



PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)

PROJECT TYPE: Medium-sized Project

TYPE OF TRUST FUND: GEF Trust Fund

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PART I: PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title:	Improving mangrove conservation across the Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape (ETPS) through coordinated regional and national strategy development and implementation.		
Country(ies):	Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape (ETPS) including Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador	GEF Project ID: ¹	
GEF Agency(ies):	Conservation International (select) (select)	GEF Agency Project ID:	
Other Executing Partner(s):	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Regional Office in Quito (Ecuador)	Submission Date:	2014-04-16
GEF Focal Area (s):	International Waters	Project Duration (Months)	24 months
Name of parent program (if applicable):		Project Agency Fee (\$):	171,073
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For SFM/REDD+ <input type="checkbox"/> • For SGP <input type="checkbox"/> • For PPP <input type="checkbox"/> 		

A. INDICATIVE FOCAL AREA STRATEGY FRAMEWORK²:

Focal Area Objectives	Trust Fund	Indicative Grant Amount (\$)	Indicative Co-financing (\$)
IW-3 (select)	GEFTF	950,405	3,375,000
IW-2 (select)	GEFTF	950,405	3,375,000
(select) (select)	GEFTF		
(select) (select)	(select)		
(select) (select)	(select)		
(select) (select)	(select)		
(select) (select)	(select)		
(select) (select)	(select)		
(select) (select)	(select)		
Total Project Cost		1,900,810	6,750,000

B. INDICATIVE PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

To implement a comprehensive, multi-government ratified and regionally articulated mangrove conservation strategy in the Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape (ETPS) countries of Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia and Ecuador through on-the-ground management activities and the strengthening of national and local policies that inform ridge-to-reef development planning and practices relevant to mangrove conservation.

Expected Outputs	Grant Type ³	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	Indicative Grant Amount	Indicative Cofinancing

¹ Project ID number will be assigned by GEFSEC.

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

			<p>countries with similar mangrove conservation challenges completed by Y2Q4.</p> <p>3.2 Communication products on mangrove conservation (policy, regulations, field implementation and other related issues) will be completed and made available to policy makers and stakeholders by Y1Q3.</p>			
<p>Component 2: National mangrove action plans and policy strengthening: National regulations and national mangrove action plans are improved and made consistent with the regional mangrove strategy such that at least 736,000 ha. of priority mangroves are put under an improved policy conducive to more effective on-the-ground conservation by Y2Q4.</p>	TA	<p>1. At least two ETPS countries have updated national mangrove action plans in line with the regional strategy and that addresses pressure on mangroves from sources across the ridge-to-reef (watershed) scale by Y2Q4.</p> <p>2. At least two ETPS countries have passed stronger regulations and incentives conducive to mangrove conservation, such as establishing stricter pollution controls, making Environmental Impact Assessments mandatory, clarifying tenure and use rights for local communities, establishing incentive schemes for effective management or establishing more stringent fines for</p>	<p>1.1. Updated national mangrove action plans are formally ratified in at least two ETPS countries by Y2Q4.</p> <p>2.1. A national mangrove policy and threat assessment for each ETPS country to orient economic valuation work, inform policy gaps, and identify outreach needs and priorities in each ETPS country completed by Y1Q4.</p> <p>2.2. Legislation passed to strengthen the protection of mangroves in at least two ETPS countries completed by Y2Q4.</p>	GEFTF	415,099	1,427,104

		<p>projects that provide incentives and/or that create business opportunities associated with the conservation and sustainable use of mangroves initiated in at least two selected sites by Y2Q4.</p> <p>5. Local stakeholders participating in demonstration projects increased by 20% over the project beginning baseline by Y2Q4.</p>	<p>options, based on existing initiatives including the GEF-UNEP Blue Forest project and WAVES, completed by Y2Q4.</p> <p>2.3 Mangrove valuation, policy and development planning outcomes and field conservation communicated broadly, including through: distribution of communications materials; an interactive knowledge-sharing platform; presentation in at least three national, regional and global conservation, science, policy and related fora (e.g.: Ramsar, CBD, IMPAC, Blue Carbon Working Group, ITTO); participating in the IWLearn mechanism (including allocation of 1% of project budget for this purpose), and presentation to policy makers in other mangrove relevant countries by Y2Q4.</p> <p>3.1 At least two training events are conducted per ETPS country with at least 15 participants each to build skills relating to field conservation measures and</p>			
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			Ecuador, Costa Rica			
(select)	(select)	(select)				0
(select)	(select)	(select)				0
(select)	(select)	(select)				0
(select)	(select)	(select)				0
Total Grant Resources				1,900,810	171,073	2,071,883

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

² Indicate fees related to this project.

E. PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)⁵

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

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

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

Trust Fund	GEF Agency	Focal Area	Country Name/ Global	(in \$)		
				PPG (a)	Agency Fee (b)	Total c = a + b
GEF TF	(select)	International Waters	Regional: Colombia, Panama, Ecuador, Costa Rica	91,000	8,190	99,190
(select)	(select)	(select)				0
(select)	(select)	(select)				0
Total PPG Amount				91,000	8,190	99,190

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

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

⁶ PPG fee percentage follows the percentage of the GEF Project Grant amount requested.

Like mangroves globally, the mangrove ecosystems of the ETPS provide a wide range of ecosystem services that are valuable ecological and economic resources for each of the ETPS countries' largest coastal population centers and hundreds of small communities.

- Mangroves are important nursery grounds and breeding sites for both marine and terrestrially associated birds,
- fish, crustaceans, shellfish, reptiles, mammals and commercially important species (Nagelkerken et al 2008). For example, in Panama, up to 60% of shrimp fisheries are based on 5 species, which directly depend on mangroves (Lacerda et al 1993).
- Mangroves, as areas of exceptional scenic beauty, support a growing sector of the region's ecotourism industry, which has been designated as a pillar for local and national development in each ETPS country. For example, Costa Rica's \$2 billion a year tourism industry is largely built on ecotourism.
- Mangroves are natural accumulation sites for sediment, contaminants, and nutrients from upstream terrestrial sources, and hence act to maintain coastal water quality.
- Mangroves are highly efficient at capturing and storing carbon from the atmosphere and ocean, thus mitigating climate change. Conversely, when degraded or converted, mangroves areas can become large sources of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide (Pendleton et al 2012, Donato et al 2010).
- The role of mangroves in coastal protection from storms and against coastal erosion and flooding is now well established. Mangrove conservation is therefore an ecosystem based approaches to climate adaptation. For example, recent modeling has shown that the mangroves adjacent to the large city of Guayaquil can – if fully forested – protect the city from the high climate-change-related coastal flooding risk expected by 2070 (Temmerman et al 2013).

Globally, mangrove forests provide at least US \$1.6 billion each year in ecosystem services and support coastal livelihoods worldwide (Polidoro et. al. 2010).

Environmental problems, root causes and barriers

Despite the importance of mangroves to the ETPS, these ecosystems have been subject to extensive loss and degradation. Regional rates of loss are similar to those in coastal regions globally; over the past 50 years approximately one-third of the world's mangrove forests have been lost with continuing losses estimated at 1-2% annually. In fact, the highest proportion of threatened mangrove species is found along the coasts of Central America, with 40% of the mangrove species present along the Pacific coasts of Costa Rica, Panama and Colombia listed as threatened, and a fifth species *Rhizophora samoensis* is listed as Near Threatened (Polidoro et. al. 2010).

Each of the ETPS countries' largest coastal cities is located in large gulfs with extensive mangrove formations. As each of these cities - Guayaquil (Ecuador), Buenaventura (Colombia), Panama City (Panama), and Puntarenas (Costa Rica) - have expansively grown in recent decades. Consequently mangrove loss and degradation has been increasingly driven by urban expansion, associated industrial and shipping activities, and the waste produced by large coastal populations with inadequate sewage and garbage management infrastructure.

Rapid expansion of aquaculture has also resulted in extensive deforestation in the ETPS from conversion of mangrove forest to shrimp ponds. For example, in the two decades starting in 1980, nearly half of the mangrove area of Ecuador (ca. 80,000 ha) was deforested for various purposes, but particularly for shrimp ponds. Shrimp ponds are the major cause of mangrove decline in Latin America (Lugo 2002).

Significant additional mangrove losses in the region have resulted from exploitation for wood products. Charcoal production is a significant source of mangrove degradation and loss in the region. In Costa Rica up to 1,300 m³ of mangrove charcoal is produced annually, while in Panama this may reach up to 7,400m³. Mangrove bark is a source of tannins for the leather industry in most Latin America countries.

Regionally, the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (Comisión Permanente del Pacífico Sur - CPPS) (members countries Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama and Peru, with Costa Rica as a cooperating non-party) have recently committed to creating and implementing a region-wide mangrove strategy (Plan de Acción). Since Peru and Chile have only minimal mangrove areas, this strategy will be most applicable to the ETPS countries. This strategy is currently in draft format with anticipated formal ratification by the end of 2014. The CPPS parties have committed to adopt the strategy and there is significant political will within the countries. However, its effective implementation will require financial and technical support both directly to the CPPS and to member countries.

2. The baseline scenario and any associated baseline projects:

Baseline scenario

If current rates of mangrove loss continue, nearly all unprotected mangroves globally could be lost in the next 100 years (Pendleton et al 2012), and this trend is apparent in the ETPS countries. While all four ETPS countries have some level of protection through policy, legislation and management relating to mangrove conservation, these mechanisms have had variable success in reducing losses. Hence, without intervention, the drivers of mangrove loss and degradation in the region described above can be expected to continue and potentially expand given national development trends relating to urban, aquaculture and agricultural expansion.

- The continued loss of mangroves within the ETPS countries will have significant impacts on the communities, from reef-to-ridge, through the loss of essential ecosystem services provided by mangroves. For example:
- Recent studies from Mexico have shown an almost immediate impact on local fisheries associated with even modest losses in mangrove cover (Carrasquilla-Henao et al 2013). The continued loss of mangroves across the ETPS will similarly result in major disruptions to the coastal fisheries that are a significant source of livelihoods for communities across the region. Very importantly, due to the high ecological interconnectivity of mangrove ecosystems, the losses in one country can affect the fisheries production in neighboring countries.
- The IPCC has identified the large coastal cities of the ETPS as being particularly vulnerable to climate change driven flooding. Seawater could penetrate 150 to 500 m inland along the Puntarenas coast of Costa Rica. In Ecuador, sea level rise over the next century will impact the Guayas river system, including associated coastal urban areas of Guayaquil, potentially resulting in the need for relocation of over 300,000 people, losses of US\$1,305 billion, losses of urban and recreation areas, and impacts on drinking water supply. In Colombia, permanent flooding of 4,900 km² of low-lying coast, impacting 1.4 million people has been predicted (IPCC 2007). Extensive losses of mangroves, which provide natural coastal defenses against some of the threats in these areas will accelerate and amplify these impacts.
- Given the broad diversity of terrestrial and marine biodiversity dependent on mangroves, ongoing loss of mangrove habitat will have reef-to-ridge biodiversity implications. The 40% of mangrove species already classified as threatened will potentially be lost. Further, continued mangrove losses will have major impacts on the biodiversity of coastal ecosystems including seagrasses, coral reefs and others, which are populated by mangrove dependent fishes, shrimp and other species (Nagelkerken 2008).
- Recent measurements of carbon storage in Costa Rican mangroves have shown that these ecosystems in the ETPS have highly significant deposits of carbon. Converting these mangroves into shrimp ponds would result in estimated emissions of 2000 tons of carbon dioxide per hectare (Kauffman personal comm.).

Tropical Pacific Seascape (ETPS) program. This program has included extensive coordinated regional planning, capacity building, knowledge sharing and implementation. Under the framework of the ETPS, the four countries have increasingly cooperated in terms of marine management planning, and in 2013 committed to developing a shared strategy for mangrove conservation in the form of a Regional Mangrove Action Plan under the auspices of the CPPS, and with the technical support of Conservation International and UNESCO. Over the next year, this plan be finalized and officially adopted but the CPPS. The CPPS parties have committed to adopt the strategy and there is significant political will within the countries. Effective implementation will then require each country to create a coordinated national mangrove plan that is consistent with the CPPS Regional Action Plan. However, the effective completion and implementation of these national plans is far from certain given the financial and technical resources required.

Country	Project	Status	Project Objectives
Costa Rica	<p>Title: Securing Livelihoods in the Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica through Mangrove Conservation and Restoration (2013)</p> <p>Donor: Swedish Lotto</p> <p>Geography: Gulf of Nicoya, Chira Island</p>	Under implementation by CI-Costa Rica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Assess the value of mangrove for fisheries, tourism and carbon storage -Develop a pilot with small coastal community, to strengthen capacities of local stakeholders for effective mangrove management (environmental education, tourism related activities, mangrove restoration)
Ecuador	<p>Title: Integrated management of marine and coastal areas of high value for biodiversity in Continental Ecuador (2013)</p> <p>Donor: GEF-FAO</p> <p>Geography: Coastal Ecuador</p>	Under development by Ministry of Environment of Ecuador and CI-Ecuador	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Assess the environmental goods and services of the mangrove ecosystem - Assess socio-cultural characteristic of coastal communities - Identification of organized groups for stewardship agreement (feasibility study)
	<p>Title: Application of the Blue Forests methodologies and approaches through small-scale interventions (2013)</p> <p>Donor: GEF-UNEP</p> <p>Geography: Gulf of Guayaquil</p> <p><i>* See last line of the table for the global component of this project</i></p>	Under development by Ministry of Environment of Ecuador and CI-Ecuador	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Valuation of ecosystem services -Evaluation of effectiveness of existing management plans and concession agreements to protect mangrove ecosystems. -Creation of new mangrove concessions -Inclusion of mangrove values (carbon and ES) in national policies (e.g., climate change, conservation, biodiversity and sustainable development)

			out the PA system) -Provide baseline and piloted measures that can feed into the national REDD process for mangrove as it matures
	<p>Title: Develop and implement the National Plan for Communication, Education, Awareness and Public Participation (CEPA) for wetlands in Panama (2014)</p> <p>Donor: FIDECO - Natura</p> <p>Geography: National and Panama Bay</p>	<p>Implemented by Panama Audubon</p> <p>Beneficiary: several communities in the Country, ANAM and Bay of Panama Protected Area.</p>	<p>-Formulate and implement the National Communication, Education, Awareness and Public Participation plan (CEPA) for wetlands in Panama in order to sensitize and train key sectors in the conservation and rational use of aquatic ecosystems.</p>
Colombia	<p>Title: Conservation and management for multiple use and the development of mangroves in Colombia.</p> <p>Donor: International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), Japanese Government, Ministry of Environment of Colombia</p> <p>Geography: National</p>	<p>Implemented by the Colombian Association of Reforesters (ACOFOR) (1995-circa 2000)</p> <p>Collaboration of local communities and Regional Autonomous Corporations.</p>	<p>-Overarching objectives: 1) Strengthen the generation of social and environmental production alternatives for the sustainable use of the mangrove, and 2) monitor ecological parameters that ensures the prosperity of the mangroves</p>
	<p>Title: Colombian Program for the sustainable use, management and conservation of the mangrove ecosystems</p> <p>Leading authority: Ministry of Environment</p> <p>Geography: National</p>	<p>The program was made official in 2002.</p>	<p>-Overarching objective: This national program seeks to inform and develop actions to achieve sustainable use of mangrove ecosystems of Colombia.</p>
	<p>Title: Colombia's national program for investigation on quality of marine environment - Mangrove Group.</p> <p>Leading authority: Coastal and Marine Investigation Institute of Colombia (INVEMAR)</p> <p>Geography: National</p>	<p>The Institute's mangrove group has been active since 1995 with focus on mangrove inventories and zoning. Since 2005, focus has shifted on the services provided by mangroves, especially for its capacity to absorb contaminants.</p>	<p>-Overarching objective: The program's seeks to generate the adequate information that guides the strategies to prevent, mitigate, and rehabilitate mangrove ecosystems.</p>
Regional	<p>Title: Mangrove and Sustainable</p>	<p>Alliance CPPS-UNESCO-CI established in 2013</p>	<p>The alliance interest includes: environmental legislation and</p>

facilitate this process and support the completion and implementation of the regional strategy with capacity building, tools and cross-country learning.

The CPPS has already given Conservation International and UNESCO the mandate on behalf of CPPS member nation governments to construct this strategy. Strengthening implementation capacity will be achieved through conducting regional and global learning efforts between project countries and beyond in coordination with other initiatives, including the GEF-funded Blue Forest project and the World Bank Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services (WAVES) partnership.

This component will create a framework for building capacity and process for promoting regional and international exchanges to promote best conservation practices and facilitate the adoption of best practices for mangrove conservation. This framework and process will include the development of networking tools and communications products that facilitate learning and dissemination of project aims and results at the local, national, regional and global scales to ensure the project generates learning and awareness benefits from the site to regional scales.

Note that although Costa Rica is not a formal member of the CPPS agreement, for the purposes of this CPPS strategy Costa Rica will participate as a Cooperating Non-Party involved in key elements of the strategy's development. This includes ensuring Costa Rica's experience and successful approaches to mangrove policy and conservation are integrated into the plan.

Component 2: National mangrove action plans and policy strengthening

The project's second component will improve national policy/regulations and national mangrove action plans to make them consistent with the regional mangrove strategy completed under component one. As a result, at least 736,000 ha. of priority mangroves will be put under an improved policy framework conducive to more effective on-the-ground conservation.

Under this component at least two of the four ETPS countries will either complete or update their national mangrove action plans to make them consistent with the regional strategy. Importantly, updates to national action plans will ensure that "ridge-to-reef" (watershed) considerations are taken into account given the strong connectivity between upstream, coastal (including mangroves) and inshore marine ecosystems.

As necessary, and in coordination with other existing projects such as the GEF-funded Blue Forests project, national mangrove plans and related policy will be informed by economic valuations that better capture the true value of the ecosystem services mangroves provide and that take into account important factors such as the lost productivity (or remediation costs required) of associated ecosystems when mangroves are degraded or destroyed.

Component 3: Local conservation action

To demonstrate the implementation of the regional and national strategies at local scales, the project's third component will develop and/or strengthen mangrove management plans that are consistent with national plans and the regional mangrove strategy in 2-5 sites across the ETPS. In tandem with this, the project will implement mangrove conservation actions that are incremental to existing field conservation programs in at least two demonstration sites in the region's most critical mangrove ecosystems. Candidate demonstration sites include (see Map 2): i) Costa Rica's Gulf of Nicoya; ii.) Panama's Gulf of Chiriquí; iii.) Colombia's Gulf of Tortugas; iv.) Ecuador's Gulf of Guayaquil; and v.) the transboundary mangrove complex spanning the Colombia-Ecuador border. The demonstration sites will be identified during the PPG stage of the project after appropriate analysis for feasibility, conservation impact and broader usefulness as a demonstration site.

Consistent with the national mangrove action plans updates, the project will support development of specific regulations and incentive programs at the demonstration sites that result in on-the-ground

Capacity building will be a key element of local policy and conservation actions. Training will be conducted to ensure the best conservation practices and most innovative conservation and restoration methods are used. Additionally, available tools and communications products will be provided to support local management and conservation.

Complementing the communications and outreach materials produced under component one, component three will also feature development of an interactive knowledge-sharing platform and presentation of the outcomes of the project in at least three national, regional and global conservation, science, policy and related fora. Potential venues include international convention meetings (e.g. Ramsar and CBD, the International Marine Protected Area Congress (IMPAC), Blue Carbon Working Group and meetings of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)). Outreach activities will be conducted with policy makers in other mangrove relevant countries, including the Philippines, Brazil, Indonesia, Pacific Islands, Suriname and Guyana.

4. Incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions to the baseline (refer to the GEF guidelines):

This project will build on and add significant incremental value to the strong foundation of existing programs in the region.

- Through the completion and implementation of regional and national mangrove strategies, this project will support the coordination of current mangrove projects across the region and their integration into a broader program. This includes government and non-governmental lead programs (see list above).
- The regional and national policy development and national strategy development and implementation proposed in this project will directly draw on the results from the projects evaluating mangroves (see project list above) – including coverage and ecosystem service value. Similarly, the ecosystem service economic valuations undertaken through this project will build directly on these assessments. All of these results will be integrated into the communication and capacity building tools and programs implemented through this project.
- The implementation of demonstration projects and capacity building across the region will build on the experience and lesson-learned in previous mangrove related demonstration projects across the region. Demonstration projects will, if possible, directly build on existing project work in the region. For example, the Gulf of Nicoya and Gulf of Guayaquil both have existing mangrove projects that can be a basis for expanded mangrove demonstration projects.
- The project will test and demonstrate the application of tools developed through the projects active in the region, specifically including the GEF/UNEP Blue Forests project. The project will be well coordinated with the global assessments and tool development within the Blue Forests Project. Further, the focus on policy within this project will assist the Blue Forests project in ensuring the ES toolbox meets the needs of policymakers.
- The project build directly on the strong coordinated conservation, policy and management foundation developed through the CI ETPS initiative. This initiative has established a strong and expansive policy, partner and networking framework across the four countries and this project will expand that core and the strong science base on which to frame conservation strategies, respectively.
- This project will share between two to four sites with current projects within the CI ETPS Initiative. While the current ETPS projects focus on MPA and fisheries, this project support expanding these efforts to address mangrove conservation and restoration through ridge-to-reef policy and conservation actions. For example, in these sites the ETPS Initiative is strengthening management institutions to resolve long-standing issues related to unsustainable fisheries associated with mangroves. This project will frame those efforts, as they relate to mangrove conservation, in a ridge-to-reef context. Additionally, this project will add the dimension of being particularly focused on mangrove conservation as a critical intermediary ecosystem that bridges

Innovativeness: While there is rapidly growing recognition of the importance of mangroves for the numerous ecosystem services they provide, there are few examples of regional or national policy and management addressing the full suite of pressures from across the reef-to-ridge complex that result in mangrove deforestation and loss. This is particularly true outside highly developed countries and specifically within the ETPS countries. This project will be innovative and timely by building and reinforcing the existing coastal site focused mangrove policy and management in the region – including the regional CPPS mangrove strategy – and expanding the perspective of these laws to recognize both pressures and ecosystem services associated with mangroves from reef to ridge.

Sustainability: This project will take place within the framework of a region where existing initiatives, regional scales projects and national investments have contributed within the last decades at building the many of the enabling conditions to ensure success of new conservation initiatives. Despite challenges, governments of the region are generally increasingly willing and committed to support conservation efforts recognizing to some extent the role and general value of ecosystems on human well-being.

The environmental policy framework in general, and the conservation of mangrove ecosystems specifically, is increasingly comprehensive in each of the four countries. In Ecuador for instance, mangrove protection is imbedded in the National Constitution (mangroves are recognized as fragile ecosystems that deserve priority protection) as well as in a series of existing legislation establishing provisions for their protection. Overall, the project will be based on basic but existing the policy framework which in turn it will help to improve.

The capacity in the region is also increasingly improving; thanks in part to initiatives like CI's ETPS program, which through support from the Walton Family Foundation has contributed widely to improving capacity with a sub-granting strategy. Nearly a hundred local partners from various sectors (academia, civil society, and public institutions) across the 4 ETPS countries have benefited from this program since 2005. This project aims at leveraging these achievements and contributing to it by working with existing regional, national and local actors and stakeholders.

In addition, the project will take place in a context where the financial sustainability of the regional network of marine protected areas have been received increasing attention from national authorities and philanthropy. For instance, all four countries have set up instruments and initiatives such as national funds (*Forever Costa Rica* in Costa Rica, *Fundación Natura* in Panama, *Fondo Acción* in Colombia, and *Fondo Ambiental Nacional* in Ecuador) that provide the foundation to the financial sustainability of their national network of protected areas and surrounding areas.

The Walton Family Foundation (WFF), which has been investing in supporting the consolidation MPAs and the conservation of surrounding areas, including most of the key mangrove areas included in the proposal, has great interest in the long-term financial sustainability of the network. In fact, to ensure sustainability of its past and current "investment" in the region, WFF and CI are planning in developing strategies and support the development of financing mechanisms for the long-term financial sustainability of key MPAs, and secure new financing sources during the 2014-2017 period. Over the project lifetime, CI will work at ensuring that key areas, including areas identified in this project, will have strategies for increasing and diversifying the revenue streams (public, philanthropy, trust funds, site generated incomes, etc) to cover long-term management of the areas.

To ensure results of this project are long-lasting and that the tools and instruments developed within this projects are implemented, buy-in from the very communities that will be involved in the protection, restoration and maintenance of mangrove ecosystem will be pursued.

Scaling Up: The CPPS mangrove strategy, national level policy and site-specific actions implemented with support from this project will provide the foundation for rapid and comprehensive expansion of mangrove conservation across the region. These policy and management tools will have country and

areas (and related industry groups) [E.g. shrimp farmers, tourism developers and operators, farmers operating within watershed etc.)	priorities	shrimp farming and tourism but also other users in the watershed such as farmers causing changes in freshwater flow and quality and fishermen dependant on mangrove related fish populations. Depending on the sites and the receptiveness of these users, the users will be actively included in the PPG stage of the project, implementation of the project or will be the target audience for outreach and communications outputs of the project.
Conservation and protected area administrators. Coastal and watershed coastal and land planners/managers.	Implementation of field conservation action National and local mangrove strategy and policy strengthening	This projects aims at improving the management of mangroves areas in and/or near existing protected areas rich in mangrove ecosystems and thus will include the active participation of representatives of these conservation areas administrators. Administrators will be key actors in the development of mangrove management plans. Depending on selected sites, this may include for example the administrator of Chiriquí National Park, Uramba-Bahía Malaga National Park, leaders of the Nicoya Gulf's Responsible Fishing Areas. Similarly the managers, planners and other relevant administrators for the coastal and watershed regions relevant to the field sites will be actively included in the PPG stage of the project and the implementation of the project as appropriate.
Local NGOs	Implementation of field conservation action	Existing local NGOs with previous experience in the areas where field action will be implemented, especially those with capacity to engage with local communities and/or association, will be identified and brought into the discussion as necessary.
National Ministries of Environment and other national level relevant ministries	Regional strategy development and implementation National and local mangrove strategy and policy strengthening	We will engage with the Ministries of each country responsible for topics related to the environment or aquatic resources and those with authority on protected areas. These actors will be contributing to the regional mangrove strategy within the framework of the Mangrove Technical Working Group created within CPPS. At the national level, they are the main leaders of their respective national mangrove strategy creation, revision and implementation, as well as leaders for the development of stronger regulations and incentives conducive to mangrove conservation. Some of the relevant authorities include MAE (Ecuador), ANAM and ARAP (Panama), MINAET (Costa Rica), MADS (Colombia).
Ministries of foreign affairs or most relevant authority	Regional strategy development and implementation	Depending on the feasibility of developing a transboundary protected mangrove areas between Ecuador and Colombia, the proper authorities, likely the ministries of foreign affairs, will be brought in the discussion and planning process.
CPPS	Regional strategy development and implementation	The Southern Pacific Permanent Commission (CPPS) is a key platform at the regional level, based in Guayaquil, Ecuador. Three of four countries in the project (Ecuador, Colombia and Panama) are contracting parties to this regional body. The CPPS leads the development of a regional mangrove strategy, which this project aims at supporting its finalization and implementation. The CPPS will be the host of a <i>Mangrove Technical Working Group</i> within which other stakeholders will provide inputs on the finalization or implementation of strategy.
UNESCO	Executing	UNESCO, with representatives based in Quito Ecuador, will

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

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

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

Risks	Ranking	Mitigation Strategy
Climate change, resulting in changed/increased pressures on mangrove forests	Medium	The project's emphasis on conserving mangroves will, due to buffering and stabilizing effect they have in the face of sea level rise and greater storm intensity
Weak institutional capacities for planning, management and governance in targeted mangrove forest areas	Medium	The risk will be reduced by working with and strengthening diverse institutions, from the national governments to local levels, thereby minimizing dependence on any one institution. The project will invest in addressing key capacity gaps; baseline analysis to be carried out during the PPG phase
Limited capacity, commitment and/or governance among local people in target mangrove forest areas.	Medium	Starting with the design phase, the project will work in a participatory manner with local communities to discuss and define the strategies to be implemented in the mangrove forest areas, in order to maximize the likelihood of ownership and uptake
Changes in some institutions providing co-financing could lead to their inability to do so	Low	Much of the co-financing for this project has already been secured. This risk will be further mitigated as much as possible by working with co-financing partners through the design phase to secure their involvement and investment.

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

As in any relatively large, multi-country project strong coordination between projects, with government and with major stakeholders is central to success. Over the past ten years CI has become specialized in building and participating in multiple networks across the ETPS countries. The following table explains with whom, and how, coordination will be maintained during this project.

Initiative	Coordination
<p>Title: Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape Program Donor: Walton Foundation Geography: Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador</p>	<p>The project will be closely coordinated with the broader Seascape Program, specifically building on the extensive coastal and marine conservation, policy and capacity building programs that have been developed over the last 10 years. This project will integrate the mangrove strategies and plans on regional to national to local levels with ongoing policy and site implementation work across the region. The project will build on the extensive networks of partners built through the Seascapes program, including the strong relationships</p>

<p>Panama and beyond Donor: GEF Geography: National and Gulf of Chiriquí, Panama</p>	<p>into capacity building and outreach with stakeholders. If the Gulf of Chiriquí is selected as a field site, these results will advise project design and implementation. More specifically, the project will support the objectives of the Panama GEF project related to mangrove areas such as adoption of needed policy reforms.</p>
<p>Title: Blue Carbon Initiative Donor: Various private foundations, NASA Geography: International</p>	<p>The Blue Carbon Initiative (BCI) will directly support the analysis and communication of results of this project by providing technical support and advise to project design and implementation. Additionally, the BCI will integrate the results of this project into its policy and management related activities and the outputs of this project will directly advise the research and other priority activities of the BCI, including the expansion of the Initiative into ecosystem services beyond carbon.</p>

B. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONSISTENCY OF THE PROJECT WITH:

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

As noted above, this project is consistent with growing national mangrove policies and regulations and is consistent with national policy goals and international commitments. The following table explains this alignment and complementarity.

Agreement/Strategy/Plan	Consistency with this projects
<p>CPPS regional mangrove action plan</p>	<p>This project is consistent with existing efforts and initiatives currently under way in the region. At the regional level, this project will have a direct contribution to the regional mangrove action plan led by the CPPS and for which CI and the UNESCO have been mandate to produce. This project is consistent and shares the same purpose of supporting the participating governments in strengthening their policies and programs for the protection, sustainable use and recuperation and/or restoration of the region's mangroves. Both aims at providing the most appropriate regional framework and tools that respect and is in alignment with national priorities.</p>
<p>Colombia national mangrove program</p>	<p>This project shares similarities with specific objectives of the programs:</p> <p>Sub-program No 2. Planning for the conservation and sustainable use of mangrove: formulate and implement integrated management plans.</p> <p>Sub-program No 3. Protected areas: Support y strengthen the management of protected areas with mangrove ecosystems and coordinate with local communities the establishment and delimitation of new areas under the most adequate management category.</p> <p>Sub-program No 4. Investigation: Incentivize the scientific community, institutions and communities in general, to develop and participate in basic applied investigation in mangrove ecosystems.</p> <p>Sub-program No 5. Citizen participation, conservation education and training. Promote education and capacity building for the sustainable use and conservation with the aim of raising awareness of citizens on the values and functions of the mangrove y guaranty the participation of communities y</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> protection of coastal and oceanic resources ST13: Strengthening of national capacity for sustainable management of biodiversity.
Panama's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)	<p>This project addresses, directly or indirectly the following NBSAP's <i>Strategic Objectives</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SO4: Elaborate policies, legal instruments, and methods to value biodiversity to incentivize sustainable use of biological resources. SO5: Increase local community participation in planning, management and use of biodiversity SO10: Ensure <i>in situ</i> conservation, including through strengthening of the National System of Protected Areas SO12: Contribute to the conservation of the global biological diversity.
Ecuador's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)	<p>This project addresses, directly or indirectly the following NBSAP's <i>Strategic Lines/Results</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SL1: Sustainability of productive activities based on native biodiversity. Specific results include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detain deforestation processes of native "forests" SL2: Ensure existence and integrity and functionality of the components of biodiversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidated National System of Protected Areas Protect threatened species Restoration of degraded ecosystems
National Laws, policies, and regulations	<p>This project both supports and is developed within the framework on national constitution, national laws, especially the ones related to environment and mangrove protection</p>

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

The proposed project is largely consistent with Objectives 2 and 3 of the IW focal area.

This project links to the regional strategy under the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (Comisión Permanente del Pacífico Sur - CPPS) (members countries Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama and Peru, with Costa Rica as a cooperating non-party) that has recently committed to creating and implementing a region-wide mangrove strategy (Plan de Acción). Through the ratification and implementation of a comprehensive multi government mangrove conservation strategy, this project will demonstrate political commitment and directly address the governance and capacity issues that lead to continued mangrove deforestation in the ETPS despite growing recognition of the importance of these ecosystems.

Finally, this project will build on a strong foundation of current regional and national policy and conservation partnerships and networks to create and implement integrated and coordinated regional and national plans for mangrove conservation and restoration across the 4 countries.

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

B.3.1 Conservation International has nearly a decade of implementing large regional marine projects in the Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape. During this period CI has invested over \$30M in the region of which nearly half has been re-granted in over 200 sub-projects to nearly 100 national and local partner organizations. Over the past decade CI has developed constructive working relationships with multiple local communities, the private sector and governments at all scales.