

**PROJECT INFORMATION DOCUMENT (PID)  
APPRAISAL STAGE**

Report No.: AB2770

<b>Project Name</b>	Sierra Leone Biodiversity Conservation Project
<b>Region</b>	AFRICA
<b>Sector</b>	General agriculture, fishing and forestry sector (100%)
<b>Project ID</b>	P094307
<b>GEF Focal Area</b>	Biodiversity
<b>Borrower(s)</b>	SIERRA LEONE
<b>Implementing Agency</b>	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security
<b>Environment Category</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> FI <input type="checkbox"/> TBD (to be determined)
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### 1. Country and Site Profile

Sierra Leone is located in the Upper Guinean Forest Ecosystem and hosts abundant richness of biodiversity, and biological uniqueness in terms of endemism and number of rare and threatened species. The country (land area 72,280 km<sup>2</sup>) has five main ecosystem types including: (i) lowland rainforests; (ii) montane forests; (iii) savanna woodlands; (iv) freshwater and wetlands; and (v) coastal and marine. Savanna vegetation covers about 35 percent of the total land area. Sierra Leone's position at the westernmost extent of the Upper Guinea Forest Ecosystem Continuum provides for significant diversity and endemism. Indigenous fauna includes 15 species of primate; 18 species of antelopes and duikers and over 500 bird species. More than 4,800 km<sup>2</sup> of Sierra Leone is wetlands, including freshwater swamp, riparian forests and mangroves, which are host to more than 200,000 migrant bird visitors annually.

The current status of Sierra Leone's biological diversity is diminishing rapidly and the capacities of ecological systems to function properly are being reduced. Surveys of the distribution and composition of forest fragments indicate that approximately 70 percent of the country was formerly covered by forest, whereas less than 5 percent of intact original forests remain. In some areas, deforestation followed in the wake of industrial-scale commercial logging during the colonial period. At that time, subsistence farmers moved directly into logged areas and burned the remaining vegetation to clear the land for agriculture, and forest was never allowed to regenerate. The decline of Sierra Leone's forests continues largely as a result of unsustainable slash-and-burn agriculture involving short fallow periods as well as unsustainable mining practices.

Despite an existing network of 48 forest reserves and conservation areas, representing about 4 percent of the land area (180,250 ha), population growth (at 2.3 percent) and unsustainable resource use are continuing to exert extreme pressure on the environment leading to over harvesting of timber, expansion of grazing and slash-and-burn agriculture, with continuing

deforestation, forest degradation and soil erosion. The most extensive area of primary forest remaining in Sierra Leone is the Gola Forest Reserves in the southeast of the country, close to the border with Liberia, where mining and timber harvesting have been contained by the establishment of forest reserve status, and donor support for conservation management. The Western Area Peninsula Forest Reserve includes another significant prevailing fragment of rainforest that is under increasingly severe threat due to uncontrolled use of forest resources and urban expansion. Nationwide, deforestation continues unabated at an estimated 2 percent of cover per annum, emphasizing the need for urgent action.

Post-independence attempts to ensure effective conservation of biological diversity and sustainable natural resource management have been hampered by: (i) weaknesses in legislation and regulations, and inadequate capacity for enforcement; (ii) insufficient funding to support protected area management; and (iii) lack of alternative sustainable livelihood opportunities for communities currently using natural resources in an unsustainable manner. Government capacity to effectively conserve Sierra Leone's biodiversity assets is severely stretched. Multiple donors and aid agencies are active in the sector, and all projects emphasize the importance of responding to immediate threats as a matter of urgency and developing capacity. This project builds on existing Government and donor initiatives. It emphasizes building the capacity of governmental institutions and personnel to carry out their mandates effectively through engaging local communities, local Government, and other key stakeholders to participate in effective conservation planning and management at three priority conservation sites in the first instance, and in the development of mechanisms for sharing best practice more broadly.

**Sites.** Project activities will be piloted initially at three conservation sites which have been selected based on priorities identified in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP, 2003), and following consultation with Central and Local Government, traditional authorities, and local communities. Sites have been selected as to include different priority ecosystems as well as a range of threats to conservation that occur in other conservation sites across the country. The three sites are: (i) Outamba - Kilimi National Park; (ii) Kangari Hills Non-Hunting Forest Reserve; and (iii) Loma Mountains Non-Hunting Forest Reserve.

Outamba - Kilimi National Park includes lowland forest, moist savanna woodland and elephant habitat corridors that link the two conservation site core areas of Outamba and Kilimi, and also stretch across the international border into Guinea, as well as riverine ecosystems hosting hippopotamus. The site supports at least nine species of primates including four threatened species - western chimpanzee, red colobus monkey, black and white colobus monkey and sooty mangabey. In addition to elephant and hippopotamus, other resident large mammals include leopard, savanna buffalo, maxwell duiker, and water chevrotain. Vegetation is characterized by a mix of grassland, closed woodland and gallery forest, with South Guinea woodland savanna dominant. At their closest points, Outamba (74,100 ha) and Kilimi (36,800 ha), are 20 km distant from one another. Conservation management of ecosystems within the parks, as well as habitat corridors in the lands between these two core areas (approximately 1,000 km<sup>2</sup>) could greatly enhance the ecological viability of the sites. Collaborative management of the natural ecosystems that are contiguous with habitat on the Guinea side of the international border could further enhance conservation objectives, in particular, providing for the movement and viability

of elephant populations, and collaborative responses to illegal hunting, burning, and encroachment for cattle grazing, etc., which constitute the major threats to the site.

Kangari Hills Non-Hunting Forest Reserve is a watershed for some of the country's main river systems and includes rich mountain forest and Savannah ecosystems. The site has been designated an important bird area by virtue of species diversity and endemism and threat (including three globally threatened species - white necked rockfowl picathartes, black faced stream warbler, and green tailed bristlebill), and hosts approximately 33 percent and 18 percent of Guinea forest and Guinea-Sudan biome species respectively. By virtue of its linkages with other remnant forest ecosystems, the site also includes vagrant populations of forest elephant and resident populations of threatened primate species including chimpanzee, red colobus, and black and white colobus monkeys. While the reserve was temporarily settled by rebels during the civil conflict, prevailing threats to ecosystems and key species include slash-and-burn agricultural practices for rice production, small scale alluvial gold mining, and hunting. The site will provide the opportunity for conservation authorities to develop participatory approaches to addressing these threats, which are common to many natural areas around the country.

Loma Mountains Non-Hunting Forest Reserve includes the largest and most remote and pristine Guinea mountain forest ecosystems in the country. At 1,945 meters above sea level, Bintumani mountain in the core of the site, is the highest mountain in the country, and the highest peak west of Mount Cameroun. The site includes grasslands and Savannah above the tree line, mountain evergreen and low altitude tropical forests. Loma ecosystems support more than ten species of primates including chimpanzee, red colobus, black and white colobus, and sooty mangabey. Other resident threatened species include black duiker, Jenkins and Maxwells duiker, forest buffalo, leopard and - at the lower elevations - water chevrotain, elephant and hippopotamus. Because of its altitude, Loma Mountains hosts a rich bird fauna including many species that do not occur elsewhere in the country, including five that are globally threatened. Threats to Loma ecosystems include seasonal agriculture, wildfires and hunting, which are currently mostly confined to the lowland aspects of the reserve. The site provides an opportunity to establish community based approaches to address and pre-empt future threats to this globally important and largely intact complex of ecosystems.

**Political and Economic Context.** Sierra Leone was the first country designated as “post conflict” by IDA to experience a democratic transition of government. Recent political events provide a good reason for optimism that a sustainable pluralistic democratic system is gradually being established. A peace and reconciliation process, including a special court, has largely completed the task of bringing closure to the atrocities of the conflict period. The situation remains fragile, however, as demonstrated by repeated clashes in urban centers between supporters of the governing and opposition parties. Sierra Leone's recovery remains fragile and the country continues to rank amongst the least developed of countries in various measures; Sierra Leone was 177<sup>th</sup> out of 177 countries in the 2007/2008 UNDP Human Development Index rankings. Much remains to be done to: (i) improve governance and accountability; and (ii) tackle high levels of unemployment, the high number of infant, child and maternal deaths which are amongst the worst rates in the world, and a very high youth dependency ratio.

Overall, Sierra Leone's post-conflict economic performance has been robust. Sierra Leone's recovery, which began in 2000, continued steadily for nine years through 2008 when real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by an estimated 5.5 percent despite a simultaneous spike in the world prices of food and fuel commodities. The average real growth rate for the period 2000-2008 was 10 percent while the population grew at a rate of just over 2 percent per annum. From a sector perspective, the main sources of growth have been agriculture and services. Agriculture employs about 70 percent of the population and, as of 2008, accounts for about 44 percent of the GDP. The mining sector accounts for 2 percent of employment and 18 percent of GDP, and has historically generated the majority of export receipts. Unsustainable use of natural resources by rural agricultural and mining communities constitute some of the most pressing threats to biological resources and natural assets that have the potential to support significant income from tourism in the future.

## **2. Rationale for Bank and GEF Involvement**

The Bank is well-positioned to support the Government of Sierra Leone in building capacity for effective conservation management as it has extensive experience implementing projects in post-conflict environments. In addition, the Bank has been a key partner in Sierra Leone since the end of the decade-long civil war supporting resettlement, reintegration, recovery, and reconstruction. The Project will leverage the Bank's worldwide experience in implementing similar projects on behalf of GEF in the region and around the world. In particular, it will bring experience in mainstreaming participatory community-based approaches to governance and resource management, which will be of critical importance in ensuring success of this operation.

The Bank is also well-positioned to coordinate with and complement ongoing interventions supported by other development partners. A number of other donors are actively assisting Sierra Leone's conservation efforts, and the Project will target resources towards the areas that have not yet received as much attention and are in need of critical intervention for conservation, as well as supporting Government to develop a coherent strategy to consolidate and build on the various parallel initiatives. Of particular importance will be the Project's coordination with the IDA-financed Bumbuna Environmental and Social Management Project (hereinafter referred to as 'the Bumbuna Project') in the Loma Mountains Non-Hunting Forest Reserve. The Loma Mountains have been established as the conservation site to serve as the 'offset' for critical habitats lost to inundation resulting from impoundment at the Bumbuna dam under the Bumbuna Project. During the next two years during which the Bumbuna Project will still be operational, the majority of the funding for the Loma Mountains Non-Hunting Forest Reserve will come from the Bumbuna Project while the biodiversity experts from the Biodiversity Conservation Project will provide technical guidance on management planning and investments in the specific site. The BCP will further continue to provide support and resources to ensure that the early investments made using the Bumbuna Project are made fully operational, and are sustainable in the longer-term. This collaborative approach will allow a more effective use of the full package of available financial resources, while also ensuring that biodiversity conservation is coherently integrated into the overall management framework country-wide.

*Relevance to GEF-3 Operational Programs:* As developed under GEF-3, the proposed GEF intervention was designed to address the objectives of GEF Operational Programs: (i) OP-1

(Arid-Semi-arid Zone); (ii) OP-3 (Forest Ecosystems); and (iii) OP-4 (Mountain Ecosystems) focusing on the establishment of a system of critical ecological sites (protected areas) and the protection and conservation of wildlife and biological diversity within them. Project outcomes will also be in line with: (i) OP-12 (Integrated Approach to Ecosystem Management); and (ii) OP-13 (Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity Important to Agriculture). The project aligns perfectly with GEF Strategic Priority SP-1 (Catalyzing Sustainability of Protected Areas (PA)).

*Relevance to GEF-4 Strategic Objectives:* The project is in line and fits with the revised GEF-4 strategic objectives for the Focal Area “Biodiversity.” The project aligns primarily with GEF Strategic Objective SO-1 (to catalyze sustainability of protected area systems) and contributes to Strategic Programs SP-1 (sustainable financing of protected area systems at the national level) and SP-3 (strengthening terrestrial protected area networks). This will be achieved through: (i) developing strategies for sustainable financing of PAs; and (ii) establishing coordination mechanisms and strengthening the coordination and management capacity at national level. Project activities also directly support SOs and SPs under the GEF-4 Focal Areas “Climate Change” and “Land Degradation,” and thereby contribute to the SO and all SPs of the GEF-4 Crosscutting Area “Sustainable Forest Management.”

### **3. Higher Level Objective to Which the Project Contributes**

The overall goal or higher-level objective of the proposed Biodiversity Conservation Project is to assist the GoSL to fulfill its strategy, as stated in the PRS, of improving the sustainable management of Sierra Leone’s natural resources in order to enhance economic growth and reduce poverty.

**Sierra Leone Poverty Reduction Strategy.** The GoSL has recently launched its second Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), which represents the Government’s overarching development strategy for the period 2008 – 2012<sup>1</sup>. The PRS acknowledges the importance of sustainable management of Sierra Leone’s natural resources – forests, wildlife, biodiversity, soil, water, land, fisheries and mineral resources – for achieving future economic growth. It also emphasizes the need to strengthen the linkages between poverty reduction and management of the environment as a key challenge to reducing poverty in Sierra Leone. The project will directly contribute to the following focus areas stated in the PRS: (i) halting deforestation, biodiversity loss and land degradation; (ii) developing and implementing strategies that address environment at the national level and are mainstreamed into implementation; (iii) promoting studies, research, surveys and analyses for the improvement and protection of the environment and the maintenance of a sound ecological system; (iv) building capacity of communities in the management of protected area systems; (v) promoting effective planning in the management of the environment; and (vi) coordinating the monitoring and implementation of national environmental policies.

**National Policy and Institutional Frameworks for Natural Resources Management.** Environmental aspects of forestry are addressed in the National Environment Protection Act of

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<sup>1</sup> Poverty Reduction Strategy 2008-2012. An Agenda for Economic and Social Empowerment. GoSL, Dec. 2008.

2008, the Mines and Minerals Act of 1996, and the 1998 Forestry Act. The former established a National Environment Protection Board to facilitate coordination among Ministries, agencies and local authorities in all areas relating to environmental protection. The Environmental Protection Act of 2008 also specifies responsibilities of the Department of the Environment charged with coordinating all environmentally related activities and “promoting the establishment of national environmental standards.” It also addresses the necessity to obtain an environmental impact assessment (EIA) license for certain projects to be determined as subject to EIA provisions. It provides guidance regarding the conditions under which EIA license applications will be required, and about the general contents of an EIA. In July 2008, through adoption of a bill, Government established the Sierra Leone Environmental Protection Agency (SLEPA) within the Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and Environment as the agency responsible for environmental management.

Responsibility for forest management and biodiversity conservation is with the Forestry Division within the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS). The Ministry has recently outlined its three strategic priorities for forestry as "the three C's" of Commercial, Community, and Conservation forestry. In 2003, the GoSL produced and adopted the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), which highlights the status of the nation's various ecosystems and biological resources, and outlines the threats to the existence and performance of these systems. NBSAP identifies a broad range of cross-sectoral needs to ensure effective conservation of biodiversity, including for policy planning and legislation, capacity building, public participation, monitoring and evaluation, incentives, research and training, public education and awareness, access to technology and information, benefit sharing, indigenous knowledge, financial resources. The NBSAP recognizes the need to finance biodiversity conservation activities on a more sustainable and long-term basis. It identifies eight priority sites where urgent actions are needed to restore the integrity and ecological functionality of these systems.

The project responds to the NBSAP and the National Environmental Policy (NEP) by directly addressing conservation challenges at three of the eight priority sites identified in the NBSAP, and also developing and implementing a strategy for sharing experience and best practice to support conservation of all other priority sites across the country. It will build on Government and donor investments to establish capacity for conservation and protected area management within Forestry Division. In addition to supporting national policies and strategies, the project also contributes directly to the four key objectives of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), including the participatory conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of biological resources, capacity building of local communities to support the management of protected area systems, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources.

#### **4. Project Description**

##### **Lending Instrument**

The SL-BCP is a full-sized, stand-alone GEF Project, with a five-year implementation period, to be financed by a GEF Grant in the amount of US\$5.0 million. The Project would be supplemented by IDA US\$2 million under the Bumbuna Environmental and Social Management

Project. The GoSL contribution in kind to the BCP will total US\$1.0 million. The GoSL is continuing discussions with other donors to raise more leveraged resources in support of the project.

**Parallel financing.** The SL-BCP is a critical and timely contribution to a diverse portfolio of donor-supported activities in the natural resources management/protected areas management sector in Sierra Leone. The Project is designed to complement these and other activities and develop a coherent approach to conservation across the country. For the next five years, total donor support to GoSL in these sectors (excluding the BCP) is estimated at approximately US\$17.8 million.

### **Project Development Objective and Global Objective and Key Indicators**

The Project Development Objective (PDO)/Global Environmental Objective (GEO) is to assist the GoSL in improving the management of selected priority biodiversity conservation sites (CSs) and enhancing its capacity for replication of best biodiversity conservation practices. The PDO and GEO are the same and directly contribute to Strategic Objective 1 (SO-1) (To Catalyze Sustainability of Protected Area Systems) of the GEF Biodiversity Program.

### **Key Outcome Indicators**

- Management effectiveness in selected priority conservation sites supported by the Project has improved by 20 percent;
- Phased plan for replication of best practices in conservation sites management throughout Sierra Leone adopted by MAFFS.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

#### **Component 1:**

- (i) Updated Wildlife Protection Act and associated regulations to include requirements of effective conservation site management drafted and submitted to Cabinet
- (ii) Updated Forestry Act and associated regulations in line with best practices and approaches to conservation
- (iii) GIS system to support management of selected priority CSs established and operational

#### **Component 2:**

- (i) Participatory management plans for selected priority conservation sites, including the area-linked monitoring systems, developed and adopted by Conservation Site Management Committees
- (ii) Annual work plans for selected priority conservation sites are approved by Conservation Site Management Committees from PY2 onwards
- (iii) Essential park infrastructure as identified in Management Plans (e.g. offices, visitor centre, trails, sign posts) established and operational by EOP

### **Project Components**

The project will have three components:

**Component 1: Strengthening of the National Framework for Biodiversity Conservation** (US\$0.8m; of which US\$0.7m is GEF, US\$0.1m is GoSL). The Project will fund services, goods and training (including workshops and study tours) under two sub-components:

- 1.1 Policy, Legal and Financial Framework (US\$0.5m), which will entail: (i) reviewing and updating forest, wildlife and biodiversity policies and regulations in consultation with stakeholders; and (ii) exploring options for sustainable financing of conservation sites, including payments for environmental services, etc.
- 1.2 Institutional Framework (US\$0.3m), which will entail: (i) establishing a National Steering Committee (NSC) for project activities; (ii) developing a strategy for replication of best practice, including Forestry Division and other relevant authorities; (iii) introducing multi-year planning and budgeting within Forestry Division; and (iv) developing a Geographic Information System (GIS) database to support conservation site management.

**Component 2: Conservation Site Planning and Management** (US\$4.5 million; of which US\$3.9m is GEF, US\$0.6m is GoSL). The project will provide services to support: planning and management; goods (e.g. vehicles, global positioning system (GPS), radios, etc.); minor infrastructure improvements; training (including workshops and study tours); and some operational costs in order to develop and implement a more effective conservation management at selected priority sites. Best practice will be shared with managers and stakeholders at other priority sites around the country in the context of implementing a national strategy for replication. The component will include three sub-components:

- 2.1: Pilot Site Management Planning and Implementation (US\$2.9m), which will entail: (i) establishing conservation management teams (CSMTs) at each of the selected sites, and building partnerships among government, non-government organizations, community-based organizations, traditional village leaders and the private sector; (ii) developing site specific conservation management plans (CMPs) that are endorsed by traditional and local authorities; (iii) implementing conservation management plans (include minor infrastructure improvements for staff and visitors such as observation posts, water supply, road access, research facilities, trails and camp sites; boundary demarcation; working with local communities to improve resources management, implementing monitoring systems, exploring financing options; and (iv) building capacity of field staff and key stakeholders to undertake conservation planning, management, and enforcement through joint training programs.
- 2.2: Community Mobilization and Outreach and Conservation-linked Development (US\$1.5m), which will entail provision of consultant services, goods, and training for: (i) community outreach and awareness through strategic local and national communication programs that will include contributing to schools curricula, preparing information materials, extension by field staff, and developing nature clubs; and (ii) conservation-linked community development through the preparation and implementation of Community Action Plans (CAPs), which will, jointly with local stakeholders, identify priority threats to conservation in each site and explore options for addressing them. Activities under the CAPs may include: (a) providing training for developing income-generating activities; (b)

supporting potential small-scale entrepreneurs to develop business plans and partnerships in support of conservation-linked investment initiatives; (c) supporting local practices for sustainable land use; (d) strengthening linkages with government programs and service providers (such as Farmer Field Schools); and (e) possible introduction of energy-saving technologies to reduce unsustainable dependency on natural.

- 2.3 Mainstreaming Conservation in District Development Planning (US\$0.1m), which will entail supporting the Government's decentralization process by training conservation staff and local officials in working with District Councils and Ward Development Committees to ensure that conservation and sustainable natural resource management is incorporated in district and regional planning for development and service delivery.

**Component 3: Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation** (US\$0.7m; of which US\$0.4m is GEF, US\$0.3m is GoSL). The Project will finance services, goods, minor works, and limited incremental operating costs (office and vehicle supplies and maintenance) to support a Project Management Team (PMT) within the Forestry Division of MAFFS with office facilities and training for planning and management. Activities will include: (i) operation of the National Steering Committee (NSC) and Project Management Team; (ii) developing and supervising annual and quarterly work plans and budgets; (iii) overseeing procurement, financial management and conducting annual audits; and (iv) establishing baselines, and developing planning, monitoring and evaluation systems for the national conservation program.

### **Lessons Learned and Reflected in Project Design**

Project design was guided by lessons learned from numerous past and ongoing World Bank and non-Bank supported protected area management and biodiversity projects, primarily in the West and Central Africa as well as from recent donor supported conservation projects in Sierra Leone. These lessons learned included: (i) the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Resources in Central Africa; (ii) the Sectoral Program for the Valorisation of Protected Areas in Gabon; and (iii) the Protected Area Development Project in Ghana. Project design also drew lessons from the Sierra Leone National Social Action Project, which has key objectives to assist communities in restoring infrastructure and building local capacity for collective action, using a community-driven development approach. Experience from recent and current conservation initiatives in Sierra Leone that contributed to the design include: (i) the Gola Forest Project; (ii) feasibility studies on options to protect Gondama and Matama Islands in Bo and Pujehun Districts; and (iii) the Tiwai Island Sanctuary Project, which is currently the only gazetted Wildlife Reserve in the country that is providing social benefits such as employment, education and recreation through eco-tourism.

The main lessons learned and incorporated in project design include the need to: (i) build ownership for sustainability through active and meaningful involvement of key stakeholders in project preparation, implementation and monitoring, specifically including local communities and traditional authorities in decision making; (ii) ensure that stakeholders are fully informed, understand and support the objectives of conservation, as well as their responsibilities and the potential benefits that will accrue; (iii) develop site specific conservation strategies and monitoring programs that targeted key threats and the underlying causes; (iv) define Government

roles to ensure effective protection of selected sites as well as sharing best practice to support replication of project successes; (v) build technical, organizational and management capacities of all relevant stakeholders at national, District, Ward and Site levels; (vi) ensure key staff are selected through transparent and competitive processes and augment Government capacity and skills with consultant expertise as necessary; and (vii) ensure realism in the scope of project focus and expected outcomes.

## 5. Financing

Global Environment Facility (GEF)	1.5	3.5	5.00
BORROWER/RECIPIENT	1.00	0.00	1.00
International Development Association (IDA) – parallel cofinancing	1.00	1.00	2.00
Bilateral Agencies – parallel cofinancing	6.46	8.0	14.46
Foreign Multilateral Institutions – parallel cofinancing	0.34	1.00	1.34
<b>Total:</b>	<b>10.30</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>23.80</b>

## 6. Implementation

**Project Oversight at the National Level.** A National Steering Committee (NSC) will be established and chaired by the Director of the Forestry Division of MAFFS. Membership of the NSC will include: (i) the Forestry Division’s Assistant Director of Conservation and Wildlife Management Unit; (ii) the Project Manager; (iii) representatives of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MFED); (iv) the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Local Government and Rural Development; (v) the Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and Environment; (vi) the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources; (vii) the Ministry of Mineral Resources; (viii) the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs; (ix) the Sierra Leone Environmental Protection Agency/Board; (x) representative of local NGOs; and (xi) a community representative from each conservation site. Representatives of other ministries, departments and agencies may be invited to participate on an ad hoc basis as needs arise. The NSC will provide strategic and advisory guidance and assistance in resolving inter-sectoral challenges to project implementation.

**Project Management at the National Level.** The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS), through its Forestry Division, will be the *Executing Agency*. Overall supervision of project implementation will fall under the responsibility of the Assistant Director and head of the Conservation and Wildlife Management Unit of the Forestry Division. The Forestry Division will establish a *Project Management Team (PMT)* responsible for the day-to-day project management, coordination, supervision and monitoring of project activities at all levels. The PMT, which will be based at Makeni, will consist of a Project Manager, and specialist staff with skills in biodiversity conservation site planning and management, information technology and GIS, social and rural development, biodiversity survey and

monitoring, policy and regulatory aspects of conservation, and communications and outreach. The PMT will directly supervise the Conservation Site Managers (CSMs) at the priority conservation sites. The CSMs are existing civil servants of the MAFFS; their salaries are paid by GoSL.

***Project Oversight at Conservation Site Level.*** A Conservation Site Management Committee (CSMC) will be established for each of the priority conservation sites, chaired by the District Council Chairman, with the Conservation Site Manager as Member and Secretary. The CSMC will consist of representatives of local communities, NGOs, other local stakeholders, such as mining or logging concessionaires, traditional leaders (e.g. Paramount Chiefs), and village committees. The CSMC will provide guidance, advice and assistance in addressing inter-sectoral challenges to project implementation at each of the priority conservation sites.

***Project Management at Conservation Site Level.*** Each site will have a *Conservation Site Management Team (CSMT)* composed of Forestry Division staff, including a Conservation Site Manager, an office manager/administrator, two technical level staff and at least six guards. With the support of the PMT, each CSMTs will contribute to the preparation, and take lead responsibility for implementing site management plans in collaboration with the CSMC.

***Accounting, financial and procurement arrangements.*** The overall responsibility for financial management and procurement will be with two specialists from a consultancy firm who are already providing services for the ongoing World Bank-financed Rural and Private Sector Development Project (RPSDP). The PMT will be supported by a team of international and national consultants who will provide technical assistance to Components 1 and 2.

### **Partnership Arrangements**

Implementation of the project will entail strengthening of existing and development of new partnerships among stakeholders at the local, District and national levels, as well as among Development Partners. At the local and national levels, inter-sectoral partnerships among stakeholders will be formalized in the context of site level conservation management committees and the National Steering Committee (NSC) as outlined above. Additionally, project implementation will benefit from partnerships with a range of parallel Development Partner supported conservation initiatives, where information and staff exchanges will be incorporated in staff training and stakeholder education and public awareness programs.

Ongoing projects where such partnerships will be further explored include: (a) the EC-financed Project "Conservation of the Western Area Peninsula Forest Reserve and its Watershed," which is being implemented by Welthungerhilfe and Environmental Forum for Action; (b) the "Trans-boundary Peace Park Project," which is implemented by Bird Life international and the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone; (c) the IDA funded Rural and Private Sector Development Project (RPSDP), which is being implemented country-wide with the aim of improving the efficiency of agricultural value chains; (d) the IFAD-funded Rural Finance and Community Improvement Programme; (e) the FAO/Government of Italy supported Food Security through Commercialization of Agriculture Project; (f) the USAID-funded Livelihood Expansion and Asset Development Program, which all support agricultural/ community development and rural livelihoods in several districts, including Koinadugu; (g) the USAID-supported Trans-boundary

Project between Sierra Leone and Guinea; (h) the EU/CARE supported Sustainable Agriculture Project in Koinadugu; and (i) the IrishAid-supported project in support of Tiwai Island Sanctuary. International NGOs involved in conservation in Sierra Leone include: (i) Conservation International; (ii) the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds-UK; and (iii) BirdLife-Netherlands. National NGOs which may become implementing partners or service providers under the project include: (i) the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone; (ii) the Environmental Foundation for Africa; and (iii) the Tacugama Chimpanzee Project.

The large number of conservation projects and the broad range of organizations engaged in implementing them represent both a challenge - in terms of their impact on Government capacity to take lead responsibility and institutionalize the benefits achieved - and an asset, in terms of the diversity of skills and experience they represent and that could contribute to overall project objectives. Consequently, it will be essential for key Government staff and the project management team to work together to develop a strategic approach to coordinating and sharing skills and experience among this diverse group in order to achieve mutual objectives and sustainability of outcomes

## **7. Sustainability**

**Commitment of the Recipient.** Following the general elections of 2007, institutional responsibility for forestry and for protected area and biodiversity conservation reverted the Forestry Division within the MAFFS. Subsequently, the Forestry Division was restructured at national level with the creation of three separate units: (i) Conservation and Wildlife Management; (ii) Commercial Forestry; and (iii) Community Forestry. This development emphasizes Government's recognition of the need and commitment to conservation at the national level. At the field level, the Forestry Division is committed to establishing Conservation Site Management Teams through relocation or recruitment of staff as necessary. Experienced and appropriately trained managers have already been identified for all priority sites supported under the project, and the number of field staff increased.

**Sustainability.** Given current level of capacity and funding as well as the poverty driven underlying causes of the threats to conservation in Sierra Leone, achieving sustainability through implementing a project of this scale and scope will be challenging. However, GoSL commitment to conservation is clear, and project design incorporates strategy for sustainability through building awareness and capacity at the site, district and national levels.

*Institutional sustainability.* The project will increase the level of institutional and human resource capacity at national, district and site level. It will build government staff capacity at the site level, where it will also establish new multi-stakeholder site management committees, and explore partnerships for conservation with civil society and private sector groups where possible. It will build on the Government's program of decentralization and work through District Councils, Wards, and Village Development Committees, as well as district forestry and wildlife offices, environmental protection offices, and community based organizations to ensure that conservation is incorporated in local, district and regional planning and resource management. This will be complemented by activities to build awareness and support for conservation among national level stakeholders, strengthen the legal framework, and develop a prioritized strategy

sharing best practice and building capacity for management of all priority conservation sites around the country.

*Social Sustainability* will be achieved by fostering local ownership of the project through active involvement of local stakeholders (communities, traditional leaders, and community-based organizations) at site level when confirming, prioritizing, planning and implementing project supported activities. In order to ensure long-term commitment for sustaining project outcomes and impacts, the project will prepare and implement community action plans (CAPs) in each site that will identify and support sustainable livelihood alternatives to unsustainable resource uses that impact negatively on the biodiversity of the conservation sites. Activities supported under the action plans will strengthen local community capacity to maintain or improve their economic status in a conservation linked manner, thereby further strengthening local community involvement and support for conservation objectives.

*Financial sustainability.*<sup>2</sup> It is expected that the conservation sites (CS) will only become financially self-sustaining entities in the medium- to long-term, and even then, significant funding from the government will be required for viability. As such, funding from external sources will remain necessary for some time in order to achieve the conservation goals. The project will explore possibilities for the creation of sustainable long-term financing instruments such as payment for environmental services (PES), forestry-based carbon off-set projects (REDD), environmental/conservation trust funds, debt-for-nature swaps, user fees, entrance fees, charges and taxes, and private sector initiatives to finance ecologically benign natural resource and park management activities and compensate community efforts for sound environmental stewardship. The project will provide natural resource-dependent local communities with alternative means of livelihood by promoting economically viable and environmentally-friendly economic activities which will reduce pressure on the natural resources in the CSs and enhance sustainability. As a key to financial sustainability, the project will introduce an effective and transparent financial management system at the CS level.

*Ecological sustainability* will be achieved by addressing barriers and constraints at all levels to ensure long-term maintenance of environmental stewardship and ecological productivity as well as the enhancement of environmental services (biodiversity, watershed management, water quality, sequestration, climate change) at both national and global levels. Various project activities will directly contribute to ecological sustainability such as: (i) promoting sustainable land use practices including conservation agriculture and agroforestry; (ii) raising environmental awareness through school programs and other initiatives, limiting poaching and managing bushmeat trading; and (iii) promoting eco-tourism.

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<sup>2</sup> Financial sustainability is achieved when a protected area system is able to secure sufficient and predictable levels of resources over the long-term to meet its total costs (GEF, 2007).

## 8. Safeguard Policies Triggered by the Project

<b>Safeguard Policies Triggered by the Project</b>	Yes	No
<u>Environmental Assessment (OP/BP 4.01)</u>	[ X ]	[ ]
Natural Habitats (OP/BP 4.04)	[ X ]	[ ]
Pest Management (OP 4.09)	[ ]	[ ]
Cultural Property (OP 4.11)	[ ]	[ X ]
Involuntary Resettlement (OP/BP 4.12)	[ X ]	[ ]
Indigenous Peoples (OP/BP 4.10)	[ ]	[ X ]
Forests (OP/BP 4.36)	[ X ]	[ ]
Safety of Dams (OP/BP 4.37)	[ ]	[ X ]
Projects in Disputed Areas (OP/BP 7.60)*	[ ]	[ X ]
Projects on International Waterways (OP/BP 7.50)	[ ]	[ X ]

Environmental Assessment (OP/BP 4.01). The Project is classified as Category B, as the potential adverse effects are few, and site specific. The Project is expected to have an overall positive environmental impact by conserving biodiversity and improving natural resource use.

GoSL prepared an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), which details measures and plans for addressing potential threats, including guidelines for screening projects and identifying mitigation measures when necessary. The ESIA was disclosed in-country, and at the World Bank's InfoShop on July 1, 2007. Disclosure workshop dates were published in three local newspapers: (i) The Democrat (May 7 & 14, 2007); (ii) Standard Times (May 10 & 14, 2007); and (iii) Salone Times (May 9, 2007). Five separate disclosure workshops were held between May 16 and 22, 2007, at different sites including: (i) Fintonia (Outamba Kilimi National Park); (ii) Kabala (Loma Mountains Non-Hunting Forest Reserve) and Tingi Hills Forest Reserve; (iii) Mongeri (Kangari Hill Non-Hunting Forest Reserve); (iv) Kenema (Gola and Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary); and (v) Freetown (Western Area Peninsula Forest Reserve). Records of the workshops carried out (including list of participants) have been included in the ESIA. As described in the ESIA, the Project will carry out small infrastructure rehabilitation or development of basic facilities such as access roads, research and visitor facilities. Additionally, the project will support community level initiatives for improved conservation management effectiveness and build efforts for conservation through enhanced awareness of benefits while catalyzing conservation linked development.

Natural Habitats (OP/BP 4.04). Consistent with OP 4.04, the project will help to conserve natural habitats and ensure that specific project activities avoid habitat degradation.

Forests (OP/BP 4.36). Consistent with OP 4.36, the project aims to harness the potential of forest ecosystems to: (i) reduce poverty in a sustainable manner; (ii) integrate forest conservation

\* By supporting the proposed project, the Bank does not intend to prejudice the final determination of the parties' claims on the disputed areas.

effectively into sustainable development; and (iii) protect vital local and global environmental services and values of forests.

Involuntary Resettlement (OP/BP 4.12). The project may entail: (i) limited land acquisition once conservation sites' boundaries are demarcated and for small infrastructure works; (ii) relocation of a small number of human settlements located inside any of the conservation sites as determined during project implementation; and (iii) restriction of access to natural resources in the selected legally designated parks and conservation sites. Overall impacts are yet to be determined as boundaries need to be re-demarcated and the status of villages inside and outside of the conservation sites needs to be identified. Therefore, consistent with OP 4.12, a Process Framework (PF) and a Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) have been prepared, approved and disclosed by GoSL (as described above under Section 4 'Social').

## **9. List of Factual Technical Documents**

1. Environmental and Social Assessment (ESIA) – May 2007
2. Resettlement Policy Framework – July 2009
3. Process Framework – July 2009
4. Biodiversity Tracking Tools for all Conservation Sites – 2008
5. Wildlife Conservation Act – 1972
6. Proclamation for the Constitution of Outamba-Kilima National Park – 1995
7. Environment Protection Agency Act - 2008

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