



# PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)<sup>1</sup>

PROJECT TYPE: Full-sized Project

TYPE OF TRUST FUND: GEF Trust Fund

## PART I: PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Project Title:	Mano River Union Ecosystem Conservation and International Water Resources Management (IWRM) Project		
Country(ies):	Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire	GEF Project ID: <sup>2</sup>	4953
GEF Agency(ies):	AfDB (select) (select)	GEF Agency Project ID:	
Other Executing Partner(s):		Submission Date:	2012-04-09
GEF Focal Area (s):	Multi-focal Areas	Project Duration (Months)	36
Name of parent program (if applicable): ➤ For SFM/REDD+ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Agency Fee (\$):	633,636

### A. FOCAL AREA STRATEGY FRAMEWORK<sup>3</sup>:

Focal Area Objectives	Expected FA Outcomes	Expected FA Outputs	Trust Fund	Indicative Grant Amount (\$)	Indicative Co-financing (\$)
IW-3 (select)	Outcome 3.1: Political commitment, shared vision, and institutional capacity demonstrated for joint, ecosystem based management of water bodies and local ICM principles.	Output IW 1: Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Actions Programs are prepared	GEFTF	2,034,633	9,000,000
(select) BD-2	Outcome 2.1: Increase in sustainably managed landscapes that integrate biodiversity conservation	Output BD 1: Regulatory frameworks and dissemination best practices for production sectors (mining, fisheries, forestry and agriculture)	GEFTF	2,571,428	10,000,000
(select) LD-3	Outcome 3.2: Integrated landscape management practices adopted by local communities.	Output LD 2: INRM tools and methodologies developed and tested	GEFTF	428,572	2,000,000
(select) SFM/REDD-1	Outcome 1: good management practices applied in existing forests	Output SFM 1: Forest area (hectares) under sustainable management, separated by forest type.	GEFTF	1,000,000	3,000,000
(select) (select)			(select)		
(select) (select)			(select)		
(select) (select)			(select)		
(select) (select)			(select)		
(select) (select)			(select)		
(select) (select)	Others		(select)		
Sub-Total				6,034,633	24,000,000
Project Management Cost <sup>4</sup>			(select)	<b>301,731</b>	1,000,000
<b>Total Project Cost</b>				6,336,364	25,000,000

<sup>1</sup> It is very important to consult the PIF preparation guidelines when completing this template.

<sup>2</sup> Project ID number will be assigned by GEFSEC.

<sup>3</sup> Refer to the reference attached on the [Focal Area Results Framework](#) when filling up the table in item A.

<sup>4</sup> GEF will finance management cost that is solely linked to GEF financing of the project. PMC should be charged proportionately to focal areas based on focal area project grant amount.

## B. PROJECT FRAMEWORK

Project Objective: Conservation of the Upper Guinea forest ecosystem						
Project Component	Grant Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	Indicative Grant Amount (\$)	Indicative Cofinancing (\$)
Integrated Ecosystem Management	Inv	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transboundary ecosystems are managed in a sustainable manner</li> <li>- including 100,000 hectares of forests under sustainable management by communities</li> <li>- 100,000 hectares of production landscapes (crop and agroforestry) under integrated management by communities</li> <li>- 50,000 hectares of production systems managed under an established certification scheme</li> <li>- 25% increase in annual income to land users from certification schemes and improved agricultural practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Best practices in activities related to production sectors that threaten the forest ecosystem are identified and disseminated in the main production sectors</li> <li>- Training systems established for farmers on how to improve management practices to meet certification programs</li> <li>- Improving management of agriculture activities within the vicinity of protected areas</li> <li>- Integrated land management plans enabling the generation of sustainable income from forest products and agroforestry</li> </ul>	GEFTF	4,000,000	15,000,000

Sustainable Management of Transboundary Waters	Inv	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water resources are managed at the regional level based on a high level intergovernmental agreement</li> <li>- Strengthened government agencies and institutions for transboundary water resource management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National inter-ministry committees established and operational</li> <li>- Reinforced capacities to prepare and adopt TDA and SAP for the protection of international waters and biodiversity</li> <li>- Awareness raising program focused on transboundary and environmental issues designed and implemented</li> <li>- Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Actions Programs are prepared and adopted at ministerial level</li> <li>- IW learn products generated and disseminated</li> <li>- Financial resource mobilization strategy</li> </ul>	GEFTF	2,034,633	9,000,000	
	(select)			(select)			
	(select)			(select)			
	(select)			(select)			
	(select)			(select)			
	(select)			(select)			
	(select)			(select)			
	(select)			(select)			
	(select)			(select)			
Sub-Total						6,034,633	24,000,000
Project Management Cost <sup>5</sup>					(select)	301,731	1,000,000
<b>Total Project Costs</b>						<b>6,336,364</b>	<b>25,000,000</b>

**C. INDICATIVE CO-FINANCING FOR THE PROJECT BY SOURCE AND BY NAME IF AVAILABLE, (\$)**

Sources of Cofinancing	Name of Cofinancier	Type of Cofinancing	Amount (\$)
GEF Agency	African Development Bank	Grant	22,750,000
Other Multilateral Agency (ies)	African Water Facility	Grant	2,250,000
(select)		(select)	
<b>Total Cofinancing</b>			<b>25,000,000</b>

**D. GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF RESOURCES REQUESTED BY AGENCY, FOCAL AREA AND COUNTRY<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>5</sup> Same as footnote #3.

<b>GEF Agency</b>	<b>Type of Trust Fund</b>	<b>Focal Area</b>	<b>Country Name/Global</b>	<b>Grant Amount (a)</b>	<b>Agency Fee (b)<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Total c=a+b</b>
(select)	GEFTF	International Waters	Regional	2,136,364	213,636	2,350,000
(select)	GEFTF	Biodiversity	Sierra Leone	900,000	90,000	990,000
(select)	GEFTF	Land Degradation	Sierra Leone	150,000	15,000	165,000
(select)	GEFTF	Biodiversity	Liberia	900,000	90,000	990,000
(select)	GEFTF(select)	Land Degradation	Liberia	150,000	15,000	165,000
(select)	GEFTF(select)	Biodiversity	Guinea	900,000	90,000	990,000
(select)	GEFTF(select)	Land Degradation	Guinea	150,000	15,000	165,000
(select)	GEFTF(select)	Multi-focal Areas	Regional - Sustainable Forest Management	1,050,000	105,000	1,155,000
(select)	(select)(select)	(select)				0
(select)	(select)(select)	(select)				0
<b>Total Grant Resources</b>				<b>6,336,364</b>	<b>633,636</b>	<b>6,970,000</b>

<sup>1</sup> In case of a single focal area, single country, single GEF Agency project, and single trust fund project, no need to provide information for this table

<sup>2</sup> Please indicate fees related to this project.

## **PART II: PROJECT JUSTIFICATION**

### **A. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONSISTENCY OF THE PROJECT WITH:**

#### A.1.1 the [GEF focal area/LDCF/SCCF](#) strategies /[NPIF](#) Initiative:

The project will be implemented in the Upper Guinea forest covering Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire with the objective of strengthening the management of transboundary natural resources for sustained ecological benefits and improved livelihoods for the forest adjacent communities. The project will build on baseline projects funded by the African Development Bank in the sectors of natural resources management and institutional capacity building at the regional level and by the African Water Facility (AWF) in the water sector. The GEF funded component will promote an Integrated Ecosystem Management approach at community level, considering water, forest and land issues in a holistic manner. It will respond to the need for conservation of the Upper Guinea Forest, which is a unique ecosystem hosting a variety of fauna and flora that are at risk from unsustainable human activities in the region. Therefore, the project will play a transformational role in the livelihoods of the communities living in the forest area covered by the project, enabling them to benefit from the ecosystem while not threatening it.

The proposed project is consistent with GEF 5 focal area strategies for biodiversity (BD), land degradation (LD), and international waters (IW) as it will contribute to the conservation of the Upper Guinea Forest ecosystem through the sustainable management of transboundary ecosystems. The Upper Guinea Forest is degrading and disappearing at an alarming rate, with adverse consequences for the quantity and quality of linked ecosystem services that underpin productivity of the land (LD), forests (BD) and water resources (IW). This has a direct impact on human well-being. As a consequence of the degradation, forest-dependent people struggle to sustain their livelihoods, often using non sustainable techniques (including poaching, logging, slash and burn agriculture, and illegal mining). The project will support local communities in developing alternative means of income generation, which will lead to an increase in forest coverage and its related benefits both at the local (ecosystem services) and global (biodiversity, enhanced carbon sinks) levels. It will enhance local stakeholders' involvement in the management of transboundary ecosystem. The project will also reinforce regional coordination among countries with a particular focus on selected ecosystems. Thus strengthening the regional regulatory framework on management of transboundary natural resources and implementing the Strategic Natural Resources Management Plan for the Mano River Union. Through its international waters component the project will support foundational capacity building and institutional reinforcement for regional ecosystem management of trans-boundary water systems. National inter-ministry committees would contribute to development of TDA and subsequently SAP. Benefits of collaboration on trans boundary basin and adoption by cooperating states in a TWRM approach contribute to improve community livelihoods, targeted in component 1, and to address environmental issues. Results will lead to a net gain in forest area (including the recovery of degraded forests) as well as increased transboundary water consideration and management in regional policies. The transboundary nature of the water resources will also entail regional collaboration resulting in enhanced regional cooperation and community interactions.

#### A.1.2. For projects funded from LDCF/SCCF: the LDCF/SCCF eligibility criteria and priorities:

The project is not requesting for LDCF/SCCF Funds.

#### A.1.3 For projects funded from NPIF, relevant eligibility criteria and priorities of the Fund:

NA

- A.2. national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions, if applicable, i.e. NAPAS, NAPs, NBSAPs, national communications, TNAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, etc.:

### **Poverty Reduction Strategy and Bank Alignment**

At the African level, this program responds to the objectives of promoting regional public goods and will contribute significantly to the ECOWAS and African Union's objectives of regional integration particularly in West Africa. It will contribute directly to the management of transboundary natural resources and protected areas of Mano River Union (MRU) member states as stipulated in their 2009-2013 Strategic Plan. At the national levels the project is fully aligned with the PRSP and the African Development Bank strategies with the MRU countries:

- In Guinea, the PRSP (2008) has a pillar on promotion of sustainable development within which sustainable and rational use of forests and protected areas is articulated. The MARFOP contributes to this pillar through sustainable agricultural production, sustainable management of forests, and increase in incomes for rural communities. The Bank's assistance to Guinea seeks to strengthen regional integration. The Guinea Results Based Country Strategy Paper (2005-2009) is based on the Country's PRSP that was adopted in 2002. The Bank Group's interventions are based on the strategic guidelines of the PRSP and concentrate on two pillars: (i) reinforcement of basic infrastructure and growth sectors; and (ii) improvement of basic social services.
- Liberia's Poverty Reduction Strategy (2008-2011) comprises four pillars – (i) consolidating peace and security, (ii) revitalizing the economy (iii) strengthening governance and the rule of law, and (iv) rehabilitating infrastructure and delivering basic services. Forestry and rural development interventions contribute to pillar 2. The central goal for forestry is for the sub-sector to become a source of higher incomes for the rural population, ensure that benefits are shared equitably, and provide adequate safeguards to ensure sustainability. The joint AfDB/WB Interim Strategy Note (ISN) 2007-2008 for Liberia has three pillars which include (i) revitalizing the economy, (ii) strengthening governance and the rule of law, and (iii) rehabilitating infrastructure and delivering basic services. This intervention in forestry and rural development targets pillar 1.
- Sierra Leone's PRSP II (2008-2012) has four main priority areas which include: (i) promoting provision of a reliable power supply, (ii) raising quantity and value added productivity in agriculture and fisheries, (iii) developing a national transportation network, and (iv) ensuring sustainable human development. The attainment of these priorities evidently requires the attainment of core preconditions in terms of good governance, macro-economic stability, private sector development, and sustainable natural resource management. The Bank's assistance to the country is guided by the AfDB/IDA/IFC Joint Assistance Strategy (2009-2012) which has two pillars – (i) Inclusive growth, and (ii) Basic services for all. The MARFOP is anchored on priority area 2 of the PRSP and pillar 1 of the Joint Assistance Strategy. Liberia and Sierra Leone have made important policy commitments to forest ecosystems conservation as evidenced by the setting aside of the Gola Forest as a transboundary Peace Park in 2009. IUCN defines a Peace Park as a transboundary protected area that is formally dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and to the promotion of peace and cooperation.
- Cote d'Ivoire PRSP (2009-2013) has a key pillar (Strategic Orientation 4) for the improvement of the accessibility and quality of basic services, environmental

protection, promotion of gender equality and social protection. The expected outcome of the pillar is ensuring welfare for all, including protection of the environment. The targeted forest ecosystems in the country are facing various threats as a result of land use changes, civil conflicts that have led to the displacement of persons, and unsustainable extraction of timber and minerals. The Bank's Interim Strategy Note (ISN) for FY08-09 has three pillars. The third pillar is "assisting economic recovery" so as to move towards sustained economic growth. The forest ecosystems management intervention will contribute to this pillar.

### **Environmental alignment**

At the Regional level, the project is consistent with the NEPAD Environmental Action Plan in which land degradation, drought and desertification are priority issues. The Mano River Forest Ecosystem Conservation Programme has been identified as one of the priority program for the period 2010-2015, along with the Congo Basin Fund, Climate for Development in Africa and the Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative.

The NAPAs and NBSAPs called for institutional capacity building to strengthen biodiversity and nature conservation effectiveness and adaptation capacity. All the NBSAPs underscore the problems associated with land degradation and the need for biodiversity conservation in forests and the river systems running through them. All NBSAPs recognize that unsustainable activities in the area are a major threat to the ecosystem. In particular, NBSAPs identify illegal mining, poaching, unsustainable agriculture techniques (slash and burn, switch farming) and logging as major threats to the forest ecosystem and water quality. The project will contribute to the implementation of alternatives to these activities within the region by introducing sustainable agriculture and land management techniques. NBSAPs have also identified that the weakness of regulatory frameworks on forest ecosystem and the lack of coordination among countries in that respect, have also contributed to the increase of such illegal activities. The project will address these weaknesses by contributing to improved harmonization and coordination among regulatory frameworks. The regional level of identification of the project makes it part of a regional effort of coordination for the conservation and management of natural resources. This project is aligned with the key pillars of the Mano River Union Natural Resources Management strategic plan. It also fits into the Bank's Agricultural Sector Strategy (2010-2014) which includes a pillar on Natural Resources Management. This project will also form part of the network of Sustainable Land Management activities established under the GEF strategic investment program for Africa and will benefit from shared experiences and knowledge generated.

## **B. PROJECT OVERVIEW:**

B.1. Describe the baseline project and the problem that it seeks to address:

### **Problematic:**

The targeted area of the Upper Guinea Forest Ecosystem is distributed among four countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia). This ecosystem is a unique biodiversity hotspot, which has an estimated 9000 vascular plants of which 25 per cent are endemic. The oil palm, the African ebony and the African mahogany are endemic to these ecosystems. In addition approximately 75 species and seven genera of birds are endemic to the region. Mammalian endemism is also very high with over 50 species recorded. Six primate species are endemic including the Diana monkey and the Olive colobus monkey. The diversity of fish species is also very high and includes over 510 freshwater fishes (Source: Conservation International).

According to the "West Africa Mineral Sector Strategic Assessment (WAMSSA)" undertaken by the World Bank in 2010 three out of the twelve critical issues affecting the Upper Guinea

Forest are environmental (deforestation and loss of biodiversity, land degradation and reclamation of closed mines, water pollution). In fact, biodiversity is unique but a large number of the endemic species within the region are threatened. For instance, it is estimated that in Guinea only, 21 species of higher plants are threatened out of 3000, 12 species of mammals out of 190, 12 species of breeding birds out of 109, 1 species of reptile out of 94 and 1 species of amphibians out of 33 (Source: Earth Trends, World Resources Institute).

The remaining portion of the Upper Guinea Forest Ecosystem is currently estimated at 93,047 Km<sup>2</sup>, which represents approximately 15 percent of its original coverage. The deforestation rate is estimated at 300 Km<sup>2</sup> per year. This dramatic decrease in the area of this important ecosystem is due to a combination of increased population, low level of economic opportunities for local populations and lack of institutional capacity to design and enforce ecosystem management measures. For instance, illegal activities such as logging, artisanal mining, poaching and bushmeat hunting have been disastrous for the forest. It is also noted that deforestation and the lack of coordination in transboundary watersheds' management is likely to threaten the availability of water resources in the region. This implies that water disputes might increase in the area as deforestation in upstream countries will negatively affect water availability in downstream countries.

The transboundary river basins in the area include the Morro River, which is the major tributary of the Mano River, the Niger, the Great and Little Scarcies (between Guinea and Sierra Leone), Lofa, Moa, St Paul, St John, Cestos and Cavalla (between Liberia, Guinea and Cote D'Ivoire) river basins (Source, Atlas on Regional Integration in West Africa, land series, 2006). The challenges in the river basins include:

- The decline in rainfall and average annual flow of watercourses due to increased climate variability
- The technical and financial difficulties to access groundwater reserves of which very little is exploited today
- The increasing preparation for the construction of dams, irrigation canals or inter-basin transfer systems
- Degradation and deforestation in the forest ecosystem which impacts on water flows and quality in terms of siltation.
- Increased human activities due to population growth and expansion of settlements.

It is noted that these issues are intensified in the border regions where different policies, laws, and practices exist, and often complicate the management of natural resources. Therefore the lack of cooperation and regulation application among the riparian countries is a major threat for the sustainable management of transboundary natural resources. This has been further exacerbated by 20 years of conflict and civil unrest from which the Mano River Union Secretariat and member countries suffered substantially and lost important capacities.

The Mano River Union was established in 1973 with the objective of sub-regional economic integration. The MRU Secretariat located in Freetown, Sierra Leone provides the institutional and administrative machinery through which the governments of the four states implement the regional policies and programmes. The Secretariat is headed by the Secretary General and it relates to member states through ministries responsible for planning and economic development with designated National Focal Points for each member state. Resident Coordinators who report directly to the Secretary General represent the Secretariat in Monrovia, Conakry and Abidjan. The MRU developed a Natural Resources Management Strategic Plan (2009 -2013) that included conservation of forest ecosystems and water resources as the main priorities. The Secretariat has the mandate to implement the Strategic Plan in partnership with the designated agencies in the member states. The regional nature of the targeted ecosystems and water resources necessitates the action from the MRU secretariat.

The Secretariat is also able to influence national policies based on the Union's Ministerial Council that is the main policy making body. Therefore the MARFOP and the GEF project, which will contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Strategic Plan, are targeted at the MRU Secretariat.

***Baseline:***

Over the last 30 years, the African Development Bank (AfDB) has been working with all four countries to address agriculture and natural resources management. However, while more than \$ 100 million have been invested in the agriculture sector in some of the countries, efforts toward investing in the forest sector has been focused on the need for regional level integration across all four countries. As indicated above, the MRU Secretariat presents the best opportunity for addressing this need in accordance with its mandate, and has been a target of AfDB assistance since 2008. Based on its experience in the region, the African Development Bank has developed some projects in partnership with the Mano River Union Secretariat. These projects, which will serve as baselines for the GEF component, are described below. These projects will leverage the co-financing needed to justify the GEF increment for generating GEBs.

The AfDB, through its Fragile States Facility, intends to support the Mano River Union in the implementation of the strategic framework approved by the Union Heads of State in May 2008. This project, ***“Capacity building and institutional strengthening for peace, effective governance, sustainable socio-economic development and regional integration”***, will consist of a USD 1 287 000 grant to the Mano River Union with an emphasis on i) institutional revitalization and capacity building, ii) review of policies in key areas of economic development and regional integration, and iii) review of the sub-regional infrastructure for peace and security. The project will address the need to revitalize the Mano River Union Secretariat following the paralysis of its activities for close to 20 years. In addition, during the period of conflict, the premises of the Secretariat were vandalized and damaged. Even after formal cessation of the wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone, lingering instability in the sub-region continued to frustrate the efforts of the Secretariat to obtain support to re-capacitate its organizational structures and implement its operations. To date, the Secretariat still lacks the institutional capacity and resources to fulfill the mandates entrusted to it during the Heads of State summits. Thus, for the Secretariat to spearhead and effectively coordinate any sub-regional program aimed at the sustainable socio-economic development of these four fragile Member States, re-building the institutional capacity of the Secretariat must be tackled.

The institutional support to the Mano River Union will be complemented by two thematic projects in the areas of forest management and sustainable management of trans boundary waters respectively funded through the AfDB's Agriculture department and the African Water Facility hosted at the AfDB.

The ***Mano River Forest Ecosystems Conservation Programme (MARFOP)*** will be funded through a USD 10.5 million grant to the Mano River Union Secretariat. The overall project goal is to contribute to the sustainable management of the Upper Guinea forest ecosystems for global ecological balance, including, carbon sequestration and climate change mitigation, and the improved livelihoods of local communities. The specific objective of the program is to strengthen the capacity of the Mano River Union for the purpose of ensuring sustainable management of transboundary forest ecosystems; thereby improving the livelihoods of adjacent communities. The targeted forests are all transboundary. In order to achieve the above mentioned objectives, the project will implement three (3) components: i) sustainable ecosystem management, ii) environmental education and communication, and iii) climate change interventions. It is expected that this project will lead to (i) the protection of ecosystems

under threat; (ii) strengthened capacities of national and regional institutions in charge of forest ecosystems management, in line with their respective missions; (iii) local communities being fully conversant with issues of the forest ecosystems under threat; and (iv) benefits from the carbon international market that will be significantly captured by national economies. The capacity of the Secretariat will be enhanced through this support.

The *Sustainable Management and Development of Mano River Basin Project*, whose overall cost is estimated at US\$ 2,252 million, will be supported by a grant from the African Water Facility (US\$ 1.5 million), and 747,000 US\$ from other partners such as ECOWAS, MRU and governments. The project is focused in the Mano river watershed, and the main objective is to establish a list of Bankable projects, supported by prefeasibility studies - technical environmental and social - for specific prioritized regional investments that will be defined during project implementation (80 % of the budget). In order to facilitate the decisions and the cooperation among the countries, the project will support preliminary transboundary analysis, IWRM capacity building among the countries and the support for the establishment of a Water resource management unit at the MRU.

### ***GEF Project:***

While the baseline projects described above will deliver specific outcomes related to forests and water resources, the need for regional integration to ensure long-term sustainability of ecosystem services for people has not been fully addressed. There are crucial needs for policies, institutions, and incentive mechanisms to enhance integrated management of land, forests, and water resources at appropriate scales, including transboundary areas where the ecosystem services can be sustained on the long-term. Such an approach will enable stronger alignment of government level interventions in the baseline investments with community-based interventions in watersheds and forest conservation areas within the four countries. The GEF project will therefore address the critical need for mobilizing communities through integrated landscape and watershed planning, training and application of improved natural resource management practices, and incentive mechanisms such as certification of forest and agroforestry products. This engagement will increase the potential for increased forest cover to enhance connectivity between protected forests, while at the same time reducing the risk of deforestation and illegal exploitation of existing forests in the highly threatened Upper Guinea ecosystem.

In addition to integrated management of the forest ecosystem, the GEF project will also strengthen the need for high level cooperation in management of transboundary river basins. Building on the GEF International Waters Focal Area approach, Transboundary Diagnosis Assessment (TDA) will be conducted to provide the basis for an inter-ministerial agreement and the Strategic Action Plan (SAP). The Mano River Basin will be the primary target for the TDA and SAP given its significantly large area and considerable overlap with the remaining transboundary forests between Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. The GEF increment will build on baseline investments for institutional strengthening (MARFOP) to ensure an improved engagement in transboundary water resources by the MRU Secretariat, which will then be charged with coordinating implementation of the inter-ministerial agreements and the SAP.

- B. 2. [incremental /Additional cost reasoning](#): describe the incremental (GEF Trust Fund/NPIF) or additional (LDCAF/SCCF) activities requested for GEF/LDCAF/SCCF/NPIF financing and the associated [global environmental benefits](#) (GEF Trust Fund/NPIF) or associated adaptation benefits (LDCAF/SCCF) to be delivered by the project:

The GEF project will base its activities on the above baseline projects that are specifically but individually dedicated to forest management and water resource management. The GEF project

will consider natural resources management in an integrated manner, it will enhance policies, institutions, and incentive mechanisms for trans boundary water resources management that will be complemented to the necessary coordination and tools that will enhance, through communities' participation, the management and conservation of protected forest and its surrounding areas. The GEF project will be focused on on-the-ground development of sustainable economic activities to support forest and water resource management and conservation. This will result in global environmental benefits with the overall preservation of the ecosystem, a net gain in forest area and improved integrated transboundary water management. Without the project, activities on the ground will continue to focus on a specific sector (either water resources, forest resources or land resources) but not in an integrated manner. The GEF project is essential as it empowers local communities in the conservation of the ecosystem through the development of alternative sustainable economic activities that are not detrimental to the environment in the region. In addition, the GEF project will also add value at the regional level by promoting further linkage between the baseline projects through the holistic approach advocated for the natural resources management.

### *Component 1: Integrated ecosystem management*

Baseline: The MARFOP project activities will focus on five transboundary landscapes (Annex 1) with the objective of strengthening coordination and harmonization in the management of the Upper Guinea forest ecosystem. Project interventions seek to rehabilitate and reconstitute the threatened forest ecosystems. Within each of these five landscapes, the project will enable the demarcation and paneling of protected forests, the establishment and /or rehabilitation of forest plantation, the establishment of guard posts and the creation of ecological centers. The MARFOP will also conduct an institutional assessment of the Mano River Union secretariat. This assessment will enable targeted support to the Secretariat and the associated national forest management agencies through capacity building, which is essential in the conservation of transboundary ecosystems. Institutional strengthening is required at all levels after the years of conflict in the region. Overall, the MARFOP will support institutional strengthening at the regional level, leading to the conservation of transboundary forest areas.

Incremental: The GEF component will add value to the MARFOP project by targeting its activities and benefits to the local communities living in the vicinity of the forests. Deforestation and its negative impact on the ecosystem is also a consequence of poor economic opportunities that have not encouraged local populations to manage the forest in a sustainable manner, leading to environment degradation. The project will focus on identifying and promoting economic alternatives to the communities, with the objective of reducing the pressure on the forests. It is expected that these activities will provide alternatives to the communities, which will enable sustainable coexistence between the ecosystem and the populations. Over 300,000 people living in the forest adjacent areas will be directly targeted. Forest adjacent communities in the landscapes will participate in prioritizing activities during the formulation of local development plans and in setting up forest co-management arrangements. Expected outputs will include:

(i) the development of integrated land use/management plans that contribute to optimal use of agricultural and forest lands. The integrated land management plans will be developed based on the current and near future valuation of the ecosystem. The valuation will determine the land uses and management practices in the various identified landscapes including the areas for agriculture production, agro-forestry and natural habitats. The planning will be participatory to enhance the awareness of communities of the inter-linkages in the productivity of the landscapes and the importance of maintaining natural habitats for provision of ecosystem services. The valuation of ecosystems provides opportunities for incorporating biodiversity in

the integrated land use plans through preservation and regeneration of the natural habitats.

(ii) the identification and dissemination of best practices for production activities that currently threaten the forest ecosystems, capacity building for forest adjacent communities to promote sustainable resource management practices, and enhanced agricultural production activities that incorporate agroforestry practices. The promotion of those sustainable resource management practices will ensure that the land used for agriculture maintains its productivity by using techniques that improve organic soil nutrient content and the moisture content such as mulching and minimum tillage. This will contribute to the PA strategy by preventing further encroachment by communities. Practices such as the slash and burn methods of clearing land will also be discouraged to control fires that may negatively impact the protected areas. Other beneficial agriculture practices such as inter cropping and nitrogen fixing crop rotation will also be encouraged. Those activities will be implemented in a sustainable manner that takes into consideration the environmental, social and economic aspects of the context.

(iii) Capacity will also be strengthened at the landscape level with regards to the organizational capacity of local communities, development of local land-use and development plans. Support will be provided for developing marketing infrastructure. The satisfaction of the basic needs of communities as regards strengthening their capacity in diversifying their income generating activities (IGA) will be supported. This is expected to diversify and strengthen sources of revenue for the concerned populations, provide economic incentives to conserve the forests, and promote sustainable land management.

#### *Component 2: Sustainable Management of Transboundary Waters*

Baseline and problem: The African Water Facility (AWF) will be supporting country dialogue aimed at developing a pipeline of Bankable projects in the Mano River basin. In addition, AfDB will support through its Fragile States Facility, the revitalization of the Mano River Union Secretariat, which suffered from twenty years of conflict and political unrest. There is however a need to strengthen the framework for integrated water resources management (IWRM) in a transboundary context to promote joint ecosystem based management of water bodies in a more efficient and regionally comprehensive manner, including communities.

#### Incremental:

The purpose or long-term objective of the project is to provide global environmental benefits through the improved protection of the trans boundary protected and surrounding areas which integrate the use of sound land and water resource management strategies. In order to achieve this objective, water management beyond the areas of focus needs to be addressed in a comprehensive and sustainable manner. Based on the preliminary dialogues and transboundary analysis of the Mano River basin undertaken in the baseline projects, this component of the project will therefore prepare a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) and a Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the prioritized basins under the MRU. The TDA will investigate the sector activities and practices that negatively impact the water resources and biodiversity in the region including a root cause analysis. The SAP will elaborate on measures to ensure sustainable development within the Mano River Basin through the use of natural resources while protecting the environment. The GEF resources will be used to build a comprehensive database on the transboundary waters in the Mano River Basin informed by detailed environmental studies and information systems analysis. The database will form part of the SAP. The SAP will also include estimates of the financial resources required for implementation and a resource mobilization strategy.

The GEF funding for this component will allow :

*(i) Strengthening capacities in the region to develop the TDA and the SAP including an estimation of financial resources required for implementation and a strategy to mobilize these resources.*

- National inter-ministry committees Environmental working groups from the MRU countries will be established and equipped with skills to prepare and implement the SAP
- Existing mechanisms for regional cooperation in regional, national and local bodies will be mapped and strengthened.
- Data and information in international waters and biodiversity, focusing on regional and transboundary issues, will be created for decision making
- Participatory planning mechanism for TDA/SAP formulation
- Training, coordination meetings, and study tours aimed at knowledge sharing with regions possessing similar social, economic, political and environmental conditions that have addressed development and environment problems.

*(ii) Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Actions Programs are prepared and adopted at the ministerial level*

The GEF inputs will link up with the Mano River Natural Resources Management Plan by building positive livelihood links that will promote protection and sustainable use of the ecosystems resources. It will also contribute to improved land use activities in community lands in the forest adjacent areas. The GEF funded SAP will thus complement the Mano River Natural Resources Management Plan. The Mano River Natural Resources Management Plan was developed through a consultative process between the Mano River Union Secretariat and the designated natural resources management agencies in the MRU countries in 2008. Additional technical support was provided by the International Centre For Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF), the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and IUCN. The objective of the Plan is to establish multilateral cooperation between the Mano River Union States that will ensure effective conservation and management of the Transboundary Biodiversity Conservation areas and other high priority areas in order to improve the livelihoods of populations within the zone. The Plan highlighted the targeted landscapes as priority areas for activities in year 1. The plan also highlights other pressing conservation needs in the region's forest ecosystems. The plan provides a sound basis for the development and implementation of conservation programmes in the sub-region. The following activities will be aligned with the Mano River Natural Resources Management Plan :

- Regional studies, at the Mano river level, to assess the impact of economic growth on important environmental resources in the region will be undertaken. The aspects considered will be : environmental trends, problems, and solutions and requirements for protecting the environment.
- Thematic studies on the impact of sub-sectors - such as mining or logging- on the environment will be undertaken. The theme will be defined in a participatory manner.
- The TDA will be formally reviewed and adopted at the ministerial level and it will include (i) a detailed identification of the environmental trends issues and concerns; (ii) a transboundary analysis; the extent to which these are transboundary; and (iii) root causes of the issues and concerns and (iv) preliminary recommendations.
- The SAP formulation will build on the analysis carried out in the TDA and identify priority actions & investments. As for the previous studies and for the TDA, the SAP will be reviewed and adopted at ministerial level. The SAP will include a financial resource mobilization strategy that will facilitate its implementation.
- The studies, the TDA and the SAP will be adequately coordinated and harmonized with internal and external stakeholders activities, to ensure (i) a more flexible country implementation of the SAP and other planning tools, and (ii) sequenced and complementary investments with more strategic use of resources, supported by regional partnership, knowledge and advocacy.

*(iii) Increased community awareness on transboundary water and environmental management*

- The project, through a dedicated awareness raising programme will ensure the participation of local communities in the integrated water resources management and development of the TDA and SAP. In particular, this component will include consultative meetings with local communities to identify natural resources management priorities, validate information and endorsement of the approaches provided in the TDA and SAP. It will ensure that all stakeholders are involved in the decisions linked to water resources management and uses with a particular focus on women and poor people who are dependent on the natural resources for their livelihoods.
- Size, indicators, scope, outputs and activities under the awareness raising program: The awareness raising will target at least 300,000 people living in the watersheds in which the SAP will be implemented. The targeted community members are those whose activities impact the functionality of the natural resources within the watershed and whose livelihoods will also be impacted by the degradation of the watershed. Awareness raising activities will include community consultation and focus group discussions, publication of materials such as posters to be placed in community halls and other communal locations including schools, community radio programs where feasible and community drama (skits, music and illustrations). The drama sessions will also be used in schools. Demonstration of best practices including through peer to peer knowledge transfer will be undertaken especially during community festivals and gatherings where possible. The outputs from these activities will be materials such as posters particularly in the local languages, radio programs and synthesized reports for use in production of manuals and documentation of lessons learnt for future sensitization and interventions. The key indicators will be the number of people reached disaggregated by gender and source of livelihoods, number and type of publications, and number and content of radio programs.

The support will help ensure that TWRM principles are incorporated into national and local plans to reduce pollution and threats to the fishery and to promote freshwater biodiversity conservation efforts. This will reduce the risk of water disputes as the project activities will ensure that interests of both upstream and downstream countries are considered in the decision making.

Based on these activities, the project will allocate between 1% to 5% of the IW budget to the IWLEARN activities ; such as generation and dissemination of knowledge products highlighting the impact of a transboundary approach to watersheds management and its benefits in respect to the water resource, a dedicated water page for the MRU water unit as well as the participation to the biennial IW conference or other regional relevant water related events.

- B.3. Describe the socioeconomic benefits to be delivered by the Project at the national and local levels, including consideration of gender dimensions, and how these will support the achievement of global environment benefits (GEF Trust Fund/NPIF) or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF). As a background information, read [Mainstreaming Gender at the GEF.](#)":

The project will have significant impact on the livelihoods of local communities in the area. It will create sustainable income-generating activities within and around the protected areas through the development and dissemination of alternative economic activities that are respectful of the forest. Poverty will be reduced and the livelihoods of local populations will be improved through the development of a variety of economic activities and the diversification of their income. Local communities will also benefit from the training that will be provided through the project in the fields of community forest management, biodiversity conservation, sustainable

forest-resource use, etc. Communities will benefit from the development of small-scale infrastructure in a planned and organized process. This will facilitate more efficient uses of economic resources in and around the forest landscapes. The sustainable land management activities to be supported by the project will have a particular positive effect and direct impact on agriculture and agro-forestry yields in the area. In addition, local communities will be empowered to control and manage forest resources for their benefit in the forest surrounding the protected areas. Overall, the communities are also expected to benefit from the provision of some social services and create short-term local employment opportunities. The project will also have a particular positive effect on gender since women will benefit from the diversification of economic activities. In addition, women are the main users of natural resources for their livelihoods and daily activities. The development of income generating activities, those that encourage women to participate in conservation and conservation-based enterprises will be facilitated. Given the high level of poverty and vulnerability in the targeted landscapes, there is evidence to justify the development of gender sensitive employment and entrepreneurship activities in areas related to forest management including ecotourism and improving market access for sustainably produced forest products.

The carbon benefits generated through the project life are currently estimated at 10 million tons CO<sub>2</sub>. This estimate is conservative since it assumes that the project will enable the conservation of 30 000 hectares of forest although the deforestation rate is 300 Km<sup>2</sup> per year and that the conversion factor used to get the Carbon sequestration rate is 141 tons Carbon per hectare. This estimate will be further refined through applying IPCC tier 2 methodology during project preparation.

Both components, integrated ecosystems management and water resource management, will strongly involve local communities. The integrated ecosystems component is fully focused on local communities' socio economic development. The water resources management component will develop an awareness raising programme to ensure the participation of local communities in the integrated water resources management and development of the SAP.

- B.4 Indicate risks, including climate change risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design:

<b>Critical Risks</b>	<b>Risk Level</b>	<b>Proposed Mitigation</b>
Climate change impacts at higher than anticipated levels	High	The region is likely to face more droughts and periods of heavy rainfall and the project is flexible enough to function under drier conditions
Peace and stability in the region	High	Three out of the four target countries have been plagued by sociopolitical instability in the recent past. These conflicts have resulted in serious forest destruction and also weakened environmental governance. The situation has however recently improved in the region. If the trend continues and current commitments to biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction are sustained by the regional and national authorities, the programme goals can be realized.

Weak capacity of institutions	Moderate	Institutional strengthening and capacity building will be intensified for the staff of the MRU Secretariat and government staff through the provision of appropriate technical assistance, procurement, financial management and disbursement. In addition, some support to improve the physical structures at the Secretariat and landscape offices will be provided. The provision of continuous support and monitoring by the programme management team will provide rapid response support to emerging implementation challenges.
Lack of adequate financial commitment by target countries	Moderate	The four countries have through the MRU Secretariat expressed commitment to this project. However, given the development challenges facing them, there is a risk that other priorities deemed to be more urgent could emerge during the life of the project and threaten the sustainability of expected outputs and outcomes. The Bank will seek acceptable and manageable financial commitments from the member countries to this initiative. The involvement of other partners will also be sought so as to complement Bank and government inputs.
Project overwhelms the available capacity and skills to an extent it fails.	High	Community based planning methods will be used to prioritize community priorities and allocate interventions with consent of communities
Projects become source of conflict	Low	Project will be established through a consultative process and all decisions are made with a bottom-up consultation as much as possible.
Instability of local and international markets	Low	The enterprise development component will rely on the stability and growth of local and international markets for various products. The project will factor in contingency measures for project level challenges while the regional governments will be expected to address the macroeconomic issues. An enabling policy environment for ecotourism development, for example, would be necessary.

B.5. Identify key stakeholders involved in the project including the private sector, civil society organizations, local and indigenous communities, and their respective roles, as applicable:

Mano River Union Secretariat: The Mano River Union Secretariat will be responsible for implementing the project. The Union was established in 1973 following the signing of the Mano River Declaration in Sierra Leone by the Heads of States of Liberia and Sierra Leone. The Union was joined by Guinea in October 1980, and later by Cote d'Ivoire in May 2008. The Union was established with the vision of promoting economic and regional integration, under

peaceful and politically stable conditions. In order to ensure appropriate implementation and monitoring of the project, the capacity of the Secretariat will be comprehensively assessed with an aim of bridging the existing gaps.

The Mano River Union will be supported by partner government agencies, including the Forest Development Authority in Liberia, the Forestry Division and SLEPA in Sierra Leone, the Ministry of Environment Water and Forests in Cote d'Ivoire and the Ministry of Environment in Guinea. All four countries involved will be represented by Focal Points in a steering committee at the Mano River Union. This institutional set up will enhance the regional aspect of the project in enhancing transboundary forest management.

Several International Organizations participated in the design of MARFOP (IUCN, ICRAF, CIFOR and WFP). These organizations have expressed interest in co-financing MARFOP. They are also well placed to assist MRU in the implementation of both MARFOP and the GEF project since IUCN, for example, has experience with IWRM projects in Africa (Nile Basin Initiative, Lake Tanganyika) and CIFOR and ICRAF are in a good position to bring best practices and applied research results in SFM to the project. WFP has experience in promoting sustainable livelihoods and a good example is the MERET project in Ethiopia. The German (GIZ) and American (USAID) are also active in the region with projects supporting communities' development and the sustainable management of the forest. . Other agencies that have shown interest in partnering with MARFOP include Conservation International, the FAO National Forest Partnership Facility, the US Forest Service, and the European Union.

#### B.6. Outline the coordination with other related initiatives:

The MRU Secretariat and the relevant government ministries will designate qualified staff to coordinate implementation in the five landscapes. Landscape coordination committees made up of local experts and stakeholders will guide implementation at the local level. Where necessary, technical assistance will be facilitated. A Regional Steering Committee made up of technical experts from the Member States will also exercise an oversight role for the Secretariat. Technical partners in the will undertake activities under contractual arrangements.

The project will co-ordinate with all the sector initiatives implemented by the AfDB and other agencies in the sub-region. The Bank has initiated discussions at national and regional levels with other development partners on developing an integrated approach to addressing biodiversity conservation and forest ecosystems management in the region. These partners include the International Center for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF), the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Jane Goodall Institute (JGI); USAID, the World Food Programme (WFP), and FAO among others.

The project will work closely with other donors who are financing complementary activities in the targeted landscapes. In the Gola Forest between Sierra Leone and Liberia, for example, the EU has contributed Euros 2.5 million in the transboundary Peace Park program and an additional Euros 2.7 million for the on-going Gola Forest Programme. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) is providing additional resources. USAID is also providing USD 1.565 million for the STEWARD II project to support transboundary natural resources management activities in three of the five targeted landscapes. These include the OKNP /Madina Oula landscape along the Sierra Leone/Guinea border, Mt. Nimba along the Cote d'Ivoire/Liberia border, and Tai/Grebo also along the Cote d'Ivoire/Liberia border. Consultations are being held with partners in the context of the preparation of the baseline. Opportunities of co-financing with those partners are being considered .In addition the lessons learnt from the ongoing projects in region such as the community livelihoods based approach

have been applied in the design of the MARFOP and will be integrated in the GEF component. Knowledge products produced on sustainable forest management in the region have also informed the MARFOP design.

### **C. DESCRIBE THE GEF AGENCY'S COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE TO IMPLEMENT THIS PROJECT:**

The African Development Bank is a privileged partner of the Mano River Union countries in the agriculture and natural resources management. It has funded many initiatives in the agriculture, irrigation, land management and forest management sectors. In that respect, it has developed an expertise working with local communities, including farmers groups in particular. In addition, the AfDB has capacity on the ground with appropriate staff and field offices in Sierra-Leone and Liberia.

#### **C.1 Indicate the co-financing amount the GEF agency is bringing to the project:**

The AfDB will contribute to the co-financing of this project up to USD 25 million through i) the Mano River Forest Ecosystem Conservation Programme (MARFOP), ii) a technical assistance capacity building program through the Bank's Fragile States Facility, and iii) a Mano River Basin sustainable management and development project, which will be funded by the African Water Facility hosted at the Bank.

#### **C.2 How does the project fit into the GEF agency's program (reflected in documents such as UNDAF, CAS, etc.) and staff capacity in the country to follow up project implementation:**

The project is supported by the third pillar (Economic Development and Regional Integration) of the Mano River Union strategic plan for 2012-2014. The objective of the forest management component is to identify and sustainably develop and manage protected areas along the borders of the Member States. The project will be implemented under the overall supervision of the Mano River Union Secretary General. Implementation will be coordinated by the deputy Secretary General in charge of economic development and regional integration at the Secretariat. The MRU forestry technical committee will serve as the Steering Committee for the program. The committee will comprise three senior forestry officials from each of the countries represented in the project. This committee will exercise oversight over progress reports and annual work plans and budgets. The MARFOP implementation on a daily basis will be managed from a local level with the technical expertise provided by national agencies for the forests management and environment. These agencies will provide technical support to the national units for the MARFOP, the existing national units that will also be enhanced with technical assistance from specialized institutions that will co-finance the programme.

This project is consistent with the Bank's current regional integration strategy for West Africa. It also fits into the Bank's Agricultural Sector Strategy (2010-2014) which calls for investment in Natural Resource Management Programs. The project is also consistent with the NEPAD Environmental Action Plan in which forest conservation, land degradation, drought and desertification are priority issues. This project will also form part of the network of Sustainable Land Management activities established under the GEF strategic investment program for Africa and benefit from shared experiences and knowledge generated.

Through its Strategy for Enhanced Engagement in Fragile States, the Bank is taking a regional approach in providing support to post conflict and transition countries. Strengthening regional integration by investing in cross border programs will create positive synergies and have a stabilizing effect on the Mano River Union sub-region. In line with the strategy, this intervention will allow the Bank to respond in a more efficient, effective and timely manner to some of the processing needs of these fragile states by providing a set of remedial solutions. This project will also be a response by the Bank in contributing directly to the management of transboundary

forest resources and protected areas in Mano River Union Member States as stipulated in their 2012-2014 strategic plan. Forest management is covered under the economic development and regional integration pillar of the Mano River Union strategic plan. The objective of the pillar is to, among other issues, identify and sustainably develop and manage protected and/or proposed areas of the remaining Upper Guinea Forest Ecosystem along the borders of the Member States.

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

**A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT (S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S):** (Please attach the [Operational Focal Point endorsement letter\(s\)](#) with this template. For SGP, use this [OFP endorsement letter](#)).

NAME	POSITION	MINISTRY	DATE (MM/dd/yyyy)
Ahmadou Sebory Toure	Guinea Operational Focal Point	MINISTERE DELEGUE A L'ENVIRONNEMENT, AUX EAUX ET FORETS	12/30/2011
Anyaa Vohiri	Liberia Operational Focal Point	ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY	04/04/2012
Kolleh A. Bangura	Sierra Leone Operational Focal Point	ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY	03/07/2012

**B. GEF AGENCY(IES) CERTIFICATION**

This request has been prepared in accordance with GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF policies and procedures and meets the GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF criteria for project identification and preparation.					
Agency Coordinator, Agency name	Signature	DATE (MM/dd/yyyy)	Project Contact Person	Telephone	Email Address
Mr. Ignacio Tourino Soto		04/09/2012	Mr. Albert Mwangi	(+216) 71 10 39 35	a.mwangi@afdb.org

## **Annex 1: Description of the five transboundary landscapes concerned by the project**

The MRU member States have identified five priority transboundary landscapes in the Upper Guinea Forest Ecosystem in West Africa for implementation of the MRU Joint Plan. The five landscapes are:

1. Landscape between the South of Guinea and the North of Sierra Leone: the Outamba-Kilimi national parks in Sierra Leone, the forests of Madina Oula and classified forests of Soyah and Pinselli in Guinea (395,000 ha);
2. Landscape between the South of Sierra Leone and north-east of Liberia: the Gola National forest in Liberia and the Gola Forest in Sierra Leone (675,000 ha).
3. Landscape between the north-east of Liberia and the south-east of Guinea: the Wonegizi forest in Liberia and the Zياما biosphere reserve in Guinea (140,000 ha).
4. Landscape between the North of Liberia, the West of Côte d'Ivoire and the south of Guinea: Mount Nimba in Guinea and in Côte d'Ivoire and the Nimba natural reserve in Liberia (65,000 ha).
5. Landscape on the West of Côte d'Ivoire and the East of Liberia; More specifically between the Taï National Park of Côte d'Ivoire and the Grebo National Forest of Liberia (700,000 ha).

The criteria for choosing these landscapes include (i) the fact that these are priority areas rich in biological resources with intense interaction between populations living on the borders, (ii) lack of significant interventions that would make impact on socioeconomic development, (iii) lack of coordination between stakeholders intervening in these landscapes and (iv) the need for transboundary collaborative approach for efficient management of resources. The initial identification of the target landscapes was done by the Forestry Technical Committee of the Mano River Union states with the support of other stakeholders that included government agencies, international conservation organizations, NGOs, and CBOs. The governments and conservation and development organizations working in this region have also affirmed the critical need to conserve these forest ecosystems.

The combined population in the four countries is estimated at about 40 million of whom over half are rural poor and depend on natural resources for sustaining their livelihoods. The economies are dominated by agriculture and forest related activities. Profit driven industrial timber extraction and extractive mining interests are harvesting substantial renewable and non-renewable natural resources and often disregard sustainability principles. Though these activities provide ready sources of revenue to communities with low levels of income, they hardly provide alternative options for sustainable revenue generation. The promotion of ecotourism, for example, will contribute to the diversification of these economies and improve livelihoods.

Map 1 below shows the five landscapes concerned by the project.

Map 1: Situation of the five priority landscapes selected by the Mano River Union Member Countries

