



PROJECT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

GEF COUNCIL SUBMISSION

AGENCY'S PROJECT ID: P094307
GEFSEC PROJECT ID: 2948
COUNTRY: Sierra Leone
PROJECT TITLE: Wildlife Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Project
GEF AGENCY: World Bank
OTHER EXECUTING AGENCY(IES): National Commission on Environment and Forestry (NaCEF) GoSL
DURATION: 6 years
GEF FOCAL AREA: BD
GEF OPERATIONAL PROGRAM: OP1, OP3, OP4
GEF STRATEGIC PRIORITY: SP1
Pipeline Entry Date: November 2005
ESTIMATED STARTING DATE: September 2006

FINANCING PLAN (US\$)	
GEF PROJECT/COMPONENT	
Project	5,000,000
PDF A	
PDF B	350,000
PDF C	
Sub-Total GEF	5,350,000
CO-FINANCING*	
IDA	3,000,000
Government	2,000,000
Bilateral	3,000,000
NGOs	
Others	3,600,000
Sub-Total Co-financing:	11,600,000
Total Project Financing:	16,600,000*
FINANCING FOR ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES IF ANY:	
* PDF-B AMOUNT NOT INCLUDED	

*Details provided under the Financial Modality and Cost Effectiveness section

CONTRIBUTION TO KEY INDICATORS OF THE BUSINESS PLAN:


300,000 hectares of selected protected areas with improved effective management (from 20% to 70% by EOP using the GEF SP1 Tracking Tool) compared with baseline conditions

One (1) Forest Reserve (the 77,300ha Gola Forest Reserve and Tiwai Island Forest) upgraded to Strict Nature Reserve status by EOP.

RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S):

Stephen S. J. Jusu, Director of Environment, Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and Environment
 Date: *October 5, 2005*

Approved on behalf of the World Bank. This proposal has been prepared in accordance with GEF policies and procedures and meets the standards of the GEF Project Review Criteria for work program inclusion


 Steve Gorman
 GEF Executive Coordinator, The World Bank
 Date: May 16, 2006

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PROJECT SUMMARY

a) Project rationale, objectives, outputs/outcomes, and activities.

Rationale:

Sierra Leone (SL) encompasses 72,278 km² on the coast of West Africa, bordered by Guinea to the north and northeast, Liberia to the southeast, and the Atlantic Ocean to the south and west. Biogeographically, SL lies within the Upper Guinean Lowland Forest Ecosystem with an abundant richness in ecosystem and species biodiversity (lowland rainforests, montane forests, savanna woodlands, agricultural, freshwater and wetlands). There are 48 forest reserves and conservation areas, representing about 4% of the land area (c. 180,250 ha). The total area of government wildlife reserves is estimated at 173,000 ha. There are over 2000 species of plants including 74 endemic species identified in SL. 15 species of primate, 18 species of antelopes and duikers, 9 bat species and over 500 bird species have been recorded in SL. About 4,837.8 km² of SL is covered by wetlands with vegetation that is typically of freshwater swamp forests, riparian and mangroves. An estimated 240 species of birds have been identified within the wetland ecosystem, with about 200,000 migrant birds flying in every year (Annex 20 and 22).

However, the country began to suffer from dramatic economic decline, social inequalities and political instability that broke down completely during the 1990s as a result of a brutal armed conflict that lasted from 1991 to early 2002. Consequently there has been significant biodiversity loss in the country (see Annex 21 for root causes and mitigation strategy analysis). Based on current biological surveys an estimated 70% of the country was once forested. However, the area of forest has declined precipitously during the last century, with just under 5% of the original forests remaining. Deforestation is pervasive and continues unabated at approximately 2 percent per annum. The main cause is human-induced and agriculture has been identified as the main cause of deforestation and land degradation.

The Government of Sierra Leone has proposed to strengthen and consolidate its system of wildlife protection and biodiversity conservation through Protected Areas (PAs) by combining their protection and management to improve the quality of life of the communities who are reliant upon these areas. Significantly, conservation of biodiversity through mainstreaming protected area management and conservation of wildlife and biodiversity into local, regional and national development planning and implementation has been identified by key stakeholders in the country as the only sustainable option for ecosystem development and biodiversity conservation in Sierra Leone. It is the overarching rationale behind the GEF alternative and it clearly stands at the center of the project design through its four inter-related project components. Thus, SL-Wildlife Protection and Biodiversity conservation project (SL-WPBCP) is a partially blended full-size GEF operation. The total project cost is estimated at **US\$16.6** million and would be partially financed with a GEF grant of US\$5.0 million and an additional estimated US\$11.6 million co-financing to be leveraged from the World Bank (IDA), UNDP and other bi-lateral resources.

The NBSAP identified a total of eight (8) priority ecological sites of important biodiversity and suggested that urgent actions were needed to restore the integrity and ecological functionality of these systems. These ecological sites are spread over four major types of ecosystems comprising the Arid and Semi-arid; Coastal, Marine and Freshwater; Forest; and Mountain zones. The government is seeking support for all of them. The initial consideration is that the proposed

project will focus on support to four (4) Protected Areas with a total area of 249,588ha, representing 3 main ecosystem types which have been identified as priority sites in the NBSAP. These will be confirmed and revisited at appraisal. Annex 20 elaborates on the selection, prioritization and biodiversity value of the selected project sites.

<i>Name/Category</i>	<i>Ecosystem Type</i>	<i>Size (ha)</i>	<i>Date of Gazettement</i>	<i>Existing Status</i>	<i>Proposed Status</i>
1. Western Area Peninsula Forest	Rainforest	17,688	1973	National Park	National Park
2. Loma Mountain and Tingi Hills Forest Complex	Montane	33,201	1973	National Park	National Park
3. Gola Forest and Tiwai Island	Montane	10,519	1973	Game Reserve	Game Reserve
	Rainforest	76,100	1926-30	Forest Reserve	Strict Nature Reserve
4. Outamba-Kilimi	Savanna	110,900	1987	Game Sanctuary	Strict Nature Reserve
				1995	National Park

In summary without the GEF assistance, there would be limited funding for protected area management, poor regional and national economic development planning for biodiversity protection and conservation management; all leading to persistent degradation of high-value, unique biodiversity and natural resources; and lastly, loss of opportunities for providing sustainable alternative livelihoods people currently living off the protected areas.

Objectives:

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is improvement of sustainable protected area management and biodiversity conservation within SL contributing to socio-economic development of beneficiary communities.

The Global Environmental Objective (GEO) of the project will be to enhance the ecological integrity of selected ecosystems and protected areas. More specifically, the proposed project will aim to: (i) improve the integrity of selected critical protected areas and ecological functions through strengthening management of protected areas (PAs) and elimination of risks from uncontrolled, non-conforming activities such as logging and mining; (ii) enhance biodiversity protection within PAs and adjacent landscapes; (iii) ensure the conservation of genetic diversity within and outside PAs that rural people traditionally use for medicinal and consumptive purposes (medicinal plants, wood fuel, bush meat); and (iv) enhance the sustainable use of biological resources.

Outputs and Activities:

Component 1: Strengthening Policy, Legislation and Institutional Framework for Ecosystem and Protected Area Management and Conservation of Wildlife and Biodiversity (Total US\$ 2.4 m; GEF US\$ 0.7m)

Activities under this component will provide support for developing capacities and strengthening the enabling environment for state agencies, private sector, civil society and local people to collectively plan, pass, monitor and enforce strong environmental policies and laws and test

innovative approaches. Collaborative frameworks will be established, where necessary, and existing frameworks will be strengthened and energized to ensure synergies and operational efficiencies within and between public and private agencies that are responsible for environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, and management of protected areas. Some key outcomes from these interventions should be the establishment of an effective legal protection status for selected ecological (biodiversity) sites and sets of rules for exploiting ecological systems and biological resources within and around these protected areas. It is expected that at the end of the project's lifespan a robust framework for sharing and distributing benefits would have been formulated and implemented and that this will be reflected by high management effectiveness of the protected area system.

The project will focus on two key areas of capacity building (i) building capacities for management of PAs and sustainable use and conservation of biological resources, and (ii) building capacities to mainstream natural resource management issues, specifically protected area management,

In addition, GEF grant funds will finance the elaboration of policies and legislation relating to land acquisitions and compensation payments with the view of ensuring that zoning (demarcation, mapping) and gazetting of the selected PAs are done under conformed institutional frameworks. The project will support GoSL to develop sets of regulations that legally formalizes co-management and local population participation in natural resource management and protection of their traditional knowledge related to biodiversity management and conservation.

Component 2: Improving Management of Selected PAs (Total US\$12.0m; GEF US\$3.7m)

Sub-component 2.1: Site Management Planning and Research (Total US\$8.2m: GEF US\$2.5m)

This sub-component aims at providing the necessary strategic and operational tools and experiences to improve management effectiveness of selected four (4) high-biodiversity areas and their buffer zones. The component will use lessons learned from other countries and initiatives in the region and sub-region to adapt them to the country and site-specific context. As an initial step under this component, GEF funds will be used to conduct a participatory evaluation of the status of conservation activities at existing or proposed PAs and the current obstacles and threats to wildlife and biodiversity at each, hence, to identify the immediate needs for management at each site. Concurrently investigation of the management and conservation histories at each site will be undertaken by Sierra Leonean CBOs, NGOs, scientific and academic institutions and civil society in conservation, in particular research and review of any management initiatives (plans) that may have been proposed or implemented at the sites in the past. This information will cumulatively be used to develop draft participatory management (work) plans for each of the selected key biodiversity conservation sites and their buffer environments and launch programmes to gather site-specific data and information on social, economic and biophysical parameters of the selected areas necessary to formulate more definitive management plans. For those selected PAs with no legal conservation status this project will also seek to obtain appropriate protected area status for these sites.

The second step under this component will involve the actual implementation of the revised and

updated management plans through targeted investments that will have direct conservation links. Potential direct biodiversity conservation activities to be financed under the Grant will include systematic geo-referenced monitoring of human activity, wildlife populations and other biological resources in the PAs, law enforcement, PA boundary demarcation, management of GIS databases, mapping, zoning and gazettement, site-specific conservation measures such as soil erosion control, rehabilitation and restoration of the selected PAs and their buffer zone areas. Monitoring activities will focus on the identification of biological resources that may be developed to add-value to the protected areas for tourism, e.g., sites where wildlife populations congregate and may be viewed, scenic trekking (hiking & canoeing) routes, sport fishing, traditional cultural ceremonies, etc.). This component will further provide support for small-scale infrastructure development and acquisition of equipment necessary for basic law enforcement, monitoring, administration, maintenance, community development, and, if appropriate, eco-tourism activities at each PA.

Long-term sustainability of PA management will depend heavily on the active participation and effective involvement of local communities and civil society because of their unique and mutual relationships with protected areas. Project funds will be used to support the formation and consolidation of PA management committees/associations as well as their operations.

Based on the completion and results of all the planned feasibility studies (to be financed under the PDFB Grant) on options for financing mechanisms for the PA network system in SL, further decisions will be made at appraisal on the feasibility of setting up and operationalization a trust fund or any other feasible financing mechanism.

Sub-component 2.2: Awareness Creation (Total US\$1.0m; GEF US\$0.4m)

The sub-component objective will be to raise awareness and increase know-how of key stakeholders and beneficiaries at all levels and to improve their capacities to participate at the appropriate level in the planning and management of protected areas and non-protected peripheries collectively maximizing management efficiency and biodiversity conservation, while enhancing local socio-economic conditions and providing alternative, productive forms of livelihood. GEF funds will be used in environmental management advocacy and direct site conservation actions. Activities proposed under the 'Cross-sectoral Action Plan' in the NBSAP will be reviewed and implemented where appropriate. At the local level, the project will broaden and strengthen local constituencies for ecosystem management and conservation of biodiversity e.g. through the formation, development and strengthening of interest groups and site support groups (SSGs).¹ Strategies will be designed and implemented to empower local communities to participate in the management and monitoring of high biodiversity sites (PAs and non-PAs). This sub-component will focus on promoting and enhancing greater involvement of civil society at project sites through effective engagement strategies. It will also support the development of programs that target children at school and the youth in the street and academic institutions by training teachers, performing voluntary examination of students on the subject of Environment, production of teachers' manuals, production of educational manuals relating to nature.

¹ 'Site Support Groups' consist of people based in or around sites who are concerned about biodiversity loss and who draw on the experience and achievements of the wider BirdLife International Partnership to create local solutions. The BirdLife Partner NGOs work with these local communities to build a stronger local voice on environmental issues.

Sub-component 2.3: Creation of Alternative Sources of Livelihood - The Community Investment Fund (Total US\$ 2.8 m; GEF US\$0.8m)

The objective of the component is to reduce dependencies of communities living in the fringes of the selected PA systems on natural resource exploitation. Dependencies will be reduced by providing communities with resources for developing alternative sources of income and livelihood support systems. GEF Grant funds will finance the provision of alternative and viable choices for the people to participate in economic development, expand opportunities for economic growth, create jobs, reduce their levels of poverty, and improve their livelihood. In this regard, the project will explore ways of increasing (alternative) sources of livelihood for people, particularly for those living in rural project communities adjoining or in the PAs. It is expected that community members when provided access to an alternative livelihood fund, will show improved community perception and awareness levels, deeper and active involvement in PA management and biodiversity conservation. This will lead to improved status of PAs through reduction in illegal harvesting of timber and other non-forest timber products, reduced deforestation and land degradation, minimization of farm encroachment and wildfire occurrence, curtailment of hunting, improved buffer zone management as well as enhancements in livelihoods of project beneficiaries.

GEF Grant funds will support rural livelihood schemes that could include apiculture, promotion of ecotourism and local handicrafts, captive breeding, environmentally-sound agri-business and product processing (e.g. palm oil, soap making, etc), development of natural resources including non-timber forest products for alternative products in response to emerging eco-markets, investing in restoration and maintenance of environmental assets (e.g. reforestation, agroforestry, soil conservation, establishment of herbal gardens). Under the Sub-component, funds will be available to support the preparation of a detailed feasibility and market accessibility analyses, which will lead to the formulation of a positive and negative list, indicating which sub-projects can be funded and which not. One criterium for categorizing sub-projects into any one of the lists will be their environmental soundness (less or no adverse impact). GEF Grant funds will support the development of a manual for screening sub-projects against their potential environmental impacts during the design stages. This manual will be used as a guide by approving authorities when evaluating proposals and contain sections that will provide guidance to applicants on preventive and mitigation measures that can be taken to address possible adverse social and environmental impacts of sub-projects on people and the local environment.

Investments in small-scale infrastructure (on demand-driven basis) will be financed from sources provided by IDA supported investment projects and other donors. The Sub-component will support acquisition of equipment necessary for basic law enforcement, monitoring, administration, maintenance, community development at each PA.

Component 3: Project Management and Monitoring and Evaluation (Total US\$2.2; GEF US\$0.6m)

The objectives of this component can be classified into 3 main categories: (i) to ensure an effective facilitation, coordination and management of the project inputs and actions (both internal and external) needed for execution of the project; (ii) to coordinate periodic tracking and monitoring of implementation progress and evaluation of project results and impacts; and (iii) to disseminate and share project results and lessons learned with key stakeholders and project beneficiaries. The component will foster information exchange and synergies with other donors and projects, and among the various parties involved in the implementation of the project. This should help to minimize overlaps, draw lessons and experience and ensure efficient use of scarce resources for optimum results. The component will also ensure that the use of project inputs and implementation of SL-WPBCP activities comply with the World Bank Financial Management Guidelines and the Procurement Guidelines (and Country Systems if they are in place). It is expected that facilitation, coordination, management, monitoring, information dissemination and sharing will occur at all levels (national, sub-regional, community) of project implementation.

b) Key indicators, assumptions, and risks

More specifically, the proposed project will aim to: (i) improve the integrity of selected critical protected areas and ecological functions through strengthening management of protected areas (PAs) and elimination of risks from uncontrolled, non-conforming activities such as logging and mining; (ii) enhance biodiversity protection within PAs and adjacent landscapes; (iii) ensure the conservation of genetic diversity within and outside PAs that rural people traditionally use for medicinal and consumptive purposes (medicinal plants, wood fuel, bush meat); and (iv) enhance the sustainable use of biological resources.

Key Performance Indicators

- i. Over 2,000 hectares of the buffer zones to the selected PAs with improved management effectiveness
- ii. One (1) Forest Reserve (the 77,300ha Gola Forest Reserve and Tiwai Island Forest) upgraded to Strict Nature Reserve status by EOP.
- iii. Rate of deforestation at the Gola Forest reserve reduced to half (1%) of the baseline rate (2%).

More details on specific indicators for each output listed under the components above can be found in Annex 3 of the GEF Project Brief and Annex B of this Executive Summary.

Potential Risks and Mitigation

There are several risks associated with this project, the first, and most important, is the assumption that peace in SL will prevail and that the post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction will not stagnate. To mitigate this risk, donors will deepen dialogue with GoSL and other groups ensuring fair distribution of wealth. The second risk is overall weak institutional capacity. To mitigate this risk, qualified project staff will be assembled and capacity development will be carried out prior to effectiveness. Additional risks include the insufficient political will to complete and implement reforms as well as weak implementation on inter-ministerial cooperation and coordination. To mitigate these risks, an adequate consensus will be built prior to negotiations in addition to re-invigoration of quarterly inter-ministerial meetings.

2. COUNTRY OWNERSHIP

a) COUNTRY ELIGIBILITY

Sierra Leone is a member of many International Conventions. It ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1996, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) in 1995, and the Ramsar Convention in 2003.

In 2003, the country also published its “National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan” (NBSAP). It has developed a National Forestry Action Plan (NFAP) under the auspices of the Tropical Forestry Action Plan (TFAP) and, with support from the World Bank, also developed a National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP), a National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) Needs Project with UNEP, and a Biosafety Framework. These various ratifications and developments have made Sierra Leone eligible for financial and technical support.

b) COUNTRY DRIVENNESS

In 2005, the Government of Sierra Leone published and adopted the country’s first full-fledged Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). This was accomplished under popular national ownership and through open dialogue among key stakeholders: ministers, parliamentarians, local communities, NGOs, civil society, the private sector, development partners, women, youth, and children.

In proposing actions for reducing poverty through the promotion of pro-poor sustainable growth for food security and job creation, Pillar 2 of the PRSP advocates for strong recognition of the linkages between poverty and environment and emphasized the need to work towards better environmental management for economic and social sustainability. Vision 2025 also highlighted the need to conserve the country’s biodiversity and the environment in general and made mention of poverty as one of the causes of environmental degradation. In this context, the PRSP outlines areas in critical need of environmental protection for the government’s immediate and medium-term focus. These include: (a) land degradation, deforestation, and biodiversity loss, (b) mined-out areas, (c) urban degradation and pollution, and (d) erosion from road construction and urbanization. At the national level, GoSL will focus on reducing the impact of environmental risks by formulating and implementing sound environmental policies to prevent and/or cope with environmental threats and challenges. According to the PRSP, improvements to the institutional frameworks governing environmental management will be pursued in order to achieve better coordination and planning among the various stakeholders, and to enforce standards and guidelines. However, it is also necessary that specific interventions and actions at the sector and community level are implemented with speed so that efforts to restore and prevent further degradation of the environment can be executed quickly. The proposed project draws direct linkages to the PRSP.

3. PROGRAM AND POLICY CONFORMITY

a) FIT TO GEF OPERATIONAL PROGRAM AND STRATEGIC PRIORITY

The proposed project will make a valuable contribution to increasing the number, size and integrity of a variety of global ecosystems by delineating representative samples of ecological areas and declaring them as legally protected. This will remove them partially or entirely from production and any other form of land use that may have an adverse impact on the objectives for which they are set aside.

The project is fully consistent with GEF Operational Programs OP-1 (Arid-Semi-arid Zone), OP-3 (Forest ecosystems) and OP-4 (Mountain Ecosystems). Additional sites if included at appraisal will be eligible to be considered under OP-2 (Coastal, Marine and Freshwater). Although the project's main focus will be the establishment of a system of critical ecological sites (protected areas) and the protection and conservation of wildlife and biological diversity within them, project outcomes will also be in line with OP-12 (Integrated Approach to Ecosystem Management), OP-13 (Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity Important to Agriculture).

The proposed project aligns perfectly with GEF strategic priority SP-1 (Catalyzing Sustainability of Protected Areas). SL-WPBCP will re-gazette 77,300 ha of rainforest, comprising the Gola Block of Forests (Gola North, East and West) and Tiwal Island into a Strict Nature Reserve and establish more protected areas. It will network priority PAs where possible, and secure their integrity and maintain sustainable flow of global and local biodiversity benefits. It will define and secure PA boundaries by surveying and pillaring them, assess their biological and socio-economic features and develop in a participatory manner management plans to cover them. GEF Grant funds will also finance capacity building of forest managers, civil society organizations, sub-national governments, rural communities in PA management and biodiversity conservation. The project will document local knowledge and skills in natural resource management and employ them in the management and protection of selected project sites. In reviewing and reforming institutional and legal frameworks relating to natural resources management, project funds will be used to define practicable arrangements for establishing public-private partnerships such as co-management and co-administration for effective and efficient PA management. Activities under Component 2 will directly contribute to meeting the objectives of SP-2 (Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Production Landscapes and Sectors). The project will support biodiversity conservation in buffer zones adjourning selected PAs by introducing community management of biodiversity resources on community lands or individual lands outside PAs. Lessons will be taken from the Ghana Protected Area Development Project that assisted communities to create wildlife management areas outside PAs, assist communities in developing participatory zoning and land use plans. The project will also support the introduction of conservation agriculture through the practice of mulching, cover cropping, rotation, green manuring, low tillage, contouring, agroforestry; etc. GEF funds will be available to bolster assistance through development of rural enterprises and market mechanisms, and provide support to community members toward income-generating activities compatible with appropriate natural resources management systems, etc.). Thus, this project will provide opportunities to managers of PAs and communities to add value to protected areas and increase the contribution of goods and services provided by their sustainable management to poverty alleviation at the national and local levels.

b) SUSTAINABILITY (INCLUDING FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY)

Financial sustainability: Short-term financing for PA management and biodiversity conservation may likely come from various sources including allocations from the state budget, HIPC and debt-relief funds, donor funds, user fees, license fees, entrance fees, royalties and taxes, etc. However, this has been proven to be ad hoc, unpredictable and inadequate to cover recurrent, operational and development activities within the network of protected areas in Sierra Leone. International best practices and experiences show that protected area management effectiveness however, can only be guaranteed if long-term predictable financing arrangements are secured. In this regard, GEF PDFB Grant funds will be used prior to Appraisal to explore possibilities for future creation of sustainable long-term financing instrument(s) such as payment for environmental services, forestry-based carbon off-set projects, environmental/conservation trust funds, debt relief mechanisms, debt-for-nature swaps, user fees, charges and taxes, private sector initiatives, donor funds, state treasury, retentions from internally generated revenues, etc, to finance ecologically benign natural resource and park management activities and compensate community efforts for sound environmental stewardship and protection of valuable ecological systems that provide global and local environmental benefits. Apart from analyzing the potential sources for long-term capitalization and developing a financial capitalization strategy, the feasibility study will also analyze legal, policy, institutional and administrative challenges at national and local levels for securing predictable long-term financing mechanisms for sustainable PA management and biodiversity conservation. Specific areas to be studied will include analysis of existing legal definitions and frameworks; governance structures; organizational structures (legal authority and capabilities/capacities, mechanisms for building consensus, coordination, participation and partnerships, monitoring and evaluation, etc) and tools needed to be in place as well as priority actions and the number of PAs to be supported under the proposed instrument(s).

The setting up of a long-term financing instrument under this project will be informed by the findings and recommendations from the proposed feasibility study, which is expected to be completed under the PDFB Grant and before Appraisal of the actual project. Once results from this study indicates clear possibilities for a or an ensemble of financing instrument(s) the project will earmark and ring-fence a portion of the Project Grant Fund to be used as seed money to capitalize a sustainable financing mechanism, which will guarantee post-project financial sustainability through promotion of funding, implementation and planning of PA management and environmental conservation activities, supporting resource coordination and strengthening institutional mechanisms.

In terms of securing financial sustainability for improvement of community livelihoods, particularly under the proposed Community Investment Fund (CIF), the project will build linkages to other initiatives particularly to rural credits and finance programs and thereby connect rural people to rural credit and finance institutions, thus enabling them to borrow money and finance assets and activities aimed at adding value to their products and raising their competitiveness in domestic and global markets. It is expected that once rural people become gainfully employed their dependence on PAs may reduce. It is also expected that the increased profile that the selected PA sites will receive through the project will increase inward

investments (in addition to revenues captured by PA authorities through license fees, charges and taxes, etc) into the communities from, e.g., tourism, research, etc. and this will also deliver livelihood enhancements thereby reducing pressures on natural resources. Evidence under the ongoing Ghana High Forest Biodiversity Project shows that where community members have been provided access to an alternative livelihood fund (individual accessibility depending on the type of businesses averages US\$300-800) there has been improved community perception and awareness levels, deeper and active involvement in PA management and biodiversity conservation, improved status of PAs through reduction in illegal harvesting of timber and other non-forest timber products, reduced deforestation and land degradation, minimization of farm encroachment and wildfire occurrence, curtailment of hunting, improved buffer zone management as well as enhancements in livelihoods of project beneficiaries.

Social sustainability will be enhanced through the creation, strengthening and empowerment of common interest groups comprising diverse stakeholder groups who will participate in the identification and prioritization of project activities and help assure that the objectives of the project can be achieved, sustained, and expanded. Such groups will constitute, at the local level, the change agents and linkages to the project and the rest of the community.

Ecological sustainability will be achieved by using the Grant to address barriers and constraints at all levels to ensure long-term maintenance of environmental stewardship and ecological productivity as well as the enhancement of environmental services (biodiversity, watershed management, water quality, sequestration, climate change) at both national and global levels. GEF Grant funds will be used to expand the reliability of coping mechanisms for the vulnerable, to mitigate the constraints of the poor, and strengthen their ability to improve their current status beyond subsistence.

c) REPLICABILITY

The results achieved from this project during and after the project life will be replicated in other protected areas and off-reserve landscapes within and outside Sierra Leone. The project aims at institutional capacity building at all levels and spread to all key stakeholder groups in planning and design, execution and monitoring of programs toward ensuring sustainable resource management. By creating avenues for collaboration and participation of key stakeholders at the national and sub-regional levels; and by ensuring effective coordination, sharing and mainstreaming of natural resource management information using good communication strategies in sectors such as agriculture, land management and administration, replicability of lessons and experiences from the project will be guaranteed. The successful implementation of the government's decentralization policy across the entire country should provide impetus to replicate and scale up lessons from the SL-WPBCP because the Bank-led IRCBP is aimed at building capacities of sub-regional structures and empower them to plan and execute development (which will include also in NRM) at that level. In the final analysis, the NaCEF once it overcomes its infant problems will work jointly with various partners to build up the capacity of stakeholder organization to sustainably manage protected areas in their immediate localities. At the global level, saving biodiversity and establishing protected conservation areas in perpetuity would ensure sustainable provision of environmental services, advance ecotourism, enhance research, and reduce the effects of climate change and land degradation. And this

should create support for similar conservation actions to be upheld and replicated in and outside SL.

If progress is made in attaining the core or focal elements of this project (a community orientation approach, long-term financing mechanisms, provision of support and dependency alternatives) lessons and experiences drawn would be replicated in other areas of the country and the West Africa sub-region in general. Further, these interventions, if successfully implemented, might be replicated for the conservation of the Fouta Njalloh Massif Program, currently funded by GEF.

d) STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Stakeholder involvement is key to the design of the project. Full consultations with stakeholders, particularly local communities for project development and design began in 2004 after the first interaction between Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) and a World Bank team working on the Bumbuna Hydro Power Project. CSSL followed up this with a 4-5 page zero draft concept paper that was circulated widely within and outside Sierra Leone.

Implementation of the proposed project would also involve a wide range of stakeholders and actors at the community, district, regional, national and international levels.

- At the local, district, and regional levels: these will include the PA fringing rural communities, provincial/district/local governments, traditional authorities (chiefdoms), community based NGOs, village elders, women and youth groups. Consultation with these local stakeholders has and will continue to constitute a major part during the design and implementation phases of the project. The stakeholder plan has been developed during the project preparation phase examines how this important element of the project can be reinforced during the implementation phase (Annex 19). In particular, CBOs, especially those living in and around the protected areas, will actively participate in the planning and implementation of natural resource management strategies and other conservation efforts, and they will receive direct benefits from the results of these activities.
- At the national level: NaCEF, Ministries of Finance; Agriculture and Food Security; Minerals and Mining; Lands, Housing and Country Planning; Tourism and Culture; Local Government and Community Development; Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL); Environmental Forum for Africa (ENFORAC); Council for Human Ecology (CHECSIL); Environmental Foundation of Africa (EFA); Conservation International (SL); Birdlife International (BI); Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB); Darwin Initiative; Njala University, private sector, professional bodies, research and academia, trades associations. Key stakeholders will be represented on the Project Steering Committee, which will be the highest policy-making organ and will provide approvals on Program of Work (POW).

A detailed stakeholder analysis has been conducted for the project where the capacities, capabilities and role of each stakeholder in the project activities have been elaborated (see Annex

19 of the GEF project Brief). GEF Grant funds will finance the operationalization of the Stakeholder Participation Plan.

e) MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation will be a high priority throughout the life of the project. The project design anticipates that monitoring and evaluation will be done at various levels, a few of which are elaborated below:

- Tracking the entire logical sequencing of input-activity-output-outcome-result, including an assessment of the impact of the project on target and non-target beneficiaries. Beyond this M&E will provide evidence on how project results are contributing toward the achievement of the overall sector goals;
- Monitoring for compliance with project covenants, agreed upon action plans (e.g., stakeholder plans, etc) and fiduciary responsibilities such as financial management and procurement guidelines and for due diligence purpose whether World Bank Social and Environmental Safeguard Policies and Country Systems are fully complied with;
- Monitoring country commitment and ownership of the SL-WPBCP to ensure that implementation is country-led and driven by the SL-PRSP. Where possible, the tracking will also establish evidence how SL-WPBCP is responding to other global and international development goals such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and other initiatives within the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS), etc;
- Monitoring risks and controversial aspects and progress in the implementation of risk mitigation measures;
- Tracking synergies and linkages with other programs and initiatives within and outside SL;

The Biodiversity Tracking Tool will serve a mechanism for tracking progress in the implementation of activities at the PAs and determining the level of improvements to the health and integrity of each individual area. Preliminary indicators to track and measure the attainment of the project's development and global objectives have been formulated in the Results Framework in Annex 3. The project will support the establishment of M&E cells and build capacities within the PMU in Freetown and at the PA site-level to collect and analysis data and to store, retrieve and share information using communication channels and partnerships (e.g., with DACO [Development Assistance Coordination Office]) that will be established under the project.

Monitoring and evaluation will be carried out at two main levels in space (i.e. national and local levels) and would involve various agencies (relevant line ministries and departments, donors, civil society organizations, etc) and beneficiary communities. At the national level, the project would support the establishment of M&E cells and build capacities within the Project Management Unit and other Implementing Agencies in Freetown to coordinate and facilitate data collection, analyze and disseminate information, integrate SL-WPBCP M&E into NaCEF's management information system and databases, inform and signal policy makers and provide feedback on policy issues to national and project level stakeholders.

At the local level, the project will support the setting up of a local community-based M&E system at park management level and introducing community-based M&E at the community level. With support from the district councils, NGOs and park management administration, the associations will define the indicators that will be used to monitor implementation of project activities, evaluate the impact of the project and other local service providers on the PAs and communities, from a locally elaborated baseline. Ecological monitoring would initially be carried out by protected area managers with the possibility of transferring such responsibilities to associations as their capacities are developed. Local facilitators (“animateurs”) would be trained in basic data collection and assisted with minimal equipment and transport necessary for them to effectively carry out their monitoring tasks. Monitoring at the PA level will focus mainly on adoption of conservation practices within and outside the PAs (e.g. appropriate agricultural practices including oastures; agro-forestry, management of wildlife and wildfires; micro-entreprises; alternative income-generating and livelihood-supporting activities).

4. FINANCIAL MODALITY AND COST EFFECTIVENESS

Co-financing Sources				
Name of Co-financier (source)	Classification	Type	Amount (US\$)	Status*
GoSL	Government	Grant or In-kind	US\$ 2.0 m	Pledged
IDA	IA	Credit	US\$ 3.0 m	Pledged
UNDP and bilateral donors	Bilateral	Grant or in-kind	US\$ 3.0 m	Under discussion
RSPB	NGO	Grant or in-kind	US\$ 3.6 m	Pledged
Sub-Total Co-financing			US\$ 11.6 m	

Based on the nature of the project, classical financial and economic analyses cannot accurately measure the impact of the project on the beneficiaries, as well as on the country. The weakness of environmental data collection in Sierra Leone, exacerbates the difficulty of measuring and valuing many of the effects involved, especially the likely off-site benefits (positive externalities) of the eight proposed Protected Areas (PAs), and in the non-protected areas.

The SL-WBCP is not only concerned with the general well being of people, including their rights, but also their indigenous knowledge and skills and the institutions, such as communities, that express and foster human relationships and the development of social capital. The Project recognizes that the communities have rights as well as responsibilities, which should be protected and improved just as environmental policy and law aims to protect and improve the environment.

In addition to the costs of implementing the project, there are opportunity costs from foregoing the use of project areas by local communities. Given the current looseness of the PAs covered by the project and the lack of relevant data, identified threats to ecosystems are used as a proxy of foregoing use of the resources in the PAs.

There are opportunity costs associated with the set of activities aiming to improve management of the high biodiversity sites, including the PAs. In order to allow the trees, animals, fish and birds to recover and in some cases prevent collapse, these activities are likely to limit hunting, logging and other deforestation activities. At all these sites, the reduction in activities should last over a recovery period that is at least as long as the project implementation. This naturally leads to a short-term loss of income for the local communities. The activities aiming to conserve critical habitats and species through strengthened or created PAs also have opportunity costs associated with them.

5. INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION AND SUPPORT

a) CORE COMMITMENTS AND LINKAGES

The Government's response to the many challenges facing the country is the formulation of its short-term growth and development agenda - the Sierra Leone Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (SL-PRSP) - that focuses on reforming sectoral policies and institutional frameworks for attaining economic growth of 6 percent per annum, eliminating food insecurity, reducing unemployment, providing basic social services in education and health, and creating an effective social safety net. The SL-PRSP also links to the attainment of the MDG targets and Vision 2025. The proposed project would contribute to the attainment of the 7th MDG (Ensuring Environmental Sustainability) while SL strives to exploit its natural endowments to enhance growth, reduce poverty, and provide social services. SL's Vision 2025 summarizes the development principles, which must guide the country's development efforts for the foreseeable future, and also describes the strategic areas of focus that form the basis for plans and policies for SL. In 2005 the Bank finalized its four-year Country Assistance Strategy (2005-2009) to replace the 2002 TSS. The CAS is well aligned with the programs of other development partners, the SL Vision 2025 and the main pillars and cross-cutting issues in the SL-PRSP that focus on (a) governance, decentralization and public financial management; (b) sustainable growth, food security and jobs creation; and (c) human development.

Additionally the Government has formulated a range of sectoral policies, regulatory and institutional frameworks, of which two key pieces of instruments, namely the National Environment Policy (NEP) and the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), were enacted in 1994 and 2000, respectively, to cover environmental management in the country. In 2003 the Government of Sierra Leone produced and adopted the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), a report that highlighted the status of the nation's various ecosystems and biological resources, outlined the threats to the existence and performance of these systems, and provided actions for addressing these looming dangers.

The Kabbah administration has found it politically expedient to establish the National Commission on Environment and Forestry, hiving the former divisions of Forestry and Environment from the MAFFS (now MAFS) and MLCPE (now MLCP), respectively, to create a semi-autonomous entity charged with the responsibility to oversee the environment and forestry sectors. This is understood as clear demonstration of the government's commitment to substantially ameliorate its institutional capacity and productivity in biodiversity conservation, natural resource management, and environmental protection and to accomplish its objectives and

meet its obligations in these initiatives at the national, regional, and international levels. The presidential endorsement of the Gola Forest Concession Conservation Program in July 2005, a clear case of buy-back of timber harvesting rights and compensation payments to chiefdoms for lost opportunities is demonstrable of the importance the government attaches to sustainable management and preservation of important ecological sites and conservation of wildlife resources and biodiversity

b) CONSULTATION, COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN IAS AND EXAS, IF APPROPRIATE.

Implementation of the proposed project would involve a wide range of stakeholders and actors at the community, district, regional, national and international levels. There are clear messages of intent from a few international organizations (EU, German Embassy, UNDP), particularly the NGO community, such as EFA and CSSL, who are willing to commit resources and participate in the execution of the project. The World Bank will provide co-financing via a couple of investment projects that are on-going or planned. Through NSAP communities fringing PAs will receive support for basic social infrastructure such as water points, schools, clinics, market access. IDA-financed IRCBP will fund decentralization and capacity building. The EU and UNDP are financing micro-projects and environment-related programs in selected communities all over the country, while RSPB and Conservation International are already investing in protected area management, natural resources management and capacity development in the Gola Forest area. The need for collaboration and building synergies is imminent.

- At the international and global level: UNDP, EU, FAO and bilateral donors (e.g., German Embassy, GTZ, KfW, DFID) will likely co-finance the proposed project or fund micro-projects and environment-related programs that will be synergetic to SL-WPBCP. Co-financing has been secured from 3 international environmental NGOs notably, Conservation International (CI), Birdlife International (BI) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). The global community would receive global benefits from services that are rendered through the creation and sustainable management of an ecologically diverse protected area system that assures conservation of areas of highest biodiversity in Sierra Leone and provides for the socio-economic development of rural communities.
- At the project level: Cooperation would be sought with the Gola Forest Concession Conservation Project financed by RSPB and CI, IDA-led IRCBP, NSAP, upcoming Bank-led RPSDP and other programs within and outside SL.

c) PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENT

The planned project will be executed by NaCEF on behalf of GoSL, with the collaboration of the Ministry of Finance and other relevant line Ministries, multilateral and bilateral donors, international and local NGOs like the Forum for Environmental Actors, Conservation Society of Sierra Leone, Environmental Forum for Africa, the RSPB and BI.

A Project Steering Committee (PSC) comprising high-level representative from key public sector agencies, private and civil society organizations will be established to provide policy direction and review and to build coordination and communication among key sectors at the national, regional and sub-regional governments. NaCEF will chair the PSC and the project management unit will function as the secretariat of this high-level body. The Ministry of Finance will be the main interlocutor with the World Bank and will supervise the project and mount joint missions at least once a year.

A project management unit (PMU) will be established under the Executive Commissioner of NaCEF, with a full-time qualified project coordinator dedicated to facilitating and coordinating the implementation of project activities. Additional administrative and technical support (e.g., project office and personnel administration, procurement, monitoring and evaluation) will be hired based on the results of a detailed capacity evaluation that is ongoing during project preparation. It is anticipated that the PMU will be fully mainstreamed into the core set-up of NaCEF once there is evidence that the Commission has improved its internal capacity to plan and design, oversee, coordinate and facilitate implementation and monitoring of programs.

During the implementation phase SL-WPBCP will require strong technical and scientific assistance. To do this a technical/scientific committee (TC) chaired by a representative outside NaCEF and mandated to provide technical information and guidance will be established at the national level.

At the protected area level, NaCEF will appoint a Team Leader (TL) who will be responsible to the Project Coordinator for overall coordination and implementation of WPBCP and other activities at the site. At each PA a protected area management committee will be formed to help with planning, decision-making and on-the-ground implementation of project activities. This committee will be chaired by the TL and comprise technical personnel from the district councils, participating public sector agencies, private sector, civil society organizations (CBOs, traditional authorities, faith-based organizations, traditional healers, etc.), women and youth groups, vulnerable groups including the unemployed, people living with disabilities, etc.

ANNEX 15: INCREMENTAL COST ANALYSIS

SIERRA LEONE: Sierra Leone Wildlife Protection and Biodiversity Conservation

Proposed objective(s)

The Project Development Objective (PDO) will be the improvement of sustainable protected area management and biodiversity conservation within SL contributing to socio-economic development of beneficiary communities. Progress would be measured, among other things, by: (i) increased involvement of local communities in the management of selected protected areas; (ii) improved flow of benefits to local communities from use and management of resources within and around protected areas; (iii) improved management of selected protected areas, conservation and sustainable use of wildlife and biodiversity; and (iv) recovery of biodiversity (key species) in each selected protected area system.

Broad Development Goals

The Government of Sierra Leone has proposed to strengthen and consolidate its system of wildlife protection and biodiversity conservation through Protected Areas (PAs) by combining their protection and management to improve the quality of life of the communities who are reliant upon these areas.

The conservation and environment scene in Sierra Leone, which was unsatisfactory before 1990, got worse during the 11-year war that ended in 2002. Additionally, the pressures from a growing population estimated at 2 percent per annum and the demographic dynamics within Sierra Leone have exerted enormous stress on the country's natural and wildlife resources base as well as the status and potential of biodiversity. In spite of the glaring looming disaster, the policy, institutional and administrative framework for sustainable natural resource management is inadequate; Also policy and program planning, implementation and monitoring in Sierra Leone is done by weak public sector institutions and an unwillingness to partner with others.

Natural resources and biodiversity management has been poorly financed using state funds. While the private sector has benefited from exploiting these resources, it has shied away from investing in their management.

The Government's response to calls for sustainable use of its natural heritage has been, first, to establish many regulatory and institutional frameworks for different sectors of the economy, such as forestry, wildlife, agro-biodiversity, marine biodiversity, fisheries management, mines, and mineral exploitation. Two key pieces of instruments, namely the National Environment Policy (NEP) and the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), were enacted in 1994 and 2000, respectively, to cover environmental management in the country. In 2003 the Government of Sierra Leone produced and adopted the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), a report that highlighted the status of the nation's various ecosystems and biological resources, outlined the threats to the existence and performance of these systems, and provided actions for addressing these looming dangers. These actions are short-, medium-, and long-term in nature and are poised help save the biodiversity (as well as other environmental and ecological goods and services) of Sierra Leone from total collapse, and to maintain the integrity of critical ecological systems in perpetuity. The NBSAP further identified eight ecological sites of

important biodiversity and suggested that urgent actions were needed to restore the integrity and ecological functionality of these systems. The eight ecological sites are spread over four major types of ecosystems comprising the Arid and Semi-arid; Coastal, Marine and Freshwater; Forest; and Mountain zones.

Despite these recent initiatives and official commitment, the current economic situation in Sierra Leone does not allow for adequate financing for the continued conservation efforts needed at the national level.

2. Global Biodiversity Objective

The Global Environmental Objective (GEO) of the project of the project will be to enhance the ecological integrity of selected ecosystems and protected areas. More specifically, the proposed project will aim to: (i) improve the integrity of selected critical protected areas and ecological functions through strengthening management of protected areas (PAs) and elimination of risks from uncontrolled, non-conforming activities such as logging and mining; (ii) enhance biodiversity protection within PAs and adjacent landscapes; (iii) ensure the conservation of genetic diversity within and outside PAs that rural people traditionally use for medicinal and consumptive purposes (medicinal plants, wood fuel, bush meat); and (iv) enhance the sustainable use of biological resources.

Incremental Cost Assessment

Baseline activities and Costs:

Context and Scope

Since independence Sierra Leone, although acknowledged by national stakeholders for its unique ecosystems and globally significant biodiversity, has not received adequate protection (including control and use restrictions) by the government. This situation stems from the weak policy, legislation, and institutional framework for a sustainable ecosystem.

In the absence of GEF assistance, Government of Sierra Leone, with limited support from other donors, would undertake limited interventions to meet selected domestic development objectives in ensuring a sustainable ecosystem, wildlife protection and biodiversity conservation. Such limited conservation support under the baseline scenario will be restricted to few biodiversity sites without any opportunity for mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and without being built on principles for sustainability as to link economic, social and environmental issues. It would also be insufficient to provide scientific data on the economic value of the use of existing biodiversity in order to ensure effective involvement of all stakeholders at national, regional and local levels in strategic planning and management.

As a conclusion, without the Sierra Leone Wildlife Protection And Biodiversity Conservation Project the baseline would be continued dismal funding for protected area management, poor regional and national economic development planning from biodiversity protection and conservation management, all leading to persistent degradation of high-value, unique

biodiversity and natural resources; and lastly, loss of opportunities for providing sustainable alternative livelihoods people currently living off the protected areas.

Cost

Over the 6-year Project period, the total expenditures associated with the Baseline Scenario are estimated at US\$ 11.6 million. These are described as follows:

Component 1: Strengthening Policy, Legislation and Institutional Framework for Ecosystem and Protected Area Management and Conservation of Wildlife and Biodiversity (Total US\$1.7m)

The project will focus on supporting the endorsement and, to a limited extent, enforcement of related environmental legislation and policies (National Environmental Policy (NEP) of 1994 and the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) of 2000, other policies on concessions, etc.), including dissemination of these policy and legal documents.

Component 2: Improving Management of Selected PAs (US\$Total US\$ 8.3m)

Sub-component 2.1: Site Management Planning and Research

Project activities relate to three pillars: (i) training and research related to the management of selected sites of high biodiversity importance; the creation of additional new protected area; (ii) actual implementation of the revised and updated management plans through targeted investments associated with conservation links, and (iii) establishment of sustainable and predictable funding mechanisms for the effective management of selected protected area systems in Sierra Leone. The baseline activities include provision of sectoral capacity building measures at the local, district and national levels in support of protected area system management, wildlife conservation and sustainable use. It includes mainstreaming environmental issues in the development planning and economic activities at the district and national levels. At the various levels, it includes the provision of basic hardware and software for local councils to improve accessibility and communication capacities.

Sub-component 2.2: Awareness Creation

The project activities will include raising awareness and increasing know-how of key stakeholders and beneficiaries at all levels and improving their capacities to manage and develop high-biodiversity sites (protected areas and their peripheries) in ways that improve productivity while enhancing their health and integrity.

Sub-component 2.3: Creation of Alternative Sources of Livelihood – Community Investment Fund

The baseline includes small grants to the communities living on the fringes of the selected protected area systems. These grants would be used to develop alternative sources of income and livelihood systems. Village tracks, roads, health posts and schools will be considered on demand-driven basis.

Component 3: Project Management and Monitoring and Evaluation (Total US\$1.6 \$m)

The activity focuses on provision of effective implementation coordination of the Project, making sure it complies with the World Bank Financial Management Guidelines and the Procurement Guidelines.

Benefits

The domestic and global benefits under the baseline scenario focus on the basic maintenance of the ecosystems, PA management, and conservation of wildlife and biodiversity. This would be done through limited, unstreamlined and uncoordinated environmental planning and management, principally at the local and national levels. The baseline would confer decreasing global benefits through limited and insufficient protection to sites with high-biodiversity conservation value.

GEF Alternative

Context and Scope

Conservation of biodiversity through mainstreaming protected area management and conservation of wildlife and biodiversity into local, regional and national development planning and implementation has been identified by key stakeholders in the country as the only sustainable option for ecosystem development and biodiversity conservation in Sierra Leone. It is the overarching rationale behind the GEF alternative; and it clearly stands at the center of the Project design through its four inter-related Project components and through the NaCEF's implementation arrangements.

Global experience with similar PA management and biodiversity projects, which aim to support sustainable development in the project areas, has shown that biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources is best managed in the long term if addressed as early in the local and regional development processes as possible. The SL-WBCP builds on this experience by complementing in a timely manner the operational move in the current decentralization process, and by piloting the transfer of responsibilities related to planning, management and monitoring of ecosystems, biodiversity conservation and their mainstreaming opportunities in relevant production landscapes from national to regional and local level from the outset.

The GEF alternative would lead towards the development and implementation of broad-based development plans for the selected PAs, where biodiversity issues are truly integrated and reflected. Vertical and horizontal coordination would lead to a better connection of development and biodiversity conservation (i.e. supportive of a 'big picture'- even transfrontier map given conservation areas (e.g. Gola Forest), with sustainable biodiversity benefits to all role players. The Project would enhance the knowledge base for sound ecosystem management and decision-making, including monitoring and evaluation for sustainable long-term tourism, mining and fishing practices. To further achieve this goal of mainstreaming, national, regional and local players would be provided with technical, financial and institutional support to develop such an enabling policy framework, adequate skills and targeted capacity. This will be achieved through the full involvement of national, regional and local governments, the private sector and other

civil society stakeholders, and the implementation of a detailed Project Participation and Communication Strategy.

The result of the alternative scenario would be conservation of biodiversity, its mainstreaming into enhanced national, regional and local development planning and management for the Sierra Leonean ecosystem in a way that is sustainable and in line with national and global biodiversity objectives and strategies.

Importantly, the lessons generated under this Project would help a broader mainstreaming of biodiversity considerations in other sectors and regions in Sierra Leone, the West Africa sub-region and other countries.

Cost

Over the six-year Project period, the total expenditures associated with the Baseline Scenario are estimated US\$5.0 million. The total expenditures associated with the GEF Alternative are estimated US\$16.6 million; these are summarized in Table 1. The Project would involve expanded and new activities as follows:

Component 1: Strengthening Policy, Legislation and Institutional Framework for Ecosystem and Protected Area Management and Conservation of Wildlife and Biodiversity (Total US\$2.4m: GEF US\$0.7m)

Main output

A collaborative vision and an improved policy, legal, institutional and planning framework for sustainable development of the Sierra Leonean ecosystem, shared by all stakeholders as a driving force for biodiversity conservation of high global importance. Up to now, the approach to regulation, control and management of the PA resources has been hampered by poor funding, unclear and overlapping institutional mandates for natural resource management, inconsistent and outdated legislation and insufficient data and information on the ecosystems. This component will bring the stakeholders together, and seek to reach consensus on a common vision for the management of the Sierra Leonean ecosystem. The vision will be based on the idea that the environment is part of a transfrontier ecosystem that permits industrial development, recreation, mining and other activities without compromising the environment and biodiversity in specific. Building on the needs and benefits for mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into production landscapes and local and regional development, this component will promote the development of a comprehensive environmental policy through a participatory process and stakeholder consultation. This component would involve removal of root causes to unsustainable and non-mainstreamed biodiversity management at the Sierra Leonean coast through clarification and harmonization of institutional mandates, review of financing needs and suitable mechanisms for biodiversity and, thus, improved coordination and inter-agency collaboration between local councils, national-level line ministries, private sector and others.

The GEF alternative would fund a series of stakeholder consultations and workshops to facilitate the process of developing a joint PA management vision, which will guide the mainstreaming of biodiversity efforts at regional and local levels.

Component 2: Improving Management of Selected PAs (Total US\$12.0m: GEF US\$3.7m)

Main output

Local councils, Local Authorities, National Commission on Environment and Forestry, other line ministries and other role players enabled to implement environmental policies with a priority given to mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into development planning, decision-making and key economic activities. This expanded component would involve removal of institutional and capacity barriers to biodiversity mainstreaming through support for the Government's decentralization efforts. It would involve targeted training and capacity building for identified key players on planning, regulations, management and monitoring the national ecosystems. Capacity building at regional and local levels would also build a basis for active involvement of local population and visitors around identified ecosystems of biodiversity importance. Resources would also be provided to set up a monitoring system, in conjunction with similar efforts by the National Commission on Environment and Forestry and other related bodies to provide for monitoring of the biodiversity status of identified ecosystem of biodiversity importance habitats and species across the national ecosystem, and an early identification of potential threats. The GEF alternative would, in particular, focus on the development and implementation of a high-impact communication strategy and public awareness campaign/action plan, which will increase knowledge of issues relating to biodiversity conservation and reinforce sustainable use of natural resources, in support of the mainstreaming of biodiversity into local and regional development issues. In that regard, this component would also facilitate the preparation of regional coastal profiles, which will provide regional and local stakeholders with socio-economic and environmental information necessary for the integration of conservation along the coastal areas into their regional and local development planning and management decisions.

Subcomponent 2.1: Site Management Planning and Research (Total US\$8.2m: GEF US\$2.5m)

Main output

On the ground biodiversity conservation in existing and emerging priority protected areas is substantially strengthened together with increased economic benefits from sustainable resource-based activities in line with sub-regional and local development objectives

This activity provides expanded on-the-ground investments in biodiversity conservation efforts in areas with high biodiversity conservation potential to improve their biodiversity status. This component would comprise core activities to address site-specific planning, protection and management in identified terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems of biodiversity importance. It would focus on the highlighting of a couple of Sierra Leone's protected areas. A phased approach would be taken over SL-WPBCP's lifetime to support the National Commission on Environment and Forestry and other national bodies to agree on the basic approach and numbers of PAs, delimiting provisional boundaries and identifying issues and management objectives before developing management plans and launching the necessary legislative process. In order to introduce functioning biodiversity conservation management in priority ecosystems, demarcation and gazetting of sites would be supported based on support for use of GIS for zoning and land-use planning and monitoring purposes. A consultative site-

specific management plan for the areas and their buffer zones/surrounding production landscapes would be developed based on recommendations for the appropriate institutional and financial mechanism emerging from the participatory process under Component 1, and based on built capacity under Component 2. This component would also provide support for site-specific limited infrastructure and equipment for management purposes.

The study into Sustainable Long-term Funding Mechanism would help determine and plan how to secure increased fund flow to the natural resource management sector through a menu of options, including large donor support for PA management, sustainable forest management, community-based natural resource management and institutional strengthening and policy development. It will also ensure the availability of an alternative financing mechanism that could be used to buy-back forestry concession rights from forestry/timber companies that renounce their rights.

This study will embrace various existing types of sustainable financing mechanisms, including environmental (conservation) trust funds, initiatives such as the HIPC, debt-for-nature swaps, forestry-based carbon offsets, user fees, taxes and charges, private sector initiatives.

Subcomponent 2.2: Awareness Creation (Total US\$1.0m: GEF US\$0.4m)

GEF funds will be used in environmental management advocacy and direct site conservation actions. Activities proposed under the ‘Cross-sectoral Action Plan’ in the NBSAP will be reviewed and implemented where appropriate. At the local level, the project will broaden and strengthen local constituencies for ecosystem management and conservation of biodiversity e.g. through the formation, development and strengthening of interest groups and site support groups (SSGs).² Strategies will be designed and implemented to empower local communities to participate in the management and monitoring of the selected high biodiversity sites. This sub-component will focus on promoting and enhancing greater involvement of civil society at project sites through effective engagement strategies.

Sub-component 2.3: Creation of Alternative Sources of Livelihood – Community Investment Fund (Total US\$2.8m: GEF US\$0.8m)

Funds will be used to finance the provision of alternative and viable choices for the people to participate in economic development, expand opportunities for economic growth, create jobs, reduce their levels of poverty, and improve their livelihood. In this regard, the project will explore ways of increasing sources of livelihood for people, particularly for those staying in the rural areas. While supporting actual conservation activities, the component will also provide investment support for enhancing the sustainable use of the sites and biological resources within them by financing income-generating activities that are connected to ecosystem services such as tour guiding facilities, community-based ecotourism, and rehabilitation of tourism facilities. The CIF will fund basic infrastructure such as village access roads, small bridges and drifts, farm trails, health posts, schools, latrines and water points in communities fringing the PAs on

² ‘Site Support Groups’ consist of people based in or around sites who are concerned about biodiversity loss and who draw on the experience and achievements of the wider BirdLife International Partnership to create local solutions. The BirdLife Partner NGOs work with these local communities to build a stronger local voice on environmental issues.

demand-driven basis. These activities will be complemented with support from the Bank-led NSAP.

Component 3: Project Management and Monitoring and Evaluation (Total US\$2.2m: GEF US\$0.6m)

Main output:

The expectation is that project implementation will be rated highly satisfactory, with well-documented achievements of results. This component will provide complementary resources to NaCEF and other implementers of the project for an effective and timely project management, coordination and the set-up of a project performance monitoring system, all of which are conditions for successful project implementation. This expanded support will include project management, coordination, reporting, monitoring and evaluation for all project activities. The GEF increment will enable further beneficial outcomes beyond those already specified in the baseline scenario. In addition to the Baseline benefits, incremental global environmental benefits include:

- Effective conservation of globally important ecosystems and species as part of priority biodiversity ecosystems of biodiversity importance/conservation areas (including support of transboundary conservation);
- Investments at ecosystem of biodiversity importance-level removing the root causes of threats, thus improving the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of management endeavours;
- Agreement on consolidated national biodiversity monitoring and information system accessible to key stakeholders (harmonized data collection and effective data dissemination will be a valuable capacity for national, regional and local decision makers);
- Strengthened institutions at national, regional and local levels through targeted capacity building for planning, management and monitoring of national biodiversity conservation including land-use planning and zoning);
- Harmonization of fragmented national environmental policies and legislation Increased partnerships at all levels, providing opportunities to better collaborate and communicate the exchange of good practices; and
- Increased local ownership through enhancement of public participation in planning and management of biodiversity resources.

1. Incremental Cost Matrix

Components	Category	Expenditure (US\$ million)	Domestic Benefit	Global Benefits
Component 1: Strengthening Policy, Legislation and Institutional Framework for Ecosystem and Protected Area Management and Conservation of Wildlife and Biodiversity	Baseline	1.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved national, regional and sub-regional planning through progress with decentralization process; improved capacity building measures and multi stakeholder consultations; ▪ Strengthened environmental legal and policy framework (e.g protected area regulation policy framework); ▪ Achieved progress with relevant line ministries devolution plans and staffing, as they relate to environmental issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enactment of Environmental Management Act and other environmental legislation to provide for environmental regulation compliance and enforcement measures of relevance to globally significant habitat and species protection

	GEF Alternative	2.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improvement in the coordination of inter-agency collaboration among all key players through well-defined and harmonized institutional mandates and responsibilities; ▪ More cost effective use of national and local council budgets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall ecosystem management, protected area management and wildlife and biodiversity conservation are embedded in a coherent policy, legal and institutional framework; ▪ Decentralization of environmental management functions ▪ Identification of opportunities to mainstream protected area management, and wildlife and biodiversity conservation considerations into national and local council development planning ▪ Development and implementation of financial sustainability strategy by the relevant line ministry; ▪ Greater cost-effectiveness in achieving global impact
	Increment	0.7		

<p>Component 2: Improving Management of Selected PAs</p>	<p>Baseline</p>	<p>8.3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity enhancement for relevant line ministries, local councils on development planning, management, and monitoring, including broader environmental issues; ▪ Collection of national biodiversity data, the relevant government body's routine species monitoring; ▪ Improved capacity of the country's Environmental Economics and Natural Resource Accounting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved information regarding the protected area management and biodiversity.
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	GEF Alternative	12.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improvement of inter-ministerial and inter-agency cooperation at all levels; ▪ Strengthened institutional and technical capacity within the local councils; ▪ Awareness for effective environmental and biodiversity planning and management including land use planning to benefit the national, regional and local institutional and human capacity through training, study tours and the involvement of international, national and local experts in the project; ▪ Strengthened national and local knowledge and capacity in assessing biodiversity values and assets as well as identifying and prioritizing protected areas. ▪ Availability of profiles of economic, social and environmental baseline data for development planning and management both at the national and local levels. ▪ Providing necessary strategic and operational tools and experiences to improve management effectiveness of selected high-biodiversity areas; ▪ Woodlot establishment through reforestation; ▪ Use of fuel efficient and energy saving devices and technologies for activities that currently account for a high demand on wood and woodfuels; ▪ Cultivation of non-timber forest products such as medicinal herbs, spices, sweeteners, fuel wood, poles, timber to enhance the resource base; ▪ Community-based nature tourism and promoting tourism-related local (village-level) enterprises; ▪ Protection of river bank and slopes; ▪ Buffer zone management ; ▪ Implementation of research-based activities to improve the resource base; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mainstreaming biodiversity and sustainable use of resources within the protected areas (PA) into national and local development planning and management processes, e.g, through sharing of PA biodiversity data and linking to socio-economic and other data by all stakeholders.; ▪ Enhanced monitoring and information exchange through development and implementation of PA biodiversity M&E systems permitting adaptive management; ▪ Improved scientific and technical knowledge base for decision-making and ecosystem of biodiversity importance site selection.; ▪ Incorporating of global biodiversity elements and promotion of integrated planning and management presented in targeted communication campaigns to increase public awareness and enhance appreciation of PA biodiversity among policy makers. ▪ The creation of one new protected area within the Gola forest stretch to cover Sierra Leone and Guinea.
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased fund flow to the natural resource management sector and large donor programs for PA management, sustainable forest management, community-based natural resource management and institutional strengthening and policy development have never been implemented.; ▪ Availability of an alternative financing mechanism that could be used to buy-back forestry concession rights from forestry/timber companies that renounce their rights. ▪ Conducting participatory research, reviews, revisions and development of management plans for selected key biodiversity conservation sites and their buffer environments; ▪ Potential direct biodiversity conservation activities such as PA boundary demarcation, GIS surveys and mapping, gazettement, site-specific and species-specific conservation measures, access control and regulation, soil erosion control, vegetation cover rehabilitation within PAs and buffer zone areas rehabilitation and management. ▪ Establishment of environmental (conservation) trust funds, drawing from initiatives such as the HIPC, debt-for-nature swaps, forestry-based carbon offsets, user fees, taxes and charges, private sector initiatives; ▪ Reduced dependencies of communities living in the fringes of the selected PA systems on natural resource exploitation by providing them with resources for developing alternative sources of income and livelihood support systems; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhanced sustainable use of the sites and biological resources within them by financing income-generating activities that are connected to ecosystem services such as tour guiding facilities, community-based ecotourism, and rehabilitation of tourism facilities; ▪ Establishment of effective management of protected area systems in Sierra Leone.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultivation of non- timber forest products such as medicinal herbs, spices, sweeteners, fuel wood, poles, timber to enhance the resource base 	▪
	Increment	3.7	▪	▪
Component 3: Project Management and Monitoring and Evaluation	Baseline	1.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Operational functioning of the Sierra Leone Wildlife Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Project 	▪
	GEF Alternative	2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthened capacity of the National Commission on Environment and Forestry, other government bodies, local councils and other stakeholders for managing core environmental awareness from increased communication efforts and coordination. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Efficient administration of Project funds, coordination of implementing institutions, and evaluation of progress towards improved protection and management of globally significant ecosystems and species. Use of project indicators and data within national biodiversity M&E mechanism for adaptive management. Improved scientific knowledge for decision-making on targeted investments.
	Increment	0.6		
Total for all components	Baseline	11.6		
	GEF Alternative	16.6		
	Incremental	5.0		

ANNEX B: PROJECT LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND MONITORING

SIERRA LEONE: Sierra Leone Wildlife Protection and Biodiversity Conservation

PDO	Project Outcome Indicators	Use of Project Outcome Information
Improvement of sustainable protected area management and biodiversity conservation within SL contributing to socio-economic development of beneficiary communities.	<p>C. 300,000 hectares of selected protected areas with improved effective management (from 20% to 70% by EOP using the GEF SP1 Tracking Tool) compared with baseline conditions</p> <p>40% of communities experiencing improved livelihoods or accruing benefits from improved PA management</p> <p>60% increase in level of resources committed from district councils to PA and biodiversity management in the district development plans by EOP.</p>	<p>To assess PA management effectiveness.</p> <p>To assess PA management effectiveness. To assess reward schemes for stakeholder participation.</p> <p>To assess level of mainstreaming of NRM into district development planning process.</p>
Project Global Environmental Objective (PGO)		
To enhance the ecological integrity of selected ecosystems and protected areas.	<p>Over 2,000 hectares of the buffer zones to the selected PAs with improved management effectiveness</p> <p>One (1) Forest Reserve (the 76,100ha Gola Forest Reserve and the Tiwai Island Forest) upgraded to Strict Nature Reserve by EOP</p> <p>Rate of deforestation at the Gola Forest reserve reduced to half (1%) of the baseline rate (0.2%).</p>	<p>To assess PA management effectiveness To assess PA health To assess global and local benefits</p> <p>To assess willingness of GoSL to increase the proportion of the country under stricter protection regimes</p> <p>To assess GoSL willingness to increase the proportion of the country under stricter protection regimes</p> <p>To assess levels of park management effectiveness</p>
Intermediate Outcomes	Intermediate Outcome Indicators	Use of Intermediate Outcome Monitoring
Component 1: Strengthening Policy, Legislative and Institutional Framework for Ecosystem and Protected Area Management and	Number of MOUs endorsing joint management with communities and other stakeholders for PA management signed and	Flags state willingness/effort to encourage participation in PA management by district councils and communities

<p>Conservation of Wildlife and Biodiversity</p>	<p>implemented</p> <p>A policy on collaborative/joint management of PAs and conservation of wildlife and biodiversity developed</p> <p>Legal establishment of NaCEF endorsed by parliament by mid-PY01</p> <p>Completion of policy and legal framework for the establishment of a long-term financing mechanism for PAs</p>	<p>To assess GoSL level of appreciation for participation in PA management</p> <p>To assess GoSL commitment to PA management and biodiversity conservation</p> <p>To assess opportunities for long-term financing of PAs</p>
<p>Component 2: Improving Management of Selected Protected Areas</p> <p>Sub-component 2.1: Site Management Planning and Research</p> <p>Sub-component 2.2: Awareness Creation</p> <p>Sub-component 2.3: Creation of Alternative Sources off Livelihood-The Community Investment Fund</p>	<p>20% increase in population of 2 key wildlife species in selected PAs.</p> <p>80% of PAs with management plans completed and endorsed.</p> <p>70% of beneficiary district councils incorporate PA and biodiversity management into their development plans</p> <p>Boundaries for 4 PAs demarcated and pillared by end PY03.</p> <p>Number of staff within NaCEF with further training in PA management and biodiversity conservation</p> <p>60% increase in GIS capability at PA management level</p> <p>40% of schools in the PA catchment with established and functioning nature clubs</p> <p>40% of the farming population at the periphery of selected PAs adopted agroforestry practices</p> <p>40% increase in beneficiary household incomes</p> <p>60% of project beneficiary households with increased incomes</p> <p>At least 40% reduction in illegal</p>	<p>Assesses health and capacity of PAs.</p> <p>Assesses progress towards Government's target of ensuring management effectiveness.</p> <p>Assesses levels of decentralization. Assesses level of mainstreaming natural resources management into district council level development planning</p> <p>Measures commitment to ensure the security of PAs and removing them from logging</p> <p>Measures GoSL's willingness to invest in PA management</p> <p>Measures level at which quality data and information on the PAs can be collected, analyzed, shared and used to improve their management</p> <p>Assess level of awareness among school going children.</p> <p>Assess level of awareness among stakeholders</p> <p>Measures reach of project benefits</p> <p>Measures reach of project benefits</p>

	<p>timber operations at the Gola Forest Reserve</p> <p>At least 60% reduction in illegal hunting of elephants, hippos and monkeys at Outamba-Kilimi National Park, monkeys and duikers at the Loma Mountains-Tingi Hills Complex</p> <p>At least 50% reduction in cattle grazing at Mamunta-Mayoso Wildlife Sanctuary (as measured by size of cattle herd and incidence of movement)</p>	
Component 3: Project Management and Monitoring and Evaluation.	<p>80% of project activities in annual work plans effectively completed</p> <p>85% of emerging project risks effectively managed</p>	<p>Progress in implementation of project activities</p> <p>Measures progress in tracking and mitigating risks</p>

B. Arrangements for Results Monitoring

Project Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Target Values					Data Collection and Reporting			
		YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5	YR6	Frequency and Reports	Data Collection Instruments	Responsibility for Data Collection
<p>PDO/PGO: C. 300,000 hectares of selected protected areas with improved effective management (from 20% to 70% by EOP using the GEF SP1 Tracking Tool) compared with baseline conditions</p>	20%	22%	30%	40%	45%	60%	70%	Yearly	Surveys, Reports	Unit of NaCEF in charge of PA management
<p>40% of beneficiary communities experiencing improved livelihoods or accruing benefits from improved PA management</p>	2%	5%	10%	20%	25%	30%	40%	Yearly	Surveys, reports	NaCEF
<p>60% increase in level of resources committed from district councils to PA and biodiversity management in the district development plans by EOP</p>	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	Yearly	Sample household surveys	NaCEF

Project Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Target Values					Data Collection and Reporting			
		YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5	YR6	Frequency and Reports	Data Collection Instruments	Responsibility for Data Collection
Over 2,000 hectares of the buffer zones to the selected PAs with improved management effectiveness	100 ha	200 ha	500 ha	800 ha	1,000 ha	1,500 ha	2,000 ha	Yearly	Surveys, reports	NaCEF
One (1) Forest Reserve (the 76,100ha Gola Forest Reserve and the Tiwai Island Forest) upgraded to Strict Nature Reserve by EOP	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	Yearly	Reports	NaCEF
Rate of deforestation at the Gola Forest reserve reduced to half (1%) of the baseline rate (0.2%)	0.2%	1.8%	1.7%	1.6%	1.4%	1.2%	1.0%	Yearly	Surveys and Reports	NaCEF
Results Indicators										
Component1 15 MOUs endorsing joint management with communities and other stakeholders for PA management	0	2	5	8	10	12	15	Annually	Reports,	PA level management

Project Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Target Values					Data Collection and Reporting				
		YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5	YR6	Frequency and Reports	Data Collection Instruments	Responsibility for Data Collection	
signed and implemented											
A policy on joint/collaborative management of PAs and conservation of wildlife and biodiversity developed	None	None	None	None	Exist	Exist	Exist	Annually	Reports	NaCEF	
Legal establishment of NaCEF endorsed by parliament by mid-PY01	None	Endorsement given						Annually	Notes from the Attorney General's, Reports, government Gazette	Office of President	
Completion of a policy and legal framework for the establishment of a long-term financing mechanism for PAs	None	None	None	Endorsement given				Annually	Notes from the Attorney General's, Reports, government Gazette	Office of President	
Component 2 20% change in population of 2 key threatened wildlife species in selected	0%	0%	5%	10%	15%	18%	20%	Annually	Reports	NaCEF	

Project Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Target Values					Data Collection and Reporting			
		YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5	YR6	Frequency and Reports	Data Collection Instruments	Responsibility for Data Collection
PA's.										
80% of PAs with management plans completed and endorsed	0%	0%	10%		40%		80%	Annually	Reports	NaCEF
70% of beneficiary district councils incorporate PA and biodiversity management into their development plans.	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	60%	70%	Annually	Reports	NaCEF
Boundaries for 4 PAs demarcated and pillared by end of PY03	0	0	0	4	4	4	4	Annually	Reports	NaCEF
Number of staff within NaCEF with further training in PA management	0	4	10	15	20	25	30	Annually	Reports	NaCEF
60% increase in GIS capability at PA management level	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	Annually	Reports	NaCEF
40% of schools in the PA catchment with established and functioning nature clubs	0%	5%	10%	15%	25%	35%	40%	Annually	Reports	NaCEF

Project Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Target Values					Data Collection and Reporting			
		YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5	YR6	Frequency and Reports	Data Collection Instruments	Responsibility for Data Collection
40% of the farming population at the periphery of selected PAs adopted agroforestry practices	0%	0%	5%	10%	20%	30%	40%	Annually	Reports	NaCEF
40% increase in beneficiary household income	0%	5%	10%	15%	25%	30%	40%	Annually	Reports Surveys	PA level management unit
60% project beneficiary households at community level with increased incomes	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	Annually	Surveys, Reports	NaCEF
At least 40% reduction in illegal timber operations at the Gola Forest Reserve	0%	5%	10%	15%	20%	30%	40%	Annually	Surveys, Reports	NaCEF
At least 60% reduction in illegal hunting of elephants, hippos and monkeys at Outamba-Kilimi National Park, monkeys and duikers at the Loma Mountains-Tingi Hills	0%	10%	15%	25%	40%	50%	60%	Annually	Surveys, Reports	NaCEF

Project Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Target Values					Data Collection and Reporting			
		YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5	YR6	Frequency and Reports	Data Collection Instruments	Responsibility for Data Collection
Complex At least 50% reduction in cattle grazing at Mamunta-Mayoso Wildlife Sanctuary (as measured by size of cattle herd and incidence of movement)	0%	5%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	Annually	Surveys, Reports	NaCEF
Component 3 80 % of project activities in annual work plans effectively completed	0%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	Annual progress reporting	Reports	NaCEF
85% of project risks emerging effectively managed	0%	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%	85%	Annual progress reporting	Reports	NaCEF

ANNEX C: RESPONSE TO PROJECT REVIEWS

ANNEX C (A): STAP REVIEW AND RESPONSE TO REVIEW

STAP Roster Technical Review
Andrew Grieser Johns
Forests and Biodiversity Conservation Specialist, FRR Limited

Project title: Sierra Leone Wildlife Protection and Biodiversity Conservation

Date: 20 March 2006 (DRAFT 1)

Endorsement

Interventions under this project are an extremely important contribution to saving the biodiversity of SL from total collapse. The project addresses this issue both from the top, with capacity building and enablement of the executive authority charged with this task, and from the bottom through the support and sensitisation of communities around target high-priority biodiversity sites. The stand-alone GEF component has clear incremental benefits in enabling and mainstreaming PA management and biodiversity conservation, which is currently completely unattainable by GoSL, its current partners and their pooled resources. Reviewer considers the GEF component as globally and regionally of extreme importance, as a well-conceived response to a very difficult project environment, and strongly recommends its support.

Key issues

1. Scientific and technical soundness of the project

SL is perhaps still the world's poorest nation. The national capacity to manage forests and biodiversity is minimal, and Government priorities of necessity lie elsewhere. However, the economy is re-building and there is a window of opportunity to mesh biodiversity conservation within Government development planning processes and the introduction of democratisation and decentralisation as these processes are institutionalised.

However, for this to happen, significant support is required in capacity building at all levels and in reawakening awareness of the role of protected areas at the grassroots level - and in providing alternatives to the current necessity among poor people to exploit and degrade their own natural resources base. There has been no large scale financial support for the forestry and wildlife sector in SL for many years. Government budgets cover only basic staff support and some recurrent expenses. Around 95% of operational funds for the natural resources sector are thought to originate with donors, and there are not enough of these funds to adequately address the issue of protected areas and biodiversity conservation. The proposed GEF intervention is extremely timely and important in addressing this and the proposal has been developed with clear attention to the root issues and in finding common solutions.

Component 1 of the project is concerned with assessing and revitalising the legislative and policy framework for conservation and management of biodiversity, which is currently largely non-functional for reasons of rural poverty and low implementation capacity of Government agencies – which add up to a complete absence of an enabling environment for conservation. There is an additional intent to create effective mechanisms for fair and equitable distribution of benefits from protected area management, wildlife protection and biodiversity conservation. Achieving these is a major challenge, but the project structure addresses the challenge in a well-conceived manner.

Sub-component 2.1 focuses first on the development of integrated protected area and buffer zone management plans, although it is not clear if a buffer zone is a legal entity under which specific regulations are applied or a largely project-driven entity defined by the distribution of project activities and benefits. The second focus is on the re-evaluation of the PA system and legalisation of sites already identified by other projects and surveys (notably NBSAP), but currently not formally established. This is, or should be, a rather complex procedure of stakeholder consultation and establishment of agreement on user rights, etc, with negotiations of trade-offs among buffer zone communities prior to legal definition and demarcation. Reviewer notes and commends the intent to establish systems of local ownership of wildlife resources off-reserve, as practised in Ghana and southern Africa (Project brief p.48).

Potential activities and capacity building indicated under this component are justifiably kept extremely broad and there is a clear need to focus down with initial needs assessments at the individual PA level at an early stage of the project. Reviewer notes that this GEF intervention is aimed at a) urgent capacity building of NaCEF (Project brief p.50) as a prerequisite for more local level interventions (this doesn't really fit under this sub-component but is part of the logic), b) addressing immediate and urgent issues at the PA level as they are defined, and c) that GEF intends additional support to identify longer-term financing mechanisms – which is an entirely sensible approach.

Sub-component 2.2 is important in its focus on the engagement of civil society in the wider interventions of the project. A high priority here would be to develop the legal structure for communities to participate in site management and decision-making. Civil society structures such as the Ghana Rights and Voice Initiative could be referred to here, which lead to a potentially more powerful form of empowerment than forming a local NGO (such as a Site Support Group on the Birdlife model).

Sub-component 2.3 concerns the establishment of a community fund that provides the leverage to establish trade-off agreements with local communities and thus help to define management regimes for protected areas and buffer zones. It is not clear if this fund supports, or meshes with, any integrated planning process for the rural community or whether it is essentially a stand-alone process than provides inputs into communities that have no decentralised planning or support structure. All grants under this fund will be environmentally appropriate, but they should go further and include an agreement clause reinforcing any community-level agreements made concerning a reduction of exploitative activities within the protected areas. As part of the funding structure, some form of participatory patrolling and monitoring in the buffer zone might be required, to discourage incursion from communities outside the buffer zone area who are not eligible for these support funds and may thus see a vacuum that can be exploited.

Component 3 concerns the project management and monitoring structure, and it is clear here that an important role is to share experience and dialogue both among the stakeholders and

with other projects in the region who for reasons of recent political stability are more advanced with planning and implementation approaches.

An over-arching theme of the project is that approaches envisaged will assist in forest and biodiversity protection and conservation by a) improving the capacity of the relevant authorities to manage protected areas for environmental goals – including improving enforcement of the already existing, although weak, legislation and up-coming regulations, and b) improving alternative livelihood opportunities for the poor people surrounding the PAs, both as compensation for a loss of access rights and also in recognition of a real need for extreme poverty conditions to be ameliorated. Increased awareness and various other interventions to help lessen reliance on natural resources, such as local ownership of off-reserve wildlife resources, are also designed to reduce the need or inclination to exploit wild biodiversity resources.

The project documents note that it is impossible at this stage to quantify actual threats on wild timber and biodiversity resources (case studies in Project brief Annex 19), or the foregone income to the target communities caused by access restriction (Project brief p.66), but generally these threats are considerable. Considerable capacity building and consultative stakeholder processes are required to enable the support funding mechanism. In the meantime the target communities can be expected to respond primarily to continuing opportunities to extract forest products illegally, rather than to project aims. For this reason, there is an extreme urgency for interventions to begin to address the real needs of the communities (and of the threatened biodiversity). Adequate monitoring and enforcement of linkages between project benefits, and community conformance to project rules, would appear to be rather crucial at early stages of the project, but global experience to date is that it is quite difficult to develop a linkage mechanism between receiving project benefits and monitoring/enforcement of rules, and for different parties to agree on such a mechanism.

In the longer term a considerable effort will need to be expended in planning for integrated conservation and development (within a framework of Poverty-environment linkages) and mainstreaming these new approaches.³

2. Identification of global environmental benefits

Global environmental benefits are clearly expressed (Project brief p.87) and amount to an enhanced enabling environment for biodiversity conservation and management. At the national level this would be achieved through enablement of the executive authority charged with biodiversity conservation to begin to undertake its very considerable task. At the local (protected area) level this would be achieved through improved management capacity and a reduction of conflict in the use of biological resources between the protected area and other stakeholders (to facilitate this, the project includes funding support for conservation-oriented livelihoods alternatives). Ultimately, the project aims to facilitate the sustainable use (not only protection) of biological resources.

In effect, GEF intervention will both improve conditions for sustainable natural resources management and provide the relevant stakeholders with the capacity and physical means to take advantage this. At present the biodiversity and environmental resources of the target

³ The intent to mainstream biodiversity conservation into development planning and economic activities at the national, regional and sub-regional levels of administration is mentioned (Project brief p.12) and this is a major opportunity, but the processes whereby this will occur are not greatly enlarged upon.

areas are currently unmanaged or provide only domestic benefits unrelated to environmental protection – the project provides the opportunity for these areas to begin providing measurable global benefits.

The importance of this approach at this time in this location is clear. The country is extremely diverse in biodiversity but socio-political factors have caused catastrophic declines, and the situation is now critical. The biodiversity values of target areas are noted (Project brief p.64-65 and Annex 21). These areas are of high global conservation importance in themselves, and some have additional value as part of trans-boundary conservation units with sustainable biodiversity benefits to all stakeholders (Project brief p.83).

3. How does the project fit within the context of the goals of GEF

The project is fully consistent with GEF Operational Programs OP-1 (Arid-Semi-arid Zone), OP-2 (Coastal, Marine & Freshwater), and OP-3 (Forests); maybe also OP-4 (Mountains) in the case of the Loma Mountains site. Identified target areas within these different ecosystems are all in need of immediate support to maintain both their internal biodiversity values and also wider environmental and human benefits (particularly in the case of Yawri Bay which is a critical nursery area for a variety of marine species and thus important for regional fisheries).

The project is in particular rooted in GEF strategic priorities SP-1 (Catalyzing Sustainability of Protected Areas). A primary focus is the development of effective and sustainable management regimes in already established protected areas and in facilitating the establishment of additional identified but not yet gazetted areas, both sets of activities including a wide stakeholder involvement to assure sustainability.

The project is also meshed with other GEF planned interventions, notably the pipeline project to define sustainable financing mechanisms for protected areas.

4. Regional context

The design and implementation of the project has benefited and will continue to benefit from a wide range of similar interventions in the Upper Guinea Forest Ecosystem, of which SL is a part, and from further afield (example of similar projects are given in Project brief p.16). The specific focus of the project on priority sites is necessary to pilot integrated conservation management approaches in depth in the country context, and Reviewer supports the decision not to take the wider 19 parallel project approach suggested by the SL-NBSAP (Project brief p.18). The target areas are wholly in need of support and GEF intervention here assists with realisation of the emerging national-level biodiversity conservation strategies, their mainstreaming into enhanced national, regional and local development planning and management for the Sierra Leonean ecosystem in a way that is sustainable and in line with national, regional Upper Guinea Forest Ecosystem and global biodiversity objectives and strategies. Lessons learned will assist with a broader mainstreaming of biodiversity considerations in other sectors and regions in Sierra Leone, the West Africa sub-region and other countries.

5. Replicability of the project

A key feature of the project is to develop capacity at national level (within NaCEF) that will then filter down to the entire forest and protected area estate under this executive authority. GEF action thus helps build a common vision and common approaches for the management of the natural resources of SL. As stated, this common vision is based on the idea that the

environmental conservation is part of a wider approach that permits industrial development, recreation, mining and other activities without necessarily compromising environment and biodiversity conservation goals. Specific implementation approaches developed by GEF (e.g. for capacity building and for management of protected areas and community integration in planning and management) will be clearly replicable to other protected areas in SL and provide lessons learned for wider uptake. Any success developing local-level community-driven planning processes that link delivery of donor project and Government programme benefits around protected areas with achievement of conservation objectives for these areas would be particularly important to replicate. Reviewer considers attention paid to replicability (Project brief p. 23-24) as appropriate.

6. Sustainability of the project

Continuation of political stability and introduction of good governance are of course essential for project sustainability (noted in project risks, Project brief p.24), but the indications are favourable that these overriding conditions will be met and the commitment of GoSL to the project is apparent.

A key constraint at project start-up is that the appointed executive authority, NaCEF, is itself currently non-functional, and revision of policy agendas will need to wait until the executive authority is fully established and provided with the necessary capacity.⁴ The expected phasing of policy revision to create the framework for project sustainability is not given (Project brief p.47), but the timing of monitorable achievements for establishment of an enabling framework (Policy brief p.42) are probably realistic and hopefully will be completed around project mid-term.

Reviewer considers the project pays good attention to establishing the linkages between conservation and development planning that will be necessary for sustainable project impacts beyond the project lifetime (Project brief p.23), notably a high degree of stakeholder ownership. However, the sustainability of implementation of management plans for protected areas and particularly their continued support by communities might be questioned. A sustainable financing strategy is expected, as mentioned earlier, but the capacity of this financing also to top up the buffer zone community funds over a longer period might be questioned – if not possible through PA income generation, this will be dependent to some extent on post-project external (national or international) support.

Secondary issues

7. Linkage to other focal areas

Project outcomes related to community engagement are in line with OP-12 (Integrated Approach to Ecosystem Management), and OP-15 (Sustainable Land Management). A further link is expected to OP-13 (Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity Important to Agriculture). In general terms, the project will also contribute to biodiversity strategic priorities BD-4 (Generation and Dissemination of Best Practices for Addressing Current and Emerging Biodiversity Issues) and BD-2 (Cross-cutting Capacity Building). Addressing the catastrophic

⁴ Reviewer notes and commends GoSL commitment to get the NaCEF at least on some sort of operational level by 28 February 2006 (*Aide Memoire, Project Preparation Mission, February 2006*).

decline of SLs forests, currently reduced to around 5% of their former area, will also indirectly address issues of land degradation and local climate change.

8. Linkage to other programmes and action plans at the regional or sub-regional level

GEF interventions apply tools and lessons learned from previous GEF and other projects at national level and elsewhere (e.g. use of the Biodiversity Tracking Tool, Project brief Annex 18). Site selection and overall focus results from a critical analysis of the NBSAP, and, more specifically, activities proposed under the 'Cross-sectoral Action Plan' in the NBSAP will be reviewed and implemented by the GEF intervention where appropriate.

The project is meshed within current GoSL programmes for decentralization and represents an important pilot for the transfer of responsibilities related to planning, management and monitoring of ecosystems, biodiversity conservation and their mainstreaming opportunities in relevant production landscapes from national to regional and local level. Due attention is paid to other sectoral programmes including the emerging global focus on the P-E nexus and implications within SL.

9. Other beneficial or damaging environmental effects

[A detailed appraisal of environmental issues and potential environmental and social impacts are not yet included in the project proposal.]

The key issue for the project as a whole is the extent to which project benefits reach the communities who are most proximate to and who rely to the greatest extent on natural resources from the target protected areas. Successful execution of project capacity building initiatives, strengthened control of the protected areas and better enforcement of legislation could result in reduced access and potential hardship for already critically poor communities. The project clearly aims to support these communities through a variety of appropriate instruments, but may need to clarify at an early stage more precisely how these benefits will be delivered or facilitated (if Government programmes) by the project on an individual community basis. Experience from elsewhere is that it is sometimes hard to develop financial benefits for communities adjacent to protected areas at a level that compensate for a closure of access to valuable (if illegal) resources – although early establishment of fund instruments would certainly help to ameliorate this.

10. Degree of involvement of stakeholders in the project

The involvement of stakeholders in project design, aimed at ensuring that project goals meet local stakeholder needs, appears to have been quite complete. Reviewer considers that a high level of attention has been paid to ensuring that stakeholders from national to local level remain completely engaged and involved in project decision making and implementation. Fund mechanisms (setting of priorities and criteria, definition of board members, delivery of capacity building to manage funds) are not explained in detail, but are expected to ensure that fund benefits are shared equitably and with due attention to considerations of gender.

Reviewer notes and commends the intention of the project (Component 2.2) to focus on advocacy and the engagement of civil society as a whole and disadvantaged stakeholder groups in particular.

11. Capacity building aspects

The project pays considerable attention to capacity building which will be extremely complex due to the number of stakeholders involved and the need to start almost from point zero in many cases. Capacity building initiatives are clearly presented, however, and appear comprehensive. Reviewers only comment relating to GEF component would be that project should ensure adequate attention is paid to PA staff responsible for community liaison and deployment skills for PA guards. There is perhaps a concern that the project will succeed in reducing needs for resource exploitation by buffer zone communities, but will not necessarily address the issue of professional forest and wildlife exploiters coming into the protected areas from elsewhere. The BZ communities may need to be actively engaged in assisting PA staff in controlling these pressures exerted from outside the target sites. Adequate attention should also be paid to this in developing the M&E system.

12. Innovativeness of the project

The innovativeness of the project lies in its intention to address the issue of integrating biodiversity conservation and protected area management within Government planning and decentralisation as it happens. This is an unusual opportunity to create an entire planning system (in effect a system of values) that pays due attention to integrating conservation criteria, as well as broader poverty-environment linkages, rather than to try to incorporate these elements into a planning system that has already been institutionalised and implemented. It includes capacity development and sensitisation of all stakeholders to understand and implement this integrated planning process. There is a potential for development of a quite remarkable holistic approach to conservation.

Of course, the main focus of the project is to respond to the biodiversity crisis in SL. Implementation methods for protected area management planning, monitoring systems and tools, systems for buffer zone community engagement, fund design and administration, etc., are well tested in the region. PA management planning models are not proposed in detail, but Reviewer would urge that these should take the opportunity to be innovative in addressing the issue of linkages with decentralised planning and financing processes, as these are rolled out at the local level, as well as in making best use of their high level of independence in terms of managing their own finances and establishing private-public partnerships (Project brief p.50). Devolving a high level of responsibility to the individual PAs is innovative, but could backfire unless there is a safety net of essential Government support.

Specific comments on Project Brief

p.7 Poverty reduction

The state of development of the SL-PRSP (complete, evaluated?) and the linkages with MDGs might be briefly outlined (especially promotion of gender aspects within all MDGs, not only within MDG3, which is a common failing of PRSPs). This is not the focus of this proposal but is an overriding feature of the project environment.

p.11 Key performance indicators

The third indicator, waterfowl numbers increasing, is not monitorable within the project framework, except at one proposed site (Yawri Bay).

p.20 Institutional and management arrangements

A legal basis should be aimed for whereby the protected area management committee has a direct responsibility, together with the PA, for developing and approving the PA/Buffer Zone management plan and submitting it to Government (rather than a purely advisory role). In the long-term, Government budget should be allocated for continuance of this wider stakeholder group.

p.40 Results framework and monitoring

The indicator '20% increase in wildlife numbers in selected PAs' is much too broad: perhaps '20% increase in selected key species' (i.e. threatened and/or easily monitored species) would be a better indicator.

The indicator 'Boundaries for **X PAs** demarcated and pillared by end PY03' seems optimistic, given the lack of consultative and legal structures, and the need to involve all stakeholders in an equitable manner.

p.41 ditto

'**Number of local community members** who have adopted more sustainable practices' is rather vague and should perhaps specify the more sustainable practices referred to.

X---X----X

***Comment 1:** Component 2.1. Potential activities and capacity building indicated under this component are justifiably kept extremely broad and there is a clear need to focus down with initial needs assessments at the individual PA level at an early stage of the project. Reviewer notes that this GEF intervention is aimed at a) urgent capacity building of NaCEF (Project brief p.50) as a prerequisite for more local level interventions (this doesn't really fit under this sub-component but is part of the logic), b) addressing immediate and urgent issues at the PA level as they are defined, and c) that GEF intends additional support to identify longer-term financing mechanisms – which is an entirely sensible approach.*

Response: The creation and real on-the-ground management of protected area system requires adequate consideration of key stakeholders, particularly the human populations already living in or around these areas. Involving local people and other groups in the management of PAs is one way of addressing challenges that protected area managers face in converting paper protected areas into managed areas. Involvement and participation could manifest in two main forms: park managers sharing some of their functions, rights and responsibilities with key stakeholders and/or partnering with key actors including local institutions, thus improving the overall capacity for management. The project recognizes that the level of stakeholder engagement would defer depending on interests and capacities of the actors involved. Knowing this, various studies including an assessment of stakeholder capacities for PA management and conservation and sustainable use of wildlife and biodiversity have been completed using proceeds from the GEF PDF Block B Grant. These studies also focused on gap and initial needs analysis of key stakeholders at the national, regional, sub-regional (district council) and protected area levels for participatory management of the selected PAs. Capacity building efforts will include creating the legal capacity to establish the NaCEF and to manage these areas; providing stakeholders with skills in PA planning and management; managing risks and conflicts; establishing and

providing skills in alternative dispute resolution mechanisms; creating and maintaining governance systems; providing skills in simple financial and procurement management, providing techniques for raising funds and support for protected area; providing skills and techniques for improving participation; providing skill in monitoring and evaluation as well as in communication skills.

Comment 2: Sub-component 2.2 is important in its focus on the engagement of civil society in the wider interventions of the project. A high priority here would be to develop the legal structure for communities to participate in site management and decision-making. Civil society structures such as the Ghana Rights and Voice Initiative could be referred to here, which lead to a potentially more powerful form of empowerment than forming a local NGO (such as a Site Support Group on the Birdlife model).

Response: In Annex 4, page 46 paragraph 2 the need to review and analyze gaps in existing frameworks for stakeholder participation, joint/co-management and distribution of benefits has been highlighted. The follow-up paragraph in the same Annex 4 talks about doing amendments, repeals and new drafting of policies, strategies and legislation. GEF funds will be used to develop legal and administrative mechanisms and instruments (memoranda of understandings, management agreements, etc) that will ensure and legalize complementary and more inclusive stakeholder participation at both national and PA level. Participation and partnership agreements should motivate complementarity in capacities, comparative advantages of actors involved and increase opportunities for financial sustainability. It will be highly important to ensure any such participation law is incorporated into the government's larger framework for decentralization. This project will benefit from Bolivia's experiences in co-management of protected area and lessons from the Ghana Rights and Voice Initiative (RAVI) in forest management and land administration. The experiences from the World Bank-financed Ghana Savanna Resource Management Project and the two GEF-supported Ghana High Forest Biodiversity Project and Northern Savanna Biodiversity Conservation Project show that local level structures could be strong and effective rallying and entry points for stakeholder participation and involvement in protected area management. This project will support the introduction of both types of engagement – the RAVI type and the use of community structures.

Comment 3: The Sub-component 2.3 concerns the establishment of a community fund that provides the leverage to establish trade-off agreements with local communities and thus help to define management regimes for protected areas and buffer zones. It is not clear if this fund supports, or meshes with, any integrated planning process for the rural community or whether it is essentially a stand-alone process than provides inputs into communities that have no decentralised planning or support structure. All grants under this fund will be environmentally appropriate, but they should go further and include an agreement clause reinforcing any community-level agreements made concerning a reduction of exploitative activities within the protected areas. As part of the funding structure, some form of participatory patrolling and monitoring in the buffer zone might be required, to discourage incursion from communities outside the buffer zone area who are not eligible for these support funds and may thus see a vacuum that can be exploited.

Response: The community fund is intended as a stand-alone process that is compensating communities for lost opportunities and helping them to wean off dependency (“safety net”) on the selected protected areas and providing them with income sources and means to improve their lives. All grants under this fund will be environmentally appropriate and recipients will be obliged under appropriate legal mechanisms to undertake activities that will not result in environmental degradation. Funds under Component 2.1 will be used to engage buffer zone communities in boundary cleaning, patrols and monitoring so as to maintain control over the PAs under their jurisdiction and keep colonizers out. The project will draw lessons and experiences from the ongoing GEF-supported Ghana High Forest Biodiversity Project and other similar projects within the region. The project will support the creation of PA level voluntary fire management squads who will be trained in bush fire control and prevention.

SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROJECT

Comment 4: The Reviewer considers the project pays good attention to establishing the linkages between conservation and development planning that will be necessary for sustainable project impacts beyond the project lifetime (Project brief p.23), notably a high degree of stakeholder ownership. However, the sustainability of implementation of management plans for protected areas and particularly their continued support by communities might be questioned. A sustainable financing strategy is expected, as mentioned earlier, but the capacity of this financing also to top up the buffer zone community funds over a longer period might be questioned – if not possible through PA income generation, this will be dependent to some extent on post-project external (national or international) support.

Response: The sustainability of the project beyond its lifetime is dependent on the degree of stakeholder interest and ownership, particularly among the local population, district council and the national protected area authority. It also depends on the level of stakeholder participation and the nature of the financing mechanism that will be operating at a particular PA level. However, the level of stakeholder involvement and type of management arrangement will depend on interest and capacities of the actors, the willingness of the state to involve other actors and the legal and administrative mechanisms that exist. Management schemes may range from complete government control to alliances between government and other stakeholders like civil society and/or private sector to completely private management. The project will support the establishment of protected area management committees and development of joint/co-management schemes. These are expected to facilitate the development of cooperative relationships, trust, an increased commitment and support of stakeholders to protected area management. Co-management, particularly co-administration (a formal agreement between the state and a civil society institution like the Ghana RAVI to share the responsibilities for protected area management) will be expected to increase opportunities for financial sustainability and PA level budgetary agility as private resources become available. The Bolivian experience in the co-administration of seven PAs shows that co-administrators often provided complimentary support for community development. This is a good case for SL-WPBCP to draw lessons from. GEF funds will be used to promote nature-based tourism in potential protected areas and it is expected that part of revenues thereby generated will be used to preserve and manage PAs and associated biodiversity. However, it is important

that co-administration agreements are adequately robust and include legal safeguard clauses that protect the interest of the state, given that PAs are a public interest in SL.

SECONDARY ISSUES

Capacity Building

Comment 5: The Reviewers only comment relating to GEF component would be that project should ensure adequate attention is paid to PA staff responsible for community liaison and deployment skills for PA guards. There is perhaps a concern that the project will succeed in reducing needs for resource exploitation by buffer zone communities, but will not necessarily address the issue of professional forest and wildlife exploiters coming into the protected areas from elsewhere. The BZ communities may need to be actively engaged in assisting PA staff in controlling these pressures exerted from outside the target sites. Adequate attention should also be paid to this in developing the M&E system.

Response: The entire PA management structure in SL is weak and capacities for management are woefully inadequate. In this regard, GEF funds will be used to support the hiring and training of PA level personnel (Project Brief p. 48 and 49). Also at the national level, the national authority, NaCEF, established through a recent Presidential directive will be supported through legal capacity building, skills development and training (Project Brief p. 50). Project funds will be used to build relationships, engage and involve communities surrounding the selected PAs in boundary cleaning, patrolling and monitoring since community participation is important basis for solving the likely stream of external challenges such as colonization by people from outside the PAs. There is a specific reference in Annex 3 (Results Framework and Monitoring) to the number of co-management agreements signed with communities.

Innovativeness of the project:

Comment 6 - PA management planning models are not proposed in detail, but Reviewer would urge that these should take the opportunity to be innovative in addressing the issue of linkages with decentralised planning and financing processes, as these are rolled out at the local level, as well as in making best use of their high level of independence in terms of managing their own finances and establishing private-public partnerships (Project brief p.50). Devolving a high level of responsibility to the individual PAs is innovative, but could backfire unless there is a safety net of essential Government support.

Response: The project recognizes that the central authority in Freetown, PA level management structures and potential co-administrators of PAs do have serious capacity weaknesses in a number of areas. Full-scale devolution of management authority from the center to the protected area management level at this time and possibly during the lifetime of the project is not anticipated. Co-management will produce the environmental objectives when the central authority is strong and is fully ensuring implementation of certain key functions such as law enforcement, because this cannot be delegated under the current laws in SL. However, it is important that co-administration agreements are adequately robust and recognize the need to include legal safeguard clauses and safety nets that protect the interest of the state, given that PAs are a public interest in SL.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS IN THE BRIEF

Response: The points made by the reviewer have been made to clarify the specific concerns.

Additional Comments

Comments: Adequate monitoring and enforcement of linkages between project benefits, and community conformance to project rules, would appear to be rather crucial at early stages of the project, but global experience to date is quite difficult to develop a linkage mechanism between receiving project benefits and monitoring/enforcement of rules, and for different parties to agree on such a mechanism.

Response: A participatory M&E system for the project will be developed before Board Approval Date and it will make suggestions on how to deal with the actual substance and structures that need to be established to follow up on how benefits accruing are shared and how these also have a bearing on compliance levels as they relate agreed rules. GEF Grant funds will be used to sensitize and build capacities to monitor and enforce rules. The details of how to enforce project rules will be worked out in the early stages of project implementation.

Comments: The project is fully consistent with GEF Operational Programs Op-1, OP-2 and OP-3; may be also OP-4 in the case of Loma Mountains site.

Responses: The omission of OP-4 in the draft Brief has been corrected (See A3D of the Brief).

Comment: A key constraints at project start-up is that the appointed executive authority, NaCEF, is itself currently non-functional, and revision of policy agendas will need to wait until the executive authority is fully established and provided with the necessary capacity.

Response: Even while preparing this project NaCEF has requested some support from UNDP and EU to jump-start building its capacity. GEF Grant funds under this project will be used to strengthen vigorously capacities at NaCEF and PA level. NaCEF will seek partnerships and collaborations with and request technical assistance from both local and international organizations and civil society agencies to help in implementing activities it doesn't have the capacity to deliver. Particularly with then revisions of institutional and policy frameworks NaCEF will need so much external support which the project will finance.

Comment: Fund mechanisms are not explained in detail, but are expected to ensure that fund benefits are shared equally and with due attention to considerations of gender.

Response: The modalities and manual for operating the proposed Community Investment Fund (which has been elaborated further in Annex 4 of the Brief) will be formulated prior to actual disbursement in PY01.

Comment: A detailed appraisal of environmental issues and potential environmental and social impacts are not yet included in the project proposal.

Response: Draft social and environmental assessments reports and a resettlement policy framework have been developed and under review by the Bank. Results will be incorporated into the Brief before or at Appraisal.

Comment: Degree of involvement of stakeholders in the project.

Response: Particularly communities and chiefdoms were well informed and consulted during the conceptualization and formulation stages of the project. Series of meetings were held at district councils and within chiefdoms to educate stakeholders and to take feedbacks and inputs, particularly with regard to indigenous knowledge and practices. The project has also developed a Stakeholder Participation Plan that will be integrated into the project and financed with GEF Grant funds under Components 2 and 3.

Specific comments on Project Brief

Comment: Poverty reduction.

Response: Linkages have been struck in section A1B and Annex 1 of the Brief.

Comment: Key performance indicators in Results framework and Monitoring Plan

Response: They have been revised and made more sharp and focused

Comment: Institutional and management arrangements

Response: This has been described under Annex 4 and one of the vital policy changes suggested is to formulate new policies and statutes that empower communities to fully participate in PA management and not to just provide advice. It is expected that any financing arrangement short, medium and long-term, whether from GoSL or from other sources such as endowments will finance activities related to buffer zone management since this is an integral part of PA management.

**ANNEX C (B.1): RESPONSES TO GEFSEC COMMENTS
(REVIEW SHEET OF DECEMBER 13, 2005)**

Sustainability

Comment 1: Stronger financial sustainability strategy for the national protected area system. Feasibility and assessment of trust fund establishment, as well as other potential financial mechanisms

Response: The amount and level of replication and scale-up of this operation will be dependent on the level of financial sustainability that could be guaranteed during and after the lifetime of this phase of the project. Financial sustainability (partial) will be achieved through opportunities that the project will provide for co-administration. Full-scale financial sustainability is unlikely in the short-term except, possibly, for sites where profitable ecotourism programmes could be quickly developed, which seems impossible. GEF Grant facility will leverage other sources of funding to establish sustainable long-term financing schemes such as conservation trust fund, user fees, taxes and charges, debt relief mechanisms, HIPC, private initiatives, etc, to finance ecologically benign natural resource and park management activities and compensate community efforts for sound environmental stewardship and protection of valuable ecological systems that provide global and local environmental benefits. Project funds will be used to support the completion of a study into what could constitute a sustainable and long-term financing mechanism for the network of PAs in SL. Based on recommendations from such a study, an ensemble of options suitable within the country context will be formulated including the legal instruments, operation manual, grant manual, fundraising strategy and investment strategy.

Increasing village-level income-generation and livelihood improvements sources and reducing dependency levels of rural population on PAs will likely lead to reinvigoration of PA health and revitalization of ecosystem functions. The project will build linkages to other initiatives particularly to rural finance programs and thereby connect rural people to rural credit institutions. Putting monies into rural people's pockets will likely gear them up to re-invest in environmental sustainability of the areas at least peripheral to the PAs.

Issues related to long-term financial sustainability have been addressed in Annex 4 (Detailed Project Description).

Replicability

Comment 2: Replication strategy of project initiatives to other PAs within the system. It needs to be included as part of project activities with allocated budget.

Response: Replication will take place at the local and national scales throughout the life of the project. Perhaps most important among these is replication at the community scale. Ideas and information on project activities and lessons learned concerning community participation programs, alternative sources of income, innovative agricultural techniques, improvement of services, etc. will be quickly exchanged between communities on the periphery of a given protected area and facilitate replication. Best practices should also be quickly replicated at the national level, given that the project will establish/re-establish management programs simultaneously at several PAs across the country, and information on the success of initiatives and interventions will be readily exchanged between PAs and promote timely replication and

project efficiency. The anticipated role of local NGOs in the SL-WPBCP who have extensive experience in public awareness and networking will also greatly enhance the exchange of information and knowledge between stakeholders and the replication of best practices at the local and national levels. Replication at the regional and international scales will be largely facilitated through the dissemination of knowledge and lessons learned in the SL-WPBCP at regional workshops, trainings, and site tours, regional and international meetings/conferences on PA management and biodiversity conservation, and a comprehensive and informative project website to be developed by NaCEF and partner NGOs. A replication strategy/plan has been annexed (see Annex 20) to the Project Brief

Stakeholder Involvement

Comment 3: Stakeholder participation plan that ensures strong participation of stakeholders, particularly the local communities and groups.

Response: A Stakeholder Participation Plan has been attached as Annex 19

Monitoring and Evaluation

Comment 4: Monitoring and Evaluation Plan with clear impact indicators. Duly completed Tracking Tool.

Response: A detailed Results Framework and Monitoring Evaluation Plan have been attached as Annex 3 in the Project Document. Reference to the Biodiversity Tracking Tool for Assessing the selected PAs can be found under Annex 12 (Documents in the Project File).

X-----X-----X

ANNEX C (B.2) : RESPONSES TO GEFSEC COMMENTS (REVIEW SHEET OF APRIL 25, 2006)

1. Country Drivenness

Comment: Linkage with PRSP has been noted, however, project's relation to the existing policy documents, such as NBSAP, national development plan, are not clearly described. Please clarify.

Response: Linkage of the project with NBSAP and NEP has been further elaborated in Section A3C of the GEF Project Brief (pages 8 and 9).

2. Program Designation

Comment(a): Project conformity to OPI,2,3 are noted. While the project sites include Montane region, one wonders why the OP4 has been dropped. Please explain.

Response: This oversight has been corrected and a bit more elaboration given on how the project aligns with OP4 (Section A3.C of the GEF Project Brief, page 10)._It may be noted revisions

have been made to the number of protected areas that are now considered for support and as a result, the project now focuses on OP 1, 3 and 4. Additional sites will be considered and revisited at appraisal to determine the extent of support that could be provided and based on availability of additional cofinancing.

Comment(b): The project conformity to SP1 is confirmed. However, linkage to SP2 is weak.

Response: The project linkage with SP2 has been elaborated in Section A3C of the GEF Project Brief, page 10.

3. Project Design

Comment (a): Please provide further explanation on the representativeness and significance/priority of the eight selected project sites. The composition of sites, i.e. balance of different ecosystem type are unclear. Moreover, would it be effective to spread the resources thinly to many sites, when the capacity is very limited?

Response: The number of target PAs has been reduced from 8 to 4 and therefore costs associated with PA level management (e.g. demarcation, development of management plans, civil works, goods and equipment, etc) is reduced. Comments have been responded to by elaborating in Annex 4 and 20 (the criteria for selection) and in A3D and B3 of the GEF Project Brief, the representativeness/priority of the 4 targeted sites. Five ecosystem types have been identified in Sierra Leone. These are (1) Lowland rainforest, (2) savanna, (3) montane, (4) wetlands (freshwater, inland valley and mangrove) and (5) marine ecosystems. With the exception of the marine ecosystem in its strictest sense, the other ecosystem types are all represented within the protected area system of Sierra Leone. Currently, Sierra Leone has 11 protected areas with moist forest formations (closed moist and semi-deciduous) within their boundaries. Three of these protected areas have entirely moist evergreen forest and include two strict nature reserves (Gola North and Gola East) and one proposed national park (Western Area forest reserve). Kangari Hills in central Sierra Leone is made up of semi-deciduous forest. Other protected areas with some moist forests within their boundaries are Lake Sonfon, Loma Mountains, Kambui Hills, Dodo Forests, Nimini Hills, Yawri Bay and Tingi Hills (Allan 1990, Harcourt et al. 1992). Protected areas with both moist and semi-deciduous forests have an estimated land area of just over 339 km² (Harcourt et al.1992). The wetland ecosystem occupies the largest land area, with numerous “proposed” protected areas than the other ecosystem types. The marine ecosystem has a limited protected area known as Inshore Exclusion Zone (IEZ). A full description of ecosystem types in SL has been attached to the GEF Project Brief (see Annex 20). The Western Area Peninsula Forest a National Park of 17,688 ha, declared reserve in 1916 is the only place in West Africa where a mountain range occurs near the coast and the only remnant of moist closed forest remaining in Western Sierra Leone (and probably the westernmost in the Upper Guinea forest block). The reserve supports 2 major water reservoirs which supply water to Freetown and other communities surrounding the peninsula. Threats include increased land clearance for farming and human settlements, mining and logging. The 76,100ha Gola Blocks of Forests (North, East and West) are of the rainforest ecosystem type, which were gazetted as forest reserves in 1926 and 1930. These are largest tracts of closed canopy, lowland rain forest in SL, with a tropical wet evergreen to moist-semideciduous closed forests and inland swamp vegetation types. They are rich in biodiversity with 56 mammal species (6 threatened primate species) and 274 species of

birds (7 threatened) and threatened with commercial logging, gold and diamond mining. The Outamba-Kilimi is a gazetted National Park, with a size of 110,900 ha. It is a savanna vegetation type. It contains 9 species of primates (4 threatened) and 220 avian species and is vulnerable to high hunting and fishing pressures. The 33, 201ha Loma Mountain Complex was gazetted a national Park in 1973). It is of montane character and faces rotational bush fallow cultivation and hunting pressures as the main form of threats.

Comment (b): The Ecotourism: Feasibility of such initiative in SL is under question. Please provide business/market assessment and/or relevant information to justify investment on such activities as it should have been done under PDFB.

Response: Since the PDFB approval (February 8, 2006) and grants came in so late some of the studies that were proposed could not be completed and hence will form part of the pre-implementation phase or the actual project. The proposed ecotourism feasibility and market assessments are examples of the key studies that fall in this category and will form part of the pre-implementation activities to be financed under the PDFB.

Comment (c): Sustainable financial mechanism: The project suggests to undertake a detailed study on various potential financing models during project implementation. However, this was precisely one of the key outcome that was planned under the PDFB. Please provide further details on the study conducted under the PDFB and its outcome.

Response: Since the PDFB approval and grants came in so late some of the studies that were proposed could not be completed and hence will be part of the pre-implementation phase or the actual project. The project recognizes that ensuring and securing the integrity of PA system in Sierra Leone will be highly dependent on having a predictable scheme of financing and has therefore proposed to carry out detailed study into designing a predictable and long-term financing mechanism for PA system management. This should be a well-thought through assessment and the timeframe was not adequate to do a search for a qualified consultant who could recommend and design a more practicable, effective and efficient financing mechanism. Given also the divergent views by many within and outside the Bank about the effectiveness of conservation trust funds, circumspection is needed till we have a better understanding of what works or would work in Sierra Leone.

A consensus has been reached between the Project Team from GoSL and the WB Task Team to use proceeds of the GEF PDFB Grant funds to carry out a full-scale review of processes leading to the design and implementation of sustainable long-term financing mechanisms for effective protected area management in SL. Such a study will cover, among other, the following: (i) review of existing institutional framework and legal statutes for raising and retaining revenues and for creating trust funds, (ii) review of the banking sector and investment products available, (iii) assessment of technical and institutional capacities, (iv) formulation of priority actions and business plans for the selected sites, (v) definition of a trust fund profile in a transparent and participatory manner, (vi) assessment of possible strategic partnerships. These studies will draw

lessons from similar Bank supported initiatives in Africa and Latin America as well as the ongoing Gola Forest Conservation Concession Initiative (GFCCI) financed with resources from RSPB and CI. Such study will be the prelude to any further considerations by the Bank and GEF on the feasibility of setting up and operationalization a trust fund or any other feasible financing mechanism. Elaborations have been made at various sections (B5 and Annex 4 page 56-62) of the draft GEF Project Brief.

Comment (d): Alternative livelihoods: Please provide evidence of needs assessment, and feasibility and market assessment of these initiatives to determine the relevance and feasibility of these initiatives. The activities are very broad and it lacks focus. It is also important to clarify the environmental impact of some of the suggested initiatives. Moreover, these initiatives need to be financed by cofinancing sources, not GEF funding.

Response: A preliminary assessment of socio-cultural and economic characteristics of rural populations in the selected PAs has been carried out under the PDFB. While the study failed to do a full-scale assessment of the needs of potentially-affected rural people, with regard to what could constitute their alternative livelihoods, it provided a few suggestions on what categories of alternative livelihood activities these could be composed of. They include apiculture, promotion of ecotourism and local handicrafts, captive breeding, environmentally-sound agri-business and product processing (e.g. palm oil, soap making, etc), development of natural resources including non-timber forest products for alternative products in response to emerging eco-markets, investing in restoration and maintenance of environmental assets (e.g. reforestation, agroforestry, soil conservation, establishment of herbal gardens). As elaborated in Section 3 (Project Design) of the Review Sheet above, detailed feasibility and market accessibility analyses were not possible but Terms of Reference have been developed and a consultant search will be carried out soon to hire a competent specialist to do detailed studies related to feasibility and accessibility to services and markets before or during project implementation but prior to setting up any alternative livelihood schemes. The feasibility studies will lead to the formulation of positive and negative lists, indicating which sub-projects can be funded and which cannot. One criteria for categorization will be their environmental soundness (less or no adverse impact) and to be able to do this the Project will fund the development of a manual for screening sub-projects against their potential environmental impacts during the design stages. This should guide approving authorities to evaluate proposals and to advise on prevention and mitigation measures to address possible adverse social and environmental impacts of sub-projects on the people and the local environment. The GEF contribution to the CIF has been reduced to 0.8 million.

Investments in small-scale infrastructure (on demand-driven basis) will be financed from sources provided by IDA supported investment projects and other donors.

4. Sustainability

Comment: Financial sustainability of the PA system is very weak and unclear. Please provide further detail regarding the assessment and approach to ensure financial sustainability (please also refer to above project design section).

Response: This issue has been elaborated in Section 3 of the Review Sheet above. Further elaboration has been made in section B5 and Annex 4 pages 56-62 of the draft GEF Project Brief. Short-term financing for PA management and biodiversity conservation may likely come from various sources including allocations from the state budget, HIPC and debt-relief funds, donor funds, user fees, license fees, entrance fees, royalties and taxes, etc. However, this may be unpredictable and inadequate to cover recurrent, operational and development activities within the network of protected areas in the country. Protected area management effectiveness however, can only be guaranteed if long-term predictable financing arrangements are secured. In this regard, GEF PDFB Grant funds will be used prior to Appraisal to explore possibilities for future creation of sustainable long-term financing schemes such as conservation trust fund, which could be set up with funds coming from donors, state treasury, retentions, user fees, taxes and charges, debt relief mechanisms, HIPC, private initiatives, etc, to finance ecologically benign natural resource and park management activities and compensate community efforts for sound environmental stewardship and protection of valuable ecological systems that provide global and local environmental benefits. Once results from the feasibility studies indicate possibilities and a financing mechanism is set up, post-project financial sustainability can be guaranteed and improvements in PA system management and biodiversity conservation are likely to be sustained.

In terms of securing financial sustainability for improvement of community livelihoods, particularly under the proposed Community Investment Fund (CIF), the project will build linkages to other initiatives particularly to rural credits and finance programs and thereby connect rural people to rural credit and finance institutions, thus enabling them to borrow money and finance assets and activities aimed at adding value to their products and raising their competitiveness in domestic and global markets. It is expected that once rural people become gainfully employed their dependence on PAs may reduce.

Institutionally, long-term sustainability of PAs depends heavily on the participation and effective involvement of local communities and civil society because of their unique and mutual relationships with protected areas. The Project will support community participation for the establishment and consolidation of PAs and activities to be financed will include the establishment and/or operation of PAs management associations/committees, partnerships with CBOs/NGOs for PAs management, and community sub-projects see Sub-component 2.3), among others. PAs management associations/committees' composition will include representatives from local community organizations, local governments, chiefdoms and civil society. Under this Sub-component management committees will be strengthened by training and by the provision of improved meeting facilities and resources to support regular activities. Committees will provide advice to management authority of the PAs, and develop PA level work plans and programs. Specific activities that will ensure enhanced local participation will include: (a) planning and programming control and protection with participation of stakeholders and local population; (b) enhancing research activities and developing linkages between research and small economic activities at the community level; (c) conducting workshops, seminars and study tours to increase information dissemination and exchange; and (d) sponsoring environmental education and public relations campaigns that target the PAs and their buffer zones.

5. Replicability

Comment: It is unclear how the replication plan that is annexed would form part of the project design (project outcome and activities). Please clarify and ensure its integration.

Response: The project will develop a Replication Plan 30 months into project implementation and have it reviewed by all key stakeholders during the Project's mid-Term Review, 36 months after Board Approval Date (see Annex 18, page 97-100). The Plan will provide detailed guidance on scale up and replication, eligibility for financing, management regimes, etc (reflected in Annex 4 at page 64). As indicated in the GEF Project Brief, the cost of implementing the Plan will be covered as activities under Components 2 and 3.

6. Stakeholder Involvement

Comment: It is unclear how local stakeholders, particularly local communities, CSOs, and governments were involved in the design of this project, including project activities in each selected project site. Please provide details.

Response: Full consultations with stakeholders, particularly local communities for project development and design began in 2004 after the first interaction between Conservation Society of Sierra Leone (CSSL) and a World Bank team working on the Bumbuna Hydro Power Project. CSSL followed up this with a 4-5-page zero draft concept paper that was circulated widely within and outside Sierra Leone.

In preparation for the proposed project (before submission of the PDFB and Pipeline Entry Proposal), CSSL initiated series of focused group consultations that was broad-based. Sensitization workshops and meetings were held with a large spectrum of stakeholders (including civil society groups, chiefdoms, community-based organizations, local and foreign NGOs, private sector, public sector, political leadership, multilateral and bilateral donors, and World Bank). Validation workshops were carried out in targeted districts after incorporation of comments and inputs from a large spectrum of stakeholders (including civil society groups, chiefdoms, community-based organizations, local and foreign NGOs, private sector, public sector, donors and World Bank) were received. The Project Team from GoSL used the print and electronic media to inform the public about the proposed project.

Once the public sector (Divisions of Environment and Forestry of the Ministries of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security and the Ministry for Lands, Country Planning and Environment) became involved in the project it took over the role as the lead implementing and coordinating agency, with strong support from CSSL (providing financial, logistics, administrative and technical assistance) and other Freetown-based NGOs. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) has been supporting since its inception with funds and technical assistance. It pre-financed the establishment of the project secretariat and other expenses incurred in running the office. The Universities and academic centers in SL have provided technical inputs since inception of the project. Many of the project associated studies were outsourced to members of the academia. To date, participating district councils and heads of chiefdoms have acted as rallying points for mobilizing community participation, interest, buy-in and enthusiasm. A lot more consultations with donors/co-financiers have taken place during project formulation.

While the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the World Bank and GEF have contributed financially and technically to developing the drafts and improving the quality of the various documents to date, most donors have only given useful comments and have committed no financial resources.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

Comment (a): Please provide further details on how the monitoring and evaluation activities are to be conducted at all levels, i.e. national, sub-regional, and community levels.

Response: The text in Section C3 of the GEF Project Brief has been expanded to include text on details on how M&E activities will be implemented at all levels.

Comment (b): Please revise the key indicators noted as contribution to the GEF biodiversity business plan as some of them have no linkages/relevance to the identified targets.

Response: Revisions have been completed on the key indicators in section B2 page 11 and Annex 3 pages 39-46 of the GEF Project Brief. This has allowed the indicators to be better linked to the identified targets in the Executive Summary.

Comment (c): Please provide copies of the completed tracking tools (it is not attached).

Response: Given the recent policy, Tracking Tools are expected at CEO endorsement and they will be provided. They have been completed.

8. Financing Plan

Comment (a): GEF financing for the potential sustainable PA financial mechanism is unclear. Please clarify.

Response: There is no anticipated use of GEF Grant Funds under the Project to support the actual setting up of a predictable and long-term financing mechanism for protected area network. PDFB Grant Funds will be used to finance studies that would look into existing menu of options for establishing sustainable long-term financing instruments to support management effectiveness. The reasons not to use GEF Grant Funds now to install an endowment fund have been articulated in Annex 4, page 49.

Comment (b): GEF financing can not be used for alternative livelihood in a form of Community Investment Fund. According to the incremental cost analysis, all baseline costs are considered as cofinance. Please clarify and provide further information.

Response: As alluded to in Comment 3 (Project Design), GEF funds will be used to finance sub-projects that align with environmental imperatives and do not harm the environment. Such sub-projects may include apiculture, promotion of ecotourism and local handicrafts, captive breeding, environmentally-sound agri-business and product processing (e.g. palm oil, soap making, etc), development of natural resources including non-timber forest products for alternative products in

response to emerging eco-markets, investing in restoration and maintenance of environmental assets (e.g. reforestation, agroforestry, soil conservation). As elaborated in the section 3 (Project Design) above, detailed feasibility and market accessibility analyses were not possible. However, the expectation is that detailed studies related to feasibility and accessibility to services and markets will be carried out during project implementation but prior to setting up any alternative livelihood schemes. It is also expected that sub-projects would be screened against their potential environmental impacts during the design stages. A sub-project screening manual will be developed to guide approving authorities to evaluate, prevent and mitigate possible adverse social and environmental impacts of sub-projects on the people and local environment. Investments in small-scale infrastructure (on demand-driven basis) will be financed from sources provided by IDA and other donors. The GEF contribution to the CIF has been reduced to 0.8 million.

9. Core commitment and Linkages

Comment: The section only describes government's commitment to the project initiatives. Please provide description on the commitment and linkages to the World Bank operation in SL.

Response: The Government of Sierra Leone's commitment and linkages to World Bank operations may be reflected by the fact that it has a good CPIA rating and all Bank operations have satisfactory ratings as well. There are currently about 10 investment projects and a couple of ESWs/AAAs which are active in SL. They include the \$20m Rehabilitation of Basic Education Project, \$20m Health sector Reconstruction and Development Project, \$15m HIV/AIDS Response Pproject, \$35m National Social Action Plan, \$35m Institutional Reform Capacity Building Project. The proposed \$28m Rural and Private Sector Development Project will support agricultural production, storage, packaging and marketing. Reference to these can be found in Section A2 and Annex 2 of the GEF Project Brief.

10. Collaboration and Coordination

Comment: Please confirm whether NaCEF, as suggested as executing agency, is now fully functional and has a capacity to execute the project.

Response: NaCEF was created by a Presidential announcement in July 2005, with no enabling legislation to legalize its existence. We are informed that a legal team is being assembled to draft the appropriate policy and enabling legislation and submit for approval to the country's legislature. The drafting will be financed from DFID and UNDP funds. The creation of NaCEF affects the institutional set up of the Ministries of Lands, Country Planning and Environment and Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security because the Divisions of Environment and Forestry (with their human and financial resources) have been moved out of their parent Ministries to constitute the new environment and forestry agency. Capacity level to execute the project will need to be bolstered and NaCEF is currently in negotiations with UNDP, DFID, FAO for support to strengthen its capacity at the national and sub-national levels. SL-WPBCP will provide capacity building support through training and/or provision of technical assistance to NaCEF and its collaborators.

11. General

Comment: Responses to the STAP comments are only partially provided. Some of the comments that are not responded are very important. A complete response is expected.

Response: It may be noted that all major concerns of the STAP Reviewer were addressed. However, smaller points have now been also included in Annex 16 of the GEF Project Brief and Annex C of the Executive Summary.

X----X----X

ANNEX C (B.3) : FINAL RESPONSES TO GEFSEC COMMENTS (REVIEW SHEET OF MAY 08, 2006)

Comment 1: "...These feasibility activities are now suggested to be conducted at pre-implementation phase or during the actual project which to be financed under the PDFB.Moreover, without these assessments, the project is going to miss the opportunity to implement the initially planned activities to actually set up a sustainable financial mechanism during project implementation.

Response: The various assessment studies proposed at PDF-B stage will be completed within the PDF_B framework in order to ensure that all baseline information and data is available prior to the implementation phase. These assessments will be revisited at appraisal to feed into finalizing the project document.

Comment 2. Strengthen financial sustainability of the PA system remains weak without the assessment done during the PDFB.

Response: Financing PA management and biodiversity conservation in SL has been ad hoc, unpredictable and inadequate to cover recurrent, operational and development activities. International best practices and experiences show that protected area management effectiveness can be guaranteed if long-term predictable financing arrangements are secured. In order to consider establishing long-term and predictable financing instrument(s) for PA management in SL, GEF PDFB Grant funds will be used prior to Appraisal to carry out detailed feasibility studies to include possible models such as payment for environmental services, forestry-based carbon off-set projects, environmental/conservation trust funds, debt relief mechanisms, debt-for-nature swaps, user fees, charges and taxes, private sector initiatives, donor funds, state treasury, retentions from internally generated revenues, etc. Apart from analyzing the potential sources for long-term capitalization and developing a financial capitalization strategy, the feasibility study will also analyze legal, institutional, policy and administrative challenges at national and local levels for securing predictable long-term financing mechanisms for sustainable PA management and biodiversity conservation. Specific areas to be studied will include analysis of existing legal definitions and frameworks; governance issues; organizational structures, legal authority and capabilities/capacities, consensus building, coordination and participation mechanisms,

monitoring and evaluation, etc) and tools needed to be in place as well as priority actions and the number of PAs to be supported under the proposed instrument(s).

Thus the setting up of a long-term financing instrument under this project will be informed by the findings of the proposed feasibility review, which is expected to be completed under the PDFB Grant by the time of Appraisal of the actual project, and a clear action plan will be prepared based on further consultations with stakeholders. It is only when this is done that the project will earmark and ringfence a portion of the Project Grant Fund to be used as seed money to capitalize a sustainable financing mechanism, which will guarantee post-project financial sustainability through promotion of funding, implementation and planning of PA management and environmental conservation activities, supporting resource coordination and strengthening institutional mechanisms.

It is also expected that the increased profile that the selected PA sites will receive through the project will increase inward investment (in additions to revenues captured by the PA authorities through license fees, charges and taxes, etc) into the communities from, e.g., tourism, research, etc and this will also deliver livelihood enhancements thereby reducing pressures on natural resources. Evidence under the ongoing Ghana High Forest Biodiversity Project shows that where community members have been provided access to an alternative livelihood fund (individual accessibility depending on the type of businesses averages US\$300-800) there has been improved community perception and engagement in of PA management and biodiversity conservation, improved status of PAs through reduction in illegal harvesting of timber and other non-timber forest products, reduced deforestation and land degradation, minimization of farm encroachment and wildfire occurrence, curtailment of hunting, improved buffer zone management as well as enhancements in livelihoods of project beneficiaries. (see Section C4 of the GEF Project Brief and Section 3 of the Executive Summary).

Comment 3: It is also doubtful that the project could achieve some of the set targets, i.e. increase in level of resources committed for PA and biodiversity management; increase in household income, adopt agroforestry practices, etc.

Response: As mentioned in point 1 above outstanding studies in the GEF Concept Note (such as the detailed feasibility study into models and instruments for sustainable and long-term financing for PA management; market and service feasibility and accessibility analyses of alternative livelihood schemes at community level) will be carried out under the PDFB phase and completed before Appraisal. The outcome of these studies are critical for considering the ensemble of instruments that can be deployed in SL to guarantee long-term financing of PAs and the positive livelihood improvement ventures that are likely to secure biodiversity benefits whilst improving income levels of beneficiary communities. It is expected that providing alternative livelihood support to communities in the project areas will wean them off the protected areas and reduce their dependencies on the PA for their livelihoods, resulting in reductions in illegal timber operations (by 40%), reductions in illegal hunting of elephants, hippos and monkeys in Outamba-Kilimi National Park (by 60%), monkeys and duikers at the Loma Mountains-Tingi Hills complex (by 60%). At Mamunta-Mayoso Wildlife Sanctuary where cattle grazing has been identified as a major threat, weaning

communities from grazing in the PA by providing alternatives outside will lead to about 50% reduction in cattle grazing in the PA as measured by the size of herd entering the reserve and the incidence of entry. The projects intervention strategy reflecting the linkages between the threats and the activities has been better defined in the Brief. Specifically, to better highlight the context, specific indicators to measure biodiversity benefits have been included in the Brief.