



GEF-6 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)

PROJECT TYPE: Full-sized Project

TYPE OF TRUST FUND: GEF Trust Fund

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PART I: PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title:	Promoting Community-Based Forestry ¹ for Climate Change Mitigation and Sustainable Livelihoods in Equatorial Guinea.		
Country(ies):	Equatorial Guinea	GEF Project ID: ²	
GEF Agency(ies):	FAO	GEF Agency Project ID:	649480
Other Executing Partner(s):	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forests and Environment	Submission Date:	9 March 2018
		Resubmission Date:	9 April 2018
GEF Focal Area(s):	Climate change	Project Duration (Months)	60
Integrated Approach Pilot	IAP-Cities <input type="checkbox"/> IAP-Commodities <input type="checkbox"/> IAP-Food Security <input type="checkbox"/>	Corporate Program: SGP <input type="checkbox"/>	
Name of parent program:	[if applicable]	Agency Fee (\$)	506,295

A. INDICATIVE FOCAL AREA STRATEGY FRAMEWORK AND OTHER PROGRAM STRATEGIES³

Objectives/Programs (Focal Areas, Integrated Approach Pilot, Corporate Programs)	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
		GEF Project Financing	Co-financing
CCM-2 Program 4: Promote conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks in forest, and other land-use, and support climate smart agriculture	GEFTF	5,329,455	18,186,100
Total Project Cost		5,329,455	18,186,100

¹ Community-based forestry (CBF) encompasses the management of forest lands and forest resources by or with local people, individually or in groups. The concept covers a range of activities including indigenous management of sacred sites of cultural importance, smallholder forestry schemes, small-scale forest-based enterprises, company-community partnerships, as well as decentralised and devolved forest management.

² Project ID number will be assigned by GEFSEC and to be entered by Agency in subsequent document submissions.

³ When completing Table A, refer to the excerpts on [GEF 6 Results Frameworks for GETF, LDCF and SCCF and CBIT guidelines](#).

B. INDICATIVE PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Project Objective: To conserve and enhance forest carbon stocks and promote sustainable livelihoods through community-based sustainable forest and land management.						
Project Components	Financing Type ⁴	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
					GEF Project Financing	Co-financing
1. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK: Strengthening the legal and policy framework for community-based sustainable forest (SFM) and land management	TA	<p><u>Outcome 1.1</u> Strengthened legal and policy framework to enable the conservation, sustainable management and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in communal forests and lands.</p> <p><i>Indicator(s):</i> - legal texts/policy documents/proposals addressing gaps in the national legal and policy framework for community-based forest and land management undergoing approval.</p>	<p>1.1 Legal framework and policy instruments (Forest Law, Land Ownership Law, National Development Plan) associated with land planning and forest tenure reviewed and proposals for their amendment submitted to the Government for approval.</p> <p>1.2 National Forest Action Programme (PNAF) updated with clear articulation of community-based forest management through a multistakeholder participatory process and aligned with relevant instruments and processes (including REDD+ Strategy⁵, Non-forest timber products strategy, FLEGT⁶).</p>	GEFTF	300,000	1,000,000
2. INSTITUTIONS AND KNOWLEDGE: Strengthening institutional capacity and knowledge for community-based SFM and land management and climate change.	TA	<p><u>Outcome 2.1</u> Improved institutional capacity and knowledge to support community-based SFM and land management within the REDD+ framework.</p> <p><i>Indicator(s):</i> Indicators (to include gender sensitive indicators) will be refined and targets</p>	<p>2.1 Information and knowledge products generated and disseminated on key topics related to community-based SFM and land management.</p> <p>2.2 South-South exchanges geared towards key stakeholders (government, communities, NGOs, and producer associations) to increase</p>	GEFTF	1,575,670	4,186,100

⁴ Financing type can be either investment or technical assistance.

⁵ Strategy for the Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries.

⁶ Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade

		<p><i>determined during project preparation.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - # of information and knowledge products developed and disseminated. - # of South-south exchanges. - # of institutions and individuals (women and men) trained and improvement in capacity indicators (tbd). - # training centers established and # of farmers (women and men) receiving support through the centres. 	<p>their knowledge and share experiences on community-based SFM, and community forest enterprises and businesses.</p> <p>2.3 A rural technical extension service with a specific focus on community-based SFM and land management, and small forest and agroforestry enterprises established and operational.</p> <p>2.4 A comprehensive capacity development programme for the extension service, and other support institutions (e.g. forest administration staff, decentralized government units) developed and implemented.</p> <p>2.5 Training centres for farmers established and training modules developed, using the approach and experience of farmer field schools (ECA: <i>escuelas de campo para agricultores</i>).</p>			
<p>3.MITIGATION ACTIONS AT COMMUNITY LEVEL: Supporting mitigation actions through inclusive governance, forests and land planning and management.</p>	TA/INV	<p><u>Outcome 3.1</u> Communal forests and lands under sustainable, gender responsive, management generating mitigation as well as socio-economic benefits.</p> <p><u>Indicator(s):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - approximately 15,000 ha with secure tenure rights and under sustainable management - reduced emissions by 247,000 tCO₂e/year over the project's proposed 	<p>3.1 At least 8 communal forests sustainably managed with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) participatory forests and land management plans. b) local governance, organizational skills and operating mechanisms. c) appropriate tenure and use rights. d) business plans, equipment and an appropriate funding structure. 	GEFTF	3,000,000	12,000,000

		<i>implementation period (5 years). reductions over 20 years approximately 5,000,000 tCO2e. - # of supported enterprises.</i>	3.2 Climate-friendly forest and agroforestry enterprises are created/strengthened and supported with robust business models (eg: community enterprises or small entrepreneurs) and training. 3.3 Forest and agroforestry enterprises supported on production and value-chain development (technical assistance and facilitation of access to finance). 3.4 Forest monitoring systems in collaboration with communities to support management, monitor safeguards and assess mitigation results established.			
4. Monitoring and Evaluation, and dissemination of best practices.	TA	<u>Outcome 4.1</u> System developed and implemented for monitoring, systematization and dissemination of results and lessons learned.	4.1. Results-based M&E system designed and implemented. 4.2. Midterm and final evaluation conducted. 4.3. Best practices and lessons learned collected and disseminated.	GEFTF	200,000	500,000
Subtotal					5,075,670	17,686,100
Project Management Cost (PMC) ⁷					253,785	500,000
Total Project Cost					5,329,455	18,186,100

For multi-trust fund projects, provide the total amount of PMC in Table B, and indicate the split of PMC among the different trust funds here: (N/A)

C. INDICATIVE SOURCES OF CO-FINANCING FOR THE PROJECT BY NAME AND BY TYPE, IF AVAILABLE

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Amount (\$)
Recipient government	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forests and Environment	Grants (National public funds for community-level investments)	8,000,000
Recipient government	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forests and Environment	In-kind	3,000,000
Donor Agency	Green Climate Fund (GCF)	Grants	900,000
Donor Agency	Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI)	Grants	1,000,000

⁷ For GEF Project Financing up to \$2 million, PMC could be up to 10% of the subtotal; above \$2 million, PMC could be up to 5% of the subtotal. PMC should be charged proportionately to focal areas based on focal area project financing amount in Table D below.

GEF Agency	FAO Technical Cooperation Programme	Grants	286,100
Beneficiaries	Communities in pilot areas	In-kind	5,000,000
Total Co-financing			18,186,100

D. INDICATIVE TRUST FUND RESOURCES REQUESTED BY AGENCY(IES), COUNTRY(IES), FOCAL AREA AND THE PROGRAMMING OF FUNDS ⁹⁾

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/Regional/Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)		
					GEF Project Financing (a)	Agency Fee (b) ^{b)}	Total (c)=a+b
FAO	GEFTF	Equatorial Guinea	Climate Change		5,329,455	506,295	5,835,750
Total GEF Resources					5,329,455	506,295	5,835,750

a) Refer to the Fee Policy for GEF Partner Agencies.

E. PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)⁸

Is Project Preparation Grant requested? Yes No If no, skip item E.

PPG AMOUNT REQUESTED BY AGENCY(IES), TRUST FUND, COUNTRY(IES) AND THE PROGRAMMING OF FUNDS

Project Preparation Grant amount requested: \$ 150,000					PPG Agency Fee: \$14,250		
GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/Regional/Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)		
					PPG (a)	Agency Fee ⁹ (b)	Total c = a + b
FAO	GEFTF	Equatorial Guinea	Climate Change		150,000	14,250	164,250
Total PPG Amount					150,000	14,250	164,250

F. PROJECT'S TARGET CONTRIBUTIONS TO GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS¹⁰

Provide the expected project targets as appropriate.

Corporate Results	Replenishment Targets	Project Targets
1. Maintain globally significant biodiversity and the ecosystem goods and services that it provides to society	Improved management of landscapes and seascapes covering 300 million hectares	<i>Hectares</i>
2. Sustainable land management in production systems (agriculture, rangelands, and forest landscapes)	120 million hectares under sustainable land management	<i>15,000 Hectares</i>
3. Promotion of collective management of transboundary water systems and implementation of the full range of policy, legal, and institutional reforms and investments contributing to sustainable use and maintenance of ecosystem services	Water-food-ecosystems security and conjunctive management of surface and groundwater in at least 10 freshwater basins;	<i>Number of freshwater basins</i>
	20% of globally over-exploited fisheries (by volume) moved to more sustainable levels	<i>Percent of fisheries, by volume</i>

⁸ PPG requested amount is determined by the size of the GEF Project Financing (PF) as follows: Up to \$50k for PF up to \$2m (for MSP); up to \$100k for PF up to \$3m; \$150k for PF up to \$6m; \$200k for PF up to \$10m; and \$300k for PF above \$10m. On an exceptional basis, PPG amount may differ upon detailed discussion and justification with the GEFSEC.

⁹ PPG fee percentage follows the percentage of the Agency fee over the GEF Project Financing amount requested.

¹⁰ Provide those indicator values in this table to the extent applicable to your proposed project. Progress in programming against these targets for the projects per the *Corporate Results Framework* in the *GEF-6 Programming Directions*, will be aggregated and reported during mid-term and at the conclusion of the replenishment period. There is no need to complete this table for climate adaptation projects financed solely through LDCF, SCCF or CBIT.

4. Support to transformational shifts towards a low-emission and resilient development path	750 million tons of CO _{2e} mitigated (include both direct and indirect)	5,000,000 metric tons ¹¹
5. Increase in phase-out, disposal and reduction of releases of POPs, ODS, mercury and other chemicals of global concern	Disposal of 80,000 tons of POPs (PCB, obsolete pesticides)	metric tons
	Reduction of 1000 tons of Mercury	metric tons
	Phase-out of 303.44 tons of ODP (HCFC)	ODP tons
6. Enhance capacity of countries to implement MEAs (multilateral environmental agreements) and mainstream into national and sub-national policy, planning financial and legal frameworks	Development and sectoral planning frameworks integrate measurable targets drawn from the MEAs in at least 10 countries	Number of Countries:
	Functional environmental information systems are established to support decision-making in at least 10 countries	Number of Countries:

PART II: PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

1. *Project Description.* Briefly describe: 1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed; 2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects, 3) the proposed alternative scenario, GEF focal area strategies, with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project, 4) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF, CBIT and co-financing; 5) global environmental benefits (GEFTF) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF); and 6) innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up.

1.1. The global environmental problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed

1. **Equatorial Guinea** is located in Central Africa, and its forests are part of the second largest tropical forest mass in the world: the forests of the Congo Basin. The country has a continental and an insular region (islands of Bioko, Annobón, Corisco, Elobey Grande, Elobey Chico and adjacent islets). The territory is administratively divided into eight provinces, subdivided into 18 districts, 36 municipalities, 716 village councils (Consejos de Poblado) and 344 neighborhood communities.

2. **Diverse country, with rapid population growth and unequal distribution of wealth.** Equatorial Guinea has a population of 1,2 million inhabitants which is growing rapidly at a rate of estimated 3.6% between 2000-2015. There are several ethnic groups in Equatorial Guinea, *Fangs* are the more numerous (80% of the population), followed by *bubis* that represent some 15% of the population. Other ethnic groups include the *Ndowés*, *Fernandinos*, *Bisios* and *Annonobonenses*. A small population of Pygmys (*Beyeles*) is also present. Although the country recently graduated from the Least Developed Country (LDC) category to middle income, a significant percentage of the population lives below the poverty line (stated as about 77% in the 2007 Horizon 2020 Plan).

3. **Recent economic development linked to the oil boom reduced the relative economic importance of agriculture and forestry.** However, this may change as oil revenue decreases and national development plans focus on the diversification of the economy. Until the end of the 1990s, the country's economy was based almost entirely on its agricultural and forestry sector. The production of cacao, coffee and timber represented the main source of income. Since the discovery of oil and gas in the 90s, the oil and gas sectors have represented most of the countries gross

¹¹ The 8 pilot project sites stretch over an area covering approximately 15,000ha, where 13,000 ha of natural tropical moist forests will be put under sustainable communal management and where 750 ha of slash and burn annual cropping systems will be converted into diverse agro-forestry systems. Preliminary emission reduction estimates indicate that the project could reduce emissions by 249,000 tCO_{2e}/year, or 1,000,000 tCO_{2e}/year over the project's propose implementation period (4 years). Assuming a capitalization period of 16 years, emission reductions over 20 years would amount to approximately 5,000,000 tCO_{2e}. These calculations were derived using the Ex-Ante Carbon-balance-Tool (EX-ACT), which is an appraisal system developed by FAO providing estimates of the impact of agriculture and forestry development projects, programmes and policies on the carbon-balance.

domestic product (GDP), boosting government revenues and prompting important state-driven investments. The Government ramped up investments to develop an extensive road network, housing project and public utilities which have also transformed the landscape (National Social and Economic Development Plan - PNDES - report, 2016). The oil boom also resulted in a reduction of the economic importance of agriculture and forestry. The economic composition of the country may change again into the future, as the country is aiming at diversifying the economy to face the decrease of oil reserves and prices through its national development plan Horizonte 2020, which supports four economic diversification axes: (i) energy and mining, (ii) fishery and aquaculture, (iii) agriculture, and (iv) financing and tourist sectors. The country is still highly dependent on food imports, creating a problem of food insecurity and lack of resilience.

Equatorial Guinea's Forests

4. As part of the second largest tropical forest mass in the world, **the forests of Equatorial Guinea are of huge global significance**. According to a forthcoming study on drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, forest cover is estimated at ~2.5 million hectares ($\pm 100\ 000$ ha), representing approximately 93% of the country's surface – and consisting of mainly humid tropical forests and swampy and flooded forests, including mangroves. The forests are considered to be the richest in the Congo Basin in terms of globally important biodiversity (flora and fauna), a result of a relatively stable climatic history and the variety of physical habitats. They are home to at least 23 species of primates, a remarkably high number given the size of the country (National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan - NBSAP-, 2005).

5. **Forest have high economic and cultural significance for communities**. Forest are perceived as an integral part of the lives of the people of Equatorial Guinea, and according to the upcoming 1st National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), they have been the fundamental pillar of subsistence of Equatorial Guinea's population. Between 80 and 90% of Equatorial Guineans rely on forest ecosystem services such as wildlife hunting, forest products and natural fibers to meet their needs for food, timber, fuel, generation of income, medicines and even for spiritual purposes. A broad range of non-timber forest products is used for subsistence and trade. It is estimated that non timber forest products could represent up to 42% of income for the rural populations (Obama, 2000). Yet, forest management and timber extraction by communities and smallholders have remained largely underdeveloped and informal. Logging is mostly carried out by transnational logging companies operating in forest concessions with little involvement of local communities.

Land and Forest Tenure

6. **The legal framework associated with land and forest tenure is complex and there are contradictions between the formal and customary tenure regimes**. The management of forest resources is governed by Law No. 1/1997 on the Use and Management of Forests (Forest Law). Forests are recognized as part of the Reserva Forestal Nacional (National Forest Reserve – NFR), which is legally considered permanent, non-transferrable and part of the public domain and is divided into **production and conservation domains (protected areas)**. In 2013, the National Forest Reserve represented 50% of the national territory (1.3 million hectares), with 61% assigned to the production domain and 39% to the conservation domain (Forest Atlas of Equatorial Guinea, 2013).

7. **The Production Domain** is composed of three categories: **Forest Plots** (parcelas forestales) which are small areas of forest located in agricultural real states; **National Forests** (Bosques nacionales), which the State can manage directly or through forest concessions; and, **Communal forests** (bosques comunales) which are forests associated to rural communities (Consejos de Poblado) and over which the State recognizes and assigns permanent use right. However, the Land Ownership Law 4/2009 also recognizes the ownership by farmers of land over which they traditionally produced. This implies that individuals or families can claim ownership rights over forest lands if they traditionally farmed them. Additionally, most local families and communities do not have formally registered land/forest titles, and they follow customary laws. These are some of the contradictions that have contributed to overlaps between different land types.

8. **Communal forests.** Formally recognized communal forests represent 7% of the total production forests (production domain). According to the Forest Atlas of Equatorial Guinea¹², about 57,000ha of forests are considered communal forests. Updated statistics produced by the World Resources Institute (WRI) in a 2016 map (see Figure 1) show that this area has been increasing in recent years. There are now 74 communal forests in the country, representing approximately 100,000ha. Most communal forests are not formally registered, so the extension is perhaps higher, and a more accurate registry would need to be generated during the full project preparation phase.

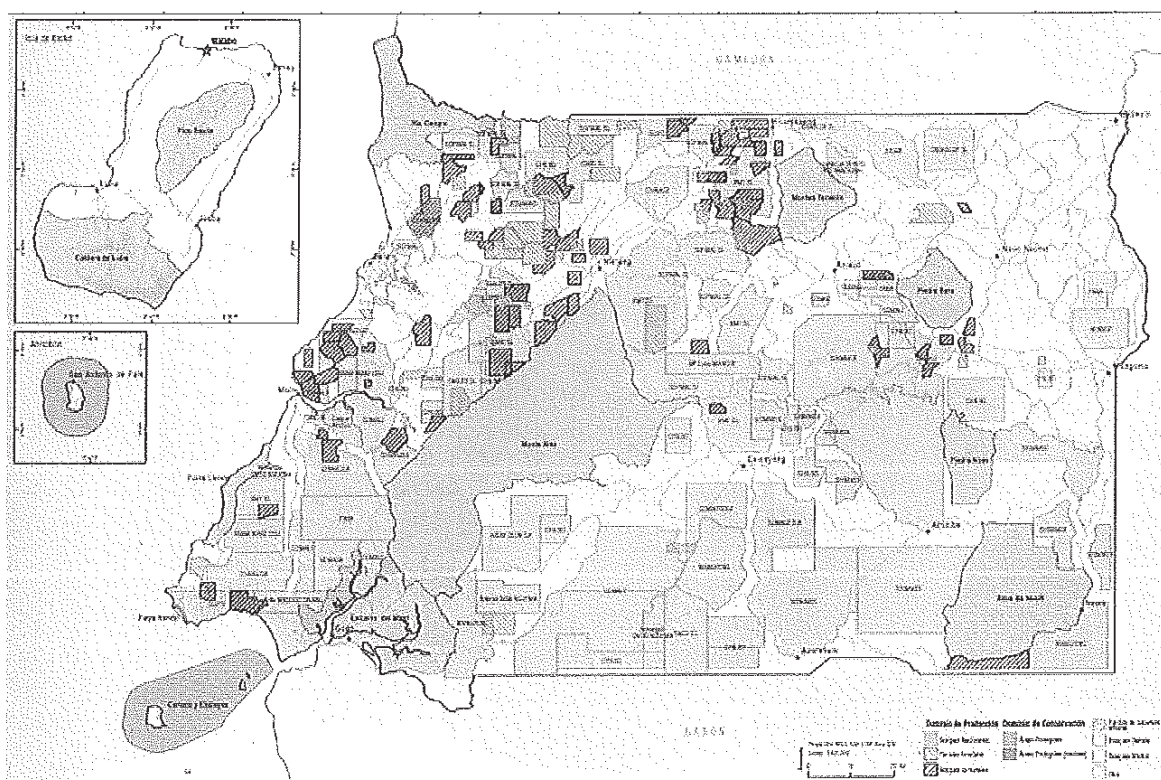


Figure 1. Land use map of Equatorial Guinea. Communal forests are shown in blue (Forest Atlas of Equatorial Guinea, WRI, 2016)

Deforestation and degradation: root causes/drivers

9. Despite maintaining a relatively high forest cover, the country is losing forest area every year. The country's forests are progressively being degraded, losing their biological wealth and their capacity to provide environmental and socio-economic services and benefits. Preliminary results from a recent study "Study of direct and underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation in Equatorial Guinea" carried out within the framework of the National REDD+ Strategy and Investment Plan process indicate that during the 10 year period from 2004 to 2014, deforestation is estimated at 86,755 ha, representing an annual rate of 0.3% or 8,676 ha per year. Degradation is significantly higher and is estimated at 0.9% or 23,010 ha per year¹³. Figure 2 illustrate the main areas of forest cover loss in the country.

The main direct cause of deforestation in Equatorial Guinea has been the expansion of infrastructure (96%), followed by agriculture (4%), which includes intensive and subsistence agriculture, the latter being more important both in the

¹² https://www.wri.org/sites/default/files/interactive_forest_atlas_of_equatorial_guinea.pdf

¹³ Forthcoming FAO study on drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in Equatorial Guinea.

continental region and in the insular region. In the case of forest degradation, agriculture is the main direct cause (responsible for 41% of the change between 2004 and 2014), followed by infrastructure including the expansion of forest roads (36%) and timber harvesting (23%). It is estimated that infrastructure development has grown less since 2014 (and into the future) due to economic recession and the end of most planned investments. However, there is still a significant risk of deforestation and degradation around the infrastructure already built because it facilitates access to the forests.

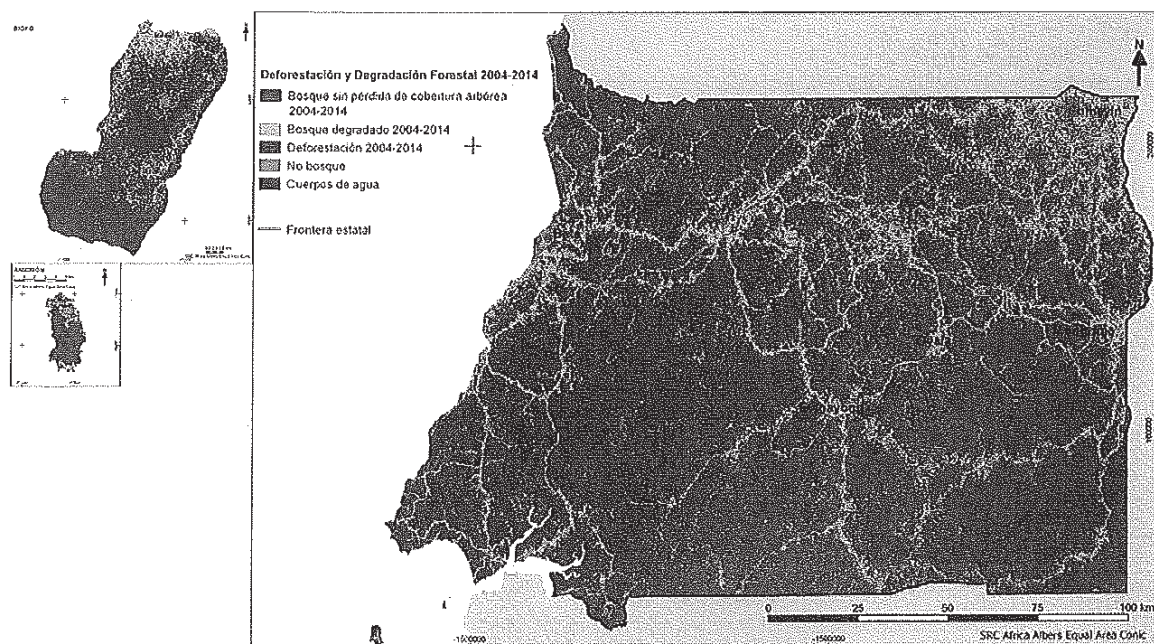


Figure 2. Deforestation and Forests Degradation in Equatorial Guinea between 2004-2014. Study on Drivers of Deforestation in Equatorial Guinea (FAO, 2018, forthcoming)

10. Forests around communities are particularly vulnerable to change through a number of the mentioned drivers. Communal forests are progressively degraded due to both itinerant subsistence agriculture and forest harvesting practices where economic criteria prevail, and which is often carried out informally and/or by external actors. In fact, most of the forests degraded in 2004-2014 were out of the limits of the formal forest concessions, so a high percentage of forest related emissions are coming from communal forests. The local population, which has access to limited economic opportunities, does not feel involved in, benefit from logging, nor feel that authority over their lands is respected. There is limited land-use planning in community lands, and a limited number of community-based forestry initiatives or forest products enterprises. In addition, the limited enforcement of the law also limits the capacity of communities to protect and manage their resources.

11. The table below presents a summary of economical, political and institutional, technological, and social factors (underlying drivers and barriers) influencing deforestation and degradation, particularly in communal forests:

Underlying drivers and barriers	
Economic factors	Uneven distribution of wealth, lack of alternatives, higher price of basic products → Food
	International and national timber demand
	Limited public investment in the forest sector, specifically in community-based forestry
Political and institutional factors	Complex tenure system, outdated regulatory framework and forest policies, and weak enforcement
	Weak governance, including transparency, participation and consultation with local population on land planning and decision making
	Lack of land-use planning

Technological Factors	Limited technical capacities in forestry and agricultural production (institutions and communities)
	Insufficient training, research and dissemination of knowledge on forestry, agriculture and climate change
Social Factors	Demographic growth
	Weak environmental awareness

12. **Strategic mitigation options to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in Equatorial Guinea.** Considering the importance and coverage of forests, the country has prioritised sustainable forest management to achieve its INDC mitigation commitments, with the intent to also enhance the resilience of local livelihoods and the role of communities in forest management. Indeed, previous efforts in the forestry sector have focused mostly on traditional logging through a forest concession system, which has not sufficiently benefited rural population. The Government recognizes that community-driven approaches are much required to not only drive economic diversification and a fairer distribution of wealth, but also to increase the chance of success and the sustainability of its climate mitigation efforts in the forestry sector. The support to community-based forestry is the approach that will address the roots causes of land emissions, while ensuring that climate change objectives are aligned with other national priorities such as poverty reduction and food security, and would trigger more socio-economic benefits. This has been highlighted as one of the main investment areas in the ongoing development of the REDD+ investment plan. **The proposed project is responding to this priority placed by the country on community-based sustainable forest management, and advancing implementation of REDD+ activities in Equatorial Guinea.**

Barriers to be addressed

13. Barrier 1: Political and institutional factors: Weaknesses (and complexities) in the current system of land and forest tenure as well as outdated regulatory framework, and lack of land-use planning at national, regional or local level.

As mentioned, the legal framework associated with land and forest tenure is complex and there are contradictions between the formal and customary tenure regimes. Some of the weaknesses of Equatorial Guinea's tenure system identified in previous studies are:

- The Land Ownership Law 4/2009 guarantee farmers the traditional ownership of their lands they own, without determining land use. However, Forestry Law 1/1997 establishes that there is no private property in the national forest reserve (Article 5), and that the formerly known Community Forest Reserves, over which communities had property rights, become Community Forests, in which the State recognizes, delimits and grants permanent use to rural communities.
- Law 1/1997 establishes that communal forests will be adjacent to the community, while in practice, community forests can be up to 15-20 km away.
- The majority of families and communities do not have legally registered title over their forests, which is why they conform to the traditional property system governed by the customary law.
- Insufficient disclosure of regulations on land tenure rights among rural communities.
- Important percentages of communal forests (33%), forest plots (13%) and natural reserves (9%) overlapped with other land management categories. Frequently, the allocation of lands is superimposed with already existing attributions; ex. forest concession or protected area that overlaps with forest plots (WRI, 2013).

The Forest Law dates back to 1997, and needs to be updated to incorporate latest developments (REDD+, FLEGT, Forest Governance) and country commitments on climate change. In the recent years, several decrees has been approved which adds complexity to the forestry regulatory framework, specifically regarding logging by smallholders and communities The National Forest Action Plan, which highlights the need to promote the involvement of the population in forest benefits, is out of date, dating back to 2000. In addition, community-based forestry is not properly reflected in the current plans and programmes that guide public investment i.e. National Development Plan.

14. Secure land and resource tenure is recognized as one of the key factors in the capacity of a country to reduce deforestation and degradation. Clear and secure land and resource rights (or usage right) contribute to the sustainable

management of the land and forests by creating long term incentives for long term investments to increase productivity of both forestry and agricultural activities (FAO, 2012). In addition to the complexities of the current tenure system noted above, only a reduced number of communities have actually secured their land rights under the current legal framework.

15. Despite Equatorial Guinea has reflected the importance of land-use planning both in the legislation (ex. Forestry Law, 1997) as well as in its international commitments (ex. INDC), the country has not put in practice a system of participatory land-use planning that allows to balance different land-uses and ensure sustainable land management, at national, sub-national and local level.

16. Barrier 2: Economic factors: lack of economic opportunities, timber demand, and limited public investment in community-based forestry.

During consultations with local communities, the lack of economic opportunities and the needs of rural families was highlighted as the main reason triggering illegal logging and unsustainable forest use. Despite timber trade has always been an important economic activity in the country, rural communities has not benefited significantly in terms of employment or revenues. A higher degree of local engagement in forest management, including more secure tenure rights and benefits, could significantly increase the interest of local population in preserving their forests in the long-term, ensuring a sustainable benefits over time.

The increasing national demand for timber relies currently on the informal sector and on imports, and national timber markets are not fully formalised or organised. The demand for timber and for non-wood forest products could be addressed through community-based forestry, including by communities and by smallholders, generating socio-economic and environmental benefits.

17. Barrier 3: Technological factors: Inadequate institutional and technical capacities (including the Institute for Forest Development and Protected Areas -INDEFOR-AP-, National Institute for Environmental Conservation -INCOMA¹⁴). To enhance the role of local communities in the governance and management of forest resources, the legislative framework needs to be accompanied by a process of gradual empowerment of communities to participate actively. This process requires institutional capacity to provide support in the short, medium to long term, and technical support for the development of organizational capacities, planning, sustainable management of natural resources and development of small businesses. Currently within support institutions there is very limited experience in community-based forestry.

Similarly, communities have neither experience nor technical knowledge about community-based forestry. As a result, communities do not actually exploit their forests for their own benefit and often cede their forest resources to companies, legal or illegal, without due environmental considerations, which generates short-term income but no sustained benefits over time, nor a greater control over their territories.

These barriers will be addressed directly through the project, creating an enabling environment to promote investment in community-based forestry and economic activities compatible with forest conservation.

The mentioned barriers are closely linked to the identified key conditions needed to enable community-based forestry to deliver fully on its objectives as per global research (FAO, 2016). The figure below represents those keys to community-based forestry.

¹⁴ As part of the project “Reinforcement of Institutional, Legal and Individual capacities for the sustainable management of soils and forests in Equatorial Guinea” an Strategy to Mainstream the sustainable management of forests and soils was developed in 2013, including more specific details of key stakeholders and capacity needs that will be taken into consideration in this project.

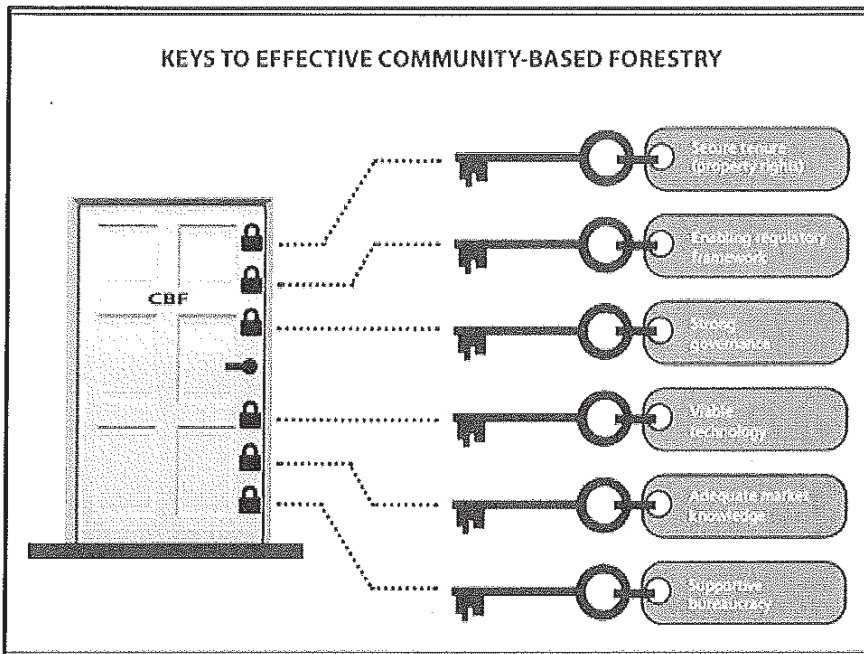


Figure 1. Keys to effective community-based forestry
 Source: "Forty years of community-based forestry" (FAO, 2016)

18. **Barrier 4: Social factors: Lack of environmental awareness**, including knowledge of climate change and its impacts, forests role related to climate change or agriculture productivity, multiple forest products and services, etc.

1.2. Baseline programme

19. This subsection focuses on what the Government of Equatorial Guinea and its partners have done to address the issues mentioned above, past and ongoing initiatives that serve as the main foundation for the proposed project – including initiatives/projects that will contribute towards co-financing.

20. **National Protected Area System (El Sistema Nacional de Áreas Protegidas - SNAP)**. The Government of Guinea responded to some of the threats by creating in 2001, a national system of protected areas in 2001. The system has a total area of 586,000 ha (18.5% of the country's land area) and consists of 13 protected areas classified into four categories: scientific reserves, national parks, monuments and 10 natural reserves. Protected areas are currently managed by the National Institute for Forest Development and Protected Areas (INDEFOR). An ongoing UNDP-GEF project "Strengthening the national system of protected areas in Equatorial Guinea for the effective conservation of representative ecosystems and globally significant biodiversity" is making important progress in institutional aspects with the creation of the "National Committee for Biosphere Reserves of Bioko and the Continental Region", capacity building, promotion of alternative livelihoods and in raising awareness on the value of biodiversity conservation. A commitment has been made to establish sustainable financing mechanisms for SNAP and forest conservation.

21. **Climate Change policy and action**. In line with its international commitments towards the UNFCCC the country wishes to advance with the implementation of its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC¹⁵), which was submitted before COP 21 in Paris, demonstrating a strong commitment towards enhancing its mitigation and adaptation efforts, with a strong focus on Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) as well as the energy sector. Also, the country has been preparing, with the support of the GEF and technical assistance from UN Environment, its first

¹⁵ See http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/INDC/Published%20Documents/Equatorial%20Guinea/1/Rep%20de%20Guinea%20Equatorial_INDC.doc

National Communication (forthcoming in 2018), highlighting the importance of forests to achieve its mitigation and adaptation priorities, notably through the sustainable management of forests by local communities.

22. In parallel, the country is preparing its **National REDD+ Strategy and Investment Plan with the technical support of FAO and financial support of the Central Africa Forest Initiative (CAFI)**. Sustainable forest management, including community-based forestry management, has been identified as a priority REDD+ investment. Together, these strategic policy efforts clearly highlight the importance of promoting community-based and community driven efforts to enhance sustainable forest management and forest benefits in the country.

23. Through funding from the FAO Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), technical assistance is currently being provided on forest governance and transparency. The project **“Awareness raising and support to forest governance and transparency for FLEGT and REDD+ in Equatorial Guinea”** is raising awareness and conducting a situation analysis and needs assessment (including identifying alternatives for a more sustainable commercial timber harvesting system). The ultimate product of this project will be an agreed roadmap for improving forest governance, which will also inform the development of the national REDD+ Strategy and Investment Plan.

24. The country has recently received from the Green Climate Fund readiness facility, funding towards strengthening the technical and institutional capacities of the Ministry of Forests and Environment on forest monitoring and MRV, as well as to design and pilot a multi-resources national land use and forest inventory. The Government of Equatorial Guinea has also submitted a GEF CBIT PIF, through FAO, focusing on strengthening the country's institutional and technical capacities in the AFOLU sector to meet enhanced transparency requirements as defined in Article 13 of the Paris Agreement.

25. With regard to community-based forestry, the country has very little experience even though legislation, national plans and various projects have recommended greater participation of communities in forest management, as a fundamental aspect in the development of the sector and in the conservation of the forests. There are a couple of relevant initiatives (described below) the proposed project will build on.

26. Equatorial Guinea is one of the participating countries in an **ongoing project “Enhancing the Contribution of Non-Wood Forest Products to Food Security in Central Africa”** led by the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC) and financed by the African Development Bank through the Congo Basin Forest Fund (CBFF). The project contributes to poverty alleviation and sustainable forest management in Central Africa in general and specifically in Burundi, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe through the valorization of non-wood forest products (NWFP) by communities, including support to developing small scale forest enterprises. At local level, the project aims to strengthen capacities of small and medium forest based enterprises to improve their organization, processing, commercialization and marketing of more value added NWFP, and to consolidate and disseminate harvesting and processing methods for a sustainable and participatory management of NWFP.

27. The Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Amigo de la Naturaleza y del Desarrollo de Guinea Ecuatorial (ANDEGE) supported the organization of cooperatives of small forest producers, prepared sustainable use plans for village reserves, and carried out education and awareness. The REDD + Model Project of COBAM-INDEFOR (2014-2016) supported forestry activities in the villages of Atom and Kukumankon that included the physical delimitation of communal forests, the participatory evaluation of the forest area and the types of forest, the establishment of parcels and the start-up of community forest nurseries.

28. The baseline initiatives, although important, do not address sufficiently the threats to the country's forest ecosystems. To advance community-based SFM and contribute to the REDD+ targets in Equatorial Guinea, the barriers outlined above need to be addressed.

1.3. Proposed alternative scenario –brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project

29. The project objective is to conserve and enhance forest carbon stocks in Equatorial Guinea through the active

engagement of local communities in forest management, promoting sustainable local livelihoods and low emission development. It is intended to act as a bridge between national policy and local level interventions, contributing to the mainstreaming of climate action and community-based forestry in national instruments, while promoting change in pilot areas that can lead to scaled up action. The project also fills critical capacity gaps which are preventing effective policy implementation and law enforcement. It has three components dealing with the policy framework, institutions and knowledge, and mitigation actions at the community level. The fourth component is a cross-cutting monitoring and evaluation (M&E) component to ensure monitoring, systematization and dissemination of results and lessons. The three main components are described below.

Component 1: LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK: Strengthening the legal and policy framework for the development of community-based sustainable forest (SFM) and land management.

30. In order to create a supportive environment for the development of community-based forestry and the implementation of REDD+ actions, this component will support the strengthening of key legal and policy instruments related to forests and land management, rural development, and climate change. Building on preliminary analyses done under the ongoing development of the REDD+ National Investment Plan, work under this component will include necessary reviews of legislative and policy instruments, including analysis of land tenure regimes/reforms and options, thorough consultations with key stakeholders (government, civil society, private sector, parliamentarians). Based on these reviews, legislative and policy proposals will be drafted, and as support provided throughout the government approval process. Particular focus will be on the Forest Law, Land Ownership Law and the National Economic Development Plan, and the National Forest Action Programme to address gaps and contradictions, some of which have been highlighted in the previous section. The National Economic Development Plan and National Forest Action Programme are of particular interest because in order to secure public investments, community-based SFM needs to be clearly articulated in these. Also, this work will include communication and dissemination activities once (and before) the reforms are enacted to make sure that these policy changes are widely understood. These activities will be linked to component 2 output 2.1.

31. Component 1 will deliver the following outcome and outputs:
- Outcome 1.1 Strengthened legal and policy framework to enable the conservation, sustainable management and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in communal forests and lands.
 - Output 1.1 Legal framework and policy instruments (Forest Law, Land Ownership Law, National Development Plan) associated with land planning and forest tenure reviewed and proposals for their amendment submitted to the Government for approval.
 - Output 1.2 National Forest Action Programme updated with clear articulation of community-based forest management through a multistakeholder participatory process and aligned with relevant instruments and processes (including REDD+ Strategy, Non-forest timber products strategy, Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade - FLEGT).

Component 2. INSTITUTIONS AND KNOWLEDGE: Strengthening institutional capacity and knowledge for community-based SFM and land management and climate change

32. Active support for community-based forestry will require significant institutional capacity not available in the country. There is also a need for a deeper and practical understanding on baseline information required to develop community-based forest and land management, and small forest enterprises, including market studies, the status of informal logging, etc. This component will focus on filling these gaps by undertaking essential background studies and by providing training while generating knowledge and sharing experiences.

33. The project advocates for the importance of horizontal exchange of experiences, between rural communities, between government administration, between producers associations and as such, will support a south-south exchange with other countries that are more advanced in community involvement in forestry, particularly in the Congo Basin and Latin America. This approach is in line with the importance to connect small forest enterprises with the objective of avoiding deforestation and reducing poverty (eg. <http://forestconnect.ning.com/>).

34. In addition, this component will support the development of a responsive and efficient government support facility on community-based forest and land management. Concretely, the project will support the creation and strengthening a community forestry structure (extension service) within Government, supporting its legal creation and ensuring it receives an appropriate budgetary allocation. A comprehensive capacity development programme for the extension service, and other support institutions (e.g. forest administration staff, decentralized government units and others) developed and implemented. Training centres for farmers will be established and training modules developed, following the model of farmer field schools¹⁶, and creating synergies with other FAO project in agriculture “Refuerzo de capacidades para un desarrollo eficaz de la producción hortícola y ganadera a través de las escuelas de campo para agricultores (ECA) en Guinea Ecuatorial”. These synergies will facilitate a landscape approach, in which different land-uses are well coordinated and coordinated, respecting the local conception of the territory. This newly created structure will play a crucial role in delivering appropriate extension services to communities interested in developing small forest and agroforestry enterprises on communal land.

35. The component will deliver the following outcome and outputs:
- Outcome 2.1 Improved institutional capacity and knowledge to support community-based SFM and land management within the REDD+ framework.
 - Output 2.1 Information and knowledge products generated and disseminated on key topics related to community-based SFM and land management.
 - Output 2.2 South-South exchanges geared towards key stakeholders (government, communities, NGOs, and producer associations) to increase their knowledge and share experiences on community-based SFM, and community-based forest enterprises and businesses.
 - Output 2.3 A rural technical extension service with a specific focus on community-based SFM and land management, and small forest and agroforestry enterprises established and operational.
 - Output 2.4 A comprehensive capacity development programme for the extension service, and other support institutions developed and implemented.
 - Output 2.5 Training centres for farmers established and training modules developed, using the approach and experience of farmer field schools.

Component 3. MITIGATION ACTIONS AT COMMUNITY LEVEL: Supporting mitigation actions through inclusive governance, land/forest planning and management in pilot communal forest landscapes.

36. This component includes activities to strengthen the organizational and technical capacity of communities to take decisions, particularly as regards the management of their lands. Tentatively, selected communities from 8 different communal forests located in the interior of the country will be supported in participatory land/forest planning, in accordance with goals and aspiration of men and women in the community and the characteristics of their resources. This will cover a total area of 15,000ha, of which approximately 13,000ha is considered as forest. These tentatively selected project sites demonstrate a relatively high forest degradation rate during the 2004-2014 (estimated at ~20%), have a community logging authorisation (*permiso de apeo*) and, in most cases, have previous experiences with government extension services and/or international cooperation projects. Some of these forests are located in the vicinity of ecologically relevant ecosystems, including Monte Alban and the Rio Campo Natural Reserve. The exact location and extent of the target areas will be further refined during the full project development stage. Figure 3 below shows the local of the proposed pilot sites.

¹⁶ <http://www.fao.org/farmer-field-schools/en/>

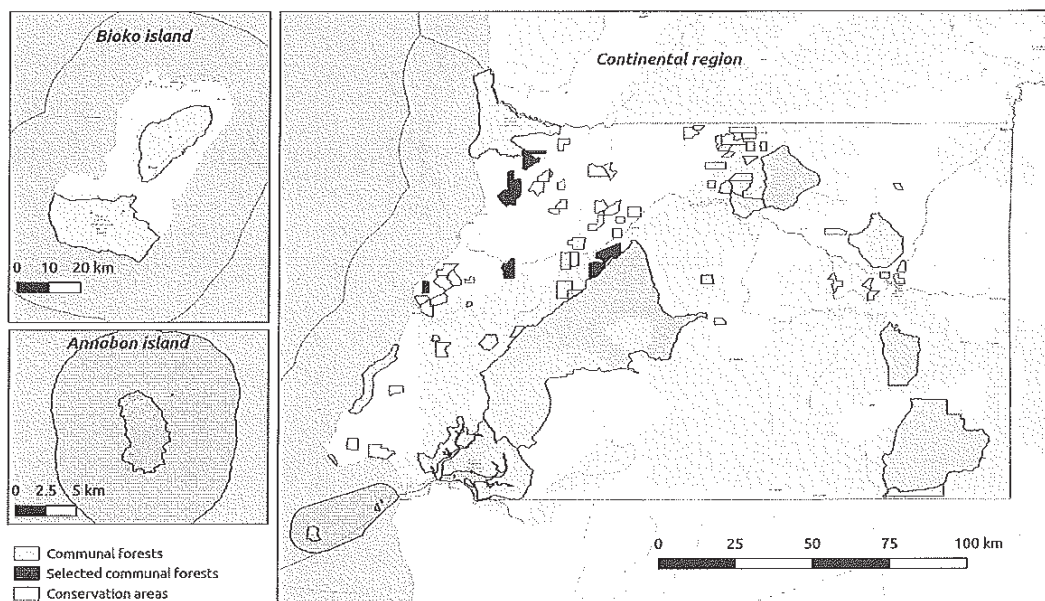


Figure 3. Location of proposed pilot sites

37. Recognising the crucial role of land/forest tenure (who can use what resources, for how long and under what conditions) in sustainable management of natural resources, climate change efforts and poverty alleviation, this project component will support communities secure tenure and management rights over their forest land. This would include, under the current legal system, obtaining the *Certificados de Reconocimiento de Bosque Comunal*, which also includes the demarcation of the land and the authorizations to use the forests (whether timber or non timber, subsistence or commercial). Communities will be accompanied in setting up their governance structure and in the participatory development of simple forests and land management plans with conservation/sustainable use and livelihood improvement objectives.

38. The project will assist forest entrepreneurs in these tentative pilot sites to develop income-generating tree and forest product enterprises, promoting a greater incentive for local communities to sustainably manage and protect those resources. Community-based tree, forest and agro-forestry product enterprises will be designed with the help of participatory methodologies such as *Market Analysis and Development (MA&D)* and operate within the framework of participatory forestry mechanisms that enable people who have a direct stake in forest resources, to be part of decision-making in all aspects of forest management. Enterprises will be accompanied to develop robust, sustainable and economically viable business plans.

39. In addition, the project will provide necessary technical assistance (land preparation, harvesting support, etc) and material inputs (ex: small harvesting and transformation equipment) to support selected enterprises in making their enterprises viable. The project will also look at options for establishing small community financing mechanism (e.g. revolving funds or community-managed micro-credit schemes) to ensure that forest enterprises have access to finance to support their enterprise models and ensure their long-term sustainability.

40. Finally, and in order to align with ongoing work on forest monitoring, communities will be trained and supported in the monitoring of their forest resources. As part of their land/forest management plans, communities will

be supported to carry out forest monitoring as well as environmental and social safeguards monitoring. This will allow target communities and forest enterprises to better understand the status and health of their forests, regenerative cycle, market inputs and guide future management and restoration activities.

41. Expected outcome and outputs include:

- Outcome 3.1 Communal forests and lands under sustainable, gender responsive, management generating mitigation as well as socio-economic benefits.
- Output 3.1 At least 8 communities supported to sustainably manage their forests with:
 - a) participatory forests and land management plans.
 - b) governance and operating mechanisms.
 - c) appropriate tenure and use rights.
 - d) business plans, equipment and an appropriate funding structure.
- Output 3.2. Climate-friendly forest and agroforestry enterprises are created/strengthened and supported with robust business models (eg: community enterprises or small entrepreneurs) and training.
- Output 3.3 Forest and agroforestry enterprises supported on production and value-chain development
- Output 3.4 Forest monitoring systems in collaboration with communities to support management, monitor safeguards and assess mitigation results established.

Component 4: Monitoring and Evaluation, and dissemination of best practices

42. Under this component, a system will be established for monitoring, systematization and dissemination of results and lessons learned. The following outputs will be delivered:

- Output 4.1 Results-based M&E system designed and implemented.
- Output 4.2 Mid-term and final evaluation conducted.
- Output 4.3 Best practices and lessons learned collected and disseminated.

1.4. Incremental cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTE, and co-financing

Component 1: Legal and policy framework

43. Baseline and co-financing: The main baseline for this component consists of the work being done under the National REDD+ Strategy and Investment Plan with the technical support of FAO and financial support of the Central Africa Forest Initiative (CAFI) and the FAO “Awareness raising and support to forest governance and transparency for FLEGT and REDD+ in Equatorial Guinea”. There are particular outputs that are important for the work proposed: forthcoming FAO study on drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in Equatorial Guinea, the REDD+ Investment Plan itself and the roadmap for improving forest governance that will come of the FLEGT project. Some preliminary analysis of gaps in the legal and policy framework for REDD+ is being done as part of these. Implementation of the component will be supported by REDD+ structures that have been set-up, especially the Inter-ministerial Steering Committee overseeing the preparation of the REDD+ National Investment Plan. This committee includes over 10 ministerial departments: Fisheries and Environment (ViceChair); Agriculture and Forests (Secretariat); Finance and Budget; Public works and Infrastructure; Mining, Industry and Energy; Interior and local authorities; Information, Press and Radio; Social Affairs and Women’s rights; National Security; Foreign Affairs and cooperation; as well as representatives of the Senate and the Parliament, and of civil society, community leaders, the private sector, and academia. It is foreseen that this committee will facilitate and provide inputs in the legal and policy framework review and approval of amendments. It is estimated that the total co-financing for this component will be USD 1 million.

44. GEF financing will go towards technical assistance to undertake a comprehensive review and amendment of the legal and policy instruments to enable sustainable forest management by local communities. This is essential for ensuring the sustainability and scale-up of community-based SFM in Equatorial Guinea.

Component 2: Institutions and knowledge

45. Baseline and co-financing: The CAFI and FLEGT projects will be part of the baseline for component 2 as well. Some knowledge is being generated, for example through the drivers study, and FLEGT awareness raising on current experiences and international best practices in forest governance. The Government has invested a significant amount of its own resources (in terms of setting up institutions, staff and equipment) to develop institutional coordination and technical capacities to enhance forest management and climate change action. The country has recently received support from the Green Climate Fund readiness facility, which aims to strengthen the technical and institutional capacities of the Ministry of Forests and Environment on forest monitoring and measurement, reporting and verification (MRV), as well as to design and pilot a multi-resources national land use and forest inventory. In terms of direct co-finance to the project, the Government plans to set-up a rural technical extension service with a specific focus on community-based SFM and land management, and small forest and agroforestry enterprises. Although there is need for technical assistance to set up the service and build its capacity, the main budget allocation will come from the Government budget. The total co-financing for component 2 will be approximately USD 4.2 million.

46. GEF funding will be mainly for technical assistance in setting up the rural technical extension service and the design and delivery of the capacity development programme.

Component 3: Mitigation actions at community level

47. Baseline and co-financing: For this component the baseline consists of the project “**Enhancing the Contribution of Non-Wood Forest Products to Food Security in Central Africa**” led by the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC) and financed by the African Development Bank through the Congo Basin Forest Fund (CBFF). The project is working in two pilot sites in Equatorial Guinea to strengthen capacities of small and medium forest based enterprises to improve their organization, processing, commercialization and marketing of more value added NWFP. In designing and implementing component 3, the project will serve as an important source of information, guidelines/approaches and best practices.

48. The main source of co-financing for this component will come from national public funds for community-level investments which will go towards implementation of community management plans and climate-friendly forest and agroforestry enterprises work. GEF financing will go towards technical assistance to accompany the communities throughout the process of establishing and managing their forests and capacity building.

49. In the absence of the GEF funding, pressures on the forests will still continue and result in both deforestation and forest degradation. It is likely that communal forests would be subject to weak or no effective governance, subject to illegal and informal activities and with no investments in more sustainable management alternatives. This will in turn result in increased greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as a result of forest carbon loss. Other negative impacts include biodiversity loss, ecosystem degradation and vulnerability to climate change. Without GEF funding, communities will not get organized and will not have the necessary information to decide on how best to manage their forests and will not have the capacity to manage their forest sustainably for multiple products and attending the needs of both men and women in the community, while generating global environmental benefits.

1.5. Global environmental benefits

50. The 8 proposed pilot project sites stretch over an area covering approximately 15,000 ha, where 13,000 ha of natural tropical moist forests will be put under sustainable communal management and where 750 ha of slash and burn annual cropping systems will be converted into diverse agro-forestry systems. Preliminary emission reduction estimates indicate that the project could reduce emissions by 247,000 tCO₂e/year, or 1,235,000 tCO₂e/year over the project's propose implementation period (5 years). Assuming a capitalization period of 16 years, emission reductions over 20 years would amount to approximately 5,000,000 tCO₂e.

51. Although the focus is on climate change mitigation, there will also be benefits to biodiversity and land degradation focal areas. At the same time, the project will also enhance livelihoods and socio-economic development

of families and local communities in rural areas by encouraging more sustainable forest and land management practices.

1.6. Innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up.

52. In terms of innovation, the project will put in practice an innovative community-based forestry approach in Equatorial Guinea, that has not been implemented in the past. The project will build on the lessons learnt and experiences of decades of community forestry (<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5415e.pdf>) and on the farmer field schools approach. Sustainability and scale up of the project will be supported by a number of results: (i) by incorporating community-based forestry as one of the priorities in the development plan that guides public investment and in sectoral plans and programmes, (ii) by creating and demonstrating the economic and productive potential of sustainable managed forests by communities, (iii) by creating technical capacities that can be transferred, and (iv) by addressing the key enabling aspects for community-based forestry identified through global research. In order to ensure sustainability, the project will initially support those communal forests where tenure regime is relatively clear, and where there is already experience with farmers organization or cooperatives, as well as strong commitment and interest on conservation and sustainable use of forest resources and new business development.

2. Stakeholders. Will project design include the participation of relevant stakeholders from civil society organizations (yes /no) and indigenous peoples (yes /no)? If yes, identify key stakeholders and briefly describe how they will be engaged in project preparation.

53. The project will directly benefit and be implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forests and Environment in close collaboration with the Ministry of Planning, Economic Affairs, and Public Investments. During the preparation and implementation of the project, the effective and informed participation of all the involved parties, including representatives of civil society, the private sector, and forest communities, especially of minority ethnic groups, shall be fostered. As is described in the consultation plan prepared in the country's REDD+ Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP), special attention shall be given to the concerns of vulnerable groups (women, children) and those whose livelihood depends on the forests (local rural communities and Beyele pygmies (R-PP, 2014)).

54. The participation and involvement of all the parties involved (women and men) from the earliest stages is essential for the achievement of the desired aims of climate change mitigation and of this project. It shall especially contribute to integrating all the points of view, reinforcing the legitimacy and sustainability of the decisions and proposals, and to the initiatives on the land being backed and supported by the most directly involved stakeholders, particularly the rural population and those that are dedicated to logging. The active participation of all social groups shall also contribute to avoiding or mitigating possible negative consequences for some of them.

55. Active participation and engagement is particularly foreseen in relation to the proposed component 3, with those communities and individuals which will be the direct beneficiaries. In particular, they will be the main actors in relation to land-use planning, forest plans and identification of potential business opportunities.

56. In line with the REDD+ safeguards and the standards of FAO, every decision, policy or activity that affects indigenous towns or territories must have their free, prior and informed consent (FPIC). Therefore, special attention shall be given to the indigenous populations and minority ethnic groups of Equatorial Guinea, with the due consideration of their points of view, their relationship with the forests, their needs, and their cultural values. Likewise, the respect for the knowledge and rights of the indigenous peoples and the local communities shall be ensured.

57. In order for all the stakeholders to be duly informed and their participation to be effective, the awareness-raising and outreach activities shall be essential. As carried out in the initial phases of REDD+, a campaign on communal forestry that includes public information, education, communication and awareness-raising shall be developed with the support of local NGOs in order to ensure dialogue, the exchange of information and the creation of broad consensus. In relation to rural communications involving Beyele pygmies that may be involved in communal forestry activities, the consultations shall be carried out through their own processes, organisations and institutions,

with their representatives. There are currently two Beyele families that move between the border of Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea, and efforts will be done to consult them to the extent possible, respecting their will and opinions. The participation of women in the process shall be ensured

58. The following table highlights the various stakeholders that will be involved and/or consulted during project design and implementation:

Name of Institution	Role
Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forests and Environment	Main implementing partner for this project and UNFCCC focal point, responsible to make linkages with other climate change and environmental initiatives. INDEFOR: Technical agency responsible for supporting forest management, forest monitoring and REDD+. INCOMA: Technical agency responsible for environmental evaluation and audits, among other things. Agriculture: responsible for farmer field schools.
Ministry of Economic Affairs, Planning and Public Investments	Coordination role related to REDD+. Main planning body for investments in the AFOLU sector.
ANDEGE - Amigos de la Naturaleza y el Desarrollo de Guinea Ecuatorial	National NGO created by local volunteers, which is highly active in the forestry sector and in environmental conservation. ANDEGE has actively supported the REDD+ R-PP process as well as the national REDD+ Investment Plan. It is one of the few actors with experience in communal forestry in Equatorial Guinea.
ECOGUINEA	NGO dedicated to local environmental conservation, originally founded to support efforts for the conservation of Pico Basile National Park, supported by a number of institutions in Spain. Its objectives are the promotion and development of biodiversity and sustainable research in Equatorial Guinea (terrestrial and marine), in support of the government's plans for environmental management. ECOGUINEA has been actively involved in the REDD+ process in the country and supports the training of park guards.
ADELO	Local Association for conservation and development, created in 2016, supports community subsistence needs in buffer zones of protected areas and in community forests.
ASAMA - Asociación de apoyo a la mujer africana	Local NGO that supports women empowerment in rural areas and on issues such as community-based forestry.

3. *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.* Are issues on gender equality and women's empowerment taken into account? (yes /no). If yes, briefly describe how it will be mainstreamed into project preparation (e.g. gender analysis), taking into account the differences, needs, roles and priorities of women and men.

59. There are differences in ways in which men and women make use of forests and land. Women are responsible for most of the agricultural activities although some activities are shared (i.e. men are more involved in land clearing and preparation, while women are primarily involved in the establishment and maintenance of crops). In addition, women also collect plants, fuelwood and other products in the forests close to agricultural areas. Men tend to enter deeper into the forests and are involved in wood harvesting and hunting.

60. Acknowledging the different roles, needs and concerns of men and women, the project will conduct a gender responsive rapid rural appraisals and develop gender responsive results-based frameworks in line with GEF's Gender

Equality Action Plan (GEAP), which is key to ensuring that women’s needs, voice, leadership and participation are taken into account in project design, implementation and evaluation. As a result, the project will, where possible, account for and apply a gender-sensitive approach to data and information collection and analysis, which will be reported in project findings and relevant publications. The project will ensure that women’s specific needs are met, that women enjoy equal access to project activities from preparation to implementation and evaluation stages, and that all potential benefits are equitably enjoyed across project activities. To do so, the project will be anchored on the country’s gender strategy for REDD+, which outlines a detailed methodology on how to ensure gender equality throughout the process. Similar to the entire REDD+ process, the project will cater for the specific needs, priorities, and concerns of women and men. Active participation of women in the consultation and decision-making processes will be promoted to ensure equitable participation between men and women, so that both benefit from the outcomes of the project, following FAO’s policy on gender equality: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/017/i3205e/i3205e.pdf>

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

61. Risks and mitigation measures will be identified in detail during project design. Below are preliminary risks identified.

Risk	Mitigation measures
Climate change impacts	Mitigation measures included in the design of the project: - sustainable harvest (use of forest resources) will improve the biophysical conditions of the forests and increase their resilience to climate change - agroforestry and conservation agriculture techniques in community trainings to contribute to adaptation in crop production.
Lack of political support to necessary reforms and provide technical assistance to implement community-based forestry.	Key Government decision-makers (who are already part of the ongoing REDD+ process) will be members of the project steering committee. The project will maintain close communications with key authorities, keeping them briefed on successes and challenges as they develop and on the socio-economic and environmental benefits of community-based forest management.
Limited interest or involvement by target communities in communal forestry activities supported by the project.	This risk will be addressed from project design throughout project implementation. Clear communication with communities on livelihood and environmental benefits of sustainable management of their forests will be crucial. This will be part of the communication strategy for the project.

62. According to FAO’s preliminary assessment, the project falls under the “Moderate” risk category of FAO’s environmental and social management standards. This risk classification is notably triggered due to the fact that the project may impact (positively) tenure rights and will have direct or indirect effects on local indigenous populations, among other things. As such, during project design, a risk analysis will be undertaken and a risk management plan developed. The risk management plan will be carefully monitored during project implementation, and revised as appropriate.

63. In the event of serious risks, including those which are outside the control of the project team, these shall be duly reported up the hierarchy. When necessary, responsibilities will be assigned to mitigate the risks (e.g. expert in gender or in indigenous peoples). All of the information on risks which could affect counterparts and partners during the implementation will be shared with them.

5. Coordination. Outline the coordination with other relevant GEF-financed and other initiatives.

64. There are projects/initiatives currently under implementation or in the approval process, which could offer some opportunities for synergy with the proposed project. Considering the technical nature of this project and the strong focus on the forestry and land sector, the project will be led by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forests and Environment, in close coordination with the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Planning and Public Investment. Together, these two ministries lead the coordination of REDD+ in the country. The project will be under the umbrella of the broader institutional framework established by the country to oversee REDD+, notably the coordination of actions and financing.

65. This coordination and institutional structure will strengthen coordination with other relevant GEF initiatives, as well as with other ongoing climate change related projects and programs.

(1) Other GEF Initiatives: The project will build on lessons and material developed as part of two other GEF funded initiatives, notably the project “Strengthening of the system of protected areas in Equatorial Guinea for the effective conservation of representative ecosystems and globally significant biodiversity” project (2014 -), implemented by UNDP with GEF funds. This project is making significant progress in institutional aspects with the creation of the “National Committee for the reserves of the Bioko and continental region biosphere”, as well as in awareness-raising activities with regard to the value of the protected areas, of the training of technicians and the development of abilities, and of the promotion of livelihoods alternative to the hunting of protected species.

(2) Other relevant Initiatives: The project will build on lessons learned from the INDEFOR-COBAM project, on agro-forestry and communal forestry in the Monte Alen area, supported by CIFOR with financing from the African Development Bank (AFDB). The project will also be implemented in close coordination with two other initiatives, namely the recently approved GCF readiness project and the CAFI initiative. As explained above, synergies between outputs and activities will be sought to maximize efficiency and enhance delivery of results.

6. *Consistency with National Priorities.* Is the project consistent with the National strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions? (yes /no). If yes, which ones and how: NAPAs, NAs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, NDCs, etc.

66. The project is consistent with the following key strategic plans:

(1) Forestry law N° 1/1997 (revised in June 2005): The project is consistent with, and proposes a direct response to the country’s forestry law, which provides a legal framework to support the emergence of communal forestry. Among other things, this calls for the provision of technical support, financial incentives and education to support communities wishing to carry out traditional activities in communal forests, including the extraction of timber and non-timber forest products.

(2) National Development Plan Horizonte 2020 (2007). The National development plan proposes the protection of biodiversity in protected areas through innovative models of participative co-management for the benefit of the rural population.

(3) National Forest Action Programme 2000 (PNAF). One of the PNAF’s objectives is to ensure that natural resources contribute to the sustainable development of the country, and propose ten strategic actions in that regard. Specifically, the programme advocates for greater involvement of rural communities in use and management, so as to have a more equal distribution of related benefits. The PNAF 2000 includes as well some project ideas such as the conservation of *Prunus Africana* in Bioko island.

(4) R-PP & REDD+ Strategy : The project is consistent and responds to the country's R-PP (released in 2014) and the forthcoming REDD+ National Strategy (to be released in 2018), which highlights the country's key drivers of deforestation and degradation, identifies key national REDD+ objectives, develops strategic options for REDD+ policies and measures, and proposes an implementation framework that includes an MRV roadmap. Amongst the main REDD+ objectives and strategic options identified by the country, the enhancement of transparency and governance

in the forestry sector is prioritized, which will be achieved by promoting the adoption of sustainable forest management practices through enforced legislation, capacity building, the adoption of management plans, the promotion of FLEGT and forest certification, as well as through sustainable value chains. Among other things, the country wishes to enhance the role of communities in the sustainable management of forests and increase the benefits they receive from the forestry sector.

(5) 1st National Communication : In the country's upcoming 1st National Communication, the country identifies forestry and energy as its two main mitigation sectors (Chapter 2, page 6). On forestry, the document highlights that the use of forest resources is one of the most important aspects for the livelihoods of Equatorial Guinea's population. That is why the implementation of an integrated approach to forest management, including the integration of agriculture objectives, is of such importance for the proper functioning of the forest ecosystems. On adaptation, the forthcoming national communication highlights the importance of sustainable forest management to maintain the integrity of ecosystems for food security. Notably, it highlights a forestry priority adaptation project on: (1) integration of climate change adaptation and ecosystem maintenance approaches in the planning of sustainable forest management, with engagement of all users; (2) comprehensive sustainable management of forests with practical pilot schemes at community level, to improve agricultural production and other components of livelihoods such as ecotourism; and (3) the creation of communication strategies and capacities for specific target groups to integrate their own considerations and coordinate the use of forests in all areas.

(6) National Adaptation Plan of Action : The country's NAPA recognizes that forests and biodiversity represent a key area of climate change vulnerability. It states that it has become widely accepted that ecosystems are intrinsically adaptive systems and often offer important barriers to the impacts of climate change. At present, unsustainable use of forests and biodiversity in Equatorial Guinea threaten to diminish the strength and functioning of these ecosystems that supply integral needs for human development and their survival. There are ongoing projects and plans, which focus on approaches for biodiversity conservation - some financed by the GEF, as stated in earlier sections.

(7) Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) : The project is consistent with and will support the implementation of Equatorial Guinea's NDC. Relevant key priorities focusing on mitigation actions outlined in Section 5.2.3 of the NDC include:

- The implementation of the country's national REDD+ strategy;
- Support the country in becoming a reference in climate smart agriculture, to contribute to food security economic diversification, reduce methane and nitrus dioxide emissions, and sequester carbon;
- Develop relevant Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) to support REDD+;
- Support the country's national strategy and action plan on the conservation of biological biodiversity (ENPADIB) and strengthen the national protected areas system (SNAP).

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

67. The project will disseminate its findings, key products and lessons learned based on the country's REDD+ communication strategy, which is being finalized under the current Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI) funded project. The information will also be communicated through the upcoming REDD+ website, where all key products will be freely and openly distributed. Also, key findings and lessons learned will be incorporated in future reporting exercises to the UNFCCC.

68. As mentioned, south-south cooperation has been incooperated into the project design. The project will facilitate horizontal exchange of experiences between rural communities, between government administration, between producers associations and will support south-south exchange with other countries that are more advanced in community-based forestry, particularly in the Congo Basin and Latin America.

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


A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT¹⁷ OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT (S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S):

(Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter(s) with this template. For SGP, use this SGP OFF endorsement letter).

NAME	POSITION	MINISTRY	DATE (MM/dd/yyyy)
HI Antonio Micha Ondo Angue	GEF Operational Focal Point, National Director, ICOMA	Ministry of Forests and Environment	03/02/2018

B. GEF AGENCY(IES) CERTIFICATION

This request has been prepared in accordance with GEF policies¹⁸ and procedures and meets the GEF criteria for project identification and preparation under GEF-6.

Agency Coordinator, Agency name	Signature	Date (MM/dd/yyyy)	Project Contact Person	Telephone	Email
Alexander Jones, Director, Climate and Environment Division, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)		9 April 2018	Maria Ruiz-Villar, Programme Officer, REDD+ team, FAO Forestry Department		Maria.RuizVillar@fao.org
Jeffrey Griffin Senior Coordinator, GEF Coordination Unit, FAO				+39 06 570 55680	GEF-Coordination-Unit@fao.org;

C. ADDITIONAL GEF PROJECT AGENCY CERTIFICATION (APPLICABLE ONLY TO NEWLY ACCREDITED GEF PROJECT AGENCIES)

For newly accredited GEF Project Agencies, please download and fill up the required GEF Project Agency Certification of Ceiling Information Template to be attached as an annex to the PIF.

¹⁷ For regional and/or global projects in which participating countries are identified, OFP endorsement letters from these countries are required even though there may not be a STAR allocation associated with the project.

¹⁸ GEF policies encompass all managed trust funds, namely: GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF and CBIT