

# TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

## IMPROVING SUSTAINABILITY OF MANGROVE FORESTS AND COASTAL MANGROVE AREAS IN LIBERIA



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Prepared by:  
The Khana Group



Prepared for:  
Conservation International





## List of Acronyms

<b>CI</b>	Conservation International
<b>IA</b>	Implementing Agency
<b>PMU</b>	Project Management Unit
<b>PSC</b>	Project Steering Committee
<b>PIF</b>	Project Identification Form
<b>RAs</b>	Research Associates
<b>ESIA</b>	Environmental Social Impact Assessment
<b>TKG</b>	The Khana Group
<b>GEF</b>	Global Environment Facility
<b>GoL</b>	Government of Liberia
<b>EA</b>	Executing Agency
<b>KII</b>	Key Informant Interviews
<b>SMART</b>	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound
<b>IEO</b>	Independent Evaluation Office
<b>TE</b>	Terminal Evaluation
<b>MICAT</b>	Ministry of Information Cultural Affairs and Tourism
<b>MFDP</b>	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
<b>OECD-DAC</b>	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development-Development Assistance Committee
<b>PPG</b>	Project Preparatory Group
<b>EPA</b>	Environmental Protection Agency
<b>FDA</b>	Forestry Development Authority
<b>LMA</b>	Liberia Maritime Authority
<b>Ha</b>	Hectare
<b>RFP</b>	Request for Proposal
<b>CAPI</b>	Computer Assisted Interviewing Technique
<b>FGDs</b>	Focus Group Discussions
<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse Gas
<b>MGCSF</b>	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CI-GEF Project Summary Information			
<b>Project Title:</b>	Improve sustainability of mangrove forests and coastal mangrove areas in Liberia through protection, planning and livelihood creation – as a building block towards Liberia’s marine and coastal protected areas		
<b>Country:</b>	Liberia	<b>GEF ID:</b>	5712
<b>GEF-Agency:</b>	Conservation International	<b>Duration in Months:</b>	43
<b>Other Executing Partners:</b>	1. Environmental Protection Agency-Liberia 2. Conservation International-Liberia	<b>Start Date:</b>	5/15/2016
<b>GEF Focal Area(s):</b>	Biodiversity	<b>Actual Project Close Date:</b>	12/31/2019
<b>GEF Grant Amount:</b>	\$963,994	<b>Date of Last Steering Committee Meeting:</b>	4/3/2019
<b>Expected Co-financing:</b>	\$3,650,000	<b>Mid-Term Review-Planned Date:</b>	Waived
<b>Total Project Cost:</b>	\$4,704,994	<b>Mid-Term Review-Actual Date:</b>	Waived
<b>Co-financing Realized as of June 30, 2019:</b>	\$3,676,255	<b>Terminal Evaluation-Planned Date:</b>	10/15/2019
<b>Date of First Disbursement:</b>	5/15/2016	<b>Terminal Evaluation-Expected Date:</b>	10/15/2019
<b>Disbursement as of June 30,2019:</b>	\$933,996	<b>PIR Prepared by: CI-GEF Program Managers:</b>	Victor Smith George Llebo Free de Koning Susana Escudero

## Overall Project Ratings

Areas	Terminal Evaluation Ratings
<p><b>Project outcomes:</b> the extent to which project objectives were achieved.</p>	<p>Overall project outcomes: <b>Highly Satisfactory</b>  Effectiveness: <b>Highly Satisfactory</b>  Relevance: <b>Highly Satisfactory</b>  Efficiency: <b>Highly Satisfactory</b>  <b>Evaluator's Note:</b> There were 5 project outcomes. Significant accomplishments were recorded in the achievement of all five. However, challenges were identified in the completion of the gazettement for the Marshall Proposed Protected Area due to ESIA concerns arising from the passing of the 2019 Land Rights Act, which required, free, prior and informed consent be obtained from communities within 3 km radius and not 2 km that initially had been initially considered. The project outcomes were effective with evaluators registering transformative impact on communities, policy, national institutions, and local human and technical capacity at all levels. Project interventions and its overall log frame were deemed relevant and fully consistent with national laws, policies and national development plan. This also includes alignment with CI-GEF Agency program focus. Evaluators conducted informant interviews on key project documents such as procurement plan and critical lessons learned from its (procurement plan) implementation to fully assess value for money, including any internal project operations/HR functions, or oversight responsibilities between and amongst implementing and executing stakeholders that may or may not have impacted project delivery.</p>
<p><b>Sustainability:</b> the overall sustainability to project outcomes when risks are considered.</p>	<p><b>Moderately likely:</b> There are moderate risks to sustainability.  <b>Evaluator's Note:</b> Risk to sustainability is recorded as Moderate. This report identified high achievement on project sustainability, but also potentially concerning aspect to the sustainability of project outcome remains. Increased role of national agencies like EPA and FDA in execution strengthened sustainability as these long-term national institutions benefited from capacity building and</p>

	<p>knowledge transfer including mainstreaming lessons learned which in future can inform program design, thus, making transformative changes to program delivery in a way that advances project outcome and lead to replication and/or scalability. Frontline Conservationists trained under the project remain sources of local knowledge for the long-term. The Conservation Agreement model with communities, the study discovered, tends to build a sense of shared community ownership.</p> <p>However, gaps to sustainability were noticed at the output level. Ownership, management, leadership of equipment and materials delivered to communities, such as Eco-stove and fishing nets, for alternative livelihood activities were largely unclear. The activities of frontline conservationists based in the communities are less optimal now. The combination of these two could increase the risk of community returning to negative action of deforestation and harmful fishing practices. Continued awareness actions within communities including maintaining forest and community monitoring as permanent features of post project activities are key to preventing community relapse into harmful environmental actions and further weakening sustained long-term transformative changes brought on by the project outcome.</p>
<b>Quality of project M&amp;E</b>	<p>M&amp;E Design: <b>Satisfactory:</b> There were no or minor short comings. The quality of M&amp;E design / implementation meets expectations.</p> <p>M&amp;E Implementation: <b>Satisfactory</b></p> <p><b>Evaluator's Note:</b> There is evidence of the Survey123 monitoring systems at EPA including an ArcGIS Lab. This is an output indicator towards achieving a key outcome on adaptive management. Evaluators received, reviewed and assessed the project monitoring result framework, the M&amp;E Plan Matrix and the M&amp;E results. The implementation of a key M&amp;E activity such as a mid-term evaluation was waived due mainly to challenges around budgeting and cost alignment. This factor is discussed in detail below under assessment of M&amp;E System.</p>
<b>Quality of implementation:</b> the role and responsibility discharged	<p><b>Highly Satisfactory:</b> There were minor or no shortcomings.</p> <p><b>Evaluator's Note:</b> The quality of implementation is rated</p>



by the GEF Agencies that have direct access to GEF resources.	Highly Satisfactory. CI-GEF Agency conducted oversight function as a donor, while GoL agencies such as EPA and FDA performed EA functions along with CI-Liberia. The Project Steering Committee (PSC) which also included PA, FDA, LMA, MGCSP etc. also conducted oversight roles. See PSC membership detail on page 15.
<b>Quality of Execution:</b> the roles and responsibilities discharged by the country or regional counterparts that received GEF funds from the GEF Agencies and executed the funded activities on the ground.	<b>Highly Satisfactory:</b> There were minor or no shortcomings. <b>Evaluator's Note:</b> This is rated highly satisfactory. All project activities were executed, and all project outcome targets were met except for the gazettelement for the Marshall Proposed Protected Area which was exogenous to the scope of the project. However, minor shortcomings were noticed on full implementation of the M&E plan. In particular, the lack of a midline evaluation including expenditure challenges around project budget. Outdated pricing and incorrect expenditure forecast during project design and costing largely contributed to the realignment of funds away from midline evaluation. Gap between project design and execution tends to run between 2-3 years.
<b>Environmental and Social Safeguards</b>	<b>Highly Satisfactory:</b> This project was low risk and did not cause any adverse environmental or social impact. <b>Evaluator's Note:</b> This was rated highly satisfactory on both environmental and social safeguards. Stakeholder engagement actions and gender mainstreaming activities were assessed under this component of the evaluation. Evaluators reviewed the project stakeholder engagement and gender mainstreaming plans with their execution deemed Highly Satisfactory.

Liberia's coastline is about 680 km long with Monrovia, the capital city, situated along the coast. Liberia's coastal rainforest has gradually depleted due to high rates of urbanization and its associated problems. Through the Global Environment Facility (GEF), Conservation International (CI) implemented the "Improve sustainability of mangrove forests and coastal mangrove areas in Liberia through protection, planning and livelihood creation- as a building block towards Liberia's marine and coastal protected areas" project.

The project aimed at strengthening the conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's globally important mangrove forests through effective participatory land-use planning and establishment of marine protected areas in at least 35% of Liberia's mangroves. This project aimed to provide

integrated land-use policies and tools to mainstream mangrove forests biodiversity conservation and to secure mangrove forest protected areas. Establishing priority mangroves as protected areas was the first phase of a long-term process towards the ultimate establishment of a Coastal and Marine Protected Areas Network in Liberia.

This project directly addresses— (1) the complexity of developing and establishing new protected areas, (2) the high priority of the global environmental problem associated with mangrove forest loss, and (3) the weak institutional capacity in the Liberian government. This Mangrove forest conservation project ran from **July 1, 2017-June 30, 2019**.

The project design identified five key project outcomes sub-categorized under two main components:

1. Identifying and delineating 15% of priority mangrove areas accompanied by a management plan to safeguard them.
2. Prioritizing and safeguarding 5% of mangroves forested area through community conservation and agreement and other legal mechanisms.
3. Prioritizing mangrove forest land-use planning as well as integrating and mainstreaming it into the wider landscape subjected to 5-year monitoring and evaluation program for adaptive management.
4. Pursuing no further deforestation within the 15% of priority mangroves areas and its surrounding buffer settlements.
5. Building capacity and awareness of key government agencies and local communities on mangrove forest conservation and sustainable land-use.

These outcomes were captured under two separate components:

1. Enabling conditions for establishment of coastal and marine protected areas in 20% of priority mangrove forests (15% as National Protected Areas and 5% as community Conserved Mangrove Forest)
2. Decreasing pressure on an additional 15% of priority mangrove areas.

As captured in the ratings below, substantial progress was made in achieving the above program outcomes. The fulfillment of sets of clearly defined output targets in the project design drove delivery towards these outcomes. Specific interventions focused on deepening broad-based stakeholder participation of local influencers at the community level. The inclusion of chiefs, youths, and women were central to project design beginning from initiation all through execution. Mainstreaming gender, stakeholder engagement and involvement, plus fostering outcome and impact sustainability including promoting local ownership through CI's rights-based approach as well as aligning project outcome with national laws and policies were central to the program logic. The evaluation exercise determined that weaving together all these made strong contribution towards the satisfactory achievement of the project's targets.

Challenges were recorded in the lack of implementation of a mid-term evaluation to inform further actions towards the conclusion of the project. Outdated pricing and problematic expenditure forecast of key spending items within the project budget were identified as a key reason. Readjustment of the project spending plan saw funding reprogrammed away from a midline evaluation exercise. However, the establishment of the GIS Lab at the EPA which recorded patrol monitoring data collected and reported by frontline conservationists provided valuable insight into progress towards project outcomes. Regular field monitoring visits also helped address any potential gap the lack of an independent mid-term evaluation may have presented. The internal project logic of allowing statutory Government of Liberia (GoL) agencies such as the EPA and the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) perform project executing role was determined to have strong connection with long term sustainability of project impact.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Purpose of Evaluation**

The purpose of this Terminal Evaluation (TE) is to assess the project's success. The evaluation is expected to: promote accountability and transparency and facilitate synthesis of lessons. The evaluation also provides feedback to allow GEF's Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) identify recurring issues across the GEF portfolio and contribute to its IEO's databases for aggregation and analysis. In addition, the TE critically and objectively reviewed the project's implementing experience and the implementing environment, assessed whether the project met its target of strengthening the conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's globally important mangrove forests through effective participatory land-use planning and establishment of marine protected areas in at least 35% of Liberia's mangroves. The evaluation also rates the extent of achievement of project outcomes using GEF rating scale provided in the evaluation project scope of work.

### **1.2 Methodology and Approach to Evaluation**

Based on the RFP and in accordance with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Monitoring and Evaluation Policy for Terminal Evaluations, TKG designed a rigorous and independent evaluation focused on providing a comprehensive and systematic account of the performance of the project. The evaluation assesses the project design, implementation, and achievement of overall objectives leading from the project outcome. TKG leverages the combination of Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development-Development Assistance Committee's (OECD-DAC) and GEF's methodological framework to assess the project's Outputs and Outcomes based on its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.

While the OECD-DAC evaluation framework and GEF's terminal evaluation requirement guided the evaluation process, the study adopts a rigorous approach to analysis based on the project's theory of change, logic, and the assumptions underpinning the theory of change. This TE also includes essential evaluation framework and rating scale as recommended by CI attached in the annex. The

data that support this evaluation are both quantitative and qualitative including Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) as well as review of project source documents. Separately gathering interviews from local community members across the 10 project sites in Grand Cape Mount, Margibi, and Grand Bassa counties on one hand and Implementing Agency (IA) and Executing Agency (EA) members on the other hand helped triangulate findings of the evaluation. The evaluation was checked for consistency in extent of impact and effectiveness of project outcomes between and among different categories of stakeholders and documented key lessons learned. A total of 200 respondents were interviewed: 10 through Focus Group Discussions, 4 through Key Informant Interviews, and 186 through Quantitative Household Surveys.

**Table 1: Total number of respondents interviewed per category**

Location	FGDs	KII	Quantitative Surveys	Total
Lake Piso	4	0	75	79
Monrovia	0	4	0	4
Marshall	2	0	37	39
Buchanan	4	0	74	78
Total	10	4	186	200

### 1.3 Evaluation Criteria

The below rating standard formed the basis for outcome measurement as detailed within the evaluation project scope of work. Please find attached in the annex the detailed rating scale and their standard of measurement.

**Table 2: Criteria for evaluation**

Relevance:	Were the project outcomes consistent with GEF focal areas/operational program strategies, country priorities, and mandates of the Agencies? Was the project design appropriate for delivering the expected outcomes?
Effectiveness:	Were the project's actual outcomes commensurate with the expected outcomes?
Efficiency:	Was the project cost-effective? How does the project cost/time versus output/outcomes equation compare to that of similar projects?
Sustainability:	Weigh the (financial, socio-political, environmental, institutional) risks to continuation of the project benefits.
Impact:	Assess the extent to which progress towards long-term impact may be attributed to the project.

Implementation & Execution:	<p>Assess the performance of the implementing agency (CI-GEF) and the executing agencies (EPA &amp; FDA) in the discharge of their roles and responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of implementation</li> <li>• Quality of execution</li> <li>• Assessment of environmental and social safeguards</li> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• Stakeholder engagement</li> <li>• Accountability and grievance mechanism</li> </ul>
Other assessments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for follow-up</li> <li>• Materialization of co-financing</li> <li>• Lessons and recommendations</li> </ul>

## 1.4 Limitations

Deployment of data collectors occurred few days after Liberia registered its index case of COVID-19. This created a degree of uneasiness amongst evaluation stakeholders including TKG. However, TKG immediately updated its deployment plan and improved staff preparedness to rigorously abide by the health protocols released by the Government of Liberia. As those were early days in the outbreak of COVID-19, the protocol was mainly focused on regular and thorough hand washing and respecting social distancing rules. Securing appointments with key informants in Monrovia also presented challenges due to partial lockdown measures of government agencies once cases started increasing. Moreover, the study was unable to achieve the respondent or sample size target of 252. This was mainly because some project communities did not have as many inhabitants as expected for the household survey. The study interviewed the total of 200 respondents (186 Household surveys, 10 FGDs and 4 KIIs).

## 2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The rate of mangrove deforestation in Liberia is 65% since 1980 (FAO 2007). Land degradation caused by factors such as urbanization, transportation infrastructure development, mining and oil exploitation were identified in the project document as the greatest threats to mangroves in Liberia. Habitat loss as a result of what the project document called “over use and over exploitation of natural resources, specifically around urban areas, through the practices of hunting, firewood collection, charcoal production, and timber extraction” were determined as secondary causes for land degradation (Project Document: Improve sustainability of mangrove forests and coastal mangrove areas in Liberia, 2016, p.1).

Against the backdrop of this problem, environmental stakeholders agreed to promote the protection and management of mangrove, build awareness against degradation and over-exploitation of mangrove resources through the combination of “research, policy

recommendations, technical advice and practical tools coupled with small-scale interventions” (Project Document: Improve sustainability of mangrove forests and coastal mangrove areas in Liberia, 2016, p.1). This project seeks to contribute to the achievement of this overarching goal through building the technical and human capacity of regulatory agencies like the EPA and FDA and through mobilizing communities to see the value of their resources, and the benefits of protecting and managing their mangrove environment. This project provides an opportunity to work with local communities and other stakeholders to educate them on the importance of mangroves and provide guidance and recommendations on best practices for protecting mangroves, their biodiversity and ecosystem.

The project planned to achieve these through utilizing key resources to produce clear outputs that lead to the achievement of an outcome which in turn produces transformative changes in both physical environment and across the wider public policy area. CI-Liberia performed execution function on the project which lasted from July 1, 2017-June 30, 2019 and impacted 10 local communities in Grand Cape Mount, Margibi, and Grand Bassa counties. The project is however in a period of no-cost extension to accommodate for current TE task. Government agencies such as EPA, Liberia Maritime Authority (LMA), and FDA supported the project execution along with the PMU. The total cost of the project was \$4,613,994 with total GEF Grant at \$963,994. Conservation International’s co-financing at \$1,300,000 while the value of co-financing from EPA and FDA were \$1,000,000 and \$1,350,000, respectively.

## **2.1 Project Objectives, Components and Outcomes**

The overall objective of this project is to “strengthen the conservation and sustainable use of Liberia’s globally important mangrove forests through effective participatory land-use planning and establishment of marine protected areas in at least 35% of Liberia’s mangroves”.

To achieve this objective, two project components were developed. They are: 1. enabling conditions for establishment of coastal and marine protected areas in 20% of priority mangrove forests; and 2. reducing pressures on an additional 15% of priority forest areas through integrated land-use planning, improving local community livelihoods and increasing stakeholders’ capacity and awareness. Below is a breakdown of project components together with corresponding outcome targets:

*Component 1: Enabling conditions for establishment of coastal and marine protected areas in 20% of priority mangrove forests.*

### **Outcomes under Component 1:**

Outcome 1.1: 15% of priority mangrove areas identified, delineated, and management plans to safeguard them

Outcome 1.2: 5% of priority mangrove forests safeguarded through community-based Conservation Agreements and other legal mechanisms

*Component 2: Reducing pressures on an additional 15% of priority mangrove areas.*

**Outcomes under Component 2:**

Outcome 2.1: Priority mangrove forest land-use planning integrated and mainstreamed in the wider landscape and subjected to 5-year monitoring and evaluation program for adaptive management.

Outcome 2.2: No further deforestation within the 15% of priority mangroves and surrounding

Outcome 2.3: Capacity and awareness of key government agencies and local communities on mangrove forest conservation and sustainable use substantially improved.

## **2.2 Project Team and Key Stakeholders**

**Table 3: Project team and Stakeholders**

No.	Names	Agency	Position
<b>Implementing Agency</b>			
1.	Free de Koning	CI-GEF	CI-GEF Representative
2.	Susana Escudero	CI-GEF	CI-GEF Representative
<b>Executing Agency / Project Team Members</b>			
1.	Victor Smith	CI-Liberia	Project Manager
2.	George Llebo	CI-Liberia	Technical Director
3.	Z. Elijah Whapoe	EPA	Manager, Policy and Planning
4.	Blama Goll	FDA	Technical Manager, Conservation
<b>Project Steering Committee (PSC)</b>			
1.	Madam Anyaa Vohiri	EPA	Executive Director/ GEF Operational Focal Point
2.	Jonathan Davies	EPA	National Coordinator Biodiversity Projects / Focal Point for Biodiversity
3.	Johansen Voker	EPA	Synergistic Project Coordinator
4.	Z. Elijah Whapoe	EPA	Manager, Policy and Planning
5.	Jessica Donovan-Allen	EPA	Country Director, CI Liberia
6.	Darlington Tuagben	FDA	Deputy Managing Director

7.	Sieane Abdul-Baki	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection	Deputy Minister
8.	John Cuffe	Liberia Maritime Authority	Representative
9.	R. Fole Sherman	Land Commission	Representative
10.	J. Momolu Kaindii	Ministry Internal Affairs	Director Urban Affairs
11.	Adam Manobah	EPA	Representative
12.	Jerry Toe	EPA	Manager

### 3 ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT RESULTS

Under this section, a comprehensive review of the project logical framework is conducted for the purpose of determining the extent to which deliverables achieved from project execution were in line with expected outcomes including the extent to which those outcomes impacted the general ecosystem (institutions, national policies and community livelihood).

#### 3.1 Assessing the Project Theory of Change

The project problem statement identified 5 key threats to Liberia's mangroves. They are:

1. Infrastructure development, such as illegal structures for housing
2. Agriculture expansion, particularly for swamp rice production
3. Illegal sand mining
4. Use of mangrove wood for fuelwood, charcoal, and fish smoking
5. Unregulated waste disposal

Addressing these challenges has presented enormous difficulties to policy actors and stakeholders. The project document identified constraints to addressing these threats as the following:

1. Weak legal environment
2. Low capacity at the individual and institutional levels and at both national and local levels
3. Inadequate funding to address key challenges
4. Community level poverty and lack of decent employment thereby shifting pressure on the mangrove environment as communities seek opportunities for economic livelihood
5. Lack of public knowledge and awareness.

The evaluation determined that the project theory of change was soundly designed to help address these constraints, tackle the challenges and present new opportunities for sustainable environmental management of mangrove forested areas including other natural resources with the overall objective of strengthening conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's globally important mangrove forests. This objective was to be achieved through effective participatory land-use planning and establishment of marine protected areas in at least 35% of Liberia's mangroves.



As contained in the project's logic model, a set of resources, both human and material, available to the Government of Liberia and partners were deployed in a way that would lead to activities and those activities would lead to output while outputs lead to outcome and those outcomes subsequently leading to wider impact across the policy spectrum through the achievement of the project overall objective. This was the flow of the logic model. The project outcome was deemed to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound), a factor which helps accelerate impact measurement and evaluation. The idea is that these outcomes will therefore remain sustainable and potentially create a chain reaction of transformative approaches to both policy and the entire sector.

### **3.2 Achievement of Project Output**

The evaluation concludes that the project achieved all outputs as determined in the project document. Key amongst these outputs includes the ecological, socio-economic and threats survey report, Mangrove Map for Liberia, base maps/map books for Lake Piso and Marshall Proposed Protected Area. Others are, Conservation Agreement Feasibility Assessments, the report on Botanical Study on the coastal vegetation, a gazettement package for Marshall Proposed Protected Area, a validated Management Plan for Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve, the set-up of two Co-Management Committees (CMCs) for Lake Piso Multiple Reserve and Marshall Proposed Protected Area including FDA endorsed financial plans for both Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve and a template for Marshall Proposed Protected Area. Project outputs also include a total of 514(168women and 346 men) workshop and trainee participants from government including 80 community meetings, 9 workshops and the development of a Participatory Land-Use Planning tool kit.

In addition, mangrove monitoring plan using Survey123 for ArcGIS was developed and approved by the EPA. The system set up at the GIS Lab at the EPA tracked and reported a total of 4,455 monitoring patrols. Ten community land use plans were also developed as guide for the communities that separately signed on to the Conservation Agreements. Some 514 government officials (168 women and 346 men) and 4,058 community members (997 women and 3,061 men), and 101 County and community leaders participated in the project. Other participants were Civil Society Organization representatives (one woman and three men), and 10 Non-Governmental Organization (3women and 7 men) representatives.

Progress for this component is rated as highly satisfactory because most outputs were achieved and two output indicators exceeded targets (total surface area in hectares under Conservation Agreements to be prevented from deforestation, and the number of people trained). Capacity building exercises led to training of 3 EPA staff in GIS courses that covered the following: Fundamental of GIS, GIS Data Format, Design and Quality, Geospatial and Environmental Analysis, Imagery, Automation and Application, Geospatial Analysis, ARC GIS, and Geo Database. Significant amounts of data have been collected and mangrove maps have been produced. Below is a matrix table displaying Output Results and status of accomplishment.

Output Indicators	Project Baseline	Status Of Output Indicators At End Of Project	Comments By The Evaluation Team
<b>Outcome 1.1: 15% of priority mangrove areas have been identified, delineated, and management plans to safeguard them completed</b>			
<b>Output Indicator 1.1.1:</b> Report on distribution and delineation of mangrove forests in Liberia with priority coastal protected areas identified for incorporation into formal protected areas and endorsed by the Government of Liberia	Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve under limited protection  No current map delineating the extent of mangrove forest distribution in Liberia and identifying the priority areas exist.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecological, Socio-economic and threats survey report produced</li> <li>• Mangrove map for Liberia developed</li> <li>• Base maps/map books for Lake Piso and Marshall Proposed Protected area developed</li> <li>• Conservation Agreement Feasibility assessments produced</li> <li>• Report on botanical study on the coastal vegetation produced</li> </ul>	These validated reports were received and reviewed by the terminal evaluation team
<b>Output Indicator 1.1.2:</b> a) Gazettement packages prepared for establishment of two coastal protected areas in Liberia and submitted to FDA for endorsement b) Multi-stakeholder management forums established for each proposed protected area	No mangrove forests in Liberia are currently under community conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A gazettelement package for Marshall Proposed Protected Area was developed</li> <li>• Management plan for Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve was updated, validated by stakeholders and approved by the Forestry Development Authority</li> <li>• Two Co-Management Committees (CMCs) have been set up i.e. for Lake Piso Multiple Reserve and Marshall Proposed Protected Area</li> </ul>	Evaluators received evidence of progress on the Gazettelement package for Marshall along with separate Co-management committees for Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve and the Proposed Marshall Protected Area.  The gazettelement package for Marshall proposed protected area is almost complete.

<b>Output Indicator 1.1.3:</b> Financial plans prepared for two coastal protected areas in Liberia and endorsed by the Government of Liberia	No financial plan for conservation of priority mangrove forests exist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial plans for both Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve and a template for Marshall Proposed Protected Area were developed and endorsed by Forestry Development Authority</li> </ul>	Evaluators determined that the below output targets were met: The Financial plans for Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve and Marshall Proposed Protected Area were participatorily developed, validated by stakeholders and validated by Forestry Development Authority (FDA)
<b>Output Indicator 1.1.4:</b> Number of key government staff (gender disaggregated) that participated in project workshops and training sessions	Low levels of awareness and support for new coastal protected areas within appropriate government agencies, ministries and legislatures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A total of 514 (168 women and 346 men) government officials participated in various workshops and training sessions as detailed out below: Year 1: 122 (19 women and 103 men) Year 2: 183 (68 women and 115 men) Year 3: 209 (81 women and 128 men)</li> </ul>	Evaluators received training attendance sheets and record reflecting both male and female participation including representatives from GOL agencies
<b>Outcome 1.2.: 5% of priority mangrove forests is safeguarded through community-based Conservation Agreements and other legal mechanisms</b>			
<b>Output Indicator 1.2.1:</b> Number of workshops and meetings held with local communities to discuss progress	No mangrove forests in Liberia are currently under community conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>80 community meetings</li> <li>9 workshops</li> </ul>	Evaluators received evidence of community meetings and workshops involving the participation of community members from the project preparation phase to execution

<b>Outcome 2.1: Priority Mangrove forest land use planning integrated and mainstreamed in the wider landscape (surrounding buffer areas) and subjected to 5-year M&amp;E program for adaptive management</b>			
<b>Output Indicator 2.1.1:</b> Tool kit is completed	No integrated land use planning practiced in the Liberian coastal zone at present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One Participatory Land Use planning tool kit was developed</li> </ul>	Evaluators received and reviewed the participatory land use toolkit developed by the project
<b>Output Indicator 2.1.1:</b> Number of ha where toolkit has been applied successfully	No integrated land use planning practiced in the Liberian coastal zone at present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11,107 ha</li> </ul>	<p>Report of the application of the toolkit in the following project communities were documented:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bleewein – 235 ha</li> <li>2. Sarwein – 398 ha</li> <li>3. Bomboja – 359 ha</li> <li>4. Bendu – 463 ha</li> <li>5. Falie – 1,214 ha</li> <li>6. Mandoe – 1,100 ha</li> <li>7. Edina – 5,140 ha</li> <li>8. Nyangba – 372 ha</li> <li>9. Ben's Town – 370 ha</li> <li>10. Snafu Dock – 1,456 ha</li> </ol>
<b>Output Indicator 2.1.2.:</b> M&E program developed and endorsed by the EPA	No protection exists for mangrove forests in buffer areas surrounding priority sites at present. Levels of deforestation and mangrove harvesting at many sites is very high at present, especially in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mangrove monitoring plan using survey123 for ArcGIS was developed and approved by EPA</li> <li>The three Environmental Protection Agency staff have completed the six additional online GIS Courses (Fundamental of GIS, GIS Data Format, Design and Quality,</li> </ul>	Evaluators received and reviewed the project M&E Plan Matrix, the M&E Result Framework and overall status of project indicators. Evaluation field trips also confirmed the presence of trained frontline

	the Montserrado and Marshall areas	<p>Geospatial and Environmental Analysis, Imagery, Automation and Application, Geospatial Analysis, ARC GIS, Geo Database</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 88 Frontline Conservationists have been trained in forest monitoring using survey123 for ArcGIS</li> </ul>	conservationists in all ten project communities including evidence of the ArcGIS Lab at the EPA
<b>Output Indicator 2.1.2.:</b> Records of monitoring activities and results of assessments undertaken	No fully developed monitoring framework for mangrove forested areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Project Steering Committee (PSC) held a joint monitoring field visit</li> <li>• CI-Liberia Technical Director conducted quarterly monitoring</li> <li>• Ecological, socio-economic and threat survey reports have been produced</li> </ul>	Various assessment and survey reports produced were received and verified by terminal evaluation team.
<b>Output Indicator 2.1.3.:</b> Number of plans completed	No participatory management plans for mangrove areas exist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 community land use plans were developed</li> </ul>	Land use plans were developed for the 10 project communities that include Bleewein, Sarwein, Bomboja, Bendu, Falie, Mandoe, Ben's Town, Snafu Dock, Nyangba and Edina
<b>Output Indicator 2.1.3.:</b> Reduction in the rate of loss of mangrove forest area at priority sites.	No Existing Conservation Agreement with Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ten Conservation Agreements signed</li> <li>• Three staff (all men) from the Environmental Protection Agency have completed an Introductory GIS</li> </ul>	The evaluation team received and verified all ten Conservation agreements signed with the communities including records of monitoring patrols conducted

		<p>training along with six recommended online GIS Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>88 (2 women and 86 men) Frontline Conservationists were trained in forest monitoring using Survey 123 for ArcGIS</li> </ul>	to reflect extent of reduction in illegal activities in mangrove areas
<b>Outcome 2.2: No further deforestation within the 15% of priority mangroves and surrounding buffer areas through addressing drivers of deforestation and improving people's livelihoods</b>			
<b>Output Indicator 2.2.1.:</b> Number of communities with Conservation Agreements	No Conservation Agreement with communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 communities</li> </ul>	<p>Ten communities signed the Conservation Agreement and they are:</p> <p>a) Nyangba, Bleewein, Sarwein and Edina in Grand Bassa County.</p> <p>b) Snafu-Dock and Ben's Town in Margibi County; and</p> <p>c) Falie, Mandoe, Bomboja and Bendu in Grand Cape Mount County</p>
<b>Outcome 2.3: Capacity and awareness of key government agencies and local communities on mangrove forest conservation and sustainable use substantially improved</b>			
<b>Output Indicator 2.3.1.:</b> Needs assessment completed and report available	Awareness of threats and benefits of mangroves amongst government officials in Liberia is currently very poor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A report on assessment of the level of knowledge on mangroves was produced</li> </ul>	Records of project needs assessment were available

<p><b>Output Indicator 2.3.2.:</b> Capacity building program designed</p>	<p>Awareness of threats and benefits of mangroves amongst people in local communities at the four priority sites is variable (moderately high at Lake Piso but poor at the other priority sites).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The three Environmental Protection Agency staff have completed the six additional online GIS Courses (Fundamental of GIS, GIS Data Format, Design and Quality, Geospatial and Environmental Analysis, Imagery, Automation and Application, Geospatial Analysis, ARC GIS, Geo Database)</li> </ul>	<p>The project delivered capacity building support at all levels and for all categories of stakeholders and project beneficiaries. Evidence of this was discovered both during field data collections and desk review</p>
<p><b>Indicator 2.3.3.:</b> Number of participants by type of stakeholders (gender disaggregated)</p>	<p>Awareness of threats and benefits of mangroves amongst people in local communities at the four priority sites is variable (moderately high at Lake Piso but poor at the other priority sites).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 514 (168 women and 346 men) government officials</li> <li>• 4,058 (997 women and 3,061 men) community members; and</li> <li>• 101 County and community leaders (37 women and 64 men)</li> <li>• Four (one woman and three men) Civil Society Organization representatives</li> <li>• 10 (3women and 7 men) Non-Governmental Organization representatives</li> </ul>	<p>Monitoring data shows stakeholders disaggregated by gender which was a key gender mainstreaming requirement of the project</p>

### 3.3 Evaluation of the Project Outcomes

Overall extent to which project achieved its outcome: **HIGHLY SATISFACTORY**

The project listed the following as key indicators for outcome performance:

1. Number of priority mangrove areas identified and delineated with safeguarding management plans
2. Area (ha and % of total) of mangrove forest under community conservation or other legal mechanisms
3. Number of government officials and local stakeholders benefiting from capacity building and awareness about threats and benefits of mangroves
4. Number of ha of avoided deforested within the buffer areas surrounding priority sites
5. Area (ha or %) of priority mangroves covered by the M&E program.

The assessment shows that the project exceeded its target on the number of surface area expected to have been covered under indicators 1 above. The final area of delineated mangroves was 24.4%, exceeding the 15% target. The number of mangrove forests safeguarded through community conservation was 14.5%, exceeding the 5% project target. The evaluation received report of an approved updated management plan for Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve which covers 24.4% of the total priority mangrove forest in Liberia. This is in addition to the constitution of co-management committees for both Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve and the Marshall Proposed Protected Area. Evaluators received and reviewed copies of ten Conservation Agreements signed and implemented by 10 local communities namely; Nyangba, Bleewein, Sarwein and Edina in Grand Bassa County; Snafu-Dock and Ben's Town in Margibi County; and Falie, Mandoe, Bomboja and Bendu in Grand Cape Mount County. Under the framework of the Conservation Agreement, the communities committed to protect the mangrove areas and avoid deforestation. Conservation International committed capacity building support to communities. This support would help communities develop sustainable livelihood activities away from deforestation of the mangroves. Livelihood support such as provision of fishing nets, Eco-stove and cassava production projects reduced community dependence on harmful environmental actions linked to mangrove deforestation.

Moreover, the project fully accomplished the development of the gazettelement package for Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve. Actions on the gazettelement for Marshall Proposed Protected Area covering 23,813 ha of which 3,295 ha are mangroves and representing 11.5% of priority mangrove forests in Liberia is yet to be completed. The Government of Liberia is requiring the conduct of a new Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) to form the basis for any future progress on finalization of the gazettelement package for the Marshall Proposed Protected Area.

A survey of 186 members of the 10 project communities reveals the extent of project communities' dependence on mangrove forested resources including the extent to which CI provision of alternative sources of economic livelihood as committed under the Conservation Agreement helped achieve indicator 2.2.: Number of ha of avoided deforested within the buffer areas



surrounding priority sites). Below is summary of findings from 186 respondent interviews in the 10 project communities across three counties (Cape Mount, Margibi and Grand Bassa). The below findings mainly focus on community residents' assessment of livelihood activities.

### **3.3.1 Community Livelihood**

- Across the 10 communities, fishing (including fish drying) is the most common source of livelihood with (93.6%) of residents in this occupation, (0%) is involved with hunting and another 51% in activities other than fishing and hunting which includes farming and selling.
- Eighteen percent (18%) are involved with coal burning as a source of economic livelihood. Of the 34 respondents who reported charcoal burning in the 10 project areas as a key source of livelihood, (76%) selected in-land forest areas as the source of harvested trees for charcoal production, (0%) picked mangrove/coastal forest areas. All 34 were fully aware that harvesting trees from mangrove forested areas is unhealthy for the community and a violation of their community agreement and commitment.
- Ninety-one percent (91%) of respondents cited provision of family meals and commercial purposes as primary reasons for community fishing.
- Ninety-two percent (92%) of respondents reported that fishermen in their communities received supplies from CI during the project in exchange for commitment to community conservation.
- Eighty-nine percent (89%) of respondents stated that there have been awareness campaigns in their communities educating residents of the harm of fishing with mosquito nets and its negative impact on the environment.
- In cases where fishing with mosquito nets are recorded, (26%) of respondents cited smaller holes and the likelihood of catching more fish and sea life including its affordability over officially recommended nets as key sources of motivation. (73%) of respondents answered "good" the extent of the impact of CI donated materials for fishing in the communities. Respondents believe CI support to the community has made a huge positive difference for commercial fishermen in the communities.
- Some seventy-nine percent (79.4%) of respondents identified charcoal production and (27%) housing construction as key motivators that continued to lead to tree harvesting. (82.3%) of respondents believe this situation has not been reported to CI, partner organizations or community leadership and only (17%) suggest some form of complaints have been registered.
- Ninety-seven percent (97.1%) of community members surveyed, however, felt that the environmental benefit of preserving the coastal forest is more important than the personal benefit of income earned from harvesting mangrove forest for coal production. (2.9%) argued that personal income benefits them more because of the lack of alternative opportunities for decent jobs.
- About fifty-five percent (55.9%) of respondents feel the limits placed on harvesting of trees from coastal/mangrove forested areas continue to affect livelihood of community residents, while (44.1%) thinks the contrary.

- About ninety-five percent (94.7%) of respondents suggested that there has been a decrease in the number of coal burner in their communities since the signing of the Conservation Agreement. (78.9%) reported that individuals who abandoned coal production due to the Conservation Agreement have found alternative means of earning income, while (21%) have not transferred to alternative economic activity.
- Seventy-five percent (75%) of respondents picked “don’t know” to their new form of livelihood, 25% said fishing and gathering.
- Over eighty-eight percent (88.5%) of respondents reported “Yes” to questions over whether they have noticed increase in the number of aquatic lives in mangroves and coastal forested areas due to improved methods of conservation. (96.8%) of respondents reported the construction of eco-stove in their community during the project. (85%) view eco-stove as just as effective as or better than using fire coal to dry fish, while 27 persons (15%) think otherwise.
- Of the 27 persons who viewed charcoal use as a more effective method of fish drying, (25.9%) said they have “never used Eco-stove”, (66.7%) said Eco-stove “cannot dry fish properly” and (7.4%) said “eco-stoves are too low”. Many respondents put the operation of these eco-stoves to women in the community involved with fish drying and sale. (98%) of respondents embraced the idea of conservation, while the remaining (2%) believe they may not “be gaining” or making much income from the use of the stove and also blamed this on “low awareness” or inadequate understanding of its operation.

### 3.4 Effectiveness

#### Outcome Effectiveness rating: HIGHLY SATISFACTORY

The evaluation determined that the project effectively accomplished nearly all its expected outcomes. The full execution of a Project M&E Plan was the key gap identified. The outcome charts below summarize the evaluation findings on outcome effectiveness.

**Component One:** Enabling conditions for establishment of coastal and marine protected areas in 20% of priority mangrove forests (15% as National Protected Areas and 5% as community Conserved Mangrove Forest).

Indicators	Target	Outcome Results	TE Comments
<b>Outcome 1.1: 15% of priority mangrove areas have been identified, delineated, and management plans to safeguard them completed</b>			
Area (ha and % of total) mangrove areas identified, delineated	(15%) Identify, delineate and develop management plan to safeguard priority mangrove	24.4%	This shows that outcome overachieved beyond its 15% target to 6,982 ha (24.4%) A desk review of the Project Implementation Reports (PIR) shows that this target was overachieved by 9.4% which is (6,982 ha, 24.4%)

with management plan	areas under this project (Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve and Marshall Protected Area)		
<b>Outcome 1.2: 5% of priority mangrove forests is safeguarded through community conservation and other legal mechanisms</b>			
Area (ha and % of total) of mangrove forest under community conservation or other legal mechanisms	5% of Liberia's priority mangrove forests placed under community conservation or other legal mechanisms	14.5%	<p>PIR shows that the project overachieved on this outcome indicator by 9.5% to 4,146 ha (14.5%) above and beyond its 5% project target.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ten Conservation Agreements were signed with the communities of Nyangba, Bleewein, Sarwein, Edina, Snafu-Dock and Ben's Town, Falie, Mandoe, Bomboja, and Bendu. These 10 Conservation Agreements cover a total surface area of 15,253 ha, of which 4,146 ha are mangroves.</li> <li>• Also, ten Conservation Agreement Management Committees were organized across the ten communities that signed Conservation Agreements. These communities include Nyangba, Sarwein, Bleewein, Edina, Snafu-Dock, Ben's Town, Bomboja, Falie, Mandoe and Bendu.</li> </ul>

The management plan for the Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve which covers 6,982 ha of mangroves, representing 24.4% of the total priority mangrove forest in Liberia has been completed, validated and approved by the stakeholders. Reports show that the gazettement package for Marshall Proposed Protected Area is not fully completed; 80% of work has been achieved.

Furthermore, CI reports that funding has been secured from the Prince of Monaco and the Turing Foundation to complete the gazettement package which is expected to be finalized within a 12-month period. The project, using its participatory and bottom to top approach, achieved on the development of the Conservation Agreement signed between CI and each of the 10 project communities. Community members interviewed during the field mission stated their satisfaction

with the effectiveness of consultation and awareness of community members and project beneficiaries.

On project effectiveness, household interview results from residents of the 10 project communities revealed the following:

- Some (96%) of 186 total household respondents (112 women and 74 men) said they were aware of the Conservation Agreement and only (4%) said they were unaware.
- Of the 123 who picked “Yes” on awareness during the quantitative survey, (68.3%) identified CI staff as their source of information on the agreement with community leadership accounting for (36.7%).
- Of the 144 respondents who announced that they were informed about the Conservation Agreement, (80%) said they participated in the consultative process and provided insights that led to the development of the Agreement. Only (20%) said “No”.
- As for whether community members in project locations were happy with the extent to which the final version of the agreement reflected their inputs and suggestions, views were quite divided. Slightly over (54%) suggested “Yes”, while (45%) said “NO”.
- One hundred and seventy-three (173) people accounting for (96.1%) of total household respondents found the Conservation Agreement clear and understandable, while only 7 respondents stated their lack of understanding. The 7 respondents, when further probed on whether they asked questions that sought clarity about the document and its purpose, 5 out of 7 said “NO”, while 2 persons intimated “Yes”. Half of those who chose “Yes” deemed their questions or inquiries satisfactorily answered and insisted that additional information provided improved their understanding of the Conservation Agreement with the remaining half considering the responses from the project team unsatisfactory. And (97.8%) of community members interviewed considered the Conservation Agreement in the best possible interest of their communities.
- Over ninety-four percent (94.6%) of total respondents maintained that their community received benefits in exchange for committing to the Conservation Agreement. (86.9%) named canoe as a benefit, (84%) said Engines for canoe, (92%) said fishing lines/net, (13%) said cassava machine, (17 %) said caustic soda.
- When asked if they (respondents) have participated in trainings related to mangrove coastal forest conservation during the project, only 52 of respondents selected “Yes”. 50 out of the 52 respondents named CI staff as their trainer and 2 others named frontline conservationists and community leaders as their sources of training.
- Twenty-six percent (26%) of those who benefited from training answered “can’t remember” when asked about what topics were discussed during the training. (51%) cited “forgoing wood harvesting” as one of the topics, (86%) said “forgoing hunting of protected and endangered animal”, (73%) said “forgoing unsustainable fishing practices”, (57%) said “water pollution”, (69%) said “coastal management”, and (21%) named “biodiversity”. And a (100%) of those who attended the workshop/training feel the training exercises were beneficial.

- Ninety-eight percent (98%) of total respondents feel the relationship between Conservation International and their communities reflects the best interest of both the environment and them (residents). (3.2%) of respondents believe that some violation of the Conservation Agreement occurred. (96.8%) do not believe so. (16%) named tree felling from mangrove coastal forest area as one key violation and the same percentage named mosquito net fishing and charcoal for fish drying as the other type of violation. Community residents did not feel they were obligated to report violation of the agreement. (83.3%) said reporting violation was the responsibility of frontline conservationists and (16%) said it was the responsibility of their community leadership. As high as (66%) of all those aware of some form of violation of the Conservation Agreement have no knowledge of the complaint form used to express concerns and report violation.
- For improvement and successful implementation of any future community agreement, (23%) of total respondents recommended the provision of more fishing material/machine, 8.6% called for the involvement and training of more women.

In addition, over twenty-two percent (22.6%) suggested regular training workshop and (18.8%) said regular monthly stipend, while (5.4%) recommended the building or fixing of water pumps for drinking for future conservation programs.

**Component 2:** Decreasing pressures on an additional 15% of priority mangrove areas

Indicators	Target	Outcome Results	TE Comments
<b>Outcome 2.1: Priority mangrove forest land-use planning integrated and mainstreamed in the wider landscape and subjected to 5-year monitoring and evaluation program for adaptive management</b>			
Indicator 2.1.: Area (ha or %) of priority mangroves covered by the M&E program	15% of additional priority mangroves with integrated land use plans and M&E program	14.5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A land use planning toolkit was developed</li> <li>• Ten (10) land use plans were developed for Falie, Mandoe, Ben's Town, Snafu-Dock, Nyangba, Edina, Bendu, Bomboja, Bleewein and Sarwein. These 10 communities have a total surface area of 15,253 ha; of which 4,146 ha are mangroves.</li> <li>• Base maps for Marshall Proposed Protected Area and Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve were produced. Also,</li> </ul>

			<p>a map of mangrove ecosystems along the entire Liberian coast has been developed using GIS and Landsat imagery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 88 (2women and 86 men) Frontline Conservationists trained on the use of mobile tablets for patrolling and the collection of monitoring data using Survey123</li> <li>• Three staff (all men) of EPA completed GIS training which included courses on Fundamentals of GIS, GIS Data Format, Design and Quality, Geospatial and Environmental Analysis, Imagery, Automation and Application, Geospatial Analysis, ARC GIS, and Geo Database.</li> <li>• These three staff actively participated in the Land Use Planning activities in Bendu, Bomboja, Bleewein and Sarwein communities. A GIS Lab and a dashboard for mangrove monitoring was set up at EPA</li> </ul>
Outcome 2.2: No further deforestation within the 15% of priority mangroves and surrounding buffer areas			
Indicator 2.2.: Number of ha of avoided deforested within the buffer areas surrounding priority sites	15%	14.5% (4,146 ha)	<p>The TE verified that ten Conservation Agreements were signed with the following communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nyangba, Bleewein, Sarwein and Edina in Grand Bassa County.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snafu-Dock and Ben's Town in Margibi County; and</li> <li>• Falie, Mandoe, Bomboja and Bendu in Grand Cape Mount County</li> </ul> <p>The total land surface area of these ten communities with Conservation Agreements is 15,253 hectares, of which 4,146 ha is mangroves. Through the Conservation Agreements, the communities are committing to protect the mangrove areas and avoid their deforestation.</p> <p>Co-Management Committees were established for Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve and Marshall Proposed Protected Area.</p> <p>Conservation Agreement Management Committees were established in 10 communities</p>
Outcome 2.3.: Capacity and awareness of key government agencies and local communities on mangrove forest conservation and sustainable use substantially improved.			
Indicator 2.3.: Number of government officials and local stakeholders aware of threats and benefits of mangroves	At least 50 government officials and 1,000 people in 4 local communities received training on the key threats to and benefits provided by mangrove forests in Liberia	514 (168 women and 346 men) GoL officials and Representatives  4,058 (997 women and 3,061 men) local stakeholders and community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A total of 514 (168 women and 346 men) government officials from Liberia Maritime Authority, Environmental Protection Agency, Forestry Development Authority, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, Ministry of Gender, Children and social Protection House of Senate and Representative, and Liberia Land Authority etc. participated in project</li> </ul>

			<p>activities including meetings, workshops, monitoring etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A total of 4,058 (997 women and 3,061 men) community members participated in meetings, workshops, negotiations and design for Conservation Agreements and other project activities</li> <li>• Two videos of five minutes each were produced for creating awareness and for advocacy. The videos highlighted importance of mangroves and threats facing them as well as a call for action.</li> <li>• Also, on World Wetlands days (February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 and 2019) the project raised awareness on the importance of mangroves. About 3,004 people participated.</li> </ul>
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This project recorded satisfactory outcomes under all three indicators. The land use planning toolkit was developed and finalized including the design and implementation of the land use plan for all 10 project communities covering the surface area of 15,253 ha; of which 4,146 ha are mangroves. The evaluators' received reports on the development of base maps for Marshall Proposed Protected Area and Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve. The report also includes account of the completion of the GIS and landsat imagery showing the map of mangrove ecosystems along Liberia's coast. Under the monitoring indicator 88 (2women and 86 men) Frontline Conservationists were trained on the use of mobile tablets and tasked with the function of conducting patrols and collecting monitoring data using Survey123 platform. Focus Group Interviews with community members also revealed that frontline conservationists also provided training and awareness support to communities during project implementation. The project also built capacity within EA organizations with three staff members of EPA completing courses in the fundamentals of GIS.

Further on capacity building, the total of 514 (168 women and 346 men) government employees/officials from EAs that include Liberia Maritime Authority, Environmental Protection



Agency, Forestry Development Authority, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, the Senate and House of Representatives, and the Liberia Land Authority etc. received trainings at meetings, workshops, and monitoring exercises. The project also witnessed the involvement of the total of 4,058 (997 women and 3,061 men) community members who participated in meetings, workshops, negotiations and design exercises around the development of the Conservation Agreements and other project activities.

Community members interviewed during this evaluation confirmed this level of consultation and participation. Some (80%) 144 out of 186 household respondents announced that they were informed about the Conservation Agreement and that they participated in the consultative process leading to its drafting and provided insights that led to the development and finalization of the agreement. Awareness activities also included the development of publicity videos and brought together some 3004 participants on World Wetland Days on February 2, 2018 and 2019. Evaluators received reports of the development of the co-management plan for Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve and Marshall Proposed Protected Area, including Conservation Agreement Management Committees in 10 communities.

The box below captures cross-section responses of members of the 10 project beneficiary communities and their assessment of the extent of project outcomes including changes in lifestyle and project impact on their communities. These responses are categorized into sub themes to reflect remarks based on key sections of the Community Agreement signed between each of the 10 communities and CI. A key component of the Conservation Agreement was the provision of technical and training capacity for communities. The training was to discourage communities' dependence on mangrove forest for livelihood which could lead to mangrove deforestation.

Topics	Cross-section of comments from Project Beneficiaries in the 10 communities. Comments are largely expressed in the voices of community members
Perception of communities (Economic livelihood, Conserving Environment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coal burning is a means of financial income. Some inhabitants earn money through these activities to sustain their families</li> <li>• Coal burning is not “rampant like other areas”. Residents reported that woods for charcoal production are collected from forests area designated for farming and not from mangrove/coastal forested areas.</li> <li>• “We don’t burn charcoal here like other areas where people just take it to be their daily occupation”. (Focus Group Participant)</li> <li>• Normally we use firewood to cook our food and dry our fish.</li> </ul>
Protected Mangrove areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We also try to put some protection into place like the case with mangroves. We don’t just destroy our mangroves because our mangrove is where fish go to produce eggs in the wetlands so we</li> </ul>

	<p>cannot destroy our mangroves when we know that they are important because without those mangroves, we will not get the kind of fish we want. These are facts I gathered from CI staff during process of training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are some trees in the forest that can grow very old and you expect that some of the branches will get old and fall so in that light when those trees fall on the ground, they become wood. We use them and do not have to go and cut new trees to fetch wood.</li> <li>• As a farmer, when I make my farm and it burned the wood, I use it to make coal because when it remains there, it will become rotten. By that you become loser after all the hard farm work. That is why we take the wood that is on the farm to make our coal.</li> </ul>
Hunting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What we normally do here is domestic hunting and we try to protect our community. What we use to do in the past when things were really organize, was before you hunt, you must have permission and you cannot just kill animals discriminately or at your liking.</li> <li>• Sometimes when you sit in the City Hall Yard, you see some bush animals passing like Squirrels. They are free because we do not just hunt them like that.</li> <li>• The only thing sometimes we really hunt here because they can destroy our cassava is the “groundhog “and other wild animals that come to destroy our farm. So occasionally we chase them away, but we do not just do it rampantly as those animals too deserve to live.</li> <li>• For the animal part, animal is good to live around human beings that because most people our community and are happy to see these animals.</li> <li>• So, since CI came here, they told us not to hunt animals, so we do not (disturb) the animals.</li> <li>• We try our best to incorporate wildlife protection in our area because it can also bring income just as hunting. Years back when we were coming up as kids, we did not know that wildlife is not to be hunted and killed discriminately. But when CI came and we got the basic information and education, we community residents do not kill for example, sea tortoise and more like in the past.</li> <li>• CI also provided livelihood for us because people were paid, and people were on salary to “mind” (provide security) for the beach</li> </ul>

	<p>side and to protect the tortoise and other animals within our environment also.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the case of “groundhog”, when we plant our cassava and we find out that the cassava farm has somehow overgrown with weeds and why we are cleaning we see signs of them, we get dogs and try to minimize their presence on the farm.</li> <li>• There is an ordinance that prevents unapproved hunting and killing of certain kind (species) of animals.</li> </ul>
Fishing (fish drying)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We normally eat fish if you see it beneath slot surrounded by water. So, we do more fishing than hunting.</li> <li>• So, we eat more fish than meat. Except where you have frozen chicken that brought from other parts of the world for marketing otherwise, we eat more fish here.</li> <li>• We use net and hook to catch fish. I am talking about two fingers, three fingers, four fingers net. And yes, the fishing lines and hooks are imported</li> <li>• We use net and lines because without those, you can't get fish to eat and if fish business is hard, we go to the market and do “sehpay”(take things on credit and pay later). We take the people's chicken, eat it and then pay for it the next day.</li> <li>• When it comes to dynamite shooting, we have been doing it here before, but since CI came here into the community and brought in those fishing materials, we have stop. We do not do dynamite fishing anymore. We do not put chemical into the water to kill the fish again. We only use net and the fishing line others just talked about</li> <li>• Yes, we have observed for now that we have more fish within our environment than we ever had before.</li> <li>• We observed it because when we protect and based on our own protection of the waters, we still find our soil intact because normally when you are using explosives at the edge of the water bank, it cracks the soil and so as times goes by the erosion takes the soil away then the community becomes smaller geographically.</li> <li>• So, because of that nobody is shooting dynamite here again. Our soil has been protected. Even our buildings and structures are being protected.</li> <li>• Since CI introduced this new fishing methods we have now put into place, we found out that it even helps us when we go to fish,</li> </ul>

	<p>we get small fish to eat but smaller fish were difficult to find before.</p>
Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We were encourage during awareness to (take care of) the beach including not cutting woods in the mangrove, we should not let the people to kill tortoise, and nobody should put chemical in the water and so many things they taught us right in this city Hall.</li> <li>• I used to cut sticks in the mangrove to set my basket but since CI came and gave us law and said that it is in the mangrove the fish lay their eggs so we should not cut the mangrove</li> <li>• CI taught us many things here and we follow them and still following them because if we (disturb) the water with things like explosives, we will not get fish,</li> <li>• CI thought communities sustainable fishing methods</li> <li>• Fish are now in abundance due to conservation action of the community</li> <li>• There are ordinances to guide the use of forest resource like tress, animal hunting</li> <li>• So those are some of the things CI has done for us. These give us a better hope in our environment.</li> <li>• Every city or every area is governed by bye-laws and constitution so after conservation international came and stop us, we the authority in the town, if we find out that you went contrary to the law, we arrest you and send you to court.</li> <li>• We had people that came from the next community and went and hunted sea tortoise. We had them prosecuted. And so, nobody can try it anymore because they know now that it is a law. So that is it. You take it or you leave it, we are prepared to abide by it.</li> <li>• Yes, we just said to you we benefited. We went through very intensive training by CI and you know a lot of things were impacted into us. We learned those things that our rivers, our forests, our animals and in fact our entire environment, what it is there for including the ones to protect. So today we can see changes in our community. We have fish and gradually we can see some changes.</li> </ul>
Conservation Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, the question that you asked just now about how we doing with the conservation (agreement), the people continue to abide by it and once they hear that no shooting dynamite, no setting basket, not cutting the mangrove root because under mangroves</li> </ul>

	<p>root is where the fish lay their eggs. So, nobody is doing it anymore.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you want to set your basket, you go in the other bush and cut your sticks and go with it in the canoe and set your basket. Right now, everything is good because nobody is hunting, firing loads and those kinds of things. Nobody is carrying it on again. Everything is fine because they are following the rules. Since some people went to court, from that time, we do not hear dynamite.</li> <li>• Communities have a system of reporting actions that undermine the environment and residents are encouraged to report cases of violation</li> </ul>
Training and workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I heard you talking about mosquito net. We used to use the mosquito nets to fish in the swamp but since they went and trained people, people used to go around and from that time I do not see anybody fishing with mosquito net again.</li> <li>• Yes, CI came here and had series of workshops with us. They told us they were going to provide us those materials to avoid us from killing the sea tortoise and cutting the mangroves and what have you.</li> <li>• I have some idea like for what Conservation International told us, like for instance shifting of farming. We overuse our farm. We make farm this year here and go on that side and make another farm. To do this learning, we know that one place we can make farm there for a protracted period rather than taking farm from here. You destroy more of the land than the way you can utilize it so it the use of land and besides that we can even use our own natural resources.</li> </ul>
Alternative means of livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• And they (CI) gave us some nets all sizes, machine and fishing canoe. On the women side, they supplied them with some agricultural tools including seeds and all that.</li> <li>• Yes, CI did it. We were at our house when they said CI brought materials at the City Hall. Women agriculture, men nets and they told the men that when they kill the fish, they should give it to the women for the women to dry and sell it so that they can keep the money and share it but since then we don't know if the men are fishing.</li> <li>• Well the agricultural group has not even made a pepper garden as far as I am concerned. CI brought wheel barrow, watering can, rain boots, corn seed, ground nut, cabbage tin and everything for</li> </ul>

	<p>the agricultural people to use but since they brought those materials and delivered it to the chairlady, she has not even made a garden bigger than the stage up there.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The canoe, the men are talking about our seeds they gave us, they went over sea and killed fish and we do not know what they did with the money. From that time, they have not called any meeting to say women this is what we have, and they are saying we have seeds and we are supposed to make farm. We did ours. I will not lie, but the men used theirs, but we do not know what they did with the money.</li> <li>• To make recommendations, to me, it is hard because they have come on the first phase and we the citizens are not benefiting due to weak community leadership</li> <li>• People have taken those things as their private thing while using it as their private materials and whatsoever. And since the boat was brought here and those that have been using it because you know they set up a special group as the fishing group not everybody can fishing but a special group was there to monitor the fishing. When they kill the fish to sell it to the women, but they took the boat and are using bit as their private boat.</li> <li>• Yes, we ourselves as city authorities we have gotten dissatisfied with the behavior of the two groups, Agriculture group and that of the fishing group.</li> </ul>
Co-Management Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a small community and we can put some mechanism in place that those people that are not responsible enough to work in accordance with the code of conduct of this community and CI, we remove them and put new people there and just get our business moving because those things are still around. The only thing is for us to make sure that the community leadership will call they right here or we send them to court, get all our thing and setup a new committee. So that is how I see it.</li> </ul>

### 3.5 Relevance

#### Outcome Relevance rating: **HIGHLY SATISFACTORY**

A desk review of the final project document shows ample steps were taken to align the fundamentals of the project with existing national laws and policies on the environment. This principle was followed throughout the project which carries the potential of promoting long-term sustainable actions and drive national ownership. The Constitution of the Republic of Liberia forms the legal basis for the formulation of the environmental law and the conservation of biodiversity

in Liberia. Under the 1986 Liberian Constitution, Chapter II, Article 7 (General Principles of National Policy), it states that “The Republic shall, consistent with the principles of individual freedom and social justice enshrined in the constitution, manage the national economy and the natural resources of Liberia in such manner as shall ensure the maximum feasible participation of Liberian citizens under the condition of equality as to advance the general welfare of the Liberian people and the economic development of Liberia”.

It is from this provision of the Liberian constitution that the National Legislature finds its power to enact enabling laws and legislations to facilitate the sustainable management and protection of the environment and all other resources for the benefit of the republic and its people. The Executive therefore moves ahead with the development of active policies on the back of these legislative acts for the effective management and protection of the environment through executive functionaries like the Environmental Protection Agency, the Forestry Development Agency, Liberia Maritime Authority etc.

Evaluators identified that this project has relevance and grounding in Liberian laws like Liberia’s Forestry Law and the Environmental Protection and Management Law (EPML). The Forestry Law and the EPML provide regulatory powers for both FDA and EPA to promote conservation of biodiversity in Liberia in addition to the development of network of protected areas, protection of wildlife, including regulation of the bush meat trade; prevention of the introduction of invasive species; environmental impact assessment for a wide range of activities that may threaten biodiversity; environmental planning; and scientific research. The EPML of 2003 further states that that “The Agency shall be the principal authority in Liberia for the management of the environment and shall co-ordinate, monitor, supervise and consult with relevant stakeholders on all activities in the protection of the environment and sustainable use of natural resources.” In addition, the Forestry Law (2006) directs the establishment of “Protected Forest Areas Network” to cover at least 30% of Liberia’s existing forest area.

In addition to these regulatory bodies, the project’s principle was also consistent with Liberia’s medium-term development plan called the Agenda for Transformation (AfT) when it says that the strategic objective of the plan under the Environment is to: 1) Develop and implement clear environmental policies and quality standards to guide environmental management, including a National Plan for a Low Carbon, Climate Resilient Economy, 2) Strengthen ownership and capacity of government agencies, the private sector and CSOs to understand and monitor environmental policies and regulations, and 3) Strengthen ownership and participation of communities in decentralized natural resource management and decision-making on environmental issues. In conclusion, the project was found to be fully consistent and relevant to all key national laws, policies, and action plans on the environment.

### **3.5.1 Relevance to the GEF**

For GEF relevance, evaluators’ desk review deemed this project consistent with GEF 5 Biodiversity Objectives 1 and 2.

### **GEF 5 Objective 1: Improve sustainability of protected area systems**

**Component 1:** Outcome 1.1 directly addresses this objective by identifying, delineating, and developing management plans to safeguard 15% of Liberia's priority mangrove areas

**Component 2:** Outcome 2.2 directly addresses this objective by expanding the number of ha of avoided deforested within the buffer areas surrounding priority sites through the implementation of Conservation Agreements that ensure sustainable use of mangrove habitats which will provide buffer zones around the mangrove protected areas and create locally appropriate sustainable livelihoods tied directly to the conservation of biodiversity rather than habitat degradation.

**GEF 5 Objective 2:** mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes/ seascapes and sectors

**Component 2:** Outcome 2.1 directly addresses this objective by building capacity within local communities, local government, and national government agencies for monitoring and evaluation. This TE verified that stakeholders at all levels were involved at different stages of program development and implementation.

**Component 2:** Outcome 2.3 directly addresses this objective through public awareness outreach, capacity building, and improving understanding of local and national leaders which will inform effective policy making and lead to reduction of pressures on priority mangrove areas through integrated land use planning.

#### **3.5.2 Relevance to CI-GEF Agency**

The project document cites CI's commitment to the implementation of its New Marine Strategy which prominently features mangroves as critically important to the climate ecosystem and valuable as a fishery habitat and a means to link terrestrial and marine conservation efforts. Through its program focus, CI commits to increasing awareness of the value of mangrove habitats for biodiversity at the local community and national levels.

The project also shows clear relevance to CI-GEF by its application of the Rights-Based Approach. CI applies Rights-Based Approach to all its work and is a leader among conservation organizations in developing institutional policies, tools and training that support Rights-Based Approach to conservation. CI recognizes the essential role and value of indigenous communities including abiding by strict guidelines on Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), and mainstreaming gender under its environmental and social safeguard component. All these principles and values were at the heart of the project design and implementation and formed part of the unique characteristics of the project. All the above offer ample evidence of project relevance with CI-GEF Agency policy and program focus.

#### **3.5.3 Relevance of the Project Design**

The evaluators' assessment of the project design was rated as highly satisfactory. The flow of the project logic was excellent, ensuring firm grounding and consistency with Liberia's legal and policy



frameworks for the purpose of strengthening local ownership and promoting long term sustainability beyond the project cycle. Even the structure of execution and implementation provide insightful programmatic lessons, lessons you will read about more in the lessons learned and recommendation sections of this report. The project components built on each other from the overall objectives, to program outputs, to a set of clear indicators, and up to the project outcomes.

The project design followed the standard practice of development of SMART indicators and outcomes which facilitates the measurement of project impact on both regulatory environment and beneficiary communities. The project focused on integrating alternative livelihood opportunities for communities in its design. This is in addition to improving community awareness and securing clear commitment for the protection of mangrove areas from habitat activities.

While this evaluation confirmed the relevance of the project design, challenges were identified on the implementation side, mainly on the execution of a component of M&E plan. The report will elaborate more on this in the assessment of the M&E design section. In nutshell, the overall framework was considered not only relevant to national laws and policies, but also to GEF regulations or programs including CI's program goals and vision. Evaluators received and reviewed annex documents such as the stakeholder engagement plan and the strategy for gender mainstreaming. However, a full plan that intently articulates a full framework for medium to long-term program sustainability outcome was lacking. Development programs with components involving livelihood activities tend to face enormous stress as communities struggle to keep businesses alive amid dynamic changes in market behavior. A sustainability plan that focuses on measures to help mitigate such risk is vital to the success of long-term livelihood programs.

### **3.6 Efficiency**

#### **Outcome Efficiency rating: Highly SATISFACTORY**

Under this section, the efficiency of project execution towards the outcome is assessed. The project utilized integrated management software called Business World (Aggressor Unit 4) to improve contracting, grant issuing, including human resource functions such as work sheet completion and activities scheduling for project staff. This software also allowed the project team to track and enhance financial and human resource functions that included planning and approving field trips, per diems and Daily Sustenance Allowance. Quality checks on project execution were conducted on a monthly basis involving staff responsible for both technical and financial operations. Quarterly reports were developed and submitted to CI-GEF.

Moreover, project procurement strictly followed CI's Procurement guidelines based on the fundamental pillars of value for money, open competition and best use of resources. Scrupulous compliance with technical/operational guidelines and project financial management procedures greatly impacted the efficiency of the project outcome which is rated highly satisfactory. There was no instance of a "disallowed cost" during any of the audit cycles. This was evident through how project managers ensured full adherence to all project management guidelines. The resignation of

the project manager 6 months into the project posed initial challenges to the efficient execution of the project and led to temporary loss of productivity. Once a new project manager was hired, trained and made fully aware of the project mechanisms and governance framework, full productivity was restored.

A terminal evaluation must be included within the project period. Therefore, a no cost extension was requested to allow completion of this evaluation exercise. The project recorded two capital assets at the close of project activities—a Land Cruiser Vehicle 72 Series 2005 purchased at US\$ 46,000 and a Dell Laptop Computer purchased at US\$1,900. These assets have been depreciated by 3 years based on CI’s capitalization policy. Current depreciated value of the Land Cruiser vehicle is US\$11,500. The plan is to donate this vehicle to the EPA, a GEF implementing agency. For the Dell Laptop computer, current depreciated value is zero. Canoe, engines, fishing nets, and eco-stove were physical assets expended as grants to the communities.

## SUSTAINABILITY OF OUTCOMES

**Overall Sustainability of Project Outcome rated: Moderately likely**

### 3.6.1 Project Risk Mitigation

Risk Identified in Project Document	Pre-Project Risk Rating	Risk rating as at End of Project	Comments
Risk 1: Communities living in or near proposed protected areas may not support the delineation and gazettement of those areas	High	Low	<b>Decreased</b> The excessive level of community and stakeholder consultation, buy-in and local ownership contributed to significant reduction of land-related risk. Involving local leaders like town chiefs, youth, women and other local influencers enhanced understanding, improved confidence and created a sense of community ownership. Community members praised the project team for capturing community participation through all stages of the project design up to implementation and now evaluation.
Risk 2: There may not be interest from local communities to engage in Conservation	Low	Low	<b>Unchanged</b> Key stakeholders including government and development partners continue to show clear commitment to promote conservation and biodiversity and as well protect the natural world. Visible impact

Agreements			on coastal communities caused by actions such as sand mining, hunting, charcoal production, harmful fishing methods continue to impact communities negatively. The evaluation records plenty of commitment from communities in addition to humongous amount of political will from national government to promote effective management of the environment and its resources.
Risk 3: Local authorities may not be supportive of communities actively participating in land use planning activities	Medium	Low	<b>Decreased</b> Respondent interviews show local authorities and their communities have deep connection with their land and very sensitive to actions that may improve or undermine its use. Local Authorities are leading at a time when focus is now on addressing policy gaps and misunderstanding on the system of land ownership in Liberia. This sector continues to experience sharp policy attention from the government of Liberia through the Land Authority in addition to donor partners like the EU and USAID who see the lack of effective land policy coordination as a potential source of future conflict. This and other internal project actions therefore made it less difficult to accelerate local authorities' interest and attention.
Risk 4: The impact of climate change	High	Low	<b>Decreased</b> Ensuring that the project qualifies as delivering for the greater good helped mitigate the negative impact of climate change. Communities committed in the Conservation Agreement to avoid for example, dynamite use for fishing, hunting in mangrove forested areas and

			harvesting trees for energy and charcoal production. A system of community enforcement and reporting of violators allowed them to own the change.
Risk 5 A resurgence of the Ebola virus in Liberia	Medium	Low	<b>Decreased</b> Liberia witnessed no rebound or a so-called “second wave” of the Ebola Virus since the WHO declared Liberia free of active Ebola cases in September of 2015. Experiences obtained from the outbreak helped Liberia build and strengthen systems and institution against infectious diseases. The project also recorded the use of personal hygiene protocols during implementation to safeguard training/workshop participants against the Virus.
Risk 6: Conflict in Liberia	Low	Low	<b>Unchanged</b> These were risks largely external to the project. However, Liberia continues to strengthen its democracy and build state institutions while committing political will to address state fragility. Promoting security, the rule of law and private sector development to expand jobs for youth are at the heart of Liberia’s development plan.

While some of these may be beyond the scope of the project, interviews in communities with 186 respondents and mostly project beneficiaries identified active challenges around the sustainability of alternative livelihood initiative supported by the project. The system of community accountability for canoe (engines), fishing nets, Eco-stove and cassava development projects were identified by community members as an ongoing challenge. The goal is to ensure that this project builds capacity at all levels and to promote sustainable use and management of the environment, mainly mangrove forested areas in project locations long beyond the project cycle. If actions are not taken to continue key project activities like community awareness and support to communities, they (communities) might risk a return to previous negative actions the project helped resolve.

Already, 14 (26.9%) out of the 52 respondents who replied “Yes” to participating in training and awareness workshops during the project selected “can’t remember much” when asked to cite

specific topics or issues they still remember from the training/awareness activities. However, many respondents, some 74%, who attended the training and awareness workshops still remember extensive amount of valuable awareness materials. GoL agencies like the EPA and FDA should continue to increase community engagement strategy and document grievances and current misunderstanding between and amongst different constituent groups in the communities. The evaluation documented ongoing misunderstanding about ownership and accountability around materials and equipment donated by CI during the project.

### 3.7 Sustainability Plan

Project outputs such as communities and project stakeholders' involvement through all stages of the project including capacity building actions and awareness through workshops and meetings were actions that promoted local ownership and built sustainability. Also, ensuring project outcome and program alignment with national development plan and government policy allowed for long lasting regulatory institutions like the EPA and FDA to continue project deliverables and potentially further redesign, scale or replicate in other regions of the country.

The development of a revised management plan for Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve which was ratified by the FDA in addition to completion of action on the gazettelement of the Marshall Proposed Protected Area promote project outcome sustainability. The GIS monitoring Lab at the EPA, including Frontline Conservationists recruited and trained under the aegis of the project could provide valuable resource to EPA and FDA in their execution of regulatory functions on forest resource and environmental management. In addition, Frontline Conservationists recruited under the project were original members of the communities. Technical capacity and skills obtained from the project by stakeholders are now at the disposal of communities for the long term.

#### Sustainability Analysis

Key Strength to Sustainability	Key Benefits
Project Right-Based and Bottom to top Approach	Increase sense of ownership and awareness
Relevance to National Laws and Policies and Programs	Promote long term sustainability. Regulatory institutions formed by an enactment of the legislature tend to be in business for the long term. Project alignment to national policies and development programs also tends to ensure long term financing through budgetary support
Regulatory Agencies as EAs	Technical logistical and human resource capacity resident in regulatory agencies sustained program impact

Increased women participation in Community Action	This improves community buy-in and allows communities to harness the enormous benefits and valuable skills women possess. Women are most involved in fish drying and selling. Getting them involved by strengthening awareness and building technical capacity by supplying fish drying equipment like ECO-stove reduces pressure on the environment by eradicating the need for woods.
Training and capacity building with communities and EAs	Capacity building/awareness sustains program impact. Most communities face the unfortunate dilemma of choosing between life and livelihood in resource-challenged settings. While communities may want to protect their lives against negative actions such as erosion, flooding etc. due to negative use of mangrove forest, these mangroves forested areas present themselves as the only source of livelihood for communities—for fishing, farming, and hunting purposes. Helping communities to sustainably deal with this dilemma through capacity building actions and pipelining them into alternative livelihood opportunities is vital.
<b>Challenges to Sustainability</b>	
Lack of clarity of the system of accountability and the structure of ownership of donated materials to communities	It is unclear what post-project system of accountability is for materials supplied by CI during the project execution phase. During focus group discussions in communities, the evaluation recorded accounts of community members in project locations in Grand Bassa citing instances of reverting to local county officials (eg. City Mayor) to intervene and resolve grievances over ownership and management of equipment like canoe engines etc. donated by CI during the project.
Fishermen and market women/fish dryer Relationship is unclear	Very unclear. Market women do not know if their male counterparts under the program

	who are fishermen are required to sell fish to them at a given discounted rate since much of the fishermen new equipment were supplied by CI.
Efficient use of Eco-Stove	Some women who are fish dryers still believe firewood does a better job at fish drying over Eco-Stove. It seems continuous training on Eco-Stove use is required.
Community Cooperation and Leadership	Conflict exists between different community actors over who reports to whom. Community members in Grand Bassa County have registered complaints to the city government about the lack of transparent reporting to the community on the current status of equipment supplied by CI.

## 4 WIDER PROJECT IMPACT

A potential wider impact of the project on national government's approach to the protection and management of mangrove forested areas can be viewed from the full extent of participation of project stakeholders like EPA and FDA in critical aspects of the project like development of the gazettelement package including commitment to push for legislative action on the document. Technical capacity at the EPA in GIS Lab operation including training for staff as well as frontline conservationists at the community level continue to provide extended positive long-term impact on the regulatory function of the EPA beyond the project cycle.

As a result of training, awareness and other capacity support initiatives, communities have extensive information and awareness on the importance of promoting sustainable use of protected mangrove areas. There is a good degree of community understanding of the extent of harmful livelihood activities such as charcoal burning, hunting, and other harmful fishing practices like dynamite use. It may be still early to track the wider impact of this project on policy. However, as a result of the project, discussions are ongoing in policy circles to declare all Mangroves areas protected. The project also contributed to improvement in ocean inter-sectoral coordination.

## 5 ASSESSMENT OF M&E SYSTEM

### 5.1 M&E Design

Overall Quality of M&E Design rated: **SATISFACTORY**

Central to the project document was the M&E plan which dedicated key project monitoring responsibilities to the Project Management Unit. The plan was detailed and formed an integral

component of the project document. The M&E design which followed Conservation International GEF procedures commenced project monitoring from the inception stage (Inception workshop and Report). At this stage roles and responsibilities of CI-GEF Agency and Executing Agencies were established including the development of an inception report which recorded any potential need to adjust project outputs or components. The Project Result Monitoring Framework Matrix, M&E Plan and the overall Status of implementation were reviewed by the evaluators during this TE. It was observed that the silos between the PPG stage and project execution impacted monitoring as project staff tasked with implementation responsibility played no direct role with the PPG. This circumstance tends to undermine smooth transition from project preparation to execution.

However, excellent linkages between the result framework and M&E plan significantly reflected in the overall status of the monitoring report which documented the performance of the project towards its expected outcome target. Project Implementation Reports (PIR), released annually also included monitoring results on the performance of the project. The PIR summarizes the annual project result and document progress towards critical program goals such gender mainstreaming. Disaggregating monitoring data by gender as a way of highlighting equitable participation was also linked to the design of the M&E Plan. A key practice of the project was to utilize data disaggregated by gender to reflect the extent of women participation. The purpose of disaggregation was both to improve women participation and to provide valuable data to help guide implementation of affirmative action in cases where evidence pointed at sharp disparity between/amongst genders.

The M&E design identified regular field monitoring, joint PSC visits, and CI-GEF annual field mission as well as design of data collection templates, monitoring forms and questionnaires as formal means of data collection. Others included meetings, workshops, surveys, GIS remote sensing, discussions, review of past reports, and transect walk. The Project monitoring officer also operated and managed a database that helped promote data quality and management.

## **5.2 M&E Implementation**

Overall quality of project M&E implementation rated as: **SATISFACTORY**

The project fully implemented monitoring actions throughout the project period. As stated above, several types of monitoring activities were implemented—inception workshop, inception report, field monitoring including Frontline Conservationists who collected field information during patrols and updated the 123 ArcGIS Data base. M&E data were also collected during studies such as Socio-economic assessment of project communities, Botanical Studies etc. Critical data points were also gathered during the PPG phase of the project. However, this TE documented key challenges confronting M&E implementation. The M&E implementation schedule faced delays and readjustment due to factors such as resignation of the project manager, political transition, the 2017 elections, and challenges around inadequate transport infrastructure. Also, as reported under the project efficiency rating in this report, the M&E execution also experienced challenges because



of sharp disconnect between project M&E budget as contained in the approved project document and subsequent cost of implementation.

This was because the project budget was designed over 24 months before the commencement of the project activities causing major misalignment between cost of activities, goods and services due to inflation and other market factors. Literacy level among Frontline Conservationists who also performed M&E functions was low and required extensive amount of capacity building and training. Lastly, decisions were made by key project stakeholders to waive the midline evaluation after a CI-GEF monitoring visit determined no compelling need due to: 1. that enough monitoring data were already available from different studies and annual PIRs and 2. gaps in project budget planning which prompted the decision to reallocate Midline evaluation funding to other critical components of the project.

## **6 ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION AND EXECUTION**

Two main categories of stakeholders were involved with project operations. The Implementation Agency (IA) led by CI-GEF with oversight function on project execution and the Executing Agency (EA) led by CI-Liberia (Project Management Unit) and heavily supported by the EPA and FDA. Below is an assessment and summary of implementation performance over the period of project execution.

### **6.1 Quality of Implementation**

Project Implementation rated: **HIGHLY SATISFACTORY**

The project established a Project Steering Committee (PSC) comprised of representatives from multiple ministries and government agencies. Conservation International acted as the secretariat of the Steering Committee. The EPA chaired the PSC and the Maritime Authority was co-chair. FDA served as alternative chair in cases where the EPA was unavailable. The principal function of the PSC was to provide guidance on the project delivery. The Steering Committee provided review and oversight functions regarding alignment of the project with national policies and laws, best practices and new initiatives. This committee ensured collaboration with other programs to avoid duplication of efforts within the sector. The PSC met quarterly and maintained consistent exchange of information among its members by electronic means, and additional ad hoc steering committee meetings were convened via telephone conference or other means.

### **6.2 Quality of Execution**

Project Execution rated: **HIGHLY SATISFACTORY**

The Project Management Unit (PMU) responsibilities involved operation planning and day-to-day implementation of all project activities under the two project components, including monitoring and reporting on project outputs and outcomes. The PMU prepared and supported PSC meetings

and managed the project budget. The PMU was based within the CI Office in Monrovia and was led by a full time Project Manager. The Project Manager maintained ultimate responsibility for this project, with input from the Senior Program Manager, Technical Director, Operations Director, and Country Director. The PMU received important technical, administrative and institutional support from other technical advisers at the EPA and FDA. Furthermore, in line with CI's global management structure, this project received oversight and compliance monitoring visits from oversea CI offices.

### 6.3 Assessment of Environmental and Social Safeguards

Environmental and Social Safeguards rated: **HIGHLY SATISFACTORY**

#### Gender Considerations

Mainstreaming gender was a key part of the project implementation and execution modalities. A gender mainstreaming plan was developed to methodologically direct the participation of both men and women and to outline specific actions that ensure meaningful, equitable participation of all genders in the project. The dynamic of women participation in natural and land-related projects presents its own unique reality in societies like Liberia with dominant male power relations. The project's mainstreaming plan fully captured this dynamic and designed gender intervention appropriately to respond to this reality. For example, reporting on project outputs by disaggregating based on gender to reflect the extent of men and women participation was a major practice. Highlighting women voices in the development process is central to program success. However, the mainstreaming plan under this project recognized sensitivities around potential negative disruption in social relations if mainstreaming actions are not carefully conducted in strategic and nuanced ways. Such disruption tends to lead to unintended negative impact on projects. To prevent such disruption, excluding men and singling out women as primary agents responsible for conservation and resource management decisions was discouraged.

#### Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder	Specific Interest	Stakeholders Assessment of Involvement
Government Agencies		
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Lead Government entity on Environmental Protection and Management and an Executing Agency (EA) under the project. EPA implements policies around management and governance of Mangrove areas and the broader environment	High

Forestry Development Authority (FDA)	FDA is main regulatory agency responsible for the effective management of forest resources including wildlife. FDA was also an EA member and provided Co-Financing Support	High
Liberia Maritime Authority	Liberia Maritime Authority supervises the nations Maritime Program and enforced regulations and issues licenses to vessels utilizing Liberia's oceans or maritime resources. Their scope also covers the management of marine resources	High
CI-GEF Agency	CI-GEF was the project donor and provided oversight functions and considered the project implementing agency	High
Local Communities	One may consider the ten local communities as being on the beneficiary side of the project. But they constituted a very important category of stakeholders. In fact, based on the Project Right-based Approach, communities were more than just beneficiaries but key partner stakeholders contributing to various stages of the project from initiation to execution to finalization.	High
Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection	The promotion and development of Women and Children's right are the key functions of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. This is achieved through deliberate innovative actions that lead to the strengthening of women participation in development through the utilization of different legal and socio-cultural framework that avoid negative disruption of social relations	Low

	but as well make progress on women's rights and equity in gender.	
Ministry of Internal Affairs	Ministry of Internal Affairs is government's entity responsible for administration of local government including cities, districts, counties, towns and villages. The involvement of local authorities like mayors and town chiefs with project activities at the community level positioned the Ministry of Internal Affairs as a key stakeholder	Medium
Land Reform Commission	The Land Reform Commission is now the Liberia Land Authority. Its key mandate since the passage of the new act is to perform land administration function and to lead critical and much needed reform of Liberia's land sector. The convoluted nature of land ownership in Liberia tends to serve as potential source of conflict in communities. LRC was therefore critical to support action around identifying appropriate category of land to be used for the creation of protected areas.	Medium
Ministry of Agriculture	During the period of project implementation, the Bureau of Fishery was imbedded within the Ministry of Agriculture. This has changed with National Fishery now a standalone authority. But the Bureau was a vital stakeholder based on its management function that included the promotion and enforcement of best fishing practices. Dynamite and mosquito net use were determined as unlawful fishing methods. Bureau of Fishery was crucial stakeholders because part of the project outcome was the supply of	Medium

	legally approved fishing nets and awareness exercises on the harm of dynamite and mosquito net use by fishermen	
Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism	Tourism in Liberia possesses enormous revenue and employment generating potential. The Marshall Proposed Protected Area and the Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve present huge touristic opportunities. This prospect makes the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism a very important project stakeholder.	Low
Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP)	MFDP implements the national development plan the Agenda for Transformation (AfT) at the time. For sustainability purposes key project activities requiring continuous funding will need inclusion in the national budget as part of government development priority. MFDP involvement was also very vital to help promote natural habitats as centers of tourism, revenue generation and economic development	Low
House of Parliament	The national parliament is responsible for the enactment of laws. With the gazettelement package requiring the force of legislation after its design and finalization, the parliament was required to remain a key stakeholder, mainly its sub-committees on Natural Resources.	Low

## 6.4 Accountability and Grievance Mechanism

The project's grievance mechanism encouraged community level stakeholders to register complaints with the Project Manager or implementing partners. Complaints failing to receive redress at the Technical Director level were referred to the Project Management Unit based on the

intriguing nature of the complaints. The project set as a standard, full adjudication of complaints in not more than 60 working days.

Annex 4 of the Conservation Agreement lays out the framework and methodology for filing and resolving grievances within the project communities. The line for complaint registration ranges from Project Management Committee (PMC) to the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) to CI-GEF Mangrove Project Manager. The end of project report recalled that only two grievances related to the project were received during the lifecycle of the project and both were resolved using the grievance mechanism established by the project. While suppressed incidence of grievances over the 3-year lifecycle of the project may be connected to rigorous stakeholder participation and public awareness around project activities, including clarity of role, however, this evaluation discovered that other factors may offer rival explanation for this low number.

A survey of 186 household respondents of the project communities from the 10-project location shows that 6 out of a total of 186 respondents reported that there were instances of community residents' violation of the Conservation Agreement. As high as 4(66%) of the 6 respondents interviewed said they were unaware of any complaint form or procedure for registration of these complaints and/or violations. In fact, as high as (83%) of all those who admitted having grievances about project execution felt reporting transgressions was the duty of frontline conservationists and community leaders. They were unaware that grievance reporting was also a right they could exercise.

When asked "has there been any violation of the Conservation Agreement by CI"? 8 out of 186 respondents said "YES". All 8 (100%) of those who said "YES" when asked what action the community pursued to address the violation, they all said "community did not take any action" and 5 (62%) of the 8 respondents said in their opinion "CI did not respond or take any action to address their (CI) own violation of the Conservation Agreement". Most of the 8 respondents cited CI not responding to "their request for the construction of community town hall, community toilets". Others cited what they called "CI promise of buying new canoes in a meeting "as a violation. However, evaluator's review of the Community Conservation Agreement revealed that commitments cited above by some community members during the household survey were not listed as obligations of CI under the Conservation Agreement. This confusion on the part of some community members could be due to lack of awareness and understanding of the terms and commitments of the Community Conservation Agreement. Remember earlier in this report, about 3.2% of community members surveyed declared lack of awareness of the Conservation Agreement their communities had signed. Furthermore, 6 out of the 8 who answered "YES" believe that the broader community was unhappy over what they called "CI failure to take corrective action" over those violations. However, 184 (98.9%) felt confident that on the overall the partnership between their communities and CI is in the best possible interest of them and their environment.

## 7 OTHER ASSESSMENTS

### 7.1 Need for follow up

Apart from the recommendations below, there are no action that the project needs to follow up on based on the findings of this TE.

### 7.2 Project Finance

Project Finance Information	
GEF PROJECT FUNDING:	\$963,994
TOTAL GEF GRANT:	\$963,994
CO-FINANCING 1: CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL	\$1,300,000
CO-FINANCING 2: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY	\$1,000,000
CO-FINANCING 3: FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	\$1,350,000
TOTAL CO-FINANCING:	\$3,650,000
TOTAL PROJECT COST:	<b>\$4,613,994</b>

CI-Liberia prepares financial reports on a quarterly basis. The financial report and the technical progress reports are submitted to the CI GEF Agency every quarter.

During the project, CI-Liberia established a workplan and budget including procurement plan on an annual basis and sought approval from CI-GEF Agency. In terms of internal control over financial spending, the Operations Director was responsible for ensuring compliance with donor regulations and CI's policies. The Project Manager was responsible for the overall budget management, ensuring only activities approved and in line with the budget plan were charged to the project.

## 8 LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Below, is a chart summarizing six important lessons learned from the implementation of the project. These were documented from interviews held with stakeholders involved with project execution including experiences from beneficiary communities.

## 8.1 Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned	Comments
Project Governance Framework	CI-GEF Agency was the donor and CI-Liberia hired and housed the Project Management Team and performed execution functions. Resignation of the project manager and onboarding of a new hire presented temporary implementation challenge. GoL was represented at PSC meetings on several occasions with junior level staff who were unable to make management decisions without extensive consultation and approval from agency head. This presented a challenge to timely and effective decision making.
Project Costing	The project experienced challenges with effective costing of activities under the project budget. CI projects tend to take 2-3 years from design to execution. Project costs face the prospects of increasing or changing over this period leading to budget constraints during project execution. A key lesson learned is to improve the quality of project budgeting to allow costs assigned to project activities remain relevant over a 2 to 3-year wait period. M&E implementation was also impacted by this situation.
Technical Preparedness (Midline)	A fully developed midline study was unavailable. Midline data tend to improve impact measurement and allow evaluators and program managers effectively track project deliverables towards outcome indicators.
Sustainability Plan	The emphasis on long-term sustainability of project outcomes was visible. Actions geared towards ensuring medium to long-term sustainability of project impact were fully recognized and recorded. Ongoing monitoring activities by the 3 EPA staff trained in GIS monitoring is an example. However, a written



	comprehensive plan to fully guide, assess and build program resilience was unavailable. For example, EPA and FDA may need funding to continue critical field activities like continued monitoring, awareness and enforcement function in project locations. The entities annual budget allocation needs to be adjusted in manners that accommodate funding for new activities created by the project. A long-term sustainability strategy will forecast this condition and design means to mitigate such constraint.
Strong Framework for Stakeholder Engagement	The stakeholder engagement approach was valuable. This level of engagement of stakeholders including members of the communities, local leaders, women et al improved ownership and allowed for a cordial atmosphere for project implementation. Land and natural resource related interventions tend to create controversy. This was even identified as a potential project risk within the project document. This risk was mitigated through effective and detailed stakeholder engagement from project design to execution and evaluation. CI's foundational Right-based Approach was vital. Potential statutory overlap of functions between and amongst GoL agencies such FDA, EPA and LMA were significantly mitigated due to sustained stakeholder engagement.

## 8.2 Recommendations

Recommended Actions	Comments
Begin to highlight revenue generating potential of protected areas for tourism	The project document recognizes that the Marshall Proposed Protected area and the Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve possess eco-tourism potential. This potential should be explored and developed by designing a strategy framework to achieve progress in this

	<p>regard. New economic activities in this area could offer pipeline for the creation of decent employment for communities in these conservation areas. A revenue surge caused by touristic visits could mainly contribute to overall economic output. GoL agencies such as the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning and the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism are critical partners in this area.</p>
Give more design attention to alternative livelihood activities	<p>Members of the communities were supported with alternative livelihood initiatives to discourage them away from Mangrove Forest deforestation and other harmful practices. However, this livelihood aspect of the project needed more sustainability and design attention. Some women who engaged with fish drying and sale expected they would pay reduced rates for fish caught by fishermen benefiting from equipment and training from the project. This level of ambiguity should be avoided.</p>
Continue monitoring of community/Mangrove area	<p>Nearly all interviewees emphasized the importance of continued public awareness and capacity building for all key stakeholders. Technical and human capacities were the most important resources of the project. Continued engagement and sharing of local knowledge and experience at both community and national level via a feedback loop will help sustain program impact.</p>
Develop a sustainability plan that critically considers key concerns and opportunities for project outcome sustainability	<p>The project document includes a stakeholder engagement plan and a gender mainstreaming action plan. Additionally, evaluators recommend the development of a comprehensive sustainability plan for future projects as a means of detailing critical challenges and opportunities to project outcome in the long-term. All potential risks to program sustainability will therefore be</p>

	forecast, analyzed and mitigated. The plan will also include indicators for performance including a tracking matrix that monitors and report on the status of the actions proposed by the plan. For example, fishing equipment including canoe engines and eco-stoves were considered grants to communities under the project. During evaluation field visits, respondents in Grand Bassa expressed concerns over the lack of clarity over who was responsible for the management of these equipment and what the system of accountability was. Such situation presents threat to long term sustainability to post project impact.
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## 9 ANNEXES

### 9.1 Annex 1: Documents Reviewed during Desk Research

No.	Document Name	Document Description
1.	CI-GEF Project Agency Project Proposal Document	Project Proposal
2.	Conservation Agreement for the 10 project communities	This Agreement commits the Project communities and CI to promote actions that protect mangrove forested areas in communities through shifting livelihood activities to sustainable methods of fishing, farming and energy acquisition.
3.	Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan	Determined strategy to enhance gender mainstreaming and improve women participation. It outlines specific actions taken within the project to ensure that both men and women could equally participate in, and benefit from, the project.
4.	Project Implementation Report (PIR)	The PIR is a catalogue of project activities, outputs and progress towards expected outcome released annually

5.	Attendance Sheets (Attendance Record)	Evidence of participants involvement in meetings, workshops and discussions over the duration of the project
6.	GEF Mangrove Project M&E Plan Matrix, M&E Result Framework and Overall Status to progress	This matrix contains project indicators, targets, and methods of data collection and essential data that showed progress toward outcome targets
7.	Socioeconomic Baseline Study Report	The intention of the study was to understand the socioeconomic living conditions but also resource usage of communities dependent on mangrove forested areas.
8.	Botanical Report for Marshall	The botanical report of Marshall is first impression of the coastal vegetation between Farmington River and St. John River. The report determined this to be nursery ground for many fish species.
9.	Biophysical Assessment Report	The report entails a holistic approach to identifying the resource. It deals with the inter-relationship between local communities and the landscape allowing the establishment of important links between resource and its environment such as climate, terrain and soil and the human impact on the resource.
10.	Feasibility Assessment for Cape Mount	This report compiles findings of a feasibility assessment to inform decision on the suitability of four communities in the Lake Piso Multiple-Use Reserve for implementation of Conservation Agreement as part of CI-Liberia Mangrove Project.
11.	GIS Training Report	The training and materials provide the trainees with the skills to create map documents, create spatial data, and to analyze its contents.
12.	Mangrove Report on Field Survey and Stakeholder Engagement Activities	This report identifies and profile mangrove sites. Liberia uses remote sensing data to assess the social and biological value and priority of mangroves sites including their use by the communities
13.	Socio-economic Survey	This report describes the socioeconomic survey work conducted by the society for Conservation

		of Nature in Liberia. The motivation of the survey was to inform development of spatial land use plans and provide information relevant to the future gazettement of Marshall wetlands Reserve
14.	Participatory Land-use toolkit	The toolkit demonstrates ways to combine landscape-level information layers to inform high-level spatial planning deliberation including interaction between high-level plans and community-level planning.
15.	Stakeholder Engagement Plan	The Stakeholder Engagement plan is a cross-cutting element central to the success and sustainability of the project. The plan aimed to encourage awareness, adoption and stewardship of conservation measures by ensuring effective participation and productive dialogue. Stakeholder Engagement plan articulates the different opportunities available to stakeholders.
16.	GEF-Mangrove End of Project Report	End of Project Implementation report summarizes the project performance and tracked progress towards the project outcome
17.	GEF-Mangrove Accountability and Grievance Mechanism	This mechanism ensures that stakeholders are well informed, clearly understand the contents of the Accountability and Grievance Mechanism (AGM) throughout the implementation of the project at no cost to the communities.
18.	GEF-Mangrove CEO Endorsement Approval	This describes any changes in alignment with the project design of the original PIF
19.	GEF-Mangrove Project Identification Form	Project Identification Form contains the project description and information around indicative co-financing
20.	GEF-Mangrove Process Framework for Restriction of Access to Natural Resources	As part of CI's rights-based approach to conservation, the process framework recognizes that people have the right to remain on the lands and territories that they have traditionally occupied, which includes the

		continued access to resources they have traditionally used.
21.	GEF-Mangrove Project Safeguard Screening Form	The CI-GEF Project Agency undertakes environmental screening of each proposed project to determine whether an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) is required and if so, the appropriate extent and type of ESIA. The CI-GEF Project Agency classifies the proposed project into one of three categories, depending on the type, location, sensitivity, and scale of the project and the nature and magnitude of its potential environmental impacts

## 9.2 Annex II. Key Informant Interviews/Stakeholders listing

No.	Name	Organization	Position
1.	Blama Goll	Forestry Development Authority	Technical Manager, Conservation
2.	Steven B. Lavala	Liberia Maritime Authority	Associate Director, Department of Marine and Environmental Protection
3.	Z. Elijah Whapoe	Environmental Protection Agency	Manager, Policy and Planning
4.	George Llebo	Conservation International	Technical Director
5.	Steven Acire	Conservation International	Finance Director
6.	Solomon Carlon	Conservation International	GIS Specialist
7.	Peter Mulbah	Conservation International	Acting Country Representative
8.	Mr. Uriah w. Subark	Ben's Town Community	Forest Conservationist
9.	Madam Martha Sillah	Ben's Town Community	Community Chairlady
10.	Elder Bob Joe Sillah	Ben's Town Community	Senior Elder
11.	Mr. Papus Photo	Snafu Duck Community	Fmr. Forest Conservationist
12.	Alphonso Carter	Snafu Duck Community	Youth Leader
13.	Sarah Summerville	Snafu Duck Community	Women Leader
14.	Elder Elizabeth Doalo	Snafu Duck Community	Chairlady/Elder
15.	Williams Chea	Snafu Duck Community	Youth Secretary

### 9.3 Annex III. Evaluation Matrix

Based on the RFP, the assessment will critically and objectively evaluate the project's performance. Based on our research on the project and the project documentation, TKG has developed the below matrix that will guide how we design and develop the instruments. TKG will work with Conservation International – GEF to finalize the evaluation framework and ensure it reflects the current realities of the program.

Indicators	Unit of measure/sources	Methodology
<b>Objective: To strengthen the conservation and sustainable use of globally important mangrove forests through effective participatory land-use planning and establishment of marine and coastal protected areas in at least 35% of Liberia's</b>		
<b>Indicator a:</b> Level of information and data on the distribution, extent, conservation status, value and key threats to mangroves and associated fauna in Liberia available to inform conservation requirements and planning initiatives	Data on species composition, distribution, abundance, and key threats to mangrove in Liberia	Desk Review, KIIs
<b>Indicator b:</b> Area (ha) and percent (%) of mangrove forest in Liberia incorporated in areas designated for formal protection	Area (ha)	Desk Review, KIIs
<b>Indicator c:</b> Number of Conservation Agreements negotiated with coastal communities in Liberia	Conservation Agreements	Desk Review, KIIs
<b>Indicator d:</b> Area (ha) and percent (%) of mangrove forest in Liberia safeguarded through community-based Conservation Agreements or other legal mechanisms	Area (% of total)	Desk Review, KIIs
<b>Component 1: Enabling conditions for establishment of coastal and marine protected areas in 20% of priority mangrove forests (15% as National Protected Areas and 5% as community Conserved Mangrove Forest)</b>		
Indicator 1.1.: Area (ha and % of total) of mangrove forest incorporated into protect areas	Area (ha) and % of total	Desk Review, KIIs
Indicator 1.1.1: Report on distribution and delineation of mangrove forests in Liberia with priority coastal protected areas identified for incorporation into	Data on species composition, distribution, abundance, and key threats to mangrove in Liberia	Desk Review, KIIs

formal protected areas and endorsed by the Government of Liberia		
Indicator 1.1.2: Gazettement packages prepared for establishment of two coastal protected areas in Liberia and submitted to Cabinet for endorsement	Number	Desk Review, KIIs
Indicator 1.1.2.: Multi-stakeholder management forums established for each proposed protected area	Number	Desk Review, KIIs, FGDs
Indicator 1.1.3: Financial plans prepared for two coastal protected areas in Liberia and endorsed by the Government of Liberia	Documentation	Desk Review, KIIs
Indicator 1.1.4: Number of key government staff (gender disaggregated) that participated in project workshops and training sessions	Number	Desk Review, KIIs
Indicator 1.2.1: Number of workshops and meetings held with local communities to discuss progress	Documentation	FGDs, Surveys
<b>Component 2: Reducing pressures on an additional 15% of priority mangrove areas through integrated land-use planning, improving local community livelihoods and increasing stakeholders' capacity and awareness</b>		
Indicator 2.1.: Area (ha) of priority mangroves covered by the M&E program	Area (ha) and % of total	Desk Review, KIIs
Indicator 2.1.1: Toolkit is completed Indicator 2.1.1: Number of ha where tool kit has been applied successfully	Project documentation, land-use planning and decision support toolkit Project documentation, land-use planning and decision support toolkit	Desk Review Desk Review, KIIs
Indicator 2.1.2: M&E program developed and endorsed by the EPA	Project documentation	Desk Review, KIIs
Indicator 2.1.2: Records of monitoring activities and results of assessments undertaken	Project documentation	Desk Review, KIIs
Indicator 2.1.3: Number of plans completed	Land-use plans	Desk Review, KIIs



Indicator 2.1.4: Reduction in the rate of loss of mangrove forest area at priority sites.	Area (ha) and % of total	Desk Review, KIIs
Indicator 2.2: Number of ha deforested within the buffer areas surrounding priority sites	Area (ha) and % of total	Desk Review, KIIs
Indicator 2.2.1: Number of communities with Conservation Agreements	Conservation Agreements	Desk Review, KIIs, FGDs
Indicator 2.3: Number of government officials and local stakeholders aware of threats and benefits of mangroves	Number	Desk Review, KIIs, FGDs
Indicator 2.3.1: Needs assessment completed and report available	Project documentation, reports, videos, signage, and posters	Interviews, meetings, and workshops
Indicator 2.3.1: Capacity building program designed	Project documentation, program document	Desk Review, KIIs, FGDs
Indicator 2.3.1: Number of participants by type of stakeholders (gender disaggregated)	Documentation	Desk Review, KIIs
<b>Safeguard Plans</b>		
Male/ Female attendance in activities, meetings and trainings	Number/percentage of women/men <i>attending</i> activities & trainings & meetings	Interviews, meetings and workshops
Male/ Female active participation in activities meeting and trainings	Number/percentage of women/men <i>actively participating</i> in activities & trainings & meetings.	Interviews, meetings and workshops
Male/ Female beneficiaries on the project	Number of men/women benefitting from the project	Interviews, meetings and workshops
Male/ Female leadership during project implementation	Number of men/women demonstrating leadership in project implementation.	Interviews, meetings and workshops

## 9.4 Annex IV. Requirements for Terminal Evaluation of GEF Funded Projects

### Scope of Work and Outline for Draft of Terminal Evaluation Reports

The draft and final evaluation reports should at a minimum contain the information below:

### **II.2.1 General Information**

The Terminal Evaluation report will provide general information on the project and conduct of the Terminal Evaluation. This includes information such as:

- GEF Project ID
- Project name
- GEF financing
- Planned and materialized co-financing
- Key objectives
- GEF Agency
- Project countries
- Key dates: Date of project start, Date of project completion
- Name of the Project Executing Agency(ies)

The Terminal Evaluation report will also provide information on when the evaluation took place, places visited, who was involved, the methodology, and the limitations of the evaluation. The report will also include, as annexes to the main report, the evaluation team's terms of reference, its composition and expertise.

Where feasible and appropriate, the Terminal Evaluation reports should include georeferenced maps and/or coordinates that demarcate the planned and actual area covered by the project. To facilitate tracking and verification, where feasible, the Terminal Evaluations should include georeferenced pictures of the sites where GEF supported interventions were undertaken.

### **II.2.2 Project Theory**

The Terminal Evaluation report will include a description of the project's theory of change including description of the outputs, outcomes, intermediate states, and intended long-term environmental impacts of the project; the causal pathways for the long-term impacts; and, implicit and explicit assumptions.

The project's objective(s) should also be included within the theory of change. Some of the projects may already have an explicit theory of change. Where appropriate, after consultations with the project stakeholders, the evaluators may refine this theory of change. Where an explicit theory of change is not provided in the project documents, the evaluators should develop it based on information provided in the project documents and through consultations with the project stakeholders.

### **II.2.3 Assessment of Project Result**

The TE must assess the achievement of project outputs and outcomes, and report on these. While assessing a project's results, evaluators will determine and rate the extent to which the project objectives – as stated in the documents submitted at the CEO Endorsement stage – have been achieved. The evaluator(s) should also indicate if there were any changes in project design and/or

expected results after start of implementation. If the project did not establish a baseline (initial conditions), where feasible, the evaluator should estimate the baseline conditions so that results can be determined. Where applicable, the Terminal Evaluation report will include an assessment of the level of achievement of the GEF corporate results targets to which the project contributes and will also incorporate data from the focal area tracking tool.

**a. Outputs:** The evaluator should rate the extent to which the expected outputs were delivered. An identification and assessment of the factors that affected delivery of outputs should also be included.

**b. Outcomes:** The evaluator should rate the extent to which the expected outcomes were achieved and the extent to which its achievement was dependent on delivery of project outputs. They should also assess the factors that affected outcome achievement, e.g. project design, project's linkages with other activities, extent and materialization of co-financing, stakeholder involvement, etc. Where the project was developed within the framework of a program, the assessment should also report on the extent the project contributed to the program outcomes.

**Criteria for Outcome Ratings:** Outcome ratings will consider the outcome achievements of the projects against its expected targets. Project outcomes will be rated on three dimensions:

**a. Relevance:** Were the project outcomes congruent with the GEF focal areas/operational program strategies, country priorities, and mandates of the Agencies? Was the project design appropriate for delivering the expected outcomes?

**b. Effectiveness:** Were the project's actual outcomes commensurate with the expected outcomes?

**c. Efficiency:** Was the project cost-effective? How does the project cost/time versus output/outcomes equation compare to that of similar projects?

**Rating Scale for Outcomes:** An overall outcome rating will be provided on a six-point scale (highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory) after considering outcome relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency (II.3).

**a. Sustainability:** The assessment of sustainability will weigh risks to continuation of benefits from the project. The assessment should identify key risks and explain how these risks may affect continuation of benefits after the GEF project ends. The analysis should cover financial, socio-political, institutional, and environmental risks. The overall sustainability of project outcomes will be rated on a four-point scale (Likely to Unlikely) based on an assessment of the likelihood and magnitude of the risks to sustainability. Higher levels of risks and magnitudes of effect imply lower likelihood of sustainability. II.3 describes the rating scale for sustainability.

**b. Progress to Impact:** The evaluators should also assess the extent to which the progress towards long-term impact may be attributed to the project. The evaluators should report the available qualitative and quantitative evidence on environmental stress reduction (e.g. GHG emission reduction, reduction of waste discharge, etc.) and environmental status change (e.g. change in

population of endangered species, forest stock, water retention in degraded lands, etc.). When reporting such evidence, the evaluator should note the information source and clarify the scale/s at which the described environmental stress reduction is being achieved.

The evaluators should cover the project's contributions to changes in policy/ legal/regulatory frameworks. This would include observed changes in capacities (awareness, knowledge, skills, infrastructure, monitoring systems, etc.) and governance architecture, including access to and use of information (laws, administrative bodies, trust-building and conflict resolution processes, information-sharing systems, etc.). Contribution to change in socioeconomic status (income, health, well-being, etc.) should also be documented. Where the environmental and social changes are being achieved at scales beyond the immediate area of intervention, the evaluators should provide an account of the processes such as sustaining, mainstreaming, replication, scaling up and market change, through which these changes have taken place. The evaluators should discuss whether there are arrangements in the project design to facilitate follow-up actions, and should document instances where the GEF promoted approaches, technologies, financing instruments, legal frameworks, and information.

For Further Reading and Documentation

Liberian Constitution 1985

Project Document, 2016

FAO 2007 Report

**c. Assessment of Monitoring & Evaluation Systems:** The evaluators will include an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the project M&E plan and its implementation. systems, etc., were adopted/implemented without direct support from, or involvement of, the project. Evidence on incidence of these processes should be discussed to assess progress towards impact. When assessing contributions of GEF project to the observed change, the evaluators should also assess the contributions of other actors and factors. The evaluators should assess merits of rival explanations for the observed impact and give reasons for accepting or rejecting them. Where applicable, the evaluators are encouraged to identify and describe the barriers and other risks that may prevent further progress towards long-term impacts.

The evaluators should document the unintended impacts – both positive and negative impacts – of the project and assess the overall scope and implications of these impacts. Where these impacts are undesirable from environmental and socio-economic perspectives, the evaluation should suggest corrective actions.

**M&E Design. To assess the quality of the M&E plan, the evaluators will assess:**

- a. Was the M&E plan at the point of CEO Endorsement practical and sufficient?
- b. Did it include baseline data?
- c. Did it: specify clear targets and appropriate (SMART) indicators to track environmental, gender, and socio-economic results; a proper methodological approach; specify practical organization and logistics of the M&E activities including schedule and responsibilities for data collection; and, budget adequate funds for M&E activities?

**M&E Implementation. The evaluators should assess:**

- a. Whether the M&E system operated as per the M&E plan?
- b. Where necessary, whether the M&E plan was revised in a timely manner?
- c. Was information on specified indicators and relevant GEF focal area tracking tools gathered in a systematic manner?
- d. Whether appropriate methodological approaches have been used to analyze data?
- e. Were resources for M&E enough? How was the information from the M&E system used during the project implementation?

**d. Assessment of Implementation and Execution:** The assessment of the implementation and execution of GEF full size projects will consider the performance of the GEF Implementing Agencies and project Executing Agency(ies) (EAs) in discharging their expected roles and responsibilities. The Project M&E systems will be rated on the quality of M&E design and quality of M&E implementation using a six-point scale (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory).

performance of these agencies will be rated using a six-point scale (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory).

#### **II.2.4 Quality of Implementation**

Within the GEF partnership, GEF Implementing Agencies are involved in activities related to a project's identification, concept preparation, appraisal, preparation of detailed proposal, approval and start-up, oversight, supervision, completion, and evaluation. To assess performance of the GEF Agencies, the evaluators will assess the extent to which the agency delivered effectively on these counts, with focus on elements that were controllable from the given GEF Agency's perspective. The evaluator will assess how well risks were identified and managed by the GEF Agency.

#### **II.2.5 Quality of Execution**

Within the GEF partnership, the EAs are involved in the management and administration of the project's day-to-day activities under the overall oversight and supervision of the GEF Agencies. The EAs are responsible for the appropriate use of funds, and procurement and contracting of goods and services to the GEF Agency. To assess EA performance, the evaluators will assess the extent to which it effectively discharged its role and responsibilities.

**a. Assessment of the Environmental and Social Safeguards:** The evaluator will assess whether appropriate environmental and social safeguards were addressed in the project's design and implementation (II.3) for more details on the rating scale). It is expected that a GEF project will not cause any harm to environment or to any stakeholder and, where applicable, it will take measures to prevent and/or mitigate adverse effects. The evaluator should assess the screening/categorization of the project along with the implementation of the safeguard plans that were approved by the GEF Agency.

#### **II.2.6 Gender**

The evaluator will determine the extent to which the gender considerations were considered in designing and implementing the project. The evaluator should report whether a gender analysis was conducted, the extent to which the project was implemented in a manner that ensures gender equitable participation and benefits, and whether gender disaggregated data was gathered and reported on beneficiaries. In case the given GEF project disadvantages or may disadvantage women or men, then this should be documented and reported. The evaluator should also determine the extent to which relevant gender related concerns were tracked through project M&E, and if possible, addressing whether gender considerations contributed to the success of the project.

#### **II.2.7 Stakeholder Engagement**

The evaluator should, where applicable, review and assess the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and project specific aspects such as involvement of civil society, indigenous population, private sector, etc. The evaluator should also indicate the percentage of stakeholders who rate as satisfactory, the level at which their views and concerns are considered by the project.

### II.2.8 Accountability and Grievance Mechanism

The evaluator should review and assess the project's Grievance Mechanism. The evaluator should analyze and assess whether project stakeholders were aware of the grievance mechanism and whether the mechanism was effective in addressing grievances.

The evaluator should also review and assess any other safeguard plans that were triggered.

### II.2.9 Other Assessments

The Terminal Evaluations should assess the following topics, for which ratings are not required:

**a. Need for follow-up:** Where applicable, the evaluators will indicate if there is any need to follow up on the evaluation findings, e.g. instances financial mismanagement, unintended negative impacts or risks, etc.

**b. Materialization of co-financing:** the evaluators will provide information on the extent to which expected co-financing materialized, whether co-financing is cash or in-kind, whether it is in form of grant or loan or equity, whether co-financing was administered by the project management or by some other organization, how shortfall in co-financing or materialization of greater than expected co-financing affected project results, etc.

**c. Lessons and Recommendations:** Evaluators should provide a few well-formulated lessons that are based on the project experience and applicable to the type of project at hand, to the GEF's overall portfolio, and/or to GEF systems and processes. Wherever possible, Terminal Evaluation reports should include examples of good practices in project design and implementation that have led to effective stakeholder engagement, successful broader adoption of GEF initiatives by stakeholders, and large-scale environmental impacts. The evaluators should describe aspects of the project performance that worked well along with reasons for it. They should discuss where these good practices may or may not be replicated. Recommendations should be well formulated and targeted. The recommendations should discuss the need for action, the recommended action along with its likely consequences vis-à-vis status quo and other courses of action, the specific actor/actors that need to take the action, and time frame for it.

The main dimensions of project performance on which ratings are first provided in the terminal evaluation are outcomes, sustainability, quality of monitoring and evaluation, quality of implementation, and quality of execution. The CI-GEF Agency also includes ratings for environmental and social safeguards.

### Outcome Ratings

- A. Criteria for Outcome Ratings:** Outcome ratings will consider the outcome achievements of the projects against its expected targets. Project outcomes will be rated on three dimensions:
- a. Relevance: Were the project outcomes congruent with the GEF focal areas/operational program strategies, country priorities, and mandates of the Agencies? Was the project design appropriate for delivering the expected outcomes?
  - b. Effectiveness: Were the project's actual outcomes commensurate with the expected outcomes?
  - c.

Efficiency: Was the project cost-effective? How does the project cost/time versus output/outcomes equation compare to that of similar projects? Rating Scale for Outcomes: An overall outcome rating will be provided on a six-point scale (highly satisfactory to highly unsatisfactory) after considering outcome relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency. The overall ratings on the outcomes of the project will be based on performance on the following criteria:

- a. Relevance
- b. Effectiveness
- c. Efficiency

Project outcomes are rated based on the extent to which project objectives were achieved. A six-point rating scale is used to assess overall outcomes:

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

The calculation of the overall outcomes rating of projects will consider all the three criteria, of which relevance and effectiveness are critical. The rating on relevance will determine whether the overall outcome rating will be in the unsatisfactory range (MU to HU = unsatisfactory range). If the relevance rating is in the unsatisfactory range, then the overall outcome will be in the unsatisfactory range as well. However, where the relevance rating is in the satisfactory range (HS to MS), the overall outcome rating could, depending on its effectiveness and efficiency rating, be either in the satisfactory range or in the unsatisfactory range.

The second constraint applied is that the overall outcome achievement rating may not be higher than the effectiveness rating. During project implementation, the results framework of some projects may have been modified. In cases where modifications in the project impact, outcomes and outputs have not scaled down their overall scope, the evaluator should assess outcome achievements based on the revised results framework. In instances where the scope of the project objectives and outcomes has been scaled down, the magnitude of and necessity for downscaling is taken into account and despite achievement of results as per the revised results framework, where appropriate, a lower outcome effectiveness rating may be given.



### **Sustainability Ratings**

The sustainability will be assessed considering the risks related to financial, sociopolitical, institutional, and environmental sustainability of project outcomes. The evaluator may also take other risks into account that may affect sustainability. The overall sustainability will be assessed using a four-point scale.

- 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.

### **Project M&E Ratings**

Quality of project M&E will be assessed in terms of:

- Design
- Implementation

**Quality of M&E on these two dimensions will be assessed on a six-point scale:**

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

### **Implementation and Execution Ratings**

Quality of implementation and of execution will be rated separately. Quality of implementation pertains to the role and responsibilities discharged by the GEF Agencies that have direct access to GEF resources. Quality of Execution pertains to the roles and responsibilities discharged by the country or regional counterparts that received GEF funds from the GEF Agencies and executed the funded activities on ground. The performance will be rated on a six-point scale.

- Highly satisfactory (HS): There were no short comings and quality of implementation / execution exceeded expectations.

- Satisfactory (S): There were no, or minor short comings and quality of implementation/ execution meets expectations.
- Moderately Satisfactory (MS): There were some shortcomings and quality of implementation / execution more or less meets expectations.
- Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): There were significant shortcomings and quality of implementation/execution somewhat lower than expected.
- Unsatisfactory (U): There were major short comings and quality of implementation / execution substantially lower than expected.
- Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): There were severe short comings in quality of implementation / execution.
- Unable to Assess (UA): The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of implementation / execution.

### **Environmental and Social Safeguards**

The approved environmental and social safeguard plans will be rated according to the following scale.

- Highly satisfactory (HS): There were no short comings and quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation exceeded expectations.
- Satisfactory (S): There were no, or minor short comings and quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/execution met expectations.
- Moderately Satisfactory (MS): There were some short comings and quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation met expectations.
- Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): There were significant shortcomings and quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation somewhat lower than expected.
- Unsatisfactory (U): There were major short comings and quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation substantially lower than expected.
- Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): There were severe short comings in quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation
- Unable to Assess (UA): The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of environmental and social safeguard plans design/implementation

## **9.5 Annex V. Key Informant Interview Protocol**

### **CI Mangrove Forest Project**

#### **Draft KII Interviewer Guide: Policy Makers (Head of implementing Agencies-EPA, FDA, CI et)**

KII Category	
Gender	
County	
Date of Interview	
Name of Interviewer	

Name of Transcriber	
Start Time	
End Time	
Comments:	

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am working with The Khana Group in collaboration with Conservation International to conduct a Terminal Evaluation of CI Mangrove Forest Project. To this end, the **objective** of this project is to strengthen the conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's globally important mangrove forests through effective participatory land-use planning and establishment of coastal protected areas in at least 35% of Liberia's mangroves.

This exercise seeks to evaluate outcomes on the two project Components. The components are: (i) Enabling conditions for establishment of coastal and marine protected areas in 20% of priority mangrove forests; and (ii) Reducing pressures on an additional 15% of priority forest areas through integrated land-use planning, improving local community livelihoods and increasing stakeholders' capacity and awareness..

You have been identified as a key informant who can provide us important insight. I'd like to talk to you today about your opinions, knowledge, and experiences with design, monitoring or implementation of this project.

First, let us start with how things will work for our interview today.

- There are no right or wrong answers.
- Please feel comfortable in sharing both positive and negative thoughts openly.
- Any information shared will remain secure and identifying information will not be included in our report.
- Feel free to ask questions.
- This interview should take approximately 30minutes.

This session will be audio recorded to ensure accuracy in our data collection process. Audio recordings and transcripts will be kept in a secure location and all recordings and transcripts will be destroyed after three years.

## SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS AND BACKGROUND

1. What agency/organization do you work for?
2. What is your title/position?
3. What are your main work duties:
4. What aspect of the Mangrove Forest Project is your organization involved with?

## SECTION B: COMPONENT 1: ENABLING CONDITIONS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF COASTAL AND MARINE PROTECTED AREAS IN 20% OF PRIORITY MANGROVE FORESTS

Based on the work of your organization in **Monrovia, Lake Piso, Marshall, Buchanan**, please answer the following questions:

5. What is the current status of the management plan for Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve?  
Probe 5: How would you describe progress on the implementation of this management plan?
6. What are some of the implementation *successes* of this management plan (successes you have witnessed or have knowledge of)?  
Probe: 6: In your opinion, why was it successful?
7. Did the project accomplish the constitution of the co-management committee for Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve?  
Probe 7a: Please state your assessment of the effectiveness of this committee  
Probe 7b: How would you describe the extent of the committee's impact on the accomplishment of component 1 of this project?
8. What are some of the implementation *gaps* of the management plan you have witnessed or have knowledge of)?  
Probe 8: In your opinion, why did it fail?
9. What lessons have you learnt from the successes/gaps in implementation of the management committee for the Lake Piso reserve?
10. How much knowledge do you have about the gazettelement package for Marshall Proposed Protected Area?  
Probe 10: Please share with us your assessment of progress on the Marshall gazettelement and the total surface area
11. Did the project accomplish the constitution of the co-management committee for Marshall Proposed Protected Area?  
Probe 11a: Please state your assessment of the effectiveness of this committee to include gaps  
Probe 11b: How would you describe the impact of this committee on the achievement of component 1 of this project?
12. What lessons have you learnt from the successes/gaps in implementation of the management committee for the Marshall Protected Area?
13. Under component 1, do you believe that the project met its target of identifying, delineating and developing management plans to safeguard 15% of priority mangrove areas?  
Probe 13: Can you refer me to an evidence source?

## **SECTION C: COMPONENT 2: REDUCING PRESSURES ON AN ADDITIONAL 15% OF PRIORITY MANGROVE AREAS**

These questions allow respondents to share understanding and experience on outcomes on Component 2.

14. In your opinion, how would you rate the impact of participatory land use planning tool kit developed and piloted in the 10 communities covering 11,107 ha on the reduction of pressure on priority mangrove areas?

Probe 14: Please state specific impact

15. Please describe how important have the 10 community participatory land use plans been useful for the project communities

16. Please describe the status of the Conservation Agreements negotiated with the 10 coastal communities in Liberia?

Probe16a: What is your assessment on the implementation of the document?

Probe16b: What does the agreement say in summary?

Probe16c: In your opinion, how has it contributed to the achievement of the project objective?

17. What are the most effective means of harnessing local ownership and sustainability in Land use in mangrove forested areas mainly across the 10 project communities in Liberia?

Probe 17: Please describe your experience with local communities

18. What can you say about the extent of political will on the enforcement of regulations around protection of Mangrove Forest areas in Liberia?

Probe 18: Rate the extent of political will in helping designed alternative livelihood programs for Mangrove Forested Communities

19. What are some key factors that can engender political will and drive efforts in this regard?

*[If time permits, go back to ask unanswered questions or to delve deeper on points of interest].*

## **SECTION D: CAPACITY BUILDING, AWARENESS, AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING**

*Under this section, impacts of the awareness program under the project including capacity building and gender mainstreaming are assessed*

20. How have Capacity building and awareness activities under the project impacted key government agencies ability to substantially improve mangrove forest conservation and sustainable use?

Probe 20: What about local communities?

21. Are you aware of the threats and benefits of Mangroves to sustainable land use?

Probe 21a: Please explain

Probe 21b: Do you think government officials and local stakeholders are aware of threats and benefits of Mangroves

Probe 21c: Please explain

22. To what extent did the project implementation mainstream representation of gender?

Probe 22: Please site-specific examples

23. Describe the extent of women involvement in the development of critical policy documents and framework around management and land use as well as designation of protected areas?

24. Describe key livelihood activities of the 10 project communities before implementation of this project.

Probe 24a: What were they?

25. What alternative livelihood activities were designed to promote sustainable use of coastal and mangrove forest use?

26. What is your assessment of local community acceptance of new methods of land use?

## **SECTION E: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

27. Does a specific body or framework exist to promote effective engagement of stakeholders over the life span of the project?

Probe27: Does this current framework exist beyond the life-cycle of the project?

28. Please state your assessment over the effectiveness of this stakeholder engagement mechanism

Probe28: Based on your experience, please state successes/gaps?

29. Do you believe your views as a stakeholder towards project implementation was highly respected?

Probe29: Could you reference specific examples?

30. What mechanism existed for handling grievances arising from project implementation?

Probe 29a: How were they resolved?

Probe 29b: Where there specific lessons learnt?

31. How would you describe the impact of the project on the current system of land and sustainable mangrove forest use in Liberia?

32. In what way did current legal frameworks like (EPA Law, FDA Act, et al) impact Mangrove Forest Conservation in project areas?

Probe 32: In what way (if any) do they overlap or complement each other?

33. Do you have suggestions or ways to improve land use and mangrove conservation in Liberia?

## SECTION F: CONCLUSION

34. Do you have any additional lessons learned, best practices or recommendations?

35. Do you have any questions that you would like TKG to answer?

This concludes our discussion. Thank you for taking time out of your schedule to talk with us. As we are going through our notes, we may have brief follow-up questions or need further clarification. If so, I will contact you.

On behalf of TKG and Conservation International, thank you for participating!

### CI Mangrove Forest Project

#### Draft Focus Group Guide: Local Community beneficiaries (FGDs)

Focus Group Category	
Gender	
County	
Date of Interview	
Name of Interviewer	
Name of Transcriber	
Start Time	
End Time	
Comments:	

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am working with The Khana Group in collaboration with Conservation International to conduct a Terminal Evaluation of CI Mangrove Forest Project. The **objective** of this project is to strengthen the conservation and sustainable use of Liberia's globally important mangrove forests through effective participatory land-use planning and establishment of coastal protected areas in at least 35% of Liberia's mangroves.

This exercise seeks to evaluate outcomes on the two project Components. The components are: (i) Enabling conditions for establishment of coastal and marine protected areas in 20% of priority mangrove forests; and (ii) Reducing pressures on an additional 15% of priority forest areas through integrated land-use planning, improving local community livelihoods and increasing stakeholders' capacity and awareness..

You have been identified as participants who can provide us important insight. I'd like to talk to you today about your opinions, knowledge, and experiences with design, monitoring or implementation of this project.

First, let us start with how things will work for our discussion today.

- There is no right or wrong answers.
- Please feel comfortable in sharing both positive and negative thoughts openly.
- Any information shared will remain secure and identifying information will not be included in our report.
- Feel free to ask questions.
- This interview should take approximately 30minutes.

This session will be audio recorded to ensure accuracy in our data collection process. Audio recordings and transcripts will be kept in a secure location and all recordings and transcripts will be destroyed after three years.

#### SECTION A: Participants Attendance

Name	Title	Occupation	Age	Gender	Awareness of the CI mangrove project.

#### SECTION B: Commitments of Local Communities

Based on your knowledge of the Mangrove Forest Project in **your community**, please answer the following questions:

1. What can you say about charcoal production in your community today?  
 Probe 1: Are you people burning more charcoal or less? Can you say how much charcoal is been burn now and how much before?  
 Probe 1a: If you are not using charcoal anymore, how do you get fire to cook your food and dry your fish?
2. Please say something about animal hunting in this community.  
 Probe 2a: Is animal hunting still happening in your community? If yes, what kind of animal do you hunt? If no, please state where you get meat from for your food? Or do you substitute meat with other protein content? What are they?
3. What is your current way of catching fish in this community?  
 Probe 3a: What will you say about the use of mosquito nets, dynamite and poison to fishing in Swamp, river or ocean?  
 Probe 3b: If there is a change, what are your new methods (ways) of fishing? Why did you change to this method? Have you observed any changes to your environment, community due to the use of the new fishing methods? What are they?



4. What is your relationship with the other communities since signing the Conservation Agreement?  
Probe 4a: Do you people share idea and try to learn from one another?  
Please give example
5. Have you people participated in any training under Conservation International in the past?  
Probe 5: What kind of training was it? What new thing did you learn? Do you think it has helped you community? In what way has it helped?
6. What do you do as a community to people who go against this Conservation Agreement like doing things like hunting, coal burning, cutting trees, and fishing with mosquito net and dynamite?
7. Have you people experience anything like bushfire in this community before? What did y'all do about it?
8. Have the community benefited from any awareness activity about protecting swamps, river and forest in the past?  
Probe 8: who did the awareness? Did y'all learn anything new from the awareness? What mainly did y'all learn? Please give example? Did the awareness lead to changes in your communities? Please share those.
9. Lastly, did the community receive things like eco-stove for cooking, support to make cassava farm, fishing net and other things from CI?
10. Does the cassava farm still exist? Where are the material things now?
11. If you still have the farm and material things, how did you manage to maintain them?
12. What changes have they made in your life and communities? Do you feel you have more money from their use for your family before this project? How much?

## SECTION C: CONCLUSION

10. Do you have any additional lessons learned, best practices or recommendations?
11. Do you have suggestions or ways to improve land use and mangrove conservation in Liberia?
12. Do you have any questions that you would like TKG to answer?

This concludes our discussion. Thank you for taking time out of your schedule to talk with us. As we are going through out notes, we may have brief follow-up questions or need further clarification. If so, I will contact you.

On behalf of TKG and Conservation International, thank you for participating!