

PROJECT EVALUATION SERIES

**Final Evaluation of Development of
the Trans-frontier Conservation
Area linking forest reserves and
protected areas in Ghana and Côte
d'Ivoire (GCP/RAF/447/GFF &
GEF ID 3984)**

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Acronyms and abbreviations

CA	Conservation Alliance
DPN	Direction de la Protection de la Nature
ET	Evaluation Team
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GFC	Forestry Commission in Ghana
HQ	Head quarter
HWC	Human-wildlife conflict
IPM	Integrated pest management
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
LoA	Letter of Agreement
LTU	Lead Technical Unit
MGE	Mainstreaming Gender Equality
NPC	National Project coordinator
OED	FAO Office of Evaluation
OIPR	Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves
PIR	Project Implementing report
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SO	FAO Strategic Objective
SODEFOR	<i>Société de Développement des Forêts</i> (Society for Forest Development)
TFCA	Trans-frontier conservation area
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of trainers
WD	Wildlife Division in Ghana

Executive Summary

1. In West Africa, wildlife species including elephants are found in small, isolated forest fragments. As human and economic activities expand, habitat fragmentation accelerates and animals face a growing threat of extinction. In many forest reserves, communities engage in subsistence agriculture and rely on wild animals for meat. Human-wildlife conflict has also been on the rise, with few efforts so far to solve this problem.
2. In this context, the project GCP/RAF/447/GFF sought to construct a conservation corridor between Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana in the Bia-Diambarakro area, a priority landscape for forest conservation and home to several endemic species. The project, funded by the Global Environment Fund and implemented by FAO, had an operating budget of USD 2,218,749. The total budget includes the co-financing and grants provided by the governments of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. The project started in 2013, benefitted from an extension, and closed activities in April 2018.
3. The project, working primarily with Conservation Alliance, la Société de développement des forêts (SODEFOR), and national and local partners aimed to improve environmental outcomes by linking forest and wildlife reserves, while also enhancing livelihoods of local communities through sustainable land and agricultural practices.
4. During the last months of the project, a final evaluation assessed changes to which the project contributed. The evaluation collected field level data during March 2018, meeting with stakeholders as well as community beneficiaries on both sides of the border. The evaluation relied on qualitative data collection tools, namely document review, key informant interviews and focus group discussions to gather information related to the results achieved. Additionally, a beneficiary satisfaction survey gathered feedback from community members both directly and indirectly involved in the project. The evaluation used multiple sources to triangulate data collected to ensure the validity of information presented in this report.
5. The project logic in terms of technical approach was strong, drawing from internationally accepted standard practices. However, stakeholders interviewed largely acknowledged the ambitiousness of the project's environmental and development objectives. Although the project is seen as an important first step, it did not possess adequate resources, namely the time and budget, to achieve the objectives as planned in the project document.
6. Recognition of this shortcoming first came during a mid-term review exercise. Most activities suggested in the project document were implemented, but at a smaller scale in accordance with the available budget. Only 2% of the targeted area was reached and, despite implementation of most project activities, no direct outcome was fully achieved.
7. Conservation Alliance, the primary executing partner for both countries and based in Ghana, was a coherent and efficient partner for the Ghanaian side of the project. In Ghana, relevant stakeholders carried out key project activities. The project even managed to compensate for limited resources by partnering with institutions having

capacity in areas of work relevant to the project, such as the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture who worked on the alternative livelihoods aspect.

8. The project did produce short-term results, and these results show signs of sustainability and potential for long term impact. More than 200,000 trees were planted, awareness generated in communities, and some capacity developed in communities and governmental institutions for conservation development actions. Importantly, the project supported the development of synergies and collaboration between stakeholders from the two countries. This gain became a lesson learned for future projects showing that trans frontier collaboration must be promoted at all levels, including the highest level, in each country. Stakeholders should share a vision and work in synergy towards a common goal.
9. Capacity development, primarily at the community level, represents another achievement of the project. Exchange visits between stakeholders of the two countries resulted in mutual inspiration. The trainings on conservation techniques and issues related to human-wildlife conflict adequately targeted beneficiaries and were well received – the average satisfaction score was 3.6 out of 4 among community members.
10. Short-term gains, however, were more modest on the Côte d'Ivoire side where the project faced a number of challenges. The selection of the executing partner, SODEFOR, did not take into account its limited capacity to manage fauna and communities living outside of forest areas. Other stakeholders were left out of the project, including *l'Agence nationale d'appui au développement rural (ANADER)* and the *Direction des Eaux et Forêts*. The limited capacity resulted in delayed implementation of certain activities.
11. The delays resulting from the lack of a targeted partnership strategy in Cote d'Ivoire were compounded by the problem of translation from English to French. The lack of time and budget dedicated to translate project documents and resources for francophone stakeholders became a major impediment to implementation, starting from project launch.
12. Despite delays and the limited tangible results of the project, most stakeholders expressed high levels of satisfaction with the project given achievements despite limited resources. The project managed to engage stakeholders in the issues of conservation and forest and wildlife protection, and the evaluation recommends immediate actions to continue current work as well as plans to scale up activities to preserve important gains achieved.

Conclusions

Conclusion 1 (Relevance). The project design was appropriate in terms of logic and a coherent Theory of Change, but the project's goals and objectives were too ambitious considering the limited resources and time frame.

Conclusion 2 (Progress to impact). The project has affected some change, including capacity building among communities and ecosystem restoration and protection, but impact remains low due to insufficient time and financial resources.

Conclusion 3 (Monitoring and evaluation system). The project did not include a well-defined gender approach in its formulation and did not allocate any budget to the planning, implementation and monitoring of a gender sensitive approach.

Conclusion 4 (Effectiveness and efficiency). Project management was appropriate and effective in Ghana, but problematic in Côte d'Ivoire until the last six months of project implementation.

Conclusion 5 (Efficiency). The partnership strategy of the project consisted of identifying and involving all major stakeholders for informed decision-making and efficient implementation, although more so in Ghana than Côte d'Ivoire. Likewise, transfer of capacity was more successful in Ghana than in Côte d'Ivoire.

Conclusion 6 (Sustainability). Some results of the project are sustainable but rather limited in scope. This suggests that more institutional and individual capacity building, awareness raising, technical and financial support is needed to ensure environmental and socio-economic impact.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1 to Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire national partners

The project is relevant to both countries and to the future of biodiversity, yet its current impact is limited. The countries should consider taking immediate actions to continue key project activities such as surveillance, tree planting, community organization and awareness raising in order to maintain project outcomes, while searching for new sources of funding to scale up and reach long term goals of the project.

Recommendation 2 to FAO and GEF

Considering the relevance of the project and key achievements, it is logical to envisage scaling up the project. However as the current impact of the project remains low, supporting project scaling up in the same region makes more sense at this stage rather than replicating the project elsewhere, which runs the risk of encountering similar challenges of limited resources in the face of ambitious goals.

Recommendation 3 to FAO, GEF, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire

A project design based on a thorough analysis of the environmental, institutional and socio-economic context of the project implementation areas is key to project success. Before the implementation phase of future projects, an updated analysis could support an adjustment of project goals to more accurately reflect the conditions of implementation.

Recommendation 4 to FAO

It would be useful for FAO to provide the policy support necessary to codify relevant land and tree ownership security measures for communities.

There is a real need of land and tree ownership security in both countries, as this represents an incentive to encourage community receptiveness towards environmental initiatives. Tree and land registration processes are lengthy and costly and need to be further clarified and simplified.

In Ghana, farmers may be allowed to stagger payment of tree registration fees over several years; in Côte d'Ivoire, foreign farmers who plant trees on their farms should have the right to receive a share from the selling of these trees in the future even if they are not land owners. This should be clearly delineated in the new Forest Law.

Recommendation 5 to FAO and GEF and project formulators

Mainstreaming gender equity is not only a requirement of FAO and GEF policies, it is required to adequately face development challenges. The design of future projects should include a clear and relevant gender approach that considers the needs of different groups in a community to ensure success and sustainability.

Recommendation 6 to FAO, GEF, Ghana, and Côte d'Ivoire

In a multilingual context, language issues can jeopardize joint efforts although these are indispensable. In the design of future project, funds should be secured for the translation of project-related documents to ensure effective trans frontier collaboration.

Lessons Learned

Lesson 1: The adequacy of project goals and resources is key to project success

- A major reason why the impact of this project was limited is the mismatch between project goals and project resources.

Lesson 2: Community engagement requires awareness raising, capacity building, and targeted incentives

- Communities adhere to conservation and development initiatives when they understand why these are important and they know what to do and how to do it. Nonetheless, understanding is sometimes not enough to ensure engagement, especially when communities lack financial support to implement learned techniques.

Lesson 3: Capacity building of governmental institutions must be carefully planned to improve efficiency

- The leadership of governmental institutions in projects related to their mandate is key to sustainability but governmental institutions often lack expertise, human resources and appropriate equipment to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

Lesson 4: Trans-frontier collaboration must be promoted at all levels including at the highest level in each country

- A trans-frontier corridor project cannot be effective if stakeholders across the countries do not share the same vision and do not work in synergy to achieve the expected goal.

Lesson 5: Future projects working across countries and languages should make particular efforts to identify the appropriate partners in each context during project design

- Institutions in different countries may have similar names but do not necessarily have identical mandates. Identification of appropriate partners is key for effective project implementation, as is the clear definition of the roles and responsibilities of each partner.

1 Introduction

1. This report presents the final evaluation of the FAO-GEF project “Development of the Trans-frontier Conservation Area linking forest reserves and protected areas in Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire” GCP/RAF/447/GFF”.
2. The project, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), was signed in 2013, benefitting from a medium size grant by the Governments of Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire for USD 859,000, for an implementation period of three years. In addition, the project benefited from co-financing amounting to USD 1,597,000.
3. The project aimed to link forest reserves in and around Bia in Ghana and Diambarakro in Côte d’Ivoire. The project started in 2013 and was extended until April 2018. It was implemented primarily by the Forestry Commission in Ghana, the Société de Développement des Forêts (SODEFOR) in Côte d’Ivoire and coordinated by Conservation Alliance International (CA) with support from a number of partners including NGOs and governmental institutions. Although not initially conceived as a pilot project, the project came to be seen by stakeholders as preparatory work to establish a viable and sustainable trans-frontier conservation area (TFCA).

4. Overall the project aimed to improve biodiversity conservation in protected areas and the production landscape within the TFCA, and to reduce identified barriers to sustainable forest and land management. The four components of the project were: i) improved capacity for biodiversity conservation; ii) ecosystem restoration and protection; iii) strengthened conservation in the production landscape; and iv) project management and monitoring.
5. Project formulators designed the project to tackle the main threats to biodiversity conservation and sustainable land and forest management in the area which include: agricultural expansion; negative incentives to remove tree cover; environmental pressure from hunting; human-wildlife conflict; and the weak capacity of local institutions to address the aforementioned issues.

1.1 Purpose of the evaluation

6. The purpose of the final evaluation is twofold: (i) to provide an independent assessment of the overall results of the project and (ii) to document lessons learned and provide recommendations for the design and implementation of on-going and future activities in similar areas of work, in particular future trans-boundary cooperations implemented by FAO, GEF and the countries of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. Annex 1 includes complete the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the evaluation.

1.1.1 Intended users

7. The main audience and intended users of the final evaluation are:

Table 1: Evaluation audience and intended use

Primary audience	Intended uses
Government of Côte d'Ivoire Government of Ghana The Global Environmental Fund (GEF) FAO Conservation Alliance	Strategic and informed decision-making Support and sustain project results Support future resource mobilization Improve the implementation of future projects and related activities in the region
Secondary audience	Intended uses
Forestry Commission (Ghana) <i>Société de Développement des Forêts-</i> SODEFOR (Côte d'Ivoire) The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) FC Wildlife and Forest Services Divisions; Rocha Ghana	Strategic and informed decision-making Improve on-going and future capacity development interventions Support and sustain project results

<i>Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves (OIPR)</i> <i>Direction de la Protection de la Nature (DPN:</i> <i>Dissolved in late 2017)</i>	
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1.2 Scope and objective of the evaluation

Scope

8. The scope of the present evaluation covers the entire period of project implementation from 2013 to April 2018. The geographic coverage of the evaluation extends to all project implementation sites in Western Ghana and Eastern Côte d'Ivoire. Sites selected for field visits include two Districts of the Western Region of Ghana, i.e. the Bia West District (Bia National Park and neighbouring communities, especially Nafana and Debiso) and the Juaboso District (Krokusua Hills Forest Reserve, Sui River) and the Abengourou Commune, Eastern Côte d'Ivoire (Forêt Classée de Bossematié, Apoisso, Bokakokoré, Bebou, Pierrekro, Pokoukro).

Objectives

9. The objectives of the evaluation are:
 - a. To assess the adequacy of the project design;
 - b. To identify changes to which the project has contributed; and
 - c. To identify sustainability measures, including partnerships, to propel project gains forward.
10. The final evaluation focused on the following key evaluation questions:
 1. To what extent was the project design appropriate? Was the Theory of Change adequate and coherent?
 2. To what extent has the project contributed to change in communities, including those planned in the logical framework, as well as any unintended effects and changes in communities not targeted by the project? What factors led to achieving these results?
 3. To what extent were the expected results achieved in the crosscutting areas of capacity development, gender and environmental impact?
 4. How appropriate and effective was project management, including the monitoring and evaluation of project activities and results?
 5. What, if any, was the partnership strategy of the project and was this approach coherent?
 6. To what extent are project results sustainable?

1.3 Methodology

11. The evaluation followed the Policies, Norms and Standards of the GEF¹ and of the UNEG². The evaluation used a consultative and transparent approach, involving internal and external stakeholders throughout the process. Initial findings were validated through triangulation with multiple information sources. The resulting evidence informed the development of the evaluation conclusions and recommendations.
12. The independent evaluation was carried out from January to July 2018, with field work in March and April 2018. It was conducted by an evaluation team (ET) composed of two experts with experience in biodiversity conservation, food security and evaluation methodology. The process was supervised and supported by the Evaluation Manager from FAO's Office of Evaluation (OED).
13. During the preparatory phase of the evaluation, the evaluation team developed the data collection methodology in collaboration with the OED Evaluation Manager, following an initial review of project documentation, stakeholder mapping and evaluation timeframe. Next, the ET prepared an evaluation matrix to guide the evaluation process. The matrix (Appendix 3) details how each evaluation question and sub-question is answered, as well as related indicators and information sources.
14. The ET relied mainly on the following qualitative methods:
 - a. Desk review of over 70 documents (listed in Appendix 5);
 - b. Semi-structured interviews with key informants and stakeholders (checklist for the interviews in Appendix 3 and list of people interviewed in Appendix 4);
 - c. Direct observation during field visits in the two countries.
15. The sites were selected during consultations between the evaluation team and the project team to enable the ET to observe activities carried out under the different components of the project, and speak with various beneficiaries as well as institutions involved, including SODEFOR, FAO, Conservation Alliance, the Forestry Commission and other partners.
16. In addition, a quantitative tool in the form of a satisfaction questionnaire collected feedback from 69 community members, and benefitted from quantitative data documented in various reports.
17. The satisfaction questionnaire gathered information on community members' perception of project results, in related to community participation in the project. A non-probability sampling method for the survey was applied based on the people met

¹ Independent Evaluation Office GEF: <http://www.gefio.org/sites/default/files/ieo/evaluations/gef-me-policy-2010-eng.pdf>

² United Nations Evaluation Group, <http://www.uneval.org/normsandstandards>

in the beneficiary communities. Individuals present answered the satisfaction survey after they participated in general group interviews.

18. At the end of the field mission, the evaluation team held a de-briefing meeting in Accra in March 2018 to discuss main findings, preliminary conclusions and recommendations with the primary stakeholders. The Lead Technical Officer (LTO) of the project (based in FAO Regional Office for Africa, RAF), the Executive Director of CA, the International project coordinator (CA) and the two National Project Coordinators representing the Wildlife Division and SODEFOR attended the debriefing. An additional de-briefing meeting, for which the LTO was also in attendance, was held the same day with the Deputy Regional Representative of FAO RAF.

Table 2: Number of people interviewed by the evaluation team

	Institutional interviewees		Community members		Total	% Women
	Men	Women	M	W		
Ghana	16	1	27	9	53	19%
Côte d'Ivoire	21	4	107	10	142	10%
FAO RAF	3	0	0	0	3	0%
FAO HQ	1	1	0	0	2	50%
Total	41	6	134	19	200	13%

19. The methodology developed relied on the identification of sub-questions and accompanying indicators to answer the evaluations questions, taking into account the time and resources of available to the evaluation. The evaluation matrix outlines the approach to answer each evaluation question and sub-question (appendix 3).

1.4 Limitations

20. The evaluation faced the following limitations:
- i. The final itinerary for site visits was developed in close consultation with the project team. The evaluation chose to observe field sites with completed activities and where interaction with beneficiaries was possible. This introduces an element of bias in terms of site selection, as a systematic sampling strategy, e.g. random sampling, was not used. The primary reason for the non-use of a random sampling strategy was time constraints combined with the information needs of the evaluation stakeholders who requested information related to tangible project results.
 - ii. The distribution of the satisfaction questionnaire was not done in optimal conditions, as many respondents were not direct beneficiaries of the project. These individuals did not receive training, technical and financial support from the project, and were rather members of the greater communities. Regarding attendance of community members during focus group discussions, participants

from the community self-selected. It was not feasible, given the time constraints of the evaluation, for the ET to sample only direct beneficiaries, separating them from other community members who attended group discussions.

- iii. Probability sampling for the questionnaire was not feasible as there was no accurate database listing all project beneficiaries and disaggregated by the type of benefit they received. Although the satisfaction questionnaire cannot be generalized to all beneficiaries, it does provide anecdotal evidence indicating that the project was well received, a finding further supported by reports indicating high participation rates.
- iv. In some cases, the ET was unable to locate or access project documentation, including documentation related to expenses per country and some financial reports. However, most relevant documents were made available and analysed (list of documents in Appendix 5).
- v. Most key stakeholders were available and interviewed. The ET did not interview several stakeholders from government and other partners due either to unavailability during the evaluation period or staff turnover.

1.5 Structure of the Report

- 21. After the introductory chapter, chapter 2 describes the national contexts, chapter 3 provides the Theory of Change and key findings related to evaluation questions, and finally chapter 4 outlines the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learnt.

2 Background and context of the project

- 22. Wildlife species, especially elephants in the forests of West Africa, are now found in small isolated fragments. Many of these animal groups are too small to survive long term and will probably dwindle to extinction unless conservation action is taken. A network of forest reserves and shelterbelts in southeastern Côte d'Ivoire and southwestern Ghana was identified as a priority landscape providing habitat for the populations of a number of scattered elephants and other endemic or threatened species. Identified forest reserves include the Bia National Park (in Ghana) and the Bossématié classified forest (in Côte d'Ivoire), recognized as a world heritage of biodiversity hotspots. As human and economic activities expand, habitat fragmentation accelerates and these animals face an increasing threat of extinction. In such ecosystems, people engage in subsistence and cash crop agriculture, and are heavily dependent on wild animals for meat. Human-wildlife conflict has also been on the rise and there have been few efforts to date to solve this problem.
- 23. The project idea was developed during a priority-setting workshop held in Elmina, Ghana in December 1999 to assess the conservation needs in the Upper Guinea region. The workshop, supported by GEF, the World Bank and Conservation International, formerly designated the Bia-Diambarakro area as a priority trans-border conservation area.

24. Based on that identification, the governments of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, with support from WWF Regional Office for West Africa, approached FAO with a request to develop the project in July 2007. FAO submitted an initial concept note detailing land degradation issues, and following this GEF requested to include the intended project in the biodiversity component of the GEF programme for West Africa. FAO submitted a second version of the concept note to comply with the GEF request, and GEF approved the concept note in September 2009.
25. In March 2010, GEF approved a Project Preparation Grant (PPG). Conservation Alliance was identified as a local partner with the expertise to work with FAO, along with national institutions such as the Forestry Commission in Ghana and the Société de Développement des Forêts (SODEFOR) in Côte d'Ivoire. The original scope of project activities incorporated GEF and FAO priorities for the region and the countries.
26. The project's global environmental objective is to establish a viable and sustainable trans-frontier conservation area (TFCA), linking forest reserves and protected areas in and around Bia in Ghana and Diambarakro in Côte d'Ivoire. Anticipated environmental benefits of the project include improved biodiversity conservation in the protected areas and production landscapes within the TFCA, and improved capacity to engage in sustainable forest and land management.
27. The project development objective is to enhance the sustainable livelihoods of local communities living in and around the Bia-Diambarakro TFCA through sound agricultural and sustainable land use practices.
28. The project commenced in November 2013 with a launching workshop, which included participation of primary stakeholders. It is structured along four components and nine sub-subcomponents. The principal components are:
 1. **Component 1: Improved capacity for biodiversity conservation:** The objective of is to improve the capacities of protected area staff and communities for biodiversity conservation in protected areas and the production landscape.

Subcomponent 1.1: Protected area management, monitoring and evaluation (MME): The objective of this subcomponent is to build the capacity of forestry and conservation staff for the effective management of the TFCA.

Subcomponent 1.2: Development of a management plan for the area.
 2. **Component 2: Ecosystem restoration and protection:** The objective of this component is to improve the local habitat and ensure a viable corridor for trans-boundary conservation of wildlife and biodiversity

Subcomponent 2.1: Strengthening the protection of forest and tree resources outside of government forest reserves: The objective of this subcomponent to support biodiversity conservation through strengthened tree and forest tenure.

Subcomponent 2.2: Strengthening community management of forest and wildlife resources: The objective of this subcomponent is to establish two additional

Community Resource Management Areas (CREMA) in Ghana and improve the management of community forests in Côte d'Ivoire to consolidate the trans-frontier conservation area (TFCA).

Subcomponent 2.3: Ecosystem restoration: The objective of this subcomponent is to restore degraded parts of the TFCA outside the forest reserves.

3. **Component 3: Strengthened conservation in the production landscape:** The objective of this component is to support conservation and enhance sustainable livelihoods in the production landscape in and around the TFCA.

Subcomponent 3.1: Assessment and reduction of human-wildlife conflict

Subcomponent 3.2: Cocoa agroforestry and improved SLM practices: The objective of this subcomponent is to train farmers in improved management practices to increase yields and incomes, and improve biodiversity on their farms.

- **Component 4: Project management and monitoring:** The objective of this component is to establish a cost-effective project management and monitoring system to support successful implementation of the project.

29. Primary project stakeholders and their respective roles in project implementation are listed in the table below:

Table 3: Project stakeholders

<p>Regional stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Alliance (CA) • International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) 	<p>Principal role in the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Project coordination • CA and IITA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Technical support for the development of corridors and management of protected areas ○ Capacity building (as trainers) ○ Awareness-raising ○ Capacity Development on Cocoa Agro-Forestry ○ Support to biodiversity monitoring and evaluation
<p>National stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ghana: government departments responsible for environment, agriculture and forestry (Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, Forestry Commission, EPA-focal point for GEF), research institutions (Forest Research Institute of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Ghana Institute of Foresters), NGOs (A Rocha) 	<p>Role in the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection, consultation and formalization of sites for corridor development • Participation in funding disbursement and management (GEF funds and co-financing) • Investments in infrastructure for conservation and sustainable forest and land management. • Capacity building (trainers and trainees) • Awareness-raising

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Côte d'Ivoire: government departments responsible for environment, agriculture and forestry (SODEFOR, OIPR, DPN and the focal points for biodiversity and environment, Ministry of Finance), research institutions (CSRS), NGO (SOS Forêts) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project management and oversight at the national level • Project monitoring and evaluation
<p>Local stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local community members • Traditional authorities • Local government agencies • Identifiable groups in communities • Local businesses • Community Based Organizations • Other relevant and interested citizens 	<p>Role in the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of community-based protected area management and other conservation activities • Trainees (reducing human-wildlife conflict, improved farming techniques, etc.) • Development and management of wildlife corridors • Implementation of improved farming techniques

3 Evaluation questions: key findings

3.1 Evaluation question 1: To what extent was the project design appropriate? Was the Theory of Change adequate and coherent?

- The ToC was appropriate and logical, but unrealistic given the project duration and available resources.
- In Ghana, relevant stakeholders and partners were involved in project design but participation in was limited in Côte d'Ivoire, which explains shortcomings in the latter country, along with the exclusions of some stakeholders.
- The project lacked dedicated funds to translate documents from English to French, which also reduced participation amongst Ivoirian stakeholders.
- Project goals were ambitious but activities were relevant to establish a foundation to achieve long-term goals.

30. To answer this question, the ET undertook three areas of analysis: adequacy of resources; involvement of relevant stakeholders in project design; and the relevance of the project objectives.

31. The resources available for the project were: USD 859,000 allocated by GEF. The materialized co-financing, USD 1,359,749, was in kind (see appendix 2 for more detail).

Table 4: Cofinancing materialized

GEF allocation	859,000 \$	
Ghana (gov + partners)	450,000 \$	in kind
Cote d'Ivoire (gov + partners)	357,749 \$	in kind
Conservation Alliance	72,000 \$	in kind
FAO	480,000 \$	in kind
Total	2,218,749 \$	

32. All stakeholders and partners interviewed by the ET found the budget and resources insufficient to achieve the planned outcomes of the project. Likewise, the duration of the project was not realistic. Most stakeholders interviewed estimated a minimum of 10 or 15 years of continued work before signs of impact could be measured. The project dealt with long term issues like the restoration of degraded forest via reforestation. Much has been written³ indicating that the adoption of new technologies and techniques in agriculture, especially by small farmers, is a long and slow process. Although indicators of factors for adoption of new technologies vary by study due to contextual relevance, common ones include: 1) farm size; 2) risk exposure and capacity to bear risk; 3) human capital; 4) labour availability; 5) credit constraints; 6) tenure; and 7) access to commodity markets. Some of the aforementioned indicators were targeted by the project, but require on-going work for sustainability.
33. According to several stakeholders, including FAO and CA, the project was approved despite design flaws as it was important to begin efforts as soon as possible to achieve long-term goals. Ivorian institutional stakeholders, especially SODEFOR, stated that the situation in the field had changed dramatically in Côte d'Ivoire between the time of project design compared to when the project was approved, further compounding a mismatch between resources and needs.
34. From project onset, the limitations imposed by the budget were widely recognized. In 2015, one year after project commencement, an FAO Headquarters-managed Mid-term review emphasized this and the ambitiousness of the expected results. Most activities suggested in the project proposal were implemented, but at a smaller scale and scope given the available budget. Only 2% of the population of the target area was reached (more details in evaluation question 4). Despite implementation of most project activities, no direct outcome was fully achieved, and the broader outcomes are far from being achieved.
35. Another important limitation for the Ivorian institutions was the language barrier. The language barrier also limited the development of bilateral relations. The project did not secure budget for translation, which is key for a multilingual project. Budget revisions after the MTR facilitated efforts especially in the Ivorian side where a translator was hired for all trans-frontier meetings, including exchange visits.
36. Despite limited tangible results of the project, the majority of the partners interviewed report high levels of satisfaction given the activities carried out with available time and resources. The consideration of the project as a preparatory phase of a larger and longer program allowed partners to focus on the gains of the project, who felt activities were a step in the right direction. They indicated that communities and partners are now engaged and have a better understanding of the needs for the project. However, if activities cease with project closure, stakeholders expressed that most efforts are likely to be lost in the medium term in Ghana and the short term in Côte d'Ivoire.

³ One example: <http://blogs.cornell.edu/policyreview/2011/07/01/agricultural-technology-adoption-issues-for-consideration-when-scaling-up/>

37. In Ghana, partners confirmed involvement in the early stages of the project and showed an understanding of most aspects of the project except the co-financing, which was not always well understood. Ivorian partners knew of the project's existence, but most reported a lack of involvement in the project formulation and design (Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves – OIPR, different departments of the Ministère des Eaux-et-Forêts, etc.). Sociopolitical change interrupted regular interaction between Ivorian and Ghanaian stakeholders for several years, and as such the final version of the approved project seems to have been designed mostly in Ghana. With limited involvement of Ivorian institutions (drafting of the project document was done during the Ivorian socio-political crisis), the document lacked contextual specificity related to the changing socio-economic and environmental reality in project areas.
38. The project document also seems to reflect the assumption that similar ministries in each country have identical mandates. The practical result is that in Côte d'Ivoire, key stakeholders reported no involvement in the project, specifically the Direction Régionale des Eaux et Forêts, the government stakeholder in charge of fauna and human-wildlife conflicts (HWC). SODEFOR indicated that following the end of the Ivorian crisis, it was deemed necessary to accept the project despite design flaws given the advanced stage of the GEF approval process. In one interview, a stakeholder indicated that due to budget constraints it was not possible to further involve some stakeholders after project approval. However, this was not confirmed by all stakeholders.
39. The project was endorsed in 2012 and at the time of endorsement aligned with relevant national policies and international conventions and agreements to which both countries were signatories. It was also aligned with GEF and FAO strategic objectives. By the time of this evaluation, more than 7 years after project design, the project continues to be relevant to national policies and priorities. In 2014, Côte d'Ivoire approved a new Forestry Law⁴ and supported farmers to understand it, and both activities align with project objectives. The objectives of the project also support implementation of the new law.
40. The project contributes to FAO Strategic Objective 2 "Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable". The project aligns with the GEF Strategic programme 4 (GEF-4) in the Focal Area of Biodiversity, focusing on its Strategic Objective 1 (BD – SO1) to catalyze sustainability of Protected Area (PA) systems and Strategic Objective 2 (BD – SO2) to mainstream biodiversity in production landscapes.

Theory of change

41. To understand how and why an intervention is working, there is a need to understand how the activities of the intervention are expected to lead to desired results -- both the results chain from activities to outcomes and impacts, and why the various links in the

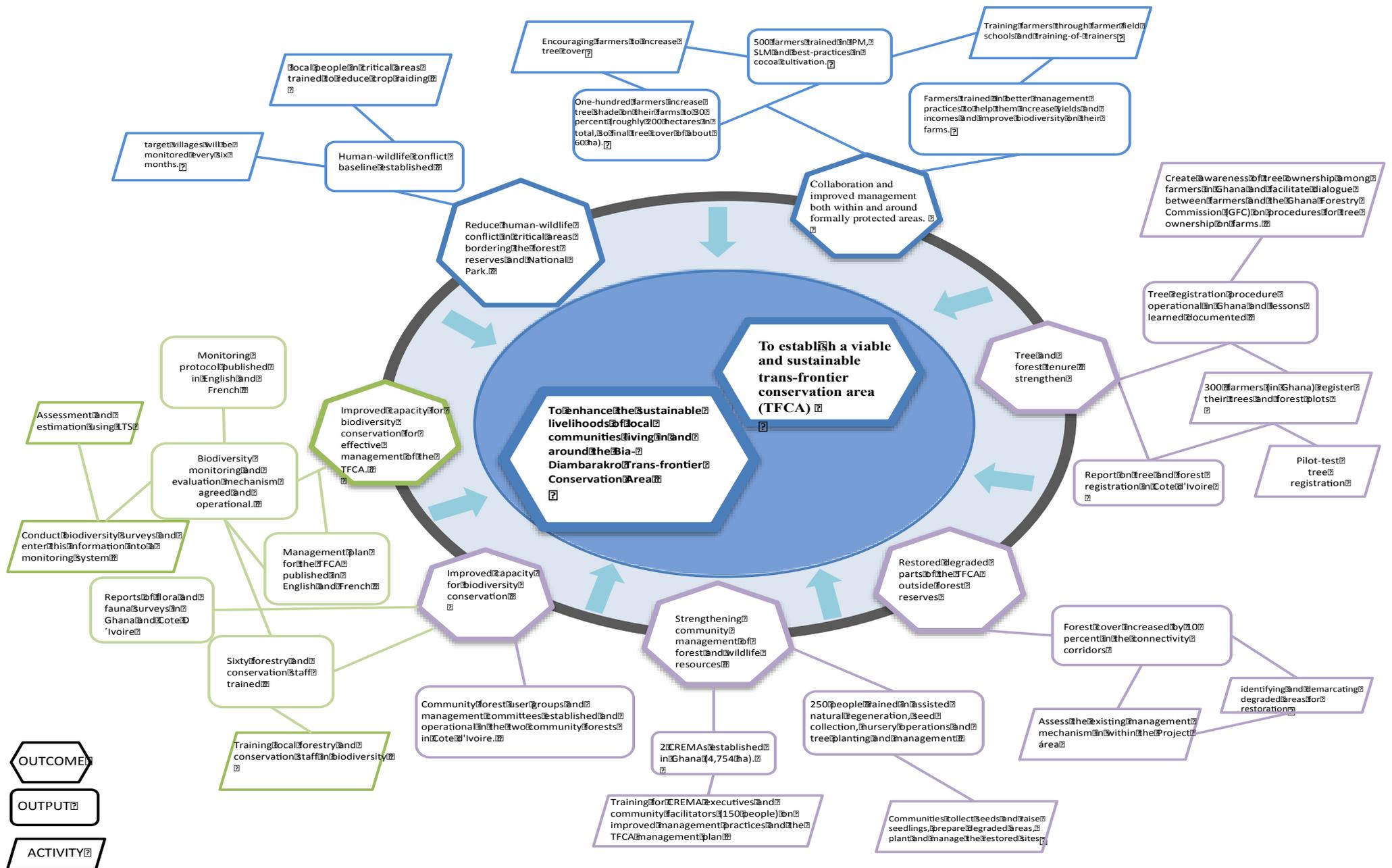
⁴ loi N°2014-427 du 14 Juillet 2014

pathways are expected to work.⁵ The Theory of change describes the casual assumptions behind the links in the pathways, clarifying what has to happen to ensure realization of outcomes. The ToC includes a systemic approach to analyse the different links between the structural elements, i.e. resources and time, and structural arrangements, i.e. activities that the structural elements could implement or provide, before finally leading to the results in terms of outputs and outcomes.

42. The concept of ToC was not used by GEF and FAO at the time of project design. For this reason the evaluation team designed an initial TOC, shown in the figure below, based on a review of project documents, and in particular the logical framework of the project.

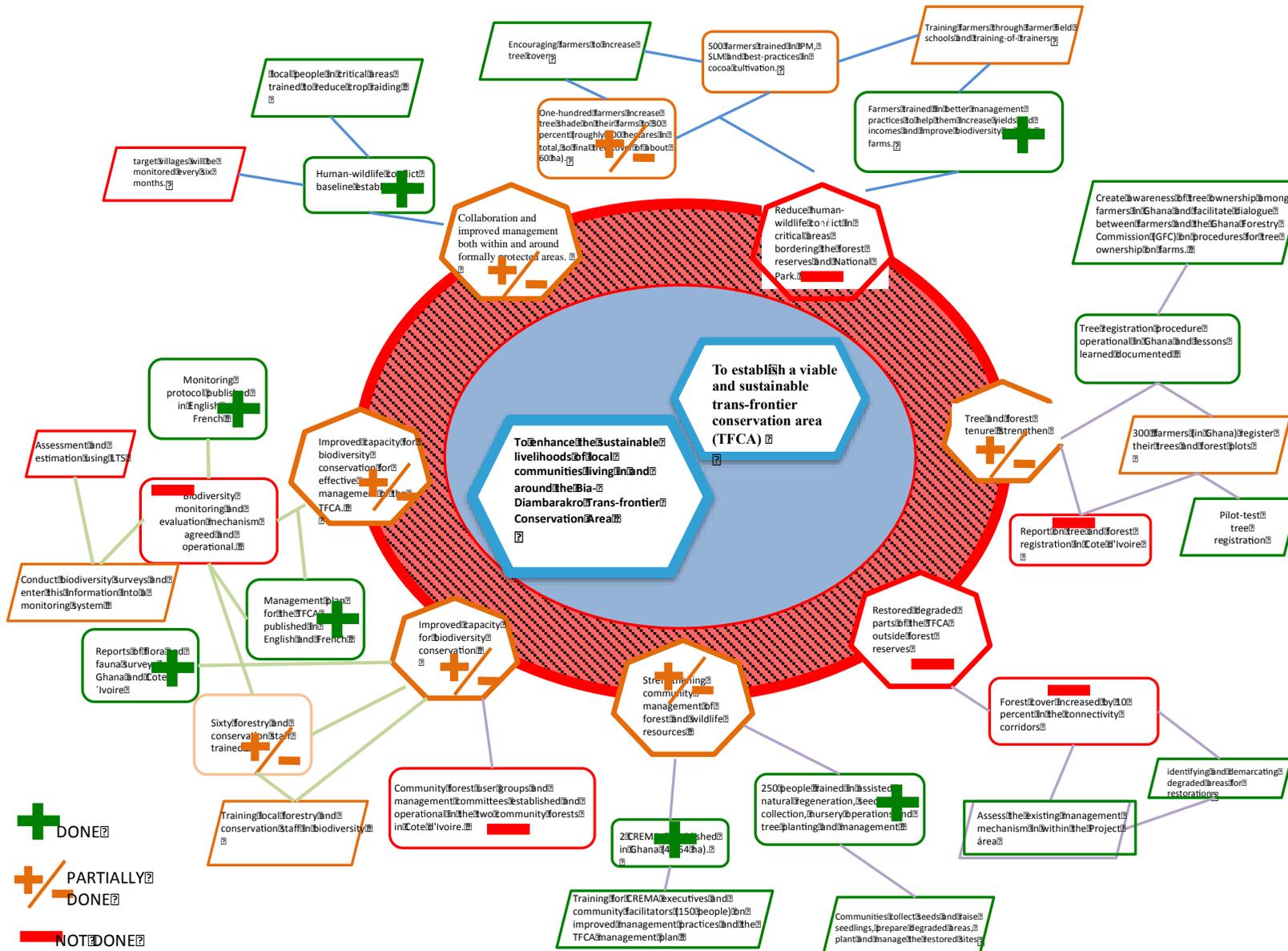
Figure 1: Initial Theory of Change based on document review

⁵ John Mayne and Nancy Johnson, 2015.



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43. The project aimed to achieve impact through two primary objectives:
 - i. The project **conservation objective** (PCO) to establish a viable and sustainable trans-frontier conservation area (TFCA) that links forest reserves and protected areas in and around Bia and Diambarakro; and
 - ii. The project **development objective** (PDO) to enhance the sustainable livelihoods of local communities living in and around the Bia- Diambarakro Trans-frontier Conservation Area through sound agricultural and conservation practices.
 44. The project aimed to contribute significantly to these goals, understanding that total achievement remains outside the sphere of influence of the project, while other work, such as the introduction of new governments laws, is also necessary.
 45. The ToC excludes the project management and monitoring component as it is not an output or outcome in itself and rather a part of project implementation.
 46. The project components are translated by the ET into seven outcomes in the ToC, and outputs link to one or more outcomes. In the first iteration of the ToC developed using project documents, not all activities were listed since some outputs can be simplified and others were not sufficiently explained in the project document.
 47. The visual analysis has a colour code: outputs and outcomes achieved by the project are green; orange represents those partially developed; and in red are those outside project scope or capacity.

Figure 2: Modified Theory of Change based on evaluation findings



48. As shown in the ToC, and mentioned previously, the structural elements (planned human and financial resources and time) were not sufficient to achieve intended results.

3.2 Evaluation question 2: To what extent has the project influenced change in communities, including as planned in the logical framework? What factors led to achieving these results?

- The impact of the alternative livelihood component of the project was low.
- Government staff and local communities received relevant trainings although not all learned techniques were implemented in the field, especially those related to the management of Human-Wildlife conflict (component 1).
- Exchange visits between stakeholders of the two countries have resulted into mutual inspiration.
- More than 200,000 trees were planted in the two countries but the environmental impacts of this in terms of increase in forest cover cannot yet be measured (components 2 and 3).

49. Local communities were asked to complete a questionnaire indicating the level of satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being the highest rating. The average rate calculated from the 69 completed questionnaires representing overall satisfaction of local communities was 3.6/4. Survey respondents indicated satisfaction with their level of involvement in project activities (3.3/4). However, most respondents also expressed the need to increase the number of beneficiaries, for tree planting activities and alternative livelihood support activities.

50. A major issue faced by the project was the lack of resources to support the alternative livelihood activities, resulting in low impact for that component. In Ghana, Conservation Alliance managed to link project communities with partners in the area dealing with alternative livelihoods such as bee hives, snail rearing, and mushroom production. Despite this, the number of beneficiaries was relatively low compared to demand, and beneficiaries found the diversification of their income sources limited (2,6/4). In Côte d'Ivoire, no alternative livelihood activities were supported until late in the project, when a group of farmers decided to implement beehives following an exchange visit to their counterparts in Ghana. At the time of the evaluation mission, these farmers had just received the basic equipment for this activity.

51. Initial biodiversity assessments were implemented in Côte d'Ivoire by the Centre Suisse de Recherches Scientifiques (CSRS) and in Ghana by a team of national experts from various institutions, complemented by several studies led by consultants on the feasibility and necessary conditions for a possible elephant corridor. These studies, carried out in both countries, included assessments of human-wildlife conflict. The studies enabled a better understanding of the state of ecosystems in each country and informed stakeholders of actions needed for the corridor to be viable. Based on these studies and planned activities, a monitoring and impact evaluation protocol was designed for the transborder area; however, the M+E protocol was never implemented. Previous biomonitoring activities in the Bia national Park (Ghana) and the Bossématié classified forest (Côte d'Ivoire) were not resumed by the project. In Ghana, a member of the Wildlife Division received training in MIST software (Management Information

System⁶) and Q-GIS⁷ to resume biomonitoring in the Bia National Park with an improved protocol. However, upon resigning his post the official did not stay in the region nor train peers in the software and thus capacities were lost. In both countries, government staff received training on elephant monitoring and animal census. The training was more comprehensive in Ghana where an elephant census is now planned for the end of 2018.

52. Select farmers received trainings on tree planting and the management of human-wildlife conflicts in both countries. However, beside tree planting by a few beneficiaries, no interviewed beneficiary in Côte d'Ivoire indicated implementing learned techniques to mitigate human-wildlife conflicts, especially the pepper grease technique. Farmers found the pepper grease technique costly and do not believe in its efficiency (in their view, pepper grease fences would have no effect on disturbed elephants fleeing from the "invaded" classified forest). Indeed, farmers find the technique especially costly when the renewal periods coincide with more pressing financial pressure such as children's school fees. Some do not attempt to access areas where they might face elephants, and as such were never in a situation to test the learned technique.
53. As stated above, the demand for tree planting in farms is high. In Ghana, besides environmental and agronomic benefits, incentive to develop tree ownership is high as it is a well-regarded source of future revenue. Some women made tree nurseries part of their businesses, and tree planting in general receives enthusiasm. There, tree registration protocol and benefit sharing are well documented but protocol costs are relatively high lead to a dependence of farmers on support provided by development projects. In Côte d'Ivoire, the new forest law states that all trees on a given land belong to the landowner. However, land registration protocol is lengthy and costly and not all farmers may claim land ownership. Farmers are encouraged to plant trees in their respective farms as they are supposed to be tree owners. Foreigners, however, are not eligible to become landowners although they may farm on land belonging to nationals. This leads to questions whether these farmers will be motivated to plant trees on their farms without guarantees they will be able to secure tree ownership.
54. Over 103,000 native tree seedlings (six different species) were planted in more than 257 ha of degraded areas in Krokusua Hills Forest Reserve, mainly through enrichment and boundary and watershed planting. In addition, farmers planted over 31,000 native tree seedlings on 816 ha of their farms, mostly cocoa farms. In Côte d'Ivoire, over 34,000 native tree seedlings (seven species) were planted in 87 ha of degraded areas in Beki and Bossématié classified forests. Moreover, 69 farmers including 56 males and 13 females were supplied with over 32,000 native tree seedlings, which they shared with other farmers and planted in around 900 ha of cocoa farms. As the oldest trees are just three years old and many have just been planted in farms, the impact of these tree plantings on forest cover is not yet measurable. The impact has the potential to be visible in the restored parts of the Krokusua Hills Forest Reserve in several years.

⁶ MIST is a free and open source software. MIST is a unified database management system designed as a full suite of tools and services for conservation, protected area and park management needs.

⁷ Q GIS is a Free and Open Source Geographic Information System.

55. Two exchange visits between stakeholders from each country enabled Ivorian stakeholders to visit their peers in Ghana and vice-versa. Participants appreciated the exchanges visits, which resulted into mutual inspiration. For example, Ivorian stakeholders were impressed by the CREMA (Community Resource Management Area⁸) concept and the accompanying organizational scheme in Ghana. They also felt inspired by alternative livelihoods activities. In turn, Ghanaian stakeholders appreciated the existence of village-owned sacred or cemetery forests in Côte d'Ivoire, as well as the commitment of communities to protect them of their own accord.
56. The project enabled the establishment of two new CREMAs in the Bia region, increasing the number of committed communities. However, the new CREMAs are recent (8 months old) with little experience and insufficient training to self sustain following project closure.

3.3 Evaluation question 3: what results were achieved in the crosscutting areas of capacity development, gender and environmental impact?

- The project adopted a “women in development” approach, without a gender sensitive approach and without resources or activities to promote it.
- The promotion of the participation of women in the different components of the project was weak and unstructured. There was no mechanism to ensure the participation, visibility and promotion of women and gender equality. However the executing partner, CA, included gender-sensitive data in order to highlight limitations encountered in this area.
- The training themes were adequately targeted to contribute to the project results and were well received by the population. However the number of beneficiaries was very low, approximately 2% of the entire population in the project area (almost 2.000 beneficiaries of 118.000 residents).

57. This section analyses the gender approach of the project and the capacity development component of the project regarding involved communities. The development capacities of the institutions and stakeholders are analysed in the last evaluation question.

Gender approach

58. The project document describes the approach adopted related to gender equality in section 2.2.3 called “Gender balance and indigenous people in project activities”. The Project adopted a “women in development” approach, which entails an uncritical acceptance of existing social structures (i.e. given their gender-specific use of the forest resources, women are directly involved in project components such as identification of

⁸ The CREMA concept is an innovative natural resource governance and landscape-level planning tool that authorizes communities to manage their natural resources for economic and livelihood benefits.

plants of medicinal value to be planted and caring for the transplanted seedlings in the enrichment), focusing instead on how women can be better integrated into existing development initiatives (e.g. the participation of women will be encouraged and monitored). This approach targets women's productive work but does not address the systemic cause of gender inequality.

59. The Mainstreaming Gender Equality (MGE) approach originated in 1995 at the 4th UN conference on women in Beijing, China. The approach ensures that all gender issues are addressed and integrated in all levels of society, politics, and programs. The MGE posits that women and men have different life courses and that these differences should be addressed by mainstreaming gender into planning, implementation and evaluation, focusing less on providing equal treatment for men and women (since equal treatment does not necessarily result in equal outcomes), and more on taking necessary steps to ensure equal outcomes. A coherent programme approach to gender equality can be developed on the basis of gender-sensitive data and context analysis, aided by well-planned, coordinated, inclusive and participatory consultation.
60. The project document describes the approach of women in development, an approach that is no longer used by international development practitioners. The choice to adopt this approach could be the result of the lack of human and financial resources to plan and implement a more comprehensive gender approach. The project team, especially CA, seems willing to encourage and promote the participation of women but there are no specific initiatives to this end.
61. In order to analyze the gender approach of the project, the ET relied on the following indicators:
 - i. *Activities focused on gender issues.* The project did not plan or provide any gender training to project staff nor beneficiary communities. There is no evidence of a gender-sensitive context analysis or participatory consultations in the communities. Of note is that the CNP coordinators and staff in both countries have no gender training even though they are aware of the inequality suffered by women and that the project does not show evidence of having addressed any gender issues. Although they expressed interest in adopting a more gender sensitive approach, they lack the tools or the knowledge to do so. In one instance, experience with trainings showed that women would not attend trainings of 2 or 3 days as they necessitated overnight stays. To resolve this, a plan was developed to hold trainings in a way more conducive to promoting women's attendance. However, the ET did not find any evidence that this plan was executed. In consultations with communities, the executing partner CA usually reports a minimum number of female attendees at meetings, but this is not systematically referenced in FAO official reports (progress reports nor PIR).
 - ii. *Project data disaggregated by sex.* The project had several reporting mechanisms. The official FAO reports are the six-month progress reports and, for GEF projects, the annual Project Implementation Review (PIR). Some data in those documents are not disaggregated by gender. However, in CA quarterly reports to FAO, the data of trainings and beneficiaries of certain activities are always disaggregated. The ET did not find a monitoring system in place. The ET

elaborated the following table based on available reports from Conservation Alliance and FAO, although this information is likely incomplete. According to estimates, a minimum of 1,973 people (including farmers and government staff) received various trainings. Most trainees, however, as they were lead farmers, received multiple trainings and were thus double or triple counted. The table below shows a summary list of trainings provided by the project, along with the beneficiaries separated by gender and information source.

Table 5: Trainings provided by the project

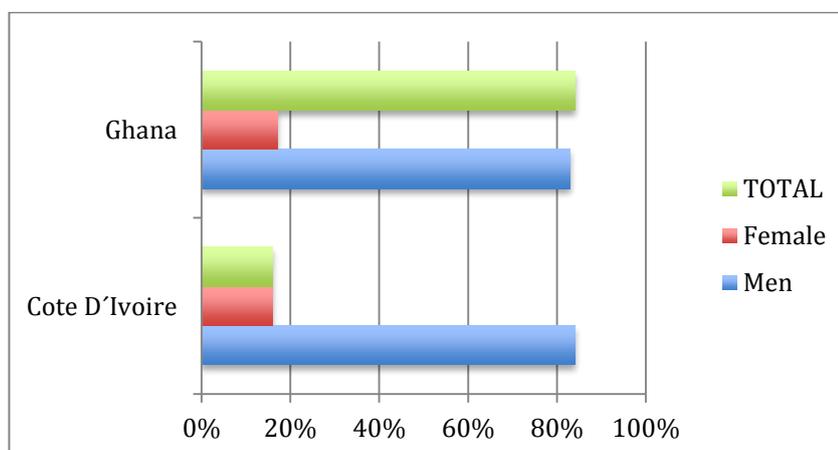
Date	Training	Country	Male	Female	Total	Source
2014	Field training on taxonomic groups (plants, birds, butterflies and amphibians) for 15 male staff of Bia National Park and 10 SODEFOR male field staff (during the biological surveys).	GH	15		15	First Progress report 2014
		CI	10	0	10	
2014	Consultation workshops in 15 villages in Ghana	GH	54	28	82	First Progress report 2014
2014	Consultation workshops in 7 villages in Cote d'Ivoire	CI	60	25	85	First Progress report 2014
2014	Local community workshops for farmers on tree registration.	GH	219	91	310	First Progress report 2014
2014	Training on MIST software and Q-GIS for the Law Enforcement Officer of Bia National Park.	GH	1		1	Second Progress report 2014
2014	Training in environmentally-friendly farming practices (e.g. preventing drift of chemicals into water bodies, preventing elephants from raiding their farms without killing them, etc.) in Ghana	GH			100	Second Progress report 2014
2014	Training in crop raiding in worst affected communities in Ghana	GH			120	Second Progress report 2014
2015	Staff from Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire trained on Biodiversity Conservation	GH & CI	44		44	First Progress report 2015
2015	Training in crop raiding in worst affected communities in Ghana	GH			31	First Progress report 2015
2015	Trainings on animal sign identifications to improve upon their monitoring skills	GH			20	First Progress report 2015
2015	Training on taxonomic groups (plants, birds, butterflies and amphibians) during the biological survey exercises	GH	15		15	Second Progress report 2015/ CA YEAR ONE NARRATIVE REPORT, 2015
2015	Training activities for 20 field staff to enhance their project implementation skills in the area of monitoring, SODEFOR	CI			20	Second Progress report 2015/ CA YEAR ONE NARRATIVE REPORT, 2015
2015	In Ghana, people from 8 communities were trained on improved conservation practices	GH			164	Second Progress report 2015
2015	Training was provided in HWC on the use of Pepper-Grease Method	GH	115	36	151	Second Progress report 2015/ CA YEAR ONE NARRATIVE REPORT, 2015
2015	An Ecologist and Spatial Analyst trained the Bia Park staff on Management Information System (MIST) software and GIS.	GH	1		1	CA YEAR ONE NARRATIVE REPORT, 2015

2016	In collaboration with the Wildlife Division organized three sessions of trainings for 5 communities (Abrewakrom, Adwoafua, Nafana, Kwametawiakrom and Bawa Camp) on natural resource management				0	CA first quarter report. FAO-GEF project 2016
2016	A-Rocha Ghana and the Wildlife Division and CA; two training sessions per CREMA for the leadership of the CREMAs within the project area to enhance their capacity in resource management	GH	67	22	89	CA first quarter report. FAO-GEF project 2016
2016	The Wildlife Division and CA provided training on improved natural resource management practices to 3 communities) Kwakuduakrom, Nsonyameye, and Nyamenaye).	GH	11	4	15	CA second quarter report. FAO-GEF project 2016
2016	With support from Wildlife Division and A-Rocha, training session for the community facilitators and executives of two CREMAs (Elluokrom and Asuopri) to enhance their management skills	GH	11	6	17	CA second quarter report. FAO-GEF project 2016
2016	CA and WD with technical assistance from IITA organized a second set of training. This group constituted the second set of Trainer of Trainers (TOT) that are responsible for upscale of the promotion of SLM, IPM and good agroforestry practices among cocoa farmers.	GH	7	3	10	CA second quarter report. FAO-GEF project 2016
2016	Training on cocoa production, IPMt and SLM (communities; Oseikojokrom, Nkrabia, Brebre, and Adiepena). These trainings by TOTs were organised with supervision from CA and the Wildlife Division.	GH	28	12	40	CA second quarter report. FAO-GEF project 2016
2016	The SOS Forests and the project team organized the second set of training. The training focused on the adoption of best practices in IPM, SLM and cocoa production, in four communities (Apoisso, Ebilassokro, Bokakokoré and Zaranou)	CI	7	3	10	CA second quarter report. FAO-GEF project 2016
2016	The Wildlife Division as part of its contribution, organized a refresher training for staff of the Forest Services Division and the Wildlife Division to enhance the skills of the personnel in data collection, effective patrolling and reporting of illegal activities	GH	56	6	62	CA YEAR TWO NARRATIVE REPORT, 2016
2016	In collaboration with the Wildlife Division, CA provided training for 40 community members from 8 fringe communities (Abrewakrom, Adwoafua, Nafana, Kwametawiakrom, Bawa Camp, Kwakuduakrom, Nsonyameye, and Nyamenaye) on natural resource management	GH	29	11	40	CA YEAR TWO NARRATIVE REPORT, 2016
2016	Training on crop raid prevention techniques by Wildlife Division with support from A Rocha Ghana	GH	122	41	163	CA YEAR TWO NARRATIVE REPORT, 2016
2016	The Community Forestry Expert trained from 7 communities on land rights and governance to support the registration of land and management of trees on them	CI			50	CA YEAR TWO NARRATIVE REPORT, 2016
2016	SODEFOR training in seed collection, nursery establishment and management as well as Assisted Natural Regeneration techniques	CI	25	7	32	CA YEAR TWO NARRATIVE REPORT, 2016
2016	Human Wildlife Conflict Expert training	CI	50		50	CA YEAR TWO NARRATIVE REPORT, 2016
2016	Training on SLM, IPM and good agroforestry practices	CI	57	18	75	CA YEAR TWO NARRATIVE REPORT, 2016
2017	IITA with support from the Wildlife Division and CA trained in May 2017 lead farmers from 5 communities about IPM, SLM and tree planting	GH	10		10	CA second quarter report. FAO-GEF project 2017

2017	Training on the 2014 Forest Code	CI			# of participants unknown	CA second quarter report. FAO-GEF project 2017
2017	training in SLM, IPM, GAP as well as shade tree planting, maintenance and Assisted Natural Regeneration have been offered to farmers.	CI			# of participants unknown	CA second quarter report. FAO-GEF project 2017
2017	A three-day training in SLM, IPM, GAP and Nursery establishment, was organized for Lead Farmers in Bia. The training was facilitated by IITA	GH	11		11	CA first quarter report. FAO-GEF project 2017
2017	Training workshop for farmers and heads of Agricultural Co-operatives on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Sustainable Land Management and Agricultural practices took place in the Appoisso community at Abengourou.	CI	105	25	130	CA first quarter report. FAO-GEF project 2016

iii. *Degree of women participation in project assessments and plans.* As previously mentioned, the executing partner CA usually reports a minimum number of females present at meetings, but gender disaggregated data were not systematically included in FAO's official reports. Women participated in mixed groups with men, rather than separated ones, which would have fostered free expression of needs and perspectives. The 1,973 people who received trainings consist of 1,130 males, 338 females and 505 sex-unspecified persons. Women's participation in trainings amounted to 20% in Côte d'Ivoire (N = 392) and 25% in Ghana (N = 1,032). The country of origin of 44 trainees was not specified in the reports. Of note is that during the evaluation mission the women in Ghana participated more, especially those from the CREMAs who brought extensive experience.

Figure 3: Participation in the project by gender



iii. *Number of women in farmers and communities representative bodies (e.g. CREMA).* The ET was not able to identify the exact number of women participating in the executive boards of the farmers associations in the project area. However, during the field mission it was noticed that in Ghana, all the executive boards of the CREMAs including the most recent ones included at least one woman, usually as treasurer. No information on this matter was available for Cote d'Ivoire.

62. The promotion of the participation of women in the different components of the project is weak and unstructured. There are no mechanism to ensure the participation, visibility and promotion of women and of gender equality outcomes. However, the executing partner CA made efforts to include gender-sensitive data to highlight limitations encountered in this area.

Capacity development

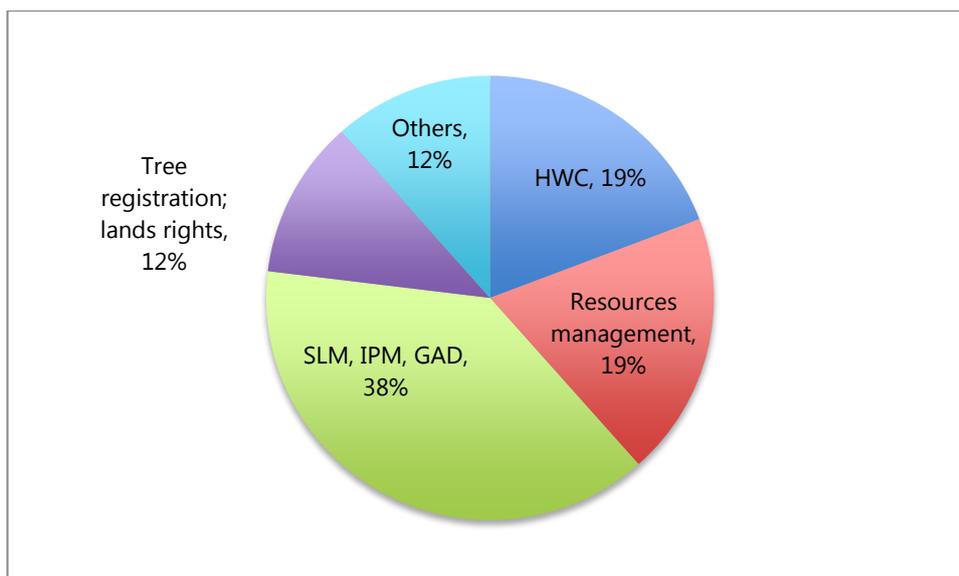
63. The project focused more on the capacity development of communities rather than of government partners. To analyse the development of capacities among communities beneficiaries of the project, the ET looked at two indicators: number of trainings for communities and the percentage of members of communities involved in the project area.
64. Around 80% of the training activities in the project framework targeted farmers and community members. In the list developed based on project reports, the ET identified an estimated 26 training activities.
65. Most training activities were carried out in Ghana (65%) as opposed to Côte d'Ivoire (35%).

Table 6: Trainings by theme and country

Training theme	Number of trainings	
	Ghana	Côte d'Ivoire
HWC	4	1
Resources management	4	1
SLM, IPM, GAD	6	4
Tree registration; lands rights	1	2
Others	2	1
Total	17	9

66. The topic of the trainings were similar in both countries, even if they were more regular, in-depth and longer in Ghana, excluding the training related to land rights.

Figure 4: Training by topic



67. Conservation Alliance adopted the Training of Trainers (ToT) approach to maximise available time and resources. The trainings targeted lead farmers expected to share knowledge with at least 10 peers. It remains difficult to estimate the number of people who benefited from peer training. Meetings with lead farmers and other community members showed that the teaching methods and number of people reached differ from one lead farmer to another. Some shared with members of the community, while others were not able to do so for various reasons. Those trainers with established links to CA and previous projects showed a greater ability to share knowledge with community members. The lack of resources from national institutions, especially on the Ivorian side, hindered the following, monitoring and support of lead farmers charged with disseminating knowledge.
68. The estimated population in the project area is 218,000 people⁹. According to data obtained from the project reports, 1,973 people participated in training activities, amounting to 1% of the population in the project area. Of note is that the figures do not include people who received training from the lead farmers. As there was no way to access a database with this information, the ET analysis relied only on available data.
69. According to these estimates, only 1% of the population in the project area received some training, which matches data collected during the evaluation missions. Expressed demand however shows that many other community members would have liked to participate in trainings and other projects activities.
70. In general, the trainings were well received and supported the awareness of the population about issues of project concern. However, the project had some limitations in terms of resources and time and could not reach all potential beneficiaries. Because of these limitations, trainings targeted farmers who had already worked with the stakeholders involved and had sufficient resources to put into practice the techniques

⁹ The estimated population in the Project area in Côte d'Ivoire in 2015 according to the WB is 105.000 (50,2% male, 49,8% female). And in Ghana according to estimation of GSS, 2010 the population size is of 113.000 people (48,8% male, 51,2% female)

promoted without extensive project investment. This was an effective strategy to maximise the project results, but also resulted in the exclusion of interested farmers unable to dedicate sufficient resources to improve their productivity or reduce their HWC.

3.4 Evaluation question 4: How appropriate and effective was project management, including the monitoring and evaluation of project activities and results?

- While the project management was effective and efficient in Ghana due to favourable contexts, the Ivorian side experienced a number of challenges.
- In Ghana, institutional arrangements were efficient and appreciated. In CI institutional arrangements needed adjustment to reinforce implementation, and this was carried out during the last stage of the project lifespan.
- Relationships between two countries related to project issues were developed, but there is still scope for enhancement.

71. Project management differed in each country. FAO, designated by GEF, was responsible for project oversight and technical support, which was provided by the Regional Office in Accra (RAF). The FAO RAF officer dedicated 15% of his time to this project. FAO national offices had little involvement in the project. The FAO Ghana Office was not involved in the project and the Ivorian office was only involved for administrative purposes, as needed.
72. CA was the main executing partner. As international coordinator, CA took the lead in executing field level activities related to capacity building, organisation and facilitation with communities under Components 1 and 2 of the project. CA also provided support to project management, including assistance for the coordination of project activities and monitoring of project progress, working closely with the Ghana Forestry Commission (GFC) and SODEFOR National Project Coordinators (NPCs).
73. The NPC in Côte d'Ivoire mobilized government co-financing for a total of USD 357,749, mainly in kind and ensured optimal coordination and collaboration with other government departments involved in the project. The in-kind co-financing provided by the Ivorian government and partners covered the organization of logistics, salaries and offices of staff, and the purchase of a vehicle for the NPC.
74. In Ghana, the NPC was the Bia Park Manager and staff of the Wildlife Division of the GFC. He is long-term staff of the park. He coordinated project activities with CA, which had an officer in the area supporting this project. The NPC along with CA coordinated work with the Forestry Division, also under the GFC. The project in Ghana supported the continuity and effectiveness of the work of the GFC in the Bia area, introducing some innovations in the area.
75. CA had been working in the project area in Ghana for over 10 years. With a good reputation and recognized area of influence, CA was able to mobilize and engage different partners, liaising project beneficiaries with others institutions in the area to

compensate for project shortcomings. One example of this is the alternative livelihood component, where CA leveraged existing partnerships to maximize available resources.

76. FAO used to have an annual LoA with CA to execute the project in the two countries. In total, 63% of the project budget was delivered through LoAs. In Ghana the budget was managed by Conservation Alliance. Some issues in the timely transfer of funds from FAO to CA were noted, resulting in delays in the field.
77. In Côte d'Ivoire, CA was not based in the country. One university professor acted as a focal point, allocating only between 5-10% of his time to the project. Activities were executed and coordinated by SODEFOR. During the first years of the project, CA transferred funds to its focal point who then had to transfer them to SODEFOR. This was an inefficient arrangement, and resulted in delays that exceeded those encountered in Ghana. The situation changed in the final years of the project as funds were later transferred directly to SODEFOR.
78. The NPC in Côte d'Ivoire was a SODEFOR officer appointed for this project; at the end of the project he will return to Abidjan. SODEFOR is the institution responsible for classified forests in the area and its general mandate is enriching and enhancing the national forest heritage, developing forest production, enhancing the value of forest products and safeguarding forest areas and their ecosystems. Normally it is not in SODEFOR's mandate to manage fauna issues or to work with communities outside the classified forests. Yet almost all the activities of the project were focused on the rural domain, a relatively new area of work for SODEFOR. In part due to this, SODEFOR experienced issues when fulfilling commitments. The project had a long period of inactivity until March 2016 when an evaluation mission from the Ministère des Eaux et Forêts helped address some institutional issues, facilitating project advancement. Project activities intensified in Côte d'Ivoire during the last year and a half of the project, and in particular the final eight months.
79. Deforestation, land degradation and human-wildlife conflicts (HWC) were significantly higher in Côte d'Ivoire than in Ghana. There were also fewer institutions and NGOs working in Côte d'Ivoire as there were in the Bia region in Ghana.
80. The Ivorian side had fewer opportunities to develop the project and more difficult conditions to do so, resulting in less efficiency in the field. However, commitment of Ivorian authorities, although delayed, eventually arrived and the project started to establish the foundation for the long-term restoration of the elephant corridor.
81. Additionally, the institution responsible for wildlife and HWC in the country is the Direction Régionale des Eaux et Forêts (Regional Department of Water and Forests), which was not involved in the project and thus did not provide support. Also present in the region were institutions that should have been involved to work with communities but were excluded, such as the Agence Nationale de Développement Rural (ANADER).
82. Furthermore, the national steering committee of the project in Cote d'Ivoire did not operate properly for a period, as some members would not attend meetings without receiving attendance fees, which were not financially supported by the project. In

addition, sometimes the individual missions of participating stakeholders were not in line with project activities. The project adjusted, replacing non-active steering committee members with more dedicated individuals, which had positive effects on project implementation.

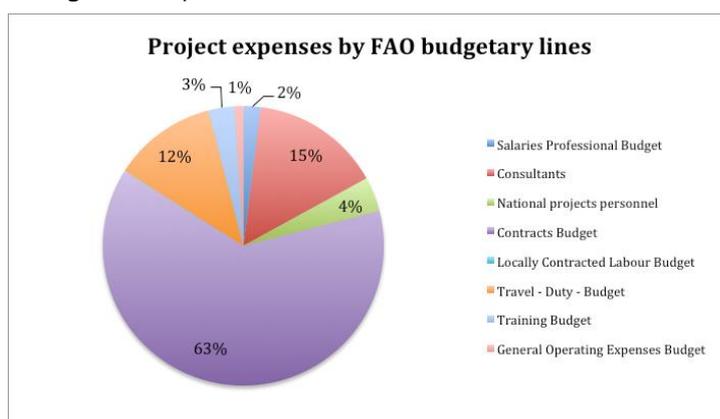
83. FAO conducts project monitoring through three formats:

- i. The Project Implementing Reports (PIR): elaborated annually and with a monitoring and update of the project indicators. Of note is that inconsistencies with several indicators were identified by the evaluation.
- ii. Monitoring field missions: including the missions of the LTO, at least one per year, and the mid-term review mission facilitated by GEF FAO Coordination Unit.
- iii. The Conservation alliance reports, compiled quarterly and annually.

84. It was challenging for the evaluation team to know precisely the amount of money spent by each country because of a lack of data. However, a brief analysis of the expenditures of the project could be made.

85. The biggest commitment of the project is the LoA with CA (63%). However, it was impossible to follow disbursements by country and by activity. In total, 15% of the project's budget went to national and international consultants hired by FAO to carry out studies and trainings. A further 12% of the budget went to travel, mainly for consultants hired and for monitoring mission of FAO and government personnel. Training budget represented only 3% of the project because only travel fees for the annual Steering committee and the travel fees for exchange visits among farmers were charged. The rest of the training fees are included either in the CA LoA or under the consultants' fees. During interviews, government partners reported satisfaction with the project implementation process (average of 3,3 points out of 5). Their satisfaction level with Conservation Alliance as executing and coordinating partner was also high (average, 3,5/5), although there was a difference in satisfaction reported by the two countries. The average in Ghana was 4 (quite satisfied) but only 2 (low satisfaction) in Côte d'Ivoire.

Figure 5: Project expenses by budget line



86. The project developed and improved relations between the Wildlife Division in Ghana and SODEFOR in Côte d'Ivoire, more so at field level where there is substantial communication and coordination. Relations among national ministries advanced during the project duration but there is still a large scope for improvement, which could

be done after the signature of the Management Plan by the authorities of the two countries. The Management Plan is a bilateral cooperative framework for the future implementation and management of the TFCA (Trans-frontier conservation area).

3.5 Evaluation question 5. What, if any, was the partnership strategy of the project and was this approach coherent?

- The partnership strategy was coherent, but more efficient on the Ghanaian side.
- Partnerships for the project in Cote d'Ivoire were not sufficiently pursued.

87. The global partnership strategy of the project consisted of identifying and involving all major stakeholders. Major institutional stakeholders were invited to join the national steering committees of the project and to contribute funding for select activities.
88. The recruitment of teams to conduct various studies in both countries may be considered as part of the global partnership strategy of the project, as these consultants were generally linked to institutional partners of the project. Studies informed decision-making and adjustment of the project approach. In particular, the studies led to the selection of the location of possible elephant corridors between forest fragments in the Ivorian side.
89. In Ghana, most relevant stakeholders were entrusted with key activities of the project. The project even managed to compensate for limited resources by partnering with institutions already working with relevant aspects, such as support to the alternative livelihoods.
90. However, in Côte d'Ivoire some relevant stakeholders were not sufficiently involved. For example, most project activities were planned for the rural domain (outside protected areas) and were related to the usual activities of ANADER. Yet ANADER was not involved as a major stakeholder, nor was the Direction Régionale des Eaux-et-Forêts the division equipped to manage Human-Wildlife conflicts and forest surveillance. These stakeholders were finally involved in a few activities during the last year of the project but the overall level of involvement was low.
91. As stated above, exchange visits involving stakeholders at community level and to a lesser extent field staff were highly appreciated by participants. However, excluding a couple of meetings of the International Steering Committee, interactions among high-level decision makers were non-existent. Also, although local communities received many trainings while government trainings were rather limited, resulting in lack of awareness and skills among these stakeholders. For example, many interviewed SODEFOR staff were not aware of the pepper grease technique as a tool to mitigate human-elephant conflicts. However, as stated above, SODEFOR and WD staffs received some training in biodiversity assessment and biomonitoring, and also managed to learn some techniques by observing beneficiary farmers.

3.6 Evaluation question 6: To what extent are project results sustainable?

- Exchange visits between community members and protected areas managers resulted into mutual inspiration and collaborative work, which will be systematized and expanded upon if the elaborated trans-border management plan is implemented.
- Trees planted in degraded areas and cocoa farms and some income generating alternative livelihoods are among the most sustainable results of the project.
- Awareness raised and capacity built will favour the long-term commitment by national and local stakeholders in conservation actions or environmental friendly livelihoods initiatives, although there is room for improvement.

92. As stated above, several cross-border exchange visits were organized at community level and also for protected area managers, resulting in mutual inspiration and a better understanding by stakeholders of the scope of the project. However, collaborative work at higher level remains to be achieved. A trans-border natural resource management plan has been elaborated and will be signed by the two countries at the end of the project to foster continued trans-border collaboration.
93. Most trees planted in the degraded areas of protected areas and farms have become autonomous and will keep growing, poised to affect environmental changes by increasing forest cover and agronomic change and improving the resilience of cocoa farms. The Forestry Commission and SODEFOR will undoubtedly continue restoration efforts, even with limited resources. The system used in Ghana, which consists of signing a contract with selected farmers who commit to forest restoration while farming for a period in the Krokusua Hills Forest Reserve, is likely to be sustainable as farmers are supposed to receive a share from the exploitation of planted trees in the future. In Pokokrou, Côte d'Ivoire, the ET visited a farm in which trees were planted 20 years ago with support from a cocoa certification initiative. The farmer stated that around these trees cocoa trees could grow better than in the past where there were no trees. The farmer intends to continue planting trees even if without project support. He also shared that farmers who visit his farm become enthusiastic about planting trees in their own farms.
94. The beneficiaries of capacity building related to best agricultural practices in cocoa farming state that these practices, like the promotion of SLM, IPM and agroforestry already resulted in improved productivity of their farms. These practices will no doubt be adopted and propelled forward by trained farmers.
95. Communities are more aware of the importance of forest conservation, reforestation and management of human-wildlife conflicts. They are more receptive to conservation initiatives, and are better organized and prepared to take responsibility related to the management of natural resources.
96. However, community members are not always equipped to start and sustain activities on their own. For example, few would be able to renew the pepper grease fences to protect their farms from elephant crop raiding (see above). Also, the newly created CREMAs in Ghana lack experience in community engagement for conservation actions. Finally, capacity development actions intended for governmental institutions were

limited to a single training on elephant monitoring and conducting a wildlife survey. Thus, more training, awareness raising, technical and financial supports are needed for all stakeholders to foster sustainable paradigm shifts.

97. Some alternative livelihoods activities in Ghana such as honey production proved to be important sources of income for several farmers. This represents an incentive for them to continue to invest in that activity even without further support from the project, and they are likely to inspire other entrepreneurs, as was the case for group of farmers from Apoisso, Côte d'Ivoire.

4 Conclusions and recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

Conclusion 1 (Relevance). The project design was appropriate in terms of logic and a coherent Theory of Change, but the project's goals and objectives were too ambitious considering the limited resources and time frame.

98. The causal relation between activities, inputs and outcomes in the project, which involve matters as complex as reforestation and behavioural change in a large region, require substantial resources and time to achieve desired results. The logic behind the design of the project is coherent and based on international and national experiences. Nevertheless, certain conditions are required, like sufficient human and financial resources, and the project only provided superficial ones, resulting in the previously mentioned limitations.
99. The four-year project relied on GEF funding to implement most activities. The rest of the co-financing was in-kind and covered salaries, offices and vehicles of the staff. However, important equipment (like computers and GPS) and trainings for staff were not sufficiently supported by the project.
100. The majority of stakeholders interviewed acknowledge that the project was ambitious in scope and content compared to the resources available. For this reason, the project is better characterized as a first-step towards the long-term objective of a fully functional and comprehensive Trans-frontier Conservation Area (TFCA) between Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire.
101. The project's goals and objective remain relevant to the country and the region, and fall under the priorities and focal areas of different donors, like GEF 7, the World Bank or private organisations.
102. Although the project currently has superficial and short-term results, there is long term potential with continued support that could lead to impact, and maybe the achievement of the trans-frontier corridor for animals, especially elephants. This implies an enormous gain in terms of biodiversity for the region and for the continent, as the area was once characterized as one of the biggest and most diverse biodiversity habitats for plants and animals in West Africa.
103. The analyses of the environmental, institutional and socio-economic contexts during the project design did not always sufficiently reflect the variations and specificities of each country. This resulted in poor institutional arrangements, misunderstanding and limitations during project implementation.
104. Contrary to what was indicated in the project document, there were no community forests in the project area in Côte d'Ivoire. In addition, SODEFOR is not in charge of the management of wildlife and that of HWCs, one of the main issues of the project. Finally, forest degradation and deforestation levels on the Ivorian side were not well described in the project document.

Conclusion 2 (Progress to impact). The project has affected some change, including capacity building among communities and ecosystem restoration and protection, but impact remains low due to insufficient time and financial resources.

105. In Ghana, despite the lack of resources, Conservation Alliance linked the communities of the project with other partners dealing with alternative livelihoods such as beehives, snail rearing, and mushroom production. However, the number of beneficiaries was relatively low compared to demand and beneficiaries did not acknowledge significant diversification of their income sources. In Côte d'Ivoire, almost no alternative livelihood activities were supported.

106. Local communities received relevant trainings although not all techniques learnt were implemented in the field, including those related to the management of Human-Wildlife conflicts.

107. Over 200,000 native tree seedlings (six different species) were planted in the two countries but the oldest trees are just three years old and do not yet have significant environmental impact.

Conclusion 3 (Monitoring and evaluation system). The project did not include a well-defined gender approach in its formulation and did not allocate any budget to the planning, implementation and monitoring of a gender sensitive approach.

108. The "women in development" approach mentioned in the project document is no longer in use by the international community. A "mainstreaming gender equality" approach should have been adopted instead.

109. Consideration for gender was weak during project formulation and implementation. There was no gender sensitive planning, activities or training to promote gender equity and balance.

110. CA reports provide gender-disaggregated data for all activities implemented. However these data were not systematically integrated into FAO reporting.

111. The lack of training on gender equity among government staff implementing the project was not identified as a need and was not addressed by the project at field level.

Conclusion 4 (Effectiveness and efficiency). Project management was appropriate and effective in Ghana, but problematic in Côte d'Ivoire until the last six months of project implementation.

112. Project success was jeopardized by inefficient institutional arrangements until relevant adjustments were made, especially on the Ivorian side. The executing partner should have the same presence and influence in both countries of the project for equal efficiency and effectiveness.

113. Conservation Alliance, the primary executing partner, did not have the same presence at field level in Côte d'Ivoire as in Ghana. Furthermore, several important stakeholders including ANADER and the Direction Régionale des Eaux-et-Forêts were left out. Further reducing efficiency, initially CA's representative in Abidjan channelled funds

from FAO to support activities carried out by SODEFOR. This was judged as ineffective and even counterproductive by SODEFOR and led to unnecessary delay in the field.

114. The starting situation was better in Ghana than in Côte d'Ivoire, and the project did not develop a strategy to reduce the implementation gap between the two countries. Indeed, the Ghanaian side of the project area comprises a national park with a permanent conservation staff in the area dedicated to promoting and monitoring wildlife. Also Ghanaian communities were organized into CREMAs resulting in a better management of natural resources with support from several institutions with expertise in project focal areas. This resulted in more activities, as well as sustainable and impactful results on the Ghanaian side.

115. During the meetings of the international Steering committee and other transnational meetings or activities, one of the noted challenges was for the project to find resources to translate documents and mobilize interpreters. The project started later in Côte d'Ivoire than in Ghana until the project documents were translated into French. Translations were carried out by FAO and CA with available project funds. Nearly all the stakeholders interviewed by the ET highlighted this issue.

Conclusion 5 (Efficiency). The partnership strategy of the project consisted of identifying and involving all major stakeholders for informed decision-making and efficient implementation, although more so in Ghana than Côte d'Ivoire. Likewise, transfer of capacity was more successful in Ghana than in Côte d'Ivoire.

116. Several studies were conducted in each country including initial biodiversity assessments and the identification of elephants' migration routes to inform project approach and decision-making.

117. In Ghana, most relevant stakeholders were entrusted with key activities of the project while some relevant stakeholders in Côte d'Ivoire such as ANADER and the Direction Régionale des Eaux-et-Forêts were not sufficiently involved.

118. Local communities received extensive training while governmental institutions received much less. SODEFOR and WD staff received training in biodiversity assessment and biomonitoring and learnt other techniques by observing what was done with farmers.

Conclusion 6 (Sustainability). Some results of the project are sustainable but rather limited in scope. This suggests that more institutional and individual capacity building, awareness raising, technical and financial support is needed to ensure environmental and socio-economic impact.

119. The project has resulted in several sustainable achievements such as trees planted and enthusiasm for tree planting, capacity built in communities and governmental institutions for conservation development actions, and the development of synergies among stakeholders inside each country and between the two countries.

120. Impact is limited, the total number of beneficiaries remains low and the project did not have resources to support activities such as alternative livelihoods. To see results, project activities should continue and intensified.

121. Although thousands of trees have been planted in the project area, significant changes in forest cover cannot be observed after three years. Also, the environmental and agronomic benefits of trees planted in farms will not be immediately apparent. However past experience in the Ivorian side of the project area shows that trees planted in farms improve the resilience and productivity of cocoa trees.

4.2 Recommendations

Recommendation 1 to Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire national partners

The project is relevant to both countries and to the future of biodiversity, yet its current impact is limited. The countries should consider taking immediate actions to continue key project activities such as surveillance, tree planting, community organization and awareness raising in order to maintain project outcomes, while searching for new sources of funding to scale up and reach long term goals of the project.

Recommendation 2 to FAO and GEF

Considering the relevance of the project and key achievements, it is logical to envisage scaling up the project. However as the current impact of the project remains low, supporting project scaling up in the same region makes more sense at this stage rather than replicating the project elsewhere, which runs the risk of encountering similar challenges of limited resources in the face of ambitious goals.

Recommendation 3 to FAO, GEF, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire

A project design based on a thorough analysis of the environmental, institutional and socio-economic context of the project implementation areas is key to project success. Before the implementation phase of future projects, an updated analysis could support an adjustment of project goals to more accurately reflect the conditions of implementation.

Recommendation 4 to FAO

It would be useful for FAO to provide the policy support necessary to codify relevant land and tree ownership security measures for communities.

There is a real need of land and tree ownership security in both countries, as this represents an incentive to encourage community receptiveness towards environmental initiatives. Tree and land registration processes are lengthy and costly and need to be further clarified and simplified.

In Ghana, farmers may be allowed to stagger payment of tree registration fees over several years; in Côte d'Ivoire, foreign farmers who plant trees on their farms should have the right to receive a share from the selling of these trees in the future even if they are not land owners. This should be clearly delineated in the new Forest Law.

Recommendation 5 to FAO and GEF and project formulators

Mainstreaming gender equity is not only a requirement of FAO and GEF policies, it is required to adequately face development challenges. The design of future projects should

include a clear and relevant gender approach that considers the needs of different groups in a community to ensure success and sustainability.

Recommendation 6 to FAO, GEF, Ghana, and Côte d'Ivoire

In a multilingual context, language issues can jeopardize joint efforts although these are indispensable. In the design of future project, funds should be secured for the translation of project-related documents to ensure effective trans frontier collaboration.

5 Lessons Learned

Lesson 1: The adequacy of project goals and resources is key to project success

- A major reason why the impact of this project was limited is the mismatch between project goals and project resources.

Lesson 2: Community engagement requires awareness raising, capacity building, and targeted incentives

- Communities adhere to conservation and development initiatives when they understand why these are important and they know what to do and how to do it. Nonetheless, understanding is sometimes not enough to ensure engagement, especially when communities lack financial support to implement learned techniques.

Lesson 3: Capacity building of governmental institutions must be carefully planned for more efficiency

- The leadership of governmental institutions in projects related to their mandate is key to sustainability but governmental institutions often lack expertise, human resources and appropriate equipment to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

Lesson 4: Trans-frontier collaboration must be promoted at all levels, including at the highest level, in each country

- A trans-frontier corridor project cannot be effective if stakeholders across the countries do not share the same vision and do not work in synergy to achieve the expected goal.

Lesson 5: Future projects working across countries and languages should make particular efforts to identify the appropriate partners in each context during project design

- Institutions in different countries may have similar names but do not necessarily have identical mandates. Identification of appropriate partners is key for effective project implementation, as is the clear definition of the roles and responsibilities of each partner.

Appendices

Appendix 1. FAO - GEF Evaluation Criteria Rating Table and Rating Scheme

1.1 FAO-GEF Evaluation Criteria Rating Table

Each criterion receives a rating derived from the evaluative assessment in the main document.

GEF - FAO criteria/sub criteria	Rating ¹⁰	Summary Comments ¹¹
Final evaluation of GCP/RAF/447/GFF		
A. ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT RESULTS		
1. Overall quality of project outcomes ¹²	MS	
1.1. Relevance	S	Project expected outcomes were highly relevant but not in adequacy with resources and time frame (Section 3.1.)
1.2. Effectiveness	MS	Final outcomes not achieved, 5/7 intermediate outcomes more or less achieved, and 2/7 intermediate outcomes not achieved (See section 3.1., Points 42-44)
1.3. Efficiency	MS	Despite the lack of resources for some components, there were some good achievements for all components, especially in Ghana (Section 3.2, Point 46) however very limited in Cote D'Ivoire
B. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND EXECUTION RATING		
2. Quality of project implementation	MS	Despite some delays, most planned project activities were carried out and no interviewed stakeholder complained about CA, the executing partner (section 3.1, Point 34 and Section 3.4, Point 81), but again only in Ghana, not in the other part of the border
3. Quality of project execution	S	All interviewed stakeholders were moderate satisfied with FAO in Ghana, the executing partner as FAO did its best to facilitate project execution including by enabling translations (Section 3.4, Point 81).
C. MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E) RATING		
4. Overall quality of M&E	MS	
4.1. M&E Design	MS	Even though there wasn't a clear M&E system, some efforts related to the M&E design took into account the implementation of activities and also the conservation and development impacts of the project (Section 3.4)
4.2. M&E Plan Implementation	MS	Activities were evaluated by internal and external evaluators, but no biomonitoring system was implemented (Section 3.2, Point 47).
D. SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES		
5. Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability		
5.1. Financial risk	ML	Considering the agreement to implement the management plan of natural resources (Section 3.4, Point 82), there is a chance that at least basic activities continue in Ghana thanks to the usual budgets of the Forestry Commission and other partners in Ghana and that of SODEFOR in Côte d'Ivoire but these budget will be insufficient to achieve the expected outcomes
5.2. Socio-political risk	ML	There might be socio-political troubles in Côte d'Ivoire during the presidential elections of 2020 even if the project area is likely to be less impacted by such troubles.
5.3. Institutional risk	ML	The main executing partners of the project are governmental institutions in both countries (Section 2.1, Point 29). However the absence in Côte d'Ivoire of the institutions responsible for wildlife management is an important weakness (Section 3.5, Point 89).
5.4. Environmental risk	MU	Scaling up the project in the region with intensified activities and increased number of beneficiaries is an urgent matter as the threat to natural resources is still high (Section 2, Point 25).

¹⁰ See rating scheme at the end of the document.

¹¹ Include reference to the relevant sections in the report.

¹²Assessment and ratings by outcome may be undertaken if there is added value. A composite scoring of all outcome ratings, however, is not advised.

1.2 Rating Scheme

A. Overall Outcome ratings¹³

Terminal evaluations take into account the project's results, logical framework, ToC and work plan. Mid-term evaluations can base outcome ratings on work plans and mid-term targets (if available).

Rating	Description
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	<i>"Level of outcomes achieved clearly exceeds expectations and/or there were no short comings."</i>
Satisfactory (S)	<i>"Level of outcomes achieved was as expected and/or there were no or minor short comings."</i>
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	<i>"Level of outcomes achieved more or less as expected and/or there were moderate short comings."</i>
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	<i>"Level of outcomes achieved somewhat lower than expected and/or there were significant shortcomings."</i>
Unsatisfactory (U)	<i>"Level of outcomes achieved substantially lower than expected and/or there were major short comings."</i>
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	<i>"Only a negligible level of outcomes achieved and/or there were severe short comings."</i>
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the level of outcome achievements.

B. Project Implementation ratings (Assess Implementation and Execution separately)

Rating	Description
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	There were no shortcomings and quality of implementation or execution exceeded expectations.
Satisfactory (S)	There were no or minor shortcomings and quality of implementation or execution meets expectations.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	There were some shortcomings and quality of implementation or execution more or less meets expectations.

¹³ See instructions provided in annex 2: Rating Scales in the "Guidelines for GEF Agencies in Conducting Terminal Evaluations for Full-sized Project", April 2017.

Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	There were significant shortcomings and quality of implementation or execution somewhat lower than expected.
Unsatisfactory (U)	There were major shortcomings and quality of implementation substantially lower than expected.
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	There were severe shortcomings in quality of implementation or execution .
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of implementation or execution .

C. Monitoring and Evaluation Design or Implementation Ratings (Overall M&E design, Assess Design and Implementation separately)

Rating	Description
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	There were no shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation exceeded expectations.
Satisfactory (S)	There were no or minor shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation meets expectations.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	There were some shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation more or less meets expectations.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	There were significant shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation somewhat lower than expected.
Unsatisfactory (U)	There were major shortcomings and quality of M&E design or M&E implementation substantially lower than expected.
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	There were severe short comings in M&E design or M&E implementation .
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of M&E design or M&E implementation

D. Sustainability

Rating	Description
Likely (L)	There is little or no risk to sustainability.
Moderately Likely (ML)	There are moderate risks to sustainability.
Moderately Unlikely (MU)	There are significant risks to sustainability.
Unlikely (U)	There are severe risks to sustainability.
Unable to Assess (UA)	Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability.

Appendix 2: Cofinancing table according to the last PIR report

	Prodoc	Pir 2017	
GEF allocation:	859000	859000	
Co-financing:			
Government of Ghana	280000	280000	in kind
Government of Côte d'Ivoire	200000	277749	in kind
Conservation Alliance	72000	72000	in kind
STCP (Ghana)/ IITA	66000	60000	in kind
A Rocha Ghana	50000	50000	in kind
CSRS, Côte d'Ivoire	15000	10000	in kind
FORIG, Ghana	15000	20000	in kind
Forestry Commission, Ghana	35000	30000	in kind
GIF, Ghana	12000	10000	in kind
SODEFOR, Côte d'Ivoire	30000	30000	in kind
OIPR, Côte d'Ivoire	20000	20000	in kind
DPN, Côte d'Ivoire	20000	20000	in kind
FAO	782000	480000	in kind
Subtotal co-financing	1597000	1359749	
Total project budget:	2456000	2218749	

Appendix 3: Evaluation matrix

Nº	Question/ Subquestion	Indicators	Method/technique
1	To what extent was the project design appropriate? Was the Theory of Change adequate and coherent?		
1.1	To what extent were the resources to the needs of the project?	% of results achieved	desk study & interview
		Level of project implementation	Desk study
		Level of satisfaction of the project's partners about the sufficiency of the resources	Survey & personal interview
1.2	How were relevant stakeholders involved in project design and implementation?	Number of partners involved in the entire project cycle	Desk study
		Level of satisfaction of the project's partners about their participation in the project cycle	Survey & personal interview
1.3	How relevant were project objectives?	Number of national priorities supported by the project	Desk study
		Number of regional and international engagement of the countries supported by the project	Desk study
		Number of FAO priorities supported by the project	Desk study
2	To what extent has the project affected change in communities, including as planned in the logical framework, unintended effects and changes in communities not targeted by the project? What factors led to achieving these results?		
2.1	To what extent has the project contributed to enhancing the sustainable livelihood of local communities with sound agricultural and conservations practices?	Level of diversification of income sources related to project activities	Desk study+ interviews+ direct observation
		Level of satisfaction of the communities about the project	Interviews/ Focus group/ survey
2.2	To what extent has the project improved capacity for biodiversity conservation, including among government staff and communities to assure the proper development of the second phase of the project?	Monitoring system of the protected areas in place	Desk study+ interviews+ direct observation
		Number of persons per institution trained in carrying out conservation actions (surveillance, awareness raising, biomonitoring...)	Desk study+ interviews
		Number of biodiversity surveys done and introduced into a monitoring system	Desk study+ interviews

2.3	To what extent has the project strengthened forest and wildlife resources to improve ecosystem restoration and protection?	Number of human wildlife conflicts documented	Desk study
		Number of farmers with tree registered in the project area during project implementation	desk study+ interviews
		Number of CREMAS or management committees established	desk study+ interviews
3 To what extent were the expected results achieved in the crosscutting areas of capacity development, and environmental impact?			
3.1	To what extent has the gender approach been included in the capacity strategy especially in the work within the communities?	Number of activities directed to women and men focused on gender issues	desk study+ interviews
		% of project data disaggregated by sex	Desk study
3.2	To what extent have special needs of women been taken into consideration in the project implementation?	Level of women participation in project assessments and plans	Focus group+ Interviews
		Number of women in farmers and communities representation bodies (ex CREMAS)	Desk study+ interviews+focus group
3.2	To what extent the capacities in communities have been developed and reinforced to implement and continue the actions promoted by the project?	% of members of communities involved in the project area	Focus group+ Interviews
		Number of training	Desk study+ interviews+focus group
4 How appropriate and effective was project management, including monitoring and evaluation of the project activities and results?			
4.1	How effective was project management in each country?	% of disbursement by country	Desk study
		Level of efficiency and effectiveness of project management by country	desk study+ interviews
4.2	To what extent have effective and efficient synergies been developed between both countries?		
		Level of the establishment of a bilateral co-operative framework for the management of the TFCA	desk study+ interviews
5 What, if any, was the partnership strategy of the project and was this approach coherent			
5.1	How have the various studies conducted contributed to project goals?	Number of conservation actions informed by studies	Desk review

5.2	To what extent was the transfer of competence to relevant stakeholders effective?	Level of consolidation of Technical capacity of GFC, SODEFOR and local community members in biodiversity monitoring, assessment and protected area management	Interviews/ focus group
6 To what extent are project results sustainable?			
6.1	How has the project affected collaboration between the two countries in the area of transboundary conservation practices?	Existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or similar document signed for future exchange of information and co-ordination of management activities.	Desk review
		Number of meetings about the establishment of a viable and sustainable trans-frontier conservation area	Desk review
6.2	To what extent are project outcomes likely to be effectively consolidated during a possible second phase?	Number of communities participating in ecosystem restoration activities	Interviews
		Level of consolidation of Technical capacity of GFC, SODEFOR and local community members in biodiversity monitoring, assessment and protected area management	Interviews

Appendix 4: List of people consulted

No	Name	Institution	Position	Country
1	Geneviève Braun	FAO- TICD Unit	Programme officer	Ghana
2	Fritjof Boerstler	FAO- TICD Unit	Programme officer	Ghana
3	Serge Nakouzi	RAF	Deputy Regional Representative	Ghana
4	Reuben Okai	RAF	Field programme support and monitoring	Ghana
5	Atse M. Yapi	RAF	LTO- Forestry Economics & policy	Ghana
6	Yaw Osei-Owusu	Conservation Alliance	Executive director	Ghana
7	Abigail Frimpong	Conservation Alliance	International project coordinator	Ghana
8	Bukar Tijani	RAF	ADG and RR for Africa	Ghana
9	Seth Appiah-Kubi	A Rocha	National director	Ghana
10	Richard Asare	IITA	Tropical trees and cocoa agroforestry	Ghana
11	Nana Kofi Adu-Nsiah	Wildlife division	Executive director	Ghana
12	Stephen Adu-bredu	FORIG	Project Focal Point at FORIG	Ghana
13	Kwame Asamoah Adam	GIF	Project Focal Point at GIF	Ghana
14	Abdallah Seidu Ali	Forestry Service Division	District manager (Juaboso/Bia)	Ghana
15	Henry Kudiabor	Forestry Service Division	District manager (Juaboso/Bia)	Ghana
16		Bia Park	Field officer	Ghana
17	Richard Efori-Amanto	Bia Park	Park manager	Ghana
18	Sampson Okeyrro	Bia Park	Accountant	Ghana
19	John Nsiah Banka	Bia Park	Law enforcement officer	Ghana
20		Community member	Lead farmer	Ghana
21	Sié Kwabenan Francis	Comunity Nafana (Bia area)	Farmer	Ghana
22	H. Collins	Comunity Nafana (Bia area)	Farmer	Ghana
23	Steven	Comunity Nafana (Bia area)	Farmer	Ghana
24	Kwaku Djané	Comunity Nafana (Bia area)	Farmer	Ghana
25	Koffi Isac	Comunity Nafana (Bia area)	Farmer	Ghana
26	Sié	Comunity Nafana (Bia area)	Farmer	Ghana
27	Rose Adey	Comunity Nafana (Bia area)	Farmer	Ghana
28	Patience	Comunity Nafana (Bia area)	Hairdresser	Ghana
29	Koffi Tchie	Comunity Nafana (Bia area)	Farmer	Ghana
30	Idriss	Comunity Nafana (Bia area)	Student	Ghana

No	Name	Institution	Position	Country
31	Anderson	Wildlife division	Field officer	Ghana
32	Asante Francis	Wildlife division	Field officer	Ghana
33	Ewar Steven	Community member Abosi	Crema member	Ghana
34	Antony Late	Community member Abosi	Crema member	Ghana
35	Amadou Rahinasu	Community member Abosi	Crema member	Ghana
36	Ifa Qesyrr	Community member Abosi	Crema member	Ghana
37	Sycum Mohamed	Community member Abosi	Crema member	Ghana
38	Jenesa Ancoma	Community member Abosi	Crema member	Ghana
39	Tahirou waua	Community member Abosi	Crema member	Ghana
40	Kennedy Mensah	Kunkumso	Crema member	Ghana
41	Job Amponsah	Nkrabea	Crema member	Ghana
42	Felicia Abrafi	Nkrabea	Crema member	Ghana
43	John Kyei	Riuamenikrom	Crema member	Ghana
44	Osei Tano	Debiso	Crema member	Ghana
45	Akua Baikoa	Elluokom	Crema member	Ghana
46	ADuba Foriwaa	Essam	Crema member	Ghana
47	Philis Quesia	Essam	Crema member	Ghana
48	John Bisimark Okyere	Asempane	Crema member	Ghana
49	Mama Yan Msid	Kunkumso	Crema member	Ghana
50	Kwabena Joe	Kunkumso	Crema member	Ghana
51	Mary Arthur	Asuopiri	Crema member	Ghana
52	Lucy Donkor	Kunkumso	Crema member	Ghana
53	Konady Gabriel	Kunkumso	Crema member	Ghana
54	John Abekah	Parabo	Crema member	Ghana
55	Amanfo Bedialco	New wenchí	Crema member	Ghana
56	Kwalcyé Feliz	Bia Park	Wildlife Assistant	Ghana
57	Dominic Avnoukavie	Bia Park	Assistant community officer	Ghana
58	Sampson Mensah	Bia Park	Field officer	Ghana
96	38 community member	Apoisso	Community	Côte d'Ivoire
139	43 community member	Bokakokoré	Community	Côte d'Ivoire
140	35 community member	Bebou	Community	Côte d'Ivoire
141	Kalé Gbégbé	Direction Régionale des Eaux et Forêts (Abengourou)	Directeur Régional	Côte d'Ivoire
142		Community member Pierrekro	Farmer	Côte d'Ivoire
143		Community member Pokoukro	Farmer	Côte d'Ivoire

No	Name	Institution	Position	Country
144	Kouamé K. Barthelemy	SODEFOR	Chef de l'Unité de Gestion Forestière de Bossématié	Côte d'Ivoire
145		Community member Apoisso	Farmer	Côte d'Ivoire
143	Adou Yao C. Yves	Conservation Alliance	Responsable Cote d'Ivoire	Côte d'Ivoire
144	Bledoumou Ahissan	SODEFOR	Coordinateur national projet	Côte d'Ivoire
145	Leon Siagoué	SODEFOR	CT-DT	Côte d'Ivoire
146	Kouadio Faustin	SODEFOR	CT-DG	Côte d'Ivoire
147	Bah Bile Laventin	SODEFOR	CT-DG	Côte d'Ivoire
148	Mamadou Sangaré	SODEFOR	Directeur Général	Côte d'Ivoire
149	Diceth Haya Coulibaly	SODEFOR	Directrice RRHH	Côte d'Ivoire
150	Koné Idparatiogo	SODEFOR	SG Communications	Côte d'Ivoire
151	Indaf Coy Alain	SODEFOR	CS Com.	Côte d'Ivoire
152	Capt. Affi Boniface Roth	Direction de la Faune	Sous-directeur de la chasse et de la protection de la faune	Côte d'Ivoire
153	Col. Agoh Jean Baptiste	Direction de la Faune	Sous-directeur élevage faune sauvage	Côte d'Ivoire
154	Col. N'dri Pascal	OIPR	Chef de cellule appui technique	Côte d'Ivoire
155	Alimata Bakayoko Koné	SP/CNFEM	GEF Operational focal point	Côte d'Ivoire
156	Cassoko Noka	SP/CNFEM	Assistant communication	Côte d'Ivoire
157	Diomandé Ismael	SP/CNFEM	Assistants en gestion de projet	Côte d'Ivoire
158	Mme Anzan	Ministère Eaux et Forêts	Directrice des Projets	Côte d'Ivoire
159	Col. Amian	Ministère Eaux et Forêts	Chargé du Suivi et Evaluation des projets	Côte d'Ivoire

No	Name	Institution	Position	Country
160	Konaté	Ministère Eaux et Forêts	Chargé du Suivi et Evaluation des projets	Côte d'Ivoire
161	Prof. Egnankou Mathieu	SOS Forêts	Président	Côte d'Ivoire
162	Dr Kouao	SOS Forêts	Membre	Côte d'Ivoire

Appendix 5: List of documents consulted

-	A Biological Survey of the Bia Conservation Area and Krokosua Hills Forest Reserve, Ghana, 2014
-	L'évaluation biologique des forêts classées de Beki, Bossématié et Diambarako, Côte d'Ivoire, Centre Suisse de Recherches Scientifiques (CSRS), 2014
-	FAO-GEF Project Implementation Review 2014 (1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014)
-	Project Progress Report, Annual report 2014 (Trust Fund Programme)
-	FAO-GEF Project Implementation Review 2015 (1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015)
-	FAO-GEF Project Implementation Review 2016 (1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016)
-	FAO-GEF Project Implementation Review 2017 - (1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017)
-	FAO-GEF Project Implementation Review 2014 (1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014)
-	GEF response to PIF. September 2009
-	Project Identification form (PFI), September 16, 2009
-	Compte Rendu de la réunion Conjointe des Comités Directeurs Nationaux (CDN) de la Côte d'Ivoire et du Ghana (Abengourou - 19/03/15)
-	Minutes for first Ghana NSC Meeting held on 17th December 2013
-	Minutes of the national steering committee of the GEF /FAO transboundary project meeting held on Tuesday 28th October 2014.
-	National Steering Committee of the project GCP/RAF/447/GFF August 3rd 2016, Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire),
-	2nd project steering committee meeting , 9th November 2016, Ghana
-	A Quick Guide to Gender Mainstreaming in Development Planning, The commonwealth Secretariat, 1999
-	Guidance note. Gender mainstreaming in development programming. UN Women, New York, November 2014
-	The state of food and agriculture 2010-11. WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE, Closing the gender gap for development. FAO, Rome 2010
-	CA First quarter report for FAO/GEF PROJECT, 2017
-	CA second quarter report. FAO-GEF project 2017
-	CA First quarter report for FAO/GEF PROJECT, 2016
-	CA first quarter report. FAO-GEF project 2014
-	CA second quarter report. FAO-GEF project 2016
-	CA Year two narrative report, 2016
-	CA Year One report, 2015
-	CA third quarter report. FAO-GEF project 2016
-	Project progress report 2014 A
-	Project progress report 2014 B
-	Project progress report 2015 A
-	Project progress report 2015 B
-	Project progress report 2016 A
-	Project progress report 2016 B
-	<u>Budget Revision A</u>
-	<u>Budget Revision B</u>

-	Funding agreement
-	Tree registration report, Elvis Kuudar, August 2017
-	A report on strengthening the protection of forest and tree resources outside government forest reserves, CSIR-FORESTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF GHANA, December 2014
-	Report on Review of Legislative Instruments and Policies, Ghana, July 2016
-	Tree registration brief, Elvis Kuudaar, 2017
-	Workplan 2014
-	Workplan 2015
-	Signed agreement FAO- Ghana
-	Signed agreement FAO- Côte d'Ivoire
-	LoA FAO-Conservation Alliance
-	Rapport de supervision/revue à mi-parcours du projet. Version finale (15 avril 2015)
-	Manual: "Monitoring. Measures of impact" , Ghana 2016
-	Presentation 1: "The project in focus: Project framework and key results" by Abigail Frimpong, CA.
-	Presentation 2: #Right of Passage required!: "Enhancing population sizes of Elephants through creation of vantage corridors" by Prof. Emmanuel Danquah, Ghana – KNUST).
-	Presentation 3: #Right of Passage required!: "Enhancing population sizes of Elephants through creation of vantage corridors" by Dr. Soulemane Ouattara, (Côte d'Ivoire).
-	Presentation 4: "Etude du régime alimentaire des éléphants dans le corridor au niveau de la zone entre les forests classees de Beki, Bossematie et Diambarakro, by Dr. Kouamé N' Guessan Francois -Côte d'Ivoire.
-	Presentation 5: "Making forest fringe communities a part of resource management: Building Capacity for Community Forest Management in Côte d'Ivoire" by Dr. Egnankou .W. Mathieu (Dr Komoé Koffi), Côte D'Ivoire.
-	Presentation 6: "Eliminating the negative incentives to tree cover: Lesons from Tree Registration Process in Ghana" by Mr. Elvis Kuudar, Consultant.
-	Presentation 7 "In pursuit of harmonious co-existence: The complexities of human-elephant conflict management in Bébou" by Dr. Kouamé N'dri Pascal, Côte d'Ivoire.
-	Presentation 8" Making forest fringe communities a part of resource management: the creation of CREMAs within the Bia end of the project" by Mr. Christian Fumey, Resource Management Support Unit (RMSC), Kumasi
-	Presentation 9 "GEF Proposed Programming Directions" by Madam Alimata Koné-Bakayoko, GEF Operation Focal Point-Côte d'Ivoire.