

INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER ORGANIZATION

ITTO

PROJECT PROPOSAL

TITLE	REHABILITATION AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF SACRED FORESTS ON RAMSAR SITES 1017 AND 1018 IN BENIN
SERIAL NUMBER	PD 754/14 Rev.3 (F)
COMMITTEE	REFORESTATION AND FOREST MANAGEMENT
SUBMITTED BY	GOVERNMENT OF REPUBLIC OF BENIN
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE	FRENCH

SUMMARY

Ramsar sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin are dotted with pockets of sacred forests (SFs) which are rich with biodiversity, representing a natural heritage of great value due to their multiple biological, ecological, socio-cultural and economic functions. Currently these forest areas are subject to severe degradation that threatens the entire ecosystem of Ramsar sites and therefore the livelihoods of local people. This project is to sustainably manage sacred forests within Ramsar sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin through the sustainable management of 40 sacred forests within these sites, to be achieved by building the capacity of stakeholders to improve the living conditions of local communities. The project stems from the implementation of Pre-Project PPD 165/12 Rev.1 (F) titled "Study for the Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests on Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin". Expected project outputs are as follows: (i) improved use of the resources of 40 sacred forests within RAMSAR Sites 1017 and 1018, (ii) the levels of income derived from sacred forests have been raised by 25% through the development of income generating activities and (iii) Forty (40) sacred forests have been integrated in the System of Municipal Protected Areas.

EXECUTING AGENCY	NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION <i>CERCLE POUR LA SAUVEGARDE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES</i> (NGO Ce.Sa.Re.N)		
COLLABORATING AGENCY	<i>DIRECTION GENERALE DES FORETS ET DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES</i> (DGFRN) -- GENERAL DIRECTORATE FOR FOREST AND NATURAL RESOURCES		
DURATION:	36 MONTHS		
APPROXIMATE STARTING DATE	TO BE DECIDED		
BUDGET AND PROPOSED:	Contribution in US\$	Local Currency equivalent	
SOURCES OF FUNDING	Sources		
	ITTO	541,218	
	Benin (Ce.Sa.Re.N, NGO)	118,100	
	TOTAL	659,318	

Table of Contents

PROJECT BRIEF	4
ACRONYMS	7
1. PART ONE: PROJECT CONTEXT	8
1.1. Origin.....	8
1.2. Relevance of the Project	9
1.2.1. Conformity with ITTO' Objectives and Priorities.....	9
1.2.2. Relevance to Benin's policies.....	11
1.3. Target area	12
1.3.1. Geographical location	12
1.3.2. Social, cultural, economic and environmental aspects	12
1.4. Expected outcomes at project completion	14
2. PART TWO: PROJECT RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES	15
2.1. Rationale.....	15
2.1.1. Institutional arrangements and organizational issues	15
2.1.2. Stakeholder analysis	16
2.1.3. Problem analysis	19
2.1.4. Logical framework matrix	22
2.2. Objectives	23
2.2.1. Development objectives and impact indicators.....	23
2.2.2. Specific objective and outcome indicators.....	23
3. PART THREE: DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT INTERVENTIONS	24
3.1. Outputs and Activities	24
3.1.1. Outputs	24
3.1.2. Activities.....	24
3.2. Implementation approaches and methods	24
3.2.1. Sustainable use of Sacred Forest resources	25
3.2.2. Improving incomes derived from sacred forests	25
3.2.3. Strategies to incorporate SF in the system of municipal protected areas	25
3.3. Work Plan	27
3.4. Budget.....	28
3.4.1. Main budget matrix	28
3.4.2. Consolidated project budget by components.....	34
3.4.3. Yearly Project Budget by sources: ITTO	36
3.4.4. Yearly Project budget contribution by sources : Executing Agency.....	38
3.5. Assumptions, risks and sustainability.....	39
3.5.1. Assumptions and risks:	39
3.5.2. Sustainability	39
4. PART FOUR: DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT OPERATIONS	41
4.1. Organizational structure and stakeholder involvement mechanisms	41
4.1.1. Executing agency and partners.....	41
4.1.2. Project Management Team.....	41
4.1.3. Project Steering Committee	41
4.1.4. Stakeholder involvement mechanisms.....	41
4.2. Reporting, Review and Monitoring-Evaluation	42
4.2.1. Project Progress Report	42
4.2.2. Project Completion Report	42
4.2.3. Technical Project Report	42
4.3. Dissemination and mainstreaming of project learning	42

4.3.1. Dissemination of project results	42
4.3.2. Mainstreamin of project learning	43
ANNEXES	44
Annex 1. Executing Agency Profile (NGO Ce.Sa.Re.N).....	44
Annex 2. Terms of reference of main experts to be hired by the Executing Agency.....	47
Annex 3. Terms of reference of the personnel and consultants financed by ITTO	48
Annex 4. Letter of endorsement and joint financing pledges from some municipal authorities	50
Annex 5 : Recommendations by the 48th Expert Panel.....	56
Annex 6: Incorporation of recommendations by the 48th Expert Panel.....	58
Annex 7 : Recommandations du Panel d'experts de la 49ème Session	59
Annex 8 : Incorporation of recommendations by the 49th Expert Panel.....	60

PROJECT BRIEF

1. Context and problem to address

RAMSAR Sites 1017 and 1018 contain more than 500 sacred forests **which although** limited in size are rich in biodiversity. These forests play a vital role in the lives of people and the conservation of local natural resources. Now with the emergence of new religions, high population growth, the weakness of traditional power, and the increasing impoverishment of the rural population, taboos and restrictions are no longer complied with. Most sacred forests are subject to abuse and uncontrolled exploitation leading to degradation or even total destruction. The recent studies on sacred groves in Southern Benin showed that 60% of them are in a degraded state. Between 1998 and 2013, 34% of sacred forests have experienced a significant reduction in area and 14% have disappeared. Degradation of these ecosystems is a serious threat to biodiversity and the lives of surrounding communities who heavily depend on it.

The NGO Club for the Conservation of Natural Resources (Ce.Sa.Re.N), aware and concerned about the situation, took the initiative in collaboration with the Forestry Administration, the Communal authorities and local communities to develop the Project “Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests on RAMSAR Sites 1017 And 1018 in Benin”. This project stems from the implementation of pre-project PPD 165/12 Rev.1 (F) which collected baseline information to develop this project.

2. Implementation objectives and indicators

The development objective of the project is to contribute to sustainable forest management of wetlands in southern Benin. This objective indicators are (i) by 2020, the wetland ecosystem degradation process currently affecting wetlands of global importance in southern Benin is reduced by at least **30%**, (ii) At the end of the project the living standards of communities closely dependent on forest resources have been raised by at least 20%, (iii) the volume of timber product has increased by 15% by 2038.

The specific objective of this project is to sustainably manage sacred forests within Ramsar sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin by building the capacity of stakeholders to improve the living conditions of local populations. Indicators are: (i) At the end of the project, **40** sacred forests feature operational management tools; (ii) at the end of the project, revenues derived from sacred forest have increased by 25%; (iii) **40** rehabilitated sacred forests are integrated in the System of Municipal Protected Areas.

The following main results are expected at the end of the project:

1. **Improved use of the resources of 40** sacred forests;
2. **The levels of income derived from sacred forests** by local communities have be raised
3. SFs are integrated in the System of Municipal Protected Areas

3. Beneficiaries, results, outcomes and expected outputs:

The main beneficiaries of this project are: dignitaries, traditional chieftains, village elders, kings, earth priests and land chiefs, community leaders, voodoo priests, communities and local populations composed of men, women and children of the village who live on SF resources together with farmers using arable lands adjacent to SFs.

The main **outcomes, outputs and results expected** from this project are the following:

- Simplified management plans allocated to **40 sacred forests**. This will enable dignitaries and owners to define the terms of their forest management and better control and monitor their management practices and interventions;
- Providing these **40 sacred forests** with titles of legal recognition to avoid “breaking and nibbling at the estate” or selling portions of it;
- **Crop cultivation techniques improved in the vicinity of sacred forests on a total area of 80 ha to increase farming outputs on these lands without encroachment on the land estates of sacred forests.**
- The demarcation and staking of 40 sacred forests, to prevent any encroachment and reduce the pressure for land;
- The establishment of **60 ha** of multi-purpose plantations to help meet the needs of local communities for forest products;

- The diversification of sources of income for the local communities through the development of alternative income generating activities, the promotion of Improved Agricultural Production Systems (SAP) and the development of community-level social infrastructure to raise the income level of the local population by at least 20%
- Capacity-building for at least 200 individual beneficiaries in local communities for forest planning/development and management techniques, and private plantations;
- The strong involvement of municipal authorities through the establishment and operation of municipal committees coordinating and monitoring the integration of SFs in the System of Municipal Protected Areas;
- Improving the biodiversity of 40 sacred forests by planting valuable plant species of value and undertaking the release of specimens of appropriate CITES faunal specimen.

The development of reforestation-related activities such as seed collection, high-quality seedling production, the promotion of fuelwood plantations to meet the demand for wood energy, which is the main source of domestic energy in rural areas. This may also help to raise the income levels of grassroots communities.

4. Implementation strategy

This project will be implemented in three successive phases:

- Firstly, local management committees will be established both at the SF level and municipal level. These committees will facilitate the development, validation and implementation of management tools. **They will also help to identify the beneficiaries of Improved Production Systems (SAP).**
- The second phase will consist in organizing the grassroots to implement enrichment planting and rehabilitation of SFs; and develop alternative income-generating and environmentally friendly activities to reduce the level of poverty and improve the livelihoods of people at grassroots level.
- In the third phase, SFs will be incorporated in the System of Municipal Protected Areas to ensure their sustainability.

5. Sustainability of project results

Institutional and political sustainability of this project will hinge on the involvement of the General Directorate of Forestry and Natural Resources and the Beninese Environment Agency and Municipalities at all stages of development and implementation. Furthermore, the various commitments made by the municipalities through the letters of endorsement attached hereto in Appendix bear witness to the ownership of the project by the municipal authorities and clearly herald the institutional sustainability of project outcomes.

The financial sustainability of project outcomes and achievements shall be secure beyond the duration of the project through the commitment of municipalities to fund the project.

Technically, the sustainability of outcomes and achievements is secured by the inclusion of traditional and modern methods of forest management **as well as through the technical monitoring services to be provided by the National Forest Service which is represented in all municipalities in Benin.**

6. Assumption and risks

The main assumptions on which the successful implementation of the project is based are as follows:

The various stakeholders support and participate in the project: One of the difficulties in the implementation of forest development projects is the lack of communication among stakeholders. This project will particularly address this aspect by involving all stakeholders in the implementation process.

Sustainable management of wetland ecosystems remains a national priority. Policy guidelines may change and the support of decision makers for the conservation of sacred forests decline. In the international context where issues related to climate change are taken seriously by the international community, the risk is almost absent.

Risks

The probable risks identified in connection with this project are as follows:

Reluctance by dignitaries and managers of sacred forests in relation to interventions by not religiously initiated outsiders in these forests. This risk can be reduced by education and outreach sessions.

Climate hazards observed lately and climate change may affect ecosystems, the flow rate of water streams and forest health in the intervention area. This may negatively impact the development actions undertaken. This risk can be reduced by the use of appropriate adaptation to the adverse effects of the most immediate climate change and the use of resistant and resilient species.

7. Budget contributions

SOURCES	Contribution in US\$
ITTO	<u>541,218</u>
Benin (Ce.Sa.Re.N NGO)	<u>118,100</u>
TOTAL	<u>659,318</u>

ACRONYMS

CARDER	:	<i>Centre d'Action Régional pour le Développement Rural</i> (Regional Action Centre for Rural Development)
CBD	:	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCSI	:	Municipal Committees for the Coordination and Monitoring of SF incorporation in the System of Municipal Protected Areas
Ce.Sa.Re.N	:	<i>Cercle pour la Sauvegarde des Ressources Naturelles</i> (Club for the Conservation of Natural Resources)
CHM	:	<i>Centre d'Echanges d'Informations sur la Diversité Biologique</i> (Information-sharing Centre for Biological Diversity)
CITES	:	Convention on International Trade on Endangered Wildlife Species
CLGFS	:	<i>Comité Local de Gestion des Forêts Sacrées</i> (Local Sacred Forest Management Committee)
DC /ED	:	Directeur de Cabinet / Executive Director
DGFRN	:	<i>Direction Générale des Forêts et des Ressources Naturelles</i> (General Directorate of Forestry and Natural Resources)
EA	:	Executing agency
GBIF	:	Global Biodiversity Information Facility
GIS	:	Geographic Information System
ha	:	Hectare
IGA	:	Income-generating activities
IPSI	:	International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative,
ITTA	:	International Tropical Timber Agreement
ITTC	:	International Tropical Timber Council
ITTO	:	International Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN	:	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
MDGLAAT	:	<i>Ministère de la Décentralisation, de la Gouvernance locale, de l'Administration et de l'Aménagement du Territoire</i> (Ministry of Decentralization, Local Governance, Land Administration and Development)
MECGCCRPRNF	:	<i>Ministère de l'Environnement Chargé de la Gestion des Changements Climatiques, du Reboisement et de la Protection des Ressources Naturelles et Forestières</i> (Ex MEHU) – Ministry of the Environment in charge of Climate Change Management, Reforestation and the Protection of Natural and Forest Resources (Ex MEHU).
NGO	:	Non-Governmental Organization
PAE /EAP	:	Environment Action Plan
PDC	:	Municipal Development Plan
PNGDRN	:	National Programme for Sustainable Natural Resource Management
PP	:	<i>Partie Prenante</i> (Project stakeholders)
PSC	:	Project Steering Committee
PTF	:	Technical and Financial Partners
RGPH4	:	4th General Population Census
SA	:	Administrative Secretariat
SAP /APS	:	Improved Agricultural Production Systems
SCRIP	:	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy
SFs	:	Sacred Forests
SGM	:	Ministry's General Secretary
SPANB	:	Strategies and National Action Plan for Biodiversity Conservation
ToR	:	Terms of Reference
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	:	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

1. PART ONE: PROJECT CONTEXT

1.1. Origin

Since the roundtable on "The Sacred and the Environment" organized by the Division of Social Sciences of UNESCO in Paris during the Tenth World Forestry Congress in 1991 (UNESCO 2003), more attention has been paid to the study of sacred forests worldwide. Sacred forests (SF) are an endogenous form of conservation of forest resources in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Benin has more than 2,940 sacred forests covering a total area of 18,360 hectares. Through their ecological, religious, socio-economic and cultural functions, these sacred forests play a key role in the lives of people and the conservation of natural resources in rural landscapes. They act as effective traditional laboratories and dignitaries are living libraries who are the depository of local knowledge based on these sacred forests. Furthermore, a sacred forest provides a refuge and sanctuary for native biodiversity of local ecosystems. Although these forests have not received legal or official protection status from the State of the kind forest reserves have received, they had nevertheless been able to maintain the integrity of their resources until recently. They stand for a successful model of traditional biodiversity management and conservation. The principle of this method of conservation is based on awe and respect inspired by traditional local beliefs, the strength of traditional authority and the power of dignitaries and religious leaders.

Currently, through the combined effect of a number of factors such as the emergence of new religions, high population growth, the weakness of traditional power and decline of associated beliefs, and the aggravating impoverishment of the rural population, religious taboos and restrictions are no longer complied with. As a result, most sacred forests have become the subject of overuse and uncontrolled exploitation leading to the degradation of their status or even total destruction. Studies recently undertaken on sacred groves in Southern Benin have shown that 60% of them are in a state of advanced degradation. Between 1998 and 2013, 34% of sacred forests have experienced a significant reduction in area and 14% have disappeared. The regressive trend affecting these ecosystems is a major threat to biodiversity and the lives of surrounding communities who heavily depend on it.

In spite of their socioeconomic and ecological significance, these particular ecosystems have long been neglected by the scientific community and the Forest Administration. Indeed, they have been considered fringe elements of vegetation and as such have received little attention. In Benin, baseline information to develop a sustainable management programme for SFs in RAMSAR sites 1017 and 1018 is non-existent or limited. To address this lack of data, a pre-project was proposed to carry out baseline studies and develop an appropriate project document.

This project builds on pre-project PPD 165/12 Rev.1 (F), implemented from May 2012 to December 2013. That pre-project resulted in the development of four research reports that are (i) the inventory of sacred forests biodiversity on Ramsar sites 1017 and 1018 (ii) A mapping study of these SFs, (iii) the study of environmental and social impacts of the project, (iv) a socio-economic study on the SFs present on these sites. These various studies compose the baseline data on SFs in the area and these data have been used in the development of an appropriate sustainable management programme. That pre-project also provided interaction opportunities with all stakeholders to develop a shared vision and develop a project in a participatory manner. During this process, the local authorities, dignitaries and local communities concerned have expressed their willingness and pledged their commitment to participate effectively in the implementation of a sustainable management project to rehabilitate these forests.

The NGO *Cercle pour la Sauvegarde des Ressources Naturelles* (Ce.Sa.Re.N) (Club for the Conservation of Natural Resources) supports this form of joint-management association that integrates knowledge and practice of both traditional and modern sciences. NGO Ce.Sa.Re.N shall work for this purpose in collaboration with the government, the local authorities, dignitaries, religious leaders and local communities for the conservation and management of sacred forests of the wetlands in southern Benin.

1.2. Relevance of the Project

1.2.1. Conformity with ITTO' Objectives and Priorities.

ITTO is a leading international organization concerned with sustainable forest management and forest conservation. This project is in line with the ITTO objectives stated in Article 1 of ITTA, 2006. These objectives are listed in paragraphs c, j and r.

c. “Contributing to sustainable development and poverty alleviation”: This project aims to contribute to the sustainable management of RAMSAR sites 1017 and 1018 including sacred forests to improve the living standards of local communities. In practice, it will organize **local** SF-surrounding communities to develop sustainable income-generating activities that contribute to the conservation of forest resources identified during the pre-project phase. Secondly, the project will initiate community development activities aimed at inducing local community support to the project objectives. It will also facilitate training and capacity building of stakeholders Directly Involved in sustainable forest management.

j. “Encouraging members to support and develop tropical timber reforestation, as well as rehabilitation and restoration of degraded forest land, with due regard for the interests of local communities dependent on forest resources”: The project will rehabilitate degraded 40 sacred forests through reforestation and enrichment planting using valuable tree species within these forests **and on adjacent lands**. Through these actions, the project will facilitate the establishment of buffer zones and that of plantations for fuel wood, medicinal plants, timber plantations using native timber species, sacred groves or others in accordance with local needs.

r. “To encourage 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”:

This project will provide **40** sacred forests on RAMSAR sites 1017 and 1018 with ownership titles or users' rights in pursuance of Article 7 of Law 93-009 of 2 July 1993 governing forests in the Republic of Benin and title of legal recognition will be issued in pursuance of Ministerial Decree 0121 MEHU / MDGLAAT / DC / SGM / DGFRN / SA of 16.11.12 laying down the conditions for the sustainable management of the sacred forest in the Republic of Benin. The project will support SF managers in the development and implementation of simple management plans for selected SFs. In addition, it will identify and earmark the SFs to be incorporated into the system of Municipal Protected Areas.

Furthermore, this project is consistent with Strategic Priority 3 of the ITTO Strategic Action Plan 2013-2018 which aims at strengthening the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in timber producing tropical forests. In this respect, the project will work to conserve and enhance biodiversity through the implementation of enrichment planting and releases of appropriate wildlife species within SFs and the creation of botanical gardens and community plantations.

Additionally this project is in line with the ITTO / IUCN Principles and guidelines for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Tropical Timber Producing Forests; especially Principe 9 regarding biodiversity at Forest Management Unit level, which states that an effective process of forest management, in which economic, social and environmental issues are balanced with societal needs and priorities, is essential to define and achieve the goals of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

Through the implementation of awareness-raising campaigns for stakeholders and the establishment of sustainable sacred forest management tools, the project is also consistent with Objective 1 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Targets which means that by 2020 at the latest, the communities will be aware of the value of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably. This can be achieved through the awareness of all stakeholders at various levels. Moreover, by securing these selected FS on RAMSAR sites, the project contributes to the achievement of Objective 5 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Targets which proposes that by 2020, the overall rate of natural habitat losses, including forests, will be at least halved and if possible brought close to zero, and the degradation and fragmentation of habitats will be significantly reduced.

We also note that this project is part of the ITTO collaborative activities with the IPSI (International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative) aimed at promoting and conserving the socio-ecological

production of landscapes and seascapes. This can be done through the advocacy and promotion of income-generating activities which are consistent with the relevant ecosystems.

Finally, this proposal is consistent with principle 9 of the Principles and Guidelines ITTO for the Sustainable Management of Natural Tropical Forests. Indeed, it will improve the livelihoods of local populations through the rehabilitation of SFs and the development of income generating activities and further recognize the rich heritage and respect for spiritual, cultural and religious values associated with SFs.

1.2.2. Relevance to Benin's policies

This project is also in line with both the national and international policies of Benin in terms of forest resources management.

At National Level:

This proposal is in compliance with Law No. 93-009 of 2nd July 1993 governing forests in the Republic of Benin which states in Article 7 that "private forests are those which are the subject of a title or possession in the name of an individual or a legal entity under private law". To this end, this project will provide **40 sacred forests** property titles to secure areas and avoid fragmentation and/or land sales.

This project will help meet certain requirements of the Environment Act of the Republic of Benin (Act No. 98-030 of 1 February 1999), which stipulates in Articles 55 and 56 that forests, whether public or private, are elements of the national heritage that must be managed in addressing environmental concerns in such a fashion that forest protection should not be compromised by economic social or recreational uses. Article 56 stipulates that forests must be protected against all forms of degradation, pollution or destruction caused by overuse, grazing, excessive clearing, fire, burning, diseases or introduced alien species.

In addition this project is consistent with the Priority Action Programme under the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (SCRP 2011-2015) as set out in the National Programme for Sustainable Natural Resource Management which aims inter alia to:

- leverage resources for the forest sector;
- maintain the environmental, economic and social functions of forests in the land-development context;
- increase the sustainability of timber potential, in accordance with international agreements;
- promote an integrated approach to the natural resources management process at local level.

This project is also consistent with other strategies and policies of the Ministry of Forests, in particular the following:

- The Strategy and National Action Plan for the Conservation of Biodiversity NBSAP 2011-2020 through its Objective 4, Focus 2, which provides for the incorporation of all the sacred forests and wetlands in the Benin System of Protected Areas by 2020.
- the National Strategy for the Implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (2003), which emphasizes the urgent need for sustainable forest management as adaptive measure to climate change.
- The document of the Environmental Action Plan (PAE 2002), and the Forest Policy (1994) which provide for the contribution of sustainable forest management of wetlands to improving the income and living standards of the communities.

Finally, the project provides an opportunity to implement Ministerial decree No. 0121/MEHU/MDGLAAT/DC/SGM/DGFRN/SA of 11/16/12 establishing the conditions for sustainable management of the sacred forest in the Republic of Benin, which states in Article 4 that sacred forests are to be managed sustainably and by the communities to maintain their ecological, economic, socio-cultural, place of worship and recreational functions.

International level:

Benin is a signatory to a number of international conventions and agreements including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Wildlife Species (CITES), the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA 2006). These agreements and conventions oblige Benin to implement actions to promote the sustainable management of forest resources. This project provides an opportunity to raise the necessary funds to implement actions in compliance with international commitments related to the conservation of forest resources.

1.3. Target area

1.3.1. Geographical location

This project will be implemented in RAMSAR sites 1017 and 1018 located in southern Benin in the coastal area between coordinates 1° 37'45" and 2° 42' 35" east longitude and between 6°12'37" and 7°1' north latitude as shown in Figure 1 below. RAMSAR site 1017 and 1018 fully cover the departments of Atlantique / Littoral, Mono and Ouémé and partly those of the Plateau, Couffo and Zou. The project area covering these two sites has a total surface of 9083.61 km² or about 8% of the surface area of the country. This area contains over 500 SFs. Studies carried out under pre-project PPD 165/12 Rev.1 (F) were used to select 50 FS with good prospects for sustainable management. The locations of these SFs are highlighted in Figure 1. These SFs cover a total area of 408 ha and are distributed over 20 municipalities in southern Benin as shown in Figure 1.

1.3.2. Social, cultural, economic and environmental aspects

Rainfalls on Benin Ramsar sites 1017 and 1018 follow a 2-rain season pattern with two dry seasons per year; these sites are located in a geological area dominated by one sediment layer. This location provides them with huge potential for soil and surface water resources. They include 270 square miles of lakes and lagoons, 2,000 km of perennial streams and 2,000 km of temporary streams and wetland valleys. This helps them to retain fauna-rich ecosystems and a strong floral diversity in particular in forest pockets and marshland forests.

The area covered by RAMSAR sites 1017 and 1018 is the most populated area in Benin. Based on RGPH4 census figures; the population is currently estimated at about 4 million people out of 10 million nationwide, which represents approximately 40% of Benin's population settled on 8% of its land area. Such a high population concentration in this area has caused considerable land pressure on natural resources in general and forest resources in particular. The three main groups of religions in the area are: Traditional religions, Christianity and Islam. The proportion of practicing faithful for each of these religion groups varies from one municipality to another. According to the socio-economic study undertaken during pre-project implementation, the development of introduced religions in the area would weaken local beliefs and defy time-honoured taboos, which contributes to the degradation of SF whose protection was based on respect for fear-inducing taboos hitherto enforced by traditional authorities and dignitaries.

The project intervention area features the following characteristics:

- Existence of more than 500 sacred forests;
- A low proportion of gazetted forests or protected areas included in the national forest estate;
- Original forest resources concentrated in the sacred forests and gallery forests;
- Pressure on land due to urban development and agriculture;
- High population growth;
- Strong demand for fuel wood, which is the main source of household fuel (fuel wood is the energy source used by more than 85% of households);
- High poverty index in rural areas (less than a dollar a day).

The main socioeconomic activities undertaken in these areas are: agriculture, fisheries, livestock, commerce and crafts. Agriculture is the main source of wealth in Benin with a contribution of more than 27% of GDP. The sector employs more than 55% of the national workforce. Agricultural systems are dominated by extensive farming with shifting cultivation and slash-and-burn practices. Over 90% of SFs are adjacent to or surrounded by crop fields. The practice of shifting cultivation is a threat to SFs and a cause of increased land pressure. It contributes to environmental degradation and deforestation. In general, the degradation of the environment bears heavily on the national economy. According to a study by the MEHU in 2002, the environmental degradation costs on average 3-5% of GDP; its prime two causes are:

- Soil erosion: 42%
- Land-clearing: 17%

From the analysis of this information, approximately 50% of these costs are attributable to the degradation of forest resources and removal of land cover.

In recent years different land uses have experienced significant changes, between 1986 and 2010. Natural forests and coconut and palm plantations have lost 23,249 and 10,540 ha respectively. During the same period the mosaics of crops and fallow lands and habitats have increased by 24,540 ha and

forest plantations by 8,849 ha. These recent changes are mainly due to the demand for farm land and the strong demand for wood energy to meet household energy needs.

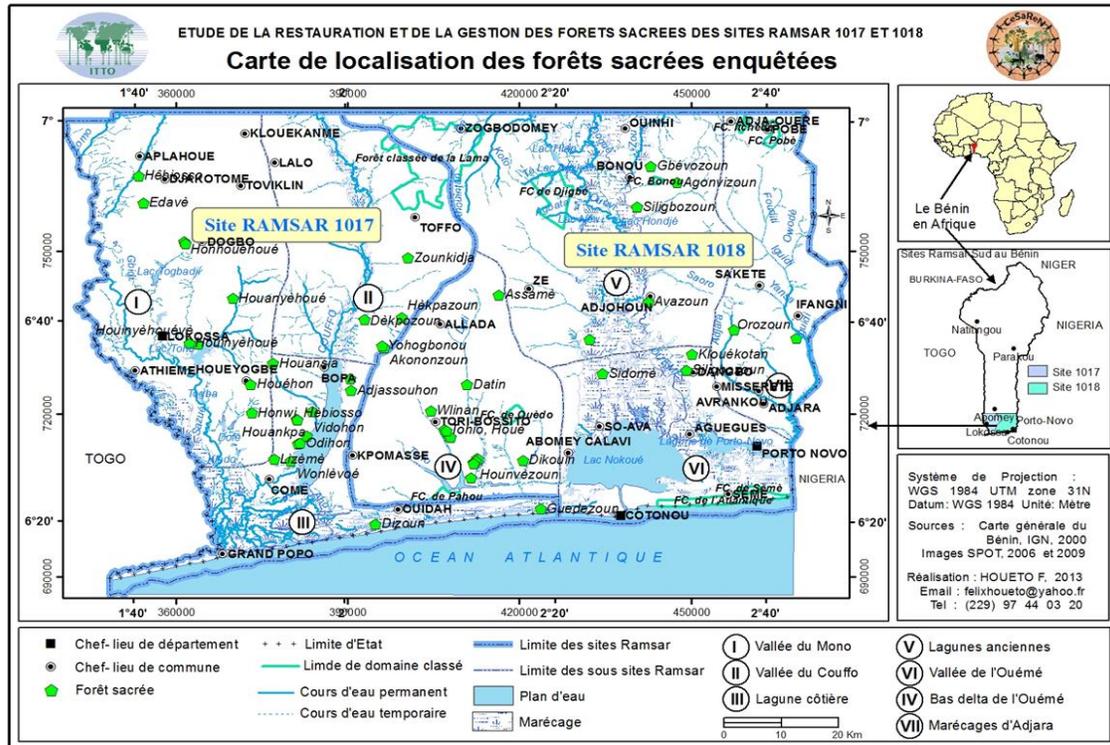


Figure 1. Map of Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018 and location of surveyed sacred forests (green patches)

1.4 Expected outcomes at project completion

At project completion, the following situation is expected:

In the short run, 40 sacred forests of RAMSAR Sites 1017 and 1018 will be sustainably managed, thanks to:

- Simplified management plans allocated to these sacred forests. This will enable dignitaries and owners to define the terms of their forest management and better control and monitor their management practices and interventions;
- Providing these 40 sacred forests with titles of legal recognition;
- The demarcation and staking of these SFs, to prevent any encroachment and reduce the pressure for land;
- The establishment of **60 ha** multi-purpose plantations to help meet the needs of local communities for forest products;
- **Crop cultivation techniques improved in the vicinity of sacred forests on a total area of 80 ha to increase farming outputs on these lands without encroachment on the land areas of sacred forests.**
- The diversification of sources of income for the local communities through the development of alternative income-generating activities to raise the income level of the local population by at least 20%;
- Capacity-building for at least 200 individual beneficiaries in local communities for forest planning /development and management techniques, and private plantation establishment;
- The strong involvement of municipal authorities through the establishment and operation of municipal committees to coordinate and monitor the integration of SFs in the System of Municipal Protected Areas;
- Improved biodiversity in **40 sacred forests** by planting valuable plant species and undertaking the release of specimens of appropriate CITES faunal species;
- The development of reforestation-related activities such as seed collection, high-quality seedling production, the promotion of fuel wood plantations to meet the demand for wood energy, which is the main source of domestic energy in rural areas. This may also help raise the income levels of grassroots communities;
- Strengthening organizational and institutional capacities of stakeholders through the creation of Local SF Management Committees and training of their members within local communities, the training of members of Municipal Committees for the Coordination and Monitoring of SF Incorporation in the System of Municipal Protected Areas.

In the medium- to long-term perspective, an increase in the forest cover of Benin RAMSAR sites 1017 and 1018 is expected, together with an increase in the production of timber and fuel wood to meet local needs and slow down the rate of degradation affecting natural forest.

2. PART TWO: PROJECT RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES

2.1. Rationale

2.1.1. Institutional arrangements and organizational issues

In Bénin, the management of forest resources is taken charge of by state structures and civil society organizations (CSOs). After the adoption of the national forest policy establishing the participatory approach and the effectiveness of the administration decentralization process, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been heavily involved in the management of forest resources alongside local populations.

It is in this context that the Directorate of Production and Forest Industries -- Club for the Conservation of Natural Resources (NGO Ce.Sa.Re.N) developed and implemented pre-project PPD 165/12 Rev.1 (F): "Study for the Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests in the RAMSAR Sites 1017 And 1018 of Benin". Therefore the Executing agency (EA) of the project will be NGO Ce.Sa.Re.N -- an organization which has been involved in natural resources management for a decade. It was registered under N°2003-0100/DEP-ATL-LITT/SG-SAG-Assoc. of 17 June 2003, as publicized in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Benin N° 14 of 15 July 2003.

It is a member of the Satoyama initiative (International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative, IPSI). Visit www.satoyama-initiative.org for more information. Ce.Sa.Re.N NGOs is also accredited by the CBD by letter N° SCBD/OMG/NP/cr80051 of 17 July 2012 as a credible structure. It works to promote ownership of the sustainable natural resources management concept by stakeholders. The NGO CeSaReN also strives to raise awareness, educate, organize and build the capacity of populations to undertake the conservation and rational management of natural resources and environmental remediation.

Meanwhile, the NGO implements several natural resource management projects with various partners (GIZ, ITTO, UNDP). It therefore concentrates the skills and capacity to implement this project. In the implementation of this project, NGO Ce.Sa.Re.N will be supported by other key structures such as:

- The General Directorate of Forestry and Natural Resources (DGFRN), which is the Forestry Administration responsible for developing governmental policies and strategies of state and the national sustainable forest management programmes. It will validate SF simple management plans and ensure compliance of project activities with current forest management legislation. Further DGFRN represents the Focal Structure which manages the the ITTA in Benin. It will work at project implementation and monitoring in compliance with relevant ITTO Guidelines. It is the collaborating Agency of the project.
- Beninese Environmental Agency (ABE): This is the National Focal Point for the management of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention) in Benin. It develops policies, strategies and management plans for RAMSAR Sites in Benin. It will be associated with this project to ensure compliance with plans and strategies for wetland management and synergy with the various on-going actions.
- To monitor the management and implementation of the project, a Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be set up, which will also support the Executing Agency. The Project Steering Committee will consist of DGFRN, ABE and the representative of municipalities, dignitaries and Technical and Financial Partners (PTFs).

2.1.2. Stakeholder analysis

The implementation of pre-project PPD 165/12 Rev.1 (F) helped identify and characterize the main stakeholders involved in the sustainable management of sacred forests in RAMSAR sites 1017 and 1018. There are three categories of stakeholders:

- Primary stakeholders directly involved in the sustainable management of sacred forests: These are:
 - Traditional authorities involving dignitaries, traditional leaders, village chiefs, kings, earth priests, heads of communities, voodoo priests. These are the managers and owners of SFs. Their lives and authority depend on SFs;
 - Local communities or populations including men, women and children who may have access to and harvest resources of SFs;
 - Local farmers bordering the FS. They conduct agricultural activities in the immediate vicinity of forests that may have impacts on these forests.
- Included among secondary stakeholders involved in the sustainable management of sacred forests, are the following groups:
 - Municipal authorities. They are responsible for the development and sustainable management of municipal resources. These are stakeholders who will support the implementation of the project in institutional and financial terms. Indeed municipal authorities have strongly endorsed the project and have demonstrated their commitment by issuing letters of endorsement and co-financing pledges attached hereto in Appendix 4. These are very important stakeholders for the sustainability of project activities.
 - The Forest Administration, which is collaborating agency providing institutional support to the project
 - Beninese Environment Agency which is another institutional stakeholder.
- **Tertiary** stakeholders include CARDER, the training and Research institutions and development NGOs.

Stakeholders Groups	Characteristics	Problems, needs and interests	Potentials	Involvement in the project
<i>Primary stakeholders</i>				
<i>Traditional authorities: dignitaries, traditional chieftains, village elders, kings, earth priests and land chiefs, community leaders, voodoo priests,</i>	Guarantors and managers of SF. These authorities protect sacred forests and edict SF access and local natural resource management rules.	Lack of capacity to ensure the conservation of SFs in the current context. Reduction of their power. Base for livelihoods threatened. Wait to see the SFs allocated management plans and legal recognition.	Traditional authorities wield power at village community level. Keepers and repository of local knowledge in the conservation of natural resources and SFs. Strong commitment to participatory management.	Prime project beneficiaries; they will be supported by the project in terms of capacity building for the sustainable management of SFs. They will facilitate the set-up of local SF management committees (CLGFS) and activities in the SFs.
Local communities or populations	Users, comprising men, women and children of the villages who live on SF resources.	Lack of resources to secure the sustainable management of resources and the conservation of SFs; stakeholders applying their respective pressures on SFs. Reduced	Strong IGA development potentials to conserve SFs. Patiently awaiting the implementation of the project. Strong commitment to the sustainable	Prime beneficiaries and direct stakeholders for the implementation of development activities and alternative income-generating activities.

Stakeholders Groups	Characteristics	Problems, needs and interests	Potentials	Involvement in the project
		<u>stakeholders' livelihoods</u>	managemnet of SFs.	
Farmers using arable lands adjacent to SFs	Active group compose of SF local residents; they derive their income from farming	Need to increase their farming output. Lack of means to apply improved production technology; encroach or "nibble at" SFs.	Understand the significance of SFs. Willingness to adopt improved production technology. Welcome behavior changes.	Prime stakeholders and beneficiaries of capacity-building activities under the project and facilitation of SF delimitation.
<i>Secondary Stakeholders</i>				
Municipal authorities	In charge of tenure management, and of preparing and applying municipalities' development plans.	Limited knowledge of site potentials; inadequate use of development opportunities; Inadequate capacity to undertake integrated natural resource planning	Exercise their authority and a strong influence on land management. Deeply committed to sustainable SF management.	Collaborate to secure the tenure of SFs and appropriate resource allocation to the project implementation process (see letters of endorsement and co-financing pledges in Annex 4). Support the establishment of Municipal Committees for the incorporation of SFs.
Forest Administration	Represented in all project intervention municipalities. In charge of enforcing the national forest policy, forest laws and regulations in connection with sustainable forest resource management.	Lack of adequate resources to support sustainable community forest management. Little interest demonstrated in the past for SF management.	Is increasingly aware of the significance and potentials of SFs.	Appuyer l'élaboration et la validation des plans de gestion des FS. Supporting the implementation of Management Plans
Beninese Environment Agency	Competent agency for the management of RAMSAR sites in Benin. Develops the development plans of RAMSAR sites in Benin.	Inadequate resource level to ensure the conservation and sustainable management any wetlands of international significance. Concerned by natural resource degradation issues in RAMSAR sites.	Strong commitment to resource conservation.	A partner institution that will ensure environmental compliance of project actions. Support to the institutional set up of the project.
<i>Tertiary Stakeholders</i>				

Stakeholders Groups	Characteristics	Problems, needs and interests	Potentials	Involvement in the project
CARDER (Atlantique-littoral, Mono-Couffo, Ouémé-Plateau, Zou)	In charge of implementing rural development policies.	Concerned by site degradation and the management of SF-surrounding areas.	Know-how in capacity building for Improved Agricultural Production Systems (SAP).	Collaborates with the project team to build the capacities of SF-surrounding farmers selected by the Project.
Training centres and research institutes	Have education and research missions.	Inadequate resources to provide support to research and development actions.	Competence for training, research, studies and surveys.	Collaborate in the implementation of research and development projects.
Development NGOs	Actively involved in the implementation of rural development activities.	Lack of resources and skills in sustainable rural development activities.	Positive work experience in project intervention areas.	Subcontract development activities, capacity building of direct beneficiaries and experience sharing.

2.1.3. Problem analysis

The degradation of ecosystems is a major threat to the sustainability of communities' livelihoods. Investigations carried out under pre-project PPD 165/12 Rev.1 (F) have demonstrated that the fundamental problem is that SFs are not sustainably managed. This inevitably leads to the destruction of forests. The main causes of this problem are of three types namely:

- ✓ **Overexploitation of resources in sacred forest;**
- ✓ **The low levels of income derived from Sacred forests;**
- ✓ **The lack of formal protection framework for sacred forests;**
- ✓ **The erosion of cultural values associated with sacred forests. The latter issue is not addressed within this project. The means and methods to deal with it is beyond the capacity of the project. Only the first three causes will be addressed.**

a) **Overexploitation of resources in sacred forest**

High population densities in southern Benin have negatively affected the forest resources in both the soil and in sacred forests. Meeting the needs for timber forest products, which used to be achieved from rural land resources is now being done using resources from sacred forests. This situation has translated into the overexploitation of resources, hence the degradation of sacred forests. The existing potential of these forests is not known; the boundaries of sacred forests are not clearly materialized and surrounding farmers in search of arable land to increase production do make incursions or encroachments in sacred forests. Due to the absence of land property title on these sacred forests, compounded with the waning powers and aggravating poverty of their managers and custodians, there are land ownership conflicts disputes, subdivision of land estates and fragmentation followed by the sale of land plot from sacred forests. The development of management tools (simplified development and management plans), improved cultivation techniques and the development of reforestation will help to reduce pressure on the sacred forests.

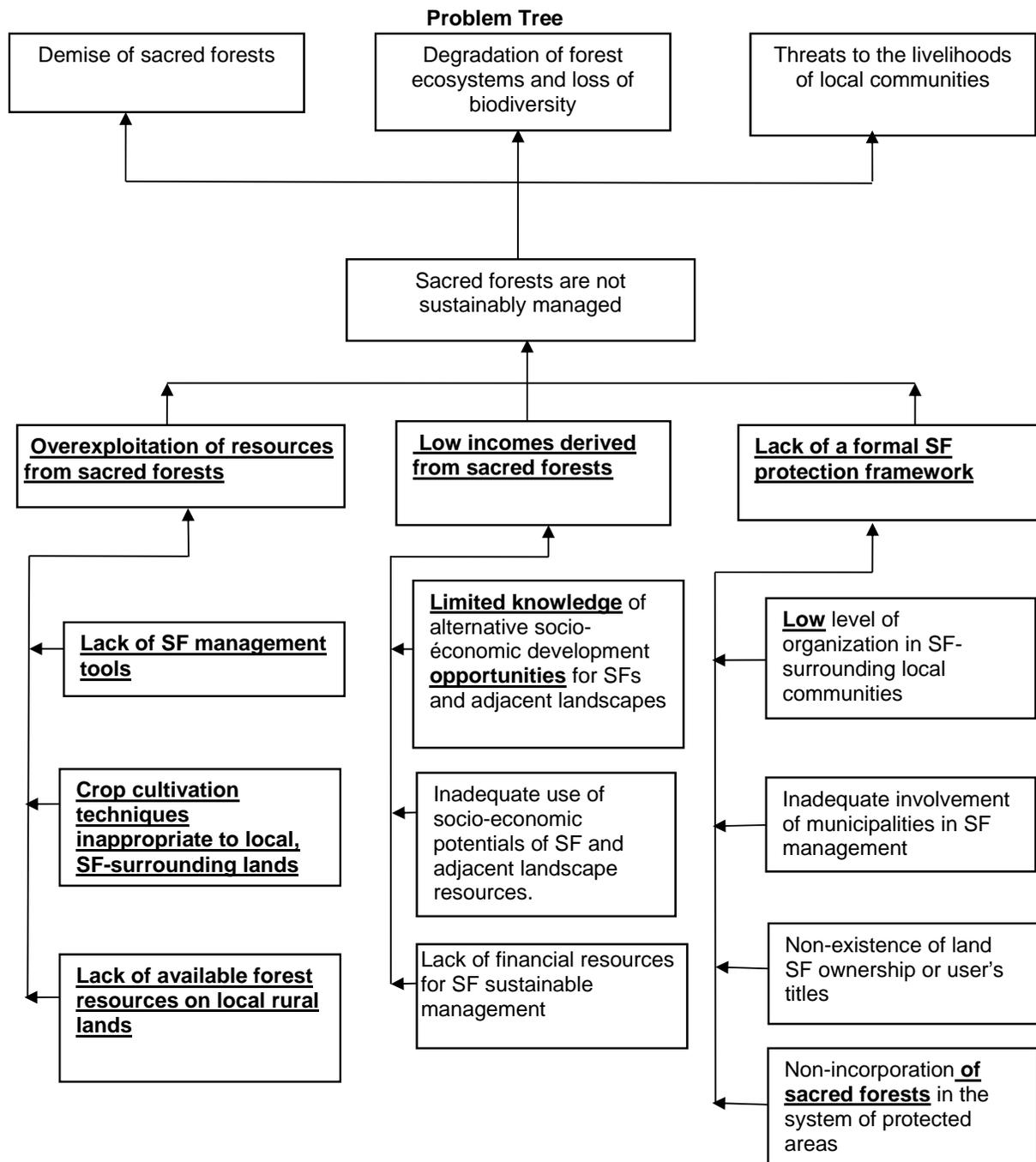
b) **The low levels of income derived from Sacred forests**

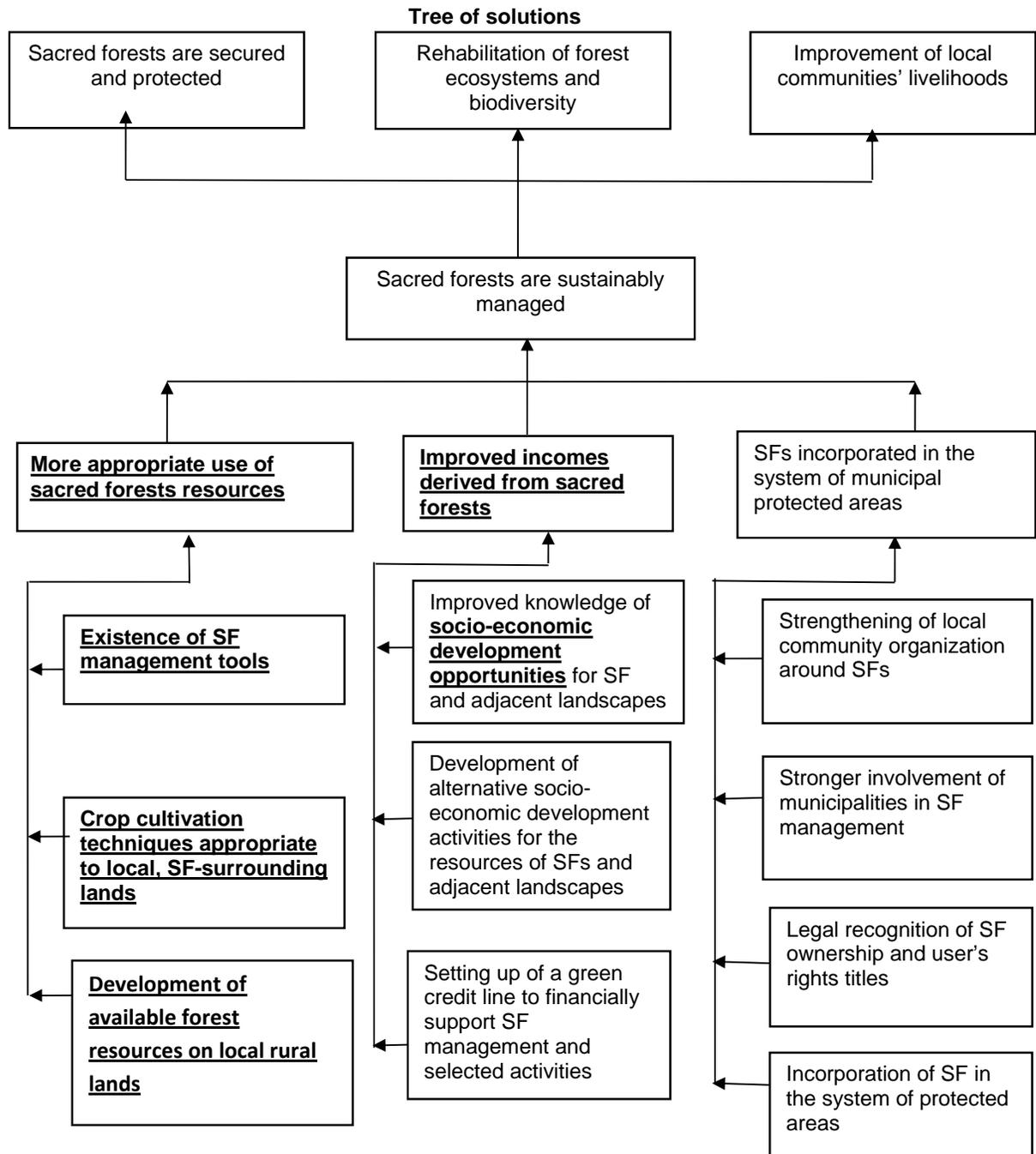
SF-surrounding communities derive their main income from agriculture and forestry resources. But with the increasing population, falling agricultural yields and increasing impoverishment, these people fall back on forest resources on which they exert more pressure. **Limited knowledge** of the opportunities to use the resources of the SFs combined with the non-existence of potential recovery methods maintain local populations within a vicious circle of poverty with a consequent degradation and increased deforestation of SFs. This project will break this vicious circle **by achieving a better knowledge of the various opportunities** and by developing income generating activities. Consequently the project will diversify the sources of income and improve the livelihoods of the communities while conserving forest resources.

c) **The lack of formal protection framework for sacred forests**

SFs are under no formal protection framework, unlike other forest reserves (gazetted forests). Due to the erosion of traditional dignitaries' powers and despite their desire to retain them, the sacred forests are no longer resilient to the various human-induced pressures they face. Municipal authorities in charge of local development do not give SFs the attention they deserve. Municipal authorities are hardly involved in the management of SFs. Consequently, SFs are not considered in most Municipal Development Plans (CDP). Moreover, the lack of consultation mechanisms between those responsible for the management of SFs has also promoted degradation and destruction.

Consequently there has been a degradation and demise of sacred forests with a loss of biodiversity and a reduction of livelihoods in the local communities. The implementation of this project will help solve the aforesaid issues to halt the degradation of these forests and initiate their sustainable management.





2.1.4. Logical framework matrix

Intervention Strategy	Measurable indicators	Means of Verification	Management assumptions
<p><u>Development Objective:</u> To contribute to sustainable forest management of wetlands in southern Benin</p>	<p><u>Impact Indicators</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by 2020, the wetland ecosystem degradation process currently affecting wetlands of global importance in southern Benin is reduced by at least 30%; • At the end of the project the living standards of communities closely dependent on forest resources have been raised by at least 20%; • At the end of the project the plant cover in RAMSAR sites 1017 and 1018 has increased by 10% at least. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Satellite imagery, aerial photographs, vegetation maps, - National reports by the Beninese Environment Agency on the management of RAMSAR sites in Benin; - Reports by DGFRN on forest resources - Reports on project implementation (progress reports) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable management of wetland ecosystems remains a national priority; - Climate change does not affect ecosystems beyond repair; - The livelihoods linked to forest resources are competitive.
<p><u>Specific Objective</u> The specific objective of this project is to sustainably manage sacred forests within Ramsar sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin by building the capacity of stakeholders to improve the living conditions of local populations.</p>	<p><u>Output indicators</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of the project, 40 sacred forests feature operational management tools • 60 hectares of plantation established • at the end of the project, revenues derived from sacred forest have increased by 25%; • At the end of the project, 40 sacred forests have been provided with formal protection frameworks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The various project reports (progress reports, mid-term evaluation, and completion reports) - Interview-surveys of stakeholders - Document incorporating SFs in the Protected Area Systems; - Institutional SF management framework document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The sustainable management of sacred forests remains a priority for grassroots stakeholders; - Effective stakeholders' support to project objectives.
<p><u>Output 1</u> <u>More appropriate use of sacred forest resources</u></p>	<p><u>Output indicators</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of the 2nd year, the simplified management plans of 40 sacred forests have been developed and validated in a participatory way; • At the end of the 2nd year, the boundaries of the 40 sacred forests are known and materialized; • By project completion date, farming outputs on the rural lands adjacent to 40 SFs have increased by 20%; • By project completion date, at least 40 hectares of plantation have been established and the forest resources of 40 SFs have been enhanced through enrichment planting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Management plan documents for SFs; - Project progress reports - Surface areas of established plantations - Density of indigenous species introduced through enrichment planting activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The local communities support the project objectives; - Participatory an iterative approach complied with. - Project beneficiaries do implement the established techniques.
<p><u>Output 2</u> <u>Improved incomes derived from sacred forests</u></p>	<p><u>Output indicators</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of the 1st year, the socio-economic potentials and value-added development alternatives of selected sacred forests and their adjacent landscapes are known. • The revenues derived from SFs under development have risen by 25% after 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number awareness-raising sessions and number of participants at such sessions. - Survey on beneficiaries' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Readiness to participate in the sessions and responsiveness to the information provided. - Willingness of local communities to

Intervention Strategy	Measurable indicators	Means of Verification	Management assumptions
	<p>the third year of the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the end of the 2nd year, sustainable SF funding mechanisms are known and implemented. 	<p>satisfaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and type of sustainable funding mechanisms and value-added development for the SFs identified and implemented. 	<p>implement the novel funding and value-added development mechanisms.</p>
<p>Output 3 Rehabilitated SFs are integrated in the System of Municipal Protected Areas</p>	<p><u>Output indicators</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the end of the 1st year, all stakeholders have been made aware of secured SFs. At the end of the project, adequate community-based institutional arrangements for the sustainable management of sacred forests have been established. At the end of the project 40 sacred forests under sustainable management have been incorporated in the System of Municipal Protected Areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number awareness-raising sessions and number of participants at such sessions. Project progress reports. Law enacting the incorporation of SFs in the System of Municipal Protected Areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The various stakeholders assume their respective roles. Strict respect of the incorporation process.

2.2. Objectives

2.2.1. Development objectives and impact indicators

The development objective of the project is to contribute to sustainable forest management of wetlands in southern Benin.

Indicators

- By 2020, the wetland ecosystem degradation process currently affecting wetlands of global importance in southern Benin is reduced by at least 30%;
- By the end of the project the livelihoods of communities closely dependent on forest resources are improved by at least 20%;
- At the end of the project the plant cover in RAMSAR sites 1017 and 1018 has increased by 10% at least.

2.2.2. Specific objective and outcome indicators

The specific objective of the project is to sustainably manage sacred forests within Ramsar sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin by building the capacity of stakeholders to improve the living conditions of local populations.

Indicators

- At the end of the project, **40 sacred forests** feature operational management tools
- At the end of the project, revenues derived from sacred forest have increased by 25%;;
- At the end of the project, **40 sacred forests** are covered by appropriate legislative and institutional frameworks.

3. PART THREE: DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT INTERVENTIONS

3.1 Outputs and Activities

3.1.1. Outputs

Three outputs are expected from the implementation of this project.

Output 1: More appropriate use of sacred forest resources

Output 2: Improved incomes derived from sacred forests

Output 3: SFs are integrated in the System of Municipal Protected Areas

3.1.2. Activities

To achieve the outputs, the following activities will be implemented:

Output 1: More appropriate use of sacred forest resources

Activity 1.1: To develop and validate simplified SF management plans

Activity 1.2: To implement **simplified forest development and management plans**

Activity 1.3: To identify the Improved Production Systems (SAP) appropriate to adjacent rural lands

Activity 1.4: To support the implementation of these SAPs

Activity 1.5: To support reforestation work and enrichment planting in the sacred forests;

Output 2: Improved incomes derived from sacred forests

Activity 2.1: To review SF socio-economic development opportunities

Activity 2.2: To support the implementation of alternative income generating activities in SF and surrounding landscapes

Activity 2.3: To identify and **establish the sustainable financing mechanisms required for alternative activities and SF management.**

Output 3: SFs are integrated in the System of Municipal Protected Areas

Activity 3.1: Building the communities organization and intervention capacities for sustainable SF management

Activity 3.2: To build the capacities of municipalities for SF management

Activity 3.3: To incorporate SFs in the system of municipal protected area

4. The project is appropriately managed

Activity 4.1 : To establish the project management team and the Project Steering Committee

Activity 4.2 : To organize one Project launching workshop

Activity 4.3 : To organize one project completion workshop.

3.2 Implementation approaches and methods

This project proposes to reduce the degradation of FS Ramsar sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin by addressing the main causes identified. Sacred forests are the property of local communities and their rehabilitation and sustainable management necessarily involves the adoption of a participatory approach. The project will work in collaboration with all stakeholders in SF management. All steps will be executed according to this approach. **This is why the Information, Education and Communication approach will be preferred at each stage of the project process. This will enable all project stakeholders to acquire a shared vision and work in synergy to achieve the expected results.**

In addition, the implementation of this project will be carried out by a multidisciplinary team of foresters, socio-economists and geographer / cartographer and experts in integrated wetlands management, local development agents, with the involvement of local communities and the managers of target sacred forests and the collaboration of municipal authorities and the Forest Administration. Specific studies will be the topic of mutual consultation exercises. The implementation of this project will be undertaken in three steps corresponding to the three outputs:

3.2.1. Sustainable use of Sacred Forest resources

One enabling condition of the sustainable management of SF resources is the development and implementation of management tools, the improvement of crop cultivation techniques on rural lands to reduce the frequency and magnitude of encroachments on SF areas and improve the timber production potentials.

Management tools will be developed from the first year of the project and implemented in a participatory manner. To do this, the proposed strategy consists of:

- Developing SF development and management plans through consultancy services. Partner NGOs and experienced individual consultants will be recruited for developing such plans for the identified SF. These plans will then be validated at several levels by the competent authorities and environmental compliance certificates will be issued by the competent structures. The management plan requirements (including reforestation, protection, enrichment planting and planting) will be enforced by the project team with the support of the communities. Aspects relating to the material demarcation of SF areas will be addressed in the implementation of these plans.
- **Building the capacity of local stakeholders to improve the production systems on local rural lands through the identification of appropriate techniques and support to their implementation;**
- **To improve the timber product potentials through reforestation work both on adjacent rural lands and in SF through enrichment planting activities conducted in the latter.**

3.2.2. Improving incomes derived from sacred forests

The level of poverty of the local population is a limiting factor for the sustainable SF management. The survival instinct sometimes leads SF managers to overuse resources or even sell portions of SF land. The second output is an approach to poverty reduction and to alleviate the various pressures on SFs by local communities. Indeed, religious awe having become obsolete, the sustainable conservation of SFs should be based not only on their cultic and cultural roles but also and especially on their material contribution to improving the revenue of forest stewards and managers. Through this output the project will diversify the sources of income of forest users through the development of income-generating activities to reduce poverty, thereby alleviating the pressure on forest resources. These activities were identified by local stakeholders themselves during the implementation of the pre-project; they include the production of great cane rats, rabbits, snails and other CITES species. Particular emphasis will be placed on profitable reforestation activities, i.e the production of service wood and fuel wood from plantations established in adjacent lands.

To achieve this, a study on the socio-economic profitability and the business plan will be conducted in the first year of project implementation. Then key beneficiaries will be selected and trained. The initial resources seeded to commence these activities will be made available to beneficiaries in the form of loans that is to say, "green micro-credits". At the end of the cycle, the initial capital that had been made available to each beneficiary will be collected and allocated to other beneficiaries, and so on. The application of this principle will ensure sustainable and ongoing funding for these activities in the adjacent landscape to reduce poverty and alleviate any poverty-induced pressure on forest resources.

3.2.3. Strategies to incorporate SF in the system of municipal protected areas

At the end of the project SFs selected by the project will be integrated into the system of Municipal Protected Areas. In addition to being placed under management plans for sustainable use, the selected SFs shall be **spared** from any human-induced stress through an appropriate legislative and regulatory framework ensuring their physical integrity. To do this, the proposed project strategy is to

establish SF management bodies: Local Sacred Forest Management Committee of the (CLGFS) and at municipal level the Municipal Coordination and Monitoring Committee for the Incorporation of Sacred Forests (CCSIF). These bodies will undertake legal registration procedures, the integration of SFs as permanent forest estate of municipalities and the sustainability of project activities.

3.3 Work Plan

Outputs/Activities	Responsible / Collaborating Parties	Work Plan											
		Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
		T1	T2	T3	T4	T1	T2	T3	T4	T1	T2	T3	T4
Output 1 : <u>More appropriate use of sacred forest resources</u>													
Activity 1.1 : To develop and implement SF simplified management plans	Consultant / Project Coordinator												
Activity 1.2 : <u>To implement simplified forest management and development plans</u>	Communities/ Project												
Activity 1.3 : <u>To identify the improved production systems (SAP) appropriate to adjacent rural lands</u>	Consultant / Communities Project Coordinator												
Activity 1.4 : <u>To support the implementation of these SAPs</u>	Communities/ Project Coordinator												
Activity 1.5 : <u>To support reforestation work and enrichment planting in the sacred forests</u>	Communities/ Project/ Local and Forest Administrations												
Output 2: <u>Improved incomes derived from sacred forests</u>													
Activity 2.1 : <u>To review SF socio-economic development opportunities</u>	Consultant / Project Coordinator												
Activity 2.2 : <u>To support the implementation of alternative income generating activities in SF and surrounding landscapes</u>	Consultant / Project Coordinator												
Activity 2.3 : To identify and implement the sustainable financing mechanisms required for alternative activities and SF management.	Project Coordinator / NGOs												
Output 3: SFs are integrated in the System of Municipal Protected Areas													
Activity 3.1 : Building the communities organization and intervention capacities for sustainable SF management	Project Coordinator / Consultant												
Activity 3.2 : To build the capacities of municipalities for SF management	Consultant / Project Coordinator												
Activity 3.3 : To incorporate SFs in the system of municipal protected area	Project Coordinator /Communities												
4. Project management													
Activity 4.1 : To establish the project team and the Project Steering Committee	Project Coordinator												
Activity 4.2 : To conduct one project launching workshop	Project Coordinator												
Activity 4.3 : To conduct one project completion workshop	Project Coordinator												

T1 = 1st Quarter

3.4 Budget

The project budget is presented in the main budget matrix below. It provides the details of the costs of project activities and lists the quantities, respective unit costs, the total and distribution by funding sources.

3.4.1. Main budget matrix

Outputs/ Activities	Description	Budget component	Quantity			Units	Unit Costs (US\$)	Total cost (US\$)	ITTO			EA		
			Year 1	Year 2	Year 3				Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Output 1 :	<u>More appropriate use of sacred forest resources</u>													
Activity 1.1 :	To develop and implement SF simplified management plans													
	To hire consultants to develop Simplified Management Plans for 40 SFs	211	40			Lump sum	925	37 000	37 000	0	0			
	Validation workshops for 40 SF management plans (10 workshops, 2 days, 20 participants)	611	5	5		Lump sum	1 600	16 000	8 000	8 000	0			
	Meeting room rental	611	5	5		Lump sum	200	2 000	1 000	1 000	0			
	Duty travels	311	5	5		Lump sum	200	2 000	1 000	1 000	0			
	To organize six (6) IEC missions (5 deays x 4 participants)	311	3	3		Unité	1 400	8 400	4 200	4 200	0			
	Duty travels	311	3	3		Lump sum	200	1 200	600	600	0			
Activity 1.2 :	<u>To implement simplified forest management and development plans</u>													

Outputs/ Activities	Description	Budget component	Quantity			Units	Unit Costs (US\$)	Total cost (US\$)	ITTO			EA		
			Year 1	Year 2	Year 3				Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
	Materializing the boundaries of 40 SFs (Landmarking and boundary line planting)	212		250		Ha	131	32 750	0	32 750	0			
	Release of CITES specimens in SFs	212		300		Unit	2	600	0	600	0			
Activity 1.3 :	<u>To identify the improved production systems (SAP) appropriate to adjacent rural lands</u>													
	<u>Hiring of consultants for SAPs</u>	213		2		Man/ month	2 000	4 000	4 000					
	<u>Validation workshop (1 day x 30 participants)</u>	613	30			particip ants	80	2 400	2 400					
Activity 1.4 :	<u>To support the implementation of these SAPs</u>	213		80	80	ha	200			16 000	16 000			
Activity 1.5 :	<u>To support reforestation work and enrichment planting in the sacred forests</u>													
	<u>50% enrichment of SFs</u>	215		150	-	ha	200	30 000	0	16 000	8 000		6 000	
	<u>Planting work on adjacent rural lands and SFs</u>	215		60		ha	916	55 000		20 000	15 000		20 000	
Output 2 : Improved incomes derived from sacred forests														
Activity 2.1	<u>To review SF socio-economic development opportunities</u>													
	Hiring of one socio-economics consultant in value-added development of natural resources	221	2			Man /month	3 000	6 000	6 000	0	0			

Outputs/ Activities	Description	Budget component	Quantity			Units	Unit Costs (US\$)	Total cost (US\$)	ITTO			EA		
			Year 1	Year 2	Year 3				Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
	Validation of the study on the value-added development of socio-economic development of SFs and surrounding lands	621	30			Participant	80	2 400	2 400	0	0			
Activity 2.2	<u>To support the implementation of alternative income generating activities in SF and surrounding landscapes</u>													
	Technical training provided to two (2) IGA Groups per village (01 IGA per SF)	622		80		Group	100	8 000	0	8 000	0			
	Financial support to the Joint-interest Group to start out IGAs	622		80		Group	400	32 000	0	32 000	0			
Activity 2.3	To set up a line of green credits to provide financial support to SF management and selected activities	623		1		Lump sum	50 000	50 000	6 250	25 000	18 750			
Output 3: SFs are integrated into the System of Protected Areas														
Activity 3.1 :	Building the communities organization and intervention capacities for sustainable SF management													
	Meetings to establish Local Sacred Forest Management Committees	631	40			Meetings	100	4 000	4 000	0	0			

Outputs/ Activities	Description	Budget component	Quantity			Units	Unit Costs (US\$)	Total cost (US\$)	ITTO			EA			
			Year 1	Year 2	Year 3				Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
Activity 3.2 :	To build the capacities of municipalities for SF management														
	Meeting to put in place municipal coordination and monitoring committees for the incorporation of sacred forests	632	20			Comités	250	5 000	5 000	0	0				
	Seven-day missions for 3-participant to set up municipal committees	332	21			M.d	80	1 680	1 680	0	0				
	Duty travels	332	1			Lump sum	200	200	200	0	0				
Activity 3.3:	To incorporate SFs in the system of municipal protected area														
	Public consultation	633		40		Lump sum	200	8 000			0		8 000		
	Cost of SF integration procedure	633		40		unit	200	8 000					8 000		
4	Project management														
Activity 4.1:	To establish the project team and the Project Steering Committee														
	1 Project Coordinator	11.1	12	12	12	Man/month	1 000	36 800					12 000	12 000	12 000
	1 Project monitoring & eval. assistant	11.2	12	12	12	Man/month	600	21 600	7 200	7 200	7 200				

Outputs/ Activities	Description	Budget component	Quantity			Units	Unit Costs (US\$)	Total cost (US\$)	ITTO			EA		
			Year 1	Year 2	Year 3				Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
	1 Accountant / secretary	11.3	12	12	12	Man/ month	400	14 400	4 800	4 800	4 800			
-	02 local development staff	11.4	12	12	12	Man/ month	800	28800	9 600	9 600	9 600			
	1 Conducteur de véhicule	11.5	12	12	12	Man/ month	250	9 000				3 000	3 000	3 000
	01 Field vehicle	441	1			Unit	40 000	40 000	40 000	0	0			
-	02 Field trip motorcycles	442	2	-	-	Unit	4 000	8 000	8 000	0	0			
	Vehicle Insurance	541	1	1	1	Unit	300	900	0	0	0	300	300	300
	Vehicle servicing & maintenance	541		1	1	Unit	Lump sum	3 500	0	0	0	500	1 500	1 500
	Fuel and lubricant	542	12	12	12	m	250	9 000	3 000	3 000	3 000			
	Desk top computer	444	3			Unit	800	2 400	0	0	0	2 400		
	Laptop computers	444	4			Unit	800	3 200	3 200	0	0			
	Printers	444	1			Unit	1 200	1 200	0	0	0	1 200		
	Photocopy machine	444	1			Unit	1 200	1 200	1 200	0	0			
	Video Projector	445	1			Unit	1 200	1 200	0	0	0	1 200		
	Power surge protector	445	3			Unit	100	300		0	0	300		
	Utilities	543	12	12	12	m	200	7 200	2 400	2 400	2 400			
	Office supplies	544	12	12	12	m	300	10 800	3 600	3 600	3 600			
	Office rent	6411	12	12	12	m	600	21 600				7 200	7 200	7 200
	6 Meetings of the Project Steering committee	6411	2	2	2	Unit	600	3 600	1 200	1 200	1 200			
	Internal audit (03)	643	1	1	1	Man/ month	2 000	6 000	2 000	2 000	2 000			
	EA's Management costs	71	1	1	1									

Outputs/ Activities	Description	Budget component	Quantity			Units	Unit Costs (US\$)	Total cost (US\$)	ITTO			EA		
			Year 1	Year 2	Year 3				Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Activity 4.2 :	To organize and conduct one project launching workshop													
	1 workshop, 1 day, <u>40</u> participants	642	<u>40</u>			Participa nt	80	<u>3 200</u>	3200					
	Duty travels	342	<u>40</u>			Participa nt	<u>20</u>	<u>800</u>	<u>800</u>					
	Meeting room rental	642	1			1	400	400	400	0	0			
Activity 4.3:	To organize a project launching workshop													
	1 workshop, 1 day, <u>30</u> participants	643	<u>40</u>			Participa nt	<u>80</u>	<u>3 200</u>			<u>3 200</u>			
	Duty travels	343	<u>40</u>			Participa nt	<u>20</u>				<u>800</u>			
	Meeting room rental	643	1			Lump sum	400	<u>400</u>		0	400			

3.4.2. Consolidated project budget by components

Category	Description	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
10	Personnel				
11.1	1 Project Coordinator	36 000	12 000	12 000	12 000
11.2	1 Project monitoring & eval. assistant	21 600	7 200	7 200	7 200
11.3	1 Accountant / secretary	14 400	4 800	4 800	4 800
11.4	02 local development staff	28 800	9 600	9 600	9 600
11.5	1 Driver	9 000	3 000	3 000	3 000
19	Sub-total	109 800	36 600	36 600	36 600
20	Sub-contracting				
211	To hire consultants to develop Simplified Management Plans for 40 SFs	37 000	37 000		
212	Materializing the boundaries of 40 SFs (Landmarking and boundary line planting)	32 750		32 750	
212	Release of CITES specimens in SFs	600		600	
213	Hiring of consultants for SAPs	4 000	4 000		
214	To support the implementation of these SAPs	16 000	16 000	0	
215	50% enrichment of SFs	30 000		30 000	
215	Planting work on adjacent rural lands and SFs	55 000		55 000	
221	Hiring of one socio-economics consultant in value-added development of natural resources	6 000	6 000		
29	Sub-total	181 350	63 000	118 350	0
30	Duty travels				
311	Duty travels for validation workshop	2 000	1 000	1 000	
311	To organize six (6) IEC missions (5 deays x 4 participants)	8 400	4 200	4 200	
311	Duty travels IEC	1 200	600	600	
332	Seven-day missions for 3-participant to set up municipal committees	1 680	1680		
332	Duty travels	200	200		
342	Duty travels	800	800		
342	Duty travels	800			800
39	Sub-total	15 080	8 480	5 800	800
40	Capital goods				
441	01 Field vehicle	40 000	40 000		
442	02 Field trip motorcycles	8 000	8 000		
444	Desk top computer	2 400	2 400		
444	Laptop computers	3 200	3 200		
444	Printers	1 200	1200		
444	Photocopy machine	1 200	1 200		
445	Video Projector	1 200	1 200		
445	Power surge protector	300	300		
49	Sub-total	57 500	57 500	0	0
50	Consumables				
541	Vehicule insurance cover	900	300	300	300
541	Vehicle repair / maintenance	3 500	500	1 500	1 500
542	Fuel and lubricant	9 000	3 000	3 000	3 000
543	Utilities	7 200	2 400	2 400	2 400

Category	Description	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
544	Office supplies	10 800	3 600	3 600	3 600
59	Sub-total	31 400	9 800	10 800	10 800
60	Miscellaneous				
6111	Validation workshops for 40 SF management plans (10 workshops, 2 days, 20 participants)	16 000	8 000	8 000	
6111	Meeting room rental	2 000	1 000	1 000	
613	Validation workshop SAP (1 day x 30 participants)	2 400	2 400		
621	Validation of the study on the value-added development of socio-economic development of SFs and surrounding lands	2 400	2 400		
622	Technical training provided to two (2) IGA Groups per village (01 IGA per SF)	8 000		8 000	
622	Financial support to the Joint-interest Group to start out IGAs	32 000		32 000	
623	To set up a line of green credits to provide financial support to SF management and selected activities	50 000		50 000	
631	Meetings to establish Local Sacred Forest Management Committees	4 000	4 000		
652	Meeting to put in place municipal coordination and monitoring committees for the incorporation of sacred forests	5 000	5 000		
633	Public consultation	8 000		8 000	
633	Cost of SF integration procedure	8 000		8 000	
641.1	Office rent	21 600	7 200	7 200	7 200
641.2	6 Meetings of the Project Steering committee	3 600	1 200	1 200	1 200
642	Project launching workshop, 1 day, 40 participants	3 200	3 200		
642	Meeting room rental	400	400		
643	Project closing workshop , 1 day, 40 participants	3 200			3 200
643	Meeting room rental	400			400
647	Internal Audit (03)	6 000	2 000	2 000	2 000
69	Sub-total	176 200	36 800	125 400	14 000
70	National Management costs				
71	Executing agency's management costs				
79	Sub-total				
80	Project Monitoring and Admin				
81	ITTO Monitoring and Review	30 000	10 000	10 000	10 000
82	Mid-term evaluation by ITTO	0			
83	ITTO Ex-post Evaluation				
	Sub-total 10 to 83 above	483 230			
	ITTO Programme Support costs (12% on items 10 to 83 above)	57 988			
89	Sub-total	87 988			
100	OVERALL TOTAL	659 318			

3.4.3. Yearly Project Budget by sources: ITTO

Category	Description	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
10	Personnel				
11.1	1 Project Coordinator				
11.2	1 Project monitoring & eval. assistant	21 600	7 200	7 200	7 200
11.3	1 Accountant / secretary	14 400	4 800	4 800	4 800
11.4	02 local development staff	28 800	9 600	9 600	9 600
11.5	1 Driver				
19	Sub-total	64 800	21 600	21 600	21 600
20	Sub-contracting				
211	To hire consultants to develop Simplified Management Plans for 40 SFs	37 000	37 000		
212	Materializing the boundaries of 40 SFs (Landmarking and boundary line planting)	32 750		32750	
212	Release of CITES specimens in SFs	600		600	
213	Hiring of consultants for SAPs	4 000	4000		
214	To support the implementation of these SAPs	16 000	16 000	0	
215	50% enrichment of SFs	24 000		24 000	
215	Planting work on adjacent rural lands and SFs	35 000		35 000	
221	Hiring of one socio-economics consultant in value-added development of natural resources	6 000	6 000		
29	Sub-total	155 350	63 000	92 350	0
30	Duty travels				
311	Duty travelsatelier validation plan	2 000	1 000	1 000	
311	To organize six (6) IEC missions (5 deays x 4 participants)	8 400	4 200	4 200	
311	Duty travels IEC	1 200	600	600	
332	Seven-day missions for 3-participant to set up municipal committees	1 680	1680		
332	Duty travel	200	200		
342	Duty travel	800	800		
342	Duty travel	800			800
39	Sub-total	15 080	8 480	5 800	800
40	Capital goods				
441	01 Field vehicle	40 000	40 000		
442	02 Field trip motorcycles	8 000	8 000		
444	Desk top computer	0			
444	Laptop computers	3 200	3 200		
444	Printers	0			
444	Photocopy machine	1 200	1 200		
445	Video Projector	0			
445	Power surge protector	0			
49	Sub-total	52 400	52 400	0	0
50	Consumables				
541	Vehicule insurance cover				

Category	Description	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
541	Vehicle repair				
542	Fuel and lubricant	9 000	3 000	3 000	3 000
543	Utilities	7 200	2 400	2 400	2 400
544	Office supplies	10 800	3 600	3 600	3 600
59	Sub-total	27 000	9 000	9 000	9 000
60	Miscellaneous				
6111	Validation workshops for 40 SF management plans (10 workshops, 2 days, 20 participants)	16 000	8 000	8 000	
6111	Meeting room rental	2 000	1 000	1 000	
613	Validation workshop SAP (1 day x30 participants)	2 400	2 400		
621	Validation of the study on the value-added development of socio-economic development of SFs and surrounding lands	2 400	2 400		
622	Technical training provided to two (2) IGA Groups per village (01 IGA per SF)	8 000		8 000	
622	Financial support to the Joint-interest Group to start out IGAs	32 000		32 000	
623	To set up a line of green credits to provide financial support to SF management and selected activities	50 000		50 000	
631	Meetings to establish Local Sacred Forest Management Committees	4 000	4 000		
652	Meeting to put in place municipal coordination and monitoring committees for the incorporation of sacred forests	5 000	5 000		
633	Public consultation	0			
633	Cost of SF integration procedure	0			
6411	Office rent				
6411	6 Meetings of the Project Steering committee	3 600	1 200	1 200	1 200
642	One project launching workshop, 1 day, 40 participants	3 200	3 200		
	Meeting room rental	400	400		
	Project closing workshop , 1 day, 40 participants	3 200			3 200
	Meeting room rental	400			400
647	Internal audit (03)	6 000	2 000	2 000	2 000
69	Sub-total	138 600	29 600	102 200	6 800
70	National Management costs				
71	Executing agency's management costs				
79	Sub-total				
80	Project monitoring and administration				
81	ITTO Monitoring and Review	30 000	10 000	10 000	10 000
82	ITTO Mid-term Evaluation				
83	ITTO Ex-post Evaluation				
84	Sub-total 10 to 83 above	483 230			

Category	Description	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
	ITTO Programme Support costs (12% on items 10 to 83 above)	<u>57 988</u>			
89	Sub-total	87 988			
90	Pre-project cost refund				
	Pre-project cost refund (pre-project budget)				
	Sub-total				
100	OVERALL TOTAL	541 218			

3.4.4. Yearly Project budget contribution by sources : Executing Agency

Category	Description	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
10	Personnel				
11.1	1 Project Coordinator	36 000	12 000	12 000	12 000
11.5	1 Driver	9 000	3 000	3 000	3 000
19	Sub-total	45 000	15 000	15 000	15 000
20	Sub-contracting				
215	<u>50% enrichment of SFs</u>	6 000		6000	
215	<u>Planting work on adjacent rural lands and SFs</u>	20 000		20 000	
29	Sub-total	26 000	0	26 000	0
40	Capital goods				
444	Desktop computer	2 400	2 400		
444	Printers	1 200	1200		
445	Video-projectors	1 200	1 200		
445	Power surge protectors	300	300		
49	Sub-total	5 100	5 100	0	0
50	Consumables				
541	Vehicule insurance cover	900	300	300	300
541	Vehicle repair	3 500	500	1 500	1 500
59	Sub-total	4 400	800	1 800	1 800
60	Miscellaneous				
633	Public consultation	8 000		8000	
633	Cost of SF integration procedure	8 000		8000	
6411	Office rent	21 600	7 200	7 200	7 200
69	Sub-total	37 600	7 200	23 200	7 200
100	OVERALL TOTAL	118 100	28 100	66 000	24 000

3.5. Assumptions, risks and sustainability

3.5.1. Assumptions and risks:

The main assumptions on which the successful implementation of the project is based are as follows:

Sustainable management of wetland ecosystems remains a national priority. One reason that arouses the enthusiasm of local stakeholders at both national and local levels is the increasing awareness of the roles and functions of wetland ecosystems to improve the living conditions of the communities, especially in rural areas. It is in this context that Benin has made its commitment, including internationally by acceding to the RAMSAR convention and listing RAMSAR sites 1017 and 1018. The authorities wish to avoid excessive degradation of these sites.

This project which aims to reverse the process of degradation of these sites, will contribute to an increased leveraging of stakeholders at various levels for the conservation of these sites of global significance.

Climate change does not unduly affect ecosystems at sites 1017 and 1018 to preclude the achievement of project objectives.

Livelihoods relying on forest resources are competitive: The spatio-temporal dynamics shows the importance of land-use and land-use changes and forestry. The promotion of IGAs and economic reforestation would render income from forest resources competitive. Pilot experiences in the sustainable use of forest resources attract the attention of Government of Benin entities and that of the communities. Local participation remains strong and current market conditions favorable.

Risks

Probable risks identified for this project are as follows:

Policy guidelines may change and the support of decision makers for the conservation of sacred forests decline. In the international context where issues related to climate change are taken seriously by the international community, the risk is almost absent.

Reluctances by dignitaries and managers of sacred forests to allow interventions by (not religiously initiated) outsiders in these forests.

Interest and sometimes conflicting cultural and religious perceptions concerning sacred forests and their use could prevent the development of partnerships and make collaboration between key SF management stakeholders difficult. But this risk is reduced by the awareness-raising and communication efforts undertaken during the implementation of the pre-project. The point is to make it clear, whenever necessary, that the project shall bring about or cause no expropriation but will rather support the sustainable management of sacred forests in the current context. **The continuation of IEC would totally eliminate that risk.**

Climate changes do affect ecosystems:

Climate hazards observed lately and climate change may affect ecosystems, the flow rate of water streams and forest health in the intervention area. This may negatively impact the development actions undertaken. This risk can be reduced by the use of appropriate adaptation and coping measure in response to the adverse effects of most immediate climate changes, and the use of resistant and resilient species.

3.5.2. Sustainability

This project meets a need long expressed by some local stakeholders to restore the forest heritage of local communities and establish Protected Areas in the municipalities. Sustainability of project outcomes depends on all stakeholders taking ownership of these outcomes on the financial and technical, economic, institutional and political levels.

- In terms of institutional and political sustainability, the involvement of the General Directorate of Forestry and Natural Resources and the Beninese Environmental Agency at every stage of

project development and implementation is a strong indication of the institutional and policy sustainability of planned project actions. Furthermore, the various commitments and pledges made by the municipalities through the letters of endorsement attached hereto in Annex bear witness to the ownership of the project by the municipal authorities and clearly herald the institutional sustainability of project outcomes. Indeed, at the end of the project, the Town Councils will take over actions initiated through the Municipal Committees for the Coordination and Monitoring of Sacred Forests Integration that will be established. At local level, the establishment and strengthening of Local SF Management Committees is a guarantee of sustainability for the outcomes of the project. The incorporation of SF in the System of Municipal Protected Areas provides an institutional facility to sustain the protection and conservation of SFs.

- In terms of financial sustainability, letters containing funding pledges by municipalities committed to financially contribute to project activities send a strong signal for a continued financial support by the municipalities to help secure the future of any successful project achievements, as municipalities are autonomous institutions as far as budgeting is concerned. By project completion date, the different Committees established will require a budget to organize the meetings and other running costs. The principle of financing these recurring costs at the end of the project has been agreed to by the municipalities. As to the local committees, it is proposed that a portion of revenues from green credits and profit-oriented reforestation should be retained to cover the operating costs at the end of the project.
- In the socio-economic perspective, the development of alternative activities generating sustainable incomes is to secure the future of project outcome through self-financing mechanisms. The reduction of poverty through the development of income-generating activities will sustainably reduce pressure on SFs and ensure the continuation of the cultural and religious functions of SFs.

4. PART FOUR: DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT OPERATIONS

4.1. Organizational structure and stakeholder involvement mechanisms

4.1.1. Executing agency and partners

The non-governmental organization *Cercle pour la Sauvegarde des Ressources Naturelles* (Ce.Sa.Re.N) is the executing agency of the project, consisting of a multidisciplinary team. This NGO implemented the pre-project. The project will be implemented by a steering unit composed of the Executive Director of Ce.Sa.Re.N acting as Project Coordinator, a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, a Secretary / accountant and four facilitators (see Project Management Chart in Annex 1). This unit will ensure the implementation of the various Activities of the project.

The Executing Agency (Ce.Sa.Re.N) will work with the collaborating agency which is the General Directorate of Forestry and Natural Resources (DGFRN) and all stakeholders identified during project development. They will make their respective contributions to the successful implementation of the project.

4.1.2. Project Management Team

Apart from members of the Steering Committee, the project management team is composed of the Coordinator, the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, the Facilitators, 1 Accountant / Secretary and the official driver. In addition to this full-time project staff, there will be consultants and other service providers.

The Executing Agency profile is introduced in Annex 2 together with its staff chart.

The tasks and responsibilities of key experts hired by the Agency execution are specified in Annex 4

The terms of reference of staff and consultants paid by the ITTO are attached in Annex 5.

4.1.3. Project Steering Committee

A Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be established in accordance with the ITTO Manual on Project Formulation. As part of its responsibilities, the Steering Committee shall oversee project implementation, approve expenditures, ensure the compliance of project work with the procedures in force, review the activities that have been carried out, and consider and propose changes in budgets and activities. The Project Steering Committee shall monitor the overall strategic management of the project and ensure that it proceeds in a timely, efficient and effective manner in accordance with its logical framework matrix, work plan, and other aspects of the project document.

The PSC will comprise nine members, as follows:

- One (01) representative of the Embassy of the donor country/ies having funded the project;
- One ITTO representative;
- One (01) representative of DGFRN who is the ITTO contact point in the Governmental administration;
- One (01) representative of Benin Environmental Agency;
- Two representatives of municipalities representing the municipalities concerned;
- The Executive Director of Ce.Sa.Re.N;
- Two (02) representatives of SF dignitaries.

It will convene at least twice a year.

4.1.4. Stakeholder involvement mechanisms

The stakeholder participation mechanism will operate at three levels:

- In connection with central government institution, through the strong involvement of the Project Steering Committee in the implementation and monitoring of Activities at field level. Indeed, as described above, the Project Steering Committee includes some key players likely

to take action at the political, legal and policy level. Their participation in the project is an asset.

- At the decentralized level, through the participation of Municipal Coordination and Monitoring Committees for the Incorporation of Sacred Forests in the System of Protected Areas at municipal level; and
- At local level through the training and establishment for each forest of one Local Sacred Forest Management Committee to ensure the monitoring and continuation project activities after project completion.

At these different levels, the Committees could also play a mediator's role of mediation in resolving problems that may arise during the execution of this project.

4.2. Reporting, Review and Monitoring-Evaluation

The Executing Agency shall issue reports to ITTO at intervals suitable for a project with having a duration of three years. ITTO will have monitoring and evaluation missions conducted by any persons of its choice with the frequency it deems appropriate.

The project will be monitored and evaluated by representatives of ITTO in accordance with the usual procedures of the Organization as described in the ITTO Manual for project monitoring, review, reporting and evaluation.

4.2.1 Project Progress Report

A project launching report and the first Annual Operation Plan (AOP) shall be prepared for the transfer of the first disbursement of ITTO funds needed to start the project. The biannual progress reports shall be regularly submitted to ITTO. The annual financial audit of accounts report will be produced and submitted each Year during the duration of the project.

4.2.2 Project Completion Report

At project completion date, the coordinator will prepare a completion report to be submitted to ITTO three months after the end of the project together with the audit report in accordance with ITTO standards and requirements. This report will summarize all Activities, achievements and outputs of the Project, lessons learned, the level of achievement of the objectives, structures and systems implemented, etc.. and it will be the definitive statement of the Project Activities during its term. It will also outline recommendations to ensure sustainability and repeatability of project activities.

4.2.3 Technical Project Report

The Executing Agency will provide ITTO and other relevant structures all technical reports and reports of consultant studies prepared during project implementation.

4.3. Dissemination and mainstreaming of project learning

4.3.1. Dissemination of project results

The project opening and closing workshops to be organized and highly publicized will be an effective way to nationally and internationally disseminate relevant information on the project and communicate the contribution made by the project to the conservation of nature and the reduction of rural poverty through improved living standards at local level.

Locally, community or local radio stations will be used intensely for Information, education and raising public awareness during the first and second years of the project. During the third year, the radio programmes will focus on the dissemination of results and lessons learned from the project.

At national and international level, the project team will make use of the opportunities offered by the publication of project results during the workshops, seminars and conferences to which the project will participate. Presentations on the achievements and results of the project will be made in the form of oral communications, published papers and posters.

With ITTO, dissemination of results will be through technical reports, progress reports and the completion report. Reports of workshops held to outreach and educate stakeholders on the achievements of the project will be disseminated.

Furthermore, the websites of the ITTO, the BCH, the Satoyama Initiative, the Ramsar Convention etc. will also be used to disseminate relevant results.

4.3.2. Mainstreamin of project learning

The main innovations of this project are partly in the development of a sustainable management model that combines traditional management practices and modern management of sacred forests based on the development of local human resources and partly in the integration of SFS into the System of Municipal Protected Areas. Moreover, the establishment of green credit lines to support local communities in reforestation activities is an innovation in the conservation of natural forests. The likelihood of success of these models is very high considering the enthusiastic support it has received from dignitaries and official commitments from municipal authorities. However, there are challenges to be met.

Results from the project will be disseminated within and beyond the project area through the aforesaid dissemination channels. The project will identify, analyze and share the lessons learned that could be beneficial in the design and implementation of similar future projects in municipalities or areas not covered by this project. In addition, experience-sharing visits will be organized towards the end of the project, for local stakeholders to foster the development of initiatives for other specific ecosystems such as mangroves and gallery forests. This could also facilitate the renewal of commitments by municipal authorities in support of the objectives of the project.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Executing Agency Profile (NGO Ce.Sa.Re.N)

The NGO Club for the Protection of Natural Resources (Ce.Sa.Re.N NGO) is an organization which has been active in forestry and natural resources management for a decade. It was registered under No. 2003-0100/DEP-ATL-LITT/SG-SAG-Assoc. on 17 June 2003 and its incorporation was published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Benin No. 14 of July 15, 2003.

Office Address: Carré 1818 "j" District Houenoussou Cotonou

City and postal code: Cotonou, 02 BP 268 Gbégamey

Country: Benin

E-mail: cesarenong@yahoo.fr

Phone (office): (229) 21003027

Phone (cell): (+229) 97084927

Its main undertaking is to promote the ownership of the natural resources dynamics concept with stakeholders in the use of resources so as to achieve sustainability, to educate them, raise their awareness, organize and build the capacity of communities to achieve the conservation, management of natural resources and environmental remediation. It is a member of the Satoyama Initiative (**International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative**, IPSI). Visit www.satoyama-initiative.org for more information.

The NGO is headed by a Board of Directors supported by a Technical Support Committee and a Control Committee. The activities of the organization are implemented by a permanent staff of six people see chart below:

- Two forest engineers
- One development engineer
- One socio-economist
- One secretary and bookkeeper
- One driver

It also contract work to temporary staff.

The NGO has undertaken several natural resources management activities with grassroots communities. They include the following:

- Participation in the development and revision of the Dogo-Kétou forest management plan with the support of the Forest and Adjacent Landscape Management Programme (PGFTR) -- Project funded by the World Bank in Benin;
- Participation in the development and review of the forest management plan for the Tchaourou Toui Kilibo gazetted forest with the support of PGFTR;
- Capacity building of local elected representatives on forest resources standards and forest legislation with the support of the *Communes du Borgou* Support Project (PACOB, Project funded by UNDP);
- Public discussion on the implementation of forest law and governance in the forestry sector in Benin with the support of DGFRN.
- In addition, the NGO collaborates with the local communities around the mangrove forests of Bénin,
- The organization of reforestation campaigns in community forests.

During the past 3 years the NGO CeSaReN has been executing projects as follows:

Project description	Technical and Financial Partners	NGO contribution in US \$	Amount requested in US \$	Total amount in US \$
Support to the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on APA (Phase 1)	GIZ and CBD	13850	65180	79030
Support to the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on APA (Phase 2)	GIZ and CBD	78600	30000	108600
PPD 165/12 Rev.1 (F) Study for the Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests on	ITTO	17 600	79 140	96 740

Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin				
Value-added development of genetic resources and enhancement of traditional knowledge for the sustainable management of the Sacred Forests of Benin (2013-2015)	UNDP, GEF	36040	75090	111130

Currently the ONG CeSaReN is promoting technical and financial support (financial support contribution amounting to US\$ 92,949) of GIZ (local subsidies agreement N° 83110536, Case N° 122130.8-004.01) and the Convention on Biological Diversity in the area of fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from the use of genetic resources (APA) for:

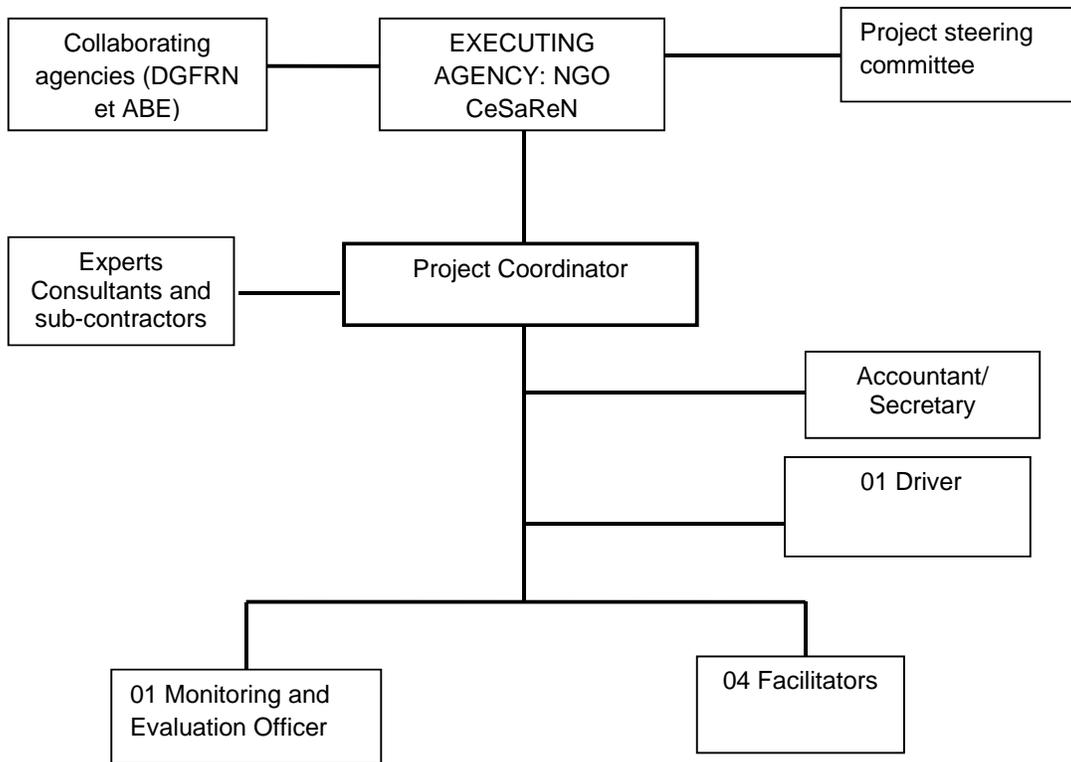
- Developing and implementing a communication plan for the APA Protocol,
- Convening Communication, Education and Outreach sessions involving all stakeholders,
- Creating strong stakeholder groups in support of the APA Committee work in the Protocol ratification and implementation process,
- Identifying key resource persons to « impact » and assessing their capacity-building needs for the ratification, implementation and monitoring of the APA process.
- Providing support to local communities in the access to fair and equitable sharing of traditional knowledge on natural and genetic resources.

In addition, the NGO CeSaReN is also accredited by the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. These features demonstrate the capacity of this NGO to implement this project.

CeSaReN Budget in US Dollars

Budget	Year		
	2010	2011	2012 (September)
Personnel	24000	14000	
Sub-contracting	13500	33500	
Duty Travels	4200	3200	
Missions	2500	5500	
Consumables	2000	3500	
Sub-total	46 200	59 700	92 949
Overall total	198 849		

Project Management Chart



Annex 2. Terms of reference of main experts to be hired by the Executing Agency

Experts/ consultants	Tasks and duties
Project coordinator (Forest Engineer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for coordinating all project activities according to the work plan developed; • Executing agency's manager; • In charge of project administrative work; • Provides interface with the ITTO by progress reports on project progress; • Provides interface with collaborating structures; • Reports to DGFRN and the Technical Support Committee on the progress of project activities • Orders the disbursements / fund releases
Project assistant Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists the Coordinator in his project management tasks; • Develops the detailed project plan; • Undertake monitoring and evaluation duties on project execution • Prepares articles and conditions of tenders and monitors procurement contracts; • Monitors the implementation of studies; • Takes charge of communication and advocacy campaigns targeting project stakeholders; • Prepares the final technical report of the pre-project (sic) with the synthesis (executive summary) of studies undertaken and the formulated project proposal.
Accountant/ Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists the Coordinator in his Secretariat functions; • Performs typing, editing, filing and storage of project documents; • Handles telephone calls for the Coordinator; • Manages the schedule of work of Coordinator; • Ensures the editing of the minutes of meetings chaired by the Coordinator • Develops recording media for the accounting and financial operations of the project; • Records all accounting transactions under the project; • Prepares the income and expenditures schedules of the project; • Prepares all documents to be used in the audit of project accounts

Annex 3. Terms of reference of the personnel and consultants financed by ITTO

Experts / Consultants	Experiences	Terms of reference
National Consultant for the development of the communication plan	4th year college education. Communication or Sociology. Engineer in communication and sociology with at least 5 years' experience in social communication and adult-education; Demonstrated capacity in written and oral communication targeting rural communities and municipal authorities.	Based on the preliminary studies carried out under pre-project PPD 165/12 Rev.1 (F), especially with regard to communication plans, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To fine tune the definition of stakeholders categories in line with their respective influence and significance in the SF management process; - To develop a social, educational and institutional communication plan to secure the incorporation of selected SF in the system of protected areas; - To propose communication themes and most appropriate communication channels and vehicles for each topic; - To propose technical communication data sheets for each main stakeholder group concerned with SF management. - To introduce the study during a validation workshop and to incorporate any improving amendment put forward by workshop participants
National Consultants responsible for developing management plans.	Forest Engineers with a 5-year college training and a minimum 10-years experience. Proven record of experience in writing forest management plans for both gazetted forests and protection forests of the State. Strong document drafting and communication skills in outreach/advocacy and adult-education contexts; A good command of the participatory approach; A sound knowledge of regulatory texts and the process to incorporate SFs in the system of protected/conservation areas.	Based on the preliminary studies carried out under pre-project PPD 165/12 Rev.1 (F), <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To compile baseline data (inventory data) of selected SFs; - To propose a zoning plan for SFs, including if possible adjacent lands; - To develop simplified management plans for SFs following a participatory approach; - To draft the simplified management plan of each SF; - To draft the monitoring and evaluation plan of each SF; - To organize the mutual consultation and validation workshops for the proposed SF zoning plans, - To organize the workshops to adopt the simplified zoning plans, including the management and monitoring plans and to incorporate therein any improvement put forward by workshop participants.
National consultant in socioeconomics for the value-added development of natural resources	Forest Engineer with a 5-year college training in agro-economics or socio-economics and a minimum 10-years experience. A proven experience in agro-economic and socio-economic studies. Familiar with micro-credit systems to promote IGAs; Sound knowledge of organization methods in rural environment; Outstanding drafting and communication skills; A good command of the participatory approach.	Based on the preliminary studies carried out under pre-project PPD 165/12 Rev.1 (F), including the IGA study, To select, based on appropriately defined criteria, including those of participatory approach and economic and financial profitability and ecological sustainability, IGAs that can be supported technically and financially at community level so as to alleviate the pressure on forest resources. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To evaluate the level of community organization around each type of selected IGA, - To identify and evaluate the need to build capacities to promote selected IGAs - To propose a generation of income account for each type of selected IGA; - To introduce the study during a validation workshop and to incorporate any improving amendment put forward by workshop participants

<p><u>National consultant responsible for materializing the boundaries of 40 SFs (Demarcation and delimitation of plantations)</u></p>	<p><u>NGOs, Consultants' firm with at least three (3) experiences in the delimitation and demarcation of forest areas, and participatory development work for this type of infrastructure involving grassroots communities.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>To identify the boundaries of selected SFs</u> - <u>To demarcate SFs with the involvement of local stakeholders</u> - <u>To materialize in a participatory manner the SF boundaries using concrete landmarks and trees</u> <u>To prepare a detailed map of each SF in the agreed format and scale</u>
<p><u>One consultant for a baseline study on improved Agricultural Production Systems</u></p>	<p><u>NGOs, Consultants' firm or individual consultants having at least three (3) experience in Agricultural Production Systems</u></p>	<p><u>To identify, prepare a baseline study and analyze improved Agricultural Production Systems</u> <u>To identify an SAP implementation plan</u> <u>To support project beneficiaries in their implementation of SAPs</u></p>
<p><u>Forestry consultants in SF enrichment and rural land afforestation/ reforestation activities</u></p>	<p><u>NGOs, Consultants' firm, or Cooperatives having at least three (3) experiences in participatory reforestation work, community plantation and/or forest enrichment planting.</u></p>	<p><u>To jointly identify with grassroots communities the SF enrichment methods;</u> <u>To jointly identify and analyze with local communities the tree species to be used in the SF enrichment planting and rural/community land reforestation activities;</u> <u>To organize grassroots communities for participatory reforestation activities, community plantation establishment and/or forest enrichment planting;</u> <u>To monitor reforestation and enrichment planting activities;</u> <u>To support project beneficiaries in plantation establishment and management activities;</u> <u>To identify appropriate plantation management procedures;</u></p> <p><u>To facilitate the availability of community lands for reforestation activities</u></p>

Annex 4. Letter of endorsement and joint financing pledges from some municipal authorities concerned

REPUBLIC OF BENIN

DEPARTMENT OF MONO

HOUÉYOGBE MUNICIPALITY

THE MAYOR

Houéyogbé, 4th February 2014

Mr. Executive Director of the
International Tropical Timber Organization

Cotonou

Object: Endorsement and co-financing pledge for the project
“Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests
In RAMSAR Sites 1017 and 1018 in Bénin”

Mr. Executive Director,

The Town Council of Houéyogbé, represented by the Mayor Olympe GLAGO, hereby agree to have the ITTO (the International Tropical Timber Organization) Project implemented in the Municipality.

As the technical staff involved in environment management and protection, the communities and myself have actively participated in the development process of this project, we hereby make the commitment to:

- ✓ Make municipal land estates available to users for reforestation activities;
- ✓ Facilitate the establishment and smooth functioning of the Municipal Committee for the Coordination and Monitoring of Sustainable Sacred Forest Management;
- ✓ Facilitate the procedure to have the sacred forests legally recognized;
- ✓ Support community development actions in the landscapes concerned.

For this purpose, in addition to our contribution in kind, the Town Council shall provide funding support amounting to one million (1,000,000) CFA Francs, approximately equivalent to USD 2,000 in cash (approximately equivalent to CFA Francs 335,000 per year) in response to the co-financing request for this project, which is to be implemented once it has been approved by your organization. This contribution shall be paid to the Agency upon approval and signature of the project document.

Consequently, the Municipality of Houéyogbé, represented by its Mayor, hereby pledges to contribute to and play an active role in the implementation of the aforesaid project.

Best regards,

The Acting Mayor
(signed and sealed)
Richard MAHOUKPO

Republic of Benin

Lokossa, 31 January 2014

DEPARTMENT OF MONO

MUNICIPALITY OF LOKOSSA

THE MAYOR

[CONFIDENTIAL]

To

Mr Executive Director of the International
Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)

Object: Endorsement and co-financing pledge for the project
“Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests
In RAMSAR Sites 1017 and 1018 in Bénin”

Mr. Executive Director,

The Mayor of **Lokossa** hereby agrees to have the project in reference implemented in the municipality of Lokossa.

As my staff, the communities and myself have actively participated in the development process of this project, we hereby make the commitment to:

- ✓ Make municipal land estates available to users for reforestation activities;
- ✓ Facilitate the establishment and smooth functioning of the Municipal Committee for the Coordination and Monitoring of Sustainable Sacred Forest Management;
- ✓ Facilitate the procedure to have the sacred forests legally recognized;
- ✓ Support community development actions in the landscapes concerned.

For this purpose, in addition to our contribution in kind, the Town Council shall provide funding support amounting to one million (1,000,000) CFA Francs, approximately equivalent to USD 2,000 in cash (approximately equivalent to CFA Francs 340,000 per year) in response to the co-financing request for this project, which is to be implemented once it has been approved by your organization. This contribution shall be paid to the Agency upon approval and signature of the project document.

Consequently, the Municipality of **Lokossa**, represented by its Mayor, hereby pledges to contribute to and play an active role in the implementation of the aforesaid project.

[signed and sealed]

Dakpè SOSSOU

PLEDGE TO CO-FINANCE THE PROJECT
"REHABILITATION AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF SACRED FORESTS
IN RAMSAR SITES 1017 AND 1018 IN BÉNIN"

REPUBLIC OF BENIN
DEPARTMENT OF L'OUEME

Akpro-Missérété, 6 February 2014

TO
Mr. Executive Director of
The International Tropical Timber Organization
(ITTO)

MUNICIPALITY of Akpro-Missérété

Object: Endorsement and co-financing pledge for the project
"Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests
In RAMSAR Sites 1017 and 1018 in Bénin"

Mr. Executive Director,

The Mayor of **Akpro-Missérété** hereby agrees to have the project in reference implemented in this municipality. As my staff, the communities and myself have actively participated in the development process of this project, we hereby make the commitment to:

- ✓ Make municipal land estates available to users for reforestation activities;
- ✓ Facilitate the establishment and smooth functioning of the Municipal Committee for the Coordination and Monitoring of Sustainable Sacred Forest Management;
- ✓ Facilitate the procedure to have the sacred forests legally recognized;
- ✓ Support community development actions in the landscapes concerned.

For this purpose, in addition to our contribution in kind, the Town Council shall provide funding support amounting to one million (1,000,000) CFA Francs, approximately equivalent to USD 2,000 in cash (approximately equivalent to CFA Francs 340,000 per year) in response to the co-financing request for this project, which is to be implemented once it has been approved by your organization. This contribution shall be paid to the Agency upon approval and signature of the project document.

Consequently, the Municipality of **Akpro-Missérété**, represented by its Mayor, hereby pledges to contribute to and play an active role in the implementation of the aforesaid project.

With my best regards,

The Mayor
(signed and sealed)
Michel M. BAHOU

REPUBLIC OF BENIN

DEPARTMENT OF MONO/COUFFO

MUNICIPALITY OF COME

Comé, 7th March 2014

The Mayor

TO

Mr Executive Director of the International
Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)

Object: Endorsement and co-financing pledge for the project
“Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests
In RAMSAR Sites 1017 and 1018 in Bénin”

Mr. Executive Director,

The Mayor of Comé hereby agrees to have the project in reference implemented in this municipality. As my staff, the communities and myself have actively participated in the development process of this project, we hereby make the commitment to:

- ✓ Make municipal land estates available to users for reforestation activities;
- ✓ Facilitate the establishment and smooth functioning of the Municipal Committee for the Coordination and Monitoring of Sustainable Sacred Forest Management;
- ✓ Facilitate the procedure to have the sacred forests legally recognized;
- ✓ Support community development actions in the landscapes concerned.

For this purpose, in addition to our contribution in kind, the Town Council shall provide funding support amounting to one million (1,000,000) CFA Francs, approximately equivalent to USD 2,000 in cash (approximately equivalent to CFA Francs 340,000 per year) in response to the co-financing request for this project, which is to be implemented once it has been approved by your organization. This contribution shall be paid to the Agency upon approval and signature of the project document.

Consequently, the Municipality of Comé, represented by its Mayor, hereby pledges to contribute to and play an active role in the implementation of the aforesaid project.

With my best regards,

The Mayor
(signed and sealed)
Bertin G.S. TOSSOU

REPUBLIC OF BENIN

DEPARTMENT OF OUEME

PLEDGE TO CO-FINANCE THE PROJECT
“REHABILITATION AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF SACRED FORESTS
IN RAMSAR SITES 1017 AND 1018 IN BÉNIN”

Dangbo, 3rd February 2014

The Mayor

A

Mr Executive Director of the International
Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)

Object: Endorsement and co-financing pledge for the project “Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests In RAMSAR Sites 1017 and 1018 in Bénin”

Mr. **Executive Director,**

The Mayor of DANGBO hereby agrees to have the project in reference implemented in this municipality. As my staff, the communities and myself have actively participated in the development process of this project, we hereby make the commitment to:

- ✓ Make municipal land estates available to users for reforestation activities;
- ✓ Facilitate the establishment and smooth functioning of the Municipal Committee for the Coordination and Monitoring of Sustainable Sacred Forest Management;
- ✓ Facilitate the procedure to have the sacred forests legally recognized;
- ✓ Support community development actions in the landscapes concerned.

For this purpose, in addition to our contribution in kind, the Town Council shall provide funding support amounting to one million (1,000,000) CFA Francs, approximately equivalent to USD 2,000 in cash (approximately equivalent to CFA Francs 340,000 per year) in response to the co-financing request for this project, which is to be implemented once it has been approved by your organization. This contribution shall be paid to the Agency upon approval and signature of the project document.

Consequently, the Municipality of **DANGBO**, represented by its Mayor, hereby pledges to contribute to and play an active role in the implementation of the aforesaid project.

With my best regards,

The Mayor
(signed and sealed)
Clement Dona GNONLONFOUN

Annex 5 : Recommendations by the 48th Expert Panel

PD 754/14 (F)

Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests on Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin

Assessment by the Forty-eighth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized the importance of the project, derived from the implementation of the pre-project PPD 165/12 Rev.1 (F), intending to contribute to the rehabilitation and sustainable management of sacred forests located in two RAMSAR sites in Benin. It was reminded that sacred forests could be, in addition to cultural-oriented sites, important sites for biodiversity conservation in most Sahel West African countries like Benin. Thus, the management of these sacred forests could be a good opportunity for the application of CBD, RAMSAR and ITTO guidelines in the area of biodiversity conservation in tropical forests.

The Panel noted that proposal presented a number of weaknesses summarized as follows: **1)** causes not clearly linked to the key problem presented in the problem analysis and problem tree; **2)** outcome indicators not consistent with the specific objective presented in the logical framework matrix; **3)** some difficulties to assess the relevance of outputs and associated activities due to the lack of vertical coherence in the lower part of the problem tree; **4)** some difficulties to analyze the work plan due to the lack of vertical coherence in the lower part of the problem tree; **5)** some difficulties to assess budgets as activities were not appropriately defined because of the lack of vertical coherence in the lower part of the problem tree but it was noticed that the amount of funds budgeted for personnel, sub-contracts and miscellaneous represented more than 70% of ITTO budget and therefore the sustainability was questionable.

B) Specific Recommendations

The proposal should be revised taking into account the overall assessment **and** the following:

1. Provide a map of the project target area with an appropriate scale facilitating its appraisal;
2. Improve the lower part of the problem tree by defining causes clearly linked to the key problem and then appropriately define the sub-causes under each cause, while ensuring the correlation with the needs and interests of main stakeholders (primary and secondary stakeholders);
3. Subsequent to the above recommendation (2nd), revise the logical framework matrix with the outputs to be derived from the causes newly defined in the problem tree and by improving the outcome indicators of the specific objectives;
4. Redefine the outputs and associated activities in accordance with the causes and sub-causes newly defined in the problem tree;
5. Subsequent to the above recommendations revise the work plan with the newly defined activities;
6. Revise the Sub-section 3.5.1 (assumptions and risks) in relation to the revised logical framework matrix;
7. Revise the ITTO budget in line with the above overall assessment and specific recommendations, and also in the following way:
 - a) Totally adjust the budgets (master budget and budget by component) in correlation with all above specific recommendations and overall assessment,
 - b) Adjust the budget Sub-component 81 to the standard rate of US\$10,000.00 per year for the monitoring and evaluation costs (US\$30,000 for a 3-year project),
 - c) Recalculate correctly the ITTO Programme Support Costs (sub-item 83) so as to conform with standard rate of 12% of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 11 to 82); and
8. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 48th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form, while making sure to add the pages indicating where to find elements addressing the overall assessment and

specific recommendations in the revised version of the project proposal document. Modifications should also be highlighted (bold and underline) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Category 2: The Panel concluded that the project proposal requires essential modifications and will be returned to the proponent. The Panel will need to assess the revised project proposal before it can commend it to the Committee for final appraisal.

ANNEX 6: Incorporation of recommendations by the 48th Expert Panel

Assessment by the Forty-sixth Panel	Modifications made
<p><u>A) Overall Assessment</u></p>	
<p>The Panel noted that proposal presented a number of weaknesses summarized as follows: 1) causes not clearly linked to the key problem presented in the problem analysis and problem tree; 2) outcome indicators not consistent with the specific objective presented in the logical framework matrix; 3) some difficulties to assess the relevance of outputs and associated activities due to the lack of vertical coherence in the lower part of the problem tree; 4) some difficulties to analyze the work plan due to the lack of vertical coherence in the lower part of the problem tree; 5) some difficulties to assess budgets as activities were not appropriately defined because of the lack of vertical coherence in the lower part of the problem tree but it was noticed that the amount of funds budgeted for personnel, sub-contracts and miscellaneous represented more than 70% of ITTO budget and therefore the sustainability was questionable</p>	<p>The required changes have been introduced in the project document (all texts in bold and underlined)</p>
<p><u>B) Specific Recommendations</u></p>	
<p>1. Provide a map of the project target area with an appropriate scale facilitating its appraisal;</p>	<p>See the new map on page 9</p>
<p>2. Improve the lower part of the problem tree by defining causes clearly linked to the key problem and then appropriately define the sub-causes under each cause, while ensuring the correlation with the needs and interests of main stakeholders (primary and secondary stakeholders);</p>	<p>Changes have been introduced to the problem tree and tree of solutions as well as to the logical framework (see related paragraph and sections in the document).</p>
<p>3. Subsequent to the above recommendation (2nd), revise the logical framework matrix with the outputs to be derived from the causes newly defined in the problem tree and by improving the outcome indicators of the specific objectives;</p>	
<p>4. Subsequent to the above recommendations revise the work plan with the newly defined activities;</p>	<p>Change addressed in the work plan and activities.</p>
<p>5. Revise the Sub-section 3.5.1 (assumptions and risks) in relation to the revised logical framework matrix;</p>	<p>Recommendations incorporated</p>
<p>6. Revise the Sub-section 3.5.1 (assumptions and risks) in relation to the revised logical framework matrix</p>	<p>See additions and improvements on the economic sustainability in paragraph 3.5.2</p>
<p>7. Revise the ITTO budget in line with the above overall assessment and specific recommendations, and also in the following way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) Totally adjust the budgets (master budget and budget by component) in correlation with all above specific recommendations and overall assessment, e) Adjust the budget Sub-component 81 to the standard rate of US\$10,000.00 per year for the monitoring and evaluation costs (US\$30,000 for a 3-year project), f) Recalculate correctly the ITTO Programme Support Costs (sub-item 83) so as to conform with standard rate of 12% of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 11 to 82); and 	<p>Changes have been introduced in corresponding budget lines and recalculated totals.</p>
<p>8. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 46th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form. Modifications should also be highlighted (<u>bold and underline</u>).</p>	<p>See Annexes 4 and 5 and all bold and underlined text sections.</p>

ANNEX 7 : Recommandations du Panel d'experts de la 49^{ème} Session

PD 754/14 Rev.1 (F)

Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sacred Forests on Ramsar Sites 1017 and 1018 in Benin (Benin)

Assessment by the Forty-ninth Panel

A) Overall Assessment

The Panel recognized the importance of the project and acknowledged that efforts had been made to address the comments in the overall assessment and most specific recommendations made by the Forty-eighth Expert Panel. However, the Panel noted that there was still a need to improve some sections and sub-sections of the project, intending to contribute to the rehabilitation and sustainable management of sacred forests located in two RAMSAR sites in Benin, as important natural sites for biodiversity conservation and for the application of CBD, RAMSAR and ITTO guidelines in the area of biodiversity conservation in tropical forests. The improvement was still needed for the following aspects: the relevance to the CBD Aichi Target and Satoyama Initiative; some discrepancies between the list of activities under each output and the work plan table and the budget by activity; some budget costs still high and not appropriately justified (such as the purchasing of 4 motorcycles while there are only 2 local development staff); and the terms of reference of some sub-contracting works were missing.

B) Specific Recommendations

The proposal should be revised taking into account the overall assessment **and** the following:

1. Improve the Section 1.2 (relevance) by providing the elements in relation to the CBD Aichi Target and Satoyama Initiative;
2. Correct the discrepancies noted in the Sub-section 3.1.2 (Activities), Section 3.3 (Work Plan) and Sub-section 3.4.1 (Main budget matrix) by harmonizing the wording of Activities 1.2 and 2.3, while harmonizing the implementation timing in the Work Plan with the budget planning period in the main budget matrix for Activities 1.3, 1.5 and 2.3;
3. Add the terms of reference for the following sub-contracting works: materializing the boundaries of 40 Sacred Forests, consultancy on improved agriculture production systems (SAPs), supporting the implementation of SAPs, enrichment of Sacred Forests, and planting trees on adjacent rural lands;
4. Revise the ITTO budget in line with the above overall assessment and specific recommendations, and also in the following way:
 - a) Reduce the number of motorcycle to two to be used by two local development staff,
 - b) Recalculate correctly the ITTO Programme Support Costs (sub-item 83) so as to conform with standard rate of **12%** of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 11 to 82); and
5. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 49th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form, while making sure to add the pages indicating where to find elements addressing the overall assessment and specific recommendations in the revised version of the project proposal document. Modifications should also be highlighted (**bold and underline**) in the text.

C) Conclusion

Category 1: The Panel concluded that the proposal could be commended to the Committee with incorporation of amendments.

ANNEX 8 : Incorporation of recommendations by the 49th Expert Panel

Assessment by the Forty-ninth Panel	Modifications incorporated (page numbers of English version)
A) <u>Overall Assessment</u>	
<p>The Panel recognized the importance of the project and acknowledged that efforts had been made to address the comments in the overall assessment and most specific recommendations made by the Forty-eighth Expert Panel. However, the Panel noted that there was still a need to improve some sections and sub-sections of the project, intending to contribute to the rehabilitation and sustainable management of sacred forests located in two RAMSAR sites in Benin, as important natural sites for biodiversity conservation and for the application of CBD, RAMSAR and ITTO guidelines in the area of biodiversity conservation in tropical forests. The improvement was still needed for the following aspects: the relevance to the CBD Aichi Target and Satoyama Initiative; some discrepancies between the list of activities under each output and the work plan table and the budget by activity; some budget costs still high and not appropriately justified (such as the purchasing of 4 motorcycles while there are only 2 local development staff); and the terms of reference of some sub-contracting works were missing.</p>	<p>The required changes have been incorporated in the project document (all in red bold and underlined sections) Page 32</p>
B) <u>Specific Recommendations</u>	
<p>1. Improve the Section 1.2 (relevance) by providing the elements in relation to the CBD Aichi Target and Satoyama Initiative;</p>	<p>Pages 9,10</p>
<p>2. Correct the discrepancies noted in the Sub-section 3.1.2 (Activities), Section 3.3 (Work Plan) and Sub-section 3.4.1 (Main budget matrix) by harmonizing the wording of Activities 1.2 and 2.3, while harmonizing the implementation timing in the Work Plan with the budget planning period in the main budget matrix for Activities 1.3, 1.5 and 2.3;</p>	<p>Page 24; 29; 30</p>
<p>3. Add the terms of reference for the following sub-contracting works: materializing the boundaries of 40 Sacred Forests, consultancy on improved agriculture production systems (SAPs), supporting the implementation of SAPs, enrichment of Sacred Forests, and planting trees on adjacent rural lands</p>	<p>Pages 49</p>
<p>4. Revise the ITTO budget in line with the above overall assessment and specific recommendations, and also in the following way: c) Reduce the number of motorcycle to two to be used by two local development staff, d) Recalculate correctly the ITTO Programme Support Costs (sub-item 83) so as to conform with standard rate of 12% of the total ITTO project costs (on budget items 11 to 82); and</p>	<p>Pages 34; 35, 36, 37</p>
<p>5. Include an Annex that shows the overall assessment and specific recommendations of the 49th Expert Panel and respective modifications in tabular form, while making sure to add the pages indicating where to find elements addressing the overall assessment and specific recommendations in the revised version of the project proposal document. Modifications should also be highlighted (bold and underline) in the text.</p>	<p>Pages 59, 60</p>