Conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of a lowland forest mosaic landscape in Ogun, Edo, Delta and Ondo States

Part I: Project Information

GEF ID
10990

Project Type
FSP

Type of Trust Fund
GET

CBIT/NGI
CBIT **No**
NGI **No**

Project Title
Conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of a lowland forest mosaic landscape in Ogun, Edo, Delta and Ondo States

Countries
Nigeria

Agency(ies)
FAO

Other Executing Partner(s)
Federal Ministry of Environment

Executing Partner Type
Government

GEF Focal Area
Biodiversity

Taxonomy
Focal Areas, Biodiversity, Protected Areas and Landscapes, Terrestrial Protected Areas, Productive Landscapes, Biomes, Tropical Rain Forests, Mainstreaming, Forestry - Including HCVF and REDD+, Agriculture and agrobiodiversity, Influencing models, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Convene multi-stakeholder alliances, Stakeholders, Indigenous Peoples, Type of Engagement, Consultation, Partnership, Information Dissemination, Participation, Communications, Awareness Raising, Behavior change, Strategic Communications, Public Campaigns, Private Sector, SMEs, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, Beneficiaries, Local Communities, Civil Society, Non-Governmental Organization, Community Based Organization, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Women groups, Gender-sensitive indicators, Gender results areas, Capacity Development, Access and control over natural resources, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Access to benefits and services, Participation and leadership, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Knowledge Generation, Workshop, Training, Knowledge Exchange, Peer-to-Peer, Field Visit, Innovation, Learning, Theory of change, Indicators to measure change, Adaptive management

Sector
AFOLU

Rio Markers
Climate Change Mitigation
Climate Change Mitigation 1

Climate Change Adaptation
Climate Change Adaptation 1

Duration
60 In Months

Agency Fee($)
332,782.00

Submission Date
4/13/2022

A. Indicative Focal/Non-Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)
BD-1-1	GET	1,401,188.00	8,359,000.00
BD-2-7	GET	2,101,780.00	17,500,000.00
	Total Project Cost ($)	**3,502,968.00**	**25,859,000.00**

B. Indicative Project description summary

Project Objective

To improve the conservation, sustainable use and restoration of a lowland forest landscape in order to protect globally significant biodiversity and strengthen sustainable livelihoods of local communities.

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)
1. Integrated landscape planning and management	Technical Assistance	1. An integrated landscape management (ILM) system operational, enabling conservation and connectivity of forest biodiversity and sustainable forest and land use *Indicators:* *(a) 985,000 ha. areas of Ogun, Edo and Delta States under ILM(b) Platforms for integrated and sustainable*	1.1 Landscape-level, multi-stakeholder mechanism established for participatory development and coordinated implementation of ILM 1.2 State-level policies strengthened in Ogun, Edo and Delta states to support ILM implementation and to incentivize biodiversity conservation and sustainable practices 1.3 Three harmonized landscape management plans for Ogun, Edo and Delta States (Note: This output connects with an ILM plan being developed under a separate, GEF FOLUR project covering a contiguous portion of Ondo state). 1.4 A strategic biodiversity vision to help harmonize, guide and/or reflect efforts in the four within-state portions of the combined landscape 1.5 Landscape-level information and monitoring system 1.6 Inclusive capacity building program for ILM implementation in Ondo, Edo and Delta States.	GET	609,523.00	4,827,000.00

	decision-making at the landscape level are in place and meet regularly	
	(c) Effective biodiversity conservation management enabled through updated legal and policy frameworks and institutional arrangements	

2. Implementation of biodiversity conservation and restoration within protected areas and buffer zones of the landscape	Investment	2. Remaining core biodiversity areas in the landscape are better protected, connected and effectively managed *Indicators*: *- 599,457 ha of protected areas under improved management;* *- 10,000 ha of forest / forest land under restoration*	2.1 Detailed mapping and designation of priority areas for conservation and restoration within existing protected areas, including one national park, portions of ten- twelve forest reserves, and several community conservation areas (CCAs) (exact number of CCAs TBD during PPG phase). 2.2 Site-level management and action plans developed and implemented, including: (i) biodiversity monitoring and species recovery plans; (ii) threat removal strategies, including plans to address illegal hunting and logging, agricultural encroachment and overharvesting of NTFPs; (iii) capacity building of protected area personnel, including for patrolling and reducing illegal logging and hunting; (iv) ecotourism infrastructure to enhance and capture non-consumptive use value of forest biodiversity, e.g. bird watching at Okomu National Park; (v) ecosystem restoration, e.g. through naturally assisted regeneration; (vi) awareness raising / ecotourism marketing plan in nearby urban areas, e.g. Benin City. 2.3 Three protected area financing solutions piloted, in Ondo, Edo and Delta States, including a financial sustainability plan for Okomu National Park.	GET	1,450,000.00	8,500,000.00

3. Implementation of sustainable production practices and nature-based tourism in connecting, productive agricultural areas of the landscape	Investment	3. Reduced pressure on biodiversity through the adoption of sustainable production practices and livelihoods within priority areas of the landscape. *Indicators*: *- 15,000 ha of corridors under sustainable practices*	3.1 Inclusive capacity development program promoting biodiversity-friendly production practices, value chains and nature-based tourism implemented. 3.2 Support provided to value chains for agroforestry, NTFPs, nature-based tourism and the wildlife economy 3.3 Restoration and capacity building strategy for community forests developed and implemented 3.4 Innovative financing mechanisms for sustainable use and restoration piloted	GET	850,000.00	4,800,000.00

4. Knowledge management and M&E	Technical Assistance	4. Knowledge and innovation are diffused at multiple sub-national, national and international scales, while project implementation is effectively monitored and evaluated by a gender-sensitive M&E strategy.	4.1 Communication, knowledge products, tools and approaches are developed and shared widely 4.2 Capacity building and awareness raising of officials and civil society representatives of remaining lowland forest states (Okun, Ekiti and Oyo States) 4.3 Operational monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems implemented	GET	426,645.00	6,500,000.00
				Sub Total ($)	**3,336,168.00**	**24,627,000.00**
Project Management Cost (PMC)						
				GET	166,800.00	1,232,000.00
				Sub Total($)	**166,800.00**	**1,232,000.00**
				Total Project Cost($)	**3,502,968.00**	**25,859,000.00**

Please provide justification

C. Indicative sources of Co-financing for the Project by name and by type

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount($)
Recipient Country Government	Edo State Government	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,987,500.00
Recipient Country Government	Edo State Government	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	3,800,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ondo State Government	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,987,500.00
Recipient Country Government	Ondo State Government	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	3,800,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Okomu National Park Services	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	550,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Okomu National Park Services	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	1,270,000.00
Civil Society Organization	Nigerian Conservation Foundation	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	689,000.00
GEF Agency	FAO	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	200,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Ogun State Government	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,987,500.00
Recipient Country Government	Ogun State Government	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	3,800,000.00
Recipient Country Government	Delta State Government	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,987,500.00
Recipient Country Government	Delta State Government	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	3,800,000.00
			Total Project Cost($)	**25,859,000.00**

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

The Cofinancing sources initially identified at PIF stage are the following: 1) Okomu National Park Services through public investment (Ecological Restoration Programme in Okomu National Park and the Construction / Provision of Recreational Facilities) as well as in-kind (recurrent expenditures for wildlife Conservation, Personnel, etc.); 2) State Governments (Edo, Ondo, Ogun and Delta) and through public investments (various investments made within the target

landscapes that contribute to achieving project objectives) and In Kind (recurrent expenditures made in line with project interventions); 3) Nigerian Conservation Foundation through recurrent expenditures supporting the conservation of species, ecosystems and genetic biodiversity in Nigeria; and FAO through in-kind contributions in support of project interventions. The above cofinancing sources will be further refined, and additional cofinancing sources will be explored during the PPG phase.

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

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount($)	Fee($)	Total($)
FAO	GET	Nigeria	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	3,502,968	332,782	3,835,750.00
				Total GEF Resources($)	**3,502,968.00**	**332,782.00**	**3,835,750.00**

E. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required **true**

PPG Amount ($)	PPG Agency Fee ($)
150,000	14,250

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount($)	Fee($)	Total($)
FAO	GET	Nigeria	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	150,000	14,250	**164,250.00**
				Total Project Costs($)	**150,000.00**	**14,250.00**	**164,250.00**

Core Indicators

Indicator 1 Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
599,457.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Indicator 1.1 Terrestrial Protected Areas Newly created

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 1.2 Terrestrial Protected Areas Under improved Management effectiveness

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
599,457.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)
Akure Ofosu Forest Reserve	300863	Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources	39,273.00						
Ekenwan Forest Reserve	36987	Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources	21,489.00						

Gilli-Gilli Forest Reserve	36988	Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources	31,567.00	
Idanre Forest Reserve	36842	Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources	56,674.00	
Okomu Forest Reserve	36989	Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources	114,626.00	
Okomu National Park	36979	National Park	22,400.00	

Ologbo Forest Reserve	36977	Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources	18,648.00	
Oluwa Forest Reserve	36971	Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources	82,900.00	
Omo Forest Reserve	36820	Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources	130,500.00	
Onisere Forest Reserve	36979	Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources	11,556.00	

Osse River Park	36976	Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources	28,000.00	
Ukpe-Sobo Forest Reserve	36996	Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources	11,033.00	
Urhonigbe Forest Reserve	20302	Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources	30,791.00	

Indicator 3 Area of land restored

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

10000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural land restored

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 3.2 Area of Forest and Forest Land restored

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
10,000.00			

Indicator 3.3 Area of natural grass and shrublands restored

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 3.4 Area of wetlands (incl. estuaries, mangroves) restored

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
10000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Indicator 4.1 Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares, qualitative assessment, non-certified)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

10,000.00

Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes that meets national or international third party certification that incorporates biodiversity considerations (hectares)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Type/Name of Third Party Certification

Indicator 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) loss avoided

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Documents (Please upload document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title	Submitted

Indicator 6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)	4344013	0	0	0
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)	0	0	0	0

Indicator 6.1 Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided in the AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)	4,344,013			

Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)	
Anticipated start year of accounting	2023
Duration of accounting	20

Indicator 6.2 Emissions Avoided Outside AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) Sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)				
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting				
Duration of accounting				

Indicator 6.3 Energy Saved (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Total Target Benefit	Energy (MJ) (At PIF)	Energy (MJ) (At CEO Endorsement)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at MTR)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at TE)

Target Energy Saved (MJ)

Indicator 6.4 Increase in Installed Renewable Energy Capacity per Technology (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Technology	Capacity (MW) (Expected at PIF)	Capacity (MW) (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at MTR)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 11 Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female	10,000			
Male	10,000			
Total	20000	0	0	0

Provide additional explanation on targets, other methodologies used, and other focal area specifics (i.e., Aichi targets in BD) including justification where core indicator targets are not provided

An estimated total of 599,457 ha of protected areas, expected to include eight forest reserves and one National Park, will be under improved management for biodiversity by the end of the project. The total carbon balance is – 4,344,013 tCO2-eq over 20 years (5 years of implementation and 15 years of capitalization) for a total area under analysis of 249,752 hectares. The main assumptions are: The project will avoid 90% of the expected deforestation; The project will impact two drivers of deforestation: shifting agriculture and commodity driven deforestation. Please see the revised Ex Act tool. The calculations provided under CI-6 will be further reviewed and updated during the PPG phase. CI-11 indicates the estimated number of beneficiaries directly benefiting from project interventions, these numbers will be further refined during the PPG phase.

Part II. Project Justification

1a. Project Description

1) The global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)

Nigeria is rich in biodiversity and houses significant levels of endemism and species richness within a complex topography and wide variety of habitats. The latter include but are not limited to coastal creeks of the Niger Delta, the rainforests of the Cross River basin and the mountains along the Cameroon border with Nigeria. Along with the Atlantic Ocean which forms the southern border part of Nigeria, and with its highly diverse marine and freshwater ecosystems, there exists an inland expanse of forest and woodland ecosystems which end up in Sudan Savannah and Sahel/semi-desert belt in the northern part of the country. With extensive river systems emerging out of the two largest Rivers—Niger and Benue—Nigeria has major riverine resources which support agriculture, navigation and commerce.

In terms of species diversity and endemism, Nigeria is highly endowed. Borokini (2014)[1] reports that Nigerian endemic flora amount to 91 species belonging to 44 families with *Rubiaceae* accounting for the highest numbers. However, Nigeria's biodiversity is under enormous pressure. In recent decades, the pace of deforestation and forest degradation in Nigeria has been among the highest in the world. According to Nigeria's National REDD+ Strategy, in 1978, 25.7% of the country's land area of 923,763 km², or approximately 237,000 km^2, was forested. By 1995, forest cover had fallen to 16.6% and 153,000 km^2, respectively; by 2016, a mere 7.7% and 71,130 km^2 of forest remained.[2] Altogether, in less than four decades, an estimated 166,277 km^2 were deforested, or a mean area of some 426,351 ha / year.

Deforestation and forest degradation has affected each of Nigeria's five main ecological zones[3]—derived savanna, Guinea savanna, lowland rainforest and montane, mangrove swamp and Sudan Sahel—in distinct ways and will thus require distinct approaches to address them. In all cases, however, there have been notable and, in some cases, devastating, effects on the ecosystem services and biodiversity previously provided and nurtured by these once heavily forested lands. From 2006 to 2016, in the case of lowland rainforests, the direct consequences of deforestation and forest degradation were felt across an estimated 231,862 ha and 110,704 ha, respectively,[4] with further impacts, e.g. those associated with fragmentation, emanating across even wider areas.

Nigeria has established an extensive system of forest reserves and conservation areas. This process reached its apex in the 1950s, at which point about 96,000 km^2, or nearly 10 million ha of such areas had been constituted, representing about 10 per cent of the country's land area. Since then, there has been substantial net degazettement, as a result of which the extent of these areas has fallen to about six per cent of total land area. In addition, a large percentage of still gazetted areas has been subject to deforestation, forest degradation, encroachment, illegal hunting, illegal logging, infrastructural development and conversion to plantation agriculture.[5]

According to the 2015 National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, the PA system includes 994 forest reserves, seven national parks, 32 game reserves and sanctuaries, 11 Ramsar sites, 27 Important Bird Area, two World Heritage Sites and five Biosphere Reserves.[6]

Target ecoregion and landscape

Nigeria's lowland forest zone extends from the southwestern border of the country with the Republic of Benin, eastward to the western edge of the River Niger (see **Figure 1**). The ecoregion is bounded by, *inter alia*, the River Niger, the Cross-Niger transition forests and the Niger Delta swamp forests. To the south, it is separated from the coast by a strip of Central African mangroves and inland water; to the north, the forests transition into a mosaic of forest and savanna habitat—the Guinean forest-savanna mosaic. The lowland forest is a natural mixed, moist semi-deciduous rainforest. The area can be further divided into a dry evergreen mixed deciduous forest in the northern part and a wet evergreen forest in the southern part. The ecoregion coincides with some or all of seven Nigerian states, i.e., Edo, Ondo, Delta, Ogun, Okun, Ekiti and Oyo States.[7]

Figure 1: Nigerian lowland forest ecoregion and neighboring ecosystems

Source: Ikemeh (2013)

A total of 82 forest reserves have been created within the Nigerian lowland forests covering 10,504 km2 – about 15% of the land area covered by the ecoregion.[8] Today, these figures have been cut in half, reduced to approximately 40 reserves and 7.5% of land area, respectively.[9]

The present project focuses on a mosaic landscape area of approximately 950,000 ha, covering portions of four of the above states. From east to west, these are Ogun, Ondo, Edo and Delta States. These states support a major portion of Nigeria's lowland forest zone and the majority of its remaining lowland forest habitat and biodiversity—largely within the project landscape. These include 12 forest reserves and one National Park (see Annex B and Figure 2 below for tentative identification of forest reserves).

Despite the existence of the above forest reserves, the National Park and what remains a relatively high level of gazettement, this landscape has been subjected to major environmental impacts and land use changes in recent decades. The process has by no means excluded the forest reserves themselves, major portions of which are presently occupied by a combination of agricultural plantations, smallholder agricultural holdings and human settlements. While oil palm is an important feature of this mosaic landscape, a number of other crops—including cocoa, rubber and various food crops—are also present.

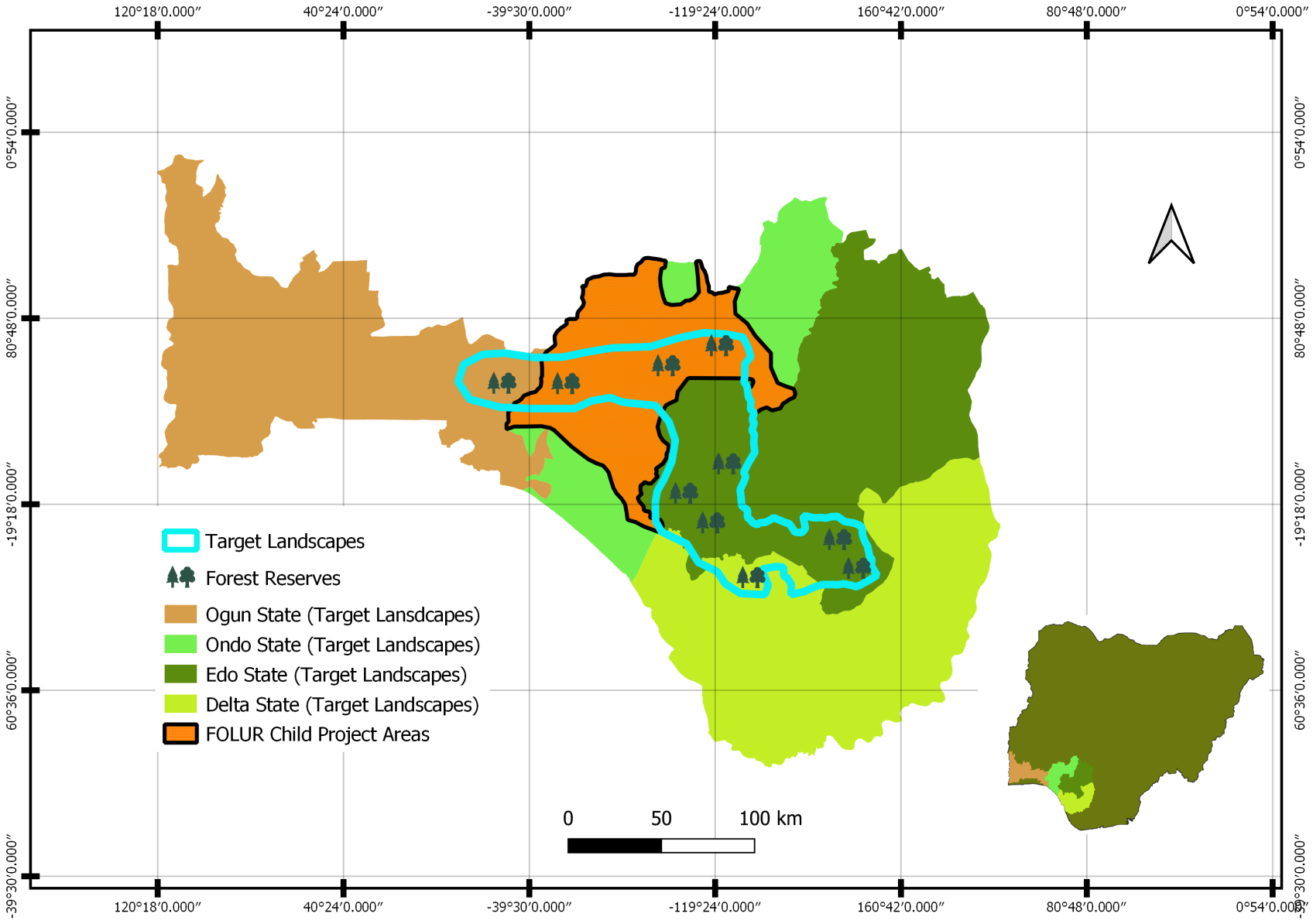

Figure 2: Project landscape and protected areas

The boundaries of the targeted landscapes presented in the map in Figure 2 were set in order to strengthen connectivity between forest reserves. For this same reason, the landscapes in Ondo state already covered by the FOLUR project were included to enable biodiversity corridors connecting various forest reserves across the 4 states. The proposed boundaries at PIF stage will be further refined and revisited during the PPG stage following field work and ground truthing missions.

At the heart of this landscape, and with a set of issues emblematic of the wider area, is Okomu Forest Reserve (OFR), a 1,082 km^2 area in the Ovia South-West Local Government Area of Edo State, about 60 km northwest of Benin City. Originally, the reserve consisted of semi-deciduous, humid, Nigerian lowland rainforest and was representative of this rapidly disappearing ecosystem. Freshwater swamp forests were found along the rivers. The African mahogany family (Meliaceae) was well represented, including: *Khaya ivorensis, Entandrophragma angolense, Entandophragma cylindricum, Guarea cedrata, Guarea thompsonii* and *Lovoa trichilioides.* Other economically important species included *Milicia excelsa, Gossweilerodendron balsamiferum, Terminalia ivorensis, Terminalia superba* and *Triplochiton scleroxylon.*[10]

The reserve currently consists largely of Okomu National Park, Okomu oil palm plantation and Osse rubber plantation. Okomu National Park (ONP) has an area of approximately 202 km, while the oil palm and rubber plantations occupy large portions of the reserve. The remainder of the the reserve is punctuated by small-scale cocoa plantations, subsistence farms and settlements, which have led to further, widespread forest degradation and fragmentation.[11]

Okomu National Park (ONP), formerly the Okomu Wildlife Sanctuary, occupies a forest block within the OFR. The park retains a small, but important, fraction of the rich forest that once covered the region; it is currently the last remaining refuge for a number of endangered species. The park is perhaps the best remaining example of mature secondary forest in southwest Nigeria.[12] ONP supports a diverse fauna, with 33 species of mammals including the African buffalo and the endangered African forest elephant (though elephant sightings are rare in recent years). The site is a stronghold for *Cercopithecus erythrogaster* (EN) and *Syncerus caffer* (NT) is also found. Although no thorough study of the primate population has been undertaken since 1982, chimpanzees were reported to be present in the region as recently as 2009. The number of chimpanzees estimated to live in the Okomu Forest reserve as a whole was estimated to be 25–50 in 2003, and some were believed to use the national park at times. Other animals found in the park include dwarf crocodiles, red river hog, sitatunga, warthog, civet cat, Maxwell's duiker, grass cutter, Mona monkey, Thomas's galago and tree pangolin. The park is also a Birdlife Important Bird Area (IBA) and about 150 species of birds have been identified, including Angolan pitta, grey parrot, wrinkled hornbill, fish eagle, hawks, woodpeckers, great owl, grey hornbill, cattle egret, black-casqued hornbill, yellow-casqued hornbill, Sabine's spinetail, Cassin's spinetail, black spinetail, white-breasted negrofinch, chestnut-breasted negrofinch, pale-fronted negrofinch and yellow-throated cuckoo.[13]

The park is accessible to tourists and has well marked trails and two tree houses, one of which is located 140 feet high in a silk-cotton tree. From here, visitors can view the park and its bird life. Visitors can also stay at chalets built on stilts, located just outside the park entrance. Guides are available to lead forest walks, on which termite nests and the Park's many medicinal plants are among the highlights.[14]

Okomu Palm Oil Company (OPOC) is located within Okomu Forest Reserve, in Edo state. OPOC is one of the four largest palm oil producers in Nigeria. It operates two palm oil mills, processing 200,000 Mt of Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFB) per year from its own plantation into 40,000 Mt of crude palm oil (CPO). In line with requirements established by the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), OPOC maintains intact 10% of its holdings as high-value conservation forest.

In addition to palm oil sourced from land under its management, OPOC purchases FFBs from local smallholder farmers (SHFs), whose levels of per ha. productivity range from 3 - 10 Mt of FFB per hectare per year, or only about 25% of the productivity on estates. This low level of productivity is due to several factors, including: (i)) a lack of access to high-quality seedlings; (ii) a lack of application of (crop-specific) fertilizers; (iii) a lack of knowledge of best practices, (iv) use of old, low-yielding trees, and (v) a lack of access to suitable financial/credit services. The problem, which extends beyond purely economic considerations, is that low yields and incomes lead SHFs to focus on increasing the area under production, since they are unable to increase production per hectare. This has a strong tendency to accelerate deforestation and loss of biodiversity within the landscape.[15]

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Given that survey data covering the landscape is in most cases years out of date, there is an urgent need for additional, detailed information to be gathered on the current status—including land use and forest cover—of the landscape's remaining forest reserves, community forest areas and intervening productive landscapes, as well as on the continued presence and abundance of globally significant and other biodiversity in all of these areas. At a minimum, this effort will need to continue, including via ground truthing, during the PPG Phase. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that a number of threats have had extensive impacts on biodiversity and constitute serious ongoing threats to remaining natural habitats and associated functions. Loss of biodiversity in the target landscape, both within forest reserves, community forests and the wider production landscape, is directly driven by a combination of the following factors:

· Expansion of commercial tree crop agriculture: Expansion of commercial oil palm and cocoa production through new estate development directly drives deforestation. This process involves companies purchasing land, e.g., a community forest or de-reserved section of a forest reserve, from the state or community, clearing forest on the land, and establishing an intensified plantation. While this production system is typically branded as 'intensification', the model is characterized by large scale conversion of forests. Certification of production, e.g., by the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), may mitigate some of the impacts of oil palm expansion on biodiversity—for example, through requirements to conserve high conservation value forest—but such efforts will be insufficient over the medium and long term when not integrated within broader, landscape level strategies.

· Expansion of low productivity smallholder agriculture: Smallholders growing permanent tree crops, like cocoa and oil palm, typically establish plantations with low yields when they do not have suitable access to factors of production—land, capital, training on sustainable, productive practices, inputs including high quality seedlings and technology. Low-yield plantations combined with low-yield management practices by definition require larger areas to produce comparable levels of output. Smallholders also grow seasonal food crops (maize, cassava, and yam) in landscapes alongside cocoa and oil palm, where they again typically reach only low levels of productivity. However, the expansionary nature and clearance of forests by these smallholders operates somewhat differently than with permanent crops like cocoa and oil palm. In this case, cultivation practices are typically characterized by high soil nutrient and organic matter losses. Once depleted, land is abandoned and left to fallow while new areas of forest are cleared, through slash and burn, to create new, fertile cultivation areas.

· Illegal hunting and logging: Illegal hunting appears to be prevalent within forest reserves in the landscape. For example, a recent survey at Idanre Forest Reserve[16] show high levels of both illegal hunting within the reserve. According to the survey, poaching activities were very high, with traps and snare counts ranking highest, along with spent cartridges and ash deposits from hunter's fires. Some of the target species noted at Idanre and elsewhere include mona monkey (*Cercopithecus mona*), Potto, and pangolin. Consumption and trading of bushmeat is significant target species include Mona monkey, Nigerian white throated monkey (*Cercopithecus erythrogaster*), putty-nosed monkey (*Cercopithecus nictitans*), red-capped mangabey (*Cercocebus torquatus*), and Maxwell's Duiker (*Philantomba maxwellii*). Others are the brush tailed porcupine and red river hog. Some additional wildlife that are not consumed as bushmeat, including chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes ellioti*) and African elephants (*Loxodonta africana cyclotis*), have also been frequent targets of hunters.[17]

· Illegal logging: Active logging indices were recorded in the above survey and are indicative of broader processes at work in the landscape. Large numbers of loggers within the reserve, along with the sounds of chainsaws, timber stockpiles and timber trucks, were all widespread during the study period.

· Unregulated collection of non-timber forest products: This includes fruits, firewood, rattan and herbs, leaves and barks.

A series of underlying and root causes combine to amplify the direct drivers of habitat loss and degradation, as well as direct reduction of biodiversity abundance through hunting, in the landscape. These indirect factors include:

· Compartmentalized agriculture, forest sector and conservation agendas: Deforestation and degradation occur indirectly primarily through the agriculture and forest sectors' compartmentalization of policy and implementation at federal, state, and local levels. At the federal level, agricultural policy focuses narrowly on agricultural success metrics, and does not set tangible objectives for reducing forest loss or increasing forest recovery within agricultural landscapes. For its part, forest policy is narrowly focused on protected areas (national parks, wildlife preserves, game reserves, and forest reserves). While some federal forestry programs do extend to community land, funding for these programs is scarce, particularly in comparison to federal agricultural programs that place little priority on forest objectives. At state and local level, this compartmentalized policy agenda follows an isolated implementation approach in the landscapes. Furthermore, local governments and communities have limited capacity to harmonize agriculture, forest sector and conservation activities at local level. Their immediate needs are served by compartmentalized, 'top down' agricultural plans that have stronger budget lines than those available for sustainable forest management.

· Increasing market demand for agricultural products, including cocoa and palm oil: High global and national demand for cocoa and palm oil products are incentivizing smallholder farmers to establish new cocoa and palm oil plantations. For palm oil, especially, domestic household and commercial demands greatly exceed supply. High rates of habitat loss can occur in the presence of strong indirect factors (such as high market demands, rapid population growth etc.) that incentivize increased production without providing access to the factors of production.

· Population growth: According to Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics, between 2006 and 2016, Ondo State had population increases of about 35 percent. Such sharp population increases and associated actions in available arable land drive the pressure on forests.

· Poverty and limited livelihood options: High levels of poverty within the landscape are characterized by inadequate alternative employment opportunities, limited income-generating opportunities, marginally diversified livelihood options and limited food sources. Such conditions of poverty, hunger, and unemployment contribute to agricultural expansion and pursuit of illegal activities like poaching.

Barriers to be addressed

Despite ongoing policy efforts aimed at addressing ongoing threats, a number of barriers continue to stand in the way of successful conservation of globally significant biodiversity within the landscape and analogous landscapes throughout Nigeria. These include:

· Capacity-related barriers: Addressing competing land uses and pressure on the remaining lowland forests and key biodiversity areas in the target mosaic landscape requires an integrated management approach. However, creating such an approach is currently constrained by a variety of limitations on state and local technical capacities. Successful integration of multiple objectives across a landscape—including agricultural, forest and other sectoral objectives—requires diagnostic information. decision tools and a multi-stakeholder decision process, based on which plans and concrete targets can emerge. The types of information that are needed, and that are currently lacking, include clearly defined current anf future scenario land use maps, HCV/HCS forest maps, agricultural data (particularly for cocoa and oil palm sectors), climate scenarios, resotration opportunity analysis and monitoring systems. Implementation of resulting plans in turn requires a variety of assocaited capacities. In the case of forest protection, it needs to be based on effective enforcement of laws intended to prevent poaching in the area. This is linked to limited ranger capacities in terms of numbers, training, strategy and mobility, as well as to a variety of factors linked to policy design and implementation, awareness and governance. Within the productive landscape, a comparable set of capacity constraints related to effective and sustainable production practices prevents local communities and stakeholders from effectively and efficiently utilizing the natural resources at their disposal in order to increase their incomes in a sustainable manner.

· Knowledge barriers: Overlapping with the above, given that knowledge is an important component of capacities, is a set of knowledge-related barriers that, again, undermine the implementation of good practices and effective plans. These barriers operate at multiple levels, constraining, at the micro level, individuals who lack knowledge of good practices and, at the macro level, limiting collective capacities, whether led by Government or more broad-based coalitions, from implementing solutions that work at scale, all the way up to the scale of the landscape as a whole.

· Financial barriers: According to the World Bank[18], Nigeria's GDP per capita was US$2,097 in 2020. The Federal Government budget for 2022 totaled 16.39 trillion naira, or $39.8 billion.[19] With major oil revenues, adequate sources of public sector finance is available in theory for protected areas and related spending priorities. This is not to say, however, that these areas are in fact well resourced. Issues relate to awareness and incentives continue to affect budgeting decisions, while governance issues have a compounding effect on effective delivery of public sector services like conservation.

2) The baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects

At national level, the following policies and programmes stand out, providing a well-developed institutional and policy context within which the challenges facing Nigeria's lowland forests and biodiversity may yet be addressed.

National Forest Policy (2020)

A revised National Forest Policy (NFP) was approved by the Federal Executive Council in 2020, updating the previous policy which dated back to 2006. The policy identifies a number of priorities that are expected to translate into actions in the near future, and it therefore represents an important aspect of the baseline. Among the policy's guiding principles are the following:

· Address the drivers of deforestation and forestland degradation including overgrazing, extensive agricultural practices, mining, infrastructural development with the engagement of all stakeholders"

· Mobilize the community and civil society organization in forestry development"

· Promote partnership with the private sector and Civil Society Organisation(s)"

· Promote biodiversity conservation and environmental functions of forest ecosystems".

The NFP goes on to identify a set of specific strategies for forest reserve management, several of which may be relevant to the present project. These include:

· Provide and implement forest management plan for each Forest Reserve.

· Involve communities in the management of forest reserves with clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

· Promote equitable benefit sharing and designate roles and responsibilities amongst stakeholders.

· Protect the Forest Estate from fire and encroachment.

· Encourage multiple-use concepts in the management of forest reserves.

· Support the states to protect forests against deforestation and forestland degradation with strong community participation.

Regarding conservation of biodiversity, the NFP aims, *inter alia*, to: (1) develop in-situ conservation areas, (2) ensure enforcement of the National Wildlife Species Protection Act, and (3) establish partnerships with "host communities around protected areas and offer conservation training, with a view to providing employment, alleviating poverty and effective empowerment."

REDD+ Strategy

Nigeria's National REDD+ Strategy is designed to be implemented in three phases over a 30-year period. Phases 1 and 2, with which the present project will overlap in part, have the following goal, each of which provides important baseline support:

· Short-term Goal will be achieved in the first 5 years of implementing the strategy, 2021 – 2025, and will focus on the strategic improvement of institutions and governance systems, as well as of spatial plans and the investment environment, in order to fulfil Nigeria's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while maintaining economic growth.

· Medium-term Goal is 10 years after the short-term goal, 2026 – 2035, aimed at achieving the implementation of governance systems in line with policies, measures and procedures developed by relevant institutions at the national and sub-national levels, and their application to the spatial and financial mechanisms developed and established in the previous phase, to achieve a targeted 20 percent reduction in emissions by 2035.

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

The NBSAP includes five national goals, all of which are relevant to the present project. These are:

· National Goal 1: Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity into national planning and societal values

· National Goal 2: Reduce the direct pressures on Nigeria's biodiversity resources and promote sustainable use.

· National Goal 3: Improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity

· National Goal 4: Ensure fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from biodiversity and ecosystem services to all.

· National Goal 5: Promote participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building as an integral part of implementation of biodiversity management

Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)

Nigeria has submitted its First Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) in July 2021 to UNFCCC, following the presentation of the Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) in 2017. In the updated NDC, Nigeria identified the AFOLU sector as the second largest contributor to Greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions, with emissions from the AFOLU sector amounting to 25% of total GHG in 2018. Climate smart agriculture and natural forest management are two priorities identified in the NDC by the country to achieve its commitments of emissions reductions. Nigeria has developed a new REDD+ Strategy in 2021 and a National Forest Policy in 2020 in order to achieve NDC goals. Furthermore, the Department of climate change has started to elaborate the Long-term low emission strategy development strategy (LTS-LEDS). Finally, the country has joined the Global Methane Pledge in 2019 to reduce methane emissions.

GEF FOLUR project: “Promoting Integrated Landscape Management and Sustainable Food Systems in the Niger Delta Region in Nigeria (Cross River and Ondo State)”

This GEF FOLUR project is due to run from 2022 - 2026 and is an important element of the project baseline. The objective of the project is “to transform the Niger Delta cocoa and oil palm production systems and landscapes towards sustainability and resilience, delivering multiple environmental and social benefits”. As part of this effort, the project will provide support in the following highly relevant areas:

· FOLUR will carry out a comprehensive assessment of land use and land-use change, including HCV/HCS forest areas, important ecosystems, protected areas, etc, including within forest reserves of the ‘Idanre forest cluster’, an area which is also targeted by the present proposal. Based on this assessment, the project will develop and implement an ILM plan for these areas.

· FOLUR will design and implement participatory forest restoration action plans within forest reserves, buffer zones and community forests, again within, inter alia, the Idanre forest cluster. Support will include training and provision of seedlings to foresters from state forestry commissions/departments and extension agents.

· FOLUR will establish unified multi-stakeholder platforms in the two pareticiapting states.

As is the case with other elements of the above-described baseline, the present proposal has also been carefully designed to extend, and synergize with, the above-described elements of the FOLUR project. Specific points of complementarity are elaborated in Section 3 below.

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Within the above-described project landscape, the following elements of the baseline are of particular importance.

Initiatives for sustainable palm oil production

In Edo State, the Africa Palm Oil Initiative (APOI) has supported the establishment of a multi-stakeholder platform through which state-level elements of the National Initiative for Sustainable Climate Smart Oil Palm Smallholder (NISCOPS) are being delivered. The platform aims to address challenges affecting the livelihoods of smallholder producers in the region, who have struggled with low productivity and low profits in the production of Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFBs); as noted above, this has created incentives to expand rather than to intensify production. Edo State is thus making smallholder development an integral part of concession allocations to companies.

The Edo platform is also developing guidelines for Free, Prior & Informed Consent (FPIC) to ensure full engagement of indigenous peoples and local CSOs. There have been discussions about expanding the platform into a regional one by including Ondo and four other states.[20]

Within the project landscape, Okomu Palm Oil Company, in cooperation with IDH’s Sustainable Trade Initiative, aims to integrate 5,000 smallholder farmers (SHFs) into their supply chain to fulfil their processing capacity needs while investing in the local economy.[21] To this end, IDH has supported the development of a service delivery model (SDM) analysis in order to assess “supply chain structures that provide farmers with services such as training, access to inputs, finance, and information. SDMs can sustainably increase the performance of farms while providing a business opportunity for the service provider.” The analysis is meant to “inform the design of an inclusive, sustainable and commercially viable smallholder palm oil program managed by the Okomu Oil Palm Company in Edo State, Nigeria.”[22] This work falls under IDH’s National Initiative for Sustainable and Climate Smart Oil Palm Smallholders (NI-SCOPS), which is a partnership between the NGO Solidaridad and IDH designed to support stakeholders to meet the Paris Agreement commitments The work is also

supported by 2SCALE, which serves as an “incubator and accelerator program” with a portfolio of public private partnerships for inclusive businesses in agro-food sectors and industries. The process supported by these organizations has so far resulted in increased adoption of RSPO compliance management requirements at state level (e.g. Edo State) and by a number of companies in the region.

REDD+ at state level

By 2020, with support from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), six Nigerian states—Nasarawa, Ondo, Edo, Ogun, Plateau and Kaduna—had joined the full-fledged REDD+ readiness process, along with Cross River State[23], where readiness efforts had commenced with the support of UN-REDD in 2010.[24] Currently, the second Phase of REDD+ Readiness is thus in progress and is expected to continue in these states until 2025.

In parallel with the national coordination mechanism, participating states are setting up mechanisms for governance at state level, including State Technical Committees, Stakeholders’ Sub-committees, State Climate Change Committees, MRV Sub-Committees, State REDD+ Stakeholders’ Forums, Safeguard Working Groups and Forest Management Committees. At a third, local level, additional local bodies are being established, including representatives of local governments, NGOs, civil society, academia, the private sector, local communities, and traditional authorities working in the field of environment and forestry or other natural resource management.[25]

3) The proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project

The objective of the project is to improve the conservation, sustainable use and restoration of a lowland forest landscape in order to protect globally significant biodiversity and strengthen sustainable livelihoods of local communities.

As briefly noted above, the project is designed to take advantage of synergies associate with partial geographic overlap with one of the FOLUR project’s sites (i.e. Idanre Local Government Area [LGA] in Ondo State; see Map 1), while avoiding thematic overlap within these areas. From the perspective of individual project components, this works out as follows:

· Component 1 - Integrated policy, planning and management: As noted in the baseline section above, FOLUR will carry out a comprehensive assessment and planning exercise covering forest reserves and community forests and buffer areas associated with the ‘Idanre forest cluster’, as part of developing an integrated landscape management system for the area. The resulting ILM plan will include important data and strategies for biodiversity conservation. These elements will be connected to, and extended by, analogous and contiguous efforts to be supported by the present project in Edo and Delta portions of the landscape. In effect, the two projects will develop, between them, three harmonized within-state plans which together will constitute a large-scale biodiversity conservation strategy for the combined landscape. The present project will also develop a multi-state, strategic biodiversity visioning exercise to help guide and/or reflect efforts within the three within-state portions of the combined landscape. In doing so, the project will demonstrate practical approaches that states can use to work together to address shared environmental challenges.

· Component 2 - Implementation of conservation / restoration actions: As described above, the FOLUR project will support targeted forest restoration, including within forest reserves of the Idanre cluster. Under component 2, the present project would: (i) support complementary actions within the Idanre cluster to address threats not being targeted by FOLUR, e.g. illegal logging and hunting and collection of non timber forest products (NTFPs); (ii) support a full range of actions, i.e. restoration, control of illegal hunting and logging and regulation of NTFPs, within the Edo and Delta State landscape areas.

· Component 3 - Implementation of sustainable use practices in the productive landscape: These aspects are fully covered in the Ondo State portion of the landscape by the FOLUR project and will not be included here. However, sustainable use issues in the productive landscape will be covered—in line with the mainstreaming guidance of the GEF biodiversity focal area—within the Edo and Delta state portions of the landcape.

· Component 4 - Knowledge management and M&E: Given the similarities of challenges facing lowland forest areas covered by the two projects, there will be ample opportunity for exchanging and comparing lessons learned through knowledge management and M&E efforts. Lessons learned globally by FOLUR are also expected to inform the present project's efforts.

The project's theory of change is shown in Annex D.

Component 1: Integrated landscape policy, planning and management

Expected outcome #1:An integrated landscape management (ILM) system operational, enabling conservation and connectivity of forest biodiversity and sustainable forest and land use

Under this component, a participatory strategy would be developed to guide land and resource use and conservation efforts in ways that enable biodiversity conservation and connectivity[26], together with sustainable development across the landscape. This would include plans for delineation / demarcation and ongoing management of forest reserves, community conservation areas, local participation in decision-making and identification of other types of protected and no-go, or set-aside, areas in Ogun, Edo and Delta State portions of the landscape.[27]

Outputs needed to deliver the above outcome include the following (see Table B above for full wording of outputs):

· Landscape-level multi-stakeholder mechanism: This mechanism, or platform, will be designed to support participatory development and coordinated implementation of ILM across the landscape. It will engage key public and private sector stakeholders and representatives from participating states and local communities. The platform will play a central role in developing the project's landscape-level planning, with technical support from the project.[28]

· Strengthened state-level policies: A policy analysis and updating process covering Ogun, Edo and Delta States (and linking to the FOLUR project in Ondo) would focus, *inter alia*, on: (i) enhanced options for safeguarding community forests and their management, (ii) systems for monitoring and public reporting, and (iii) forest reserve management, budgeting and oversight. Within these categories, specific local and state-level policies that may be acting as barriers to enhanced landscape-level management—including those perpetuating gender-based inequalities—will be identified during the PPG and specifically targeted in the project design.

· Landscape-level strategic plans: Based on a combination of remote sensing data analysis and ground truthing efforts, along with survey data concerning local livelihoods, gender and other social aspects, landscape-level biodiversity, habitat and social assessments will be prepared. Harmonized landscape-level plans will then be developed by Ondo, Edo and Delta States and relevant local Governments, with a small component aimed at ensuring inter-state, landscape-

level co-ordination (here including Ondo State). These plans will be developed in close coordination with emerging state-level REDD+ and oil palm platforms and other coordination mechanisms in order to ensure buy-in and compliance from stakeholders in these areas, including local communities and private sector interests. The plans will be used to guide local and state-level spatial planning and development within the landscape in ways that protect remaining core forest areas, reduce impacts of illegal hunting and logging, enhance connectivity and encourage sustainable intensification and smart agricultural practices within productive areas of the landscape. Gender concerns will be integrated directly into the plans under this output.

· Strategic biodiversity vision: A strategic biodiversity visioning exercise will help harmonize, guide and/or reflect efforts in all four within-state portions of the combined landscape. In doing so, the project will demonstrate practical approaches that states can use to work together to address shared environmental challenges. This will include strengthened commitments to addressing threats like illegal logging and hunting. Development and monitoring of implementation of the visioning exercise would take place under the auspices of the landscape-level, multi-stakeholder platform, possibly under a technical committee to be established for this purpose.

· Data and monitoring systems: A landscape-level monitoring system will be established to harmonize geo-spatial data collection and to ensure data sharing within the overall landscape, in line with the key indicators of biodiversity intactness. A publically accessible online platform will be developed to ensure transparency and sharing of data.

· Capacity building for plan implementation: Capacity assessments to be undertaken during the PPG phase will be further refined as details of the planned actions emerge, in order to optimize the delivery of capacity building support. Key technical areas for capacity building are likely to include: (1) monitoring, data collection and management; (2) protected area management, particularly the role of local communities; (3) conflict resolution.

Component 2: **Implementation of biodiversity conservation and restoration within protected areas and buffer zones of the landscape**

Expected outcome #2: Remaining core biodiversity areas in the landscape are better protected, connected and effectively managed

Under Component 2, the project will invest in enhanced management and conservation of remaining core biodiversity areas within the landscape. Existing forest reserves, and, data permitting, areas within those reserves, will be prioritized for support beginning during the PPG and continuing as part of the planning work being undertaken under Component 1. This will be based on an initial biodiversity assessment, including an assessment of remaining forest cover, presence of globally significant biodiversity and opportunities for restoration; possibilities to conserve and enhance connectivity of forest fragments within existing, degraded reserves will be among the priorities to be identified. Okomu National Park will represent a top priority area, with others to be identified. During the full project, site-specific conservation, restoration and sustainable use plans will be developed and implementation begun, under the aegis of the overall landscape-level strategy developed under Component 1. The process will engage local communities and disadvantaged groups, including women, at each step along the way; in particular, community conservation areas (CCAs) will be supported wherever feasible.

Outputs needed to deliver the above outcome include the following:

· Detailed mapping and designation of priority areas for conservation and restoration within existing protected areas, including a national park and several forest reserves and community conservation areas (CCAs): This assessment will build on, and provide increased level of granularity to, the larger-scale, i.e. landscape-level assessment being prepared under Output 1.2 above. It will include consultations with relevant stakeholders aimed at increasing participation, buy in and ongoing support.

· Site-level management and action plans: Continuing to work under the umbrella of the overall landscape plans developed under Component 1, the project will develop and implement action plans for conservation and restoration of each of the prioritized protected areas.[29] Once approved by the Project Steering Committee, these site-level action plans will be directly supported by the GEF project, including identified co-financing.[30] Among thematic areas to be supported are the following: (i) biodiversity monitoring and species recovery plans; (ii) threat removal strategies, including plans to address illegal hunting and logging, agricultural encroachment and overharvesting of NTFPs; (iii) capacity building of protected area personnel, including for patrolling and reducing illegal logging and hunting; (iv) ecotourism infrastructure to enhance and capture non-consumptive use value of forest biodiversity, e.g. bird watching at Okomu National Park; (v) ecosystem restoration, e.g. through naturally assisted regeneration; (vi) awareness raising / ecotourism marketing plan in nearby urban areas, e.g. Benin City. In all cases, efforts will be made to engage and empower local communities to participate fully in, and benefit from, conservation actions.

· Protected area financing pilots: Based on an assessment of financing needs and opportunities, to be undertaken during the PPG, the project will implement PA financing pilots in up to three protected areas, including Okomu National Park, a Community Conservation Area (CCA) and a forest reserve. In the case of ONP, a financial sustainability plan will be developed. It will be important to test approaches against this range of financing challenges in order to deliver a more comprehensive set of financing solutions for the landscape and others like it in Nigeria. Support for further uptake, particularly within the lowland forest ecoregion, will be included under Component 4.

Component 3: Implementation of sustainable practices and sustainable tourism in connecting, productive agricultural areas of the landscape

Expected outcome #3: Reduced pressure on biodiversity through the adoption of sustainable production practices and livelihoods within priority areas of the landscape.

Under this component, the project will invest in improved, biodiversity-friendly practices within the Ogun, Edo and Delta portions of the landscape. The theme underlying and determining this support will be to identify and support pathways by which productive livelihoods can support habitat and species conservation and connectedness across a mosaic of land uses characteristic of the landscape. Thematic areas to be supported will include the following: (i) biodiversity-based business, e.g. support to ecotourism, sustainable collection of non-timber forest products; (ii) support services for ecosystem restoration, including seed and seedling production; (iii) agroforestry efforts that help to restore key connective habitat; and (iv) support for sustainable agricultural production, to reduce pressure to expand into remaining forested areas.

Outputs needed to deliver the above outcome include the following:

· Capacity development programme: Under this output, capacities will be built in the use of biodiversity-friendly production practices and ecotourism within key areas of the landscape. Support for strengthened value chains will also be provided. Areas of support for enhanced practices will likely include: (i) building capacities among rural cooperatives and SMEs to deliver enhanced quality services in areas like integrated soil fertility management and integrated pest management; (ii) support services for ecotourism, and (ii) promoting innovative marketing tools to increase the commitment of buyers, consumers, and producers in sustainable, responsible and efficient value chains. Selection of specific products and practices to be supported will take place during the PPG.

· Support provided to value chains for agroforestry, NTFPs and forest restoration: Investment in restoration or rehabilitation of degraded forests creates a number of economic opportunities for local community members and entrepreneurs. This output will strengthen areas along the supply chain identified as barriers in this area. This may include, for example, provision of native seedlings, marketing and processing opportunities of agroforestry products. In addition, support will be provided to agroforestry and sustainable harvesting of NTPFs.

· Restoration and capacity building strategy for community forests developed and implemented: Resulting enhanced management and productivity of community forests will reduce pressure on natural forests related to fuelwood needs, while providing enhanced connective habitat for wildlife. Based on skills, practices and value chains (e.g. for seedlings) developed under previous outputs, this output will support restoration of 10,000 ha of priority community forest areas, aimed at enhancing provision of ecosystem services (including fuelwood provision) and providing enhanced connective habitat for biodiversity. Assisted natural regeneration, woodlot restoration and capacity building for local forest management will be supported.

· Innovative financing mechanisms: In a manner analogous to work being undertaken under Output 2.3, but in this case looking at areas within the production landscape, the project will develop and test financing approaches designed to enhance conservation incentives. Various options will be considered during the PPG, including opportunities to incentivize individuals, communities and small businesses, including farms. Support to sustainable financing will represent a key element of the project's sustainability / exit strategy. This work will be closely coordinated with, and designed to complement, efforts to develop and implement the strategy for sustainable financing of forest landscape restoration being created under the FOLUR project.

Component 4: Knowledge management and M&E

Expected outcome #4: Knowledge and innovation are diffused at multiple sub-national, national and international scales, while project implementation is effectively monitored and evaluated by a gender-sensitive M&E strategy

Under this component, the project would encourage the capture and wide dissemination and uptake of lessons learned, good practices and innovations, while ensuring effective monitoring and evaluation of project activities.

Outputs needed to deliver the above outcome include the following:

· Knowledge products, tools and approaches are developed and shared widely: In broad terms, the purpose of the project's knowledge management efforts is to increase understanding of the factors leading to success in managing biodiverse landscapes for conservation and sustainable use benefits. To this end, the project will adapt and implement a tool for tracking the status and dynamics of landscape-level change, as well as assessing how and to what extent the sustainability of agricultural production is being enhanced by government, NGO and donor interventions. The project will develop a quantitative and qualitative picture of the dynamics of land use and land use change—particularly habitat loss / including deforestation—within the target landscape, as well as of various parameters related to the human environment, the political economy of commodity development within the landscape and associated governance factors. Economic aspects, as well as indicators of landscape integrity, such as biodiversity health indices, will be carefully tracked. Resulting lessons will be used to inform ongoing efforts at managing Nigeria's remaining native forest and other biodiverse landscapes, as called for in the National REDD+ Programme and other policy documents.

· Capacity building and awareness raising of officials and civil society representatives of remaining lowland forest states: The project will support uptake in other contiguous states that continue to support Nigerian lowland forests. Additional states are: Okun, Ekiti and Oyo States. Under this output, officials and civil society representatives from the three additional states will be engaged through awareness raising efforts, workshops and site visits. REDD + initiatives in these states will be targeted as part of this effort. The aim will be to initiate a transformative impact across the ecoregion, based on demonstration and diffusion of lessons learned, including strategies to transform incentives in order to support conservation.

· Operational monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems implemented: The project will establish monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems, processes and procedures designed to ensure smooth and effective project implementation and to measure achievement of project indicators, including impacts. These will include mid-term and final evaluations a well as annual reviews. In doing so, M&E will support the project team as it reacts to a changing external environment

and identifies appropriate adaptive management actions. It will also help to maximize the project's direct impact by providing actionable feedback on delivery, stakeholder engagement and uptake. Effective M&E will help to generate credible and actionable evidence to support the further scaling up, e.g. to other landscapes, of those project actions that deliver the greatest value for money.

4) Alignment with GEF focal area and/or Impact Program strategies

The project aims to mainstream biodiversity conservation across sectors as well as landscapes (BD 1-1) by enabling informed spatial and land-use planning in landscapes hosting biodiversity of global relevance (Component 1) and mainstreaming of biodiversity considerations in agricultural sector and through nature-based solutions (Component 3). In addition, it will address direct drivers to protect habitats and species and improve financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of Nigeria's protected areas (BD 2-7) by landscape-level planning and realignment of protected areas (Component 1) and strengthening of protected areas management (Component 2). Component 4 of the project, for knowledge management and M&E, will support both of the above-mentioned focal area objectives.

The project will build solid links to the work of the FOLUR impact program in Ondo State, developing complementary activities there related to aspects of biodiversity conservation not covered by the Impact Program, e.g. control of illegal hunting and logging and strengthening the capacity of forest reserves and community forests.

5) Incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF, and co-financing

The project baseline includes a number of significant policy developments and plans, both at national level as well as those associated with international environmental conventions. Notable among these, for example, are the National Forest Policy and the National REDD+ Programme. Both call for a range of policy actions and investments that are expected to be implemented during the project period under the baseline. These actions represent the bulk of spending identified as project cofinancing. They include actions funded by Edo and Ondo States, by the National Park Service and by Nigerian Conservation Foundation.

The alternative project will have four components where incremental GEF support builds on the strong national baseline to strengthen land policy, planning, management, and knowledge sharing that will eventually lead to biodiversity mainstreaming and addressing direct drivers to protect habitats and species and improve financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of the global protected area estate.

Table 1 below summarizes the project's incremental cost reasoning.

Baseline scenario	Alternatives to be put in place	With-project scenario
Weak and fragmented legislation and institutions responsible for th e conservation of biodiversity will continue to work towards building on previous and current donor-fun ded projects, but the dire lack of fu	The alternative to be put in place involves strengthening biodiversity governance at t he national and local levels and within an d outside of protected areas. This strengt hening process seeks to update and cons olidate the policy frameworks that will the	The GEF investment will contribute to enhancement of stakeholder en gagement and participation in plan ning and development processes. A total of 599,457 hectares of prot

ded projects, but the dire lack of fu nding support from the country its elf will continue to frustrate these efforts. At the same time the pres sures of weakly controlled resourc e exploitation will continue to depl ete the natural resource base and push the conservation status of i mportant species into high levels of threat. Associated with this los s of species is the degradation of t heir habitats and associated ecos ystems. The impacts of this uncon trolled consumptive use are exace rbated by the country's dependenc e on agriculture as an important c ontributor to its GDP. This has led t o expansion of agricultural land wi th little consideration for their neg ative environmental impacts.

Under this scenario, the FOLUR pr oject will provide important co-ope ration with Ondo state including: (i) supporting the establishment o f a multi-stakeholder platform; (ii) developing a comprehensive asse ssment of land use and land-use c hange, including HCV/HCS forest areas, important ecosystems, prot ected areas, etc., and; (iii) developi ng and implementing an ILM plan and participatory forest restoratio n action plans within forest reserv es, buffer zones and community f orests. However, even assuming t he success of such efforts along with effective uptake by neighbori ng states, they will not be sufficien

olidate the policy frameworks that will the n support the more effective alignment of institutional arrangements and the buildin g of their capacity to develop and implem ent the required strategies and action pla ns necessary to secure the integrity of the landscape's biodiversity and ecological as sets. This will complement and extend, bo th thematically and geographically, the glo bal benefits being delivered by the FOLUR project.

A systematic conservation planning exerc ise will equip the local stakeholders to crit ically review the landscape's biodiversity c onservation priorities and to develop and i mplement focused strategies and action plans to achieve its conservation targets t hrough the application of a variety of tool s including the effective management of it s priority protected areas.

The application of global best practice to the implementation of these tools will als o help to ensure enhanced management e ffectiveness.

Coupled with this sharper focus will be an increased effort to engage affected com munities and the private sector in partner ships that can facilitate the leveraging of financial support from the latter, and the s ecuring of cooperative management supp ort from the former. Cooperative manage ment agreements will form an integral par t of the conservation management strateg ies and action plans, both within and outsi de of protected areas.

A robust and efficient long-term monitorin g and evaluation programme will be devel

ected areas will be subject to impr oved management for conservatio n and sustainable use. Global best practice will be applied to increase management effectiveness, includi ng in terms of up-to-date manage ment plans, sustainable financial s upport and strong co-management agreements with affected commu nities, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders.

In addition, approximately 20,000 h a within the productive landscape, and particularly within areas that c an support biodiversity, will benefit from the project. This will include b iodiversity-friendly restoration of 1 0,000 ha of forest and forest land. It will also include 10,000 ha under improved management to benefit biodiversity. The direct and indirect biodiversity benefits—the latter via dissemination of best practices ac ross the landscape—will be substa ntial.

The above efforts will be undertak en in partnership with local institut ions and communities. Altogether, the project is expected to positivel y impact the lives and livelihoods o f the inhabitants of the approximat ely 10,000 men and 10,000 women from these communities.

t to contain the range of ongoing t hreats to biodiversity in the broade r lowland forest ecoregion. This is due both to the fact that such thre ats go beyond the scope of FOLUR sectorally (e.g. illegal hunting and l ogging) and because a larger-scal e approach is needed that takes in to account ecological issues and c onnectivity at a larger scale acros s the ecoregion.

Fortunately, the country has establ ished a network of protected area s and has a Directorate within the Federal Ministry of Environment wi th the legal mandate to develop an d implement biodiversity conserva tion strategies and action plans. In addition, there are many NGOs wo rking towards addressing a variety of environmental and biodiversity conservation issues. Finally, a nu mber of academic institutions und ertake relevant research which ca n support the development of strat egies and action plans. A number of these stakeholders have indicat ed their willingness and availability to work together to enhance the ef fective conservation of the countr y's biodiversity assets.

Additionally, innovative funding m echanisms are beginning to emerg e, including green and blue bonds and the country's Stock Exchange has indicated its willingness to ex plore a variety of options to gener

oped and maintained to measure the effe ctiveness of the above efforts and to serv e as a source of data to support the gener ation of knowledge products. The countr y's reporting obligations to international p rotocols will thus be supported and enhan ced.

Finally, gender equality and other human ri ghts considerations will serve as over-arc hing guiding principles to ensure that biod iversity conservation management in no way exacerbates any existing inequalities experienced by marginalized groupings a nd that there is equal access to livelihood opportunity and decision-making process.

ate the financial support that cons ervation management will require i n order to be effective.		

6) Global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)

The main global benefits being generated by the project are associated with the biodiversity focal area, though certain additional, global environmental co-benefits related to land degradation and climate change mitigation are also evident.

The project aims to conserve as representative an example as possible of Nigerian lowland forest, a tropical moist forest ecoregion located in southwestern Nigeria and southeastern Benin. Given the significant levels of deforestation and forest fragmentation that have occurred in this ecoregion, extant biodiversity, including globally threatened and endemic species, are at high risk due both to continued habitat loss and genetic losses as remaining populations become increasingly isolated. The prospects for survival of several globally threatened species will be significantly enhanced by the project activities.

Conserving globally and nationally significsnt biodiversity of this ecoregion will require effective action both within existing protected areas as well as in areas of the prudtion landscape that connects these areas. A more biodiversity-friendly mosaic of land uses across a substantial landscape area will deliver important benefits for conservation, including enhanced survival prospects for a number of key species—notably including the white-throated guenon (*Cercopithecus erythrogaster*, EN)—that remain present within the project landscape.

In quantitative terms, the proposed project will deliver global environmental benefits in the form of the following:

· Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (599,457 Hectares)

· Area of forest land restored (10,000 Hectares), which will take place in carefully selected portions of the landscape, with the aim of maximizing biodiversity benefits

· Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas) (10,000 Hectares) will be selected and implemented with similar concerns in mind

· GhG emissions to be mitigated are estimated at 4,344,013 tCO2 eq over 20 years (5 yrs implementation and 15 yr capitalization). Estimates have been calculated through the EX-Ante Carbon-balance Tool (EX-ACT v9.0)[31]. See Annex E.

7) Innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up

Knowledge sharing, learning and innovation are essential elements in achieving the expected transformative impact of the project. Experiences, models, tools and approaches for landscape-level biodiversity conservation and sustainable land and forest management will be shared extensively within Nigeria and also more widely in West Africa and beyond. Multi-stakeholder dialogue and innovation platforms will be strengthened and will act as important knowledge hubs both for sharing lessons and in maximizing engagement of stakeholders on the ground.

By demonstrating to local, state and Federal government the effectiveness of the proposed innovative tools and by raising awareness of the business potential of nature-based investments, the project will ensure that knowledge is transferred into the local/national government's action plans to achieve wider scale-up nationwide of the tested innovations. The private sector will also be an important catalyst for scaling and technology transfer both within and outside Nigeria.

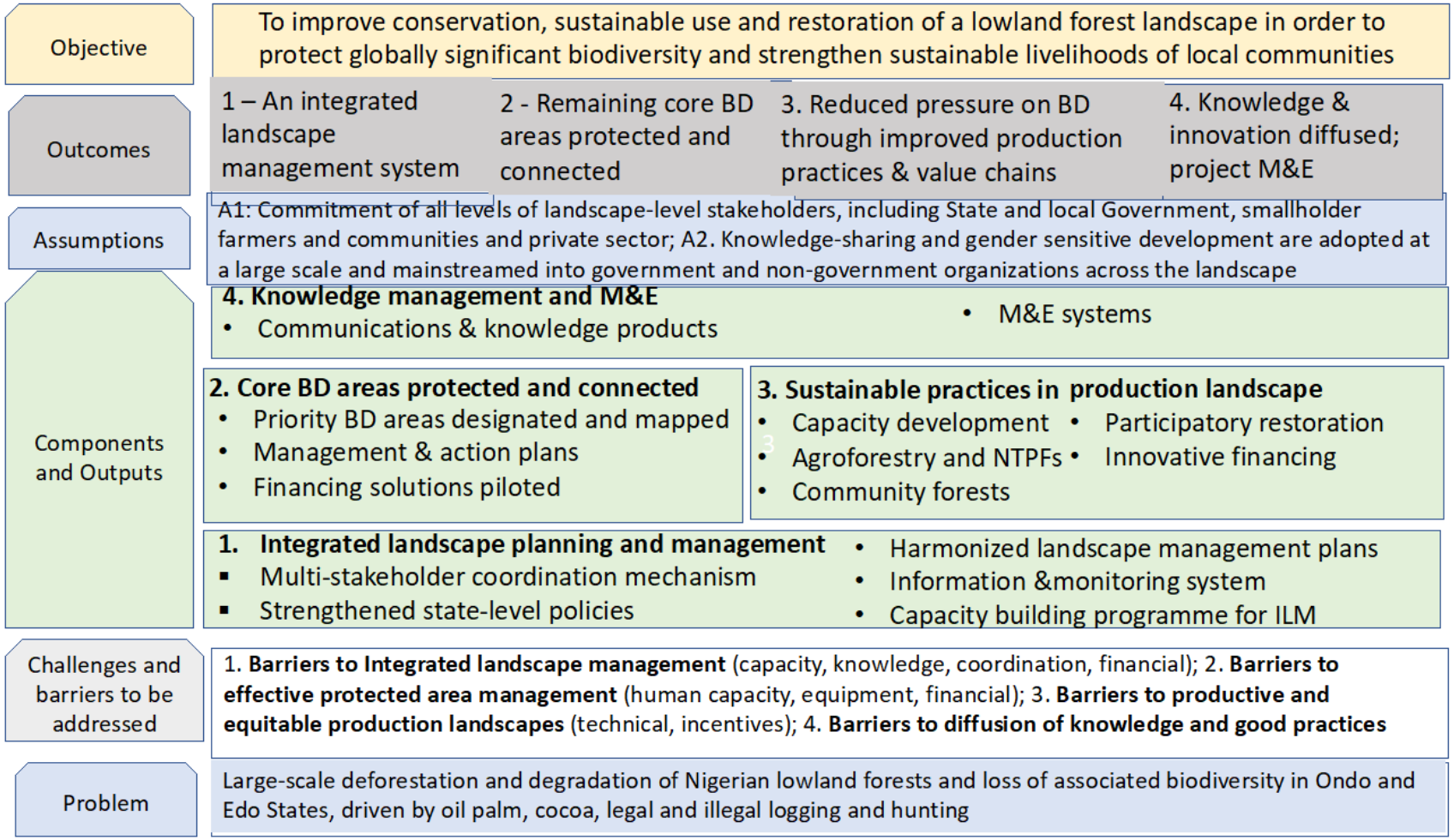
Innovation: The project is innovative in its eco-regional approach—defining and targeting conservation of a heavily threatened, large-scale landscape at the heart of an eco-region, while prioritizing the remainder of the eco-region for replication / further uptake. It is also innovative in terms of the use of technologies and applications for landscape-level conservation. The project aims to bring together national, state and local stakeholders for the conservation and sustainable use of forests, and empower local stakeholders for the integration of biodiversity in territorial planning processes. The project will strengthen capacities for the effective and appropriate use of planning methodologies and decision support that will help to: target interventions; identify and understand the main causes / drivers of deforestation and forest degradation; select and design instruments that optimize net social and environmental benefits, and; highlight the circumstances in which the maintenance of ecosystems and their services will generate higher long-term economic benefits than the introduction of economic processes that degrade and deplete ecosystems. Finally, the project will promote alliances to catalyze innovations in technology, policies, financing and business models for the more sustainable development of productive activities.

Sustainability: Social, environmental and financial / economic sustainability will be achieved through a multi-faceted exit strategy designed to ensure that positive results continue to flow after project termination. The project design, as described here in the PIF, and as it will be further elaborated during the PPG, takes account of the need for sustainability of project results. Specific design elements geared towards sustainability include: (i) efforts to institutionalize training and capacity building efforts; (ii) emphasis on stakeholder participation as a way to lay the groundwork for continued post-project engagement; (iii) development of financial mechanisms aimed at delivering a more sustained flow of resources, particularly for protected area management; (iv) raising awareness among area populations, including urban populations, of nature-based recreational opportunities and associated conservation needs; (v) development of a gender action plan to improve social sustainability by engaging women as change agents, and; (vi) strengthening of incentives for conservation e.g. ecotourism opportunities, which would persist following project completion These elements of project design, and others to be identified during the PPG, will help to ensure the project's successful 'exit' and the persistence of its benefits.

Potential for replication: The project's complementarity with national policies and plans—National REDD+ Strategy, NBSAP, National Forest Policy and NDC—creates a high potential for replication. The communication and information strategy will help demonstrate the effectiveness of project interventions, i.e. biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, reduction of anthropogenic pressures, intensification of agricultural production, access to markets, income and livelihoods approaches, thus facilitating the replication of experiences and lessons. Alliances with the private sector will allow replicating experiences with sustainable value chains. Alliances with the academic sector will contribute to knowledge dissemination. The socialization of results and the exchange of experiences will contribute to the dissemination of the results obtained. Coordination and articulation among different institutions will allow project actions and results to diffuse to other landscapes where the results can be replicated. The systematization of experiences and lessons learned will help to scale up the results of the project at sub-national, national and international level.

The project will also support uptake in other contiguous states that continue to support Nigerian lowland forests. Additional states are: Okun, Ekiti and Oyo States. The aim will be to initiate a transformative impact across the ecoregion, based on demonstration and diffusion of lessons learned, including strategies to transform incentives in order to support conservation.

Project Theory of Change



[1] Borokini, Israel. 2014. “A systematic compilation of endemic flora in Nigeria for conservation management.” Journal of threatened taxa. 6 (11)

[2] Based on figures provided in Federal Ministry of Environment, Nigeria. 2020. “National Strategy for Nigeria REDD+ Programme”. Abuja.

[3] Federal Ministry of Environment. 2020. Draft National Forest Policy.

[4] Ibid.

[5] See Draft National Forest Policy, *op cit*

[6] NBSAP. 2015. Regarding the forest reserves, the report further notes: “50% still maintain their FR status, while the remaining 50% have either been de-reserved or have been encroached upon and converted to either farmlands or residential areas.” (p.9)

[7] Ikemeh, Rachel A. 2013. “Sustainable forest management in a human dominated landscape and its implications for biodiversity conservation: a Nigerian lowland forest perspective.” Research and Reports in Biodiversity Studies 2013:3 9-23.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Authors’ estimate, based on national trend (see Fn #5 above). Exact figures to be developed during PPG Phase.

[10] Ajayi, S.S. 1997. Case Study 2: Multipurpose forest management for bushmeat production: A success story from West Africa.

[11] Enaruvbe, Glory. 2018. “A systematic assessment of plantation expansion in Okomu Forest Reserve, Edo State, southern Nigeria. Nigerian Research Journal of Enginering and Environmental Sciences (1) 2018, p. 39-47.

[12] Oladejo, S.O. 2021. Ecological and biodiversity status of Okomu National Park, Edo State Nigeria (Case Study: The White Throated Guenon). Ecology and Conservation Science, V.1, Issue 5; Oladejo, S.O. 2015. Land use/land cover and biodiversity status of Okomu Forest Reserve. 10.13140/rg.2.1.3563.1441.

[13] BirdLife International (2022) Important Bird Areas factsheet: Okomu National Park. Downloaded from http://www.birdlife.org on 21/03/2022.)

[14] Op. cit., Oladejo 2021.

[15] IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative. July 2021. Service Delivery Model Analysis: Okomu OPC, Nigeria Public Case Report.

[16] Francis, Okosodo E., Olubunmi Kolawole and Oluwafemi Jacob O. 2020. Indices of human disturbances on protected areas: a case study of Idanre Forest and Omo Biosphere Reserves, Southwest Nigeria. Jouranl of Researches in Agricultural Sciences, vol. 8 (1) March 2020, p. 1-9.

[17] Ikemeh 2013, *op cit*. Persistence of Loxodonta is uncertain.

[18] https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=NG

[19] https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/nigeria-unveils-record-398-bln-budget-2022-spending-up-25-2021-10-07/#:~:text=ABUJA%2C%20Oct%207%20(Reuters),the%20impact%20of%20the%20pandemic.

[20] Tropical Forest Alliance. 2021. “The Africa Palm Oil Initiative: Highlights 2019-2020

[21] IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative. July 2021. Service Delivery Model Analysis: Okomu OPC, Nigeria Public Case Report.

[22] Ibid.

[23] UN-REDD had supported REDD+ readiness efforts in Cross River State from 2010-2012. Ondo and Nasaraw States had also initiated pilot readiness efforts by 2016.

[24] National Strategy for Nigeria REDD+ Programme

[25] REDD+ National Programme.

[26] The PPG phase will consider various approaches to supporting functional connectivity between forest patches to support landscape corridors that facilitate movement between forested areas, particularly forest reserves. Methods and datasets to measure and monitor landscape connectedness will be identified during the PPG phase to assess wildlife movement across anthropogenic and climate-sensitive landscapes. Both structural and functional connectivity metrics for species conservation will be explored (i.e., distance to the nearest forest patch, habitat availability, observation of patch occupancy, travel between seasonal ranges, etc.).

[27] In the case of Ondo State, work under this component will link to outputs being funded under the FOLUR project (# 10481).

[28] Working arrangements within Ondo State would need to be considered carefully in light of the planned unified FOLUR multi-stakeholder platform. For example, Ondo's participation in the multi-state platform could come under the overall aegis of the state's unified FOLUR platform.

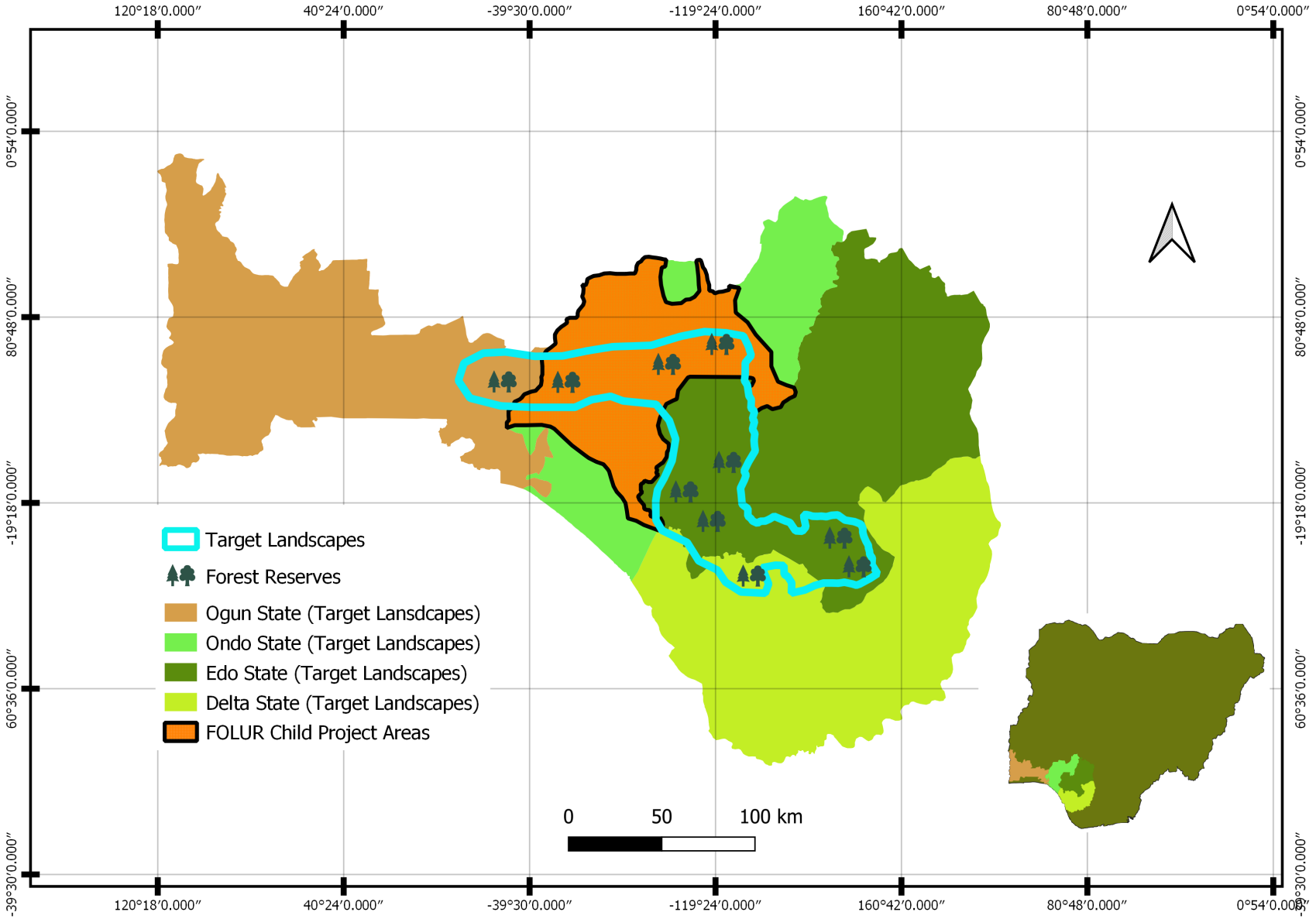
[29] As part of a strategy aimed at consolidating limited financial and other resources and rewarding conservation efforts, protected areas, e.g. forest reserves, whose biodiversity, habitat and development trends are assessed as providing very limited opportunities for conserving globally significant biodiversity will not be further supported.

[30] Action plans and promotional material (see Component 4 below) will be utilized in an effort to identify and engage additional sources of leveraged cofinancing.

[31] http://www.fao.org/tc/exact/ex-act-home/en/

1b. Project Map and Coordinates

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



The target landscape is located between 160°42’0.000” West, 40°24’0.000” East, 60°36’0.000” South and 80°48’0.000” North. These coordinates will be further refined and site-specific coordinates for each forest patch targeted will be added during the PPG phase.

2. Stakeholders

Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase:

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities

Civil Society Organizations Yes

Private Sector Entities Yes

If none of the above, please explain why:

Consultation of stakeholders during the project identification phase is summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Stakeholder consultations during PIF

Stakeholder Name	Stakeholder profile	Consultation methodology at PIF stage	Consultation discussion	Date
Federal Ministry of Environment Office of the Hon. Minister of State for Environment Office of the GEF Operational Focal Point (National GEF Desk)	Federal MDA	Physical meetings in Abuja and meeting through Teams call; exchange of emails	Inputs to the proposal design and selections of target landscapes Identification of the existing baseline programs and alignment of PIF to government priorities. Capacity for implementation as operational partner (executing agency).	March – April 2022
Other Federal Institutions: National REDD+ Programme and Federal Department of Forestry (FDF).	Federal Institution	Discussion with the Director of Forestry in Abuja.	Discussion around baseline initiatives that aligns with biodiversity conservation as well as Inputs to the design of the PIF	March – April 2022

Other Federal Institutions Okomu National Park Services	Federal Institution	Virtual meetings, WhatsApp and email exchanges.	Challenges in management of protected areas particularly encroachment from loggers and agricultural expansion as well as access to modern facilities for surveillance.	March 2022
State Ministry of Environment and Forestry in Ondo, Edo, Delta and Ogun States **State REDD+ Secretariat** in Ondo and Edo States	State MDAs	Virtual meetings with the Directors and technical staff and exchange of mails	Baseline information on the status of the state's forest reserves and landscape selections Baseline initiatives, co-financing and technical capacity in support of the project as well as inputs to the design of the PIF	March – May 2022

In addition, provide indicative information on how stakeholders, including civil society and indigenous peoples, will be engaged in the project preparation, and their respective roles and means of engagement

During the PPG phase, a participatory design process inclusive of all project stakeholders (see Table 3 for a tentative list) will be undertaken. Engagement of project stakeholders during the design phase will include household surveys, key informant interviews, focus group meetings and regular meetings with key resource persons and representatives of stakeholder groups including women, youth and local communities within each of the states covered within the targeted landscape.

Table 3: Key stakeholders, roles and responsibilities related to the project and its objective

Stakeholders	Roles & Responsibilities
National Level	

· Federal Ministry of Environment .	The Ministry focuses on the following key environmental issues, especially, in the area of policy awareness, enforcement and intervention: Desertification and Deforestation; Pollution and Waste Management; Climate change and clean Energy; Flood, Erosion and Coastal Management; and Environmental Standards & Regulations. The Ministry's main thrusts are Reclamation and Rehabilitation of degraded land, Biodiversity Conservation and Eco-tourism, Effective Waste Management, Mitigating the effects of Climate Change and Effective Environmental Governance. The Ministry has zonal offices in the six geopolitical zones of the country as well as field offices in all the 36 States and the FCT. The Ministry also has the following parastatals: Environmental Health and Registration Council of Nigeria (EHORECON); Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria (FRIN); National Biosafety Management Agency (NBMA); National Environmental Standards Regulatory and Enforcement Agency (NESREA); National Agency for the Great Green Wall; National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA); and National Parks Service (NPS). The Ministry will ensure the overall coordination of project interventions, and work in collaboration with other stakeholders to deliver specific activities in areas related to regulatory and institutional frameworks, provision of public financial reources, coordination of land use planning and environemental monitoring. An exhaustive list of federal stakeholders will be identified during PPG stage.
· National Park Services	The Nigeria National Park Service has the statutory responsibilities for the following: To preserve, enhance, protect and manage vegetation and wild animals in the National Parks; To advise the Federal Government on the development and preservation policy of the National Parks including the financial requirements for the implementation of such policy, and; To advise the Federal Government on the declaration of areas which for the purpose of protecting wildlife species, biotic communities, sites of special interest or of aesthetic value, the Service considers may be declared as National Parks under this Act

	onal Parks under this Act. NPS will play an active role in supporting project interventions in Okumo national pa rk in partnership with Okomu National Park authorities and other national and local stakeholders.
· The Nigerian Con servation Foundation (NCF)	The Foundation focuses on nature conservation and sustainable development in Ni geria. It works on: Preserving the full range of Nigeria's biodiversity which include sp ecies, ecosystems and genetic biodiversity; Promoting sustainable use of natural re sources for the benefit of the present and future generations; and Advocating action s that minimize pollution and wasteful utilization of renewable resources.
· Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) ·	The service support combatting illegal international trade in endangered species, as well as the prevention and suppression of smuggling. It will support the enforcemen t of interventions related to the fight against poaching and illegal logging, in coopera tion with other stakeholders to be approached during the PPG phase including Niger ia Immigration Service, Department of State Security and Nigeria Police Force.
· National Environm ental Standards and R egulations Enforceme nt Agency (NESREA) ·	The agency supports environmental compliance, monitoring and enforcement. It wil l support the enforcement of interventions related to the fight against poaching and illegal logging, in cooperation with various stakeholders to be consulted during the P PG phase including prosecutors and judiciary in target States.
· Federal & State Mi nistries of Tourism Cul ture and National Orie ntation	These ministries will support project interventions related to Nigeria's wildlife-based economy in cooperation with other stakeholders, which will be consulted during the PPG phase including Federal Departement of Forestry, Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, National Boundary Commission; Forestry Research I nstitute of Nigeria (FRIN); Africa Nature Investors Foundation, Nigeria Conservation Foundation and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS).
Nigeria Customs	The service support combatting illegal international trade in endangered species, as well as the prevention and suppression of smuggling. It will support the enforcemen

· Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) ·	t of interventions related to the fight against poaching and illegal logging, in coopera tion with other stakeholders to be approached during the PPG phase including Niger ia Immigration Service, Department of State Security and Nigeria Police Force.
State/local Level	
· State Ministries of Enviornment in Edo, O ndo, Delta and Ogun St ates · State Ministries of Agriculture and Forestr y in Edo, Ondo, Delta a nd Ogun States ·	State governments will play key roles in supporting project interventions across the target landscape in the Nigerian lowland rainforest eco-region. These include co-fin ancing of activities contributing to the intended outcomes of the GEF-funded projec t; Provision of extension services to land users; Formulation of related policies and guidelines; and Support and coordination of land use planning, monitoring and evalu ation. Partnerships with state and local level actors will be further explored and refined dur ing the PPG stage.
· Okomu National P ark authorities · · Forest reserve ma nagers and staff	In cooperation with NPS, the authorities of Okumo national park and targeted forest reserves will be proactively engaged throughout the PPG phase to identify meaningf ul ways to support project interventions related to biodiversity conservation activitie s, inlcuding patrolling of national park; Support stakeholder engagement towards re duction of threats from deforestation and grazing inside Pas; Biodiversity monitorin g; and Sustainable forest management activities within forest reserves
· Local government authorities, Traditional chiefs, CSOs, and NGO s	During project preparation, thePPG team will engage Local government authorities, Traditional chiefs, CSOs, and NGOs to identify meaningful ways to support project in terventions related to Participation in the financing of SLM and SFM actions; Sensiti zation and information of land users; Support to extension services and environmen tal monitoring focused on the degradation of the environment and natural resource s; Supporting active stakeholder engagement at the local level; Raising awareness a nd providing information to the population; Ensure compliance with laws and regula tions
· Local communitie s, village co-managem	The project will actively engage local communities through participatory decision-m aking processes; identification and development of alternative income-generating a ctivities; piloting of SLM and SFM methods; implementation of collaborative sustain

ent committees	ctivities; piloting of SLM and SFM methods; implementation of collaborative sustain able natural resource management systems; and participatory M&E processes.
Private sector	
· Presco Plc	An agro-industrial company in Nigeria with business interests in the cultivation of oil palm plantations and milling and crushing palm kernels to produce a range of refine d vegetable oil. The company also has a packaging plant and a biogas plant which t reats its palm oil mill effluent. Presco Plc specialises in cultivating oil palm and extr acting, refining and fractionating crude palm oil into finished products. The compan y supplies specialty fats and oils of outstanding quality.Presco Plc has a concessio n of 6 462 hectares at Obaretin Estate; 12 560 hectares at Ologbo Estate; 2 800 hect ares at Delta Estate; and 17 000 hectares at Sakponba Estate. The company's head office is in Edo State, Nigeria. Public-Private Partnerships will be explored during the PPG phase to support aware ness raising; the introduction of SLM, SFM, and LDN concepts; Promotion of environ mentally and socio-economically sustainable technologies and value chains. Co-fina ncing will be also sought through activities contributing to the intended outcomes o f the GEF-funded project.
· Okomu Oil Palm C ompany Plc	The company is a engaged in cultivation of oil palm, processing of fresh fruit bunch es into crude palm oil for resale, rubber plantation and processing of rubber lumps t o rubber cake for export. The Company operates through two segments: Palm oil pr oducts and Rubber products. The Company produces Banga cooking oil and natural rubber products. The Company's plantation carries on the business of oil palm and r ubber cultivation. The Company has ongoing plantation operations in Cote D'ivoire, Liberia, Guinea, Cameroon, Kenya and Indonesia. Public-Private Partnerships will be explored during the PPG phase to support aware ness raising; the introduction of SLM, SFM, and LDN concepts; Promotion of environ mentally and socio-economically sustainable technologies and value chains. Co-fina ncing will be also sought through activities contributing to the intended outcomes o f the GEF-funded project.

· Agricultural cooperatives	The project will work together with agricultural cooperatives and associations to: Support extension services and awareness raising on SLM, SFM, and LDN concepts and promotion of environmentally and socio-economically sustainable technologies and value chains at the national and sub-regional level; Support to processes aimed at achieving solidarity and reducing potential for conflict at the local farming community level; and fostering of consultations, knowledge sharing and cooperation.
Other Stakeholders	
· Academic, research and training institutions	The project will work together with academia and research institutions to support: Generation of data and scientific information; Development of environmentally sustainable techniques and technologies; Training (development and implementation of modules on SLM, SFM and LDN); Support to knowledge management processes.
· Development Partners	Development partners will be identified as part of the baseline assessments. These will be engaged to secure: Access to global and local networks and technical expertise, including on integrated policy development, institutional strengthening, non-governmental participation, conflict prevention, rural enterprise development and natural resource management; Experience and tools acquired under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) related to protected area management and biodiversity mainstreaming; Expertise on applying the Scientific Conceptual Framework for LDN and methodologies developed by SPI; monitoring of progress towards achievement of LDN targets; establishment of partnerships, access to WOCAT platform (UNCCD); and Co-financing of activities contributing to the intended outcomes of the GEF-funded project.
· Media	The project will engage media to ensure: contribution to information campaigns and public awareness events; and sharing of lessons learned and good practices to enable upscaling.

A detailed stakeholder analysis will be conducted during the PPG phase to ensure an inclusive process to engage a wide range of stakeholders at federal, state and community levels.

3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address gender in project design (e.g. gender analysis).

According to a recent UNDP Human Development Report[1], Nigeria ranked 181 of 193 countries on the Gender Equality Index. Reasons for its low score include: poor resource allocation in the economic and social sectors, frequent conflicts, forced displacements and inadequate inclusion of women and girls' perspectives in policy-making decisions, low representation of women in governance and politics; and inadequate legal framework and limited capacity to support women's empowerment and equality efforts. In the rural landscape areas where project activities are focused, and where agriculture is a mainstay of economic activity, the project will take account of the fact that women have unequal access to land, inputs, equipment, and credit and that, overall, their economic and social opportunities remain limited compared to those of men.

The project will be designed specifically to ensure that it maximises opportunities to contribute to gender equality. In line with FAO and GEF policies on mainstreaming gender into project design and implementation, a gender gap analysis will be conducted during project preparation, and a detailed, costed action plan with associated indicators developed to ensure that the design takes into full consideration gender-related dynamics and opportunities in the Nigerian context.

The gender analysis will examine the underlying gender dynamics, specific to each of the 4 targeted states, to understand the interplay between the prevailing social constructions and gender-based roles assigned to men and women within the context of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in the targeted eco-region.

During the project development phase, activities will be designed to address gender gaps regarding access to and control over natural resources, as well as for strengthening the participation of women in decision-making processes and enhancing their income-generating potential. The gender strategy will ensure an inclusive approach throughout the full range of project activities. The results framework will include gender-disaggregated indicators and set targets that reflect balanced social and economic benefits. The M&E plan will also ensure adherence to gender-sensitive indicators.

While details of the gender analysis and action plan thus remain to be developed, it is fully expected that, at a minimum, the project will:

(i) empower women by involving them in all aspects of project development and implementation;

(ii) ensure that gender-focused NGOs and CBOs are invited to participate at meetings, seminars, workshops and discussion groups that are convened by the project;

(iii) encourage gender-focused NGOs and CBOs within the project landscape to establish their own forums or associations to collaborate and share experiences on issues regarding biodiversity conservation and forest protection and management;

(iv) ensure that public information dissemination campaigns and awareness-raising activities specifically target women;

(v) involve gender-focused NGOs and CBOs in project implementation and capacity development at national and local levels.

[1] Human Development Report 2019 http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/NGA.pdf

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

closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources; Yes

improving women's participation and decision-making; and/or Yes

generating socio-economic benefits or services for women. Yes

Will the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators?

Yes

4. Private sector engagement

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes

Please briefly explain the rationale behind your answer.

As described in some detail above, private sector agriculture, ranging from smallholder agriculture and farmers' associations up to large-scale plantation agriculture, constitutes a crucial set of actors determining forest and biodiversity outcomes in the project landscape and many others like it across Nigeria. In addition to producers, other private sector actors include individuals at various stages of the value chain for agricultural products, NTFPs, etc.

Private sector entities and individuals involved in the tourism sector, including those operating in areas related to the wildlife economy, will be mapped out and engaged during the PPG stage at both federal and state level. This will include dialogues with relevant businesses operating along BD-related value chains within the target landscapes.

These stakeholders will be engaged throughout the project, beginning with their expected presence on the multistakeholder platforms being established under Component 1. They will be targets for support via awareness raising and the introduction of SLM and SFM concepts, particularly among smallholder farmers. Private sector actors will be encouraged to adopt environmentally and socio-economically sustainable technologies. Finally, they may provide co-financing of activities, thereby contributing to the intended outcomes of the GEF-funded project.

5. Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

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

Section A: Risks to the project

Table 3 below summarizes the identified risks as well as their impact levels, likelihood of occurrence, corresponding mitigation measures, and the responsible individuals.

Table 3: Project risk identification and mitigation actions

	Description of risk	Impact	Probability of occurrence	Planned mitigation actions	Responsible party
Political Risks					
1	**Insufficient government support**.	**High:** Key aspects promoted by the project, particularly integrated land use management, will rely on government commitment and support.	**Medium**	**1) Diversify project support at multiple levels:** This project will be designed to mobilize support at federal, state, and local levels. This approach diversifies stakeholder buy in at multiple levels, such that if support for project approaches at one level of project management erodes, it has been diversified and institutionalized within others to offset the change. **2) Communication of results:** Through the multi-stakeholder platforms and communication products.	National PMU State PIUs
2	**Limited support from Local Government Councils (LGC) and traditional leaders**	**Medium:** Local government councils and traditional authorities play an important role in the land use planning process and their support will be ne	**Medium**	**1) Ensure buy in of priority LGC members.** As a part of the selection criteria for 'priority' LGAs, interest and enthusiasm local government council's authorities was factored into the selection process, ensuring that project a	State PIUs State Steering Committee Operational

		eded by the State Steering Committees. Traditional authorities have a significant influence over customary land at the local level, and impact the land use systems to a high degree. This can constrain access to customary rights of occupancy, particularly for women and youth.		ctivities being carried out on the ground receive support from LGC members. . **2) LGC Representation in State Steering Committee**: LGC member representatives have been included in the State Steering Committee so that their LGA's priorities are addressed. This mitigates the risk of low enthusiasm to take part in project activities by aligning LGC interests with feedback for FRIN service provision to LGAs. It is imperative that the State PIU and State Steering Committee actively engage LGC representative members in coordination, advisory, and feedback. 3) **Ensure buy in of priority traditional leaders**: As part of its support to land use planning (Component 1), the project will dedicate resources to working with traditional authorities, with a focus on the needs for women's inclusion in customary rights allocation and in selected SLM and SFM value chains. The project will plan to engage traditional authorities with the LGC's land planning process, to ensure that their concerns are met alongside women and youth inclusion. Operating partners will be engaged with traditional authorities, particularly in the land use planning process with the LGCs, in order to mitigate this risk.	partners
COVID-19					
3	**COVID-19 Ris**	**Medium:** The overall risk	**Medium**	1) The project will actively explore ad	National P

	ks: 1) Risk of co-financing. Government priorities to address the pandemic could have an effect on funding for key federal and state government programs that the proposed project builds upon. 2) Availability of technical staff and ability to interact with local communities. 3) The global pandemic poses risk to project effectiveness and, depending on the development of the COVID conditions at the national level and state levels, project activities, and the extent to which they can be	impact is considered high. Depending on the level of pandemic threat during project implementation, the project activities that support face to face collaboration and engagement may be significantly impacted, which could have a high level of impact on land planning activities and cross sector collaboration. Such impacts would be very problematic for the project and thus the impact of this threat is designated as 'high'. The risk of forest conversion to cropland is also considered high.		ditional cofinancing sources, including private financing, during the PPG phase to ensure a minimum level of viable cofinancing is guaranteed. 2) **Adherence to health precautions:** It should be duly noted by the National and State PIUs that this project component's implementation measures will follow the precautionary measures set forth by the Federal Ministry of Health, the World Health Organization, as well as any additional measures at the state or local government area levels. It is the responsibility of the National PMU to provide updates on these conditions to the State PIUs, to play a central role at the state level in communicating policies for mitigating spread of the COVID virus. The State PIUs will assume responsibility of receiving advice from the State Steering Committee as to properly implement health precautions according to recent developments in local conditions. It will be the responsibility of State Steering committees to provide updates as necessary to the State PIUs for implementation of health-related measures during project design and execution. 3) The project design addresses directly this risk of expansion of agriculture into forests.	MU; State PIUs; State Steering Committee;

	effectively carried out may be impacted. 3) As Nigeria strives to recover from the economic downturn, there could be additional pressure on forests being converted to agricultural land.				
Climate Risks					
4	**The climate risk is substantial**	**Substantial:** possible impacts of different weather-related hazards (exacerbated by climate change) on SLM and SFM approaches - Drought: - Prolonged heavy rainfall: - Heat-stress effect:. It may threatens crop, planting survival, and forests thus curtailing the basis for development of value chains appropriate for food security.	**Substantial**	ILM plans to be developed taking into account the current climate trends and projected changes in the landscape and target states – including selection of climate-resilient local species for restoration. Enhanced provision of agro-climatological information Promotion of climate-smart SFM practices incl. agroforestry systems e.g., selection of the most appropriate tree species and seed-sources for tree-based restoration, adaptive forest management approach, etc. Livelihoods diversification.	National PMU; State PIUs;
Project Management Risks					
5	Project mana	**Moderately High**	**Low**	The PMU will be composed of qualifi	PSC, PMU

	gement risks such as delays, overspending, lack of coordination			ed personnel. Oversight by implementing partners, presence in targeted landscapes and well-established processes and monitoring activities will favor an early identification of issues that may hinder project implementation.	
Economic risks					
6	Economic drivers associated with cocoa and oil palm plantation	**Substantial**	**Substantial**	Economic drivers associated with cocoa and oil palm plantations do indeed represent a significant risk for project interventions. In order to mitigate such risks, the project will build up on the work conducted through the FOLUR project, in order to contribute to a wider uptake within the target landscapes beyond Ondo state of BD-compatible productive practices.	National PMU; State PIUs; State Steering Committee;

COVID-19

The project will support national and sub-national efforts for a transition towards a greener post-COVID-19 economic recovery by enabling smallholders, government institutions and private sector entities to adopt sustainable and biodiversity-compatible practices along biodiversity-positive value chains through interventions proposed under Outcome 3. Policy making, planning and financing of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of forest resources across mosaics of natural and productive landscapes in the targeted eco-region, will be also supported through outcomes 1 and 2 of the project. These investments will inform decision making and enable better management of forest reserves over the long term.

Climate risk rational and recommendations

Nigeria has a moderate vulnerability to climate related impacts (ranked 127 out of 181 countries), but vulnerability is particularly high in flood prone areas of the Niger Delta (ND-GAIN, 2017; Matemilola, 2019). Since 2015, several areas have been affected by multiple flooding events. For instance, in 2018, the overflow of the Niger River affected 1.9 million people, having a death toll of 200 and displacing over 200 thousand people (Reliefweb, 2018; CRED, 2020).

According to the Köppen scale, the Niger Delta has a monsoon climate (Am), with warm mean annual temperatures (above 25^{o}C) and a very humid year-round period (i.e. June-October tend to record more than 300 mm month^{-1}), interrupted by a short and dry period from December to January (with less than 60 mm month^{-1}) (Köttek, 2006). Given its latitude (4^{o}N) and location within the Gulf of Guinea, the Niger Delta is under the influence of the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ), migrating northwards during the summer months and vice-versa in winter. As any other delta, the Niger Delta sits at sea level and is often exposed to storm surges originating at the Gulf of Guinea. In addition, all-year round abundant precipitation in the lower basin of the Niger River and densified

river network makes drainage at the delta difficult, leading to frequent and severe flooding. As a result of the combined effect of storm surges and sea level rise, Nigeria´s coastline is rapidly eroding, already submerging villages and displacing coastline population (Fashae & Onafeso, 2011; Anabaraonye et al., 2019).

Past climatic trends show a temperature increase of 0.5-1.5^{o}C over the period 1951-2005 across the country (UNFCCC, 2014). Rates of temperatures rise are higher in northern parts of the country than in southern states (project´s location). In addition, maximum and minimum mean temperatures in the southern states have risen from 30.6 to 32.0 ^{o}C and from 21.7 to 23.0^{o}C, respectively, over the period 1951-2005 (UNFCCC, 2014). Precipitation has declined over the period 1951-2005 and remarkably decreased in the 70´s. However, in the Niger Delta (Port Harcourt), precipitation has slightly recovered, by 4 mm decade^{-1}, between 1983 and 2008 (Olofintoy & Sule, 2010).

Future climate projections show a temperature increase of 1.1-2.5^{o}C by 2060 in Nigeria (USAID, 2019). The number of extreme heat days is also expected to increase, from 10 days in the 90´s to 260 days by the end of the century (USAID, 2019). Regarding future precipitation projections, there is uncertainty in terms of amount and frequency, but rainfall variability is likely to increase. In addition, the Niger Delta and costal zones will experience a sea level rise of 0.4-1.0m by 2100, resulting on saline intrusion in coastal aquifers (USAID, 2019). In addition, sea level rise will cause the partial submersion of densely populated areas along the coastline, including parts of Lagos and other smaller towns (Ebele & Emodi, 2016). In the worst-case scenario, a sea level rise of 1m will result in the loss of three-quarters of the Niger Delta (FME, 2014).

Based on the above, the climate risk in the Niger delta is substantial (on a scale of low, moderate, substantial and high). During the PPG phase, a thorough climate rationale and analysis of climate related aspects will be conducted.

The project will capitalize on existing sustainable forest management (SFM) tools, such as the FAO SFM tool box. The SFM tool box gathers a package of best practices as well as examples for sustainably managing forests. The intended users of the SFM tool box are the public in general, private forest and land managers, as well as staff of extension services and NGO´s (FAO, 2020a). Other initiatives promoted by FAO on landscape management and forest restoration is the “Diversity for restoration tool”, which helps decision-makers select the most appropriate tree species and seed-sources for tree-based restoration in Colombia and northwestern Peru (BI, 2020). Lessons learned from the implementation of this tools could be critical for its adoption in the context of equatorial areas of Africa, such as the Niger Delta. Similarly, the “Guidelines on sustainable forest management in drylands of sub-Saharan Africa” provides information on the adoption of an adaptive forest management approach, including management decisions to changes in climatic patterns (rotation lengths, planting seasons, enhancing natural regeneration through enrichment planting, planting of species and crop varieties that are resilient to climate change and variability, as well as the assessment of forests sensitivity to wildfires etc.) (FAO, 2010).

Section B: Environmental and Social risks from the project

The Environmental and Social Risk screening has been carried out during PIF design by a technical officer of the GEF Agency, based on a standard checklist. As per the FAO Project Environmental and Social Screening, the proposed project falls into the High Category of FAO´s Environmental and Social Risk Classification system. Safeguards 2, 3,4 and 7 were triggered (Table 4 and further in Annex F). During PPG, this risk level will be further confirmed, and a risk mitigation plan prepared, based on guidelines provided.

Table 4: Summary results from the Project Environmental and Social (E&S) Screening

Safeguard Triggered	Risk Identified	Risk Classification	Mitigation Measures
2	2.1 - Would this project be implemented within a legally designated protected area or its buffer zone?	High	The project is to improve the conservation, sustainable use and restoration of a lowland forest landscape in order to protect globally significant biodiversity and strengthen sustainable livelihoods of local communities. The project through Component (2) will implement biodiversity conservation and restoration within protected areas and buffer zones of the landscape. It will facilitate the restoration of degraded areas within the PAs, through restoration/reforestation of said places affected by illegal activities. A full environmental and social impact assessment will be conducted during PPG and ESM plan developed.
3	3.4 - Would this project establish or manage planted forests?	Moderate	The project will not undertake Plantation Forest sensu stricto but will promote agroforestry using multipurpose native species, enrichment planting and assisted natural for forest restoration
4	4.7 - Would this project be located in or near an internationally recognized conservation area e.g. Ramsar or World Heritage Site, or other nationally important habitat, e.g. national park or high nature value farmland?	Moderate	The project intervention area will include nationally recognized protected area. Environmental and social impact assessment will be conducted during PPG and ESM plan developed.

7	7.2 - Would this project operate in sectors or value chains that are dominated by subsistence producers and other vulnerable informal agricultural workers, and more generally characterized by high levels "working poverty"?	Moderate	Yes. Mitigation actions are planned. The project will have a gender including youth action plan to ensure all categories are benefiting from the interventions

6. Coordination

Outline the institutional structure of the project including monitoring and evaluation coordination at the project level. Describe possible coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.

Federal Ministry of Environment will act as the lead executing agency and will be responsible for the day-to-day management of project results entrusted to them in full compliance with all terms and conditions of the Execution Agreements signed with the GEF Implementing Agency, i.e. FAO. The government will designate a National Project Focal Point (NPFP) located in the Federal Ministry of Environment. The NPFP will be responsible for coordinating project activities with all the national and sub-national bodies related to the different project components, as well as with the project partners. S/He will also be responsible for supervising and guiding the Project Management Unit (PMU) on the government policies and priorities.

The GEF Operational Focal Point will chair the Project Steering Committee (PSC), which will be the main governing body of the project.

Project monitoring and evaluation functions will be undertaken through: (i) day-to-day monitoring and project progress supervision missions (PIU); (ii) technical monitoring of indicators defined in the project results framework; and (iii) monitoring and supervision missions (IAs). At the beginning of project implementation, the PMU will establish a system to monitor the project's progress to submit for PSC review. Participatory mechanisms and methodologies to support the monitoring and evaluation of performance indicators and outputs will be developed. During the project inception workshop, the tasks of monitoring and evaluation will include: (i) presentation and explanation (if needed) of the project's Results Framework with all project stakeholders; (ii) review of monitoring and evaluation indicators and their baselines; (iii) preparation of draft clauses that will be required for inclusion in consultant contracts, to ensure compliance with the monitoring and evaluation reporting functions (if applicable); and (iv) clarification of the division of monitoring and evaluation tasks among the different stakeholders in the project. A project M&E specialist will draft a monitoring and evaluation matrix that will be discussed and agreed upon by all stakeholders during the inception workshop. The M&E matrix will be a management tool for project partners to: i) six-monthly monitor the achievement of output indicators; ii) annually monitor the achievement of outcome indicators; iii) clearly define responsibilities and verification means; and iv) select a method to process the indicators and data.

During the PPG, the project development team will establish links with and capitalize on the lessons learned from relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives, including mechanisms for sharing information throughout the project implementation. These include the "Promoting Integrated Landscape Management and Sustainable Food Systems in the Niger Delta Region in Nigeria" / 10481; the "Food-IAP: Integrated Landscape Management to Enhance Food Security and Ecosystem Resilience in Nigeria" / 9143; the "LCB-NREE: Nigeria Child Project: Comprehensive and Integrated Management of Natural Resources in Borno State" / 9161; and the "Sustainable Fuelwood Management in Nigeria" / 5745.

7. Consistency with National Priorities

Is the Project consistent with the National Strategies and plans or reports and assesments under relevant conventions?

Yes

If yes, which ones and how: NAPAs, NAPs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, INDCs, etc

The project is being designed in a manner that is informed by, and aims directly to support, several national strategies, plans and associated targets and priorities, as follows:

· National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP): The NBSAP includes 14 National Targets, including the following to which the present project would directly contribute:

o Target 1: 30% of Nigeria's population is aware of the importance of biodiversity to the ecology and economy of the country.

o Target 3: adoption of a national ecosystem-based spatial planning process and plans, promoting the values of biodiversity and ecosystem services to sustain development.

o Target 4: up to 15% of the areas of degraded ecosystems in Nigeria are under programmes for restoration and sustainable management

o Target 6: at least 10% of Nigeria's national territory is sustainably managed in conservation areas at varied levels of authority, with representation of all ecosystem types.

o Target 12: community participation in project design and management of key ecosystems is enhanced in one (1) each of the six (6) ecological zones.

o Target 14: the capacity of key actors is built and gender mainstreaming carried out for the achievement of Nigeria's biodiversity targets

· National REDD+ Strategy: The Strategy defines four strategic priorities, the first two of which are considered of particular importance to the present project. These are:

o Strategic Priority 1: Reduce deforestation and carbon losses from forestry and agriculture as well as other fluxes including bush burning, charcoal production, mineral exploitation and grazing - Under this priority, actions for sustainable restoration, forest protection and reforestation, along with linked efforts to promote Climate Smart Agriculture. Notably, the first action identified here is to organize a national conference to develop "a National Action Plan and programme for adopting *integrated landscape management approaches*" (see Strategic Option 1.1). Other relevant actions include reducing bush burning (Option 1.2), controlling overgrazing of forest reserves (Option 1.4) and sustainable intensification of agriculture and agroforestry (Option 1.6).

o Strategic Priority 2: Increase the country's network of forest reserves and conservation areas - This strategic priority includes planned actions to designate new forest reserves and protected areas, while also improving the management of existing protected areas, including "work[ing] collaboratively with communities to build their capacity in the management of community conservancies and sanctuaries, especially those contiguous with protected areas and other critical ecosystems and wildlife corridors, as well as joint management of buffer zones of protected areas." It acknowledges links to the objective of achieving at least 25% forest coverage for the country[1] (based on the Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD) and the attainment of SDG Goal 15[2]."

· National Forest Policy: The Policy describes 32 'priority areas for sustainable forest management (SFM). For each of these areas, the document presents a brief policy statement, as series of objectives and a set of strategies. Among the key topic areas to which the project will contribute most significantly, from the incremental perspective of biodiversity mainstreaming and protected areas management, are: 3.3.1 Forest management; 3.3.2 Biodiversity conservation, including protected areas; 3.3.4 Supply of seeds and seedlings; 3.3.5 Forest fires; 3.3.8 Environmental services of forests; 3.3.13 Non-timber forest products; 3.3.14 Agro-forestry; 3.3.15 Community participation; 3.3.16 Private sector participation; 3.3.20 Gender issues; 3.3.22 Forest administration; 3.3.25 Training and capacity building; 3.3.26 Education and awareness creation; 3.3.27 Information and database management; 3.3.28 Land, tree tenure and conflict resolution; 3.3.30 Cross-sectoral cooperation. For each of the areas mentioned, the project will identify specific opportunities to incrementally support the respective objectives and strategies.

· UNFCCC Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC): The NDC, which was updated in 2021, "*recommits* to its ambitious *relative* emission reduction targets from the 2015 NDC, namely an unconditional contribution of 20% below business-as-usual by 2030 and a 45% contribution conditional on international support." It refer3ences a validated Forest Reference Emissions Level (FREL), based on revised data and emissions projections for the forestry sector. The NDC notes that "The objective of the National REDD+ Programme is to implement the forest sector plan for achieving Nigeria's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) aimed at reducing GHG emission." A key element of the NDC is the potential role of nature-based solutions, which the report defines as "actions that protect biodiversity, sustainably manage and/or restore ecosystems, while simultaneously contributing to the achievement of multiple sustainable development goals, including national goals for climate, food security, water security, disaster risk reduction and livelihoods." It goes on to identify the "top three nature-based solutions for climate mitigation [as] agroforestry, improved forest management and forest restoration, with a combined mitigation potential of 89 Mt CO2e/year." The present project will contribute to implementation of these solutions while generating co-benefits related to mitigation.

[1]http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4793e.pdf

[2]https:/www.sdgfund.org/goal-15-life-land

8. Knowledge Management

Outline the knowledge management approach for the Project, including, if any, plans for the Project to learn from other relevant Projects and initiatives, to assess and document in a user-friendly form, and share these experiences and expertise with relevant stakeholders.

The project will benefit from close cooperation with the Nigeria FOLUR project and, by extension, will be informed by FOLUR global learning processes. This will be particularly important given the significant presence of oil palm and cocoa within the project landscape. This will begin during the PPG; the PPG team will receive updates from the Nigeria FOLUR team regarding emerging lesson learning and knowledge products. In addition to supporting project design, this will help to ensure that knowledge management efforts by the present project are complementary with those of FOLUR.

Under Component 4, a strategy on knowledge sharing and strategic communication and information management will be carried out in order to capture, analyse and share lessons learned for biodiversity conservation and sustainable agricultural development across landscapes. The project will facilitate a lesson learning process as part of the day-to-day work of the project team. The lessons will feed into an adaptive management process and will be shared with stakeholders on a continuous basis. Knowledge management will include documentation of best practices, impacts and an evolving theory of change. Information will be produced and packaged for targeted stakeholders, including local government officials and producer associations and forums. Capacity building events will supplement existing knowledge materials with ones developed by the project, the latter to be updated as project lessons are learned. Media and local means of information dissemination will be targeted under the project; project results and lessons learned will be shared through printed and online media, as well as radio and television. The project will carry out regular participatory monitoring and evaluation of project activities, which will be documented as part of the project's reporting requirements. To broaden the range of dissemination of lessons learned, the project will explore opportunities for meaningful participation at specific events e.g. at symposia and other events where landscape management and biodiversity conservation are being discussed.

9. Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

Provide information on the identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project/program based on your organization's ESS systems and procedures

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification*

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
Medium/Moderate			

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

Provide preliminary information on the types and levels of risk classifications/ratings of any identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project (considering the GEF ESS Minimum Standards) and describe measures to address these risks during the project design.

Safeguard Triggered	Risk Identified	Risk Classification	Mitigation Measures
2	2.1 - Would this project be implemented within a legally designated protected area or its buffer zone?	High	The project is to improve the conservation, sustainable use and restoration of a lowland forest landscape in order to protect globally significant biodiversity and strengthen sustainable livelihoods of local communities. The project through Component (2) will implement biodiversity conservation and restoration within protected areas and buffer zones of the landscape. It will facilitate the restoration of degraded areas within the PAs, through restoration/reforestation of said places affected by illegal activities. A full environmental and social impact assessment will be conducted during PPG and ESM plan developed.
3	3.4 - Would this project establish or manage planted forests?	Moderate	The project will not undertake Plantation Forest sensu stricto but will promote agroforestry using multipurpose native species, enrichment planting and assi

	forests?		sted natural for forest restoration
4	4.7 - Would this project be located in or near an internationally recognized conservation area e.g. Ramsar or World Heritage Site, or other nationally important habitat, e.g. national park or high nature value farmland?	Moderate	The project intervention area will include nationally recognized protected area. Environmental and social impact assessment will be conducted during PPG and ESM plan developed.
7	7.2 - Would this project operate in sectors or value chains that are dominated by subsistence producers and other vulnerable informal agricultural workers, and more generally characterized by high levels "working poverty"?	Moderate	Yes. Mitigation actions are planned. The project will have a gender including youth action plan to ensure all categories are benefiting from the interventions

Supporting Documents

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

Title	Submitted
ESS FULL Screening Checklist BD PIF Nigeria May 9th	

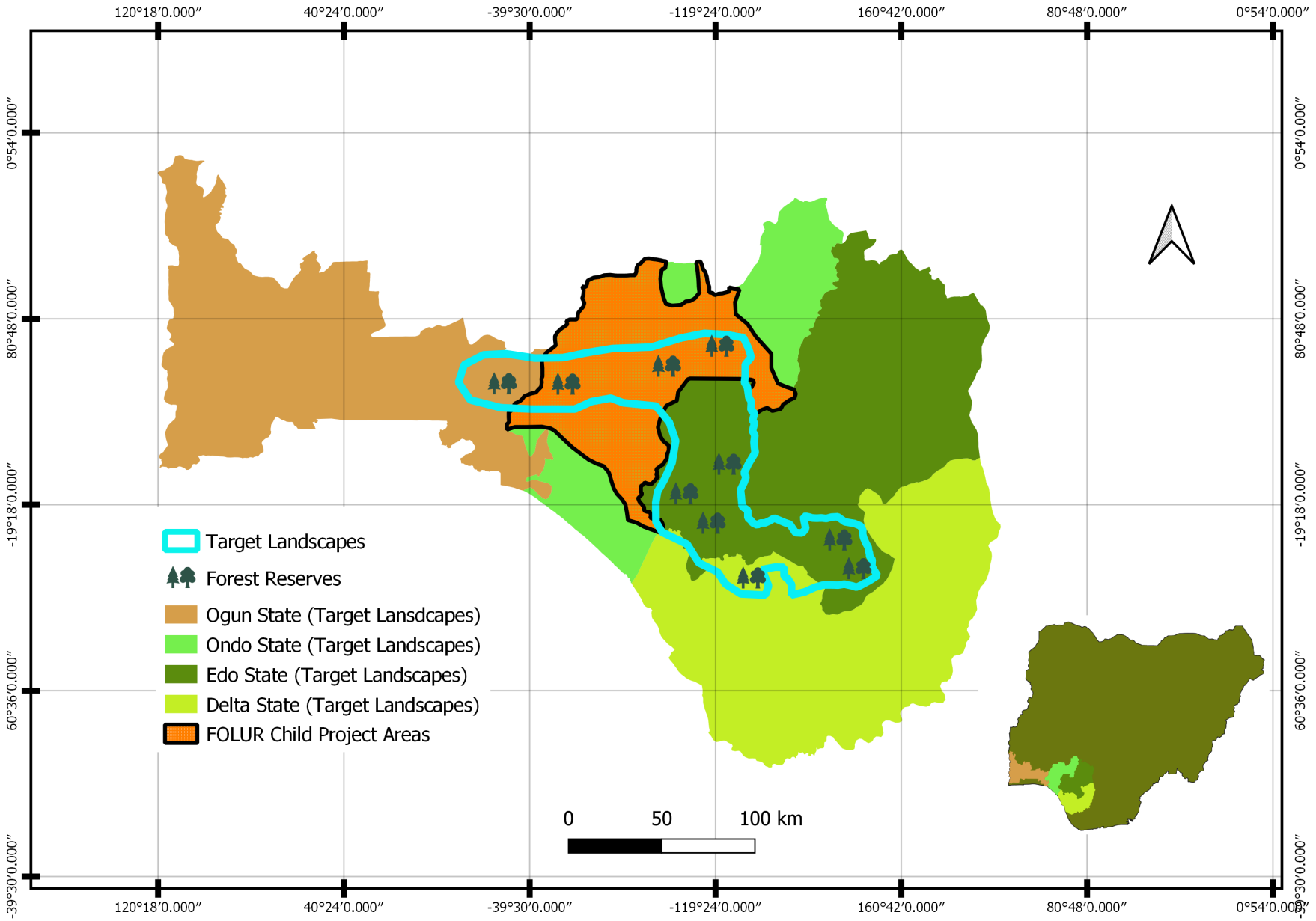
Part III: Approval/Endorsement By GEF Operational Focal Point(S) And GEF Agency(ies)

A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT (S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S): (Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter with this template).

Name	Position	Ministry	Date
Mr. Stanley Jonah	Director Planning Research & Statistics/ GEF Operational Focal Point	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT	4/11/2022

ANNEX A: Project Map and Geographic Coordinates

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project intervention takes place



The target landscape is located between 160°42’0.000” West, 40°24’0.000” East, 60°36’0.000” South and 80°48’0.000” North. These coordinates will be further refined and site-specific coordinates for each forest patch targeted will be added during the PPG phase.