

PENDING FINANCE

1. General Description:

ID:CN-24033

Project resulting from this CN: N/A

Note: CNs are developed into project proposals following consultation with donor(s).

1.1 Project Title:

Pre-project: Conducting Studies in relation with the Sustainable Management of *Azelia africana* and *Pterocarpus erinaceus* in Benin

1.2 Submitting Country/ies:

Benin

1.3 Specific Location & Country/ies/regions/areas benefitting from the project:

Benin

1.4 Endorsement from ITTO Focal Point:

[Accord_Point_Focal_Benin.pdf](#)

1.5 Intended Project Duration (in months):

10

1.6 Indicative Budget (in US\$):

ITTO	121,520
Counterpart	28,000
Total	149,520

1.7 Programme Line Focus

Conservation of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

1.8 Project Type

Capacity Building/Training, Community/field-based project implementation, Analytical work/studies

Project Type - Other (please explain):

NA

1.9 Proposal Summary:

Afzelia africana and Pterocarpus erinaceus are two of the most sought-after local timber species, and are currently in danger of extinction in their natural habitat, due to strong anthropic pressure and overutilization compounded by the growing demand for their wood in Benin. In addition, due to a lack of awareness of wildfire risks, the use of forest land for agriculture, and uncontrolled logging, it is expected that both species will no longer be found in Benin, resulting in significant economic and environmental damage. Following the CITES Appendix II listing of P. erinaceus in 2016, the entire Afzelia genus was also listed in CITES Appendix II in 2023. Despite the interest for these multi-purpose species, up-to-date information on their availability, the extent of threats and their economic importance for ensuring their sustainable management are lacking in Benin. Due to the lack of essential information for decision-making, a harvesting ban was promulgated by the Government of Benin and is currently in force. The pre-project aims to provide sufficient information to ensure the sustainable management of A. africana and P. erinaceus in Benin. The specific objective of the pre-project is to make use of the necessary information for developing a project proposal on the sustainable management of A. africana and P. erinaceus in Benin. Project expected outcomes are as follows: (i) updated ecological and socio-economic data is available for A. africana and P. erinaceus in Benin; (ii) awareness of the importance of sustainable management for A. africana and P. erinaceus has been raised among all relevant actors and stakeholders; and (iii) a project proposal for the sustainable management of A. africana and P. erinaceus in Benin is available.

2. Proponent Information:

2.1 Executing Agency Information:

Name of Agency/Organization/Institution:

Initiative for Life Conservation non-governmental organization (Initiative pour la Préservation de la Vie—IPV-NGO)

Name of main Contact Person:

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NA

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2.2 Type of Organization:

Civil Society Organization

Type of Organization- other case:

NA

2.3 Collaborating Agency/ies:

Name of Agency/Organization/Institution:

General Directory of Water, Forests and Hunting (Direction Générale des Eaux, Forêts et Chasse—DGEFC)

Name of main Contact Person:

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2.4 Relevant experience of EA:

IPV-NGO has been responsible for implementing initiatives for the protection of endangered species and the restoration of forest ecosystems in collaboration with the DGEFC. The IPV-NGO members have expertise in project management; data collection; threat analysis; and the development of conservation strategies appropriate to local circumstances. IPV-NGO technical members were involved in the 2020 forest inventory. The IPV-NGO also participates in reforestation and awareness-raising campaigns.

3. Relevance:

3.1 Conformity with ITTO objectives (ITTA, 2006) and priorities (current SAP):

c. Contribute to sustainable development and poverty alleviation: The pre-project will collect updated ecological and socio-economic data on *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* in Benin. Based on collected data, actions involving communities will be implemented for alleviating poverty in rural areas. f. Promote and support research & development with a view to improving forest management and timber use efficiency, and to enhancing the capacity in preserving and promoting other forest values in timber producing tropical forests: The pre-project will assess the environmental and economic potential of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* timber in Benin with a view to promoting their sustainable management. m. Encouraging members to develop national policies aimed at sustainable utilization and conservation of timber producing forests, and maintaining ecological balance, in the context of the tropical timber trade: As a result of pre-project implementation, reliable data will be available for decision-making in connection with the sustainable management of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus*. n. Strengthening the capacity of members to improve forest law enforcement and governance, and address illegal logging and related trade in tropical timber: The pre-project will contribute to enhancing the operational capabilities of control officers and to supporting the sustainable management and conservation of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus*. r. Encouraging members to recognize the role of forest -dependent indigenous and local communities in achieving sustainable forest management and develop strategies to enhance the capacity of these communities to sustainably manage tropical timber producing forests: The strategy for pre-project implementation will be based on a participatory approach.

3.2 Relevance to the ITTO Programme Lines:

Program Line 1: Legal and sustainable supply chains (LSSC): Pre-project implementation will contribute to stakeholder capacity building on the ecological and economic role of *P. africana* and *P. erinaceus* with a view to ensuring their sustainable management. This will ensure the continued and sustainable supply of utility wood and timber in the long term. Program Line 2: Biodiversity and ecosystemic services: The pre-project will contribute to biodiversity conservation through the restoration of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* in timber production forests. In addition, the sustainable management of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* forest species and the maintenance of related ecosystemic services will be ensured through the implementation of the various activities.

3.3 Relevance to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Global Forest Goals (GFGs) and other forest related global agenda:

SDG 15 (Life on Earth): The project will contribute directly to achieving SDG 15 through the preservation of land biodiversity, including threatened plant species such as *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus*. It also aims to combat deforestation; to restore degraded ecosystems; and to promote sustainable forest management.

SDG 13 (Climate action): Forest conservation, including conserving forest species such as *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus*, contributes to greenhouse gas emission reduction; carbon sequestration; and adaptation to climate change. This is key for achieving the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement.

SDG 1: (No Poverty) and SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth): The project will contribute to poverty alleviation; promote inclusive economic development through local community involvement in the sustainable management of forest resources; and support economic initiatives based on *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* species.

Global Forest Goals (GFGs): The project will contribute to achieving the goals as contained in the New York Declaration on Forests, such as deforestation reduction; forest ecosystem restoration; and promotion of sustainable forest management.

REDD+ Program (Reducing emissions resulting from deforestation and forest degradation): By contributing to forest conservation, the project will support the REDD+ Program objectives through reducing carbon dioxide emissions from deforestation and enhancing the sustainable management of forest resources.

3.4 Relevance to submitting country's policies:

The pre-project is fully in line with Benin's new forestry policy, legislation and regulations, and current national strategies and sectoral action plans, as well as the Government's PAG2 Action Program. Benin's forest resource management policy is based on a participatory approach for the management of natural forest and wildlife resources, by involving local populations in the sustainable management of protected areas. It promotes strengthening the technical, logistical and operational capacities of stakeholders. It also aims to preserve the various environmental, economic and social functions of forests and wildlife populations, while organizing resource management following an approach consistent with agricultural and pastoral development strategies. The pre-project provides an opportunity to implement certain aspects of Benin's national policy. The project will serve as a framework to help achieve Action 4 of the 2021-2026 PAG, which aims to improve the well-being of all and to preserve the environment. The project will address the international strategic policies endorsed by Benin through the ratification of several environment-related conventions, agreements and initiatives. The listing of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* in CITES Appendix 2 makes it mandatory to carry out a study for producing a non-detrimental findings report, to which project outcomes will greatly contribute. To avoid any risk associated with logging, Benin has followed a conservative approach prohibiting *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* harvesting, including for domestic consumption. The project will therefore provide Benin with updated data for decision-making and the development of a project proposal for the conservation and sustainable utilization of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus*.

3.5 Linkages to previous/ongoing ITTO and other projects/activities (if any):

The pre-project is closely linked to previous and ongoing activities implemented by the ITTO and other organizations working in the field of forest management and biodiversity conservation. Potential links with these initiatives include:

1. Sustainable forest management programs: The ITTO has implemented several programs promoting the sustainable management of tropical forests. The *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* conservation project will be part of these efforts by integrating sustainable forest management practices and contributing to the conservation of forest resources.
2. Research and monitoring programs: Research institutions such as the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the International Development Research Center (IDRC) and partner universities have carried out studies on the distribution, ecology and conservation of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* in the region. This conservation project will draw on the study findings to guide its interventions and contribute to biodiversity monitoring efforts.
3. The project is in line with the priorities of regional initiatives such as those of the Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC) and the West African Forest Commission in terms of conservation and sustainable forest management.
4. Biodiversity conservation projects: Other institutions such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and non-governmental organizations specializing in biodiversity conservation have previously implemented forest ecosystem and endangered species preservation projects in West Africa. This project can benefit from partnerships with these initiatives to ensure access to funding, technical expertise and lessons learned.

4. Project synopsis:

4.1 Objectives (reflecting reference to elements within all ITTO Guidelines as applicable):

The pre-project development objective is to contribute to the sustainable management of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* in Benin. Specifically, the pre-project aims to i) assess the current status of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* populations in Benin's secondary forests, focusing on geographical distribution, abundance and threats. This objective is in line with the guideline Restore degraded natural forests. It represents an effort to (i) increase timber production in a sustainable way and develop policies for the sustainable conservation of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus*; (ii) assess the socio-economic data available on *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* in Benin. Based on this data, effective strategies will be developed (priority areas for conservation, inclusive management, and sustainable economic alternatives for communities) for the conservation and sustainable management of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* populations; (iii) raise awareness among all actors and stakeholders involved in the sustainable management of target species. This objective is also in line with the guideline Integrate trees into agricultural landscapes. Stakeholders will be made aware of ecosystem services and agroforestry associated with *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus*, and of the uptake of practices minimizing overgrazing, forest fires, overuse and overlogging for fuelwood with a view to increasing crop yields, and improving livelihoods and incomes; and (iv) develop a project proposal for the sustainable management of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* in Benin. This objective is in line with the guideline Management of secondary forests. A pilot project proposal will be developed for promoting the conservation and regeneration of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* populations through appropriate management practices, such as assisted natural regeneration and the protection of critical habitats.

4.2 Key problem(s) to be addressed:

The study on the status of *P. erinaceus* carried out in 2020, and enhanced by a literature review on both species, showed a number of constraints for their sustainable management such as the lack of updated information on their national potential (productivity and regeneration); a lack of consistent information on the dynamics of natural stands; lack of socio-economic data; lack of mechanism for centralizing harvesting and marketing data for each forest species; lack of a non-detriment findings report essential for determining harvesting quotas and the sustainable management of the species. All above constraints are compounded by the degradation of the species' habitat. As fertile land becomes scarcer, local populations are increasingly turning to other land, particularly in gazetted forests that are now the main areas where *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* are found in Benin. Anthropogenic pressures in protected areas contribute to the degradation of potential habitats for species conservation. As a result of severe degradation due to the loss of species populations from wildfire, agriculture, logging and habitat fragmentation, *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* populations have become reduced. While short-term threats are mainly selective logging, deforestation, wildfire and agriculture, the reduction in stand size and the lack of gene flows between populations will threaten the species' capacity for regeneration and adaptability in the long term. Priority actions must therefore be taken with regard to local communities living in the vicinity of the various forests still home to *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus*.

4.3 Main stakeholders and beneficiaries:

Sustainable management of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* in Benin involves close collaboration between a large diversity of beneficiaries and stakeholders. They include:

- Local communities: One of the main beneficiaries of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* sustainable management for their subsistence, livelihoods and culture. At least 590,000 community members will be impacted.
- Timber harvesters and processors: Those involved in the harvesting and processing of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* timber will be encouraged to uptake legal and sustainable logging practices, which will contribute to their economic stability.
- Timber industries: Timber industries using *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* timber for furniture-making, construction and handicraft activities will benefit from their sustainable management by ensuring a steady supply of high-quality timber. It will also enhance the image of businesses in terms of environmental and social responsibility.
- Civil society organizations and environmental NGOs: They will be involved in awareness-raising activities promoting the sustainable management of target forest resources. They will benefit from technical expertise for supporting local communities with the uptake of more sustainable practices.
- Government and local authorities: they are important stakeholders in the sustainable management of forest resources. Through pre-project implementation, the forestry administration (DGEFC) will be provided with updated data for the development and implementation of policies, laws and regulations governing the harvesting and management of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus*.

4.4 Key activities:

1- Assess the current status of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* populations in Benin: This activity will assess the available potential of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* (occurrence, volume, abundance) as well as faced threats. 2- Assess the current socio-economic and cultural potential of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* in Benin: Surveys will be carried out in the pre-project areas, taking into account each category of stakeholder. Semi-directive interviews will be conducted on local knowledge and perceptions; traditional and commercial uses; conservation and sustainable management initiatives; cultural importance; challenges and opportunities; and future prospects for the use and conservation of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus*. 3- Outreach and awareness raising among stakeholders: A workshop will be held to report study results to stakeholders. Following the workshop, stakeholder consultations will be held to promote local ownership of actions and to consolidate the sustainable management of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus*. The Information Education and Communication (IEC) approach will be used. Consultations will be held with all actors and stakeholders and awareness raising will be conducted on the sustainable management of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus*. Awareness-raising and information meetings will be held for stakeholders. 4- Developing a project proposal for the sustainable management of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus*: An expert in ITTO project development will be hired to develop a project proposal following a participatory approach including all stakeholder categories. The ITTO Manual for Project Formulation will serve as the template for developing the project proposal. 5- Production and dissemination of the final pre-project report.

4.5 Expected outcomes and impacts, including innovation/transformation:

Output 1: Updated ecological and socio-economic information on *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* in Benin is available. Output 2: Awareness of sustainable management for *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* has been raised among relevant actors and stakeholders. Output 3: A project proposal for the sustainable management of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* in Benin is available. Implementing the project to be developed will ensure the sustainability of *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus*, and the maintenance of related ecosystem services.

4.6 Existing funding for (related) initiative(s)/established contacts to potential donors:

NA

4.7 Any other information deemed necessary/important:

Pre-project implementation is important and urgent for Benin in order to be provided with key data for: (a) Strengthening national management measures for *A. africana* and *P. erinaceus* on the basis of sound data; (b) Ensuring compliance with CITES requirements; (c) Raising stakeholder awareness and developing a project for the production, conservation and sustainable management of two of Benin's most prized species for timber and utility wood. The IPV-NGO will work in close collaboration with the DGEFC to ensure the sustainability of pre-project outcomes and to facilitate the successful implementation of the project to be developed. ITTO's contribution to the project will be an essential added value.

4.8 Risk mitigation measures:

The likely risks and related mitigation measures identified for the project are as follows: Socio-economic and environmental studies: Support from various stakeholders will be pursued through awareness raising and involving the collaborating agency in all stages, from study planning to actual implementation. Forestry personnel will be involved in inventories to build up trust for the project among communities. Awareness raising will also be conducted prior to project start among local and community authorities. Availability of stakeholders to take part in awareness-raising sessions: This risk will be kept under control as stakeholders will find it in their interest to have their concerns addressed. Open and transparent communication mechanisms will be established with all relevant stakeholders, providing regular information on project objectives, activities and outcomes, and promoting stakeholder participation and feedback. Project document meeting national expectations: To limit the risk of producing a project document not endorsed by stakeholders, consultant selection and the methodical approach to be followed by the consultant will be validated with the DGEFC, and a monitoring committee will be established.

Pledges/Addtional funding

Session	Donor	Pledge	Renn

Person in charge:

Masupa Kambale

5. Indicative Budget (in US\$):

Indicative Budget (in US\$):

Description	ITTO	Counterpart	Total
Personnel	19,500	19,000	38,500
Sub-contracts	42,000	0	42,000
Travel and DSA	3,500	0	3,500
Capital Items	4,000	0	4,000
Consumables	6,500	3,000	9,500
Publication / Dissemination	14,000	0	14,000
Miscellaneous	4,000	6,000	10,000
Total	93,500	28,000	121,500

ITTO Project Monitoring & Review	10,000	-	10,000
Annual/Final Audit	5,000	-	5,000
ITTO Programme Support	13,020	-	13,020
ITTO Ex-post Evaluation	0	-	0
GRAND TOTAL	121,520	28,000	149,520