for conservation and sustainable management of coastal resources and ecosystems is relevant to the entirety of Liberia's coastline. Mechanisms are anticipated to support a wide variety of efforts in the future, ranging from community-based resource management to site-based interventions for specific species to avoided carbon emissions and climate change adaptation to protected area establishment, all along the coast. Thus, Map 1 also reflects the geographic scope of Component 2 of the project.

21. Under Component 3 of the project, community-based interventions will be implemented in the southeast of Liberia, in Rivercess, Sinoe and Grand Kru Counties (see Map 2). To date, a variety of interventions have targeted the northwest, from the border with Sierra Leone to the estuary mouths just below the city of Buchanan. These interventions have included protected area creation and strengthening at Lake Piso, initiatives focused on sea turtles and manatees, and a broad range of community conservation and development projects. Communities relying on mangroves of the Marshall Wetlands in Margibi and Grand Bassa Counties will be the focus of a project to advance protected area establishment beginning in January of 2019. However, the southeastern half of Liberia's coast has received very little attention or investment, despite high ecosystem values given the presence of mangrove ecosystems and their attendant biodiversity. As a result of this project, conservation and sustainable resource management efforts by the Government of Liberia and its partners will begin to include the entirety of the nation's coast and embark on a path toward engagement of all its coastal communities.

22. The three abovementioned counties include nearly 35% of Liberia's mangrove ecosystems, distributed as follows:

Table 1: Mangrove Area in Focal Counties

County	Area of Mangroves (Hectares)
Rivercess	1,926
Sinoe	5,587
Grand Kru	4,462
Total	**11,975**

Source: Conservation International (2015).

23. The initial set of communities identified for engagement in Component 3 is as follows:

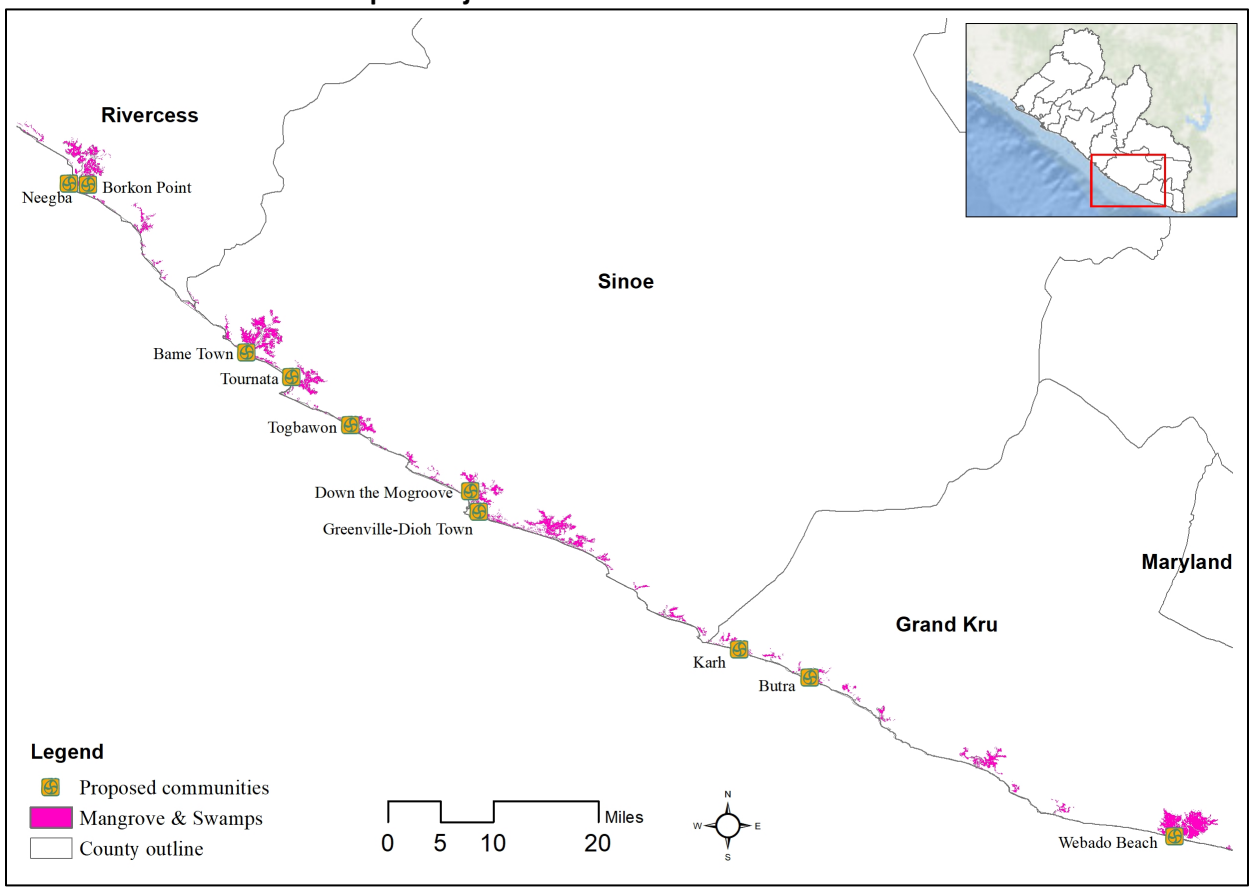
Table 2: Proposed beneficiary Communities in South East coast

County	District	Community	Population
Grand Kru	Upper Jloh	Butra	192
Grand Kru	Lower Jloh	Karh	90
Grand Kru	Grand Cess Wedabo	Webado Beach	192
Rivercess	Sam Gbalor	Borkon Point	200
Rivercess	Sam Gbalor	Neegba	100
Sinoe	Sanquin Dist# 3	Bame Town	150
Sinoe	Greenville	Down the Mogroove	2,000
Sinoe	Greenville	Greenville-Dioh Town	3,000
Sinoe	Sanquin Dist#2	Togbawon	77
Sinoe	Sanquin Dist# 3	Tournata	68
		TOTAL	**6,069**

Note that population figures are a combination of 2008 data from Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) and data derived from fieldwork conducted by CI in 2018 during the PPG phase. Therefore, figures for several communities remain to be updated, and the total population is a conservative estimate.

24. This initial set was identified through a combination of ecosystem extent mapping and fieldwork during socio-economic baseline assessments. Pursuant to the Conservation Agreement methodology described below, once the project commences next steps include feasibility assessments and community engagement to confirm site suitability and community interest. The results of these steps will inform the final set of communities with whom to proceed toward Conservation Agreements; in CI-Liberia's experience, final community selection rarely diverges from initial identification (see, for example, the GEF-funded project entitled *Improve sustainability of mangrove forests and coastal mangrove areas in Liberia through protection, planning and livelihood creation – building blocks towards Liberia's marine and coastal protected areas*).

Map 2: Project Communities in Southeast Liberia



B. Environmental Context and Global Significance

25. Liberia retains significant biodiversity and immense natural capital compared to neighboring countries in the West African region. Liberia hosts two of West Africa's three largest remaining rainforest blocks containing numerous endemic plant and animal species whose survival is severely threatened. These forest areas are recognized as a global biodiversity hotspot and priority for conservation efforts. Only 15% of the original West African ecosystem remains; 40% of this is found in Liberia (CEPF, 2005). 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.

26. Liberia has a 565 km coastline and claims an economic zone of 13 nautical miles and territorial zone of two hundred nautical miles. About 90% of the coastline consists of a narrow sand beach 20-25 meters wide, reaching 60-80 meters in some parts of southeastern Liberia, interspersed with lagoons. The coastal area consists of swamp-related vegetation, including mangrove forests and reeds that extend up to 40 km inland. Liberia's 37,142 ha of mangrove habitats include parts of two Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), namely Lake-Piso and Cestos-Senkwen (Kouame et al. 2012). The

coastal sites of Lake Piso, Marshall Wetlands, and Mesurado Wetlands are internationally recognized Ramsar Sites.

27. Liberia is home to approximately 125 mammal species, 590 bird species, 162 native fish species, 74 known reptiles and amphibians, over 1,000 described insect species and over 2,900 plant species (WAPS 1999). Moreover, Liberia is considered one of 14 centers of global plant endemism (CBD, 2006). Liberia's coastal ecosystems 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 also been found to occur in the southern mangrove forests. The Liberian coast is critical habitat for Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*, EN), Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*, EN), Green (*Chelonia mydas*, EN), and Olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea,* EN) sea turtles, which feed in the waters and breed on beaches and in estuaries. Estuaries are also important habitat for threatened West African manatees (*Trichechus senegalensis,* VU), while the mangroves harbor three species of crocodile: the African dwarf crocodile (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*, VU), the Nile crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*, LC), and the African sharp-nosed crocodile (*Mecistops cataphractus,* DD).

28. Coastal ecosystems, including mangroves, provide a range of ecological goods and services for Liberia's coastal communities. They are sources of timber, fuelwood and medicines, and they protect shorelines from storms and tidal surges. Mangroves provide important breeding and nursery areas for many West African marine species of fish, crab, shrimp and mollusks. Therefore, mangrove loss negatively impacts fish stocks, leading to reduced food security and an increase dependence on the bushmeat trade as a source of protein. Thus, mangrove protection has an indirect effect on terrestrial biodiversity conservation in Liberia.

29. Mangroves are highly productive ecosystems, with rates of primary production that rival those of tropical terrestrial forests. Mangroves help protect coral reefs and sea-grass beds by filtering and trapping sediments and other suspended matter discharged by rivers. They also provide protection from coastal erosion, tsunamis and other coastal hazards such cyclones, wind and salt spray. They are considered to be amongst the most carbon rich ecosystems in the world and as such are a significant carbon sink in terms of forest biomass as well as organic sediment accumulation (Mcleod *et al*. 2011, Donato *et al.* 2011, Ajonina *et al*. 2014). Total ecosystem carbon in undisturbed mangroves in Central Africa has been estimated at around 1,520 tonnes of carbon per hectare (Ajonina *et al*. 2014). Liberia's mangroves specifically are estimated to store up to 1,382 tonnes of carbon per hectare; heavy exploitation can reduce carbon storage by as much as 50% (Kaufman and Bhomia 2017).

C. Socio-Economic and Cultural Context

30. Liberia faces severe development challenges. Liberia is a Least Developed Country that has recently emerged from extended conflict in two civil wars, from 1989-1996 and from 1999-2003. The war had a devastating impact on the country's health and education systems and a large portion of the population is illiterate. According to the PAPD, about 3 million Liberians (70.1 percent) were multi-dimensionally poor (deprived of development), and another 924 thousand are near multidimensional poverty (GOL 2018). Food insecurity affects 41% of the population and chronic malnutrition is high (World Food Program 2013).

31. Nearly 58% of Liberia's four million people live within 40 miles of the coast and migration from rural areas to coastal cities is increasing, which puts extensive pressure on coastal ecosystems for food, land and other resources. National population continues to grow at 2.57% per annum (United Nations 2018), and new infrastructure (e.g. roads and housing), while desperately needed, will increase pressure on vulnerable ecosystems.

32. The economy, though recovering, is still unable to generate the large-scale employment opportunities essential for absorbing a large pool of unemployed and underemployed men and women. The majority of the country's population directly depends on natural resources. Aquatic ecosystems provide protein for nearly 70% of the population (GOL, 2004). Charcoal remains the dominant source of cooking and heating energy for over 95% of Liberia's population (Jones 2015). Beach sand mining, practiced in nearly every coastal community for brick production, is among the most serious threats to the coastline and marine environment in the country (UNDP 2008). Many people continue to rely on subsistence agriculture using low-productivity shifting cultivation that results in forest clearing all along the coast.

33. Waste disposal is a socio-economic factor that presents a risk to human health as well as an environmental challenge. Improper waste disposal practices in much of the country threaten the access to and quality of drinking water and contribute to the spread of disease. Liberia continues to struggle with providing sufficient access to water and sanitation facilities to urban as well as rural populations. Waste is often dumped on the edge of wetlands in coastal areas, and sewage is often discharged directly into lagoons, rivers and the ocean.

34. Men and women in Liberia use mangroves and other coastal resources differently and have distinct perspectives on the importance of these ecosystems and options for improved management. Access to coastal resources, and the ability to restrict access by outsiders, is vital for the ability of local communities to properly manage mangrove forests. All along the coast men do the majority of fishing while women are responsible for smoking the fish, and women also are the primary market sellers of fish. The use of mangrove wood as cooking fuel as well as to prepare fish for market is a major cause of deforestation. But women also use the mangroves to collect a range of other food resources, to a greater extent than their male counterparts. Thus, women are central in addressing drivers of mangrove loss and a key beneficiary in their conservation. The differences in how women and men use mangrove resources have important implications for intervention strategies.

D. Global Environmental Problems and Root Causes

35. Worldwide coastal ecosystems extend along more than 1.6 million km of coastline in 123 countries. They include a diverse set of habitat types, both terrestrial (e.g. sand dunes) and marine (e.g. seagrass beds), that sustain a wealth of fauna and flora. Coastal areas are home to approximately one third of the world's population. Coastal ecosystems are intricately connected to both upstream terrestrial/freshwater ecosystems and marine ecosystems. For example, forest ecosystems help to stabilize soils, thereby preventing erosion and downstream sedimentation, which are processes that can smother coral reefs and otherwise negatively impact these ecosystems.

36. Coastal ecosystems directly underpin or contribute to a number of economic sectors, including tourism, commercial fisheries, salt, minerals, oil and construction. Estimates of their annual contribution to the global economy range from billions to trillions of US dollars. Fish are one of the most widely traded food commodities in the world, particularly in developing countries where they

can account for more than half the total value of all traded commodities. In 2017 global fishery exports amounted to US$153.5 billion (FAO 2018). Coastal ecosystems such as coral reefs, mangroves and seagrasses support the global fishery export market by providing habitat and breeding grounds for commercially relevant fish species.

37. The state of global coastal ecosystems was thoroughly documented in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA, 2005). This study identified coastal ecosystems as "among the most productive yet highly threatened systems in the world" (MEA, 2005). Population growth and technological advances have fueled an unprecedented and unsustainable exploitation of coastal resources in the past century. Coastal communities aggregate near the types of coastal systems that provide the most ecosystem services; these coastal subtypes are also the most vulnerable. Human pressures on coastal resources are compromising many of the ecosystem services crucial to the well-being of coastal economies and peoples.

38. Liberia's coastal ecosystems are valuable to the economy, but these values have not been systematically assessed or tracked over time. Liberia's immense natural wealth is under threat and biological diversity has suffered notable decline over the past 30 years. Liberia has lost 60% of its forest cover over the last two centuries (GOL 2017). Poverty and the need for economic growth/development are significant drivers of degradation of natural resources in Liberia, and the impacts on coastal resources are becoming more evident. Coastal ecosystems are threatened by the overexploitation of demersal fish species and other species (e.g. sea turtles), beach sand mining, beach erosion and mangrove loss. Liberia is vulnerable to climate change, due to extensive poverty combined with high dependence on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and forestry. Current development trends along the coast pose a significant and ongoing threat.

39. The main threats to Liberia's mangroves include: 1) infrastructure development, such as illegal structures for housing; 2) over-harvest of natural resources; 3) agriculture expansion, particularly for lowland rice; 4) illegal sand mining; and 5) unregulated waste disposal.

40. *Infrastructure Development:* Liberia's post-conflict economic recovery and increased population have overwhelmed the urban plans for its coastal cities. For instance, originally designed to accommodate 350,000 persons, Monrovia's population is now more than 1 million people. Populations continue to grow, and new infrastructure (e.g. roads and housing), while desperately needed, will add additional pressure and increase ecosystem degradation. The biggest threat to Liberia's mangroves is urban expansion and accompanying landfills, particularly in Monrovia. Similar mangrove destruction can be seen along the entire length of the Mesurado River. Mangrove loss to housing development is resulting in increased erosion and because the plots barely sit above sea level, communities living within the mangrove are extremely vulnerable to storms, flooding, and climate change.

41. *Over-harvesting and Over-hunting:* Unsustainable harvesting of natural resources is a significant threat to coastal ecosystems. Demand for food, energy and building materials is leading to over exploitation of natural resources in and around major urban settlements. Demand for land, food, charcoal, and construction materials is driving degradation and deforestation in forests, mangroves and other ecosystems all along the coast line of Liberia. Although there have been no recent surveys to take stock of existing biomass, Liberia's Bureau of National Fisheries (BNF) estimates that the demersal species are under threat from over exploitation from both commercial and artisanal fisheries. Coastal fish resources are believed to be fully exploited, while deep sea fisheries are

underexploited. Although fish is the main protein source, bush meat comes second. There is little data related to bush meat harvesting rates, but increasing demand and the bush meat trade constitute a growing threat to biodiversity.

42. *Agricultural Expansion:* The Government of Liberia (GOL) has implemented initiatives that have focused on increasing agricultural investments in Liberia. The National Rice Development Strategy of Liberia (Republic of Liberia 2012) is aggressively attempting to double domestic rice production by 2018, which raises a number of potential environmental concerns. This strategy includes a focus on expanding lowland rice cultivation, with a planned increase from 22,000 ha in 2009 to 110,000 ha by 2018. This may result in a net loss of wetlands along the coast and potentially damage wildlife due to chemical pollutants and habitat loss. Since 2009 four international palm oil companies have been granted concessions in Liberia for palm oil production on 620,000 hectares of land; concessions extend down into coastal areas and may result in conversion of coastal forest. The prevalence of shifting cultivation threatens ecosystems as land availability declines, leading to shorter fallow periods and potential permanent loss of forest cover in coastal areas.

43. *Illegal Sand Mining:* As noted, beach sand mining poses a serious threat to the coastline and marine environment (UNDP 2008). The resulting sand pits cause slight embayments that exacerbate shoreline erosion. Incidents of beach erosion along the Monrovia coastline have resulted in the loss of land and shorefront properties. Erosion is causing shoreline recession in several cities, including Buchanan, Greenville, Harper and Robertsport. People attempt to prop up structures on stilts or fill in lost land with rocks and trash to prevent structures from falling into the water, but these measures succeed temporarily at best. Erosion and mangrove degradation exacerbate each other because mangroves do not have sufficient area and time to migrate inland, and as the coasts erode mangrove habitat shrinks causing increased habitat degradation. Conversely, mangroves can prevent coastal erosion due to complex root structures, but as the ecosystem is lost the erosion caused by sand mining is amplified.

44. *Unregulated Waste Disposal:* As noted, improper disposal of waste is a source of environmental degradation and poses a risk to human health. The need for improved solid waste management will increase with population growth, economic expansion, and continued rural-to-urban migration.

45. The root causes of these are: a lack of planning capacity among relevant regulatory agencies; lack of data and information to inform planning processes; and a dearth of economic alternatives to unsustainable resource use.

E. Barriers to Addressing the Environmental Problems and Root Causes

46. Barriers to addressing the environmental issues mentioned above largely fall into five categories:

47. *Lack of data about the value of Liberia's natural capital.* Data on the quantity and quality of natural resources in Liberia such as land, water, fish, soils, forests, minerals and energy, and changes in these stocks over time, is scarce. Liberian government institutions face shortages of scientific information pertaining to environmental management. The Liberian Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) houses the nation's statistical spatial and non-spatial data and produces the System of National Accounts, but despite some progress in capacity building LISGIS and other national statistical systems remain weak. Data that does exist tends to be scattered across

different institutions with unclear ownership, and is typically in an analog or paper format which limits access.

48. *Lack of awareness and knowledge among decision makers about the value of Liberia's natural capital.* The value of coastal ecosystems is not yet fully recognized by decision makers. They are unaware of the direct and indirect services that ecosystems provide to people and that these indirect services can now be quantified. Awareness amongst coastal communities and other stakeholders in Liberia of the important role of coastal ecosystems is also limited, except for some areas where FDA and partners have conducted intensive efforts to promote community awareness of the importance of mangroves.

49. *Inadequate legislation and gaps in national policy.* Liberia lacks the policy, regulatory and informational frameworks necessary to integrate ecosystem and biodiversity protection into national actions. Regulatory authorities such as the EPA do not have adequate human and financial resources to execute enforcement responsibilities. Gaps and inconsistencies in legislation and its application complicate coastal resource management, as in the example of marine protected area (MPA) creation. The FDA is responsible for setting up and managing the national protected area network, but there is no legislation for the establishment of MPAs. Government entities such as the Liberia Maritime Authority (LMA) and Liberian coast guard appear better suited to address legal enforcement in MPAs, while the EPA holds a clear mandate for environmental management but does not have the capacity to implement actions on the ground.

50. *Limited institutional capacity and coordination in government ministries.* Institutional and individual capacity at both national and local levels in Liberia is limited. There is limited capacity in the Liberian government to assess, plan, and monitor natural resource use in coastal areas and to determine how these resources contribute to the economy. There is also lack of integrated inter-sectoral planning between different government ministries and agencies, leading to duplication of efforts, gaps in project and program design, and poor delivery.

51. *Poverty*. Limited employment opportunities and pervasive poverty result in heavy local community dependence on coastal resources for subsistence and local commerce (wood for energy and housing materials, numerous species living in mangroves for food consumption and sale, fishing, sand mining, etc.). The combination of these economic pressures and limited awareness of ecosystem function and value result in unsustainable extraction methods and levels, undermining the viability of coastal ecosystems. As men and women in Liberia interact with their environment in different ways, this barrier manifests in different ways with respect to resource use, needs and priorities depending on gender.

52. *Limited financing for conservation and sustainable management of coastal resources.* Currently protection of inland ecosystems in Liberia receives significant investment, especially for avoided deforestation activities in terrestrial forests. However, little attention is being given to the conservation and sustainable use of natural capital along Liberia's coastline. There are some interventions in place such as the GEF funded project *Improve sustainability of mangrove forests and coastal mangrove areas in Liberia through protection, planning and livelihood creation – building blocks towards Liberia's marine and coastal protected areas*, and the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation supported project *Sustainable Mangrove Conservation in Liberia: Improving enabling conditions for creation of the Marshall Wetlands Protected Area*. However, total investments in conserving coastal resources remains inadequate and often relies on short term

grants provided by private foundations and government aid agencies that cannot be sustained in the long term. Private sector participation in conservation is limited.

F. Current Baseline (Business-as-Usual Scenario) / Future Scenarios without the Project

53. Liberia has rich biodiversity and immense natural capital that has not yet been systematically assessed, measured, or valued. There are few systematic measurements of the stocks of natural capital (natural assets including plants, animals, water, soils, minerals) in Liberia or of the flows of ecosystem services that these ecosystems provide to benefit people or sectors of the Liberian economy. For example, there have been no stock assessments of fisheries resources in over twenty years. There is a dearth of local research capacity to study dynamics of ecological factors affecting fisheries or coastal habitats – the productivity of ecosystems, pollution levels and nutrient load, species diversity of the various fish communities, and harvesting pattern of commercial species.

54. Knowledge regarding the extent, distribution and status of coastal ecosystems in Liberia is very poor. The composition, distribution, status, threats to and benefits provided by coastal ecosystems in Liberia are not well understood. Awareness among coastal communities and other stakeholders in Liberia is also poor with respect to the important role these areas play in supporting biodiversity, livelihoods, climate resilience and community wellbeing through their contribution to primary production, provision of habitat for rare and endangered species, provision of nursery and foraging areas for important fish species, shoreline protection, sediment trapping, water purification, and other goods and services. Very little is known about the value of freshwater wetlands, from their role in providing medicinal plants and other products, to their role in providing ecosystems services such as water quality enhancement, flood control, and provision of habitat for valued species. Sand mining is permitted along the coast without a full understanding of coastal erosion and associated costs that these activities cause.

55. As the value of coastal ecosystems is not fully recognized by decision makers, they continue to be lost and degraded. National planning and development agencies, which influence many of the decisions that impact natural resources in Liberia, are focused on the immediate need to improve the well-being of people. In the face of these severe challenges, the notion that conserving natural resources should be a critical component for improving human well-being in Liberia is not recognized by decision makers. The true costs of exploiting Liberia's natural resources are not being accounted for in development decision making and this is likely to result in a continuation of the current trend of unstainable exploitation. Although better information and awareness alone may not suffice to change decision-making trends, without them such change is even less likely.

56. There is no doubt that there are many threats to Liberia's coastal ecosystems, that the rate of destruction is growing, and that Liberia is on the verge of losing many key coastal ecosystems. Coastal erosion is evident all along the coast, and particularly acute around urban areas. There is a high risk of losing sea turtle nesting beaches and ecosystems important for migratory birds. Essential breeding sites for economically important marine species may drastically decline, affecting fish stocks and creating greater pressure on terrestrial biodiversity, already under threat from the bush meat trade. Continued degradation and loss of Liberia's coastal ecosystems will have a direct and negative effect on food security throughout the country.

57. The population of the country, especially of people residing in major coastal towns, is growing rapidly, and along with it the demand for land, fuel-wood, charcoal, building materials and protein.

The World Bank estimates that 49% of Liberians now reside in urban areas and most urban development is occurring along the coast. Expanding population is placing ever increasing pressure on coastal resources and ecosystems. Across the country there is wide concern that communities are being threatened by coastal erosion and the impacts are exacerbated by irresponsible sand mining. Private developers are also taking advantage of local communities' need for cash income, their low levels of education, and their limited understanding of the true value of the land, and are entering into agreements to purchase or lease riparian and coastal land at prices that are well below market value. In the absence of clear regulations or legal enforcement, landowners are free to clear the land thereby depriving coastal communities not only of the land itself but also the ecosystem goods and services that it historically provided.

58. There are some interventions in place that seek to address threats to Liberia's coastal ecosystems. However, these interventions are unlikely to achieve scale or catalytic influence if decision makers do not start taking the true costs of exploiting Liberia's coastal ecosystems into account in development planning. While Liberia's environmental protection policies have proposed that key ecosystems be gazetted as protected areas (30% of the country's land area), limited actions have been implemented to date to ensure this gazettement moves forward. Of four proposed protected areas that include mangroves, only one, the Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve (LPMUR), has actually been established to date. However, important contributions are taking place under the aforementioned GEF-supported project *Improve sustainability of mangrove forests …,* and the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation-supported project *Sustainable Mangrove Conservation …,* which include activities to support the establishment of a protected area to protect the Marshall Wetlands.

59. Without this project, and GEF support, the Liberian Government is not likely to develop natural accounting capacity; development policies and strategies will continue to ignore critical ecological factors; and coastal communities, particularly in southeast Liberia, will continue to rely on unsustainable resource use with significant negative long-term ramifications. Without this project, Liberia is on a trajectory to lose a vast share of its coastal natural capital, including all their unprotected mangrove forests and the biodiversity associated with them.

G. Alternatives to the Business-as-Usual Scenario

60. Under the Business-as-Usual scenario, Liberia's coastal ecosystems are highly threatened. Several approaches might be considered for improving conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's coastal ecosystems. Possible alternative scenarios include a) efforts that focus on formal protected areas; b) livelihoods and economic development; c) land use planning; d) community-based natural resource management (CBNRM); and e) a combination of natural capital accounting, innovative financing for conservation and sustainable management, and direct incentives through Conservation Agreements.

61. a) Protected area establishment is an important element of Liberia's overall biodiversity strategy. A focus on creating additional protected areas along the country's coast would be a contribution, but would not suffice on its own for several reasons. First, considerable important areas fall outside the proposed protected area network, and the appetite on the part of government to consider additional sites outside this network is limited. Second, protected area creation on its own may lead to paper parks without meaningful change on the ground. Third, protected area establishment that restricts community access to resources will face political difficulty and will generate local conflict.

62. b) A focus on livelihoods and economic development (e.g. through continued investment in strengthening the fisheries sector) may be expected to reduce dependence on unsustainable resource use and promote sustainable management. However, the range of possibilities in remote rural communities along Liberia's coast is limited, and will continue to rely on the natural resource base. Thus, there would be a significant risk of increased pressure on resources as market links improve, household incomes rise, and better prospects attract migrants to the area.

63. c) Land use planning can help rationalize resource use and management of coastal ecosystems. Comprehensive land use plans could specify, for example, mangrove areas within a community's area that are strictly off limits, and other areas that are available for extractive activities subject to sustainable harvesting plans. However, land use planning on its own is unlikely to secure sufficient multi-stakeholder buy-in to be maintained as an ongoing process or achieve a concrete result. Thus, it is not likely to produce enduring behavior change that includes conservation and sustainable management.

64. d) CBNRM would involve investing in community capacity-building with respect to knowledge as well as governance, both of which are clearly worthwhile. A combination of enhanced governance capacity and better understanding of ecosystem functioning and values could persuade some community members to turn to more sustainable practices. However, immediate needs for food and cash could easily overwhelm CBNRM in these communities, as could competition between different resource user groups.

65. Each of the approaches noted above may be an important element of overall strategy, but they share several challenges. First, there is a dearth of information as well as processes to systematically incorporate information in decision-making. This relates to ecosystem functions, conditions and trends, and ecosystem service values. This makes it difficult to make the case for protected areas and management measures or particular livelihood investments, and also poses an obstacle to land use planning and CBNRM. Second, each of these approaches requires sustained funding over a meaningful period of time, which is difficult to justify given low probability of success of individual actions. Third, these approaches do not in and of themselves present concrete incentives to communities to embrace behavior change in aid of conservation and sustainable management.

66. e) The selected scenario for this project combines natural capital accounting, innovative financing for conservation and sustainable management, and direct incentives through Conservation Agreements, such that the three project components each addresses one of the three challenges described above. This will create the wider enabling environment to make the various tools collectively viable and mutually reinforcing. Information generated through NCA and incorporated into decision-making processes will support future protected area creation and rationalize development and land use planning; sustainable financing will support long-term interventions; and Conservation Agreements will make CBNRM as well as protected area creation viable and attractive for communities. Moreover, this approach is more likely to be sustained at an institutional level in the long term, as building the requisite capacity and embedding NCA in government planning and decision-making processes will yield a level of ownership that can underpin enduring transformation. Through this integrated approach the project will establish the capacity and operational foundation for a fundamental shift in Liberia's development paradigm, thus advancing conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's coastal natural capital, and eventually extending to other ecosystems.

H. Cost Effectiveness Analysis of Chosen Alternative

67. The three primary components of this project entail institutional development and capacity-building; catalytic investment to unlock new funding sources; and facilitation of community-based conservation and resource management. Each of these components pursues long-term outcomes that do not lend themselves to meaningful short-term indicators, so the cost effectiveness analysis takes the form of qualitative assessment that examines the alternatives that were considered.

68. As described above, the alternatives to the selected approach may be valuable activities to undertake, and therefore are not necessarily not to be ruled out on the basis of cost, but on their own and in the absence of requisite enabling conditions they offer a low probability of success. For example, pursuing protected area establishment without a sound approach to involving stakeholder communities is likely to fail. Economic development programming that does not incorporate robust information on ecosystem values will not result in optimal resource use. Enduring uptake of CBNRM or land use plans is improbable without incentives. Therefore, premature investment in these alternatives, particularly as stand-alone initiatives, would be a poor use of scarce conservation funds.

69. The selected scenario is thus more cost-effective because it will put in place enabling conditions — NCA capacity, financing streams, and demonstration of Conservation Agreements— that together increase the likelihood of enduring stakeholder buy-in that will sustain positive ecosystem impacts. In so doing, the project will also enhance the probability of success for future deployment of other approaches. In fact, the Conservation Agreement component of the project will incorporate some of these alternatives (e.g. conservation commitments that include land use planning and CBNRM; links to conservation-friendly enterprises that expand livelihood options), and show how they become more likely to succeed when embedded in the Conservation Agreement model.

70. The cost effectiveness of the selected approach is further enhanced by the links between NCA and the other two project components. An initial NCA focus on the value of mangrove ecosystems will be of direct benefit to efforts to pursue Blue Carbon options, justify impact investment in conservation-friendly enterprise, and optimize catalytic small-grant making. NCA outputs can also be used in site prioritization, thereby supporting the selection of direct investments in community conservation and sustainable resource management through Conservation Agreements. Cost-effectiveness is thus furthered through economies of scope and scale in mutually reinforcing project components; as stand-alone initiatives, these components would likely involve duplication and redundancies.

SECTION 3: PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Objective, Components, Expected Outcomes, Targets, and Outputs

Objective

71. The Objective of the project is to **improve conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's coastal natural capital by mainstreaming the value of nature into Liberia's development trajectory**. The

project will do so through three mutually reinforcing components: working with the Government of Liberia to begin incorporating Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) into the system of national accounts, with an initial focus on mangrove ecosystems; using NCA results to inform resource allocation and finance to support coastal conservation and sustainable resource management; informed by NCA results, and leveraging new financing flows, advance community-based coastal conservation and sustainable resource management with 10 communities in southeastern Liberia using Conservation Agreements. Mainstreaming will be achieved by initiating a process of establishing additional natural capital accounts, institutionalizing financing mechanisms, and building on Conservation Agreement demonstrations to design a national program for community-based conservation and sustainable resource management.

Component 1: Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) in Coastal Ecosystems

72. The first component of the project is to build the foundation for Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) in Liberia to ensure that the value of biodiversity and ecosystem services, particularly for coastal areas, is incorporated into national decision-making. Although coastal areas encompass a variety of ecosystems and habitats, the project will focus on mangroves as these are recognized as important and vulnerable by a wide range of stakeholders, and they serve as a concrete entry point for establishing an NCA framework. Nevertheless, this focus is expected to yield positive impacts on wider coastal ecosystems. This component will result in the following expected outcome:

Outcome 1.1*:* Decision-making improved in coastal ecosystem governance by mainstreaming Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) into Government of Liberia (GOL) development strategy, policy and planning

Target 1.1.a*: At least one natural capital account (mangroves) established and embedded in at least five key government policies and plans*

Target 1.1.b: *At least 50 government officials and other relevant stakeholders trained on the technical aspects of NCA*

Target 1.1.c: *At least 50 decision makers trained on how to use NCA results for the conservation and sustainable use of globally important biodiversity*

73. National planning and development agencies, which influence many of the decisions that impact natural resources in Liberia, are primarily focused upon improving the well-being of people. Often this condition is measured by financial wealth or sectoral productivity. The true costs of Liberia's natural resources are not accounted for in development decisions and this can result in unsustainable exploitation of natural resources for short term gain. The Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development is the Liberian government's primary strategy to foster sustainable and equitable growth. This strategy seeks to promote sustainable, transparent, and well-managed use of Liberia's natural resources.

74. Like most governments that adhere to the statistical standard of the U.N. System of National Accounts, the Government of Liberia collects data that describe the country's economic performance and form the basis for calculating GDP and other standard economic indicators, such as balance of trade and household consumption. These accounts allow countries to make key macroeconomic decisions and set policy. However, the indicators within such national accounts are

currently limited to the production boundary of the economy and thus, do not measure progress towards achieving sustainability objectives of the Pro-Poor Agenda.

75. At present the government has not sought to measure the stock of natural capital in Liberia, the value of the ecosystems and the services they provide in monetary and non-monetary terms, and the change in these values as the ecosystems are degraded. As such, the true costs of Liberia's natural resources, and thus how these natural resources contribute to development, and the policies that can help foster both, are not incorporated into the Pro-Poor Agenda. Incorporating natural capital into national accounts will reveal the impacts and dependencies of economic activity on the environment, and support better economic decisions in the long term. By providing information on the true cost of natural resource use, depletion and degradation, NCA can help a country's decision makers to better understand the impacts and tradeoffs of development decisions.

76. Through an investment from the GEF this project will create the enabling environment for natural capital accounting. This will directly increase the capacity for data collection and analysis within the government and indirectly, through the data produced by assessments associated with this project, allow for more effective sustainable development. As a result, Liberia will be able to better manage its ecosystems, enhance its land use planning, and proactively protect its key biodiversity and threatened ecosystems.

77. To achieve this the project will involve all related ministries and agencies and provide capacity training to carry out and contribute to natural capital accounting. This project will ensure the enabling conditions for natural capital accounting are in place (multi-agency engagement process, a plan for streamlining data collection efforts, securing long-term funding for natural capital accounting), develop preliminary assessments/pilot accounts that could facilitate future accounting efforts based on the context in the country, and make recommendations regarding the infrastructure required for future mainstreaming of accounting outputs into decision-making as per country priorities.

78. This readiness process will be linked with key decision makers within the government, and will be promoted as one of the tools that can help with planning for, and prioritizing of, biodiversity conservation and the maintenance of key ecosystems and their services. The outputs of the assessments and future accounts will ensure that decision-makers are made aware of the importance of ecosystem and biodiversity stocks and flows to the economy, and are clear on how key policies or government initiatives could be informed by the initial assessments and, in the future, by accounts.

79. Policy and planning decisions on sustainable development and natural resource management are increasingly being informed by the multiple benefits of ecosystem services to economies and livelihoods. Natural Capital Accounting – the systematic and repeated measurement of ecosystems (stocks) and the services they provide (flows) to well-identified beneficiaries – both in biophysical and monetary terms, yields a wide range of analyses, maps and indicators that can help to inform the mainstreaming of such information into policy and development planning. For example, NCA-generated information can be used to demonstrate, e.g., trade-offs associated with investment choices (such as with cost-benefit analysis of alternative investments); the cost-effectiveness of resource/budget allocation (such as with spatial planning/prioritization exercises that consider highest benefit values and greatest risk of degradation/loss); the equity of resource use or impacts

from degradation (such as multi-criteria analysis that considers weighing the relative benefits that ecosystems provide to people from a given areas as based on stakeholders' preferences). 1

80. NCA has been mainstreamed in several countries in all stages of a typical policy cycle2 including (i) problem identification, (ii) policy response, (iii) implementation, (iv) monitoring, and (v) review. In Liberia, we envision a similar approach in mainstreaming NCA into Government of Liberia (GOL) development strategy, policy and planning. The project will target several potential applications where a mangroves account will inform government efforts in revising existing policies or developing new ones. The NCA technical team will work closely with relevant GOL agencies on how accounting indicators and additional analyses (if required) will be used throughout the policy cycle. Thus, mainstreaming of NCA and establishment of the mangrove NCA account will be accomplished through a combination of direct technical support, targeted training for government staff, and joint application of tools to accomplish project objectives in a learning-by-doing process.

81. This project will develop mangroves accounts following the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA) methodological standards and guidelines as described in Central Framework (2012), as appropriate, while focusing on the implementation of mangrove accountings as proposed by the Experimental Ecosystem Accounts (2013). Mangrove account-generated measurement approaches, e.g., for indicators of mangrove area change, health, as well as biophysical and monetary values of select ecosystem services to the economy will inform replication of accounting efforts for other ecosystems (e.g., forests accounts) and the potential scaling up of ecosystem accounting efforts at the national level.

82. The project will generate a wide range of analytical products, maps and indicators which will be immediately useful in Liberia's planning and policy process associated with mangrove ecosystems. We are targeting several application cases where mangroves accounts will inform government efforts in revising existing policies or developing new ones, thereby mainstreaming accounting into such processes.

83. The Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA) guidelines in its current format lack guidance on how to take into account ecosystem services in the social or environmental impact assessment processes for both large and small-scale projects and investments. We will work with relevant government agencies including the Environment Protection Agency (EPA), Forestry Development Authority, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) and the University of Liberia in the revision of those guidelines so that the next iteration of guidelines requires measurement of ecosystems and the benefits they provide to inform, e.g., the planning and implementation of infrastructure, resource extraction, urban and community development projects.

84. The State of the Environment Report for Liberia provides information on the overall condition of the Liberian environment. Mangrove accounts will generate indicators of direct relevance for this Report, specifically as it relates to land cover change and health/degradation and provision of benefits to different beneficiaries. We will work with EPA and MFDP through the Environmental Sector Working Group to propose a section on ecosystem accounts so that those indicators are reported repeatedly towards measuring progress. The Environmental Sector Working Group (ESWG) is the national multi- sectors stakeholders working group with the mandate of mainstreaming enabling environment, nature resources climate change activities to inform the implementation of the Pro Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development of Liberia. The Government has appointed

Conservation International as co- chaired of the ESWG. In fact, CI-Liberia aims to demonstrate that sustainable development is achievable in Liberia through an integrated landscape approach that seeks to balance nature conservation, sustainable production and the sustainable economic development. We envision the process and generated-ecosystem accounting information can greatly facilitate that important effort.

85. The Liberia REDD+ strategy is currently going through a review process and can greatly benefit from accounting measurements and generated information to inform the country's forest conservation climate mitigation efforts. Indeed, ecosystem extent, condition and thematic carbon accounts can provide foundational scientific inputs with information required for the development of baseline carbon stocks, inform systematic and repeated measurements on carbon emission & sequestration, while facilitating prioritization exercises to inform most suitable areas for REDD+ interventions based on biodiversity, ecosystem services provision, as well as risk of land cover change. We will work with the Liberia Forestry Development Authority to proposed changes to the strategy and submit for approval by the National Climate Change Steering Committee of Liberia.

86. Natural capital accounting could shape public sector decision-making in Liberia in several ways:

a) Specific technical processes relating to Environmental Impact Assessment, calibration of benefit-sharing mechanisms, and preparation of periodic State of the Environment reports by the EPA would each benefit from information generated by NCA.

b) NCA could help the Bureau of National Fisheries (BNF) balance the needs of ecosystem health, food security, economic growth and social development. For example, the mangrove account to be developed under the proposed project can help shape implementation of the 2014 BNF policy on fisheries and the aquaculture sector, by informing zoning of aquaculture investments while pursuing conservation targets based on robust scientific and economic data on marine ecosystems.

c) NCA can inform spatial planning and related activities such as prioritization of important areas for conservation or sustainable use; disaster preparation and management; monitoring of ecosystems; and siting of investments such as aquaculture mentioned above or infrastructure development. For example, with respect to infrastructure, natural capital assets such as mangroves may offer advantages over engineered infrastructure in some areas along Liberia's coast. The mangrove account will help planners incorporate the value of green infrastructure as Liberia prepares its National Urban Policy (NUP). Spatial planning and prioritization exercises will be designed to support conservation or sustainable use of mangroves, disaster preparation and management, siting of investments such as aquaculture. On the latter, we propose to work with relevant agencies, and with the Bureau of National Fisheries (BNF) in particular, on the implementation of policy on fisheries and the aquaculture sector, specifically for zoning of aquaculture investments to rely on spatial planning/prioritization exercises that consider highest values of benefits, both in terms of biodiversity and ecosystem services, and lowest risk of degradation/losses.

87. Key outputs arising from this expected outcome include:

Output 1.1.1: Inter-ministerial NCA Steering Committee established to guide NCA development and implementation

88. NCA will require cooperation across several different government ministries to establish a functioning set of national accounts. This is because, for most natural capital accounting endeavors, the data needed to develop accounts comes from a series of line ministries who collect data and (usually) provide it to a central statistical agency. In addition, once the accounts are produced, the results are used by several different ministries (e.g. Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Environmental Protection Agency, Forestry Development Authority, Ministry of Agriculture). The project will establish a multi-agency Steering Committee to guide delivery and ensure that there is alignment across different government institutions. The TOR for this committee, to be developed jointly with the member agencies, will include tasks such as: allocating responsibilities among agencies for data collection; allocating operational and decision-making responsibilities; formulating data-sharing protocols; identifying entry points for integrating NCA outputs into government planning and decision-making; and prioritizing ecosystems for future natural capital account creation after the mangrove account is created under this project and/or supporting scaling up efforts at the national level. Thus, this Steering Committee will ensure that this project component is aligned with government needs and expectations.

Output 1.1.2*:* Mangrove ecosystem account planned for, developed, and executed

89. Understanding that the Liberian EPA has prioritized coastal regions for pilot accounting initiatives, the project will design and establish a natural capital account for mangrove ecosystems. Essential components of the mangrove account will include: GIS-based mapping of mangrove ecosystem extent and condition, capturing stocks; physical supply and use tables (PSUTs) that capture flows (increases/decreases in mangrove extent); and economic accounts based on valuation of the physical flows. Activities to generate the data needed to build these components involve several methods ranging from field surveys to ground-truth ecosystem conditions, to household surveys to inform economic valuation, to computer-based modeling to process remote sensing data.

90. Development of the mangrove account will take place as a collaboration between technical experts from CI and EPA, such that Government of Liberia capacity is built through direct hands-on involvement. The mangrove account will also serve as a concrete training example for personnel in other Government of Liberia agencies (Output 1.1.3). The initial focus on the mangrove account in this project will fill a capacity need within the Liberian government, and build the foundation for the development of future accounts for additional coastal resources as well as terrestrial natural capital, to be created under the NCA Operational Framework (Output 1.1.4).

Output 1.1.3: Capacity of government officials and other stakeholders developed on technical aspects of NCA

91. This project will provide substantial training opportunities to ensure that there is capacity in the Liberian government to begin systematic and repeated natural capital accounting, beginning with awareness-raising as to the overall utility of NCA and its key applications. This project will provide Liberia with a foundation to monitor and assess the values of natural resource stocks and flows and how they contribute to the economy. Participants in these trainings will be selected in the initial phase of the project but at a minimum would include staff from the EPA, LISGIS, FDA, Ministry of Agriculture, Liberia Land Authority (LLA), Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy, and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. Recognizing capacity challenges, the project will dedicate considerable effort to this process.

Output 1.1.4: Operational framework established for SEEA-compliant natural capital accounts

92. The project will advance national-level natural capital accounts through the development of an operational framework compliant with the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA), an internationally accepted framework for natural capital accounting developed by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD). Specifically, the Liberian government has expressed interest in developing SEEA Ecosystem Accounts that measure the relationship between ecosystems and the economy.

93. Design of the operational framework will be guided by the NSA Steering Committee, and build on the training provided under Output 1.1.3. The framework will require coordinated multi-agency efforts, with leading roles for LISGIS and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. It will address specific technical needs, such as the design and deployment of supplementary data collection tools to be applied in concert with existing economic information collection systems. The operational framework will also specify protocols for data treatment (processing and analysis, and dissemination). The mangrove account created as Output 1.1.2 will provide a learning opportunity that will then inform the design of the overarching operational framework that will guide all future natural capital accounts.

94. The operational framework will be designed to allow long-term monitoring of the status and health of ecosystems, tracking stocks of ecosystems, and flows of ecosystem services to the economy. To develop this framework we will produce scoping information including: the identification of key accounts to establish given Liberia's natural resources priorities, recommendations on key statistical indicators, data collection protocols, recommendations for resourcing these; a review of data availability as it relates to natural capital accounting; and recommendations on institutional arrangements, roles, and responsibilities for natural capital accounting. Thus, we will identify challenges and required enabling conditions to embed NCA in Liberian government systems. The framework will be designed with an emphasis on repeatability, replication and scaling up of accounting efforts over time, in accordance with institutional arrangements and mandates necessary for implementation.

Output 1.1.5: Support provided to the GOL to integrate the NCA operational framework into national planning processes

95. The data collected, processed and disseminated by statistical agencies is a necessary but not sufficient step in incorporating NCA into government decision-making. To accomplish Outcome 1.1, this project will provide support to the Government of Liberia to integrate the operational framework for national level natural capital accounts into the Government of Liberia's Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (2018-2023). This entails a core role for the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. Evolution and implementation of the Pro-Poor Agenda will be an intensive process that cuts across numerous sectors with competing interests. In this regard, the project relates directly to Pillar 4 (Governance and Transparency Goal) and its associated Development Outcome 4: Improved tenure and natural resource governance. Two examples of indicators in the Results Framework for the Pro-Poor Agenda are, "*Increase fisheries contribution from 3% to 6% of the GDP*" and "*Increase forest contribution from 9% to 12% of real GDP*"; NCA will help the Bureau of National Fisheries and the Forestry Development Authority respectively to more systematically estimate sectoral GDP contributions in light of natural capital trends (e.g. in fish stocks and forested area), understand the sustainability of these economic activities, and plan

accordingly. For Output 1.1.5 this project will work with government agencies to link the NCA operational framework to planning processes under the Agenda and thus better incorporate the value of natural capital.

Output 1.1.6: Support provided to the GOL to incorporate NCA results into Liberia's Aichi Targets, Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and other international commitments and reporting mechanisms

96. Like many countries, Liberia is actively and continually considering how they will achieve their commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), as emphasized in the Pro-Poor Agenda. These deliberations provide an important window of opportunity during which to influence national-level strategies for implementation so that they harness, conserve and restore the natural capital that is the foundation of truly sustainable development. However, many nations require support to fully recognize the role of natural capital in achieving the SDGs and establish effective policy frameworks to integrate proper management of this natural capital into development plans. The project will help the Government of Liberia incorporate information generated from NCA into the country's SDGs and other international commitments such as the Aichi targets.

97. This will involve identifying NCA indicators that can be used to measure and demonstrate progress on Aichi targets, and then incorporating these indicators into the Pro-Poor Agenda Results Framework. Doing so in and of itself would be a significant advance on Aichi Target 2 (*By 2020, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems*). Moreover, the mangrove account, for example, can inform tracking of performance on Targets 5 (*By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced*) and 6 (*By 2020 all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem based approaches, so that overfishing is avoided, recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species, fisheries have no significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems and the impacts of fisheries on stocks, species and ecosystems are within safe ecological limits*). Application of NCA results in this way will form an explicit part of training processes, and help leverage the various outputs of this project.

Output 1.1.7: Roadmap developed for prioritizing and developing natural capital accounts for additional ecosystems, resources and sectors

98. The operational framework will provide the Government of Liberia with a roadmap to establish the relevant set of SEEA compliant national accounts determined in part by Liberia's development aspirations and policy goals. For example, Namibia's environmental accounts are based on the UN's SEEA framework (United Nations, 2002) and include minerals, fisheries, water, livestock, land and energy, though monetary asset accounts have been constructed only for minerals and fisheries. In Liberia the operational framework proposed in this project will help the Government of Liberia to prioritize a set of relevant SEEA compliant accounts and provide concrete recommendations on data gaps that need to be filled, financial commitments that will need to be made and the institutional arrangements that are required to establish a set of national accounts.

Component 2: Innovative Financing Schemes for Conserving Coastal Natural Capital

99. The second component aims at increasing and diversifying resource flows for the sustainable management and restoration of mangroves and other coastal ecosystems. This component will result in the following expected outcome and corresponding two targets:

Outcome 2.1*:* Funding sources for the sustainable management and restoration of coastal ecosystems increased

Target 2.1.a: *Financial resources for the sustainable management and restoration of coastal ecosystems increased by 50%*

Target 2.1.b: *At least 2 new revenue streams to support the long-term sustainability developed*

Target 2.1.c*: Small grants provided to at least three local organization*

100. Component 1 of this project will help decision makers understand externalities; the unpriced costs of development. Of equal importance is ensuring that there is a steady flow of financial resources that is sufficient for the conservation and sustainable use of coastal natural capital, justified as the need to offset these unpriced costs. Conservation finance includes an array of mechanisms, such as tourism-related taxes and fees, debt-for-nature swaps, conservation trust funds, and payments for environmental services. These include both market mechanisms and non-market mechanisms such as overseas development assistance.

101. Component 2 of this project seeks to pilot the development of additional mechanisms that reward good stewardship of natural resources and provide long term, sustainable financing for coastal conservation. An assessment of financial resources available for coastal conservation and sustainable resource management in Liberia conducted in preparation for this project suggests a baseline amount averaging about US$ 1 million per year over the next 5 years (CI 2018b). Increasing this amount will involve the piloting of different mechanisms through which the beneficiaries of ecosystem services such as the private sector can compensate those who help maintain the provision of ecosystem services (such as mangrove-dependent communities). The two new revenue streams to be pursued under this component are carbon finance and conservation-friendly enterprise.

102. In global efforts to develop nature-based strategies to reduce carbon emissions and expand carbon sinks Blue Carbon is rapidly evolving as a complement to REDD+ approaches. Although Blue Carbon is not yet as mature as initiatives based on forest protection and restoration, efforts by the international Blue Carbon Working group have found a significant and growing appetite for investment in coastal ecosystems, motivated by clearly visible co-benefits of such carbon investments with respect to benefits to people and biodiversity. This justifies confidence in the ability of well-prepared mangrove protection projects in Liberia to attract carbon finance, particularly from the voluntary market; this was signaled, for instance, in the recent Blue Oceans Conference held in Monrovia. Two potential sources include the offshore oil sector and the international shipping sector, given their relevance to the marine sphere. With respect to the latter, growing moves to incorporate the international shipping sector into global carbon accounting frameworks may be expected to lead to interest from the sector in offsetting emissions by purchasing blue carbon credits, as the International Maritime Organization committed in 2018 to reduce their footprint by 50% by 2050 relative to 2008 levels. Given that Liberia's Shipping Registry is now the second largest in the world, coastal Blue Carbon projects in Liberia may enjoy a particular

advantage in attracting such funding. CI's pioneering Blue Carbon work centering on mangrove protection in Colombia, in partnership with the Apple corporation, demonstrates implementation capacity to develop and bring Blue Carbon credits to market (see https://www.conservation.org/stories/Pages/A-Critical-Investment-In-Blue-Carbon.aspx).

103. Conservation-friendly enterprise exists in Liberia and offers potential for growth through a combination of investment and technical collaboration to link different value chain participants. Three compelling examples are a farmer-support service provider that focuses on organic agriculture; an artisanal honey marketing and distribution company; and a firm that produces biofuel pellets using waste products from the palm oil sector. These three companies have established track records, and offer concrete examples of commercial relationships with small farmers and communities. The project will seek to foster links between these companies and project beneficiary communities in mangrove sites that promote: 1) agricultural practices that reduce negative impacts on mangroves and other ecosystems, 2) apiculture as an ecologically benign and highly profitable livelihood option, and 3) use of waste products to produce fuel while reducing reliance on mangroves for fuelwood. In addition, the Small Grants Program may consider proposals from other, as yet unidentified, conservation-friendly enterprises.
Find below the details/profiles of the three companies:
    - **J-Palm:** This is a Liberian company that employs a professional, for-profit business model to create a full range of consumer goods and clean energy products based on the oil palm plant. J-palm wants to create smokeless, more energy-efficient, and affordable charcoal briquettes to directly compete with traditional charcoal. The company wants to raise awareness about the problems of using wood charcoal for fuel (deforestation and environmental degradation, indoor air pollution) and offer a viable alternative for all Liberians. The company is looking for a conservation partner who would help them establish relationships with communities in Nimba and a market for their product. The by-products of Liberia's immense agricultural resources (currently going to waste) could be harnessed to provide access to cleaner, safer, and more sustainable energy sources as well as organic fertilizers that slowly leach essential nutrients into the soil and improve its overall vitality with time. Current estimates suggest that Liberia produces over 3.9 million dry tons of cash crop residues per annum – including coconut husks; oil palm empty fruit bunches, fiber, shells and fronds; sugarcane tops, leaves and bagasse; coffee husks and cacao pods. All of these crop residues have tremendous energy applications – ranging from gasification to torrefaction to charcoal briquetting.
    - **Organic Matters:** Organic Matters is a small Liberian start-up company that sells organic fertilizers, soil management services, farming assistance, and soil recovery services with replacement products for growth stimulants, pesticides, and herbicides. Vermicompost production and use is an 'environmentally friendly, protective and restorative' process as it diverts wastes from ending up in landfills and also reduces emission of greenhouse gases (GHG) due to the very small amount of energy used in its production process. The application of vermin-compost in farm soil works as soil conditioner and helps in its regeneration by improving its physical, biological and chemical properties. Organic Matters is already working with farmers in Liberia and the company is looking for a conservation partner to help develop and manage relationships.
    - **Universal Outreach** has developed a Liberian focused beekeeping program. Over the past five years, Universal Outreach has invested in training Liberia's top beekeepers. Now this team is ready to share their knowledge and train other beekeepers so more Liberians can realize the economic benefits of honey production. With a guaranteed buyer (Liberia honey)

ready to purchase every ounce of honey produced (at a very fair market price) beekeeping is a skills training program that results in improved financial stability for Liberians and more healthy bee colonies in Liberia. Universal Outreach's training and extension work program draws from Liberia's top beekeepers and employs eight people in its beekeeping extension work team. This team travels Liberia to support new beekeepers, collect data, harvest honey for Liberia Pure Honey and share important information related to beekeeping. With the goal of sharing this income generating skills with more Liberians, Universal Outreach has started partnering with other organizations who also have an interest in creating environmentally friendly economic opportunities for Liberians.

104. Key outputs arising from this outcome include:

Output 2.1.1*:* Potential carbon-based financing mechanisms for coastal ecosystem conservation identified and assessed

105. Coastal ecosystems are recognized for their importance in supporting fisheries, reducing coastal erosion and flooding, maintaining coastal water quality, and providing essential natural materials and sources of livelihoods for millions of people across Liberia. In addition, Liberia's wetlands sequester and store significant quantities of carbon. Mangrove systems, for instance, may sequester more tons of carbon equivalents per hectare than terrestrial tropical forests. The carbon stored in these systems can generate new incentives for prioritizing the conservation and sustainable use of coastal ecosystems and open new opportunities for sustainable financing in Liberia (e.g., Blue Carbon finance).

106. This project will conduct site-level feasibility assessments of blue carbon initiatives in mangrove ecosystems in Liberia. Efforts have already been made in Liberia to structure community agreements (including Conservation Agreements) that will be the foundation of any payment system, and there have been some preliminary assessments of coastal carbon that suggest great potential for carbon finance (Kaufman and Bhomia 2017). This project will build on the existing efforts and put in place conditions necessary for a fully-fledged coastal carbon project in Liberia. This will include precise site-level mapping of mangrove extent, ground-truthing mangrove density characteristics and carbon stock estimates, and modeling rates of change. Recognizing the challenges that face the global regulatory market for carbon credits, particular effort will be placed on securing support from voluntary/philanthropic sources of demand for carbon credits, with emphasis on the co-benefits of coastal carbon (i.e. benefits relating to local human wellbeing and biodiversity).

Output 2.1.2: At least one conservation-friendly enterprise transacting with market participants in the project area to improve sustainable use of coastal and marine resources

107. Total investments in conserving natural capital fall far short of needs and largely rely on short term grants provided by private foundations and government aid agencies. Conservation-friendly enterprise offers an underdeveloped investment opportunity that can help conserve vital ecosystems while providing a financial return.

108. This project will pursue partnership with at least one environmentally, socially and economically sustainable enterprise that can deliver alternative sources of income to communities that directly support conservation outcomes. Initially, this activity will involve contracting an enterprise to

provide services to communities as part of the benefit package under Conservation Agreements (more on this model below). The project will then seek to catalyze an enduring commercial relationship between the enterprise and community members, by supporting the development of relevant livelihood activities. Based on available literature, three enterprises that appear promising include biomass briquettes manufactured from oil palm waste; input and technical support for organic agriculture; and expansion of honey production and marketing through training of farmers in beekeeping.

109. *Biomass Briquettes Using Oil Palm Waste:* For better or worse, the palm oil sector is likely to figure largely in Liberia's future economic development. Therefore, a conservation-friendly enterprise that builds on this sector may be highly beneficial. Biomass briquette production is a long-established technology for turning waste into alternative fuel. J-Palm is a Liberian company developing a range of consumer goods and clean energy products based on the oil palm plant. J-palm seeks to produce smokeless, more energy-efficient, and affordable briquettes by using biomass waste from palm oil production, including palm leaves, kernel shells, and palm chaff, to directly compete with conventional household energy sources. Thus, this enterprise links directly to improved use of natural capital and efforts to reduce deforestation, including reduced pressure on mangroves for fuelwood and charcoal production.

110. *Organic Farming Support Service:* Agriculture remains the principal occupation of the majority of rural Liberians. Natural capital maintenance with respect to agriculture is critical, and can easily be undermined through damaging practices such as inappropriate applications of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. These practices can be deleterious to the health of ecosystems as well as the people who live and work in them. Organic Matters is a small Liberian company that sells natural compost, provides soil management services and farming assistance, and offers soil recovery services with organic products that replace inorganic growth stimulants, pesticides, and herbicides. Organic Matters is already working with farmers along Liberia's coastline and the company is looking for a conservation partner to help develop and facilitate relationships with additional coastal communities.

111. *Beekeeping for Honey Production:* Apiculture is a conservation-friendly livelihood that can be highly profitable in Liberia as well as sustainable, with additional positive externalities in the form of pollination services. The Universal Outreach Foundation fields an experienced team of apiculture trainers throughout Liberia, and also works to empower people in communities to become local trainers themselves. Liberia Pure Honey has positioned itself as a guaranteed purchaser for participating farmers, and makes its purchases at farm-gate thereby overcoming a major hurdle for many livelihood interventions (getting the product to market).[1] The growth in the number of trained beekeepers from 50 to over 1,350 over the past decade indicates the enormous potential of this product.[2]

112. When negotiating Conservation Agreements with communities, the project implementers will include the possibility of linking to one or more of these companies as part of the potential benefit package. J-Palm will be presented as a source of alternative energy, including briquettes and cleaner cookstoves; this will provide the basis for exploring deeper links including alternative income opportunities for community members based on supplying raw material for J-Palm's briquette

[1] https://www.liberiapure.com/our-approach

[2] https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/dec/04/african-killer-bees-providing-living-liberia

production. Organic Matters will be presented as a source of technical support to improve agricultural methods, and ultimately as a potential buyer of organic inputs produced by the community. The Universal Outreach Foundation will be presented as a source of apiculture training services, with Liberia Pure Honey as eventual purchaser. Thus, the project will cultivate links between communities and proven conservation-friendly enterprise, to deepen participation in the green economy.

Output 2.1.3*:* Small grant mechanism established to support coastal conservation

113. Local NGOs and community-based organizations often struggle to secure the financing necessary to support small scale interventions that promote good stewardship of natural resources. This project will re-establish the Liberia Conservation Action Fund (LCAF) that previously operated in Liberia from 2004 until 2008, when its funds were exhausted (as intended). The LCAF will support innovative interventions in select coastal ecosystems through the provision of small grants to local organizations. Interventions may include primary data collection, Conservation Agreements, or other supportive conservation/ development work. For the duration of the project, the LCAF will be administered by CI with support from EPA. The LCAF will establish regular calls for proposals through a transparent selection process under the guidance of a multi-agency steering committee. Participation of UNDP in this steering committee will maximize synergies between the LCAF and the UNDP's small grant program, and facilitate joint work towards institutional and financial sustainability of this mechanism.

114. The total amount allocated to the LCAF from the project budget is US$500,000. Based on the UNDP's GEF-funded SGP experience in Liberia, the LCAF will cap its small grants at US$100,000, anticipating that many proposals will have substantially smaller budgets. The LCAF will only consider one-year proposals, but successful applicants will be eligible for follow-up grants upon successful project completion. Therefore, CI and EPA anticipate that the LCAF will disburse funding to at least three different local NGOs, potentially through sequential one-year small grants. Although the portfolio may ultimately include more than three recipients, CI and EPA feel that three is a minimum to ensure a diversity of sites and activities.

115. CI and EPA, with input from the steering committee, will shape the LCAF anticipating that it may ultimately be integrated as a component of the Liberia Conservation Fund (LCF). Under the project the LCAF will comprise a sinking fund capitalized only by the project budget allocation. Proposal evaluation will consider demonstrated alignment with other funded activities and committed co-finance, but there are no other funding commitments for the corpus of the LCAF itself at this juncture. Based on demonstration of and lessons learned from LCAF functioning over the course of the project, CI and EPA will map out a process for integration of the LCAF into the LCF, including a fundraising strategy. In the meantime, ongoing fundraising efforts by the Government of Liberia and CI for the LCF will include attention to opportunities to secure support a future small grants mechanism housed under the LCF.

Output 2.1.4: Potential scope, need and feasibility assessed of national financing mechanism to ensure long-term support for sustainable management of coastal ecosystems

116. The Liberia Conservation Fund (LCF) was created by the Government of Liberia with support from CI and other partners as a means to support the national protected area system as well as community-based conservation efforts. As a national mechanism, the LCF will include endowed, revolving, and

sinking fund components, and will accommodate sub-accounts tied to individual protected areas. Partners envision that the LCF will serve as a mechanism for channeling funds from a range of conservation finance sources, including biodiversity offsets from Liberia's growing mining and energy sector, payments for ecosystem services such as REDD+ transactions, and earmarked government revenues such as conservation fees levied on the timber sector.

117. A similar mechanism may be needed with an explicit focus on coastal ecosystems, given these areas' specific needs, legal context, and financing options. If further analysis and stakeholder consultations confirm that this is the case, options include a dedicated stand-alone mechanism, or a subsidiary mechanism housed under the LCF. This output will involve the analyses, consultations and design efforts needed to inform the creation of an appropriate mechanism, taking into consideration legal, ecological, financial, institutional and social factors.

Component 3: Community Incentives to Conserve and Sustainably Manage Natural Capital in Coastal Ecosystems

118. The third component of this project seeks to establish a locally appropriate delivery mechanism that can channel funding as conservation incentives to communities. This component will result in the following expected outcome:

Outcome 3.1*:* Community-level conservation and sustainable use of coastal resources improved through performance-based payments using conservation agreements

Target 3.1.a*: 11,975 additional hectares of mangrove ecosystems under protection across Liberia*

Target 3.1.b*: 5,000 additional hectares of terrestrial forest ecosystems under sustainable management in coastal areas.*

Target 3.1.c*: Income within coastal and mangrove communities targeted by the project improved by 50%*

119. Conservation finance mechanisms, such as water funds, green taxes, bioprospecting, tourism-based revenues, and carbon finance represent types of payments for ecosystem services that can be used to finance a shift away from conventional and unsustainable resource use practices and create market signals that favor preservation, restoration and sustainable management. They can also provide benefits for local communities, who are often the stewards of important conservation areas. This outcome will involve the piloting in southeastern Liberia of a performance-based system that improves stewardship and management of natural resources by local communities, by providing incentives to change behaviors and protect the natural capital they depend on. Integrating NCA into government decision-making processes is an important step. An equally important step is to identify appropriate incentives that result in sustained management of ecosystems and biodiversity at a community level. Setting up a system that enables efficient and fair distribution of funds through incentives to resource users is essential for equitable sustainable development. Key outputs arising from this expected outcome include:

Output 3.1.1*:* Conservation agreements executed with 10 additional communities along the southeastern coast of Liberia

120. Building on initial site identification work (see Tables 1 and 2), the project will conduct a thorough feasibility assessment and stakeholder engagement process to confirm key sites on the southeast coast of Liberia for community-based conservation. This will include conservation of mangroves and other coastal ecosystems both within and outside Liberia's proposed protected area network, based on social, biological and economic values of these areas. The project will use the Conservation Agreement model to design and provide appropriate incentives for communities that result in sustained management of ecosystems and biodiversity. Although mangrove ecosystems are the core focus of this project, community engagement will promote a holistic resource management perspective, grounded in a participatory land use planning process. Therefore, conservation commitments to be negotiated in the agreements, in addition to specific commitments pertaining to mangroves, can include a range of other commitments pertaining to terrestrial forest ecosystems, wetlands, etc. In communities whose lands potentially overlap with proposed protected areas, Conservation Agreement design will anticipate requirements for community resource management within Multiple Use Reserves, as seen in Lake Piso.

121. The Conservation Agreement model offers direct incentives to communities to help achieve conservation and sustainable resource management, by providing a negotiated benefit package in return for verified conservation actions. Conservation agreements can make a wide variety of interventions (payments for ecosystem services, co-management of protected areas, environmental offsets, and others) tangible and attractive for communities. The model includes four phases: feasibility analysis; community engagement; agreement design and negotiation with resource users; and implementation. The feasibility analysis informs implementers whether an agreement may be suitable for a given site. If so, the implementer approaches the community to introduce the model and gauge interest in developing an agreement. If resource users explicitly express a desire to proceed, joint design of the conservation agreement begins.

122. The agreement specifies rights and responsibilities of the parties involved, conservation commitments of resource users, benefits provided by the implementer, and penalties for non-compliance. Community commitments in the agreement are based on the conservation objective; they can include direct behavior change, such as desisting from illegal hunting or fishing, and/or actions to reduce external pressure, such as patrolling to deter poachers. Benefit packages are designed to address the value of foregone resource use as well as the cost of conservation actions such as time spent patrolling. Benefits can include cash payments to individuals, often as wages for patrolling, training and livelihood strengthening, and/or investments that provide group benefits, such as small-scale irrigation infrastructure. An initial agreement typically is signed for 1 year, and then renegotiated and renewed if all parties are willing. After 3–5 years, implementers explore sustainable financing options for a long-term agreement. Options include trust funds, payments for ecosystem services (e.g. carbon sequestration), and private sector partnerships (e.g. conservation-friendly enterprises). Sustainability can also involve investment in improved local governance capacity to reduce reliance on technical support.

123. Conservation Agreements have been used in a wide variety of contexts in Liberia, demonstrating that the model complements a diversity of strategies and project types that entail some form of behavior change on the part of local resource users in pursuit of conservation objectives. Based on experience implementing Conservation Agreements in coastal areas in northwest Liberia, incentives could include alternative livelihood development projects (such as agricultural and livestock extension services), job creation, or direct payments. Incentives could include productive activities that address unsustainable land management, such as conservation agriculture, agroforestry and

organic agriculture. Conservation Agreement negotiations are grounded in participatory land use planning (PLUP) to ensure that local land users are given the opportunity to play a central role in decision-making processes concerned with the land and resources they use and depend upon.

124. The project will improve local livelihoods by increasing household food security and income. A monitoring system will be developed and implemented to measure the impact on project beneficiaries. A socio-economic baseline will be established in the first year of the agreements followed by annual monitoring. The purpose of socio-economic monitoring is to understand how conditions of resource users change during implementation, and to track the impacts of the agreement on their wellbeing. Some of the indicators that will be used include changes in household income sources and expenses, number of meals per day, and number of months per year when most food is purchased (rather than locally produced), among others. Socio-economic monitoring also examines perceptions of resource users about the agreements and the benefits realized, as these perceptions will influence the degree of compliance. The sampling framework will be designed to allow disaggregation of data by gender to capture gender dimensions of resource use and socio-economic trends, and the monitoring team will include male and female survey enumerators to facilitate data collection from men and women.

Output 3.1.2: A national conservation agreement program designed and established that offers economic incentives for coastal protection.

125. Building on the successes of conservation agreements to date, and the ongoing scale-up through the current GEF-5 mangrove project (ID 5712), the project will set up a national stewardship model. The goal is to establish a national program that can offer economic incentives to occupants of areas with critical natural assets such as forest and mangroves to guarantee protection over the medium to long-term. Nation-wide experience with conservation agreements will be assessed to inform design of the program, including site selection, execution capacities, governance, monitoring and financing. We will identify key government institutions to work with, assess and build core competencies, review legal frameworks and seek out large-scale funding for a national program that will be designed to respond to the realities of the Liberian context. Site prioritization and the funding strategy will both be informed by NCA results. We will draw on experiences in other countries including Ecuador's *Programa Socio Bosque* and China's *Forest Eco-Compensation Fund*.

126. The Liberia Conservation Action Fund (LCAF) will be re-established with the objective to eventually incorporate it into the Liberia Conservation Fund. The Government of Liberia and its partners currently are analyzing possible ways to restructure the LCF; therefore, directly building the LCAF component of this project into the LCF will require the EPA, FDA and CI to ensure that future incorporation is taken into consideration. This entails building the requisite institutional capacity in relevant Government bodies with respect to financing mechanisms, aligning the LCAF with ongoing work to expand the LCF into a national mechanism, and ensuring that LCAF programming reinforces efforts related to Conservation Agreements. These features distinguish the LCAF activities under the project from SGP-Liberia, and CI-Liberia's current role as Administrator for the LCF make it uniquely well positioned to deploy the LCAF in a way that meets these needs. Crucially, the LCAF will be deployed in such a way as to anticipate government ownership and leadership of the mechanism, and thereby seek to ensure long-term institutional sustainability

127. The national conservation agreement program will be linked to the abovementioned LCF as a financing mechanism, since the LCF can house earmarked funding to sustain specific conservation

agreements (as envisioned, for example, for agreements with communities around the East Nimba Nature Reserve). After the LCAF is incorporated into the LCF, it can also become a source of small grants to support initial development of agreements under the national program. However, full actualization of the national conservation agreement program will require additional financing beyond this project. This parallels Liberia's experience with establishing a national program of REDD+ activities, whereby the Government and its partners initially designed and created the program, and then subsequently was able to attract the funding needed to initiate on-the-ground activities.

128. The intent of the envisioned national stewardship program is to use Conservation Agreements as a framework for negotiated arrangements between a centralized national program and individual communities, in which incentives are provided to a community in return for measurable and verified conservation commitments. The full establishment and deployment of this national program is beyond the scope of the project, but Conservation Agreements with coastal communities to protect mangroves and other coastal ecosystems will serve as valuable demonstrations that show the workings of the model to government, civil society and communities, reinforcing the work of the current GEF-CI project in northwest Liberia. Thus, the project will inform and advance design of the national program, with an important role for NCA in geographical prioritization and calibration of incentive formulae.

129. The ultimate scope of a national stewardship program is anticipated to include communities living in and around protected areas throughout Liberia, as well as those in other conservation priority areas outside the protected area system. The LCF has been designed with a mandate to support such Conservation Agreements, but to date has only been capitalized to a level sufficient to cover a portion of core costs of managing the East Nimba Nature Reserve, with an endowment of US$1 million contributed by the Global Conservation Fund, and a pending commitment of a further US$1 million from the Government of Liberia; disbursements have yet to commence. The project will contribute to ongoing development of a path to expand the LCF into a truly national financing mechanism by analyzing the financial implications (costs and financing strategy) of linking the fund to the national stewardship program.

B. Associated Baseline Projects

130. ***Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP) 2016-2020, USD 37.5 million:*** The LFSP is implemented by the FDA with funding from the Kingdom of Norway channeled through the World Bank. With the overarching goal of reducing deforestation to achieve carbon emissions reductions (REDD+), this project seeks to: expand the protected area network; improve government capacity to manage the nation's forest estate; promote sustainable community forestry; and develop sustainable financing for protected areas and community conservation. The LFSP is focused on terrestrial conservation and resource management, though geographically overlaps with some coastal ecosystems. By advancing NCA in Liberia, the proposed project will support LFSP by enhancing the decision-making framework for spatial planning and policy development. The proposed project also will build on the LFSP to enhance multi-agency coordination, planning and management (particularly between the FDA, EPA, and BNF), prepare for eventual incorporation of the forestry sector in the system of national environmental accounts (after the initial focus on mangroves), and pursue synergies in national financing mechanisms for conservation (by aligning Blue Carbon opportunities with the national REDD+ framework, and coordinating work on building a national conservation trust fund).

Absent this proposed project, an imbalance between investment in coastal versus terrestrial conservation and resource management will persist.

131. ***West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change (WA-BiCC) 2015-2020, USD 48.9 million***: The USAID-funded regional WA-BiCC program seeks to address direct and indirect drivers of natural resource degradation to improve livelihoods and natural ecosystems across the region. WA-BiCC focuses on efforts to strengthen policies and systems that will improve natural resource management and the health and resilience of coastal and upland forest ecosystems. The proposed project will help Liberia extend WA-BiCC impacts by building NCA capacity that can enhance planning for low-carbon development; pursuing sustainable financing strategies that can sustain capacity investments beyond the life of the program; and providing concrete demonstrations of models for behavior change in pursuit of coastal ecosystem sustainability at the community level.

132. ***Improved Sustainability of Mangrove Forests and Coastal Mangrove Areas in Liberia through Protection, Planning and Livelihood Creation 2016-2019, USD 4.7 million*** *(GEF ID 5712):* A GEF investment of USD 1 million is supporting efforts by CI and partners to improve management of mangrove ecosystems around Lake Piso and Buchanan using a combination of planning, governance strengthening, and community livelihoods and incentives. The proposed project will further inform planning by incorporating systematic valuation of mangrove ecosystems, and allow the partners to leverage experience and learning through application to other parts of the country where coastal conservation and resource management remains severely under-funded. The proposed project's emphasis on sustainable financing mechanisms will help consolidate achievements of this GEF investment.

133. ***Sustainable Mangrove Conservation in Liberia: Improving enabling conditions for creation of the Marshall Wetlands Protected Area 2019, USD 390,000:*** This one-year project supported by the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation will follow up on multi-stakeholder input on the draft gazettement package for the proposed Marshall Wetlands Protected Area in Margibi and Grand Bassa Counties. The project will entail comprehensive consultations in all 34 affected communities; creation of governance structures; an eco-tourism strategy; a communications strategy to promote mangrove protection; and conservation agreements with all affected communities to structure co-management arrangements. The project will enable CI Liberia to help the Government of Liberia submit the gazettement package for legislative approval and officially create the Marshall Wetlands Protected Area

134. ***The Liberia Conservation Trust (LCF):*** An important component of the proposed project will advance sustainable financing mechanisms to support conservation in Liberia. The FDA and CI worked together to create the LCF, launched in May 2018, with initial capitalization contribution of USD 1 million from CI's Global Conservation Fund and a commitment of USD 1 million from the Government of Liberia through the FDA. The above-mentioned LFSP may include a further contribution to this mechanism. However, just to meet protected area financing needs in Liberia the total endowment required is many multiples larger than the total amount committed to date. The proposed project will examine the possibility of reinforcing the LCF as a national financing mechanism for protected areas as well as community-based conservation and resource management.

135. ***Conservation Agreements in Liberia:*** In Liberia, CI has worked with government and the private sector (ArcelorMittal, Chevron) to develop CAs that protect high-biodiversity value ecosystems (the

East Nimba Nature Reserve, mangroves in the Lake Piso and Buchanan areas) while developing and promoting alternative livelihoods with local communities. CI's annual investment in CA initiatives in Liberia has ranged from USD 200,000 to USD 400,000 per year. The proposed project will build on 12 years of CA work in Liberia with applications that include strengthening community participation in protected area management and enhancing community-based natural resource management. However, investments to date have concentrated on the northwest of the country and Nimba county; the proposed GEF investment in this project will extend community conservation and development efforts to coastal ecosystems in the southeast.

136. ***Government of Liberia investments in mangroves and coastal areas:***

    i. *EPA* support for education and awareness activities related to conservation of coastal areas and biodiversity (USD 75,000 per year); enforcement of wetland and mangrove regulations; development of national wetland policy.

    ii. *FDA* establishment and management of protected areas.

    iii. *LMA* efforts on coastal clean-up, community awareness, and community development (including Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) projects).

137. In addition to the currently ongoing associated baseline projects, the proposed project will build on several recently concluded activities:

    i. *UNDP/GEF Enhancing resilience of vulnerable coastal areas to climate change risks in Liberia 2010- 2014, USD 3.3 million*

    ii. *UNDP/GEF Strengthening Liberia's capability to provide climate information and services to enhance climate resilient development and adaptation to climate change 2013-2017, USD 6.7 million*

    iii. *UNEP/European Commission The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) study in Liberia 2014-2016, USD 120,000*

    iv. *EPA and CI Mapping Essential Natural Capital (MENC) and laying the foundation for natural capital accounting (NCA) 2016, USD 300,000 (Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation)*

C. Incremental Cost Reasoning

138. The currently ongoing associated baseline projects described above are taking place without systematic, comprehensive, integrated assessment or incorporation of the value of critical natural capital. Moreover, the preponderance of conservation efforts is focused on terrestrial ecosystems (e.g. the LFSP). The proposed GEF investment in NCA applied to coastal ecosystems will address both these deficiencies, thereby constituting clear coverage of an incremental cost above and beyond current efforts.

139. Although some earlier initiatives achieved a start on developing information frameworks and compiling data (the UNDP/GEF project *Strengthening Liberia's capability to provide climate information and services to enhance climate resilient development and adaptation to climate*

change; the MECN initiative; the TEEB study), absent a follow-up investment dedicated to NCA the outputs of these initiatives will languish without impact. Without the proposed project, these activities would likely remain as standalone efforts and fail to advance natural capital accounting in Liberia.

140. With respect to site-based interventions, conservation and sustainable resource management investments in Liberia principally are directed toward Nimba County, Sapo National Park, and northwest Liberia (e.g. Lake Piso, Gola, and Wonegizi). The southeastern part of the country has received little attention. Targeting this new geography constitutes another way in which GEF funding would exhibit a clear incremental contribution to achieving national-level goals.

141. The proposed project will also build on existing efforts to advance innovative financing schemes. CI and the Government of Liberia are working to grow the LCF to provide long-term sustainable financing for protected area management as well as community conservation and development. The proposed project can help generate momentum for securing new contributions to this fund, as a mechanism for channeling payments for ecosystem services (e.g. proposed Blue Carbon transactions), housing a small grant mechanism, and supporting Conservation Agreements.

D. Global Environmental Benefits

142. This project will deliver Global Environmental Benefits relating to biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, and land degradation. As Liberia hosts the bulk of remaining forests in the Upper Guinea Forest Biodiversity Hotspot, improved land and resource management that recognizes the value of natural capital offers enormous benefits. Direct benefits generated from the project intervention are as follows:

Biodiversity conservation

143. This project will contribute to maintaining globally significant biodiversity and the ecosystem goods and services it provides through improved management of at least 10,000 hectares of coastal ecosystems. Liberia's coastal ecosystems encompass several internationally recognized Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), including significant mangrove sites, and provide habitat and feeding grounds for several endangered species. Specific fauna species that will benefit from the project include, but are not limited to: Rufous fishing owl (*Scotopelia ussheri*, VU); West African manatee (*Trichechus senegalensis,* VU*)*; African dwarf crocodile (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*, VU) and African sharp-nosed crocodile (*Mecistops cataphractus, DD*); Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*, EN), Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*, EN), Green (*Chelonia mydas*, EN), and Olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea,* EN) sea turtles.

Climate change mitigation

144. Liberia's coastal ecosystems offer significant opportunities for climate change adaptation and mitigation. This project will help reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions and enhance carbon stocks by conserving coastal wetlands, sea grass meadows and mangroves that store and sequester carbon within their biomass and soils. Avoided emissions potential will be analyzed under project activities relating to Blue Carbon, but estimates suggest that mangroves may sequester on the order of 1,000 tons of carbon equivalent per hectare, well above estimates for tropical forests. Improved coastal ecosystem management under this project will also enhance climate resilience by providing

protection against extreme weather events such as storm winds and floods, and reducing the impact of coastal erosion.

Land degradation

145. This project will help sustain flows of ecosystem services that underpin productivity of fisheries and agricultural systems in coastal areas. Through investments in planning, management and enforcement capacity, and incentives, this project aims to halt the ongoing destruction of globally significant coastal ecosystems, including mangroves and other types of coastal forests. In doing so, the project will support improved and continued availability of ecosystems services, such as carbon sequestration, nutrient filtration, coastal and soil stabilization, and flood protection. The project will halt ecosystem degradation through direct investment in improved management in an additional 5,000 hectares of coastal forest. Through site-based demonstration, capacity-building in relevant government institutions, and policy justification based on NCA, the ultimate impacts may benefit management all along Liberia's 565 km coastline.

Local socio-economic benefits

146. The project will use Conservation Agreements (CAs) with at least 10 communities in southeast Liberia to generate tangible human wellbeing benefits for approximately 6,000 people (about half of whom will be female), as per Table 2. Alternative livelihood training and support for socio-economic improvements will incentivize behavioral change and lessen dependence on unsustainable natural resource use. Specific benefits to be provided to communities under CAs will be determined during participatory agreement design and negotiation; we anticipate a focus on food security, improved access to education and health services, and direct income through conservation jobs.

E. Risk Assessment and Mitigation

Table 3: Risk Assessment and Mitigation Planning

Project Outcome	Risks	Rating (H, S, M, L)	Risk Mitigation Measures
1. Decision-making improved in coastal ecosystem governance by mainstreaming natural capital accounting (NCA) into Government of Liberia (GOL) development strategy, policy and planning	**Insufficient political will to adopt and mainstream NCA** The Government of Liberia is committed to NCA as a signatory of the Gaborone Declaration. The project builds on previous work that closely involved Government. This project is designed in partnership with EPA and consultation with all other government agencies. However, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) is a key stakeholder whose support and buy-in will need to be secured.	M	• Work on developing NCA will be done in close collaboration with government counterparts to promote buy-in. • Project delivery will emphasize capacity-building within relevant government agencies. • Continued consultations will solicit input and cultivate support on an ongoing basis. • Evolution of the NCA framework will be guided by Government priorities. • Demonstrate to MFDP that NCA will better capture Liberia's economic status and trends, and help attract investor and donor support for sustainable development.

	Political instability undermines work with government Elections in late-2017 led to a smooth transfer of power. Key technical staff within relevant government agencies remains in place.	L	Investment in building and embedding technical expertise in government has proven effective ever since 2004, regardless of changes in administration. This project will devote explicit attention to applying this lesson, which also serves as means to mitigate the impact of the first risk listed.
2. Funding sources for sustainable management and restoration of coastal ecosystems increased	**Investor/donor confidence insufficient for adequate contributions to sustainable financing mechanisms** To date, 95% or more of funding for coastal conservation in Liberia has come from GEF. Other sources have concentrated on terrestrial conservation, so are not dissuaded from investing in Liberia per se. Co-benefits from coastal conservation (charismatic species, human wellbeing, potential returns for impact investors) suggest significant potential once interventions are investment-ready.	L	• Careful site/intervention selection under the project to maximize demonstration impact. • Build on previous successes with small grants to scale up. • Align project with wider national sustainable conservation finance efforts.
	Enterprise development fails or is not adopted by local Communities Enterprise development is challenging under the best of circumstances, and outside the core competencies of conservation organizations as well as government.	M	• Leverage proven viability of existing conservation-friendly enterprises. • Focus community-based development on activities with which they already are familiar (e.g. agriculture, fisheries).
3. Community-level conservation and sustainable use of coastal resources improved through performance-based payments using conservation agreements	**Community members are not interested in behavior change through commitments in CAs** Experience throughout Liberia has shown that, with proper engagement processes, technical support, and incentives, communities are highly responsive to opportunities to improve resource management and their lives.	L	• Apply Rights Based Approach to ensure appropriate communication, engagement, and participation processes, including Free, Prior and Informed Consent. • Cultivate local champions (through Community Based Organizations, traditional leadership, and local NGOs) to act as intermediaries • Conduct site-level feasibility assessments to identify local appetite for participation in the project. • Tailor CA benefit packages to address local needs and priorities.
	Other stakeholders such as local government are reluctant to share planning and management responsibilities with communities	M	• Consult and engage local government as key stakeholders in planning and executing CA initiatives.

	Resistance can result from perceptions that technical and financial support is available for communities and national government agencies, but not for local government. Moreover, changing the distribution of roles can be seen as a threat to local power structures.		• Ensure that capacity-building efforts include local government. • Emphasize the role of local government in monitoring and enforcement of relevant laws and regulations. • Build awareness within local government of the advantages of working toward a green economy.
	Institutional competition with respect to housing a national conservation agreement program and its associated funding streams The importance of community-based mechanisms is widely recognized among agencies, as is the need for interagency coordination in community-level operations. However, influence over funding streams has considerable implications which may complicate such coordination.	M	• Conduct national program design in collaboration with full range of stakeholder agencies. • Jointly work toward clear definition of roles and responsibilities for all concerned stakeholders. • Build on existing structures and forums for interagency coordination and collaboration (REDD+ working group; LCF; etc.).
All Outcomes	**Impacts of climate change undermine project outcomes** Climate change is manifesting through sea level rise and extreme weather events around the world. Coastal Liberia is particularly vulnerable to this trend. The pace at which the project can enhance mitigation, adaptation, and resilience may be overwhelmed.	S	• Select sites that offer maximum likelihood of weathering climate change impacts given project support. • Prioritize early action on maintaining green infrastructure that buffers climate change impacts. • Ensure that land- and resource use planning take into consideration climate change impacts.
	Implementation capacity is inadequate The project requires a range of skills and capacities on the part of government and other implementing partners, such as: - Technical expertise on NCA - Data collection - Sustainable finance design - Community engagement - Site-level benefit delivery A dearth of existing capacity plus project budget constraints result in a medium level of risk with respect to project delivery.	M	• Build in extensive training opportunities • Design implementation processes such that they contribute to capacity-building • Rely on local partners to ensure cost-effectiveness • Align with complementary programs to design mutually reinforcing investments (e.g. LFSP, WA-BiCC)

F. Socio-Economic Benefits

147. Improved management of mangroves and other coastal ecosystems in Liberia will generate a range of socio-economic benefits including contributions to enhanced food security, livelihoods, health, and storm/flood protection. With respect to climate security, this project will help reduce GHG emissions and enhance carbon stocks through the conservation of coastal wetlands, sea grass meadows and mangroves that store and sequester carbon within their biomass and soils. Protection of these ecosystems will provide climate mitigation benefits and enhance carbon stocks through natural regeneration. The protection of coastal ecosystems under this project will also reduce vulnerability to extreme weather events, such as storm winds and floods, and reduce the impact of coastal erosion that currently threatens Liberia's coastline.

148. At the national level, a 2013 report estimated that 49% of Liberians faced some level of food insecurity, and 34% had inadequate food consumption patterns characterized by high intake of cereals and low intake of protein-rich foods (World Food Program 2013). Fish and shellfish provide approximately 15% of total animal protein supply, leaving Liberia vulnerable to a decline in fisheries due to low adaptive capacity (FAO 2011). Given the role of mangroves as nurseries for many traditionally and economically important fish species, continued loss of mangrove habitat would have a severe impact on food security. One consequence would be greater reliance on bushmeat to meet protein demand, with severe implications for biodiversity throughout the country.

149. To generate direct socio-economic benefits on the ground, the project will use the Conservation Agreement (CA) methodology with at least 10 communities in the Southeast of Liberia. These agreements will improve the livelihoods of an estimated 6,000 people (half of whom are female). In return for community conservation commitments, the project will offer incentives such as alternative livelihood training, support for woodlot establishment, and other benefits determined through participatory processes, and thereby catalyze behavioral change and reduce dependence on unsustainable resource use. Details of community commitments and benefits provided under the CAs will be determined in negotiation and design phases, but we anticipate that investments in local livelihoods and socioeconomic development will contribute to household incomes and enhance food security, improve access to education and health services, and provide direct income through conservation jobs (e.g. monitoring, surveillance, planting, etc.). Livelihood prospects will be further strengthened through partnerships with conservation-friendly private sector enterprises.

150. Protecting coastal ecosystems will help safeguard traditional activities such as fishing (typically a male activity) and gathering of crustaceans (usually done by women). Some socio-economic benefits will differ by gender, but in general by intervening in ecosystem degradation trends the project will preserve the ability to continue activities essential for household food security as well as income generation. This will be achieved through habitat restoration and maintenance, implementation of sustainable resource management measures, and ecosystem protection through improved waste management. Improved waste management as well as introduction of more efficient cook stoves will also generate direct health benefits for project participants.

151. The project will contribute to rural development and natural resource governance through participatory land- and resource-use planning. By engaging the 10 communities and other relevant stakeholders in planning processes, the project will ensure that they have a voice in the design of sustainable resource extraction frameworks and benefit-sharing arrangements. Doing so will generate dual benefits of enhanced capacity and ownership at the local level. Through this process,

communities will be empowered to negotiate future land and resource uses and help reduce power asymmetries between local people and other stakeholders.

G. Sustainability

152. *Financial sustainability.* One of the project outcomes is to catalyze a steady flow of financial resources for the conservation and sustainable use of coastal natural capital. The project will develop and pilot multiple mechanisms through which funding is leveraged from beneficiaries of ecosystem services such as the private sector, through blue carbon, green enterprise, and a small grant mechanism. The project will increase and diversify resource flows for the sustainable management and restoration of coastal ecosystems and in so doing ensure that interventions introduced during the project can be maintained in the long term.

153. The Liberia Conservation Fund (LCF) was launched in May, 2018. The LCF was developed by the Government of Liberia, CI, the Global Conservation Fund and the private sector as a national protected areas fund, and its mandate explicitly includes support for community-based conservation in and around protected areas. The LCF serves as a mechanism for channeling funds from a range of conservation finance sources, including biodiversity offsets from Liberia's growing mining and energy sector, payments for ecosystem services such as REDD+ transactions (as well as blue carbon), and earmarked government revenues such as conservation fees levied on the timber sector. The LCF includes provisions for endowed, revolving, and sinking fund components, and will accommodate sub-accounts tied to individual protected areas. Its structure also can accommodate small grant mechanisms. The ultimate goal of the Government of Liberia and her partners is to ensure long-term financing for all Liberia's protected areas and community-based conservation throughout the country.

154. *Benefits*. In addition to consolidating behavior change through incentives sustained through financing mechanisms and green enterprise, global biodiversity benefits will be sustained through increased awareness and education of local communities such that mangrove protection becomes standard practice. During the PPG phase we observed the successful long term effects of other such educational programs surrounding mangrove deforestation and sea turtle harvesting in the Lake Piso area. Under this project these proven methods will be implemented with communities in southeast Liberia. Information and lessons generated through this project will also advance permanent legal protection of coastal ecosystems, including mangroves, which will enhance prospects for long-term sustainability.

155. *Institutional sustainability*. The Government of Liberia has prioritized issues of coastal erosion nation-wide and specifically mangrove destruction in and around Monrovia. This relates to government initiatives such as: the protected areas network overseen by the Forestry Development Authority, sustainable fisheries projects under the BNF within the Ministry of Agriculture, and rural development plans with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Through this project, CI and the EPA will advise in the development of management plans and marine protected area networks to include mangroves and other coastal ecosystems, and firmly embed coastal conservation in ongoing policy and planning processes.

156. The foundation for natural capital accounting developed during this project, as well as associated assessments and data collection initiatives, will provide key decision makers and technicians the platform to maintain accounts beyond the life of this project, with the ability to develop additional

accounts for different types of natural resources. The project will also build institutional capacities within key government ministries and agencies to improve environmental management that will benefit Liberia beyond the life of the project. The approach in this project seeks to build and enhance governance structures that will endure beyond the project timeline. With the relevant government ministries involved at every stage of this project, the project will ensure buy-in from these entities. By incorporating capacity building, long-term financing, and mainstreaming into decision-making, the project will make it possible to ground green economic development decisions in quantified information about Liberia's ecosystems and biodiversity, thereby allowing the government to better manage and protect these vital ecosystems.

157. *Long-term stakeholder support*. At the community level, the project will leverage CI's well-established system of community involvement using the Conservation Agreement methodology. By incorporating alternative livelihood trainings, establishing woodlots, etc., the project will empower communities to shift away from unsustainable resource use and protect vital coastal ecosystems. At the national level, concessionaires are all developing environmental mitigation plans which will involve these key coastal areas in their environmental impact assessments. They have a vested interest in the health and well-being of communities and the natural environment and therefore will be engaged as potential partners and sources of long-term co-financing. Local NGOs and community-based organizations will be engaged and strengthened through the small grant mechanism and as partners in implementation of project activities, thereby solidifying civil society capacity to maintain the coastal conservation agenda beyond the project.

158. *Environmental threats to sustainability*. The main threats to coastal ecosystems include unsustainable resource use driven by population growth and development pressure, and climate change, largely due to sea level rise and increased coastal erosion. This project directly addresses these threats by measuring the value of coastal ecosystems, introducing this value into national decision-making, and working with communities to adjust resource use in ways that preserve this value. Coastal ecosystem conservation, in addition to protecting biodiversity and sources of key resources, will also enhance resilience to climate change through maintenance of green infrastructure.

H. Innovativeness

159. The project will introduce new and innovative tools for natural capital accounting to Liberia. This will involve new ways of collecting, managing, analyzing and utilizing economic and environmental data in Liberia. To do so we will draw on CI's global experiences as well as CI Liberia's extensive in-country experience. CI and its partners have produced a set of best practices in ecosystem accounting which will be introduced through this project. For example, in Peru, we recognized that there was a need not just for capacity building and account development, but to ground natural capital accounting efforts in prior identification of policy targets and anticipate eventual applications to decision making and policy.

160. New and innovative tools in participatory land-use planning and conservation agreements will be introduced to the southeast coastal region of Liberia through the proposed project. This will draw upon CI's experiences globally, but will be adapted to the specific context in southeast Liberia. For example, 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 has worked with local partners to adapt the Conservation Agreement approach in more than 60 communities around the world

(including multiple sites in Liberia). These tools will be used throughout the project to promote integrated management, stewardship, and improved livelihoods within the priority coastal areas of Liberia. The Conservation Agreement methodology also provides an innovative framework to address any restriction of access to natural resources in the project field sites.

161. Finally, we will put in place the enabling conditions for marketing Blue Carbon credits generated through coastal conservation in Liberia. This is an innovative approach to financing ecosystem protection while contributing to global efforts to mitigate climate change. Our project will allow Liberia to join the forefront of global work to refine this component of market-based approaches to reducing global carbon emissions.

I. Replicability and Potential for Scaling Up

162. The NCA, conservation finance, and Conservation Agreement components of this project synergistically combine to offer great potential for replicability and scaling up. The project will develop the foundation for NCA in Liberia via an extensive readiness and strategic development process. Baseline data collected during the life of the project will identify the highest priority accounts to develop (first as assessments then later as accounts), but secondary priority accounts or topics of interest (e.g., priority ecosystem services) will also be identified, to be addressed in the future once the initial natural capital accounting efforts have been developed. Replication of the initial NCA processes will expand the set of resources and ecosystems captured in Liberia's national systems of accounts over time, which will support improved planning and decision-making for an ever greater portion of the country's natural capital.

163. Another avenue of scale up will be to build on the field impact, financing mechanisms, and policy justification developed through values captured in NCA to reinforce the process of creating two new protected areas in southeast Liberia. The protected areas themselves, and replication of Conservation Agreements with stakeholder communities in and around these protected areas, will consolidate conservation gains at scale in this portion of the country. Project advances in the Blue Carbon space will help mobilize financial resources for these protected areas and conservation efforts elsewhere along the Liberian coast in the future.

164. Finally, building on the successes of Conservation Agreements to date and the additional Conservation Agreements to be implemented in southeast Liberia under this project, we will formulate a national stewardship model and deployment strategy. The goal is to establish a national program that offers economic incentives to owners of land with critical natural assets such as forest to guarantee protection over the medium to long-term. Linked to the LCF and associated financing mechanisms developed through the project, this national program will help channel financial resources that empower rural communities to manage natural resources while improving human well-being. The program will act as a catalyst for replicating the Conservation Agreement model throughout the country to achieve community-based conservation and natural resource management at scale. The project's effective demonstrations of NCA, innovative conservation finance and Conservation Agreements in Liberia will also serve as models for replication elsewhere in West Africa and beyond.

J. Consistency with National Priorities, Plans, Policies and Legal Frameworks

165. The following table describes project consistency with Liberia's priorities, plans, policies and legal frameworks:

Table 4: Consistency with National Priorities, Plans, and Policies

National Priorities	Project Consistency
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	The Government of Liberia ratified the CBD on November 8, 2000. This project is of particular relevance to articles 1, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, and 19 of this convention.
Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD), 2018 – 2023	The PAPD includes efforts to enhance inter-sectoral coordination on the environment, implementation of the new NBSAP, and advancing TEEB analyses, each of which will be directly facilitated by this project's work on natural capital accounting. The PAPD also signals the intention to advance on a national conservation financing mechanism, which is a core activity of the project. The Development Outcome under Pillar Four (Governance and Transparency) of the PAPD is "Reduction in degradation of farming land, coastal wetlands, and deforestation while increasing returns on natural capital"; the project clearly offers a direct contribution to this national priority.
Liberia's Protected Areas Network Strategy, 2006	The proposed protected area (PPA) network of Liberia includes two areas in the Southeast, the Cestos Senkwehn and Grand Kru –River Gee PPAs. This project will conduct a thorough stakeholder engagement process to identify key sites on Liberia's southeast coast for community-based conservation, taking into consideration plans for future protected area gazettement. Sites selected for community-based conservation will likely include conservation of mangroves and other coastal ecosystems within and neighboring the abovementioned PPAs.
National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), 2017 - 2025	Liberia's NBSAP includes national targets and indicators with consideration being given to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Targets. The mission of the new NBSAP is to promote biodiversity mainstreaming in sectoral, cross-sectoral planning, and national accounting systems, through development policies, plans and programmes. This project will address threats identified within the NBSAP and will align with specific national goals and targets as indicated below:
Relevant NBSAP Goals and Targets: **GOAL ONE**: Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society **Target:** 1.2 By 2020, biodiversity values and prioritized ecosystem services are quantified, monitored and mainstreamed to support national and sectoral policy-making, planning, budgeting and decision-making frameworks **Target 1.3:** By 2020, selected incentives for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use are in place and applied, and the most harmful subsidies are identified and their phase out initiated. **Target 1.4: :** By 2020, mobilization of financial resources from all sources will be increased compared to the period 2008-2012 to allow for the effective implementation of this strategy and action plan. **GOAL TWO: Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use**. **Target 2.1:** By 2024, the rate of loss and degradation of natural habitats outside protected areas serving ecological corridors or containing key biodiversity areas or providing important ecosystem services is minimized by 3% through integrated land use planning.	

Target 2.2: By 2023, at least 20-25% of living marine and aquatic resources are managed sustainably and guided by the ecosystem approach.

GOAL THREE: Improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity
Target 3.1: By 2020, at least 4% of existing terrestrial protected areas (national parks, nature reserves, conservation areas set aside in community forests, etc.) are conserved, effectively and equitably managed, within an ecologically representative and well-connected system, and by 2022, at least 5% of coastal and marine areas of particular importance to biodiversity and ecosystem services, are identified, assessed and measures taken for their protection.

GOAL FOUR: Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services
Target 4.1 By 2022, ecosystems that provide essential services and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are safeguarded, and restoration programmes have been initiated for degraded ecosystems covering at least 15 per cent of the priority areas.

GOAL FIVE: Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building
Target 5.3: By 2025, knowledge, science base and technologies relating to biodiversity and ecosystem management are improved and made relevant to political decision makers.
Target 5.4: By 2022, mobilization of financial resources from all sources will be increased compared to the period 2008-2012 to allow for the effective implementation of this strategy and action plan.

Liberian National Action Programme (NAP) to Combat Desertification (2011-2018)	Liberia's National Action Programme outlines strategic objectives for Liberia to achieve Sustainable Land Management within eight (8) years, starting in 2011. This project is most directly aligned with Strategic Objective 1 which aims to improve the standard of living of people in areas affected by the land degradation and its associated negative impacts. The project is also aligned with Strategic Objective 2 which seeks to improve the condition of affected biodiversity within its habitats and affected ecosystems within the political boundaries of Liberia and its political sphere including Liberia's continental shelf.
National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA), 2008	This project addresses key issues highlighted within Liberia's draft NAPA. In particular 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 and other ecosystems.
National Land Reform Programs and Strategies	Ongoing programs being completed or supported by the Land Commission, USAID and other partners address land reform issues. It is important to ensure that these programs are in compliance with laws regarding coastal protection.
Abidjan Convention, 1984	Coastal profile and action plans completed in furtherance of commitments under the Abidjan Convention highlight the importance of coastal ecosystem conservation in Liberia.
National laws, policies, and regulations	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 subsequent environmental and forestry management policies.
National Climate Change Policy and Strategy	The EPA currently is leading the development of a national Climate Change Policy for Liberia. Drafts of the policy suggest that this project will

	specifically address a number of important policy issues that will be determined in greater detail over the course of this project. A key focus is modalities for community participation in and benefits from national climate action, including carbon markets. The National Climate Change Policy and Strategy (NCCPS) classifies coastal areas as a sector with a high impact. As a matter of intervention, the document proposes the following: a) "to engage with communities along the coast to participate in actions aimed at protecting the coast and ensuring its continuous viability; b) investigate the suitability and where possible implement the living shorelines approach (LSA), which uses natural vegetation, sand and some rocks to protect shorelines and habitat; and c) design and implement a strategic communication action plan to inform and educate people about changes and challenges associated with coastal areas related to climate change and how they can adapt to cope with these changes and challenges". It also "supports the protection and restoration of mangroves recognizing their role as an important habitat for aquatic species, which contributes to biodiversity and increased food product availability for household consumption and resources for local markets, as well as providing water filtration services". The policy also requires the Government of Liberia to "establish improved information and communication networks for decision making and planning as well as between fishing communities to support information sharing about potential shocks in the system"; whilst the former states "support the diversification of the livelihood portfolio of communities that are fishery dependent"
Gaborone Declaration on Sustainable Development in Africa	Liberia is a signatory of the GDSA which includes commitments to sustainable development and specifically the adoption of natural capital accounting. This project will support the Government of Liberia to deliver on this commitment.
Community Rights Law **Land Rights Act**	This project, through Conservation Agreements, will demonstrate practical ways to resolve issues surrounding community exercise of land rights. FPIC, RBA, etc. and will align closely with Liberia's Land Rights Policy which empowers communities.
Environmental Policy of Liberia	With respect to conservation and management of wetlands*,* the policy states that "there should be public ownership of wetlands, and wetlands communities must be involved in the design and implementation of projects around the wetlands." It reemphasized this commitment under *Marine and Coastal management,* by requiring the EPA to **"**institute regulations for sustainable use of and the protection, control and development of coastal areas, mangrove swamps and river banks; and "ensure massive public awareness about marine and coastal management"[3]. All these provisional requirements suggest that, while coastal ecosystems are public goods, they are held in trust by the EPA to the benefit of everyone. Private property and communal property rights, as expressed in the forestry sectors and relating to carbon rights, are restricted. Similar position is espoused in the EPML.

[3] Section 5.8 (2), Environmental Policy

	The Section on *Mining and Mineral Resources*, requires that "Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) should be mandatory for all mining activities, including beach sand mining", and that the EPA should "ensure local community involvement in decision about mining activities."[4] The policy recognizes the local communities as stakeholders and therefore gives them right to be included in the decision-making processes about these resources. However, like the succeeding statute – the EPML – it does not clearly grant authorization to these communities to, at will, access and use these ecosystems.

[4] Section 5.9 (8&9), Environmental Policy

K. Consistency with GEF Focal Area and/or Fund(s) Strategies and the Aichi Targets

166. This project is aligned with the GEF 6 Biodiversity (Program 10) and Land Degradation (Program 1) Focal Areas, as well as Aichi Targets 1, 2, 3 and 4, as described below.

Table 5: Mapping of Project Components to GEF Focal Area and Aichi Targets

Project Components	GEF 6 Focal Area Programs	Aichi Targets and Indicators
Component 1: This project will integrate the value of biodiversity and ecosystem services into development planning and financing in Liberia by incorporating Natural Capital Accounting in government systems. Doing so will involve training and awareness-raising among key stakeholders on the value of coastal natural capital.	**BD - Program 10:** Integration of the Valuation of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services into Development & Finance Planning	**Target 1:** By 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably. **Target 2**: By 2020, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems.
Component 2: This project will operationalize innovative finance mechanisms to provide a steady flow of public and private financial resources for the conservation and sustainable use of coastal natural capital in Liberia in perpetuity. Conservation finance will facilitate concrete incorporation of biodiversity and ecosystem service values in development planning, and will provide incentives for conservation and sustainable resource management at the community level.	**BD - Program 10:** Integration of the Valuation of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services into Development & Finance Planning	**Target 3**: By 2020, at the latest, incentives, including subsidies, harmful to biodiversity are eliminated, phased out or reformed in order to minimize or avoid negative impacts, and positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are developed and applied, consistent and in harmony with the Convention and other relevant international obligations, taking into account national socio-economic conditions.
Component 3: Through land use planning to inform local natural resource management, the project will sustain ecosystem services that underpin productivity of fisheries and agricultural systems in coastal areas. The project will use Conservation Agreements to incentivize intensification of food production through agroecological methods by smallholder farmers.	**LD - Program 1:** Maintain or improve flow of agroecosystem services to sustain food production and livelihoods	**Target 4**: By 2020, at the latest, Governments, business and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve or have implemented plans for sustainable production and consumption and have kept the impacts of use of natural resources well within safe ecological limits.

L. Linkages with other GEF Projects and Relevant Initiatives

Table 6: Project Links to Other Initiatives

Project/Initiative	Description and Linkages
UNDP/GEF project: Strengthening National Capacities to Meet Global Environmental Obligations within the Framework of Sustainable Development Priorities Approved 2017, USD 1.5 million	This project intends to strengthen a targeted set of national capacities to deliver and sustain global environmental outcomes within the framework of sustainable development priorities. The proposed project will build on these investments, particularly Component 1 which seeks to establish an integrated environmental knowledge management system that catalyzes the application of best practices and innovations for the global environment. The proposed project will complement efforts to develop new and improved global environmental indicators for select high priority sector(s) in Liberia.
UNDP/GEF project: Strengthening Liberia's capability to provide climate information and services to enhance climate resilient development and adaptation to climate change—October 2013-2017, USD 6.7 million	This project aims to strengthen Liberia's capability to provide climate and hydrological information and services that enable climate resilient sustainable development. The proposed project will collaborate with the UNDP/GEF project to maximize synergies and avoid duplication with respect to data collection, as data required for the two projects are mutually reinforcing, relevant to climate resilient development, climate change adaptation, natural capital accounting and local land use planning.
CI-GEF: Improve sustainability of mangrove forests and coastal mangrove areas in Liberia through protection, planning and livelihood creation – building blocks towards Liberia's marine and coastal protected areas—June 2016- May 2019, USD 1 million	CI and EPA are currently implementing a GEF-funded project 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. The project focuses on mangrove areas along the northern coast of the country. This GEF 6 project will expand coastal community-based conservation to at least 10 additional communities and lay the foundation for additional protected area establishment in southeast Liberia, thereby completing coverage of Liberia's priority coastal areas for conservation.
UNDP/GEF project: Enhancing Resilience of vulnerable coastal areas to climate change risks in Liberia—June 2010-June 2014-ongoing, USD 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. The proposed project will complement these investments, working specifically with coastal and mangrove communities on local land-use plans and livelihood solutions. This project seeks to value natural ecosystem based solutions, and therefore will coordinate closely with the resilience project to ensure that information is incorporated into national accounts.
UNDP/GEF Small Grants Program	The proposed project will build on the UNDP Small Grants Program (SGP) by directing support to civil society and community groups in key coastal landscapes. The project will work with the UNDP SGP to seek synergies with current and future investments and avoid duplication of efforts. Examples of recent SGP projects relevant to this project include: • Communities empowerment to assess opportunities and challenges of managing mangroves and building synergies to ensure sustainable utilization, improved livelihood and natural resource governance • Biodiversity conservation and rural livelihoods improvement • Promoting climate-change resilience through livelihoods activities • Empower communities to take positive actions in favor of combating climate change in rural Montserrado • Protecting Liberia's crocodiles through conservation and ecotourism • Strengthening community capacity to effectively conserve the remaining Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve

	• Promoting sustainable fishery in the Lake Piso Basin Multiple Sustainable Use Reserve without reducing the protected and endangered species to maintain their population • Building farmers' capacity to increase rice production through improved lowland farming methods that promote forest preservation and reduce their vulnerability to effects of climate change • Combating erosion in local coastal Liberia • Promoting biodiversity conservation through alternative livelihood development and market access support in rural Montserrado County
Sustainable Mangrove Conservation in Liberia: Improving enabling conditions for creation of the Marshall Wetlands Protected Area – Jan-Dec 2019, USD 390,000	This project will draw from ongoing lessons learned through growing experience with conservation agreements and design of governance mechanisms in mangrove-dependent communities in the Marshall Wetlands area. We will also bundle the growing number of coastal conservation agreements as a strong argument for the development of financing mechanisms that support coastal conservation and resource management.
WB Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP)	This project will continually share lessons and collaborate with the LFSP as it is implemented. We will continue to work with FDA and the WB to ensure the two projects are able to build on one another's success in institutional capacity building and livelihood development for local communities. Further areas for coordination include protected area establishment, continued development of the Liberia Conservation Fund, and participation in global carbon markets.
West Africa Regional Fisheries Project (WARFP)	The project, part of a larger regional initiative in 9 countries, 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 USD 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 protection of key fish breeding areas along the coast (i.e. mangrove forests), and legal/regulatory enforcement relating to coastal resources. The project also will seek to integrate fisheries data collected through the WARFP into natural capital accounts.
WB/ Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) – REDD Readiness Plan	The FCPF has approved a REDD Readiness grant of USD 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 Technical Working Group to ensure that mangroves are included in the Liberia REDD+ strategy.
UNDP/ GEF Enhancing Resilience to Climate Change by Mainstreaming Adaption Concerns into Agricultural Sector Development in Liberia 2012 – March 2016, USD 2.4 million	The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) led this project to enhance community-level resilience to climate change. Coordination with the MOA will be critical in ensuring that the approach used in the proposed projects reinforces previous efforts especially as it pertains to agricultural development within wetlands and mangroves. CI and EPA participation on the Steering Committee for the MOA project makes them well placed to ensure coordination.
Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA)	WIOMSA aims to advance regional co-operation in all aspects of coastal and marine sciences and management, and to support sustainable development. CI has been collaborating with WIOMSA since 2011 on our blue carbon work, representatives from the WIOMSA office in Senegal attended the Blue Carbon Scientific Working Group Meeting, which CI coordinates, in 2015. We will continue to coordinate efforts with WIOMSA in relation to this project to ensure complementarity.

M. Consistency and Alignment with CI Institutional Priorities

167. CI implements transboundary ocean management that sustains significant improvements in people's lives while safeguarding a consolidated network of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) and a sustainable fishery and tourism industry. With more than a decade of extensive work in marine protected areas and community-based coastal conservation, CI is now well-positioned to replicate and expand innovative solutions to Liberia. Marine biodiversity and mangrove conservation have been and will remain institutional priorities under CI's Oceans and Field divisions. The CI marine strategy released in 2016 prominently featured mangroves as important ecosystems for climate adaption and mitigation, valuable fisheries habitats, and as a means to link terrestrial and marine conservation efforts. CI now focuses conservation efforts at the landscape and seascape scale and this project directly applies to this priority through natural capital valuation and accounting, land use planning, and community-based conservation and sustainable resource management in furtherance of coastal MPA establishment.

168. CI has embraced NCA as a central component of green economic development. Advancing NCA methodologies and working with partner governments to deploy NCA systems are an institutional priority, spearheaded by CI's Economics and Planning Program. This priority is closely linked to CI's emphasis on sustainable production landscapes and sustainable consumption initiatives, both of which are also relevant to this project.

169. CI applies a Rights-based Approach to all of its work, and is a leader among conservation organizations in developing institutional policies, tools and training that support a Rights-based Approach to conservation, including CI's Indigenous Peoples Policy, Research Ethics Policy, guidelines for applying Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), and guidelines for integrating gender into projects and programs. These policies and tools align with the Conservation Agreement model that CI is advancing at numerous sites around the world. CI Liberia is an integral part of CI's Sub-Saharan Africa Strategy and this project is closely aligned with the regional priorities.

N. Communications and Knowledge Management

170. Knowledge management is a core element of Component 1. The objective of instituting NCA in Liberia will involve data collection, storage and analysis, and attention to putting in place systems to enable access to data and associated products to a wide set of users. By introducing new tools and building required capacities, particularly in relevant government agencies, the project will position this integrated environmental knowledge management system to catalyze the application of best practices and innovations for the global environment.

171. The project will generate key data for the design, justification and eventual gazettement of coastal protected areas in southeast Liberia. Therefore, knowledge management considerations include specific attention to ensuring that data are captured, housed, and organized in collaboration with the EPA and FDA in such a way as to most effectively and efficiently inform the protected area establishment process. This will also relate to baselines for environmental and social monitoring associated with protected area management.

172. The project will also generate a rich set of lessons pertaining to the introduction of NCA in a capacity-constrained context. Many countries around the world face similar constraints, and the experience in Liberia can offer valuable examples and lessons. Therefore, knowledge management

must from the outset include an explicit focus on capturing lessons learned and distilling them in a form amenable to dissemination and contribution to global efforts.

173. Several different kinds of communications activities will be integral to the project. First, for **project awareness** information about the project itself will be disseminated through several channels. Content will be created and disseminated through websites. This will include online blog entries, social media updates and videos to raise the profile of the project and of coastal ecosystems in Liberia more generally. Media releases will be crafted and published in local newspapers to help highlight major milestones in the project or bring attention to upcoming events. Project factsheets will also be widely disseminated at key meetings and events. Where possible, the project will also share lessons during events held under the aegis of relevant major initiatives, such as the Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services (WAVES) and the Gaborone Declaration for Sustainability in Africa (GDSA).

174. Second, communications activities will spread **community awareness** of the importance of coastal resources, the Conservation Agreement model, and issues surrounding protected area establishment. This forms part of ensuring Free, Prior and Informed Consent, builds local buy-in for the project, and opens up channels for community input into project design, implementation, and adaptive management.

175. The **small grant mechanism** portion of the project also will involve specific communication activities. Announcements of small grant opportunities will be disseminated online and through partner networks in Liberia to encourage submission of proposals by local non-government organizations and community-based organizations. Results and lessons from initiatives supported by the SGP also will be publicized through an online portal, and an end-of-project symposium convening the implementers. One objective of this set of communication activities will be to cultivate financial support for institutionalization of the SGP as a permanent feature of conservation funding in Liberia.

176. A key part of the project will be to cultivate business relationships between communities and **conservation-friendly enterprises**. This component of communication activities will reach out to relevant enterprises to encourage forging of supply chain links to communities in the project area, and later highlight the commercial benefits of doing so to ensure that the wider private sector is exposed to the opportunity for triple bottom line investments.

177. Finally, the project will rely on effective communications to market **Blue Carbon** investment opportunities to support development of new financing mechanisms for coastal conservation. Documenting progress in creating on-the-ground enabling conditions for Blue Carbon projects will allow the project to approach international networks of climate investors with a combination of technically sound investment rationales and socially/environmentally appealing marketing messages.

O. Lessons Learned During the PPG Phase and from other Relevant GEF Projects

178. Key lessons learnt during the PPG phase of this project and from other relevant GEF Projects include:

179. There exists considerable technical knowledge regarding mangroves in Liberia. This knowledge is accompanied by widespread consensus that mangrove conservation is a priority for the country.

This reinforces the selection of mangrove ecosystems as the initial focus for developing an NCA framework in Liberia.

180. Despite rapid human population growth and a high level of dependency on natural resource harvesting as a livelihood strategy in Liberia, pressure on ecosystems outside of the larger urban centers remains moderate. This offers a near-term window of opportunity to work with local communities and other stakeholders to introduce conservation and sustainable resource management measures to safeguard local, national and global environmental values.

181. Transportation infrastructure in Liberia is limited, especially outside the main urban centers and particularly in the southeastern part of the country. Many areas in the southeast become virtually unreachable during the rainy season. This is an important factor in selection of sites for on-the-ground work such as conservation agreements, balancing accessibility against other criteria such as biodiversity value, carbon stocks and local appetite for collaboration.

182. A number of lessons relate to the CA approach. First, local communities are responsive to incentives and alternatives, being well aware of the need for sustainable use of natural resources in general. However, limited awareness of specific ecosystem services and functions indicates the need for awareness-building and environmental education to buttress incentive-based interventions. Second, traditional leadership is strong in rural communities. Therefore, community engagement processes need to explicitly incorporate the role of traditional leadership, while also meeting standards for broad-based representation and participation, including gender considerations.

183. Many parts of the CA model are effectively executed through local NGO partners, including socio-economic and ecological baseline assessments, community engagement, and benefit delivery. However, capacity is less developed for participatory land use mapping and spatial planning. This component of the project will require dedicated time and resources for training to ensure that execution of these activities in the field meets project requirements.

184. Experience in other projects supported by GEF (and other donors) indicates that small grant programs (SGPs) offer significant contributions in the Liberian context, noting that SGPs: are readily scaled to local absorptive capacity; provided in series promote capacity-building and gradual expansion of local NGO and community-based organization (CBO) activity; avoid locking-up large amounts of funding in ambitious-scale initiatives with uncertain outcomes; promote localized initiative that does not depend on, but can align with, government; and help communities and local NGOs work toward effective participation in larger programs.

SECTION 4: COMPLIANCE WITH CI-GEF PROJECT AGENCY'S ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK (ESMF)

A. Safeguards Screening Results and Categorization

185. All GEF-supported projects must apply measures to avoid, minimize, abate, and, where appropriate, offset any adverse impacts to people and the environment. The safeguard screening process was conducted by the CI-GEF Agency in December 2017, based on the PIF. The table below notes results of the safeguard screening process as well as measures to be taken during the project to address relevant safeguard policy issues.

Table 7: Safeguard Screening Results

Policy/Best Practice	Triggered (Yes/No)	Justification
Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Policy	No	No significant adverse environmental and social impacts that are sensitive, diverse, or unprecedented is anticipated
Protection of Natural Habitats Policy	No	The project is not proposing to alter natural habitats
Involuntary Resettlement Policy	Yes	The project is proposing restriction of access/use of natural resources.
Indigenous Peoples Policy	No	The project does not plan to work in lands or territories traditionally owned, customarily used, or occupied by indigenous peoples
Pest Management Policy	No	There are no proposed activities related to pest management
Physical Cultural Resources Policy	No	There are no proposed activities related to physical and cultural resources
Stakeholder Engagement	Yes	The project is required to engage stakeholders Local communities in coastal areas are central stakeholders in one of the three principal project components. Project implementation will involve extensive engagement with these local communities using the conservation agreement methodology, which includes best practices in community engagement. They will also be involved through participatory planning for land and resource use. The project will emphasize the provision of locally appropriate alternatives to unsustainable harvest practices, determined with community members through participatory agreement design and negotiation processes. Using the conservation agreement model the project will promote income generation and job creation within impoverished communities while improving resource management; thus, the project pursues positive social and environmental change, with safeguards in the engagement process to prevent negative social impact. Moreover, the project will work through existing governance structures within the communities, strengthening and adding where needed, to enhance local control over resource use and related decisions.
Gender mainstreaming	Yes	The project is required to mainstream gender at all levels Throughout the project the Executing Agency will ensure full and equitable representation in and benefit sharing from project activities. The stakeholder engagement strategy will address all sub-groups of stakeholders within communities, including potentially marginalized groups. Engagement, design and

		negotiation steps to define conservation agreement elements explicitly will take into account differential relationships between sub-groups and resources, and each other, with a particular emphasis on gender dynamics. Monitoring systems will include disaggregation by gender where appropriate to track differential project roles and impacts throughout the life of the project. Moreover, the anticipated small grant facility to be deployed under the project will require applicants to address gender issues in their proposals, and contemplate a thematic funding window focused on community-level gender and conservation initiatives.
Accountability and Grievance Mechanisms	Yes	Justification: As a publicly funded GEF project, a Grievance Mechanism is required.

186. By improving community-based management of coastal habitats and resources, natural regeneration and resource recovery will yield positive environmental impacts; through investment in community livelihoods and governance capacity, the project will yield positive social impacts. The interventions will be community-driven, involving best-practice engagement processes and Free, Prior and Informed Consent, with specific attention to gender considerations. However, the interventions will not involve resettlement, pesticides, or alterations to physical cultural property. Thus, the safeguard screening process indicates that the proposed project will have minimal or no adverse environmental and social impacts.

Table 8: Safeguard Categorization

PROJECT CATEGORY	Category A	Category B	Category C
			X
Justification: The proposed project activities are likely to have minimal or no adverse environmental and social impacts.			

B. Compliance with Safeguard Recommendations

187. The safeguard screening process found that the proposed approach of the project is expected to avoid or minimize adverse impacts, and that therefore no better alternative can be conceived at this time. Moreover, no indirect and/or long term impacts due to anticipated future activities are foreseen. However, the process triggered four safeguard policies, namely:

    i. Involuntary Resettlement (due to Restriction of Access to and Use of Natural Resources)
    ii. Stakeholder Engagement
    iii. Gender Mainstreaming
    iv. Grievance Mechanism

Involuntary Resettlement (Restriction of Access to and Use of Natural Resources)

188. To ensure that the project meets CI-GEF Project Agency's "Involuntary Resettlement Policy #3" the Executing Agency was required to develop during the PPG phase a Process Framework document, following guidance provided in Appendix IV of the CI-GEF Agency ESMF Policy. In addition, the project monitoring plan was required to include tracking of and reporting on the following minimum indicators relating to the Restriction of Access to and Use of Natural Resources:

    - Number of persons whose access to and use of natural resources have been voluntary restricted

- Number of persons whose access to and use of natural resources have been involuntarily restricted
- Percentage of persons who gave their consent for voluntary restrictions
- Percentage of persons who have received compensation for voluntary restrictions
- Percentage of persons who have received compensation for involuntary restrictions

189. Although this project will not resettle individuals, it may have an effect on use of marine and coastal resources by individuals and communities in the project areas. As the project will apply CI's Conservation Agreement methodology, the relevant processes are based on FPIC and fair compensation for behavior change in the form of negotiated benefits as incentives defined in the agreements. Monitoring of conservation agreements necessarily includes attention to the indicators listed above (among numerous other factors). Thus, project design has addressed the recommendations, as reflected in the Process Framework and monitoring plan provided.

190. The Process Framework developed during the PPG phase describes the nature of the potential restrictions and the participatory process by which restrictions will be formulated and compensatory measures to protect and enhance livelihoods will be designed. The Framework draws on CI's existing Rights-based Approach to conservation and Conservation Agreement methodology. The Process Framework provides a set of actions that will be implemented by the Project Manager and the Project Management Unit (PMU) to ensure that communities have been provided the space to give or withhold their consent to a project. The Process Framework for Restriction of Access to and Use of Natural Resources is presented in Appendix VI.

Stakeholder Engagement

191. To ensure that the project meets CI-GEF Project Agency's "Stakeholders' Engagement Policy #9", the Executing Agency was required to develop a Stakeholder Engagement Plan. In addition, the project monitoring plan was required to include tracking of and reporting on the following minimum indicators relating to stakeholder engagement:

    - Number of government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector, indigenous peoples and other stakeholder groups that have been involved in the project implementation phase on an annual basis
    - Number persons (sex disaggregated) that have been involved in project implementation phase (on an annual basis)
    - Number of engagements (e.g. meeting, workshops, consultations) with stakeholders during the project implementation phase (on an annual basis)

192. Stakeholder engagement is central to this project in at least two prominent ways: to secure multi-stakeholder buy-in from the full range of relevant government agencies at all levels for adoption and mainstreaming of NCA, and voluntary participation at the community level in conservation agreements. CI is a leader in development and application of best practices in stakeholder engagement, and will apply these in this project, as reflected in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and monitoring framework provided.

193. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan prepared during the PPG phase was informed by, among other things, a multi-stakeholder engagement meeting to review findings of ecological and socio-

economic baseline assessments conducted in the proposed project area. The workshop was attended by government and NGO representatives, including individuals with expertise in community-based conservation in Liberia and specific experience in mangrove ecosystems. During the course of the workshop, participants were given opportunities to comment on which key stakeholders needed to be involved in the project. The purpose of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan is to encourage buy-in and support for the project through effective participation and productive dialogue. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan is presented in Appendix VI.

Gender Mainstreaming

194. To ensure that the project meets CI-GEF Project Agency's "Gender Mainstreaming Policy #8", the Executing Agency was required to prepare a Gender Mainstreaming Plan. In addition, the project monitoring plan was required to include tracking of and reporting on the following minimum indicators relating to gender mainstreaming:

    - Number of men and women that participated in project activities (e.g. meetings, workshops, consultations)
    - Number of men and women that received benefits (e.g. employment, income generating activities, training, access to natural resources, land tenure or resource rights, equipment, leadership roles) from the project
    - Number of strategies, plans (e.g. management plans and land use plans) and policies derived from the project that include gender considerations (where relevant)

195. With respect to conservation agreements, differences between the ways in which men and women participate in decision-making and how they use natural resources are essential aspects of engagement, agreement design and negotiation, and selection of conservation commitments and compensatory benefit packages. Thus, mainstreaming of gender considerations is integral to proper implementation of the approach, as reflected in the Gender Mainstreaming Plan and monitoring framework provided.

196. The Gender Mainstreaming Plan adopts a similar instrument developed for a prior GEF-supported project, "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" (2016-2019). To ensure compliance with the safeguards on the inclusion of a gender perspective, a *Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan* was developed for this project. To do so, CI, in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, organized a two-day workshop entitled "Gender Strategy Development and Gender Mainstreaming" in 2015. The workshop convened civil society groups, gender focal points from key government ministries, youth groups and international NGOs to review the National Gender Strategy and Policies of Liberia and identify best practices for mainstreaming gender into natural resource management projects. Participant reactions and input shaped the final Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan for the earlier project, and thus shaped the Gender Mainstreaming Plan for this project (Appendix VI).

Grievance Mechanism

197. To ensure that the project meets CI-GEF Project Agency's "Accountability and Grievance Mechanism Policy #7", the Executing Agency was required to develop an Accountability and Grievance

Mechanism that will ensure people affected by the project are able to bring their grievances to the Executing Agency for consideration and redress. The mechanism must be in place before the start of project activities, and also disclosed to all stakeholders in a language, manner and means that best suits the local context. In addition, the project monitoring plan was required to include tracking of and reporting on the following minimum indicators relating to accountability and grievance indicators:

- Number of conflict and complaint cases reported to the project's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism
- Percentage of conflict and complaint cases reported to the project's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism that have been addressed.

198. Ongoing community satisfaction, buy-in and support are critical to successful Conservation Agreements. Therefore, means by which to identify, prevent and address any sources of dissatisfaction are crucial elements of effective Conservation Agreement design, as reflected in the Accountability and Grievance Mechanism document (see Appendix VI) and monitoring framework provided.

SECTION 5: IMPLEMENTATION AND EXECUTION ARRANGEMENTS FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT

A. Project Execution Arrangements and Partners

199. The Environmental Protection Agency of Liberia (EPA) and CI-Liberia will be co-executing agencies. CI-Liberia will play a main role in implementing and monitoring the project and maintaining its strategic focus. EPA has been deeply involved during the preparatory phase and will continue to play a strong role during the execution of the project. Also, as the principal government body for collecting, analyzing and storing statistical information, the Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) will be closely involved in Component 1 of the project pertaining to NCA. Finally, as a lead authority with respect policies and management of Liberia's marine sector, the Liberia Maritime Authority (LMA) also is a leading partner.

200. Other important partners who will be involved in project execution are:
    - Forestry Development Authority
    - Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
    - Ministry of Agriculture/Bureau of National Fisheries
    - Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
    - Liberia Land Authority
    - Ministry of Internal Affairs

201. The CI-GEF Project Agency will support project implementation by maintaining oversight of all technical and financial management aspects, and providing other assistance upon request of the Executing Agencies. The CI-GEF Project Agency will also monitor the achievement of the project outputs, ensure the proper use of GEF funds, and review and approve any changes in budgets or workplans.

Project Management Unit

202. The Project Management Unit (PMU) will be responsible for operational planning and day-to-day implementation of all project activities under the three project components, as well as for monitoring and reporting on project outputs and outcomes. The PMU will prepare and support Project Steering Committee (PSC, see below) meetings and manage the project budget. The PMU be based in the CI-Liberia Office in Monrovia and will be led by a full time Project Director, with supported from a Project Manager, both specifically hired for this project. The Project Director will maintain ultimate responsibility for this project, with input from the Technical Director, Operations Director, and Country Director. In addition, the PMU will receive important technical, administrative and institutional support from technical advisers at the EPA, FDA and LISGIS, as well as the Moore Center for Science at CI-HQ (Arlington, VA USA). Furthermore, in line with CI's global management structure, this project will receive oversight and compliance monitoring from the Africa and Madagascar Field Division's office in Nairobi.

203. With respect to site-based interventions under Component 3, the PMU will pursue a bottom up approach giving time to communities to take ownership of the proposed projects and adapt them to their own vision and needs. The project manager and other staff will travel frequently to project sites to maintain close and continuous contact with the project implementing partners, communities and other stakeholders.

204. PMU Members:
    - Project Manager – to be hired
    - Grants Manager – to be hired
    - Project Officer – to be hired
    - Technical Director, CI Liberia (technical support and oversight)

205. PMU Advisors:
    - Hawa Walker (Environmental Protection Agency)
    - Jallah Johnson (Forestry Development Authority)
    - Steven Lavallah (Liberia Maritime Authority)
    - Grey Johnson (Liberia Land Authority)
    - Bannel S. Dennis (Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services Statistics)
    - Anthony Yokie (National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority)
    - Saliho Donzo (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning)

206. The PMU Advisors have an important responsibility to ensure country ownership and drivenness of the project. This applies to mainstreaming NCA into government strategy and decision-making processes as well as community empowerment. The PMU and its Advisors will meet on a bi-monthly basis and prior to PSC meetings to review progress of the project and help develop an agenda for PSC meetings. Minutes from PMU meetings will be submitted to the CI-GEF agency and other relevant stakeholders.

Project Steering Committee

207. The project has established a Project Steering Committee (PSC) composed of representatives from a range of different ministries and government agencies. CI-Liberia acts as the secretariat of the

Steering Committee. The EPA will chair the group and the Liberia Maritime Authority will act as Co-Chair. FDA will be the alternative should one of the chairs be unavailable. The principal function of the PSC is to provide guidance on the project delivery. The Steering Committee will provide guidance based on government positions relevant to project alignment with national policies and laws, best practice and new initiatives. This body will ensure collaboration with other programs and avoid duplication of efforts within the sector. The PSC will maintain continuous exchange of information among its members by electronic means, and additional *ad hoc* steering committee meetings can be convened via telephone conference or other means, if necessary.

208. Project Steering Committee members
    - Elijah Whapoe (Environmental Protection Agency)
    - Blamah Goll (Forestry Development Authority)
    - Daniel Tarr (Liberia Maritime Authority)
    - Hon. Alice J. Howard (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection)
    - Tom Wesley Korkpor (Liberia Land Authority)
    - Wellington Nangbe (Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services)
    - Hon. Emma Metieh Glassco (National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority)
    - Varney Sirleaf (Ministry of Internal Affairs)
    - Saliho Donzo (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning)
    - Professor John Woods (University of Liberia)

209. The PSC will meet quarterly to review project progress. Minutes of PSC meetings will be submitted to the CI-GEF Agency and other relevant stakeholders.

Other Project Staff

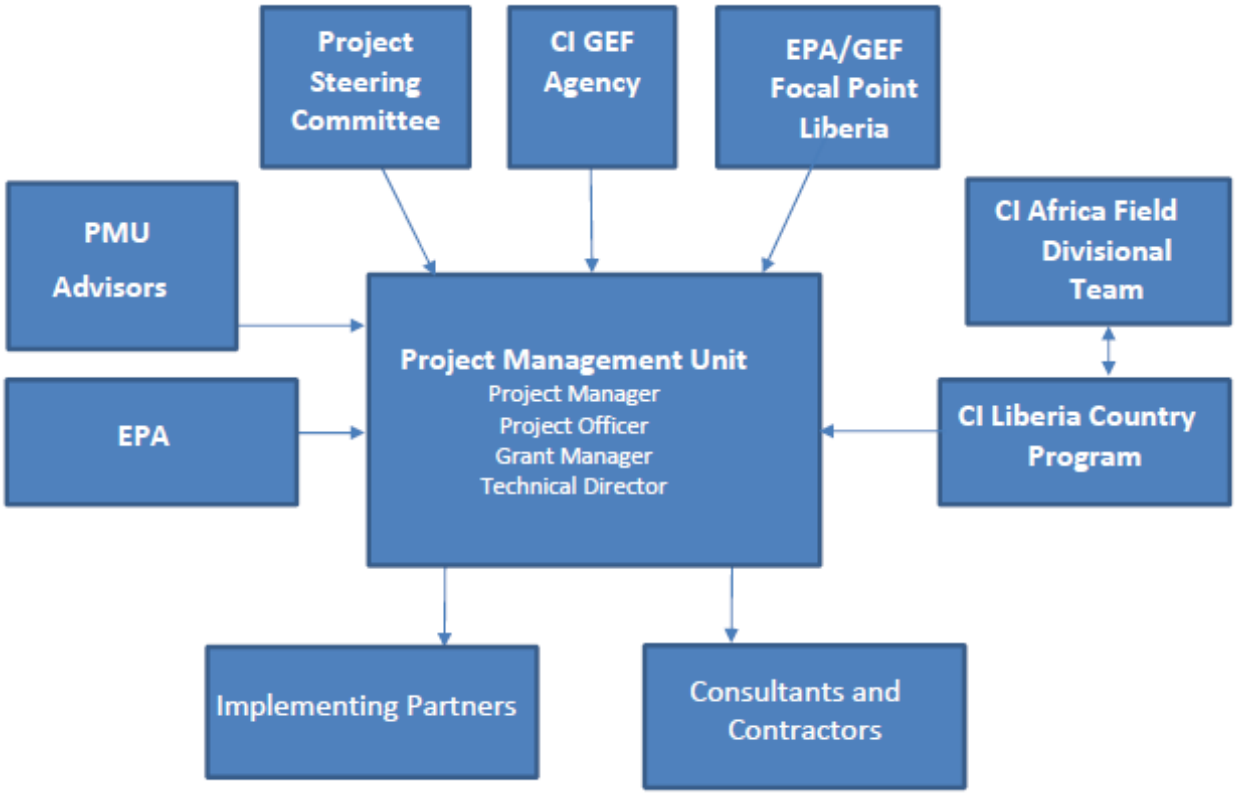
210. Conservation International has global staff who will play key roles in the implementation of this project. Their responsibilities will be to ensure that the project receives high level guidance regarding new and emerging technologies, lessons learned, and global progress. This includes support from CI's Moore Center for Science, Marine Team, and Conservation Stewards Program.

Other Collaborators

211. In addition to the abovementioned partners and contributors, CI efforts with respect to Natural Capital Accounting benefit from a partnership with NASA, focused on technical collaboration on design and application of innovative remote-sensing and mapping solutions.

212. Discussions are underway between CI and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), which has a particular interest in advancing natural capital accounting. Potential collaboration may include targeted technical support from UNSD, with the exact nature of their relationship to the project to be determined jointly by EPA and CI with input from other relevant Government of Liberia agencies. Details of this relationship are expected to be documented explicitly, as in a formal MOU between UNSD and the project partners.

B. Project Execution Organizational Chart



SECTION 6: MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

213. Project monitoring and evaluation will be conducted in accordance with established CI and GEF procedures by the project team and the CI-GEF Project Agency. The project's M&E plan will be presented and finalized at the project inception workshop, including a review of indicators, means of verification, and the full definition of project staff M&E responsibilities.

A. Monitoring and Evaluation Roles and Responsibilities

214. The Project Management Unit on the ground will be responsible for initiating and organizing key monitoring and evaluation tasks. This includes the project inception workshop and report, quarterly progress reporting, annual progress and implementation reporting, documentation of lessons learned, and support for and cooperation with the independent external evaluation exercises.

215. The project Executing Agency is responsible for ensuring the monitoring and evaluation activities are carried out in a timely and comprehensive manner, and for initiating key monitoring and evaluation activities, such as the independent evaluation exercises.

216. Key project executing partners are responsible for providing any and all required information and data necessary for timely and comprehensive project reporting, including results and financial data, as necessary and appropriate.

217. The Project Steering Committee plays a key oversight role for the project, with regular meetings to receive updates on project implementation progress and approve annual workplans. The Project Steering Committee also provides continuous ad-hoc oversight and feedback on project activities, responding to inquiries or requests for approval from the PMU or Executing Agency.

218. The CI-GEF Project Agency plays an overall assurance, backstopping, and oversight role with respect to monitoring and evaluation activities.

219. The CI Internal Audit function is responsible for contracting and oversight of the planned independent external evaluation exercises at the mid-point and end of the project.

B. Monitoring and Evaluation Components and Activities

220. The Project M&E Plan should include the following components (see M&E table 9 for details):

    a. **Inception workshop**
    Project inception workshop will be held within the first three months of project start with the project stakeholders. An overarching objective of the inception workshop is to assist the project team in understanding and taking ownership of the project's objectives and outcomes. The inception workshop will be used to detail the roles, support services and complementary responsibilities of the CI-GEF Project Agency and the Executing Agency.

    b. **Inception workshop Report**
    The Executing Agency should produce an inception report documenting all changes and decisions made during the inception workshop to the project planned activities, budget, results framework, and any other key aspects of the project. The inception report should be

produced within one month of the inception workshop, as it will serve as a key input to the timely planning and execution of project start-up and activities.

c. **Project Results Monitoring Plan** (Objective, Outcomes, and Outputs)
A Project Results Monitoring Plan will be developed by the Project Agency, which will include objective, outcome and output indicators, metrics to be collected for each indicator, methodology for data collection and analysis, baseline information, location of data gathering, frequency of data collection, responsible parties, and indicative resources needed to complete the plan. Appendix III provides the Project Results Monitoring Plan table that will help complete this M&E component.

In addition to the objective, outcome, and output indicators, the Project Results Monitoring Plan table will also include all indicators identified in the Safeguard Plans prepared for the project, thus they will be consistently and timely monitored.

The monitoring of these indicators throughout the life of the project will be necessary to assess if the project has successfully achieved its expected results.

Baseline Establishment: in the case that all necessary baseline data has not been collected during the PPG phase, it will be collected and documented by the relevant project partners ***within the first year*** of project implementation.

d. **GEF Core Indicators**
These are presented in Appendix IV. Achievement of the indicators will be monitored: i) at CEO Endorsement, ii) at the time of the mid-term review, and iii) at the time of the terminal evaluation.

e. **Project Steering Committee Meetings**
Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings will be held quarterly. Meetings shall be held to review and approve project annual budget and work plans, discuss implementation issues and identify solutions, and to increase coordination and communication between key project partners. The meetings held by the PSC will be monitored and results adequately reported.

f. **CI-GEF Project Agency Field Supervision Missions**
The CI-GEF PA will conduct annual visits to the project country and potentially to project field sites based on the agreed schedule in the project's Inception Report/Annual Work Plan to assess first hand project progress. Oversight visits will most likely be conducted to coincide with the timing of PSC meetings. Other members of the PSC may also join field visits. A Field Visit Report will be prepared by the CI-GEF PA staff participating in the oversight mission, and will be circulated to the project team and PSC members within one month of the visit.

g. **Quarterly Progress Reporting**
The Executing Agency will submit quarterly progress reports to the CI-GEF Project Agency, including a budget follow-up and requests for disbursement to cover expected quarterly expenditures.

h. **Annual Project Implementation Report** (PIR)
The Executing Agency will prepare an annual PIR to monitor progress made since project

start and in particular for the reporting period (July 1st to June 30th). The PIR will summarize the annual project result and progress. A summary of the report will be shared with the Project Steering Committee.

i. **Final Project Report**
The Executing Agency will draft a final report at the end of the project.

j. **Independent External Mid-term Review**
The project will undergo an independent Mid-term Review within 30 days of the mid-point of the grant term. The Mid-term Review will determine progress being made toward the achievement of outcomes and will identify course correction if needed. The Mid-term Review will highlight issues requiring decisions and actions, and will present initial lessons learned about project design, implementation and management. Findings and recommendations of the Mid-term Review will be incorporated to secure maximum project results and sustainability during the second half of project implementation.

k. **Independent Terminal Evaluation**
An independent Terminal Evaluation will take place within six months after project completion and will be undertaken in accordance with CI and GEF guidance. The terminal evaluation will focus on the delivery of the project's results as initially planned (and as corrected after the mid-term evaluation, if any such correction took place). The Executing Agency in collaboration with the PSC will provide a formal management answer to the findings and recommendations of the terminal evaluation.

l. **Lessons Learned and Knowledge Generation**
Results from the project will be disseminated within and beyond the project intervention area through existing information sharing networks and forums. The project will identify and participate, as relevant and appropriate, in scientific, policy-based and/or any other networks, which may be of benefit to project implementation though lessons learned. The project will identify, analyze, and share lessons learned that might be beneficial in the design and implementation of similar future projects. There will be a two-way flow of information between this project and other projects of a similar focus.

m. **Financial Statements Audit**
Annual Financial reports submitted by the executing Agency will be audited annually by external auditors appointed by the Executing Agency.

221. The Terms of References for the evaluations will be drafted by the CI-GEF PA in accordance with GEF requirements. The procurement and contracting for the independent evaluations will handled by CI's General Counsel's Office. The funding for the evaluations will come from the project budget, as indicated at project approval.

Table 9: M&E Plan Summary

Type of M&E	Reporting Frequency	Responsible Parties	Indicative Budget from GEF (USD)
a. Inception workshop and Report	Within three months of signing of CI Grant Agreement for GEF Projects	• Project Team • Executing Agency • CI-GEF PA	*3,360*
b. Inception workshop Report	Within one month of inception workshop	• Project Team • CI-GEF PA	
c. Project Results Monitoring Plan (Objective, Outcomes and Outputs)	Annually (data on indicators will be gathered according to monitoring plan schedule shown on Appendix III)	• Project Team • CI-GEF PA	*60,000 over life of project*
d. GEF Core Indicators	i) At CEO endorsement; ii) prior to project mid-term evaluation; and iii) project completion	• Project Team • Executing Agency • CI-GEF PA	*17,202*
e. Project Steering Committee Meetings	Annually	• Project Team • Executing Agency • CI-GEF PA	*16,140*
f. CI-GEF Project Agency Field Supervision Missions	Approximately annual visits	• CI-GEF PA	*25,000*
g. Quarterly Progress Reporting	Quarterly	• Project Team • Executing Agency	*50,000*
h. Annual Project Implementation Report (PIR)	Annually for year ending June 30	• Project Team • Executing Agency • CI-GEF PA	*30,000*
i. Project Completion Report	Upon project operational closure	• Project Team • Executing Agency	*25,000*
j. Independent External Mid-term Review	CI Evaluation Office Project Team CI-GEF PA	• Approximate mid-point of project implementation period	*21,000*
k. Independent Terminal Evaluation	CI Evaluation Office Project Team CI-GEF PA	• Evaluation field mission within three months prior to project completion.	*21,000*

l. Lessons Learned and Knowledge Generation	Project Team Executing Agency CI-GEF PA	• At least annually	*12,000*
m. Financial Statements Audit	Executing Agency CI-GEF PA	• Annually	*12,869*

SECTION 7: PROJECT BUDGET AND FINANCING

A. Overall Project Budget

1. The project will be financed by a medium size GEF grant of USD 3,944,220 with co-financing from the Government of Liberia and Conservation International. A summary of the project costs and the co-financing contributions is given in the two tables below. The project budget may be subject to revision during implementation. The detailed Project Budget is provided in Appendix VII.

Table 10: Planned Project Budget by Component

	Project budget by component (in USD)				
	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	PMC	Total budget
Personnel Salaries and benefits	851,166	203,475	281,199	108,979	1,444,819
Professional services	401,757	84,000	62,600	12,869	561,226
Travels and accommodations, Meetings and workshops	239,481	122,877	65,630	37,338	465,326
Grants & Agreements	120,000	620,000	370,000	0	1,110,000
Equipment	35,539	17,760	19,000	0	72,299
Other Direct Costs (Printing, Shared Office Costs, direct phone costs)	128,304	64,844	68,768	28,634	290,550
TOTAL GEF FUNDED PROJECT	**1,776,247**	**1,112,956**	**867,197**	**187,820**	**3,944,220**

Table 11: Planned Project Budget by Year

				Project budget by year (in USD)		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total budget
Personnel Salaries and benefits	235,627	361,971	271,652	276,049	299,520	1,444,819
Professional services	61,100	183,587	146,715	141,322	28,502	561,226
Travels and accommodations, Meetings and workshops	84,738	132,596	83,809	85,056	79,127	465,326
Grants & Agreements	210,000	225,000	225,000	225,000	225,000	1,110,000
Equipment	55,000	13,124	891	2,338	946	72,299
Other Direct Costs	52,627	59,036	59,462	57,853	61,572	290,550
TOTAL GEF FUNDED PROJECT	**699,092**	**975,314**	**787,529**	**787,618**	**694,667**	**3,944,220**

B. Overall Project Co-financing

2. USD 3,944,220 will come as support from GEF and the total of USD 11,194,248 in co-financing for the project. USD 11,000,000 in-kind contribution will come from the Government of Liberia in form of requisite infrastructure, office space, office furniture, utilities, staff salaries. And project monitoring. A grant of USD 194,248 has been committed by Conservation International which Specifically will cover human, administrative and equipment costs to support the implementation of the project activities.

   The co-financing commitment letters are attached in the Appendix VIII

Table 12: Committed Grant and In-Kind Co-financing (USD)

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Amount (USD)
Recipient Government	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	In-kind	5,000,000
Recipient Government	Liberia Maritime Authority	In-kind	2,000,000
Recipient Government	Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-information Services (LISGIS)	In-kind	2,000,000
Recipient Government	Forestry Development Authority (FDA)-Liberia Forest sector Program	In-kind	2,000,000
GEF Agency	Conservation International	Grant	194,248
TOTAL CO-FINANCING			**11,194,248**

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: Project Results Framework

APPENDIX II: Project Timeline

APPENDIX III: Project Results Monitoring Plan

APPENDIX IV: GEF Core Indicators

APPENDIX V: Safeguard Screening Form and Analysis

APPENDIX VI: Safeguard Compliance Plans

APPENDIX VII: Detailed Project Budget

APPENDIX VIII: Co-financing Commitment Letters

APPENDIX I: Project Results Framework

Objective:	To improve conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's coastal natural capital by mainstreaming the value of nature into Liberia's development trajectory
Indicator:	National development policy instruments explicitly incorporating Natural Capital Accounting

Expected Outcomes and Indicators	Project Baseline	End of Project Target	Expected Outputs and Indicators
Component 1: Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) in Coastal Ecosystems			
Outcome 1.1: Decision-making improved in coastal ecosystem governance by mainstreaming natural capital accounting (NCA) into Government of Liberia (GOL) development strategy, policy and planning ***Indicator 1.1.a:*** *Number of natural capital accounts established and embedded in key government policies and plans* ***Indicator 1.1.b****: Number of government officials and other relevant stakeholders trained on the technical aspects of NCA* ***Indicator 1.1.c:*** *Number of decision-makers trained on how to use NCA results for the conservation and sustainable use of globally important biodiversity*	**Baseline Indicator 1.1.a:** No natural capital accounts established and embedded in key government policies and plans **Baseline Indicator 1.1.b:** No government officials or other relevant stakeholders trained on the technical aspects of NCA **Baseline Indicator 1.1.c:** No decision-makers trained on how to use NCA results for the conservation and sustainable use of globally important biodiversity	**Target 1.1.a:** At least one natural capital account (mangroves) established and embedded in at least 5 key government policies and plans **Target 1.1.b:** At least 50 government officials and other relevant stakeholders trained on the technical aspects of NCA **Target 1.1.c:** At least 50 decision makers trained on how to use NCA results for the conservation and sustainable use of globally important biodiversity	**Output 1.1.1:** Inter-ministerial NCA Steering Committee established to guide NCA development and implementation ***Indicator 1.1.1:*** *Number of NCA Steering Committees established* *Target 1.1.1: One NCA Steering Committee* **Output 1.1.2:** Mangrove ecosystem account planned for, developed, and executed and NCA embedded in key Government policies and plans ***Indicator 1.1.2 a:*** *Number of active mangrove ecosystem accounts* ***Indicator 1.1.2 b:*** *Number of policies and plans that include NCA results* *Target: 1.1.2 a: 1 mangrove ecosystem account* *Target 1.1.2 b: 5 key government policies and plans* ***Indicator 1.1.2:*** *Number of active mangrove ecosystem accounts* *Target: 1.1.2: 1 One mangrove ecosystem account* **Output 1.1.3:** Capacity of government officials and other stakeholders developed on technical aspects of NCA

			Indicator 1.1.3*: Number of government officials and stakeholders that have participated in training events* *Target 1.1.3: 50 people trained (10 women, 40 men)* **Output 1.1.4:** Operational framework established for SEEA-compliant natural capital accounts ***Indicator 1.1.4****: Number of operational frameworks* *Target 1.1.4: One operational framework* **Output 1.1.5:** Support provided to the GOL to integrate the NCA operational framework into national planning processes ***Indicator 1.1.5:*** *Number of national planning instruments that incorporate NCA results* *Target 1.1.5: One national planning instrument (Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development) incorporates NCA results for assessing key indicators (forests' contribution to the economy)* **Output 1.1.6**: Support provided to the GOL to incorporate NCA results into Liberia's Aichi Targets, Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and other international commitments and reporting mechanisms ***Indicator 1.1.6:*** *Number of reporting mechanisms for international commitments that incorporate NCA results* *Target: 1.1.6: One monitoring mechanism (Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development) incorporates NCA results for reporting progress on targets* **Output 1.1.7:** Roadmap developed for prioritizing and developing natural capital accounts for additional ecosystems, resources and sectors

			Indicator 1.1.7: *Number of roadmap documents for additional natural capital accounts* *Target 1.1.7: One roadmap document*
Component 2: Innovative Financing Schemes for Conserving Coastal Natural Capital			
Outcome 2.1: Funding sources for sustainable management and restoration of coastal ecosystems increased ***Indicator 2.1.a:*** *Financial resources (USD) available for the sustainable management and restoration of coastal ecosystems* ***Indicator 2.1.b:*** *Number of revenue streams to support long term sustainability of coastal ecosystems* ***Indicator 2.1.c:*** *Number of local organizations receiving small grants for coastal conservation*	**Baseline Indicator 2.1.a:** Average of USD 1 million per year available for the sustainable management and restoration of coastal ecosystems over 2019-2023 period **Baseline Indicator 2.1.b:** No revenue streams available to support long term sustainability of coastal ecosystems **Baseline Indicator 2.1.c**: No organizations receiving small grants for coastal conservation	**Target 2.1.a:** Financial resources for the sustainable management and restoration of coastal ecosystems increased by 50% (USD 2.5 million over the lifetime of the project) **Target 2.1.b:** At least 2 new revenue streams to support the long-term sustainability developed **Target 2.1.c:** Small grants provided to at least three local organizations	**Output 2.1.1**: Potential carbon-based financing mechanisms for coastal ecosystem conservation identified and assessed ***Indicator 2.1.1:*** *Number of prospectus for Blue Carbon demonstration/pilot project* *Target 2.1.2: One prospectus for blue carbon demonstration/pilot project* **Output 2.1.2:** At least one conservation-friendly enterprise transacting with market participants in the project area to improve sustainable use of coastal and marine resources ***Indicator 2.1.2****: Number of conservation-friendly enterprises active in the project area* *Target 2.1.2: One enterprise* **Output 2.1.3:** Small grant mechanism established to support coastal conservation ***Indicator 2.1.3:*** *Number of organizations receiving small grants* *Target: Three local organizations* **Output 2.1.4:** Potential scope, need and feasibility assessed of national financing mechanism to ensure long-term support for sustainable management of coastal ecosystems ***Indicator 2.1.4:*** *Number of comprehensive design documents for national coastal conservation financing mechanism formally adopted by relevant government body/bodies*

			Target 2.1.4: One design document
Component 3: Community Incentives to Conserve and Sustainably Manage Natural Capital in Coastal Ecosystems			
Outcome 3.1: Community-level conservation and sustainable use of coastal resources improved through performance-based payments using conservation agreements ***Indicator 3.1.a****: Area (hectares) of mangrove ecosystems under protection across Liberia* ***Indicator 3.1.b:*** *Area (hectares) of terrestrial forest ecosystems under sustainable management in coastal areas.* ***Indicator 3.1.c:*** *Income (USD) within coastal and mangrove communities targeted by the project*	**Baseline Indicator 3.1.a**: 10,257 hectares of mangrove ecosystems under protection across Liberia **Baseline Indicator 3.1.b:** 11,034 hectares of terrestrial forest ecosystems under sustainable management in coastal areas **Baseline Indicator 3.1.c:** Estimated monthly household income of $65 USD within coastal and mangrove communities targeted by the project	**Target 3.1.a:** 11,975 additional hectares of mangrove ecosystems under protection across Liberia **Target 3.1.b:** 5,000 additional hectares of terrestrial forest ecosystems under sustainable management in coastal areas. **Target 3.1.c:** Income within coastal and mangrove communities targeted by the project improved by 50%	**Output 3.1.1:** Conservation agreements executed with 10 additional communities along the southeastern coast of Liberia ***Indicator 3.1.1:*** *Number of Conservation Agreements signed with communities* *Target 3.1.1: Ten Conservation Agreements* **Output 3.1.2:** A national conservation agreement program designed and established that offers economic incentives for coastal protection ***Indicator 3.1.2:*** *Number of national conservation agreement programs designed and established* *Target: 3.1.2: 1 One national conservation agreement program*

APPENDIX II: Project timeline

	Timeline																			
	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Outcome 1.1: Decision-making improved in coastal ecosystem governance by mainstreaming natural capital accounting (NCA) into Government of Liberia (GOL) development strategy, policy and planning																				
Output 1.1.1: Inter-ministerial NCA Steering Committee established to guide NCA development and																				
Output 1.1.2: Mangrove ecosystem account planned for, developed, and executed																				
Output 1.1.3: Capacity of government officials and other stakeholders developed on technical aspects of NCA																				
Output 1.1.4: Operational framework established for SEEA-compliant natural capital accounts																				
Output 1.1.5: Support provided to the GOL to integrate the NCA operational framework into national planning																				
Output 1.1.6: Support provided to the GOL to incorporate NCA results into Liberia's Aichi Targets, Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and other international commitments and reporting mechanisms																				
Output 1.1.7: Roadmap developed for prioritizing and developing natural capital accounts for additional ecosystems, resources and sectors																				
Outcome 2.1: Funding sources for sustainable management and restoration of coastal ecosystems increased																				
Output 2.1.1: Potential carbon-based financing mechanisms for coastal ecosystem conservation identified and																				
Output 2.1.2: At least one conservation-friendly enterprise transacting with market participants in the project area to improve sustainable use of coastal and marine resources																				
Output 2.1.3: Small grant mechanism established to support coastal conservation																				
Output 2.1.4: Potential scope, need and feasibility assessed of national financing mechanism to ensure long-term support for sustainable management of coastal ecosystems																				
Outcome 3.1: Community-level conservation and sustainable use of coastal resources improved through performance-based payments using conservation agreements																				
Output 3.1.1: Conservation agreements executed with 10 additional communities along the southeastern coast of																				
Output 3.1.2: A national conservation agreement program designed and established that offers economic incentives for coastal protection																				

APPENDIX III: Project Results Monitoring Plan

Indicators	Metrics	Methodology	Baseline	Location	Frequency	Responsible Parties	Indicative Resources
Objective: To improve conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's coastal natural capital by mainstreaming the value of nature into Liberia's development trajectory							
Indicator a: National development policy instruments explicitly incorporating Natural Capital Accounting	# of policy instruments	Document analysis	None	Monrovia	Mid-term and end of project	CI-Liberia, EPA	
Component 1: Natural Capital Accounting (NCA) in Coastal Ecosystems							
Indicator 1.1.a: Number of natural capital accounts established and embedded in key government policies and plans	# of NCA accounts	Document analysis	None	Monrovia	End of project	CI-Libera, EPA	
Indicator 1.1.b: Number of government officials and other relevant stakeholders trained on the technical aspects of NCA	# of people trained	Tracking participation in training events	None	Monrovia	Annual	CI-Liberia	
Indicator 1.1.c: Number of decision-makers trained on how to use NCA results for the conservation and sustainable use of globally important biodiversity	# of people trained	Tracking participation in training events	None	Monrovia	Annual	CI-Liberia	
Indicator 1.1.1: Number of NCA Steering Committees established	# of Steering Committees	Tracking of meeting minutes	None	Monrovia	Annual	CI-Liberia, EPA	
Indicator 1.1.2: Number of active mangrove ecosystem accounts	# of accounts	Document analysis	None	Monrovia	End of project	CI-Liberia, EPA, LISGIS	
Indicator 1.1.3: Number of government officials and stakeholders that have participated in training events	# of people trained (diff. by gender)	Tracking participation in training events	None	Monrovia	Annual	CI-Liberia	
Indicator 1.1.4: Number of operational framework	# of operational frameworks	Documentation	None	Monrovia	End of project	CI-Liberia, EPA, LISGIS	

Indicator 1.1.5: Number of national planning instruments that incorporate NCA results	# of instruments	Document analysis	None	Monrovia	Annual	CI-Liberia, EPA	
Indicator 1.1.6: Number of reporting mechanisms for international commitments that incorporate NCA results	# of mechanisms	Document analysis	None	Monrovia	Annual	CI-Liberia, EPA	
Indicator 1.1.7: Number of roadmap documents for additional natural capital accounts	# of roadmaps	Documentation	None	Monrovia	End of project	CI-Liberia, EPA	
Component 2: Innovative Financing Schemes for Conserving Coastal Natural Capital							
Indicator 2.1.a: Financial resources (USD) available for the sustainable management and restoration of coastal ecosystems	USD budgeted	Tracking of relevant project and program budgets	Average of USD1 million per year available for the sustainable management and restoration of coastal ecosystems over 2019-2023 period	Monrovia	Annual	CI-Liberia, EPA	
Indicator 2.1.b: Number of revenue streams to support long term sustainability of coastal ecosystems	# of sources	Documentation	No revenue streams available to support long term sustainability of coastal ecosystems	Monrovia	Annual	CI-Liberia, EPA	

Indicator 2.1.c: Number of local organizations receiving small grants for coastal conservation	# of recipients	Documentation	No organizations receiving small grants for coastal conservation	Monrovia	Annual	CI-Liberia	
Indicator 2.1.1: Number of prospectus for Blue Carbon demonstration/pilot project	# of project prospectus	Documentation	None	Monrovia	Annual starting in Project Year 2	CI-Liberia, EPA	
Indicator 2.1.2: Number of conservation-friendly enterprises active in the project area	# of enterprises	Documentation	None	Monrovia; Project communities	Annual	CI-Liberia	
Indicator 2.1.3: Number of organizations receiving small grants	# of recipients	Documentation	No organizations receiving small grants for coastal conservation	Monrovia	Annual	CI-Liberia	
Indicator 2.1.4: Number of comprehensive design documents for national coastal conservation financing mechanism formally adopted by relevant government body/bodies	# of documents	Documentation	None	Monrovia	End of project	CI-Liberia, EPA	
Component 3: Community Incentives to Conserve and Sustainably Manage Natural Capital in Coastal Ecosystems							
Indicator 3.1.a: Area (hectares) of mangrove ecosystems under protection across Liberia	Hectares	Mapping of mangrove areas under conservation management	7,791 hectares of mangrove ecosystems under protection across Liberia	Monrovia	Annual	CI-Liberia, EPA, LISGIS	

Indicator 3.1.b: Area (hectares) of terrestrial forest ecosystems under sustainable management in coastal areas	Hectares	Mapping of forest ecosystems under sustainable management	11,034 hectares of terrestrial forest ecosystems under sustainable management in coastal areas	Monrovia	Annual	CI-Liberia, EPA, LISGIS	
Indicator 3.1.c: Income (USD) within coastal and mangrove communities targeted by the project	USD	Socio-economic surveys	Estimated monthly household income of $65 USD within coastal and mangrove communities targeted by the project	Project communities	Mid-term and end of project	CI-Liberia	
Indicator 3.1.1: Number of Conservation Agreements signed with communities	# of agreements	Documentation	None	Monrovia, project communities	Annual	CI-Liberia	
Indicator 3.1.2: Number of national conservation agreement programs designed and established	# of mechanisms	Documentation	None	Monrovia	End of project	CI-Liberia, EPA	
Safeguard Plans:							
Involuntary Resettlement							
IR1: Number of persons whose access to and use of natural resources have been voluntary restricted	Number of people	Socio-economic surveys	None	Project communities	Annual	CI-Liberia	

IR2: Number of persons whose access to and use of natural resources have been involuntarily restricted	Number of people	Socio-economic surveys	None	Project communities	Annual	CI-Liberia	
IR3: Percentage of persons who gave their consent for voluntary restrictions	Percent of people	FPIC documentation	None	Project communities	Annual	CI-Liberia	
IR4: Percentage of persons who have received compensation for voluntary restrictions	Percent of people	Socio-economic surveys	None	Project communities	Annual	CI-Liberia	
IR5: Percentage of persons who have received compensation for involuntary restrictions	Percent of people	Socio-economic surveys	None	Project communities	Annual	CI-Liberia	
Stakeholder Engagement							
SE1: Number of government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector, indigenous peoples and other stakeholder groups that have been involved in the project implementation phase on an annual basis	Number of stakeholders	Analysis of project documentation	None	Monrovia, project communities	Annual	CI Liberia, EPA	
SE2: Number persons (sex disaggregated) that have been involved in project implementation phase (on an annual basis)	Number of people	Analysis of project documentation	None	Monrovia, project communities	Annual	CI Liberia, EPA	
SE3: Number of engagements (e.g. meeting, workshops, consultations) with stakeholders during the project implementation phase (on an annual basis)	Number of engagements	Analysis of project documentation (meeting records)	None	Monrovia, project communities	Annual	CI Liberia, EPA	
Gender Mainstreaming							

GM1: Number of men and women that participated in project activities (e.g. meetings, workshops, consultations)	# of men, women	Meeting attendance records	None	Monrovia, project communities	Monthly	CI-Liberia, EPA	
GM2: Number of men and women that received benefits (e.g. employment, income generating activities, training, access to natural resources, land tenure or resource rights, equipment, leadership roles) from the project	# of men, women	Project documentation, socio-economic surveys	None	Project communities	Annual	CI-Liberia	
GM3: Number of strategies, plans (e.g. management plans and land use plans) and policies derived from the project that include gender considerations (where relevant)	# of instruments	Project documentation	None	Monrovia	Annual	CI-Liberia, EPA	
Accountability and Grievance Mechanism							
AG1: Number of conflict and complaint cases reported to the project's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism	Number of cases	Grievance mechanism records	None	Monrovia	Annual	CI-Liberia	
AG2: Percentage of conflict and complaint cases reported to the project's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism that have been addressed.	Percentage of cases	Grievance mechanism records	None	Monrovia	Annual	CI-Liberia	

APPENDIX IV: GEF Core Indicators

Core Indicator 4	**Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)**					***(Hectares)***
			Hectares (4.1+4.2+4.3+4.4)			
			Expected		Expected	
			PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE
			15,000	*16,975*		
Indicator 4.1	Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity					
			Hectares			
			Expected		Achieved	
			PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE
			15,000	*16,975*		
Indicator 4.2	Area of landscapes that meet national or international third-party certification that incorporates biodiversity considerations					
Third party certification(s):			Hectares			
			Expected		Achieved	
			PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE
Indicator 4.3	Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems					
			Hectares			
			Expected		Achieved	
			PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE

Indicator 4.4	Area of High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) loss avoided					
			Hectares			
			Expected		Achieved	
			PIF stage	Endorsement	MTR	TE
Core Indicator 11	**Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment**					***(Number)***
			Expected		Number Achieved	
				Endorsement	MTR	TE
			Female	*2,904*		
			Male	*3,146*		
			Total	*6,050*		

APPENDIX V: Safeguard Screening Form and Analysis

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL

gef GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

CI-GEF PROJECT AGENCY

SCREENING RESULTS AND SAFEGUARD ANALYSIS

(To be completed by CI-GEF Coordination Team)

I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country: Liberia	**GEF Project ID**: 9573
Project Title: Conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's coastal natural capital	
Executing Agency: Conservation International (CI) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of Liberia	
GEF Focal Area: Biodiversity and Land degradation	
GEF Project Amount: USD 3,944,220	
Reviewer(s): Ian Kissoon	
Date of Review: December 22, 2017	
Comments: Analysis completed and approved	

B. Project Objective:

To improve conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's coastal natural capital by mainstreaming the value of nature into Liberia's development trajectory.

C. Project Description:

Liberia's coastal ecosystems are valuable to the economy and directly underpin or contribute to several economic sectors, including tourism, commercial fisheries, salt, minerals, oil and construction (e.g. by providing goods such as rock, sand, lime and wood). Aquatic ecosystems provide protein for nearly 70% of the population (Government of Liberia, 2004) and also provide key ecosystem services such as flood control and water and soil filtration. However, these values have not been systematically calculated at the sub-national or national level or tracked over time.

Current development trends along the coast pose a significant and ongoing threat including the overexploitation of demersal fish species and other species (e.g. sea turtles), beach sand mining, beach erosion and mangrove loss. In some instances, ecosystem degradation may be higher than in terrestrial ecosystems. For example, it is estimated that the rate of mangrove deforestation could be as high as 65% since 1980.

The current threats to Liberia's coastal ecosystems are exacerbated by several barriers including: lack of data about the value of Liberia's natural capital; lack of awareness and knowledge amongst decision makers about the value of Liberia's natural capital; Inadequate legislation and gaps in national policy; limited institutional capacity and coordination in government ministries; and limited financing for conservation and sustainable management of coastal resources.

The goal of this project is therefore, to use new and powerful tools, such as Natural Capital Accounting (NCA), to build on intrinsic value arguments for nature conservation and provide actionable information derived from the same statistical systems countries use in the

macroeconomic decision making to conserve natural capital in coastal areas. The project will help account for the value that ecosystems such as coastal ecosystems, including mangroves, provide in Liberia and help decision makers come to understand the externalities, the unpriced costs of development, so that impacts and tradeoffs of development decisions are recognized from the onset. It will build the capacity of key development and statistical agencies to collect and analyze this data on a regular basis and to include this information in regular decision making.

The project will empower decision makers in the public sector to develop clear, credible, and long-term policy frameworks that support and incentivize actors in the private sector – including foreign investors – to value and report on their use of Liberia's natural capital and thereby work towards internalizing environmental costs.

The project will be executed under the following components:

- Component 1: Natural Capital Accounting in coastal ecosystems
- Component 2: Innovative financing schemes for conserving coastal natural capital
- Component 3: Community incentives to conserve and sustainably manage natural capital in coastal ecosystems

D. Project location and biophysical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis:

The project will be implemented along Liberia's 565 km long coastline. About 90% of the coastline consists of a narrow sand beach 20- 25 meters wide, reaching 60-80 meters in some parts of southeastern Liberia, interspersed with lagoons. The coastal area consists of swamp-related vegetation, including mangroves forests and reeds that extend up to 25 miles inland.

Liberia is home to around 427 sq. km of mangrove habitats (Spalding et al. 1997) that are recognized internationally as Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) (Kouame et al. 2012). The Liberian coast is critical habitat for four endangered species of marine turtles – Leatherback turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*, EN), Loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*, EN), Green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*, EN), and Olive Ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea,* EN)- which feed in the waters and breed on beaches and in estuaries. Estuaries are also important habitat for threatened West African manatees (*Trichechus senegalensis*, VU), while the mangroves harbor three species of crocodile, the African dwarf crocodile (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*, VU), the Nile crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*, LC), and the African sharp-nosed crocodile (*Mecistops cataphractus*, DD).

While technically Liberia does not recognize any indigenous communities, the coastline hosts a number of communities who depend almost entirely on the coastal ecosystems for their livelihood. Coastal ecosystems have an economic value in Liberia supporting human lives and livelihoods through the provision of food and materials, nutrient cycling, waste processing, and other essential goods and services. Aquatic ecosystems provide protein for nearly 70% of the population (Government of Liberia, 2004) and also provide key ecosystem services such as flood control and water and soil filtration. They are sources of timber, fuelwood and medicines, and they protect shorelines from storms and tidal surges.

These goods and services are harnessed differently by men and women in Liberia, with different positions in society. For instance, in the current mangrove project sites at the coastline, it has been found that that both men and women living near mangrove ecosystems in Liberia use mangrove resources in different ways. Based on data collected, it was understood that men were more likely

to harvest wood in mangroves based on the level of physical effort required to fell mangrove trees. Women were more likely to fish for crustaceans in mangroves ecosystems by setting out woven palm traps. Men were more inclined to cut channels through the mangroves and line them with nets to catch different species of fish. These same channels were used by women to gain access to Mangroves that grew closer to the water's edge. Clearly both women and men use mangrove resources in different ways and any restriction on access to mangrove resources would have a negative impact on both groups.

E. Executing Agency's Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies:

The EA is currently implementing another GEF funded project "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" and therefore has the capacity and experience to comply with the requirements of the safeguard policies.

II. SAFEGUARD AND POLICIES

Environmental and Social Safeguards:

Safeguard Triggered	Yes	No	TBD	Date Completed
1. Environmental & Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)		**X**		
Justification: No significant adverse environmental and social impacts that are sensitive, diverse, or unprecedented is anticipated				
2. Natural Habitats		**X**		
Justification: The project is not proposing to alter natural habitats				
3. Involuntary Resettlement	**X**			
Justification: The project is proposing restriction of access/use of natural resources.				
4. Indigenous Peoples		**X**		
Justification: The project does not plan to work in lands or territories traditionally owned, customarily used, or occupied by indigenous peoples				
5. Pest Management		**X**		
Justification: There are no proposed activities related to pest management				
6. Physical & Cultural Resources		**X**		
Justification: There are no proposed activities related to physical and cultural resources				
7. Stakeholder Engagement	**X**			
Justification: The project is required to engage stakeholders				
8. Gender mainstreaming	**X**			
Justification: The project is required to mainstream gender at all levels				
9. Accountability and Grievance Mechanisms	**X**			
Justification: As a publicly funded GEF project, a Grievance Mechanism is required.				

III. KEY SAFEGUARD POLICY ISSUES AND THEIR MANAGEMENT

1. Describe any safeguard issues and impacts associated with the proposed project. Identify and describe any potential large scale, significant and/or irreversible impacts:

From information provided in the Safeguard Screening Form, this project has triggered four safeguard policies. These are:

I. *Involuntary Resettlement (Restriction of Access to and Use of Natural Resources)*
II. *Stakeholder Engagement,*
III. *Gender Mainstreaming, and*
IV. *Grievance Mechanism.*

2. Describe any potential indirect and/or long term impacts due to anticipated future activities in the project area:

No indirect and/or long term impacts due to anticipated future activities are foreseen at this time.

3. Describe any project alternatives (if relevant) considered to help avoid or minimize adverse impacts:

The proposed approach of the project is expected to avoid or minimize adverse impacts. As such, no better alternative can be conceived at this time.

4. Describe measures to be taken by the Executing Agency to address safeguard policy issues.

I. *Involuntary Resettlement (Restriction of Access to and Use of Natural Resources)*
To ensure that the project meets CI-GEF Project Agency's "Involuntary Resettlement Policy #3" the Executing Agency is required to develop during the PPG phase, a Process Framework document (refer to Appendix IV of the ESMF Policy for guidance).

In addition, the Executing Agency is required to monitor and report on the following minimum indicators for the Restriction of Access to and Use of Natural Resources:

1. *Number of persons whose access to and use of natural resources have been voluntary restricted*
2. *Number of persons whose access to and use of natural resources have been involuntary restricted*
3. *Percentage of persons who gave their consent for voluntary restrictions*
4. *Percentage of persons who have received compensation for voluntary restrictions*
5. *Percentage of persons who have received compensation for involuntary restrictions*

II. *Grievance Mechanism*
To ensure that the project meets CI-GEF Project Agency's "Accountability and Grievance Mechanism Policy #7", the Executing Agency is required to develop an Accountability and Grievance Mechanism that will ensure people affected by the project are able to bring their grievances to the Executing Agency for consideration and redress. The mechanism must be in place before the start of project activities, and also disclosed to all stakeholders in a language, manner and means that best suits the local context.

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

1. *Number of conflict and complaint cases reported to the project's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism; and*
2. *Percentage of conflict and complaint cases reported to the project's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism that have been addressed.*

III. *Gender Mainstreaming*

To ensure that the project meets CI-GEF Project Agency's "Gender Mainstreaming Policy #8", the Executing Agency is required to prepare a Gender Mainstreaming Plan.

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

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

IV. *Stakeholder Engagement*

To ensure that the project meets CI-GEF Project Agency's "Stakeholders' Engagement Policy #9", the Executing Agency is required to develop a Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

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

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

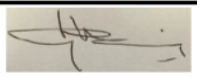
IV. PROJECT CATEGORIZATION

PROJECT CATEGORY	Category A	Category B	Category C
			X
Justification: The proposed project activities are likely to have minimal or no adverse environmental and social impacts.			

V. EXPECTED DISCLOSURE DATES

Safeguard Plan	CI Disclosure Date	EA Disclosure Date
Environmental & Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)	*NA*	*NA*
Environmental Management Plan (EMP)	*NA*	*NA*
Voluntary Resettlement Action Plan (V- RAP)	*NA*	*NA*
Process Framework for Restriction of Access to Natural Resources	*Within 15 days of CI-GEF approval*	*Within 30 days of CI-GEF approval*
Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP)	*NA*	*NA*
Pest Management Plan (PMP)	*NA*	*NA*
Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)	*Within 15 days of CI-GEF approval*	*Within 30 days of CI-GEF approval*
Gender Mainstreaming Plan (GMP)	*Within 15 days of CI-GEF approval*	*Within 30 days of CI-GEF approval*
Accountability and Grievance Mechanism	*Within 15 days of CI-GEF approval*	*Within 30 days of CI-GEF approval*

VI. APPROVALS

Signed and submitted by:		
	**Name: Free de Koning** **Sr. Director Project Development & Implementation**	**Date: 2018-01-03**
Approved by:		
	**Name: Ian Kissoon** **Technical Advisor (Safeguard Manager)**	**Date: 2017-12-22**

APPENDIX VI: Safeguard Compliance Plans

A. Process Framework for Restriction of Access to Natural Resources

As part of our existing rights-based approach to conservation, CI recognizes that people have the right to remain on the lands and territories that they have traditionally occupied, which includes the continued access to resources they have traditionally used. While this project will not resettle individuals, it may have an effect on access to marine and coastal resources by individuals and communities in the project areas. The project proposes to institute community-based natural resource management of coastal resources in Liberia. Sustainable management may include voluntary restrictions on access to resources including mangrove resources. The project proposes to use Conservation Agreements to adequately compensate for any loss of access to resources.

What are Conservation Agreements?

Forests, reefs and species around the world are threatened because in many places that harbor exceptional biodiversity, local people lack alternatives to unsustainable resource use. Protecting biodiversity and key ecosystem services in these places requires conservation tools that provide development opportunities to local populations. When conservation offers concrete benefits to rural farmers and local communities, protecting the environment becomes an increasingly viable and attractive choice. In a Conservation Agreement, resource users commit to conservation actions in exchange for benefit packages defined through participatory processes to address local development needs and priorities. Conservation Agreements are long-term interventions that produce enduring solutions for people and nature, with an emphasis on financial sustainability and sound governance. Conservation agreements promote social structures and local empowerment that improve stewardship of key natural resources and help people pursue sustainable development options.

A Conservation Agreement can be broken can be broken down into to two key elements

- The conservation actions to be undertaken by the resource users in response to threats to biodiversity or ecosystems
- The benefits provided by the conservation investor to offset the opportunity cost of conservation incurred by the resource users

The benefit package in a Conservation Agreement is determined together with communities to ensure that it responds to local needs and priorities, but delivery of benefits over time depends on verified compliance with conservation commitments. Benefits are conditional on the counterpart's compliance with commitments specified in the agreement. Sanctions (adjustments in benefits) for non-compliance are designed jointly by all parties to the agreement to ensure that they are understood, viable, and appropriate to the counterpart's culture while still respecting rights.

Compensating resource users for any loss of access using Conservation Agreements

A Conservation Agreement recognizes that there is an opportunity cost associated with conservation. The opportunity cost of conservation reflects the value of what resource users give up by not utilizing their resources under the business-as-usual scenario.

This is the balance of:

- The income that would be derived from resource use such as clearing forest for agriculture or timber extraction (*e.g.*, the value of crops or timber that would be harvested in the absence of conservation)
- The value of ecosystem services that would be lost by destructive resource use (*e.g.*, reduced water quality, soil erosion, loss of culturally significant resources)

To secure an agreement, the benefit package must be designed to offset the opportunity cost that resource owners believe they will incur if they choose conservation. In essence, communities are compensated for any loss of access to resources using opportunity cost to determine a fair level of compensation.

Conservation International's Rights-based Approach (RBA) and Conservation Agreements

The Conservation Agreement model reflects Conservation International's Rights-based Approach (RBA). RBA is an approach to conservation that promotes and integrates human rights into conservation policy and practice by emphasizing the positive connections between conservation and the rights of people to secure their livelihoods, enjoy healthy and productive environments, and live with dignity. The RBA recognizes that respecting human rights is an integral part of successful conservation, and emphasizes community rights to choose and shape conservation and development projects that affect them. CI's RBA includes principles, policies, guidelines, tools, and practical examples to guide the organization, ensuring that we respect human rights in all of our work. Any Conservation Agreement initiative involves a thorough community engagement process and a participatory design and negotiation stage that embodies the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). The principle of FPIC refers to the right of indigenous peoples to give or withhold their consent for any action that would affect their lands, territories or rights, as recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). While FPIC is the right of indigenous peoples alone under international law, the principles underlying it are generally considered to be a good guideline for engaging any community or group of local stakeholders.

FPIC can be broken down as follows:

Free: Without coercion, intimidation, or manipulation

Prior: Before the start of any activity while also respecting indigenous consultation/consensus processes

Informed: Indigenous peoples have full information about the scope and impacts of the proposed activity on their lands, resources and well-being

Consent: right to say yes or no as a result of consultation and participation in good faith

FPIC is not simply a decision-making process or a veto mechanism for the community, but a tool to ensure that outside people and organizations engage indigenous communities in a culturally appropriate way, so that their development priorities, needs and desires can be met. A true FPIC process includes not only consultation but also the space for a community to give or withhold their consent to a project.

Negotiating Conservation Agreements under this Project

The decision to work on an agreement will be entirely up to the community. CI works with communities who have a strong collective interest and ability to organize to protect their natural resources. The consent to a Conservation Agreement must reflect the desire of the community, free of external pressure from not only the implementer but also any other entity such as the Government.

The following set of actions will be implemented by the Project Manager to ensure that there has been a true FPIC process that provides space for a community to give or withhold their consent to a project.

- The Project will develop the feasibility analysis for Conservation Agreement implementation using mainly secondary information to help avoid raising expectations in the communities.
- Respecting customary decision-making mechanisms within communities ensures that CAs are adapted to local realities. However, it is important to also remember that some customary decision-making mechanisms do not allow for disadvantaged or marginalized groups to be heard. The Project Manager will establish culturally-appropriate ways to ensure those voices are part of decision-making.
- The Project Manager will explain the CA model to communities during the engagement phase and allow them to understand the interests of the implementers and decide if they want to work together on a CA.
- The Project Manager will design the CAs together with communities and ensure that communities have enough time to discuss the content and to decide if they want to sign such an agreement
- The Project Manager will ensure that the communities know how the benefit package amount has been defined to reduce conflicts when negotiating the benefits to be provided by the CAs.
- The Project Manager will show the biodiversity and socioeconomic monitoring results to communities to increase their engagement and demonstrate how the CA impacts their natural resources and wellbeing.
- The Project Manager will aim to establish one-year agreements that allow communities and implementers to learn from the experience, improve the CA design, and build trust among the parties involved.

This process ensures that any restrictions of access to natural resources are enacted voluntarily and with the consent of the community, and offset by mutually agreed-upon compensation in the form of the CA benefit package.

Monitoring and evaluation of Process Framework for Restriction of Access to Natural Resources

Indicator 1: Number of persons whose access to and use of natural resources have been voluntarily restricted

Logic: Shows how many people have accepted restrictions on resource access

Indicator 2: Number of persons whose access to and use of natural resources have been involuntarily restricted

Logic: Shows how many people have seen their resource access restricted against their wishes

Indicator 3: Percentage of persons who gave their consent for voluntary restrictions

Logic: Shows the degree to which the project secured local agreement to restrict resource access

Indicator 4: Percentage of persons who have received compensation for voluntary restrictions

Logic: Shows the degree to which acceptance of resource access restrictions was secured through incentives

Indicator 5: Percentage of persons who have received compensation for involuntary restrictions

Logic: Shows the degree to which involuntary resource access restrictions were offset through compensation

B. Stakeholder Engagement Plan

a) Introduction

In Liberia it is estimated that the rate of mangrove deforestation could be as high as 65% since 1980 (FAO 2007). The greatest threat to mangroves in Liberia is land degradation due to urbanization, transportation infrastructure development, and mining and oil exploitation. A secondary cause related to habitat loss is overexploitation of natural resources, specifically around urban areas, through the practices of hunting, firewood collection, charcoal production, and timber extraction. Finally, pollution of the water, air and soil from chemicals released from agricultural pursuits, oil exploration, mining, and the effects of climate change also contribute to the loss of mangroves in Liberia.

Against this background of continued degradation and over-exploitation of mangrove resources, there is a vital need to advance a holistic, integrated approach to better manage and conserve mangrove areas vital for biodiversity and community well-being. This project, combining research, policy recommendations, technical advice and practical tools coupled with small-scale interventions provide such an approach. This project will work with local communities and other stakeholders to educate them on the importance of mangroves; provide guidance and recommendations on best practices for protecting mangroves, their biodiversity, and the services that they provide; and enter into negotiated Conservation Agreements with communities that empower them to improve sustainable resource management in return for concrete incentives.

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan is a cross-cutting element that is central to the success and sustainability of this project. Through it we aim to encourage awareness, adoption and stewardship of conservation measures by ensuring effective participation and productive dialogue. Specifically, the Stakeholder Engagement Plan will articulate the different opportunities that stakeholders will have to actively participate in the project and how the expectations of different stakeholders will be managed by the Project Management Unit (PMU). The plan highlights key institutions, organizations, communities and individuals that influence or would be influenced by project activities.

b) Policies and Requirements

The CI-GEF Project Agency oversees the Executing Entity involving all stakeholders, including project-affected groups, local communities, and local CSOs, as early as possible in the preparation process and ensures that their views and concerns are made known and taken into account. The CI-GEF Project Agency Team will also ensure that the Executing Entity will continue to hold consultations throughout project implementation as deemed necessary to address environmental and social impacts that affect them.

Local communities in coastal areas are central stakeholders in one of the three principal project components. Project implementation will involve extensive engagement with these local communities using the conservation agreement methodology, which includes best practices in community engagement. They will also be involved through participatory planning for land and resource use. The project will emphasize the provision of locally appropriate alternatives to unsustainable harvest practices, determined with community members through participatory agreement design and negotiation processes. Using the conservation agreement model the project will promote income generation and job creation within impoverished communities while improving resource management; thus, the project pursues positive social and environmental change, with safeguards in the engagement process to prevent negative social impact. Moreover, the project will work through existing governance structures within the

communities, strengthening and adding where needed, to enhance local control over resource use and related decisions.

The Screening and Safeguard Analysis by the CI-GEF Project Agency noted that "The project is required to engage stakeholders," and required preparation of a Stakeholder Engagement Plan. This document presents an analysis of key stakeholders and explains the measures put in place to ensure that safeguard requirements are met.

c) Summary of Previous Stakeholder Engagement Activities

Project preparation included a number of information sharing and consultation activities with various actors that have a key stake in the proposed project. These activities and the stakeholders involved are summarized below:

Project Steering Committee meetings

During the Project preparation phase, members of the Project Steering Committee were convened on a regular basis to provide insight based on the requisite positions within government regarding project alignment with national policies and laws, best practice and new initiatives. The Project Steering Committee was focused on ensuring collaboration with other programs and avoiding any duplication of efforts within the sector.

Project Management Team meetings

During the project preparation phase, members of the Project Management Team were convened on a regular basis. The Project Management Team included government employees from the EPA and representatives from CI. The Project Management Team was responsible for day-to-day planning and execution of project preparation steps. The team convened to discuss key decisions regarding project contracting, staffing and workplans. The team also met prior to all Project Steering Committee meetings to review documents to be presented during these meetings. Members of the Project Management Team also participated in socio-economic baseline assessment activities.

Experts consultation meeting and multi-stakeholder meeting

CI convened an expert's panel in Monrovia on September 25-26, 2018 to review information relevant to the status of Natural Capital Accounting and identify key gaps and needs to be addressed by the project. This was followed by a multi-stakeholder meeting on September 27, 2018 to invite reactions to the general project structure and goals. At both meetings, results of ecological and socio-economic baseline assessments were presented for validation by government and civil society representatives, to inform site selection and site-based intervention design.

Ecological and socio-economic baseline assessments

Baseline assessments were conducted by CI-Liberia and a contracted firm to inform site selection and site-based intervention design, and to build a foundation of background knowledge about local social conditions to inform stakeholder engagement and eventual partnerships with communities through conservation agreements. Specific goals for these assessments included:

- Characterize conditions of mangrove sites in the proposed project area
- Assess the social and biological value of these priority mangrove sites including their use by communities, rate of loss, ecosystem services provided, and threats to these ecosystems
- Initiate stakeholder engagement processes at the local level, while managing expectations with respect to eventual project delivery

(Ecological and socio-economic baseline assessments available on request).

Gender workshop in Monrovia

Under a previous initiative, CI, in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, organized a two-day workshop on Gender Strategy Development and Gender Mainstreaming. The workshop brought together a cross-section of stakeholders including civil society groups, Gender Focal Points from key government ministries, youth groups and international NGOs. The purpose of the workshop was to review the National Gender Strategy and Policies of Liberia and to identify best practices for mainstreaming gender into natural resource management projects. The final few sessions of this workshop had the specific objective of soliciting participants' views on draft elements of a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan. The final Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan developed for the earlier project provided the basis for the Gender Mainstreaming Plan adopted for the current project.

d) Project Stakeholders

The following major stakeholders/stakeholder groups are relevant to the project:

Local communities

Local communities residing on the coast of Southeast Liberia, particularly those in close proximity to mangroves and other priority coastal ecosystems. This project will focus on communities in Grand Bassa and River Cess Counties. Final selection of communities will be subject to a multi-stakeholder selection process informed by 1. feasibility assessment using CI's Conservation Agreement methodology, 2. data and analysis pertinent to NCA, and c. viability of linkages to conservation-friendly enterprise.

Local County Administration

Local County Administration is the sum-total of personnel who run the various political sub-divisions of the Country as Local Government. The Project will engage members of the County administration to ensure ownership and drivenness for the project by local authorities in the two counties that the project will be implemented. This leadership structure in each county comprises the following:

County Administration

- County Superintendent
- City Mayor
- District Commissioner
- Township Commissioner
- Paramount Chief

- Clan Chief
- General Town chief
- Cultural leaders

National Government Entities

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

The EPA was authorized by the EPA Act in 2003, but did not become functional until late in 2006, with a board of directors and Policy Council. EPA is charged with implementing the Environment Protection and Management Law, a framework environmental law that envisions the development and harmonization of sector-specific laws. EPA serves as the principal authority for managing and regulating environmental quality (including environmental and social impact assessments), and it is directed to coordinate all activities relating to environmental protection and the sustainable use of natural resources. It also promotes environmental awareness and oversees the implementation of international conventions related to the environment. Management of coastal ecosystems falls under the remit of the EPA.

Forestry Development Authority (FDA)

The FDA was created by an Act of the Legislature in 1976, which was subsequently amended in 2006 with the adoption of the Forestry Reform Law. The FDA provides forestry planning, develops forestry policy, administers and enforces the forestry laws, administers concession agreements, calculates forestry fees, carries out reforestation and forest research and training, monitors the activities of timber companies, and sets up and administers national parks.

Liberia Maritime Authority (LMA)

The Liberia Maritime Authority has a statutory mandate to administer, promote and regulate programs relating directly and indirectly to the functioning, growth and development of the maritime sector.

Ministry of Agriculture (MOA)/ National Bureau of Fisheries (BNF)

The Bureau of National Fisheries (BNF) is housed within the MOA to regulate fishing activities in Liberian waters. 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 has three divisions (Marine, Research and Statistics, and Aquaculture) that are closely aided by an administrative section. The BNF is charged with the responsibility for managing and developing fisheries and aquaculture in Liberia. BNF collaborative efforts include work with NGOs to conduct outreach and education; mangrove conservation management with the EPA; producing maps with LISGIS; and coordinating enforcement efforts with other law enforcement agencies.

Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MOG)

Established in 2001 by an Act of the National Legislature, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection amongst other things serves as a driving force of Government for application of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its related instruments including UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); the Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC); the

AU Protocols on Women and Children, UNSCR 1325 on Women Peace and Security; and the Beijing Platform for Action.

The Ministry is mandated to advise Government on all matters affecting the development and welfare of women and children as well as any other matters referred to it by the Government. The Ministry is divided into two Departments: Planning and Administration; and Research and Technical Services.

Liberian Coast Guard

The mission of the Liberian Coast Guard is to enforce law and make enquiries, examinations, inspect, search, seize and affect arrests within the Liberian Exclusive Economic Zone, in order to prevent, detect, and suppress violation of the Laws of the Republic of Liberia. In these efforts, the LCG collaborates with a variety of Government Agencies, including BNF, Liberia Maritime Authority, National Port Authority, Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, and others.

Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA)

Ministry of Internal Affairs is responsible for local governance and rural development and as such will be key engaging local communities in the project priority areas.

Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy (MLME)

Established in 1972, the MLME maintains jurisdiction over the management and extraction of mineral, water, and energy resources in Liberia. The Ministry of Lands, Mines & Energy (MLME) was established by an act of Legislature to administer all activities relative to land, mineral, water and energy resource exploration, coordination and development in the Republic of Liberia. In adherence to its statutory mandate, the Ministry formulates and implements policies and regulations in collaboration with other sector related agencies for the delivery of efficient services to the public from the land, mineral, water and energy sectors.

Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP)

The MFDP was created in 2013 by an Act of the National Legislature, in line with international financial management best practices. The new MFDP effectively replaced the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, with the mandate to formulate, institutionalize and administer economic development, fiscal and tax policies for the promotion of sound and efficient management of financial resources of the government. As custodian of the country's economy, the MFDP combines public finance, development planning and economic management expertise and experience to effectively manage the economy.

Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services (LISGIS)

LISGIS was established by an Act of the National Transitional Legislative Assembly in 2004, and created in July 2005 by spinning off the Statistical Department of the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs. The goals of LISGIS are to: 1. Establish, develop and maintain a holistic National Statistical and Spatial Data System (NSSDS) and an integrated National Statistical and Spatial Database (NSSD); and 2. Coordinate, monitor and supervise the NSSDS and NSSD to allow for the provision of holistic gender and geographic

sensitive analysis for timely, relevant and acceptable standards of information to institutions of the Government, the business and the wider national and international communities.

Liberia Land Authority (LLA)

The LLA is an autonomous institution that has the statutory mandate to govern and regulate all land related functions. The LLA was established in 20016 to consolidate the agencies, develop land policy, and implement programs in support of land governance. The LLA is a critical conduit for access to important services like recording rights for rural customary groups, public information campaigns, and facilitating dispute resolution for overlapping claims. The LLA's Survey Division is responsible for the National Land Information System (NLIS), which serves as the national spatial data infrastructure to effectively manage land administration functions at national, sub-national, regional and local levels and aid in sustainable development planning.

Bilateral/ Multilateral Entities

USAID

For nearly six decades, USAID has been working in Liberia on rural and urban development, health and education. USAID invests heavily in natural resource management in Liberia. USAID continues to build the capacity of the Liberian Forestry Development Authority and other government agencies, civil society organizations as well as strengthen local communities' management of forests and natural resources.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Environment and energy represent one of the key practice areas for UNDP in Liberia due to its critical links with efforts in poverty eradication and sustainable development. UNDP's activities in Liberia fall within six corporate thematic areas, including Environment & Energy. The Energy and Environment Programme aims to mainstream environment and climate change in national development priorities and strategies in the country. UNDP in Liberia is an implementing agency for the GEF. UNDP have been the implementing agency on a number of GEF projects in Liberia, including projects with a focus on coastal communities and ecosystems.

GEF

Since joining the GEF, Liberia has received through GEF's various mechanisms grants totaling nearly US$35 million that leveraged nearly US$110 million in co-financing resources for 21 national projects, as well as shares of several regional projects. These include projects in climate change, biodiversity, and persistent organic pollutants. Under STAR GEF-6 Liberia has received an indicative allocation to formulate and execute projects for US$3,432,734 in biodiversity, US$ 3,000,000 in climate change, and US$1,000,000 in land degradation.

GEF Agencies in Liberia: World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); Conservation International; African Development Bank

National Executing Partners: Environmental Protection Agency, Ministry of Land, Mines and Energy, Rural and Renewable Energy Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, Electricity Corporation, Ministry of Lands

CI-GEF Project Agency

The CI-GEF Project Agency supports governments, private sector, civil society and knowledge institutes in accessing GEF funding in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The CI GEF Agency will supervise development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the projects and is accountable to the GEF Council.

United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP)

The UNEP post-conflict capacity-building program was ended in December 2007. Liberia has since reverted to being serviced remotely by the UNEP Regional Office for Africa. UNEP has a strong interest in supporting conservation of mangroves and coastal ecosystems in Liberia. UNEP and the EPA implemented a TEEB study that aims to demonstrate the value of mangroves for Liberia, focused on analyzing economic and cultural benefits gained from conservation or restoration of wetlands in five study sites along the coast of Liberia.

World Bank (WB)

The World Bank has supported more than 30 projects in Liberia that have impacted many sectors such as agriculture, education, transportation, energy, and water, supply and sanitation. Significant projects related to NRM include:

- The Smallholder Tree Crop Revitalization Support Project (STCRSP) is operating from 2013-2016, and will increase access to finance, inputs, technologies and markets for smallholder tree crop farmers in Liberia (cocoa, coffee, oil palm and rubber), and to develop a long term development program for the tree crops sector in six of the country's main tree crop producing counties (Bong, Nimba, Grand Gedeh, Grand Bassa, Montserrado and Margibi).

- The West African Regional Fisheries Program (WARFP), initiated in 2009 and extended to continue operating at present, supports a combination of regional cooperatives, national reforms and local education and empowerment. The goal is to help West African countries work together to manage their shared fisheries resources. Since its inception in 2009 WARFP has supported Ghana, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Senegal. In Liberia, BNF is currently engaged in activities designed to improve the management and regulation of fisheries in Liberia in line with the PRS.

- The Biodiversity Conservation through Expanding the Protected Area Network in Liberia (EXPAN) was initiated in March of 2011 and concluded in 2014. The project's objective was to contribute to the conservation of Liberia's globally significant biodiversity by: (1) providing better representation of ecosystems within Liberia's current protected area network; and, (2) enabling active conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity with local communities. The project included the planned creation and gazettement of two additional protected areas (Grebo and Grand Kru).

<u>Private land owners in coastal and riverine areas</u>

Mangroves near urban centers on the Liberian coast are being cleared and in their place plots of land are being developed for the purpose of housing. For example, this includes housing for impoverished residents in Monrovia and land development by wealthy individuals on the Marshall River. This dynamic

may be less prevalent for the moment in the project area, but is beginning to manifest near larger settlements.

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.

The Society for the Conservation of Nature in Liberia (SCNL)

Founded in 1986, SCNL is the oldest environmental NGO in Liberia. Its conservation projects include the creation and maintenance of protected areas, wildlife conservation, bio monitoring, and the use of socioeconomic surveys. They are the local partner for Birdlife International (BI), and have conducted bird inventories in several forest areas, and produced a list of Important Birds Areas in Liberia.

Farmers Associated to Conserve the Environment (FACE)

The mission of Farmers Associated to Conserve the Environment (FACE) is to empower local farmers to engage in modern, stable farming practices that are sustainable, environmentally friendly, and yield significant positive net income. FACE is involved in seed rice multiplication and mangrove conservation. The focus is to promote stable, modern farming systems in order to improve food production and enhance the natural environment.

Save My Future Foundation (SAMFU)

The Save My Future (SAMFU) Foundation is a non-governmental organization established in 1987 by a renowned Catholic priest and two conservationists. SAMFU's mission is to facilitate and promote participatory community-based sustainable natural and human resource management and development in Liberia. This is pursued through an educational and empowering process in which the people in partnership with each other and those able to assist them identify their priorities, mobilize resources and assume the responsibility to manage and control the resources on which they depend. The organization's activities are directed towards the protection for the environment, facilitation of nature conservation and embrace the promotion of social justice, equality and respect for human rights.

National Charcoal Union of Liberia (NACUL)

NACUL is an umbrella organization of charcoal stakeholders in Liberia. NACUL advocates on behalf of charcoal producers, sellers and buyers, and works closely with FDA to monitor charcoal production.

Sea Turtle Watch Liberia

The Sea Turtle Watch (Liberia) is working directly with other international and local NGOs to build an alliance with the responsible government agencies and coastal communities in an effort to save sea turtles and their habitats in Liberia.

Skills and Agricultural Development Services (SADS)

SADS was founded in 1998 as a campus-based organization at the University of Liberia with the goal of improving environmental awareness and education of students. SADS is focused on implementing a wide range of education and developmental programs designed to improve social services in areas such natural resource governance, advocacy, human rights, and rural livelihood skill development in Liberia

Rural Integrated Center for Community Empowerment (RICCE)

The mission of RICCE is to empower rural residents to build vibrant self-sustaining communities through peace building initiatives, networking, advocacy and poverty reduction. RICCE works in several program areas, including: rights monitoring; biodiversity conservation advocacy; women's empowerment; agriculture; health promotion; peace building; and, community development.

Fauna and Flora International (FFI)

FFI has operated in Liberia since 1997, and currently has a five-year mission (2013-2018) to make a measurable improvement to the status of biodiversity and ensuring resilient ecosystems through supporting good environmental governance, building capacity and supporting conservation-friendly livelihood strategies. Past efforts have included support to re-establish Sapo National Park, developing a rapid ecological assessment tool to identify and prioritize sites for inclusion in the protected area network, leading field activities for the Liberian National Forest Re-Assessment, conducting a variety of floral and faunal surveys, capacity building in key GOL organizations, and facilitating the development of laws related to community rights and forestry. In the 15 years since FFI's arrival, geographical focus of on-the-ground activities has broadened from Sapo to include Nimba Mountains and Lake Piso, both recognized biodiversity hotspots.

The table below provides additional information on the major stakeholders (Table 1).

Project Stakeholders

Table 1: Project Stakeholders

	Stakeholder	Interests in the Project	Stakeholder Influence in the Project	Project Effect(s) on Stakeholder
Local communities in project sites	10 local communities in Rivercess, Sinoe, and Grand Kru Counties.	10 local communities with whom the project will partner using Conservation Agreements have a strong interest in ensuring that this project addresses the economic pressures and limited employment opportunities that have resulted in an increase in local communities' dependence on mangroves for	Local communities living in and around the mangroves are the primary users and beneficiaries of the mangroves and are key to the project's success.	Local communities are the direct beneficiaries in this project and will ultimately determine whether mangroves can be sustainably managed using the suite of tools that this project will provide.

	Stakeholder	Interests in the Project	Stakeholder Influence in the Project	Project Effect(s) on Stakeholder
		subsistence and local commerce.		
National Government Ministries and Agencies	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	EPA is the co-executing agency on this project. As the operational focal point for GEF funding in Liberia, the EPA has a strong interest in the development and success of this project.	As the operational focal point for GEF funding in Liberia, the EPA has a strong influence on the direction of this project. The agency has a strong role in executing this project and this is reflected in the agency's strong representation on both the Project Steering Committee and Project Management team.	The success of this project will reflect either positively or negatively on the agency's position as operational focal point for all GEF funding in Liberia.
	Forestry Development Authority (FDA)	As the project will work with communities near potential future protected areas, as custodian of the protected areas network in Liberia the FDA has a particularly strong interest in Component 3 of this project (conservation agreements).	The FDA has a strong influence in all forest related projects across the country, including mangrove forests.	The project will create the enabling conditions for inclusion of community co-management strategies in future protected area creation along Liberia's coast.
	Ministry of Agriculture (MOA)/ Bureau of National Fisheries (BNF)	The BNF is charged with the responsibility of managing and developing fisheries and aquaculture. Actions taken in this project will have a direct impact on the future protection and management of fish stocks in Liberia.	The BNF has strong relationships with local communities living in and around mangroves. The BNF will be influential in our interactions with the primary users of mangroves in this project.	The BNF is currently looking to support projects that involve managing and developing fisheries and aquaculture. This project will allow the ministry to increase its portfolio and include the

	Stakeholder	Interests in the Project	Stakeholder Influence in the Project	Project Effect(s) on Stakeholder
			The BNF is also responsible for coordination with the West Africa Regional Fisheries Program. It will be important we align our interventions to maximize synergies.	management of mangroves as another component in their work.
	Liberia Maritime Authority (LMA)	Liberian Maritime Authority has a statutory mandate to administer, promote and regulate programs relating directly and indirectly to the functioning, growth and development of the maritime sector. The LMA has a strong interest in supporting initiatives that address coastal management.	As the lead agency regulating programs in the maritime sector, LMA could act as an intermediary between the FDA and the EPA.	This program will help the LMA execute better on aspects of their mandate.
	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MOG)	Communities across Liberia are highly dependent on natural resource use for subsistence and local commerce. The mainstreaming of gender into all natural resource and climate change projects is a high priority for the MOG.	The MOG played a significant role shaping the gender mainstreaming plan for this project.	The execution of this project will provide valuable information for the ministry about the practicalities of mainstreaming gender into future natural resource management projects.
	Liberian Coast Guard (LCG)	The LCG's mandate is to enforce law and make enquiries, examinations, inspect, search, seize and affect arrests within the Liberian Exclusive Economic Zone. This includes law enforcement in project areas selected for this project.	The LCG works in close collaboration with the BNF, providing sea patrol and enforcement support. The LCG will be involved in policing any illegal activities happening in the	This project may provide information on illegal activities occurring within mangrove areas that the LCG could utilize to make inquiries and enforce the

	Stakeholder	Interests in the Project	Stakeholder Influence in the Project	Project Effect(s) on Stakeholder
			project area, such as illegal fishing with dynamite.	law where necessary.
	Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA)	The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) is responsible for local governance and rural development. The MIA has an interest in all projects that seek to address issues related to rural development and governance of natural resources.	MIAs has an important role coordinating and implementing government services through the various units of the Local County Administration whose support and buy-in will be essential for the success and sustainability of this initiative.	CI will be engaging with members of the County Administration in each project site, from County Superintendent down to the General Town chief. MIA will have an important role ensuring that the different representatives within the Local County Administration are aligned in their understanding and expectations of the project.
	Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy (MLME)	The MLME administers activities related to the use of land and may have an interest in the land use planning component of the project.	The MLME maintains jurisdiction over the management and extraction of minerals, water, and energy resources in Liberia. Future projects including hydroelectric projects or mining projects may have a direct impact on mangrove ecosystems downstream.	Participatory land use planning at the community level in this project may provide valuable information for the MLME as it devises new strategies for future land use planning processes across the country.
	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP)	The MFDP holds the mandate to formulate, institutionalize and	MFDP's decision to embrace NCA will be critical to	The project will affect central aspects of

	Stakeholder	Interests in the Project	Stakeholder Influence in the Project	Project Effect(s) on Stakeholder
		administer economic development, fiscal and tax policies for the promotion of sound and efficient management of financial resources of the government, which are all targets for NCA incorporation.	project success, as they are the ultimate authority with respect to planning processes. They are also integral to linking a national conservation financing mechanism to a national conservation agreement program.	MFDP's approach to development planning and tracking of economic performance. It will make MFPD planning and decision-making more sustainable by incorporating the value of natural capital.
	Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services (LISGIS)	LISGIS is responsible for collecting data and maintaining databases pertinent to national planning processes. Thus, the project's emphasis on NCA relates directly to core goals of LISGIS.	LISGIS has a strong influence on the project as it houses the relevant technical mandate and capacity for developing and maintaining NCA, and adding it to existing data systems.	The project will focus on building LISGIS capacity with respect to NCA, and collaborate closely with LISGIS to integrate NCA into national planning systems by ensuring that NCA results are incorporated into data packages provided to users (especially other government agencies).
	Liberia Land Authority (LLA)	The mandate of the LLA extends to all land and land based natural resources. This project is currently the largest single investment in mangrove conservation across the country and as a result holds great interest for the LLA.	The LLA has a strong interest in the deployment of community-based resource planning and management activities, such that this project represents important demonstrations and precedents.	The LLA can use experience generated through this project to shape future policy with respect to land and resource rights of coastal communities.
Local Government	Local County Administration	Local County Administration is the sum-	Local Administrators	The project should provide

	Stakeholder	Interests in the Project	Stakeholder Influence in the Project	Project Effect(s) on Stakeholder
		total of personnel who run the various political sub-divisions of the Country as Local Government. The project will be active in Grand Bassa and River Cess counties. Local County Administrators have a direct interest in all projects being implemented in their County.	have a strong influence on the direction and success of projects within their counties. Local communities are unlikely to actively engage in the project if the project does not have the blessing of the Local Administration.	Local County Administrators with an opportunity to demonstrate to their constituents that they are securing additional support to address challenges facing the local populace.
Bilateral/ Multilateral Entities	USAID	USAID invests heavily in strengthening local communities' management of forests and natural resources in Liberia. USAID has not previously invested in the management of mangrove ecosystems and is likely to be interested in lessons learned from this project.	USAID has launched the regional West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change (WA-BiCC) program. There is clearly a need for cross learning between the project and this program to avoid duplication of effort and maximize mutually reinforcing investments.	USAID is likely to be interested in lessons learned from this project. These lessons will likely determine future USAID investment in the environmental and natural resources sector in Liberia.
	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	UNDP has invested heavily in projects in Liberia focused on building resilience of vulnerable coastal areas to the risks associated with climate change. This project will invest in nature based solutions to address coastal resilience. These alternatives solutions are likely be of interest to UNDP.	UNDP is one of the few other GEF implementing agencies in Liberia. UNDP can potentially influence whether this project will secure additional funding for future expansion of the project.	This project is likely to influence future UNDP investments in coastal areas.
	Global Environmental Facility (GEF)	As a GEF investment there is significant interest in the success of this project.	The GEF secretariat provided important input	This project will likely have an impact in determining

	Stakeholder	Interests in the Project	Stakeholder Influence in the Project	Project Effect(s) on Stakeholder
			for the design of this project, which will certainly impact implementation.	future allocations in Liberia.
	CI-GEF Project Agency	As this is the second project implemented by the CI-GEF Project Agency in Liberia, there is a strong interest in ensuring that the project is a success.	The CI-GEF Project Agency has a significant role in the Monitoring and Evaluation of this project. This will have a significant impact on the execution of this project over time.	The success of this project will have an impact on the appetite of the CI-GEF Project Agency to support future work in Liberia.
	United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP)	UNEP has strong interest supporting conservation of mangroves and coastal ecosystems in Liberia.	UNEP and the EPA conducted 'The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity' (TEEB) study that aimed to demonstrate the value of mangroves for Liberia. The results of this study will inform execution of this project.	This project may determine future UNEP support for conservation of mangroves and coastal ecosystems in Liberia.
	World Bank (WB)	The WB has and continues to support many significant natural resource management projects in Liberia. The WB is also a strong advocate globally for Natural Capital Accounting.	WB participation in global efforts to advance NCA will help shape Component 1 of this project.	This project may influence future WB investments in forestry, Liberia's Protected Area Network, and NCA efforts in the country.
NGOs and civil society organizations	The Society for the Conservation of Nature in Liberia (SCNL)	SCNL has previously been involved in past mangrove conservation projects elsewhere in Liberia and continues to be very interested in similar projects	SCNL has a strong interest in partnering with CI as one of the local partners on this project. SCNL will provide significant guidance on the direction of this	SCNL currently partners with CI on another project that addresses mangrove conservation in Barcoline, Grand Bassa. SCNL may

	Stakeholder	Interests in the Project	Stakeholder Influence in the Project	Project Effect(s) on Stakeholder
			GEF investment based on their past experience in mangrove conservation in Liberia.	partner with CI as a local partner on this project.
	Farmers Associated to Conserve the Environment (FACE)	FACE implemented a UNDP-sponsored awareness raising project in the Lake Piso wetlands in 1999 and an NC-IUCN small-grant sponsored project in 2004. They hold great interest in expanding their mangrove conservation efforts to other areas.	FACE will provide guidance on the direction of this GEF investment based on their past experience in mangrove conservation in Liberia.	FACE currently isn't involved in mangrove conservation work but may become involved under this project.
	Save My Future Foundation (SAMFU)	SAMFU have previously been engaged in sea turtle conservation projects long the Liberian coast including Grand Bassa County. SAMFU continues to have strong interest in projects that address protected area management and biodiversity conservation in coastal landscapes.	SAMFU may help shape thinking on the development on community-based conservation in this project.	SAMFU may partner with CI as a local partner on this project.
	National Charcoal Union of Liberia (NACUL)	The production and distribution of charcoal is a practice commonly mentioned by stakeholders as a major threat to mangroves and biodiversity. The project will address charcoal production from mangrove wood.	The NACUL may influence the way in which the project engages with project beneficiaries on the use of mangrove wood in charcoal production.	The project will potentially engage with the National Charcoal Union of Liberia to address the use of mangrove wood in charcoal making.
	Sea Turtle Watch Liberia (STWL)	Sea Turtle Watch Liberia's community-based sea turtle conservation project was launched in 2012 and includes sites in Grand Bassa County.	STWL will potentially be implementing activities in areas that lie adjacent to the proposed project sites in this project.	STWL may be able to use the GEF project to increase awareness around its own community-based sea turtle

	Stakeholder	Interests in the Project	Stakeholder Influence in the Project	Project Effect(s) on Stakeholder
				conservation projects.
	Skills and Agricultural Development Services (SADS)	SADS currently partners with CI to implement Conservation Agreements around East Nimba Nature Reserve. They have a strong interest in partnering with CI on this project.	As a potential partner, SADS may influence the design and delivery of future Conservation Agreements under this project.	This project may offer SADS an opportunity to expand work on Conservation Agreements from terrestrial forest to mangrove forest.
	Rural Integrated Center for Community Empowerment (RICCE)	RICCE currently partners with CI to implement Conservation Agreements around East Nimba Nature Reserve. They have a strong interest in partnering with CI on this project.	As a potential partner, RICCE may influence the design and delivery of future Conservation Agreements under this project.	This project may offer RICCE an opportunity to expand work on Conservation Agreements from terrestrial forest to mangrove forest.
	Fauna and Flora International (FFI)	FFI previously implemented a project in Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve to improve the capacity of civil society members to sustainably use and conserve mangrove resources. This included the development of a protected area (PA) management strategy for the reserve.	FFIs previous work developing community co-management strategy in mangrove settings may offer lessons relevant to Component 3.	FFI may adopt lessons from the project in its own community, conservation financing, and mangrove work.
Private land owners in coastal and riverine areas	Private land owners	Private land owners and land developers have a vested interest in land use regulations in coastal and riverine areas.	This project will potentially engage private land owners and land developers with respect to land use planning as well as innovative financing options.	Private land owners may have a strong influence over Local County Administration and their role in this project.

e) Stakeholder Engagement Program

The goal of this Stakeholder Engagement Plan is to involve all stakeholders of the project, as early as possible in the implementation process and throughout project duration to ensure that their views and

concerns are made known and taken into account. The plan will help the project in implementing effective communication channels and working relationships. The Executing Agency will continue to hold consultations throughout project implementation as deemed necessary. This section provides a summary of the engagement of the major stakeholders. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be implemented in conjunction with the Gender Mainstreaming Plan and the Process Framework relating to restriction of access to natural resources.

Table 2. Summary of the engagement of the project's major stakeholders

Stakeholders	Engagement Methods/Means	Engagement Activities	Responsible Party(ies)	Required Resources
Local communities in project sites	Through face-to-face community meetings, individual interviews and workshops	Range of activities may include: participatory appraisals of community needs using standard PRA methods and tools; capacity building and awareness raising; feasibility studies for Conservation Agreements; data collection for research purposes; consultations to attain Free, Prior and Informed Consent; involvement in local land use planning meetings	PMU (primarily CI Liberia)	Staff time; travel to project sites; meeting venue and catering for community meetings
National Government Ministries and Agencies	Emails, face-to-face meetings, workshops	Project Management Unit meetings Project Steering Committee meetings Project Inception workshop Training and capacity building events Joint work on NCA frameworks Share midterm and final project evaluation	PMU (primarily CI Liberia) and CI Moore Center for Science staff	Staff time; travel support for EPA; meeting venue and catering for meetings
NGOs and civil society organizations	Emails, face-to-face meetings, workshops	Project Inception workshop Share midterm and final project evaluation	PMU (primarily CI Liberia)	Staff time; travel support; meeting venue and catering for meetings
Private Sector	Emails, face-to-face meetings, workshops	Project Inception workshop Share midterm and final project evaluation	PMU (primarily CI Liberia)	Staff time; meeting venue and catering for meetings
Bilateral/ Multilateral Entities	Emails, face-to-face meetings, workshops	Project Inception workshop Share midterm and final project evaluation Coordination meetings	PMU (primarily CI Liberia)	Staff time; travel support; meeting venue and catering for meetings
Local Government	Emails, face-to-face meetings, workshops	Project Inception workshop Share midterm and final project evaluation Local land use planning activities	PMU (primarily CI Liberia)	Staff time; travel support; meeting venue and catering for meetings
Private land owners in coastal and riverine areas	Emails, face-to-face meetings, workshops	Local land use planning activities Information and outreach activities	PMU (primarily CI Liberia)	Staff time; travel support; meeting venue and catering for meetings

f) Methods Used for Information Delivery and Consultation

The project will implement education and awareness activities at a community level to raise awareness on the importance of mangroves. The bulk of information delivery and consultation will be conducted through direct in-person interaction with community members, by either CI-Liberia field staff or partners engaged for field work. Activities may include the use of theatre to convey important messages about mangrove conservation that are adapted to the local context. The project will utilize sign boards to raise the profile of the project and key conservation messages.

g) Resources and Responsibilities

A Liberian national will be hired as the project manager, and will oversee the implementation of the project's Stakeholder Engagement Plan at the whole-project level.

CI Liberia's Technical Director and Senior Program Manager will also provide oversight and support implementation of the project's stakeholder engagement plan at the whole-project level. Half of the Technical Director's budgeted time on this project will be dedicated to implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

The Project Steering Committee (PSC) and Project Management Team (PMT) will also hold responsibility for implementation of the project's Stakeholder Engagement Plan at the whole-project level.

h) Monitoring and evaluation of Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Indicator 1: Number of government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector, indigenous peoples and other stakeholder groups that have been involved in the project implementation phase on an annual basis

Logic: Shows the extent of institutional stakeholder involvement in project implementation

Indicator 2: Number persons (sex disaggregated) that have been involved in project implementation phase (on an annual basis)

Logic: Shows the extent of individual stakeholder involvement in project implementation

Indicator 3: Number of engagements (e.g. meeting, workshops, consultations) with stakeholders during the project implementation phase (on an annual basis)

Logic: Shows the degree to which stakeholder engagement is incorporate into the project implementation process

C. Gender Mainstreaming Plan

Introduction to project

In Liberia it is estimated that the rate of mangrove deforestation could be as high as 65% since 1980 (FAO 2007). The greatest threat to mangroves in Liberia is land degradation due to urbanization, transportation infrastructure development, and mining and oil exploitation. A secondary cause related to habitat loss is the overuse and overexploitation of natural resources, specifically around urban areas, through the practices of hunting, firewood collection, charcoal production, and timber extraction. Finally, pollution of the water, air and soil from chemicals released from agricultural pursuits, oil exploration, mining, and the effects of climate change also contribute to the loss of mangroves in Liberia.

Against this background of continued degradation and over-exploitation of mangrove resources, there is a vital need to advance a holistic, integrated approach to better manage and conserve mangrove areas vital for biodiversity and community well-being. This project, combining research, policy recommendations, technical advice and practical tools coupled with small-scale interventions provide such an approach. This project will work with local communities and other stakeholders to educate them on the importance of mangroves; provide guidance and recommendations on best practices for protecting mangroves, their biodiversity, and the services that they provide; and enter into negotiated Conservation Agreements (CAs, see below) with communities that empower them to improve sustainable resource management in return for concrete incentives. Gender is an incredibly important element in this project, and therefore this Gender Mainstreaming Plan has been adopted.

Objectives of the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan:

The objective of this gender mainstreaming plan is to outline specific actions that will be taken within the project to ensure that both men and women have the opportunity to equally participate in, and benefit from, the project. Along with the stakeholder engagement plan, this plan is part of the project's commitment to equitable stakeholder participation. The plan takes into account that project activities cover a range of operational scales from communities to global agendas with components that fund field-based implementation and broader knowledge management and capacity building. Gender implications and considerations will be different within each of the project components in this project

Gender dynamics within the project

Liberia's population is highly dependent on natural resources. Liberia is well endowed with natural resources and economic growth is primarily based on the use of these resources. In Liberia, about half of the population lives in or near forested areas and the forests are of great importance to the poor, for instance through the provisioning of food, building materials, wood fuel, medicine, etc. In Liberia, men and women have clearly distinct gender roles with respect to natural resource use at the household and community levels. Women in rural settings in Liberia are often highly dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods, and are therefore particularly susceptible to changes in the availability and quality of these resources. Despite their reliance on natural resources, women have less access to and control over natural resources than men. Due to structural injustice, social norms and traditions, women have limited access to land despite the fact that the farmers often are women. Usually it is men who put land, water, plants and animals to commercial use, which is often more valued than women's domestic uses.

Men and women in Liberia, with different positions in society, use mangroves differently and have different perspectives on the importance of mangroves and how they should be protected. Access, and the ability to restrict it, is vital for the ability of local communities to properly manage mangrove forests. During the PPG phase of this project, explicit attention was given during socio-economic assessments to document and understand the different ways in which women and men access and utilize mangrove resources in Liberia and to identify any obstacles to equal participation in conservation. It was clear that men and women use mangrove resources in different ways. Based on data collected, it was understood that men were more likely to harvest wood in mangroves based on the level of physical effort required to fell mangrove trees. Women were more likely to fish for crustaceans in mangroves ecosystems by setting out woven palm traps. Men were more inclined to cut channels through the mangroves and line them with nets to catch different species of fish. These same channels were used by women to gain access to mangroves that grew closer to the water's edge.

Although women and men use mangrove resources in different ways, restrictions on access to Mangrove resources would impact both sexes. Based on these key differences in the use of mangrove and coastal resources, a gendered perspective on mangrove conservation must be adopted. Strategies to avoid inequality in this project will be explained in the next section of this document. This strategy will outline a set of actions that signify a shift away from the focus on simply including greater numbers of women to a set of actions that will challenge existing power hierarchies. This project will seek to address power differences and recognize the differing levels of control and dependence on mangrove ecosystems.

Strategies to avoid inequality within the project

The project will need to include several different strategies to allow women to openly voice their opinions on specific issues. At the same time, the project will have to ensure that these strategies are sensitive to local cultural norms and do not inadvertently encourage a deepening of power imbalances. These strategies cannot exclude men and discourage their support for the project by singling out women as primary agents responsible for conservation and resource management decisions. The project will adopt the following strategies to avoid inequality within the project:

1. Collect detailed sex-disaggregated data on project beneficiaries as the full project commences

Baseline data collection during the PPG phase of the project will be supplemented with ongoing data collection over the course of the full project. Detailed gender specific data on project beneficiaries will need to be collected at each local project site once communities have provided their Free, Prior and Informed Consent to participate as part of the full project. This will include more detailed information on gender roles relating to mangroves (such as use patterns and participation in management/decision-making), as well as possible positive/negative impacts on men and women.

Actions:

- Information/data will be collected with oversight from CI's Technical Director. This staff member already has time built into the project to oversee this work.
- The Project Manager will develop the protocol (questions, information gathering system, etc.) for collecting the gender information, informed by CI's Gender Integration Guidelines.
- Following the information gathering stage, the Project Manager will be responsible for interpreting the information and reviewing the Gender Mainstreaming Plan to ensure that no negative gender-based impacts will occur during the project.

- The CI-HQ Gender and Conservation Specialist (CI-HQ Policy and Practice Unit) as well as any local NGOs with experience related to gender issues are resources that can be used to help fine-tune gender strategy for particular site-level projects (i.e. individual conservation agreements).

2. Ensure that women's representation on project management decision making bodies in this project is not limited to nominal positions

Women are often chosen to sit on decision-making bodies but tend to be offered nominal positions with little decision-making power or influence. This can mean that women often hold positions as tokens or fronts for men. This project will seek to address this tendency and ensure that women have equal access to important positions that hold influence.

Actions:

- The Project Management team will ensure that any decision-making bodies that are established at community level will have fair and meaningful representation by both genders.

3. Establish separate project decision-making bodies for both men and women in target project sites

The involvement and participation of marginalized groups, such as women and youth, in public meetings concerning the management of mangroves and marine resources is insufficient. This strategy has identified specific actions to ensure equitable representation and participation in decision-making by both men and women. In the local context in Liberia, it may be countercultural for women to openly disagree with their male counterparts. Efforts to increase gender equality in decision making about coastal and marine resources by mixing men and women in public forums may not create the enabling environment for women's participation, because the presence of men may serve as an intimidating factor.

Actions:

- In addition to establishing central project decision-making bodies in target project sites, this project will establish separate decision-making bodies for both men and women that will report directly to the main project management decision-making body. Every effort will be made to ensure that women's representation on the primary project management decision-making body in each community in this project is not limited to nominal positions.

4. *Ensure adequate access to information for both women and men and conduct gender sensitive communication activities in the project*

The few men who have access to information and documents may use them to control and manipulate discussions. The project will need to address this concern by ensuring that both men and women have access to the same information and that this information is presented in a manner that can be understood by both men and women at a community level.

Actions:

- The Project Manager will ensure that any communications and awareness-raising material is distributed to both men and women. The Project Manager will also ensure that this material is presented in a manner that is accessible to community members who are illiterate or have not been through formal schooling.
- The Project Manager will ensure that community meetings will be scheduled at an appropriate time to allow participation by both men and women.

5. Consider gender as an important element during the negotiation and design of Conservation Agreements

The project will utilize the Conservation Agreement (CA) methodology to engage with communities. CAs are a form of direct incentives for conservation, in which conservation investors provide a negotiated benefit package in return for conservation actions by communities. CAs link conservation funders (governments, bilateral agencies, private sector companies, foundations, individuals, etc.) to resource owners whose decisions influence conservation outcomes. Benefit packages typically include funding for social services like health and education, as well as investment in livelihoods, often in agricultural or fisheries sectors. Examples of conservation commitments in CAs include forgoing forest clearing, adopting particular farming or fishing practices, and participating in patrolling and monitoring activities. Respecting customary decision-making mechanisms within communities ensures that CAs are adapted to local realities. However, it is important to also remember that some customary decision-making mechanisms do not allow for disadvantaged or marginalized groups to be heard. It is necessary to find culturally-appropriate ways to ensure those voices are part of decision-making.

Men and women interact with their environment in different ways, and therefore have different needs, priorities, and interests in conservation. It is important to consider these differences, and ensure that both men and women are involved with developing and implementing CAs. Conservation actions identified by the community may have a more direct impact on either women or men. For example, if harvesting of mangrove wood is banned under a CA, this may directly affect men who tend to use mangrove wood in charcoal production. At the same time, this restriction on access by men could have an indirect impact on women if less income is available at a household level based on the restriction on charcoal production. Alternatives identified in any CA that is negotiated will need to take in account the different ways that men and women use resources. However, the project must first ensure that women and men have the same knowledge about the CAs, and are both included in Free, Prior and Informed Consent processes.

Actions:

- During the initial feasibility analysis stage, a CI staff member will ask questions about how men and women use the mangrove resource the CA seeks to protect. A woman will lead focus groups or surveys where women's input is sought, and a man will lead interactions with men, recognizing that groups or individuals may be more comfortable speaking about these issues with people of the same sex.
- Negotiation of CA conservation commitments and benefits: During the negotiation and design phase of a CA, communities will define the conservation actions in the agreement and the benefits they will receive in return. During this phase the Project Manager or staff member responsible for negotiating the agreement will ensure that conservation actions identified in the agreement are analyzed to provide an understanding of how these actions may impact differently on men and women and ensure that the results of this analysis are reflected in the final benefit packages that are agreed upon with communities.
- Representative community bodies under CAs: If communities are to make decisions and choices as a collective whole, then effective and equitable organizations for community representation are required. The Project Manager will ensure that women's representation on CA decision-making bodies are not limited to nominal positions.

Monitoring and evaluation of gender considerations

Indicator 1: Number/percentage of women/men *attending* activities & trainings & meetings.

Logic: Reflects male/ female access to meetings linked with the project, training resources, etc. - will also be subject to the local gender and interest group demographics.

Indicator 2: Number/percentage of women/men *actively participating* in activities & trainings & meetings.

Logic: An indicator for the relative involvement and interest of men and women in the context of the exercise at hand. Indicator 2 is a subset of Indicator 1. Active participation will be measured as the number of distinct contributions (questions, answers, leading break-out sessions, reporting on break-out sessions, etc.) per individual.

Indicator 3: Number of men/women benefitting from the project (e.g. employment, income generating activities, training, access to natural resources, land tenure or resource rights, equipment, leadership roles).

Logic: An indication of equal opportunities and access to benefits (excepting any activities specifically designed with stakeholders to redress a gender equitability issue).

Indicator 4: Number of men/women demonstrating leadership in project implementation.

Logic: An indication of how gender influences decision-making processes.

Indicator 5: Number of strategies, plans (e.g. management plans and land use plans) and policies derived from the project that include gender considerations (where relevant)

Logic: Tracking of explicit incorporation of gender considerations in Conservation Agreements and associated planning instruments.

Budget and resources

Gender mainstreaming actions and activities are largely the responsibility of the Project Management team. Responsibility for gender mainstreaming in the Project will rest with the Project Manager and Technical Director. The project has allocated sufficient resources for both Project Manager and Technical Director responsibilities for managing gender mainstreaming activities.

D. Accountability and Grievance Compliance

Ongoing community satisfaction, buy-in and support are critical to successful Conservation Agreements. Therefore, means by which to identify, prevent and address any sources of dissatisfaction are crucial elements of effective Conservation Agreement design.

For the overall project at the community level, verbal complaints will first be addressed in community-level meetings with project implementing staff. If unresolved, community members will be invited to submit complaints in writing to the Project Manager or implementing partner and through him or her, to the CI Technical Director. Community members may also choose to proceed directly to submission of written complaints rather than raise the issue in a community meeting. The letter of complaint must be signed by the person(s) submitting the complaint. If needed, the Project Manager or implementing partner will assist the complainant(s) in preparing the letter of complaint.

If the complaint, depending on its complexity, cannot be resolved by the Technical Director, it will be taken up by the Project Management Unit (PMU), who will address it at the next PMU meeting or, if necessary, organize an emergency meeting.

An answer to the complaint must be provided within 60 days and must be provided in written form.

These options and the relevant contact information (names, addresses, phone numbers) for the Project Manager and Technical Director will be provided to communities at the outset of community engagement activities, in readily accessible document form accompanied by verbal explanation. As part of the FPIC process, engagement activities (initial presentation of the project, Conservation Agreement negotiations, socio-economic surveys, project status reports back to community, etc.) will include reminders of the grievance option and mechanisms, as well as contact information. The Project Manager will also ensure that community leadership (chiefs, teachers, religious leaders, women's group leaders) have the relevant contact information.

Complaints from other stakeholders, including partners, will also be directed to the Project Manager, the Technical Director, or the PMU. This option will be communicated in initial project documents shared with other stakeholders, along with project summary, implementation process, etc. Periodic reporting on the project to the wider stakeholder group and partners will also include reminders of the grievance submission options.

The CI-GEF Project Agency will be promptly informed about any complaints submitted and their resolution. Grievances not addressed at the project/country level can be escalated with CI's General Council Office at HQ.

A specific grievance mechanism will be established for each Conservation Agreement that is signed with communities. The details of the grievance mechanism will depend on the nature of the agreement and community dynamics; however, at a minimum the grievance management system under any agreement will track grievances and pursue conflict resolution from the point of reporting to the point of redress and finality. A Conservation Agreement grievance mechanism will provide a system for recognizing and responding coherently to a complaint through identifying a person responsible for investigating the complaint and coordinating response. The system will include a methodology for the following:

- Receiving complaints through any of the above-mentioned channels
- Assessing information needs

- Allocating responsibility for investigation
- Recording the process
- Contacting the complainant
- Determination of the facts
- Agreeing responsibility and action where required
- Informing the complainant
- Dealing with disagreements over response and outcome
- Implementing action
- Researching complainant satisfaction
- Monitoring and evaluating the outcome

The specific means of executing this methodology will be stipulated in the Conservation Agreement document, detailed jointly by the project implementer and the counterpart community. Thus, definition and launching of the grievance mechanism is an explicit component of the Conservation Agreement design and negotiation process.

Monitoring and evaluation of Accountability and Grievance Compliance

Indicator 1: Number of conflict and complaint cases reported to the project's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism

Logic: Shows the volume and frequency of conflicts and complaints attributed by stakeholders to the project

Indicator 2: Percentage of conflict and complaint cases reported to the project's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism that have been addressed.

Logic: Reflects the success rate of the Accountability and Grievance Mechanism in resolving cases.

Contact information for Accountability and Grievance Mechanism channels

Project Manager	*(To be updated in this document after Project Manager is hired)* NCA Project Manager Conservation International Liberia House #1 Johnson Compound, Tubman Boulevard Old Congo Town, Monrovia Phone: Email:
Technical Director	George Ilebo Conservation International Liberia House #1 Johnson Compound, Tubman Boulevard Old Congo Town, Monrovia Phone: +231881926157 Email: gilebo@conservation.org
Implementing Partner	*(To be provided on case by case basis depending on the particular implementing partner at specific project site; this document will be*

	updated with a list of Implementing Partners and relevant contact info as they are contracted)
Project Management Unit	*(To be updated after PMU is fully constituted)*
CI General Counsel Office	Three ways to contact the CI General Counsel's office: • online at ci.ethicspoint.com (select the "Make a Report" link) • by telephone by calling (866) 294-8674 (toll free for US) • or, if you are calling from outside of the United States: **International Dialing Instructions (Reverse Charge Calls / Collect Calls)** a) From an outside line contact your local operator. b) Request a reverse charge or collect call to be placed to the United States, to: 503-748-0567. c) When the operator asks who is placing the call, give your company name. Do not give your name. d) All reverse charge or collect calls will be accepted by the Ethics Point Contact Center After you complete your report you will be assigned a unique code called a "report key." Write down your report key and password and keep them in a safe place. After 5-6 business days, use your report key and password to check your report for feedback or questions.

APPENDIX VII: Detailed Project Budget

Sum of USD Amount Total		Activity				
RPT Category	Comments/Justification	C1	C2	C3	PMC	Grand Total
1. Personnel Salaries and Benefits	Biodiversity Specialist	57,590				57,590
	Carbon Specialist	9,878				9,878
	Grants Manager -TBH	42,023	48,997	37,690		128,710
	HQ Finance Lead				16,470	16,470
	Hydrological Modeler	111,839				111,839
	Mapping Specialist	102,983				102,983
	National Policy Expert	20,198	22,385	24,514		67,098
	Overall Expert for Component One	147,701				147,701
	Project Driver	16,112	16,112	23,047		55,272
	Project Finance Lead/Overall Financial Management Oversight and contract management	42,689	17,076	12,807	34,151	106,723
	Project Lead -VS	80,568	53,299	106,598	44,622	285,087
	Project Officer -TBH	32,662	26,339	38,011	13,735	110,747
	Project Techical Advisor/Technical backstopping/Oversight	77,065	19,266	38,533		134,864
	Technical Lead for Component one	109,857				109,857
1. Personnel Salaries and Benefits Total		**851,166**	**203,475**	**281,199**	**108,979**	**1,444,819**
2. Professional Services	Implementation of Field Surveys - Biodiversity inclusive of consultant fees, travel, and data collection	41,027				41,027
	Audit Fees				12,869	12,869
	Biodiversity field collection data quality assurance, control, synthesis and reporting	25,000				25,000
	Biodiversity Specialist - Data Collection (Rachel's position)	25,000				25,000
	Ecosystem Account Surveys	30,000				30,000
	Ecosystem Accounting Integratin into SNA inclusive of consultant fees and travel	101,642				101,642
	Ecosystem Accounting Integration into SNA inclusive of consultant fees and travel	100,088				100,088
	Final Evaluation	7,000	7,000	7,000		21,000
	Hydrologist Consultant	25,000				25,000
	International: Blue Carbon Feasibility Consultancy		45,000			45,000
	International: Nation-wide Experience in Conservation Agreement and Financial Feasibility Assessment Consultancy			35,000		35,000
	International: Value Chain Analysis		25,000			25,000
	Mid term evaluation	7,000	7,000	7,000		21,000
	National Capital Conservation Fellow - internship program (10 Student/interns every year for 3 months)			12,000		12,000
	Recruitment cost			1,600		1,600
	Species diversity model input to conditions account	40,000				40,000
2. Professional Services Total		**401,757**	**84,000**	**62,600**	**12,869**	**561,226**

	3. Travel, Meetings and Workshops	Applications of the account for policy and planning Workshop (cost includes meals, venue rental, transportation for participants and training materials for 25 participants over 3 days)	4,474				4,474
		Carbon Offset	2,091				2,091
		Conservation Agreements Training - (includes cost of meals, venue hire, participant transportation and stationery)		9,274			9,274
		Ecosystem Accounging integration into SNA training/Workshop (cost includes meals, venue rental, transportation for participants and training materials for 25 participants over 3 days)	4,344				4,344
		Ecosystem Accounting methods and analysis training/Workshop (cost includes meals, venue rental, transportation for participants and training materials for 25 participants over 3 days)	4,094				4,094
		Grants Management Training - (includes cost of meals, venue hire, participant transportation and stationery)		4,635			4,635
		Inception workshop -(includes cost of meals, venue hire, participant transportationa and stationery)				3,360	3,360
		International Travel to Global NCA Event from Liberia to US (includes airfare, hotel, meals, taxi and visa costs)	8,684				8,684
		International Travel US-Liberia for Biodiversity Specialist (1 trip for Year 1 and 2; inclusive of airfare, hotel, per diem and local transportation)	9,235				9,235
		International Travel US-Liberia for Biodiversity Specialist (1 trip per year inclusive of airfare, hotel, per diem and local transportation)	17,590				17,590
		International Travel US-Liberia for Hydrological Modeler (1 trip per year inclusive of airfare, hotel, per diem and local transportation)	17,590				17,590
		International Travel US-Liberia for Mapping Specialist (1 trip per year inclusive of airfare, hotel, per diem and local transportation)	17,197				17,197
		International Travel US-Liberia for Overall Expert for Component One (1 trip per year inclusive of airfare, hotel, per diem and local transportation)	21,824				21,824
		International Travel US-Liberia for Technical Lead for Component one (1 trip per year inclusive of airfare, hotel, per diem and local transportation)	21,824				21,824
		Liberia Government Representative - FDA or EPA on Field Surveys (includes hotel and meals cost during field visit)	6,090				6,090
		National Travel for Grants Manager (includes hotel and meals cost during site visit)		12,927			12,927
		National Travel for Policy Expert to field sites(includes hotel and meals cost during field visit)		11,946			11,946
		National Travel for Project Driver to field sites(includes hotel and meals cost during field visit)	47,782				47,782
		National Travel for Project Finance Lead to field sites(includes hotel and meals cost during field visit)		2,390			2,390
		National Travel for Project interns to field sites(includes hotel and meals cost during field visit)			16,159		16,159
		National Travel for Project Lead to field sites(includes hotel and meals cost during field visit)			47,782		47,782
		National Travel for Project Techical Advisor to field sites(includes hotel and meals cost during field visit)		23,891			23,891

		Policy Engagement meetings - (includes cost of meals, venue hire, participant transportation and stationery)	6,090	3,230	1,688		11,009
		Project Management Training - (includes cost of meals, venue hire, participant transportation and stationery)		4,635			4,635
		Project Management Unit - Monthly meeting (Meals and transportations for 10 persons)				17,839	17,839
		Project Steering Committee - Quarterly Meeting -(Meals and transportations for 13 persons)				16,140	16,140
		RAP Survey cost (includes Vehicle rental, fuel, lodging for survey team, permits, meals for survey teams)	38,285				38,285
		SNA and SEEA training/Workshop (cost includes meals, venue rental, transportation for participants and training materials for 25 participants over 3 days)	3,975				3,975
		Standardized data collection and integrated field surveys training/Workshop (cost includes meals, venue rental, transportation for participants and training materials for 25 participants over 3 days)	4,094				4,094
		Thematic accounts (i.e., biodiversity, carbon and water) training/Workshop (cost includes meals, venue rental, transportation for participants and training materials for 25 participants over 3 days)	4,217				4,217
		Vehicle Fuel and maintenance		49,948			49,948
	3. Travel, Meetings and Workshops Total		**239,481**	**122,877**	**65,630**	**37,338**	**465,326**
	4. Grants and Agreements	Conservation Agreements - CI Support			310,000		310,000
		In-Kind Grant to Environment Protection Agency (EPA) Support		120,000			120,000
		In-kind grant to Forestry Development Authority (FDA) Support			60,000		60,000
		In-kind grant to Liberia Maritime Authority (LMA)	60,000				60,000
		In-kind grant to Liberian Institute of Statistics and Geographical Information Services (LISGIS) for Software	60,000				60,000
		Small Grants Program		500,000			500,000
	4. Grants and Agreements Total		**120,000**	**620,000**	**370,000**		**1,110,000**
	5. Equipment	Computer - partially funded by GEF	1,000				1,000
		Data Entry Ragged Tablets with GPS	1,000				1,000
		Gators, waders, headlamps, fuel stove/kitchenware	2,575				2,575
		Landcrusier Hardtop	15,000	15,000	15,000		45,000
		Laptop Computers - 2 Staff	2,000		2,000		4,000
		Office Desk			2,000		2,000
		Research equipment - sampling gear, camera traps, fishing nets, vials, preservaties, batteries	7,210				7,210
		Tableu - Interactive online data management and visualization	2,754				2,754
		Vehicle Tire replacement		2,760			2,760
		Waterworld license	4,000				4,000
	5. Equipment Total		**35,539**	**17,760**	**19,000**		**72,299**
	6. Other Direct Costs	Communication for direct Project Staff		15,927			15,927
		Communication Material Development (billboards, posters, flyers, etc)	12,244				12,244
		Communication Materials	2,000				2,000
		Country Office Project Admin Support Costs	71,167	48,916	68,768	28,634	217,485
		Responsible Conduct in Research (RCR) Course	2,750				2,750
		US Rent Allocation	30,144				30,144
		Vehicle Insurance	10,000				10,000
	6. Other Direct Costs Total		**128,304**	**64,844**	**68,768**	**28,634**	**290,550**
	Grand Total		**1,776,248**	**1,112,955**	**867,197**	**187,820**	**3,944,220**

RPT Category	Comments/Justification	Values USD Amount Year 1	USD Amount Year 2	USD Amount Year 3	USD Amount Year 4	USD Amount Year 5	Sum of USD Amount Total
1. Personnel Salaries and Benefits	Project Driver	8,272	10,664	11,358	12,096	12,882	55,272
	National Policy Expert	14,756	14,446	13,378	11,873	12,645	67,098
	Grants Manager -TBH	11,539	26,587	28,315	30,155	32,115	128,710
	Project Finance Lead/Overall Financial Management Oversight and contract management	18,744	19,963	21,260	22,642	24,114	106,723
	Project Techical Advisor/Technical backstopping/Oversight	23,687	25,226	26,866	28,613	30,472	134,864
	Technical Lead for Component one	12,399	32,182	18,941	18,426	27,909	109,857
	Biodiversity Specialist	13,763	21,263	7,300	7,519	7,745	57,590
	HQ Finance Lead	3,102	3,195	3,291	3,390	3,492	16,470
	Carbon Specialist	0	4,866	5,012	0	0	9,878
	Project Lead -VS	50,071	53,326	56,792	60,483	64,415	285,087
	Project Officer -TBH	16,327	22,218	23,663	25,201	23,338	110,747
	Overall Expert for Component One	31,114	44,065	20,631	21,250	30,642	147,701
	Hydrological Modeler	17,265	42,153	16,960	17,469	17,993	111,839
	Mapping Specialist	14,588	41,817	17,886	16,934	11,757	102,983
1. Personnel Salaries and Benefits Total		**235,627**	**361,971**	**271,652**	**276,049**	**299,519**	**1,444,819**
2. Professional Services	Mid term evaluation	0	0	21,000	0	0	21,000
	Final Evaluation	0	0	0	0	21,000	21,000
	Audit Fees	2,000	2,060	2,122	2,185	4,502	12,869
	Recruitment cost	1,600	0	0	0	0	1,600
	International: Blue Carbon Feasibility Consultancy	45,000	0	0	0	0	45,000
	International: Value Chain Analysis	0	25,000	0	0	0	25,000
	International: Nation-wide Experience in Conservation Agreement and Financial Feasibility Assessment Consultancy	0	0	0	35,000	0	35,000
	Implementation of Field Surveys - Biodiversity inclusive of consultant fees, travel, and data collection	0	41,027	0	0	0	41,027
	Ecosystem Accounting Integration into SNA inclusive of consultant fees and travel	0	0	49,895	50,192	0	100,088
	Ecosystem Accounting Integratin into SNA inclusive of consultant fees and travel	0	0	50,698	50,944	0	101,642
	Ecosystem Account Surveys	0	30,000	0	0	0	30,000
	Biodiversity Specialist - Data Collection (Rachel's position)	0	25,000	0	0	0	25,000
	Biodiversity field collection data quality assurance, control, synthesis and reporting	12,500	12,500	0	0	0	25,000
	Species diversity model input to conditions account	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	40,000
	National Capital Conservation Fellow - internship program (10 Student/interns every year for 3 months)	0	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	12,000
	Hydrologist Consultant	0	25,000	0	0	0	25,000
2. Professional Services Total		**61,100**	**183,587**	**146,715**	**141,322**	**28,502**	**561,226**

	3. Travel, Meetings and Workshops	Carbon Offset	492	344	437	449	369	2,091
		Vehicle Fuel and maintenance	9,408	9,690	9,981	10,280	10,589	49,948
		National Travel for Project Lead to field sites(includes hotel and meals cost during field visit)	9,000	9,270	9,548	9,835	10,130	47,782
		National Travel for Project Driver to field sites(includes hotel and meals cost during field visit)	9,000	9,270	9,548	9,835	10,130	47,782
		National Travel for Project Techical Advisor to field sites(includes hotel and meals cost during field visit)	4,500	4,635	4,774	4,917	5,065	23,891
		National Travel for Policy Expert to field sites(includes hotel and meals cost during field visit)	2,250	2,318	2,387	2,459	2,532	11,946
		International Travel to Global NCA Event from Liberia to US (includes airfare, hotel, meals, taxi and visa costs)	0	4,214	0	4,470	0	8,684
		National Travel for Project Finance Lead to field sites(includes hotel and meals cost during field visit)	750	0	796	0	844	2,390
		National Travel for Project interns to field sites(includes hotel and meals cost during field visit)	0	3,863	3,978	4,098	4,221	16,159
		International Travel US-Liberia for Overall Expert for Component One (1 trip per year inclusive of airfare, hotel, per diem and local transportation)	4,111	4,234	4,361	4,492	4,627	21,824
		International Travel US-Liberia for Technical Lead for Component one (1 trip per year inclusive of airfare, hotel, per diem and local transportation)	4,111	4,234	4,361	4,492	4,627	21,824
		International Travel US-Liberia for Biodiversity Specialist (1 trip per year inclusive of airfare, hotel, per diem and local transportation)	4,111	0	4,361	4,492	4,627	17,590
		International Travel US-Liberia for Hydrological Modeler (1 trip per year inclusive of airfare, hotel, per diem and local transportation)	4,111	0	4,361	4,492	4,627	17,590
		International Travel US-Liberia for Biodiversity Specialist (1 trip for Year 1 and 2; inclusive of airfare, hotel, per diem and local transportation)	4,549	4,686	0	0	0	9,235
		RAP Survey cost (includes Vehicle rental, fuel, lodging for survey team, permits, meals for survey teams)	0	38,285	0	0	0	38,285
		SNA and SEEA training/Workshop (cost includes meals, venue rental, transportation for participants and training materials for 25 participants over 3 days)	3,975	0	0	0	0	3,975
		Standardized data collection and integrated field surveys training/Workshop (cost includes meals, venue rental, transportation for participants and training materials for 25 participants over 3 days)	0	4,094	0	0	0	4,094
		Ecosystem Accounting methods and analysis training/Workshop (cost includes meals, venue rental, transportation for participants and training materials for 25 participants over 3 days)	0	4,094	0	0	0	4,094
		Thematic accounts (i.e., biodiversity, carbon and water) training/Workshop (cost includes meals, venue rental, transportation for participants and training materials for 25 participants over 3 days)	0	0	4,217	0	0	4,217
		Ecosystem Accounging integration into SNA training/Workshop (cost includes meals, venue rental, transportation for participants and training materials for 25 participants over 3 days)	0	0	0	4,344	0	4,344

		Applications of the account for policy and planning Workshop (cost includes meals, venue rental, transportation for participants and training materials for 25 participants over 3 days)	0	0	0	0	4,474	4,474
		International Travel US-Liberia for Mapping Specialist (1 trip per year inclusive of airfare, hotel, per diem and local transportation)	4,111	4,234	4,361	4,492	0	17,197
		Inception workshop -(includes cost of meals, venue hire, participant transportationa and stationery)	3,360	0	0	0	0	3,360
		Project Management Unit - Monthly meeting (Meals and transportations for 10 persons)	3,360	3,461	3,565	3,672	3,782	17,839
		Project Steering Committee - Quarterly Meeting (Meals and transportations for 13 persons)	3,040	3,131	3,225	3,322	3,422	16,140
		National Travel for Grants Manager (includes hotel and meals cost during site visit)	0	3,090	3,183	3,278	3,377	12,927
		Conservation Agreements Training - (includes cost of meals, venue hire, participant transportation and stationery)	4,500	0	4,774	0	0	9,274
		Project Management Training - (includes cost of meals, venue hire, participant transportation and stationery)	0	4,635	0	0	0	4,635
		Grants Management Training - (includes cost of meals, venue hire, participant transportation and stationery)	0	4,635	0	0	0	4,635
		Policy Engagement meetings - (includes cost of meals, venue hire, participant transportation and stationery)	3,000	3,090	1,591	1,639	1,688	11,009
		Liberia Government Representative - FDA or EPA on Field Surveys (includes hotel and meals cost during field visit)	3,000	3,090	0	0	0	6,090
3. Travel, Meetings and Workshops Total			**84,738**	**132,596**	**83,809**	**85,056**	**79,128**	**465,326**
4. Grants and Agreements		Small Grants Program	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	500,000
		Conservation Agreements - CI Support	50,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	310,000
		In-Kind Grant to Environment Protection Agency (EPA) Support	24,000	24,000	24,000	24,000	24,000	120,000
		In-kind grant to Forestry Development Authority (FDA) Support	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	60,000
		In-kind grant to Liberian Institute of Statistics and Geographical Information Services (LISGIS) for Software	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	60,000
		In-kind grant to Liberia Maritime Authority (LMA)	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	60,000
4. Grants and Agreements Total			**210,000**	**225,000**	**225,000**	**225,000**	**225,000**	**1,110,000**
5. Equipment		Gators, waders, headlamps, fuel stove/kitchenware	0	2,575	0	0	0	2,575
		Research equipment - sampling gear, camera traps, fishing nets, vials, preservaties, batteries	0	7,210	0	0	0	7,210
		Computer - partially funded by GEF	1,000	0	0	0	0	1,000
		Tableu - Interactive online data management and visualization	0	0	891	918	945	2,754
		Landcrusier Hardtop	45,000	0	0	0	0	45,000
		Data Entry Ragged Tablets with GPS	1,000	0	0	0	0	1,000
		Waterworld license	2,000	2,000	0	0	0	4,000
		Office Desk	2,000	0	0	0	0	2,000
		Vehicle Tire replacement	0	1,339	0	1,421	0	2,760
		Laptop Computers - 2 Staff	4,000	0	0	0	0	4,000
5. Equipment Total			**55,000**	**13,124**	**891**	**2,338**	**945**	**72,299**
6. Other Direct Costs		Communication Materials	0	0	0	0	2,000	2,000
		Vehicle Insurance	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	10,000
		Communication Material Development (billboards, posters, flyers, etc)	4,897	1,224	4,897	1,224	0	12,244
		US Rent Allocation	4,756	10,516	4,941	4,620	5,311	30,144
		Country Office Project Admin Support Costs	35,223	42,205	44,442	46,731	48,884	217,485
		Responsible Conduct in Research (RCR) Course	2,750	0	0	0	0	2,750
		Communication for direct Project Staff	3,000	3,090	3,183	3,278	3,377	15,927
6. Other Direct Costs Total			**52,627**	**59,036**	**59,462**	**57,853**	**61,572**	**290,550**
Grand Total			**699,091**	**975,314**	**787,530**	**787,619**	**694,666**	**3,944,220**

APPENDIX VIII: Co-financing Commitment Letters

2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 500, Arlington, VA 22202, USA
Tel: +1 703 341.2400
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CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL

December 21, 2018

Dr. Miguel Morales,
Vice President, CI-GEF Project Agency
2011 Crystal Drive
Suite 500
Arlington, Virginia 22202
USA

Subject: Co-Financing support for "Conservation and Sustainable Use of Liberia's Coastal Natural Capital."

Dear Dr. Morales,

On behalf of Conservation International Foundation (CI), I am pleased to inform you that CI plans to contribute **USD 194,248** in co-financing from non-GEF funding in support of the GEF project titled '**Sustainable Mangrove conservation in Liberia: Improving enabling conditions for creation of Marshall Wetlands Protected Area**'. Sustainable Mangrove Conservation in Liberia: Improving enabling conditions for creation of the Marshall Wetlands Protected Area.
This co-financing will support additional funding for **Component 2: Innovative financing schemes for conserving coastal natural capital; and Component 3: Community incentives to conserve and sustainably manage natural capital in coastal ecosystems** during the period of performance, currently estimated from **January 2, 2019 – December 31, 2019.** Specifically, the co-financing will cover **human, administrative and equipment costs** to support the implementation of the project activities. **This co-financing is contingent upon full execution of a grant from the non-GEF funding source.**

This contribution as described above is intended to qualify as **GRANT** co-financing should the project proposal be successful.

We look forward to continued partnership for the implementation of this project.

Sincerely,

Barbara DiPietro
Chief Financial Officer
Conservation International Foundation

REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
P.O. Box 4024
4th Street Sinkor, Tubman Boulevard,
1000 Monrovia, 10 Liberia

Office of the Executive Director

ED/EPA-01/01021/18/RL

November 18, 2018

Dr. Miguel Morales,
VICE PRESIDENT CI-GEF PROJECT AGENCY
2011 Crystal Drive
Suite 500
Arlington, Virginia 22202
USA

Subject: Approval for "Conservation and Sustainable use of Liberia's Coastal Natural Capital Project in Liberia" ProDoc.

Dear Dr. Miguel:

On behalf of the Liberian Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), I write to confirm that we have thoroughly review the final ProDoc and are pleased with the level of work done and activities to be achieved when implemented. Therefore, the EPA will like to officially approve the ProDoc including the budget and execution arrangement.

The EPA has no doubt about Conservation International capacity to support the Government of Liberia through the EPA to conserve and sustainable use of Liberia's Coastal Natural Capital.

Please accept the assurance of my highest esteem and consideration as we strive for environmental sustainability for now and successive generation.

Kind Regards,

Nathaniel T. Blama, Sr., *L.H.D., MPA*
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO

Website: http://www.epa.gov.lr *Mobile: +231880707024/+231778059829 Email: hweahjr@epa.gov.lr*

REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
P.O. Box 4024
4th Street Sinkor, Tubman Boulevard,
1000 Monrovia, 10 Liberia

Office of the Executive Director

ED/EPA-01/01021/18/RL

November 18, 2018

Dr. Miguel Morales,
VICE PRESIDENT CI-GEF PROJECT AGENCY
2011 Crystal Drive
Suite 500
Arlington, Virginia 22202
USA

Subject: Co-Financing support for Conservation and Sustainable use of Liberia's Coastal Natural Capital Project in Liberia

Dear Dr. Miguel,

On behalf of the Liberian Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), I write to confirm that **(Five Million United States Dollars) USD 5,000,000** has been committed as co-financing to Conservation International in support of the GEF project titled 'Conservation and Sustainable use of Liberia's Coastal Natural Capital'.

This co-financing from EPA will support all components particularly Components 1. Natural Capital Accounting in coastal ecosystems and 2. Innovative financing schemes for conserving coastal natural capital. Specifically, the co-financing will cover in-kind contribution of requisite infrastructure, office space, office furniture, utilities (e.g. water, electricity and internet) and staff salaries. The in-kind contribution will be estimated using the equivalent cost of service if outsourced.

This contribution as described above is intended to qualify as co-financing should the project proposal be successful.

Please accept the assurance of my highest esteem and consideration as we strive for environmental sustainability for now and successive generation.

Kind Regards,

Nathaniel T. Blama, Sr., *LL.H.D., MPA*
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO

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REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (FDA)

Office of the Managing Director

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REF: MD/178/2018/-1

December 18, 2018

Dr. Miguel Morales,
Vice President, CI-GEF Project Agency
2011 Crystal Drive
Suite 500
Arlington, Virginia 22202
USA

Subject: Co-Financing support for Conservation and Sustainable use of Liberia's Coastal Natural Capital Project in Liberia

Dear Dr. Miguel,

On behalf of the Liberian Forestry Development Authority (FDA), we write to confirm that USD 2,000,000.00 in-kind has been committed as co-financing to Conservation International in support of the GEF project titled '**Conservation and Sustainable use of Liberia's Coastal Natural Capital'**.

This co-financing from FDA will support all components particularly Components 1. Natural Capital Accounting in coastal ecosystems, 2. Innovative financing schemes for conserving coastal natural capital and 3.Community incentives to conserve and sustainably manage natural capital in coastal ecosystems. Specifically, the co-financing will cover in-kind contribution of requisite infrastructure, office space, office furniture, utilities (e.g. water, electricity and internet) and staff salaries. The in-kind contribution will be estimated using the equivalent cost of service if outsourced.

This contribution as described above is intended to qualify as co-financing should the project proposal be successful

Please accept the assurance of our highest esteem and consideration as we strive for now and successive generation.

Kind Regards,

C. Mike Doryen
Managing Director

CMD/bsg/lhy
bsg

Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services
Statistics House
Capitol Hill P.O. Box 629
1000 Monrovia, 10 Liberia

Office of the Directo
Cell: 231-886-560-435
Email:ffwreh25@hotmail.com
Website:www.lisgis.net

ISGIS/FFW/DG/293/A-1.1/11/'18

November 30, 2018

Dr. Miguel Morales,
Vice President, CI-GEF Project Agency
2011 Crystal Drive
Suite 500
Arlington, Virginia 22202
USA

Subject: Co-Financing support for Conservation and Sustainable use of Liberia's Coastal Natural Capital Project in Liberia

Dear Dr. Miguel:

On behalf of the Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services (LISGIS), I write to confirm that US**$2,000,000.00(Two Million United States Dollars)** has been committed as co-financing to Conservation International in support of the GEF Project titled 'Conservation and Sustainable use of Liberia's Coastal Natural Capital'.

This co-financing from LISGIS will support all components particularly Components:
1. Natural Capital Accounting in coastal ecosystems;
2. Innovative financing schemes for conserving Coastal Natural Capital and
3. Community Incentives to Conserve and Sustainably manage natural capital in coastal ecosystems. Specifically, the co-financing will cover in-kind contribution of requisite infrastructure, office space, office furniture, utilities (e.g. water, electricity and internet) and staff salaries. The in-kind contribution will be estimated using the equivalent cost of service if outsourced.

This contribution as described above is intended to qualify as co-financing should the project proposal be successful.

Please accept the assurance of my highest esteem and consideration as we strive for now and successive generation.

Sincerely Yours,

Prof. Francis F. Wreh
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Liberia Maritime Authority
P.O. BOX 10-9042
1000 MONROVIA 10, LIBERIA
Tubman Boulevard, Sinkor

Liberia Maritime Authority

LiMA/COM/L-00169/'18

November 30, 2018

Dr. Miguel Morales,
Vice President, CI-GEF Project Agency
2011 Crystal Drive
Suite 500
Arlington, Virginia 22202
USA

Subject: Co-Financing support for Conservation and Sustainable use of Liberia's Coastal Natural Capital Project in Liberia

Dear Dr. Miguel,

On behalf of the Liberian Maritime Authority (LMA), I write to confirm that **USD 2,000,000** has been committed as co-financing to Conservation International in support of the GEF project titled 'Conservation and Sustainable use of Liberia's Coastal Natural Capital'.

This co-financing from LMA will support all components particularly Components 1. Natural Capital Accounting in coastal ecosystems; 2. Innovative financing schemes for conserving coastal natural capital and 3. Community incentives to conserve and sustainably manage natural capital in coastal ecosystems. Specifically, the co-financing will cover in-kind contribution of requisite infrastructure, office space, office furniture, utilities (e.g. water, electricity and internet) and staff salaries. The in-kind contribution will be estimated using the equivalent cost of service if outsourced.

This contribution as described above is intended to qualify as co-financing should the project proposal be successful

Please accept the assurance of my highest esteem and consideration as we strive for now and successive generation.

Kind Regards,

James F. Kollie, Jr., CMA, PhD
COMMISSIONER