



Ecosystem Profile for the Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot



Lunchtime Conference External Cooperation Infopoint
19 January 2016

CRITICAL **ECOSYSTEM**
PARTNERSHIP FUND

The Guinean Forests Hotspot



Past CEPF investment in the hotspot

- CEPF awarded 72 grants worth \$6.2 million from January 2001 through December 2005
- A 3-year consolidation phase ran from 2008 to 2011, with a further \$2.1 million of investment
- These investments focused on the Upper Guinean Forests sub-region only

Lessons learned

- Emerging NGOs need to start small; they require oversight and capacity building as well as money
- Partnerships and networks are integral to avoiding duplication of effort and maximizing results
- Community participation needs to be encouraged at all stages of design and implementation of conservation interventions
- Poverty is a constant obstacle to conservation success; projects that included alternative income generation often yielded significant results
- There is a great need for a range of grant sizes, to engage partners of differing capacities

Ecosystem profiling: 2013-2105

- Advisory group (Ghana)
- 2 x consultation meetings (Togo and Cameroon)
- Remote consultations: 67 completed questionnaires
- Additional smaller workshops in Nigeria, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Ghana
- 2 x final stakeholder workshops (Liberia and Cameroon)



Biological importance of the hotspot

- Rich biodiversity and endemism.
- Contains around $\frac{1}{4}$ of the mammals native to Africa, and 90% of its 30 primates are endemic!
- Notable mammals include:
 - Western Gorilla, Drill, Pygmy Hippo, Duikers, Forest Elephant.... plus many more!
- Groups with notable endemism include:
 - ~450 fishes; >1,800 plants; 48 birds; >80 amphibians



Biological importance of the hotspot

- Notable features of the hotspot include:
 - Niger Delta swamp forests (second largest swamp forest in Africa).
 - Central African Mangroves (largest mangrove in Africa, third largest in the world).
 - The offshore volcanic islands (with very high endemism).
 - Western Equatorial Crater Lakes ecoregion (“globally outstanding” and with high endemism).



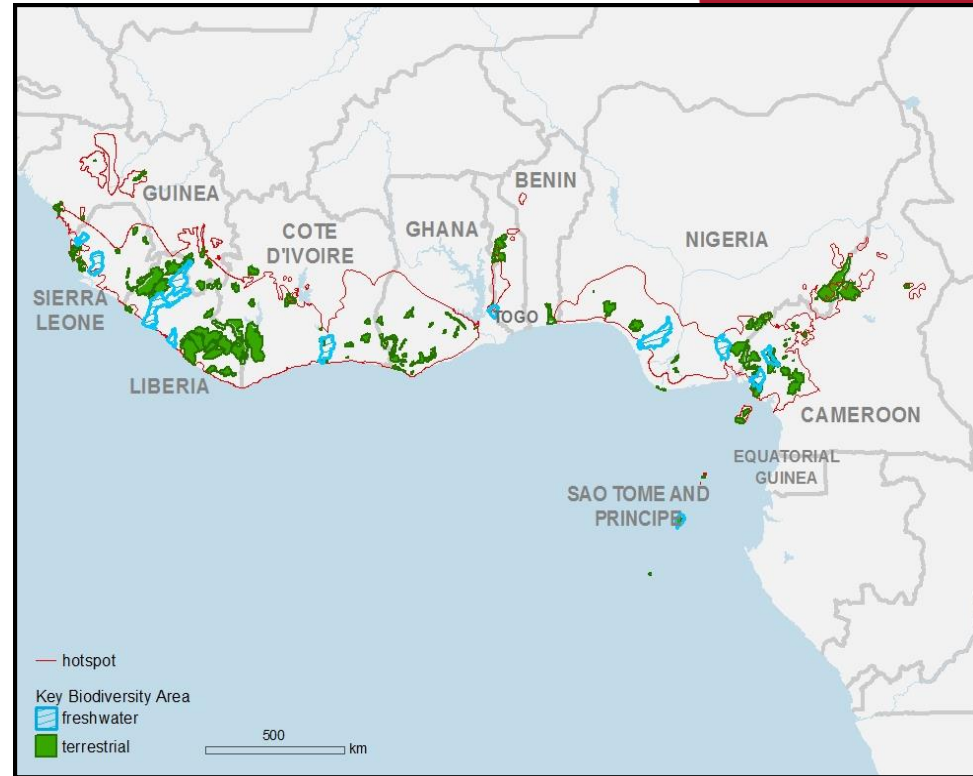
Ecosystem services

- Forests play a global role in carbon storage
- Hydrological functions of forests and mangroves:
water quality/flows regulation; controlling soil salinity, erosion and sedimentation; maintaining aquatic habitats.
- Provision of food:
bushmeat + fish (high human dependence, and strong hunting traditions)
- Provision of non food forest products:
timber, fuel, medicines (also high human dependence)
- ‘Troubled’ but growing ecotourism sector

Conservation outcomes

Selection of conservation outcomes was based on:

- 936 globally-threatened species (as per the IUCN Red List)
- 137 pre-identified KBAs



All KBAs in the Hotspot

Socio-economic context

- 84.7 million people
- Numerous cultures and indigenous groups, further complicated by historic and ongoing migrations
- Civil unrest and disease outbreaks
- High levels of poverty, acting as obstacles to development

Socio-economic context

- Small-scale agriculture is the dominant form of livelihood in all hotspot countries
- Foreign investment is increasing, particularly for agro-industries (e.g. biofuel) and mining
 - Environmental /social standards and governance are often weak, and existing ecosystem benefits not valued
 - Land tenure complexities can lead to poor compensation for those using the land, and even to conflicts
- Economic growth is strong in certain areas, although the distribution of wealth is not balanced

Political context

- The regulatory framework is highly uneven among countries.
- Challenges relating to protected area designation and management include:
 - Land ownership and resource tenure
 - Limited capacity
 - Conflicts over alternative land uses (e.g. logging, mining)
- All countries are signatories to the major global environmental conventions (CBD, CITES, Ramsar...)

Civil society context

- Role of CSOs is still limited
- Major barriers to effective CSO performance include “poor technical and institutional capacities” and “poor access to long term funding”
- Governments often exclude civil society from policy-making processes
- A gap in the understanding of how CSOs can engage with the private sector is apparent
- There is a need to promote greater cooperation and coordination among CSOs, donors, and govts.

Threats



- Unsustainable biological resource use
- Agriculture and aquaculture
- Energy production and mining
- Human intrusions and disturbances
- Climate change and severe weather



Drivers and root causes

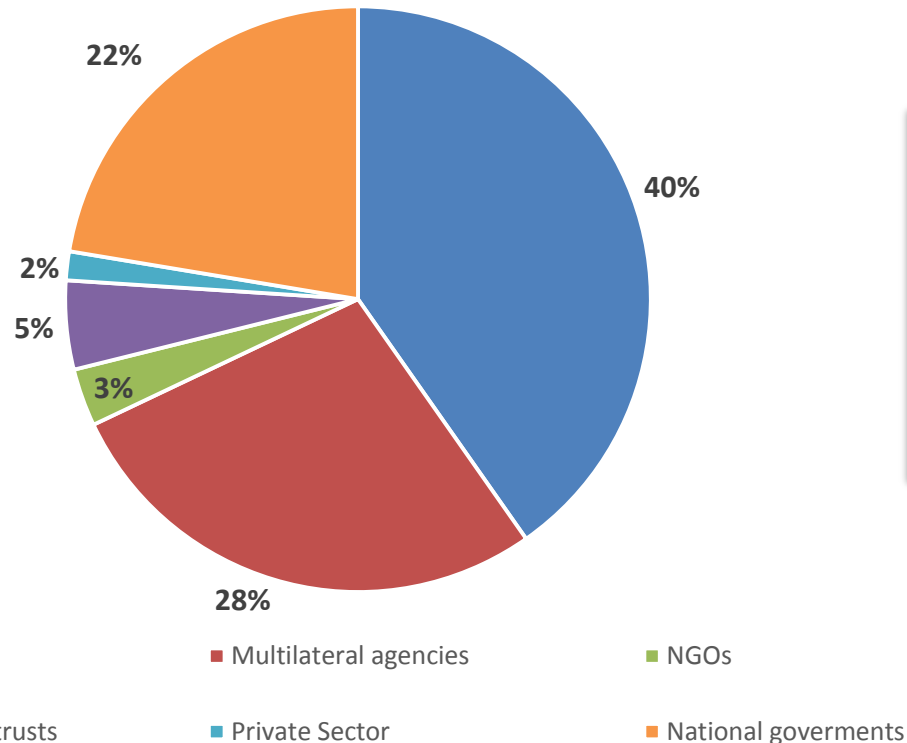
- Outdated / inequitable land tenure arrangements
- Socio-economic trends, development models and fiscal pressures
- Poverty and wealth inequality
- Population pressure and southerly migration

Barriers to Action:

- Legislative and policy weaknesses
- Weak governance
- Lack of education, awareness and understanding for effective conservation

Current investment

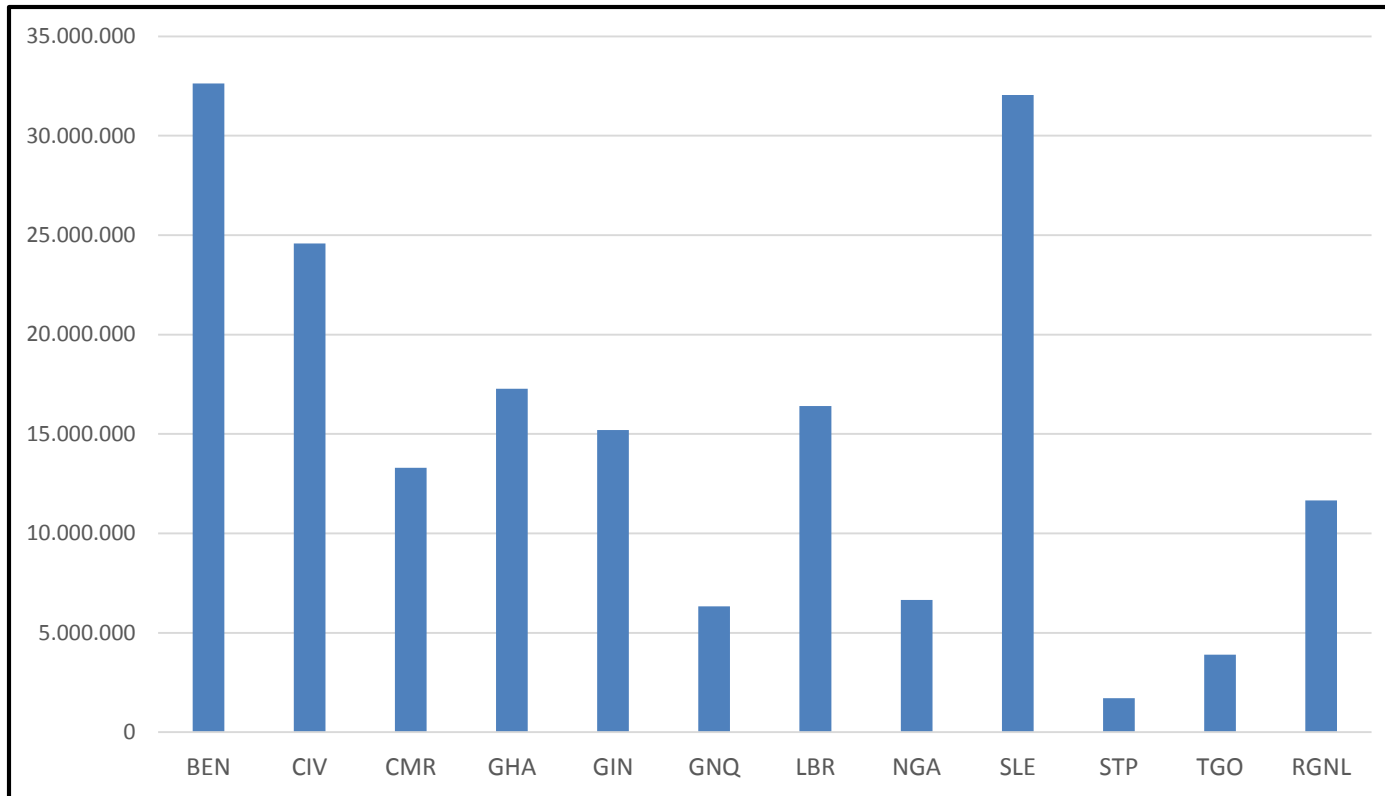
Conservation investment in the Guinean Forests during 2009-2014 by source



A total of USD 266 million across 182 projects, over a five-year period (2009 – 2014)

Current investment

Conservation investment in the Guinean Forests during 2009-2014 by country (in USD)



CEPF niche for investment

*“Provide CSOs at grassroots, national and international levels with **tools, capacity;** and **resources** to establish and sustain multi-stakeholder partnerships that demonstrate models for sustainable, pro-poor growth and achieve priority conservation outcomes in the hotspot.”*

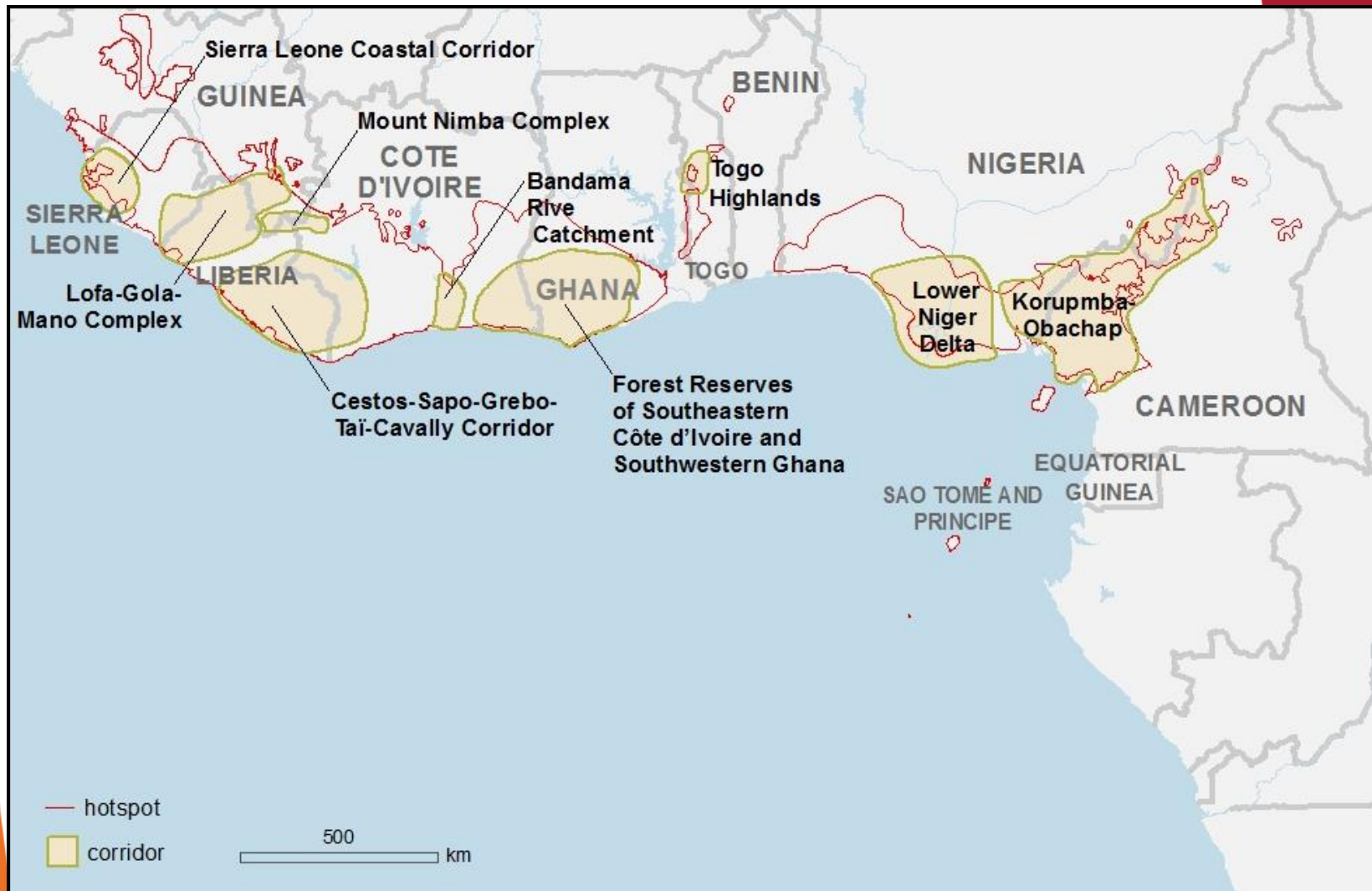
Theory of change

Investments by CEPF will need to focus on:

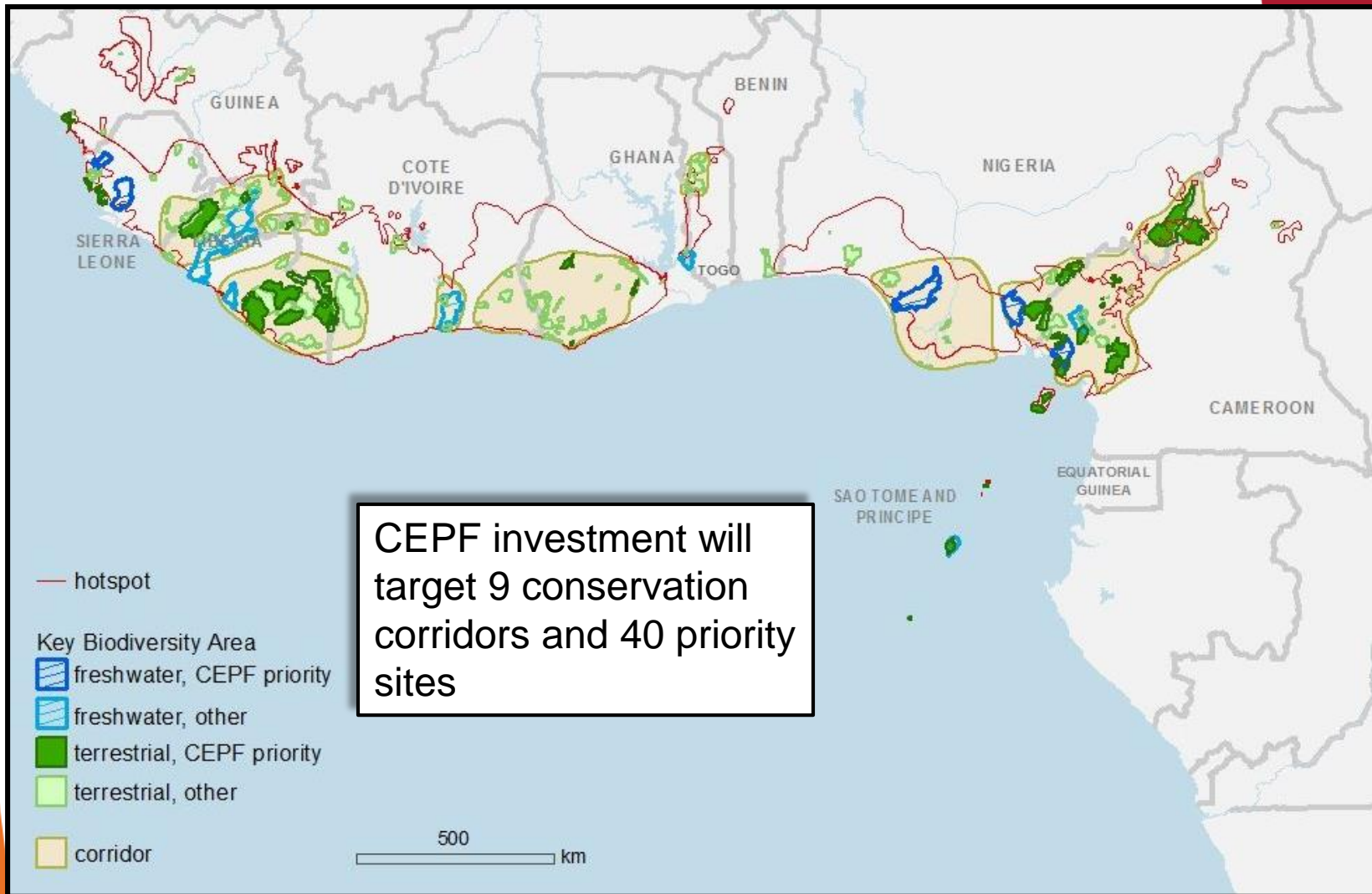
- ecological connectivity;
- the needs and aspirations of communities (especially vulnerable groups like Indigenous People and women);
- the capacity of key actors

Focusing resources effectively on these three areas will require robust partnerships, informed by a solid information base

Conservation Corridors in the Guinean Forests Hotspot



Priority Sites in the Guinean Forests Hotspot



CEPF investment strategy

1. Empower local communities to engage in sustainable management of 40 priority sites and consolidate ecological connectivity at the landscape scale
2. Mainstream biodiversity conservation into public policy and private sector practice in the nine conservation corridors, at local, sub-national and national levels
3. Safeguard priority globally threatened species by identifying and addressing major threats and information gaps

CEPF investment strategy

4. Build the capacity of local civil society organizations, including Indigenous People's, women's and youth groups, to conserve and manage globally important biodiversity
5. Provide strategic leadership and effective coordination of conservation investment through a Regional Implementation Team



Thank you ! — www.cepf.net