



WWF GEF Project Document Cover Page

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ANPN - Agence Nationale des Parc Nationaux (Gabon)
AGM – Annual General Meeting (Namibia)
ARPA- Amazon Region Protected Areas
BOD- Board of Directors
CBD- Convention on Biological Diversity
CBNRM - Community-based Natural Resources Management
CBO- Community-based Organization
CEO- Chief Executive Officer
CTF - Conservation Trust Fund
DGFAP - Directrice Générale de la Faune et des Aires Protégées (Gabon)
CMAR- Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Conservation Corridor
ESMF- Environmental and Social Management Framework
Ha or HA – Hectares
GEB – Global Environmental Benefits
GEF - Global Environment Facility
HWC- Human-Wildlife Conflict
IBA- Important Bird Area
IPA- Important Plant Area
IPBES- Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
EE - Enduring Earth
ETP - Eastern Tropical Pacific
FAO- United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
IPLC- Indigenous Peoples and local communities
IPPF- Indigenous Peoples Plan
IPPF- Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework
KM- Knowledge Management
KM²- Square kilometers
LC3- Low conflict, low carbon, low cost
M&E- Monitoring and Evaluation
METT- Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MEFT - Ministry of Environment Forestry and Tourism (Namibia)
MinEF - Ministry of Environment and Forestry (Gabon)
MPA - Marine Protected Area
mm- Milimeter
NBSAP- National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
NACSO - Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations (Namibia)
NGO - Non-governmental Organization
NP - National Park
OECM- Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures
PA - Protected Area
PIF - Project Information Form
PFP - Project Finance for Permanence
PPG - Project Preparation Grant
PRODOC – Project Document

PSC- Project Steering Committee
RCP- Representative Concentration Pathway
SIPP- Safeguard Integrated Policies and Procedures
SOCCR- State of the Communal Conservancies Report
SFM - Sustainable Finance Mechanism
TBR -Transboundary Biosphere Reserve
TFCA - Transfrontier Conservation Area
TNC - The Nature Conservancy
UNAM- University of Namibia
US- United States
USD- United States Dollar
WHO- World Health Organization
WWF - World Wildlife Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recent studies show that pressures on nature are intensifying, and species, habitats, and ecosystem services are being lost at an alarming rate, with the great majority of indicators of ecosystems and biodiversity showing rapid decline (IPBES, 2019). Protected and conserved areas (PA) are a cornerstone of biodiversity conservation and protection, storing crucial stocks of natural, cultural and social capital, yielding flows of economically valuable goods and services that benefit society, secure livelihoods, and contribute to the achievement of other development goals. Moreover, PAs are key buffers to the impacts of climate change. However, the necessary resources for effective management of protected and conserved areas (and of conservancies) have not kept pace with system needs, resulting in suboptimal or asymmetrical management. Under these circumstances, PAs and conserved areas cannot ensure the long-term conservation of biodiversity and associated cultural, scenic and scientific values of the areas they administer; the maintenance of ecosystem services of national, regional and global significance can be compromised; and the continued provision of environmental and social benefits which are crucial to sustainable development are threatened. This project responds to these and other barriers inhibiting the effective, inclusive and sustained management of PAs in the project geographies, which include Namibia, Gabon, and the Eastern Tropical Pacific (ETP) region.

The Enduring Earth (“EE”) partnership is an ambitious collaboration between the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Nature Conservancy (TNC), WWF, and Zomalab to support governments and communities to conserve the resources that sustain life by accelerating inclusive area-based conservation measures in furtherance of the Global Biodiversity Framework’s Target 3 (the “30 by 30” target) and other development goals through the Project Finance for Permanence (“PFP”) approach.

Under a PFP approach, the parties define and agree on a unique set of commitments in a single closing to ensure that, over the long term, large-scale systems of conservation areas are well-managed, sustainably financed, and benefit the communities who depend on them. This entails institutional capacity building, leadership and commitment, and, often, changes in policy. The key elements of the PFP approach are: a large-scale, specific, and charismatic conservation goal; conservation plan that details all activities to achieve and maintain the conservation goal; a robust financial model that estimates full, long-term costs to achieve and maintain the conservation goal in perpetuity; a set of closing conditions that the PFP partners agree to meet; institutional improvements needed for effective implementation; funding commitments needed to achieve the conservation goals; and an independent fund administrator to oversee PFP resources.

Learning from PFPs underway in Bhutan, Brazil, Costa Rica, Colombia and Peru, the six-year, \$22.6M GEF-7 Enduring Earth Project (“the project”) will catalyze PFP initiatives in Gabon and Namibia (Component 1 - \$19M), as well as initiate a design process for a durable finance mechanism in the Eastern Tropical Pacific (Component 2 - \$1,199,464). The project will also undertake global work to promote scaling out of the PFP approach through the Enduring Earth partnership (also under Component 2 - \$400,000). Component 3 (\$957,500) will ensure effective project-level monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management on key topic areas and will strengthen national and regional/global coordination among members of the Enduring Earth partnership and key stakeholders.

Gabon

Gabon's forests, rivers and ocean are some of the continent's most biodiverse, with many species that are unique to the region, and many more that are still unknown or just being discovered by science. The country's natural ecosystems harbors 6.4Gt of carbon. Resilient tropical forests cover 88% of the country and absorb 100M tons of net carbon a year from the atmosphere. Gabon has formally designated 11% of its land area as National Parks (NP), an additional 10% as Ramsar sites, and 26% of its Exclusive Economic Zone as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Gabon is one of the most forested countries in the world and has significant wildlife values, including the largest population of forest elephants and western lowland gorillas.

In Gabon, the PAs system lacks funding; responsible agencies and other stakeholders have insufficient capacities to participate meaningfully in planning and PAs management; the protected area system presents important gaps in ecological representation and ecological connectivity; and the failure to plan for and consider the livelihoods of communities living near and surrounding national parks often inhibits the durability of PAs.

To address these challenges, the project will support a comprehensive and ambitious nation-wide PFP building upon the Government of Gabon's ongoing collaboration with TNC to secure the protection of the country's important biodiversity and carbon stocks over the long term and close land and freshwater protection gaps in furtherance of its ambition to protect 30% of its terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems by 2030.

The GEF project will support the delivery of a PFP that will establish both transition and endowment funds. The \$97M Transition Fund (to which the GEF project will contribute US\$3.7M) will cover the costs of establishing new PAs and effective management of the full network of these PAs during a 10-year transition phase. Payments from the transition fund will diminish over time as the Government institutionalizes in-country sustainable finance mechanisms that will help ensure permanence for conservation of 30% of its land, waters, and ocean. The endowment fund—with a target initial capitalization of \$27M (of which GEF will contribute \$5M)—will support capacity-building needs (of both government agencies and local communities) over the long term, maturing only after the end of the 10-year PFP transition phase, while the protected area system operational costs are expected to be covered with revenues generated through the operation of the sustainable finance mechanisms and over time increased government budgetary allocations to the PAs system.

A conservation trust fund (CTF), set to be established by late 2023 as a US-based corporation with a headquarters in Gabon, will manage both the transition (sinking) and endowment funds to give effect to the PFP conservation plan. The Gabon CTF will follow internationally recognized standards and good practices to ensure transparency and good governance of the CTF (including a diverse, independent board of directors, an internationally recognized asset manager, inter alia).

GEF funds will provide critical support across all phases of the PFP. Prior to the PFP single close, when the parties are negotiating the terms of the agreements with respect to the goals of the transaction (the conservation plan, financial plan and responsibilities, etc.), GEF funds will complement co-financed activities to produce studies that inform the PFP closing conditions (regarding the creation of government and community capacities to effectively manage PAs and participate in conservation planning, respectively). GEF funds and project co-finance will also support the design of sustainable finance mechanisms that will help the government of Gabon to meet its commitments for increased government funding for the PA system under the PFP. GEF and co-finance funds will capitalize a transition fund that will cover the gap for establishing new PAs and effective management of the full PA network during a 10-year transition phase. Finally, the GEF

contribution of critical seed capital for the endowment fund will help to crowd-in support from other donors to ensure a sustainable flow of resources is available over the long term to support capacity building activities to complement PA investment from other sources (e.g. government budget allocations, sustainable finance mechanisms), and enhance the efficiency of resource use (through improved absorption capacity, better project planning and sequencing, etc.).

Namibia

Namibia is one of the few dryland countries in the world with internationally recognized biodiversity hotspots. Namibia is a wildlife-rich country, with one of the world's largest populations of cheetah, the largest free-roaming population of black rhino, and unique desert-dwelling populations of rhino, lion, and elephants. It hosts other high value, threatened species such as painted dog (formerly called African wild dogs) and pangolin. Namibia's state PAs share more than 70% of their boundaries with conservancies. When adjacent to national parks or forming part of corridors between parks, conservancies – which are the focus of this project – enhance the viability of the national Protected Areas (PAs) system (which is comprised of 20 national PAs covering 17 % of Namibia's terrestrial area (140,394 km²)).

Despite the scope of its impressive national PA and conservancy systems and encouraging conservation outcomes with respect to key species, maintenance of these successes is challenged by funding limitations for effective management of natural resources. Management across the conservancy system is asymmetrical. Some areas lack basic management while others maintain a relatively high management standard. Under these circumstances, conservancies cannot ensure the long-term conservation of biodiversity and associated cultural and scientific values of the areas they administer; the maintenance of ecosystem services of national, regional and global significance; and the provision of environmental and social benefits which are crucial to the country's sustainable development. The great challenge for the system is to mobilize sufficient resources to ensure management of the conservancy system that receives significant but insufficient public support and may compete for resources with the national PAs system.

Building on a strong base of work being led by the Namibian Association of Community-based Natural Resources Management Support Organizations (NACSO), the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT), and WWF Namibia, the project aims to develop the first PFP in the developing world to focus on community conservancies as an area-based management strategy, providing critical support to enable the financial sustainability of its extensive conservancy system. A \$10M sinking fund (seeded with project co-financing) will support the provision of extension services (by NACSO and its members) to drive conservation impacts during the project cycle. A \$50M endowment will fully-fund the provision of essential extension services in perpetuity to strengthen community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) and deliver community-driven protection and conservation impact in approximately 100 communal conservancies covering an estimated 20M hectares of land. This support will ensure effective management and foster economic development by guaranteeing the effective delivery of key services by CBNRM support organizations (NACSO and member organizations, including NGOs/Government/the University of Namibia) and the local Conservancies. Covered extension services will be enumerated in an extension services plan and will fall into one of four workstreams: (1) business and livelihoods; (2) institutional development and governance; (3) natural resource management; and (4) national support services. Extension services support will complement the operational budgets of conservancies which are funded through tourism and hunting ventures.

The sinking and endowment funds will be managed by a fund administrator (still to be identified) in accordance with internationally recognized good practices for conservation trust funds (CTFs). A due diligence assessment of an existing CTF in Namibia is in process at the time of first submission (June 2023). The fund administrator will disburse funds— per rules and procedures defined in the PFP operational manual – to cover the costs of planned extension services which will be provided by the Namibian Association of Community-based Natural Resources Management Support Organizations (NACSO) and its member organizations.

GEF project funds will contribute almost exclusively to the capitalization of the extension services endowment fund. The critical GEF seed contribution will help to crowd-in support from other donors.

In Namibia and in Gabon, the integration of GEF safeguards standards and procedures into fund operations – and dedicated technical support in the lifetime of the project to ensure trust fund staff understand these standards and procedures and how to implement them effectively – will ensure that the trust fund continues to adhere to international good practice long after the project cycle.

Eastern Tropical Pacific (ETP) & Global

The ETP’s rich waters and the communities that depend on them face growing threats, such as those arising from unsustainable fishing, climate change and lack of ecological connectivity. In November 2021 at the Conference of Parties (COP) 26 in Glasgow, the Presidents of Panama, Ecuador, Costa Rica, and Colombia signed an agreement to create a 500,000 km² Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (TBR) (one of the world’s largest) to connect and protect core MPAs in the region. The subsequent announcement by the four countries at the Our Oceans Conference in Panama in 2023 to create a permanent Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Conservation Corridor (CMAR) secretariat and to execute a regional treaty creates a strong foundation for a regional, durable conservation finance mechanism.

The transboundary conservation vision outlined by the four governments includes a well governed, durable, and effectively managed multi-jurisdictional marine conservation area and secure transboundary pathways of ocean connectivity that support global biodiversity, the resilience of coastal communities, and a productive blue economy. Under Output 2.1, this project will help to assess regional conservation mechanisms that can help to realize this vision and plan for an inclusive design in the ETP to support the long-term sustainability of this ecologically significant region. This work will be led by the Pew Charitable Trusts with the participating countries of the ETP.

At the global level, GEF resources will finance technical assistance that will help build capacities to replicate and scale the PFP approach to advance 30x30 goals. Under Output 2.2, consultancies will evaluate institutional strengths and needs of CTFs in EE portfolio countries and their partner organizations against global practice standards for Conservation Trust Funds, deriving lessons relevant to the development of and implementation of future PFPs. This output will also help to identify and evaluate available financial mechanisms/present options to governments that could be channeled toward PFP conservation objectives (and thus promoting policy coherence) in the future. The report will include an evaluation of potential mechanisms and case studies, with a target audience of national governments. Finally, a series of webinars, case studies and workshops will be developed to present best practices on core competencies for PFP implementation and management of protected and conserved areas, and to facilitate south-south exchange of lessons and experiences among PFP countries. Work under Output 2.2. will be led by the Enduring Earth partnership hub.

Monitoring & Evaluation, Knowledge Management & Institutional Arrangements

The project will ensure effective monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management activities and training on key topic areas and will strengthen national and regional/global coordination among members of the Enduring Earth partnership and key stakeholders.

TNC will serve as the project's Lead Executing Agency. TNC is a member of the Enduring Earth partnership and has a successful record of leveraging private investment and innovative financing for conservation, as well as global reach and experience in the themes of spatial planning and Indigenous people-led conservation.

The project will be implemented by a number of Executing Partners. For Component 1, in Gabon, management and coordination of the Project will take place through TNC until the PFP single close is realized. TNC's responsibilities in this regard will transfer in full to the Fund Administrator (CTF) following single close and will be maintained throughout the course of the project and the implementation of the PFP. PFP funds will be managed in accordance with internationally recognized good practices as set out in the GEF-supported practice standards for conservation trust funds¹ to ensure transparency and good governance (incl. a diverse, independent board of directors / oversight committee, an internationally recognized asset manager, sound investment policy, *inter alia*).

In Namibia, GEF budget will not be disbursed until after single close, during which time WWF, NASCO and MEFT will utilize co-financing to coordinate to complete the due diligence process of the Conservation Trust Fund (CTF) and to reach the conditions to execute the PFP transaction— including donor commitments, a conservation plan, a financial model, agreed governance structure for the PFP, and an Operational Manual. As in Gabon, PFP funds will be managed in accordance with internationally recognized good practices.

Work in the ETP will be led by The Pew Charitable Trusts. The work to support the global scale out of the Enduring Earth approach to improve the knowledge base for PFPs among key stakeholders will be managed by the Enduring Earth Hub.

Finally, a Global Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be the highest decision-making authority for the project, responsible for supervising and monitoring the technical and financial execution of the project, including the fulfilment of the Results Framework, and approving annual work plans and budgets. The PSC will be responsible for strategic guidance and approving any major changes that may be needed in the execution strategy of the project, informed by the project monitoring and evaluation outcomes, and ensuring alignment with the Project Document and national priorities and policies.

¹¹ See: [CFAPracticeStandards2020.pdf \(redlac.org\)](#)

1 SECTION 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND & SITUATION ANALYSIS

1.1 Background

1.1.1 The Enduring Earth Partnership and the PFP model

The Enduring Earth Partnership² is an ambitious collaboration to support governments and communities to conserve the natural resources that sustain life by accelerating inclusive area-based conservation measures in furtherance of 30x30 and other development goals through the Project Finance for Permanence (“PFP”) approach.³ Under a PFP approach, the parties define and agree a unique set of commitments in a single closing to ensure that, over the long term, large-scale systems of conservation areas are well-managed, sustainably financed, and benefit the communities who depend on them.

A PFP is defined as an initiative that at one time (the single close), secures all funding necessary to meet the specific conservation goals of a co-designed program over a defined long-term timeframe, with the ultimate goal of achieving the ecological, social, political, organizational and financial sustainability of that program (WWF, 2016). This entails institutional capacity building, leadership and commitment, and, often, changes in policy.

The PFP approach must incorporate each of the following components⁴:

- A large-scale, specific, and charismatic **conservation goal**
- A **conservation plan** that details all activities to achieve and maintain the conservation goal
- A robust **financial model** that estimates full, long-term costs to achieve and maintain the conservation goal in perpetuity. The financial model may also speak to the mechanisms that may be deployed to cover these costs in the long term.
- A set of clear, one-time prerequisites called **closing conditions** that PFP partners agree to meet before implementation can begin (the moment when all partners formally agree that all closing conditions have been met is often called the “closing” or “**single closing**”). In addition to final agreement regarding other components on this list, closing conditions may include enactment of policies to ensure permanence of the initiative, definition of implementation and governance arrangements, a complete PFP operating manual,⁵ and completion of (or formal commitment to) institutional improvements needed for effective implementation.
- Formal, upfront **funding commitments** for necessary funding to achieve the conservation goals are secured before implementation begins. Funding may be in the form of donations, public budget increases, and/or revenue derived from sustainable financing mechanisms from public or private sources. Fundraising responsibilities are typically shared among PFP partner organizations.
- An independent **fund administrator** with a multi-stakeholder board to provide oversight and transparency during implementation.

²See <https://enduringearth.org>. The NGO and philanthropic partners are The Nature Conservancy, The Pew Charitable Trusts, World Wildlife Fund, and ZOMALAB, the family office of Ben and Lucy Ana Walton.

³ See [Securing Sustainable Financing for Conservation Areas](#) for a comprehensive treatment of PFPs, including case studies.

⁴ *Id.* at 12.

⁵ *Id.* At 59. A PFP operating manual is a document that includes many design phase components (conservation plan, a summary of the financial model, disbursement conditions, implementation arrangements, etc.) It establishes the PFP’s operating rules and specifies responsibilities and processes for implementation. The operating manual is often based on existing agreements and procedures of the relevant authority and fund administrator. However, where a new trust fund is established, or where gaps or opportunities for improvement exist, the manual should reflect new procedures.

- A clear set of rigorous, usually annual, **disbursement conditions** or milestones that must be met by implementing partners and funders for funds to continue to be released throughout the implementation phase. These conditions act as an incentive for all partners to adhere to the PFP’s mutually agreed vision over time. Disbursement conditions typically include achievement of specific conservation results, increased allocations of in-country sustainable funding to the program, and other previously agreed commitments.

Members of the Enduring Earth partnership and others – with critical support from the GEF in a number of instances – have worked previously with six countries⁶ to execute PFPs resulting in the conservation of a cumulative 90 million hectares of PAs and the improvement of the livelihoods of millions of people dependent on them (TNC, 2022). The Enduring Earth partnership aims to build on this legacy by working with 20 countries to protect an additional half a billion hectares by the year 2030, and has set a fundraising target of \$4 billion to support deal development (funding to support the scoping and development of PFPs), and deal capital (funding needed for the implementation of PFP conservation plans) for a series of PFPs.⁷

The Enduring Earth partnership is working with governments and other stakeholders to develop a pipeline of PFP initiatives to achieve this ambitious goal. Each prospective PFP passes through a rigorous “stage-gating” process which progressively refines the transactions. The Enduring Earth partnership assesses potential PFPs using a suite of criteria, prioritizing places that are ecologically important, represent different biomes, have direct benefits for communities, and are “at scale.” The stage gating process for an Enduring Earth PFP can be broken down into three progressively more advanced phases: viability (developing a coherent vision for the PFP; loosely defining outcomes; assessing whether a PFP is conceptually achievable), feasibility (refining the PFP vision, engaging with stakeholders to secure support), and planning (structuring the PFP to ensure alignment of all parties, finalization of the core PFP elements). The outcome of this stage is a complete PFP plan that is ready to be implemented and signed by all parties at a closing event. Following single close, the plan developed in the previous stages is put into action. This includes executing the conservation and financial plans, implementing the community engagement plan, and delivering the community/socio-economic benefits outlined in the plan. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation ensure that the project continues to meet its objectives and that any necessary adjustments are made.

1.1.2 Project scope

The proposed GEF-7 Enduring Earth Project will catalyze Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) initiatives in Gabon and Namibia, and help to design a multi-country, marine-focused durable finance mechanism in the Eastern Tropical Pacific (Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Panama)⁸ to advance the achievement of goals set under the Global Biodiversity Framework and other development objectives.⁹

⁶ **Bhutan** (“Bhutan for Life”), **Brazil** (Amazon Region Protected Areas or “ARPA” Program), **Canada** (Great Bear Rainforest Project), **Colombia** (“Herencia Colombia”), **Costa Rica** (“Forever Costa Rica”), and **Peru** (“Peru Natural Legacy”).

⁸ The Enduring Earth partnership, in consultation with governments and stakeholders, completed PFP feasibility assessments in Gabon, Namibia, and the Eastern Tropical Pacific countries which established that a number of critical PFP enabling conditions are in place. In all cases,

In addition, global technical assistance and capacity building will promote enabling conditions for sustainable financing for protected and conserved areas and the “scaling out” of the PFP approach, learning from PFPs underway in Brazil, Costa Rica, Colombia, and Peru, to accelerate PFP development in additional countries. By working with governments and other stakeholders and rightsholders to use PFP as a vehicle to generate new sustainable funding sources to secure durability of conservation interventions, EE will contribute to establishing the conditions for durable biodiversity protection and climate mitigation—including community engagement, sustainable finance mechanisms, political commitment, philanthropy, and capacity-building of local and national organizations.

The PFPs in Namibia and Gabon, and the durable finance mechanism being explored in the ETP at the time of project submission have advanced to the PFP “planning phase” (following the Enduring Earth methodology). Thus, while the preceding steps in the process have helped to define the broad strokes of the PFP, certain details with respect to key PFP elements may continue to be refined. The planning phase ends with the finalization of a PFP plan, and the execution of the single close which will trigger the start of the PFP implementation phase. The ETP project only recently (January 2023) advanced into planning phase; therefore, it is less developed than the transactions in Namibia and Gabon. Support from GEF will help the ETP governments and partners determine the structure of a durable finance approach, define governance arrangements in the target ETP transboundary region, and assess regional conservation and sustainable finance mechanisms collectively.

Summaries of the PFPs for Gabon, Namibia, and the possible regional durable finance mechanism for the ETP appear below.

1.1.3 Overview of the PFPs

Gabon

Gabon harbors species-rich terrestrial, marine, and freshwater ecosystems, and is the second most forested country in the world - and one of only a handful that is carbon positive. The Government of Gabon (GoG) has indicated the intention to implement a comprehensive conservation and sustainable development plan to protect 30% of ocean, 30% of land and 30% of freshwater ecosystems by 2030 in line with the targets set out in the Global Biodiversity Framework, while transitioning the nation’s oil-based economy to one driven by natural resources management that will help to provide jobs to Gabon’s underemployed youth.

the assessments determined that: individual PFPs will make important contributions to the achievement of government strategic priorities; governments are supportive of the PFP; and there is donor interest in supporting the effort / PFP co-financing is available.

⁹ Of particular note are the links between the project and Global Biodiversity Framework (.GBF) Targets 3 and 19. **Target 3** calls for ... “at least 30 per cent of terrestrial, inland water, and of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.” **Target 19** calls on countries to “substantially and progressively increase the level of financial resources from all sources, in an effective, timely and easily accessible manner, including domestic, international, public and private resources.” The project also advances GBF **Goal D**, one of the five overarching goals to be achieved by 2050, which focuses on implementation – including finance, technical and scientific cooperation – needed to close the biodiversity finance gap of \$700 billion per year.

Government, with TNC and other partners, have been actively exploring the viability and feasibility of a Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) initiative for Gabon since June 2021.

Conservation Goal

The PFP aims to help Gabon become the first country to achieve “30 by 30 by 30,” that is to achieve 30% protection of its terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems, respectively, by 2030. Over the six-year GEF project implementation period, the PFP aims to create 1,861,437 ha of new terrestrial PAs (including forest and wetlands) and bring 6,115,713 ha of existing PAs (including forests, wetlands and freshwater) under improved management. The PFP will also create 676,680 ha of new MPAs, and bring 5,364,630 ha of existing MPAs under improved management. The PFP will also produce climate mitigation benefits (estimated at 3.3M tCO_{2e}) as well as benefits for the people dependent on forests and fisheries for their livelihoods who will have reduced vulnerability as a result of the PFP. Direct benefits are estimated to extend to 60,000 people living in rural areas.

Conservation Plan

To achieve this objective -- and maintain it -- the PFP will channel resources to a range of possible activities described in Table 1. Development of the conservation plan for the Gabon PFP started in 2023 and will be finalized ahead of the PFP single close (expected to occur in late 2024), informed by technical, environmental, and sociological studies developed through a consultative process with stakeholders.

Table 1. Range of Possible Activities Under the PFP Conservation Plan

Protected and Conservation Area Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Park Planning, including freshwater management objectives, monitoring and evaluation. • Resourcing: personnel, training, equipment, infrastructure • Monitoring and surveillance systems • FPIC, local community extension services • Commercial engagements in selected sites
Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and skills development, personnel, mentorship for both government agencies and local communities
Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance and institutional systems • Local leadership, community-based organization (CBO) support • Human wildlife conflict mitigation
Legal Framework & Regulatory Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and regulation development, designation of protected and conservation areas • Clarification and expansion of existing PA boundaries to include priority boundary rivers and freshwater features • Monitoring and surveillance systems • Agency capacity for monitoring and enforcement of practice standards
Environmental Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of high conservation value areas • Knowledge Practice and Attitude Surveys, Zoning development/surveys • Marine Spatial Planning • Low conflict, low carbon, low cost (LC3) energy roadmap – identifying lowest conflict, feasible sites for solar, wind and hydropower
Sustainable Financing Mechanisms (SFM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of SFMs • Creation of enabling conditions for market-based investments with nature positive outcomes

Summary of Financial Model

Based on current projections, the total cost for achieving the PFP’s conservation goals in Gabon over a 10-year implementation phase (also known as the transition period) is estimated to be US\$285million to be unlocked from multiple sources (including private and public donors, increased government budget allocations over baseline, and SFMs). This figure may change as the conservation plan and the finance plan are further developed and finalized before the single close, projected for 2024 (early in the GEF project period). These costs consist of:

- US\$ 8M – for the establishment of new PAs
- US\$ 240M – for the improvement of management effectiveness of new and existing PAs
- US\$ 5M – for the operationalization and management of the Conservation Trust Fund (CTF)
- US\$ 32M – for seed investment for new Sustainable Finance Mechanisms, including the capitalization of a US\$27M PFP Endowment Fund (to support capacity building initiatives complementing other PA investment) and
- US\$5M – for the development of a conservation tourism program.

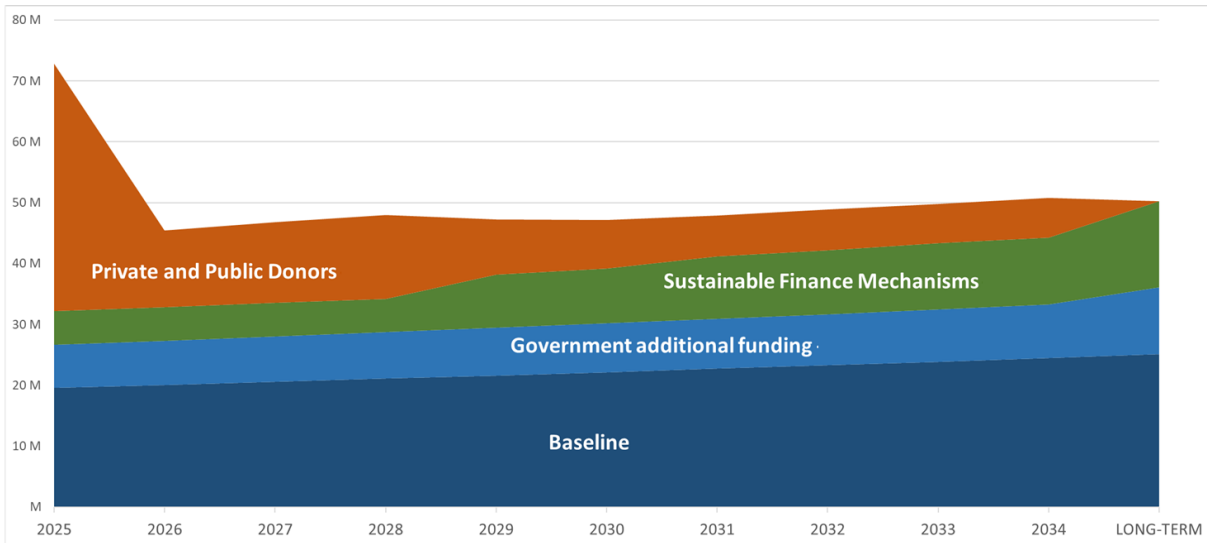


Figure 1. Proposed funding model, PFP Gabon

Figure 1 shows the proposed funding model for the PFP Gabon to cover the costs to achieve the PFP’s conservation goals over the 10-year implementation phase. **Note:** these are preliminary estimates which will continue to evolve as the conservation plan progresses. The funding model includes:

- **Baseline** (estimated between \$175-263 Million USD): This amount comprises current and projected public funds allocations from the national treasury to the National Parks Agency and other relevant agencies; projected park fees revenues; and other funds that will be received by the National Parks Agency to cover the operational costs of the current protected area network.
- **Government additional funding** (estimated between \$63-95 Million USD): This amount includes estimated additional treasury allocations for the PFP, that will cover the additional cost required for the improved management of existing and new PAs and seed investments for new planned Sustainable Finance Mechanisms. In total, a 10% increase of government allocation at the end of the implementation period is estimated, to secure long term funding at the Steady State.
- **Public and Private grants** (between US\$99-\$149M): This amount includes private and individual funding, public donor funding (including the GEF contribution) and TNC funding. US\$27M will be used for the capitalization of an endowment fund (to which this GEF project will contribute US\$5M) and the rest will be channelled via a Transition Fund (to which the GEF project will contribute with \$3.7M) to be spent during the transition phase. Transition funds will be used to achieve the conservation objectives agreed and set in the conservation plan.
- **Sustainable Finance Mechanisms revenues** (estimated between US\$66-\$98M): This amount includes revenues from the proposed Sustainable Finance Mechanisms, arriving at a steady state by the end of the transition period of ~US\$14M/year. Sustainable Finance Mechanisms preliminarily identified, prioritized and now under closer examination include a marine-focused revolving funding mechanism, tourism optimization mechanisms, a Payment for Ecosystem Services (to be developed with GEF project funds), extractive royalties, and the revenues generated by the Endowment Fund. Endowment revenues would support on-going capacity building investments (local communities and government agencies), monitoring and performance standards verifications, and core operating costs.

Current estimates (which may be refined prior to deal close) suggest that in the post-transition fund “steady state,” US\$25M per year (in addition to the baseline for current PAs) will be required to maintain the planned level of conservation management over the long term. These recurring costs will be funded by a combination of government contributions and revenues generated by SFMs (including the endowment fund). Payouts from the endowment fund will begin after the 10-year transition period and are projected to amount to US\$3M/year, based on anticipated returns of 7% p.a.¹⁰ The income generated from the investment of endowment capital (less management fees) will support on-going capacity building activities for local communities and government agencies.

Institutional Arrangements / Governance

A conservation trust fund (CTF), set to be established in late 2024 as a US-based corporation with a headquarters in Gabon, will manage transition (sinking) and endowment funds to give effect to the conservation plan. The Gabon CTF will follow internationally recognized standards and good practices to ensure transparency and good governance of the CTF (including a diverse, independent board of directors, an internationally recognized asset manager, inter alia). Careful staffing arrangements and capacity support/project oversight from TNC and project support and supervision by WWF GEF will ensure that the new fund is able to manage GEF funding (pooled with other donor funding in the endowment), including adhering to GEF safeguards and stakeholder engagement minimum standards. The PFP Operating Manual will define operating rules and processes, and specify responsibilities. As of June 2023, a draft Operating Manual is under development and should be completed in late 2023.

The CTF will be governed by a multi-stakeholder Board of Directors and managed by an Executive Secretariat led by a Chief Executive Officer. The Government of Gabon (GoG) will have a seat on the Board of Directors as a Founding Member, in addition to at least one other seat on the board. TNC will also have a Founding Member seat. Other civil society organizations (including NGOs, CBOs, trade organizations, representatives of the legal and financial sectors, research institutes, etc.) will be invited to appoint representatives to sit on the Board of Directors. The CTF bylaws will ensure that the fund maintains at all times a majority non-government Board. The Board will have to comply with a Conflicts of Interests Policy.

An advisory committee will provide expert guidance to the trust on Finance and Investments, and oversee the performance of a professional internationally renowned investment manager, selected by the Board through a competitive bidding process. This will ensure the endowment is invested according to the CTF investment policy and has the conditions to generate the expected annual proceeds.

The endowment will complement transition funds by helping to improve and sustain the capacity of conservation practitioners to absorb additional resources, including both the government agencies in charge of the PA system and civil society organizations. The endowment will promote improved planning of projects / proper sequencing of efforts, which will accelerate the use and effectiveness of the finance available.

The endowment will fund activities such as:

- Management effectiveness tools training for PA agencies and staff (such as METT) and implementation of the tools in PA on a regular basis.
- Specific training for PA staff, such as monitoring of species, local community engagement and consultation, use of technology, etc.
- Project management training for PA agencies and staff, local NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs).

¹⁰ Projection based on average investment returns on TNC’s own endowment.

- Project design and proposal writing for local NGOs and CBOs, including intervention logic, identification of sound indicators, costing and financial planning, baseline setting, risk analysis, etc.
- Project implementation practices for local NGOs and CBOs, including financial management and reporting, monitoring and evaluation of execution and biodiversity indicators, environmental and social compliance, communication.
- Organizational development (including formalization) of local NGOs and CBOs, their institutional structuring, governance and operation procedures.
- Financial management and sustainability for local NGOs and CBOs.
- Participatory monitoring for community groups, local NGOs and CBOs, including citizen science.
- Women, youth and other vulnerable groups education and empowerment.

Eligible activities will be defined in an endowment fund program strategy.

The increased capacity for management in the new and existing PAs/MPAs will be complemented with increased funding for operational costs of management from additional government allocations and revenues from SFMs.

Namibia

Since 2008 the government and the CBNRM community in Namibia has aspired to set up a long-term sustainable financing mechanism for its extensive conservancy system. In 2018, a PFP pre-feasibility study established that the PFP approach could be applied to community conservation areas outside of the state protected system, helping to deliver on this aspiration, and amplify inclusive conservation approaches in connected landscapes. This project thus aims to support the first PFP in the developing world to focus on community conservancies as an area-based management strategy. It will channel resources to an endowment scaled to fully-fund the provision of critical extension services to approximately 100 communal conservancies covering an estimated 20M hectares of land in perpetuity to strengthen CBNRM in Namibia and deliver community-driven protection and conservation impact. While at present there are 86 communal conservancies in Namibia, the fund is capitalized to cover the costs associated with the provision of critical extension services to 100 conservancies, allowing for the possibility of expansion of the system. A sinking fund (capitalized with co-finance) will finance interventions in the interim period between the PFP's single close and the endowment maturation (approximately five years, depending on investment performance, initial capitalization, and other factors).

Conservation Goal

The PFP aims to improve management effectiveness in the 86 communal conservancies in Namibia, covering an estimated 20M hectares of land.

Conservation Plan

The PFP conservation goal will be achieved by ensuring – through the operation of the endowment fund – that every year, access to critical¹¹ extension services enables at least 80% of the 86 conservancies to meet at least 80% of the following applicable requirements (as articulated and required under national community-based natural resource management legislation):

1. Hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) each year as per their conservancy constitution.

¹¹ "Critical" extension services (1) contribute directly to the extension services goal; (2) are SMART; (3) can be systematically and recurrently provided to conservancies; and (4) are within the mandate of conservancy constitutions and MEFT legislation. Note these should cover ongoing support to prevent system failure / conservancy collapse. This could include enhancement but not one-off/development support.

2. Conduct Conservancy Committee elections as required by their conservancy constitution.
3. Produce and submit satisfactory (adopted by conservancy members at the AGM) annual financial statements (and audits if required by their conservancy constitution) that show that expenditures are within approved budgets.
4. Manage wildlife as per the approved Wildlife Management and Utilisation Plan, and submit the Wildlife Utilisation Report annually to Ministry of Environment Forestry and Tourism.
5. Generate and distribute benefits according to their own Benefits Distribution Plan and procedure as per their conservancy constitution.

This support to the conservancies will promote the protection of 86 communal conservancies,¹² and foster economic development by funding the effective delivery of key services by CBNRM support organizations (NACSO Secretariat and its membership, incl. NGOs/Government) and the local Conservancies. Covered extension services will be elaborated in an extension services plan (an advanced draft of which has been prepared over the course of the project development phase through a robust consultative process with stakeholders; see Annex 7b. Planned extension services – which will be provided by NACSO and its member organizations -- are mostly Technical Assistance to the communal conservancies, though they could cover, eventually, some minor basic equipment / water infrastructure costs. Although the operational /investment costs associated with the implementation of the above presented plans will be borne by the conservancies (using their revenues generated from tourism and hunting activities), the TA that the extension services will provide is critical for the conservancies to be able to implement their plans effectively. Extension services will fall into one of the following four workstreams:

- I. *Business and livelihoods* support (focusing on capacity building, not seed capital for businesses) will help emerging entrepreneurs to learn basic business concepts (markets, competition, supply and demand, business productivity, pricing), how to assess business opportunities, and business and financial planning. This support will, among other things, help conservancies secure benefits from joint ventures with the private sector.
- II. *Institutional Development and Governance* support will contribute to compliant, transparent, and effective conservancy governance and management and may encompass legal and policy support, conservancy establishment, stakeholder engagement, conflict resolution, learning exchanges, training on: constitution implementation and amendments, Annual General Meetings, financial management and reporting, advocacy, support for training of managers.
- III. *Natural Resource Management support* will include mapping, management plans, quota setting, hunting concessions, harvesting systems, human wildlife conflict mitigation, fire management, training and basic equipment (such as uniforms, binoculars, camping tents, communication systems, vehicles/motorbikes) to community game guards (CGGs) to implement anti-poaching systems, game censuses and introductions, monitoring systems, law enforcement support.
- IV. *National Support Services* will provide an enabling framework at a national level to ensure that the different thematic technical services will be effective in achieving their intended purpose in an efficient manner. These services may include (1) Support to the CBNRM from the NACSO Secretariat

¹² There are currently only 86 conservancies, however, several are currently emerging and new ones may form over time.

in reviewing and developing policies and legislation as needed to fit the current and evolving CBNRM operational context (2) Support in aligning Namibia’s development plans with the needs of community conservancies (3) Facilitating the development and implementation of a CBNRM advocacy strategy to enhance community voices so that their rights are fully devolved, and they take ownership. (4) Coordinating / facilitating synergies in the development and implementation of environmental and social safeguards by different service providers at all levels; (5) Facilitating the development and implementation of a national CBNRM Communications Strategy, including preparation and publication of the annual State of Community Conservation Report; (6) Supporting the continued operationalization of a national CBNRM coordination and representational service to maintain synergy and collaboration across thematic and geographic focal areas, and effective representation of Namibian CBNRM experiences in relevant external fora i.e. sustaining the core/foundational structure of NACSO secretariat as a critical national level service (core staff structure plus M&E). The key stakeholders in this service include conservancies, MEFT, NACSO, relevant line ministries, CBOs, civil society, experts/consultants, the Legal Assistance Centre, and tertiary institutions.

Summary of Financial Model

The Namibia PFP financial model (expected to be finalized by December 2024) reflects a combined funding target of a total of US\$60M to sustain and support the compliance of conservancies on a national scale. The financial structure is comprised of two funds,¹³ outlined in the table below.

Table 2. Financial model for the Namibia PFP

Fund	Target/Need	Secured/Projected	Gap
Extension Services Endowment Fund	US\$50M	US\$30M (including ~US\$9M contribution from the GEF project)	US\$20M
Extension Services Sinking Fund (co-financing)	US\$10M	US\$2.5M	US\$7.5M

After PFP closing, an “interim” period up to five years is foreseen during which the endowment fund will be set up, invested and allowed to mature. During this “interim period,” a sinking fund will be used to support the delivery extension services (and management effectiveness impacts) to community conservancies through NACSO and its membership.

USD \$60M of donor funding (including ~US\$9M contribution from the GEF project) will yield an estimated \$112M over ten years from revenue and benefits generated from wildlife and tourism that go directly to conservancies associated with the support provided by NACSO and partners. A good portion of that \$112M will go toward operational/investment costs for members to manage the conservancies. However, some of it

¹³ At the time of the first submission of the project document, WWF is in the process of assessing the feasibility of a socioeconomic development fund to invest in sustainable nature-based enterprises that could employ conservancy members (in sectors such as sustainable tourism, agriculture, livestock, and collection of natural resources) and support sustainable local-level green industry and infrastructure investments (e.g. solar power). The assessment will identify specific industries for sustainable economy, and make recommendations on the thematic scope, size, design, and funders for a sinking fund that could significantly improve the socioeconomic well-being for Namibia’s communal conservancy members. If assessed to be feasible, and associated fundraising efforts are successful, the scope of the PFP could expand to include a socioeconomic development sinking fund of some \$20M.

is the value of tourism jobs that conservancy members hold (i.e. their salaries), and some is in the form of in-kind benefits (value of meat from wildlife harvested sustainably that communities receive).

Institutional Arrangements & Governance

PFP funds will be managed by a Fund Administrator in accordance with internationally recognized good practices as set out in the GEF-supported practice standards for conservation trust funds. A due diligence assessment of an existing CTF in Namibia is in process at the time of first submission (June 2023). Funds will be disbursed – per rules and procedures defined in the PFP operational manual – by the Fund Administrator to cover the costs of planned extension services – which will be provided by NACSO and its member organizations. NACSO is an association comprising eight Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and the University of Namibia that provides services to rural communities seeking to manage and utilise their natural resources in a sustainable manner.

Eastern Tropical Pacific (ETP)

The Eastern Tropical Pacific (the transboundary marine space shared by Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Panama) is one of the most productive oceans in the world, characterized by its high biological diversity and regional endemism. Communities and regional economies are dependent upon the ecosystem services and natural resources provided by the ETP's rich and thriving waters. The ETP faces growing threats, such as those arising from unsustainable fishing, climate change and lack of ecological connectivity. In November 2021 at the Conference of Parties (COP) 26 in Glasgow, the Presidents of Panama, Ecuador, Costa Rica, and Colombia signed an agreement to create a 540,000 km² Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (TBR) (one of the world's largest) to connect and protect core MPAs in the region. This was an unprecedented announcement that catalyzed significant donor, partner, and political interest in the region.

For nearly two decades, this globally significant marine area has been supported through a voluntary regional cooperation mechanism, the CMAR. Recognizing that enhanced institutional coordination and durability are needed to ensure its long-term conservation, the ETP governments publicly committed to a regional treaty to codify their cooperation efforts at the Our Oceans Conference in Panama in March 2023, and to establish a permanent CMAR secretariat to help to ensure the protection of this vital marine space.

The transboundary conservation vision outlined by the four governments includes a well governed, durable, and effectively managed multi-jurisdictional, multiple use seascape with secure transboundary swimways of ocean connectivity that support global biodiversity, the resilience of coastal communities, and a productive blue economy. This project will help to assess regional durable finance mechanisms that can help to realize and sustain this vision and plan for an inclusive conservation and blue economy design.¹⁴

The exact geographic scope of the regional durable finance mechanism will be determined during the planning phase (underway at the time of first submission of the project document), in consultation with the ETP governments. The proposed Biosphere Reserve includes “anchor” MPA, and the connecting swimways outlined in Table 3 and Figures 4 and 5, due to their importance for migratory species and overall contribution to the diversity and productivity of ETP marine ecosystem.

¹⁴ At a CMAR meeting in March 2023, the ETP countries requested an evaluation of other regional conservation mechanisms. This document refers to the development of a TBR, but as planning proceeds, another regional mechanism may be undertaken.

The planning phase will run approximately 3 years and is estimated to cost ~US\$3M. It will follow a participatory process led by the ETP governments with support from The Pew Charitable Trusts and the CMAR Secretariat. While a feasibility assessment was completed by The Pew Charitable Trusts, further assessments will be completed in the planning stage concerning regional conservation models, swimways and ecological needs, and possible governance arrangements. A robust funding model will be developed that will include cost categories such as CMAR financial sustainability, community development, ecological monitoring, and surveillance coordination. The enabling work under this GEF-7 project towards a durable conservation finance mechanism for the ETP will lead into further work under the Conservation International-implemented GEF-8 project “Beyond 30x30: Securing resilience in the Eastern Tropical Pacific through enhanced transboundary cooperation Project” (GEF ID 11267).

1.1.4 Environmental significance

Governments, policymakers, and many members of the conservation community have long held that PAs are the cornerstone for biodiversity conservation, while the importance of other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) is also increasingly recognized.¹⁵ Well managed PAs with participatory and equitable governance mechanisms yield significant benefits far beyond their boundaries, which can be translated into cumulative advantages across a national economy and contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development. These benefits include a wide range of critical ecosystem services such as water provision, purification and retention, erosion control and flood prevention, thus buffering human communities against a variety of environmental risks and hazards, while supporting food and health security by maintaining crop diversity and species, and agricultural genetic material with economic and subsistence value. Well-managed protected area networks also offer critical opportunities to adapt to and mitigate climate change, storing 15% of the global terrestrial carbon stock, and helping counter climate change by retaining or expanding carbon-rich habitats and marine ecosystems. Indeed, more than 1.1 billion people depend on protected forests, pastures, wetlands and marine areas for subsistence and livelihoods, contributing directly to the global agenda for sustainable development, poverty reduction and maintaining cultures (Dudley et al. 2008). Currently, ~17% of the land and ~8% of the ocean is reported as PAs or other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs)(CBD 2022).¹⁶

The recently adopted global targets for nature, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework targets, which guide actions worldwide through 2030 to protect and preserve nature and essential services to people, prioritize the protection of ecologically-representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of PAs and other effective area-based conservation, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories and practices. Specifically, they include the targets of effective conservation and management of at least 30% of the world’s land, inland waters, coastal areas and oceans, and the restoration on at least 30% of degraded terrestrial, inland waters, and coastal and marine ecosystems and reduce to near zero the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance, including ecosystems of high ecological integrity.

¹⁵ OECMs were defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 2018 as places outside the protected-area estate that deliver effective biodiversity conservation, such as government-run water catchment areas, territories conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as some private conservation initiatives.

¹⁶ See [Global status, gaps and opportunities of protected areas and other area-based conservation measures \(cbd.int\)](https://www.cbd.int/doc/abstracts/2022/01/22-01-01-en.pdf)

1.1.4.1 Environmental significance – Gabon

Gabon is in the western region of the Congo Basin and is known for its high forest cover and low rates of deforestation (HFLD)¹⁷. Gabon spans from the Atlantic coast with its lowland humid forests to the country's vast interior rainforests, interspersed with forest-savanna and wetland mosaic landscapes along with the biodiverse forest areas of the Du Chaillu and Crystal Mountains that run parallel to the coast. Savannas, wetlands, and mangroves cover most of the remaining land in the country. Around 89% of Gabon's territory is covered by tropical rainforest with low human density (the country has a population of 2.2 million people) and low agriculture pressure. Gabon is widely known for its efforts in conservation of the environment, having one of the largest proportions of PAs in the world relative to land area. MPAs represent 28.8% and terrestrial PAs 22.4% of the total area, respectively.¹⁸

Diversity of Ecosystems. The country has an equatorial climate with year-round high temperatures and humidity. Gabon is classified into five terrestrial biomes (Tropical and Subtropical Moist Broadleaf Forests; West Coastal Equatorial Freshwater; Tropical and Subtropical Grasslands; Savannas; and Shrublands), and three aquatic biomes (Mangroves; West Coastal Equatorial Freshwater; Marine).¹⁹ These biomes host marine and terrestrial PAs including National Parks, watershed, mangroves, and community forests, as well as for logging, agriculture, oil and gas, mining, infrastructure, and urban development.

Species diversity. Gabon is home to over 194 mammal species, including 32 species of cetaceans, 21 primates, 20 carnivores, and 13 artiodactyls; 715 bird species, of which a quarter are migratory; 128 reptile species with 25% endemism or sub endemism; 93 species of amphibians; over 1,047 species of fish of which two-thirds are marine or essentially marine and 57 fish species are endemic; and many species of invertebrates whose richness is difficult to assess.²⁰ Gabon has the world's largest populations of forest elephants²¹, numbering at about 95,000. Gabon's flora, too, is exceptionally rich, with 5,175 plant species recorded to date, of which nearly 650 species are endemics.²² Of the Gabonese forests' more than 400 tree species, only 60 are logged, the main tree being Okoume (*Aucoumea klaineana*) which accounts for more than half the harvest.

National and global significance of marine and terrestrial PAs in Gabon

Gabon is a biodiversity hotspot, characterized by its important high biological diversity and endemism. In Gabonese's forests, two species are especially noteworthy and emblematic: the forest elephant, *Loxodonta cyclotis*, and the western lowland gorilla, *Gorilla gorilla* (~35,000 individuals). As noted above, terrestrial and aquatic biomes host rich biodiversity and high ecosystems diversity and significant ecosystem services, with forests, including PAs sequestering 100 million tons of CO₂ per year.²³ The creation of a network of 13 national parks was announced in 2002. In 2017, 20 MPAs (9 marine parks and 11 aquatic reserves) were

¹⁷Krutu of Paramaribo Joint Declaration on HFLD Climate Finance Mobilization: Gabon is one of only 11 countries in the world recognized for their high forest cover and low deforestation rates (HFLD) https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/SubmissionsStaging/Documents/201903220903---Krutu%20of%20Paramaribo_13-02-19.pdf. Gabon is leading the way in maintaining its status of High Forest Cover Low Deforestation (HFLD) country <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/july-2021/gabon-becomes-first-african-country-receive-payment-reducing-co2-emissions>

¹⁸ State of the Wildlife Economy in Africa Gabon case study : <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/393899bbfbc54974a1abd195221edb7>

¹⁹Gabon's ecological region 2020: <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/ecological-regions-of-gabon.html>

²⁰ProDoc GEF 7/CBD Country Profile: Gabon, <https://www.cbd.int/countries/?country=ga>

²¹ "Gabon holds roughly half of all forest elephants, which occur across almost the entire country's area"

<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/blog/wildlife-biodiversity/a-first-for-large-african-mammals-dna-used-to-count-gabon-s-endangered-forest-elephants-81843#:~:text=Gabon%20holds%20roughly%20half%20of,important%20to%20the%20species%20future.>

²² ProDoc GEF 7/ State of the Wildlife Economy in Africa (Case Study: Gabon), <https://sowc.alueducation.com/programs/research/>

²³ <https://www.undp.org/fr/gabon/news/la-superpuissance-verte-de-lafrique-pourquoi-le-gabon-veut-que-les-marche%CC%81s-contribuent-%C3%A0-la-lutte-contre-le-changement-climatique>

added to the system to protect 26% of Gabon's territorial waters.²⁴ A map of Gabon's protected area network is shown in 1 below.

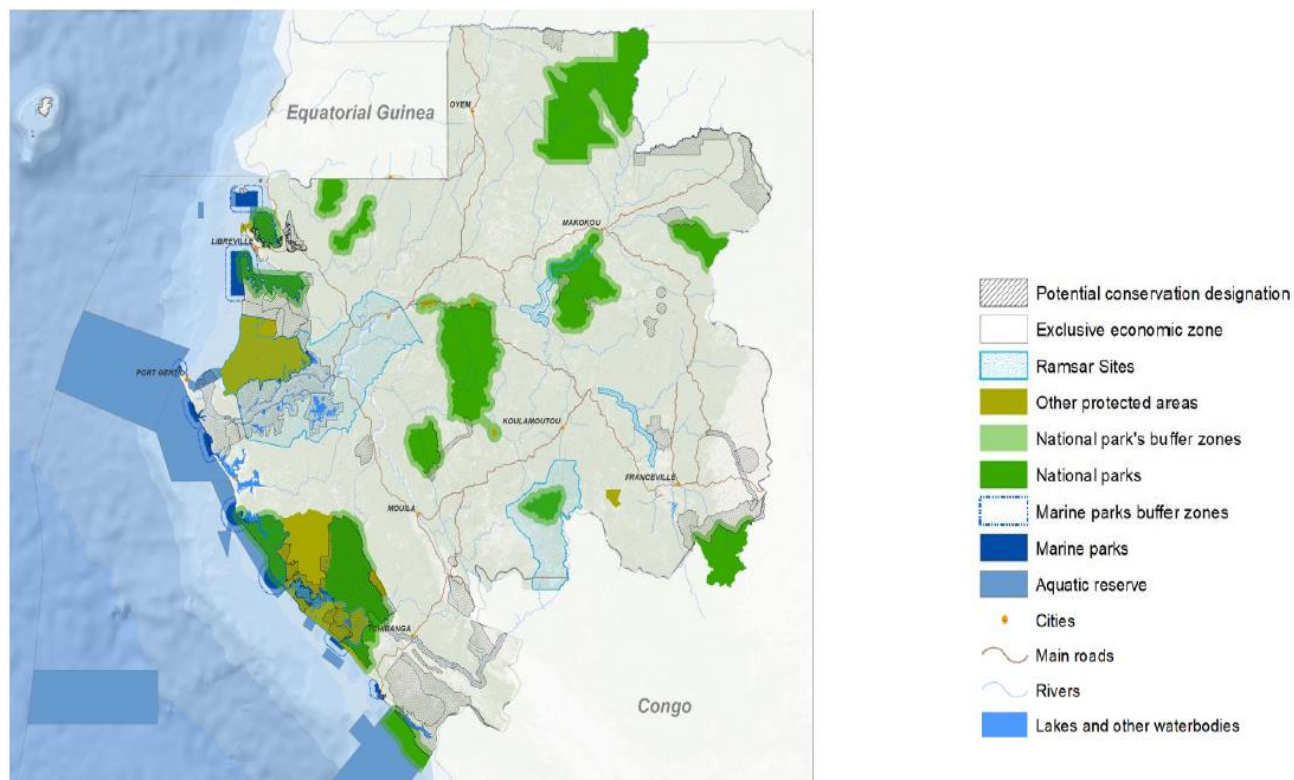


Figure 2: The footprint of the protected area network in Gabon

(Sources: TNC 2022)

1.1.4.2 Environmental significance – Namibia

Namibia is one of the few dryland countries in the world with internationally recognized biodiversity hotspots. Namibia is a wildlife-rich country, with one of the world's largest populations of cheetah, the largest free-roaming population of black rhino, and unique desert-dwelling populations of rhino, lion, and elephants. It hosts other high value, threatened species such as painted dog (formerly called African wild dogs) and pangolin. Nation-wide, the elephant population has increased from 6,000 in 1995 to 24,000 in 2020. Namibia's state PAs share more than 70% of their boundaries with conservancies. When adjacent to national parks or forming part of corridors between parks, conservancies enhance the viability of the national PAs system comprised of 20 national PAs, covering 17 % of Namibia's terrestrial area (140,394 km²). Namibia's PAs and conservancies in the Zambezi region are critical to allowing for the movement of wildlife, including the world's largest population of elephant, across the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA).

Namibia's biodiversity is shaped by a diverse range of factors including climate, topography, geology and human influences. As the most arid country south of the Sahara, lack of rainfall and the high variability of

²⁴ <https://www.nationalgeographic.fr/environnement/2017/06/le-gabon-cree-la-plus-grande-reserve-oceanique-dafrique-pour-protger-la-biodiversite-marine>

rainfall are perhaps the leading influences on biodiversity. Namibia is characterized by a steep south-west to north-east rainfall gradient, with annual rainfall averages as low as 10mm in the south-west and west, and as high as 600mm in the north-eastern areas²⁵. A reverse gradient exists in terms of seasonal and daily temperature variations, which are low in the north and north-east and high in the west and south-west. As a result, the greatest overall terrestrial species diversity is found in the more tropical areas of north-eastern Namibia, while areas of high endemism are mainly concentrated in the arid and semi-arid west, central and southern parts of the country.

Some sites of national and global significance in Namibia include:

- **Twenty PAs**, which cover hugely varied ecosystems and some 17% of the country's land mass including the entire 1500km coastline
- **Two Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs)** – Ai/Ais-Richtersveld TFCA, and the Kavango Zambezi TFCA (the world's largest TFCA)
- **Four Ramsar Wetland Sites of International Importance** – Etosha Pan, Walvis Bay Lagoon, Sandwich Harbour and the Orange River Mouth. All these sites are located within PAs. A new Ramsar site nomination will be situated in the Nyae Nyae Conservancy in eastern Namibia, protecting ephemeral inland wetlands/ salt pans of outstanding significance to migratory birds.
- **Nineteen Important Bird Areas (IBAs)**, 12 of which are located in the coastal zone or on offshore islands
- **Forty Important Plant Areas (IPAs)**, spread across the country.
- **Two World Heritage Sites**: The Namib Sand Sea and Twyfelfontein are already designated, and Namibia is currently exploring potential linkages to the Okavango Delta World Heritage Site in Botswana along the Okavango and/or Kwando-Linyanti-Chobe wetlands area.

Diversity of Ecosystems. Namibia is classified into four terrestrial biomes (Desert; Nama and Succulent Karoo; Acacia Savanna; and Broad-leafed Savanna), and two aquatic biomes (Coastal Marine; and Wetlands). Namibia's variable environmental conditions have also shaped a large diversity of vegetation zones, which have been divided into 29 units. In general, palaeotropical floral elements are found in the north, cold-temperate elements in the south, and transitional elements between the two. The vegetation zones and biomes are shown in detail in **Error! Reference source not found.**²⁶ below.

²⁵ Mendelsohn et al 2003. Namibia's National Atlas. Accessible at <http://the-eis.com/>

²⁶ Source: [Atlas of Namibia](#)

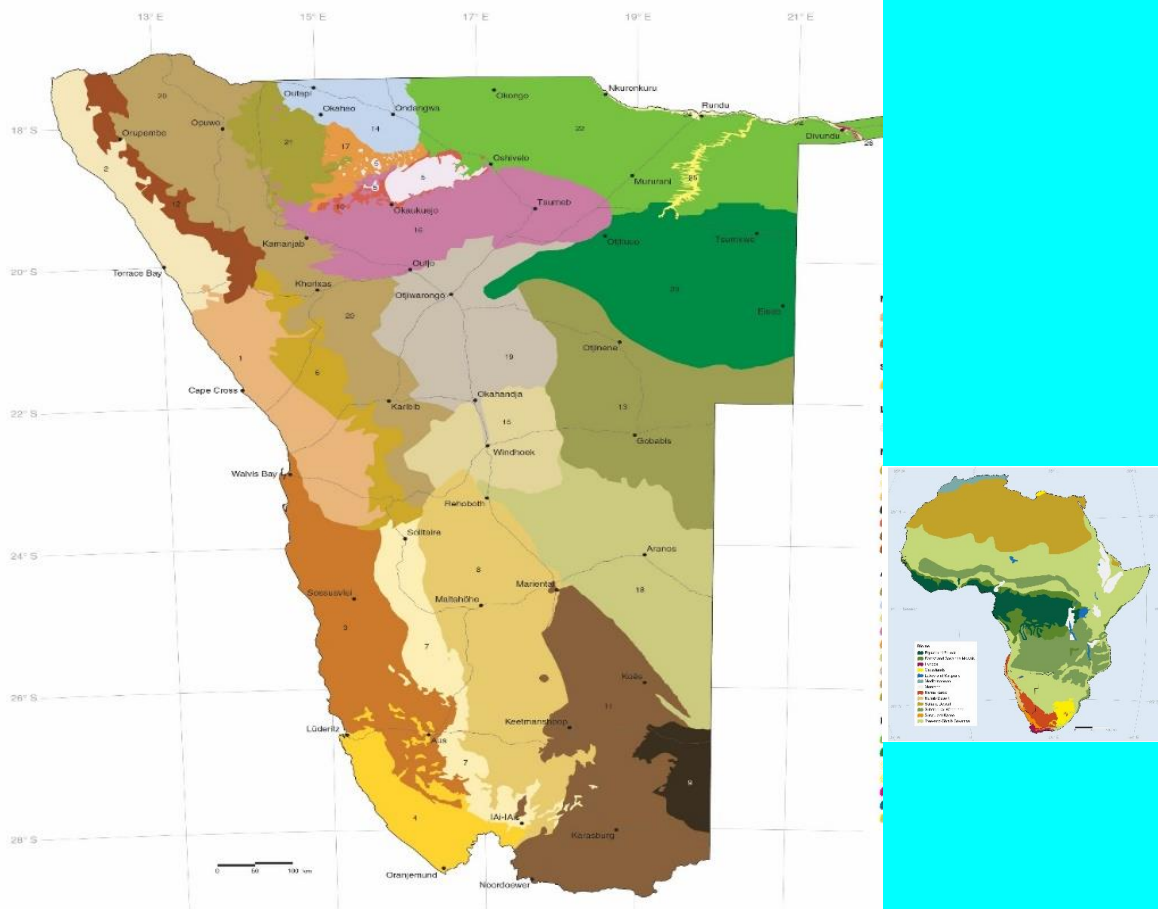


Figure 3: The division of Namibia into vegetation zones (r) and biomes in the context of Africa (l)

Species diversity: Namibia hosts remarkable species diversity and exhibits high levels of endemism. As an arid country, Namibia has a relatively low number of species compared to countries with wetter climates. However, it possesses a high level of endemism, with approximately 20% of described species classified as endemic. Endemism is particularly high in plants, invertebrates, reptiles, and frogs in Namibia, while it is relatively low for mammals, birds, and fish.

National and global significance of biodiversity across conservancies in Namibia:

Community conservancies have been established since the late 1990s. As of 2023, 86 Communal Conservancies have been legally registered and are operational. They double the area dedicated to conservation in Namibia (**Error! Reference source not found.**3), complementing the State Protected Area (SPA) network and bringing the land area under conservation status to 38.7%.²⁷ Terrestrial SPAs cover 16.9% of Namibia, the three tourism concessions outside PAs cover 0.8% and communal conservancies cover 20.2%. Although many of the community forests overlap the communal conservancies, they add an additional 1.7%.

²⁷ Excluding proclaimed and emerging Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

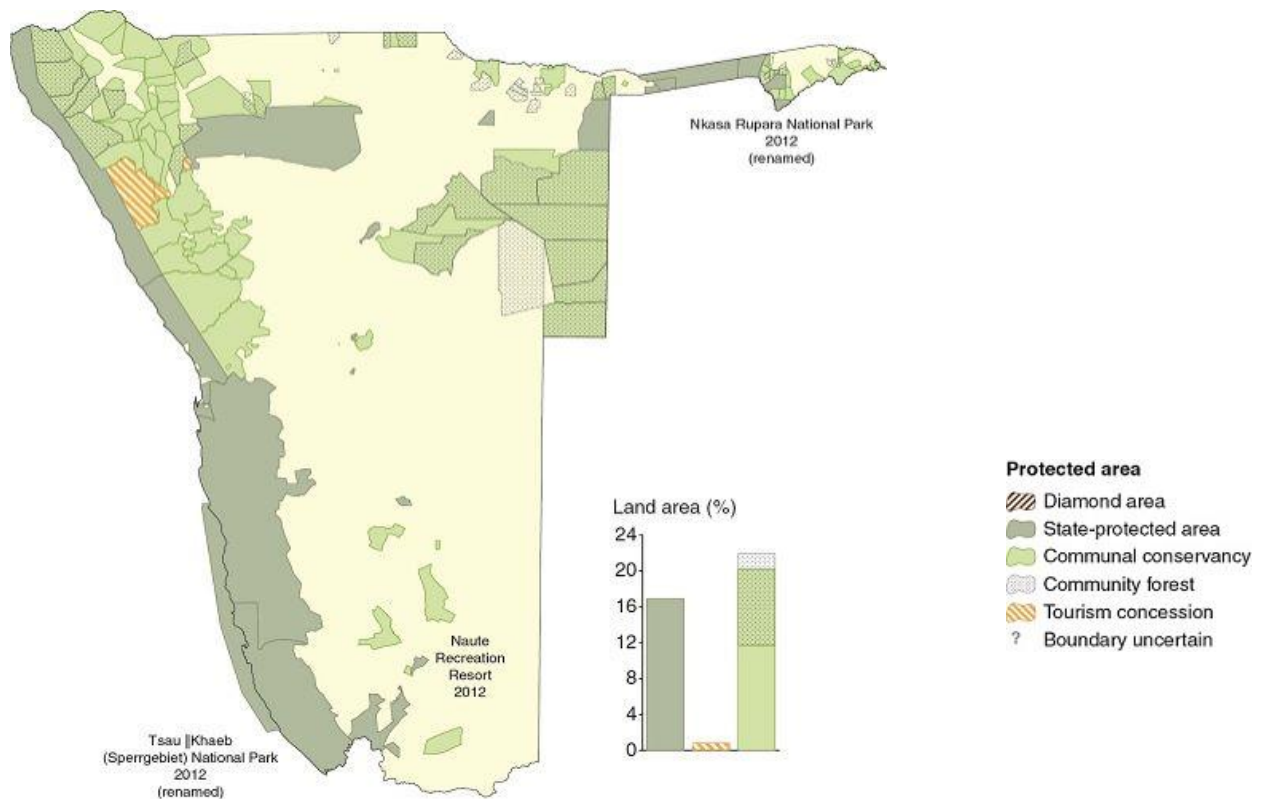


Figure 4: The protected area system in Namibia, combined of SPAs, Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and State Concession areas

Community Conservancies are mostly situated along the borders of existing State Protected Areas (SPAs). They contribute especially to habitat connectivity and form critical corridors for migration of species, i.e., elephants and carnivores. For example, the conservancies in the east and north-east of Namibia provide connectivity throughout the Kavango-Zambezi Trans-frontier Conservation Landscape and in the north-west they promote connectivity between the Skeleton-Coast Park and Etosha. Conservancies enable residents on communally managed land to utilise and benefit from wildlife and tourism and create incentives for pro-conservation attitudes and good-will. Conservancies have, over the past 25 years, contributed significantly to a local-level conservation mindset, collaborations in combatting wildlife crime, and promoting human wildlife co-existence.

1.1.4.3 Environmental Significance – Eastern Tropical Pacific Ocean

The ETP is one of the most productive oceans in the world, characterized by its high biological diversity and regional endemism. For example, approximately 88 species of sharks are recorded in the region of which many, including the scalloped hammerhead, silky, and whale sharks, are listed as endangered or threatened. The ETP also supports the world’s second most important nesting colony for green sea turtles (Enright et al. 2021).

The ETP harbours abundant ecosystem services, which coastal communities rely upon. Commercial fisheries (food production) are valued at approximately \$2 billion per year. The MPAs in the region are recognized as some of the best recreational diving destinations in the world, due to the abundance, biodiversity, and beauty of their marine resources, and are an important economy for many coastal communities (Enright et

al. 2021). The ETP is home to undersea ridge swimways and wildlife nursing grounds, most prevalent in corridors between the four major islands and the coasts of surrounding nations. These ecological pathways are pivotal for maintaining population levels for a wide variety of pelagic species, which in turn are critical for maintaining health of the ecosystem and sustaining regional economies (see **Error! Reference source not found.5**). Further, the Marine PAs of Malpelo, Cocos, Galapagos, and Coiba, are designated as UNESCO marine World Heritage Sites. Two of the MPAs are Ramsar Sites (Galapagos and Cocos; Ramsar, 2021) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has designated Galapagos and Malpelo as Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs) (Enright et al. 2021).

Table 3. Marine Protected areas in the Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Conservation Corridor

Country	Current MPA	Size (Km ²)
Costa Rica	Cocos Islands NP	2 000
	Bicentennial Seamounts Marine Management Area	106
Panama	Coiba NP	503
	Cordillera de Coiba Managed Resources Area	1723
Ecuador	Galapagos Marine Reserve	133 000
	Hermandad Marine Reserve	60 000
Colombia	Malpelo Fauna and Flora Sanctuary	27 000
	Yuripari	94 000
	Lomas	28 000



Figure52: Map of existing marine protected areas in the ETP

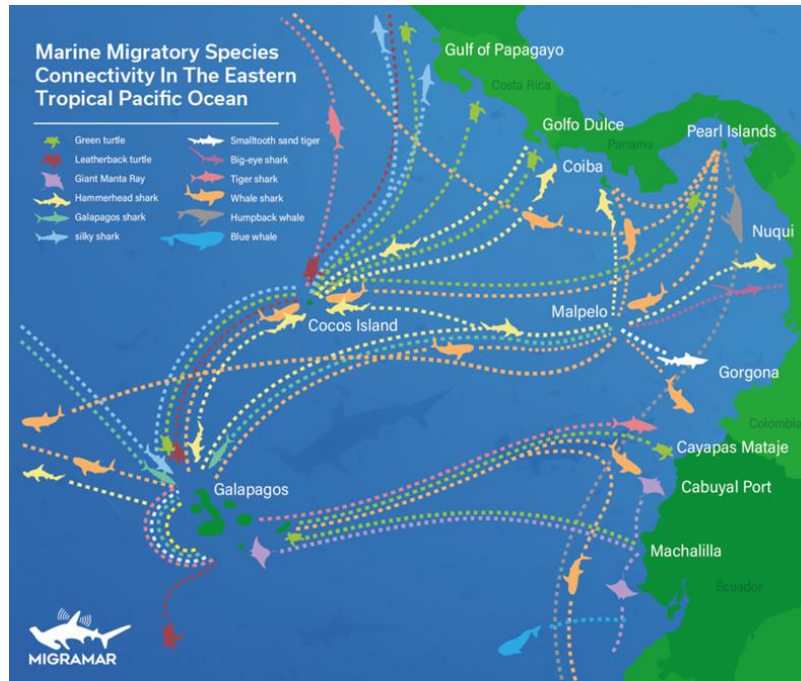


Figure 6: Documented migratory swimways for focal species (MigraMar)

Diversity of ecosystems: The ETP marine area has been recognized as an Ecologically and Biologically Significant Area (EBSA) by parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (CBD, 1992) on the basis that *inter alia* “the geomorphological structures of the area are biologically and ecologically significant and are important for the connectivity of species on their migratory routes and at other times of their life cycles (e.g., mating, birth, feeding).²⁸ The ETP plays an important role for populations of hammerhead sharks, humpback whales, leatherback and Ridley turtles, and birds, such as cormorants, boobies, and pelicans” (Enright et al. 2021). The PACIFICO²⁹ conservation plan, which outlines shared conservation goals for the ETP identified the following ecosystems of national and global significance:

- **Coral Reefs:** from a global perspective, the ETP reefs are considered unique if the restrictive environmental conditions in which they have developed are taken into consideration. The disturbances are frequent, the bioerosion is intense and recovery seems to be extremely slow, which results in a limited biological diversity. The ETP is a unique biogeographic region and can be used as a model to understand the fate of coral biotopes in a changing environment (Manzello, 2010).
- **Mangroves:** Mangroves in ETP are discontinuous, but they offer areas for feeding and protection to shorebirds and fish. Approximately 4,485km² of mangroves in the ETP are estimated to hold approximately 735MtCO₂, and provide necessary protection against climate risks such as flooding, critical for long term storm resilience.
- **Seamounts:** Seamounts are known for their higher productivity, contrasting with the open ocean surroundings due the local upwellings produced by their physical and hydrological features. Located in the swim ways between MPAs, seamounts support local communities with high rates of endemism and attracts high biomass of highly migratory species such as the scalloped hammerhead, whale shark, olive ridley turtle and green turtle (*S. lewini*, *R. typus*, *L. olivacea*, *C. mydas*) and important commercial species such as tuna species (*Thunnus albacares*, *T. spp.*) and some species of billfishes (*Istioporidae*). Seamounts

²⁸ See <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/transboundary-marine-biosphere-reserve-tropical-eastern-pacific-colombia-costa-rica-ecuador-and>

²⁹ ACRXS (Asociación Costa Rica por Siempre-Forever Costa Rica Association). 2016. PACIFICO Conservation Plan. San José- Costa Rica. 49 p.

are critical because they help secure temporal refuge for highly migratory species that use the seamounts as steppingstones to complete their migrations from/to reproductive or feeding areas, and increase the recovery of the fish stocks by guaranteeing temporal refuges during migrations and feeding zones at the seamounts.

Diversity of species: Within the ETP there are more than 5,000 invertebrate marine species, more than 1,000 fish, 30 marine mammals, and 123 marine birds (PACIFICO, 2016). The ETP also provides habitat for a wide diversity of species, many of which are endemic. For example, the Galapagos Marine Reserve supports the most functionally diverse fish communities in the world. The total number of species in the swimway region remains unknown (PACIFICOS, 2016). Below are some of the target species that will likely be used when defining the conservation scope of the ETP initiative:

- **Turtles:** The four species of marine turtles that nest in the ETP are listed on the IUCN Red List as species threatened with extinction, namely the Endangered Green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), Leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), the Critically Endangered Hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) and Olive ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*).
- **Great Whales:** Four species of whales are regularly seen in the ETP, including the humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), populations of the Pacific northeast and southeast; blue whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*), populations of the Pacific northeast and Pacific; Bryde's whale (*Balaenoptera brydei*); and sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*).
- **Sharks:** These include endangered whale species such as the Whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*) and pelagic thresher shark (*Alopias pelagicus*), as well as the critically endangered hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna lewini*). Sharks are especially vulnerable to fishing activity because of their extremely slow reproduction rate and the length of time they require to reach sexual maturity.
- **Migratory Shorebirds:** Marine shorebirds are characterized by the enormous distances they travel, mainly in response to the changes in climate that occur at their reproduction sites and in search of better feeding conditions. During their annual migration, these birds concentrate in great numbers in a few nonreproductive sites. The migratory shorebirds are considered as a conservation target since they have large resting places in the ETP and are globally protected by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN).
- **Migratory Seabirds:** Oceanic seabirds are birds that have their ecological niche and use the marine-pelagic habitat for the greater part of their life cycles (~90%); they feed, defecate, and die in this area and, except for reproducing, never touch the land. Due to their low rate of reproduction and late sexual maturity, these birds are highly susceptible to anthropogenic disturbances.
- **Pelagics:** A majority of pelagic fauna are threatened by human activities in the sea and by contamination of the oceans. These organisms can serve as indicators of marine ecosystem health. These species transport nutrients and form part of the food chain—controlling fish populations. They can also be used as a tourist attraction—which, with appropriate guidelines and consistent regulations, could increase national foreign exchange and support conservation efforts.

1.2 Environmental Problems and Threats

Recent studies have estimated that nature provides the equivalent of \$120T in services each year (globally), and that half of the world's GDP is moderately or highly dependent on nature (WWF, 2018). Nevertheless, pressures on nature are intensifying and species, habitats, and ecosystem services are being lost at an alarming rate, with the great majority of indicators of ecosystems and biodiversity showing rapid decline (IPEBS, 2019). Globally, direct drivers of protected area ecosystem degradation and destruction have been identified as climate change; land use change (primarily for agriculture) leading to deforestation and habitat change; pollution, including nutrient loading leading to contamination of terrestrial, freshwater, and marine

ecosystems; unsustainable and unregulated exploitation of resources including illegal activities such as poaching and logging; and invasive species. These direct drivers result from an array of underlying causes or drivers of change, namely, intense pressure on natural resources due to demographic changes and economic growth, underpinned by social values, behaviours and other socio-political factors influencing decision making that influence PAs and other effective area-based conservation measures.

The sections below describe a broad range of threats to biodiversity in the PA systems in Gabon, the conservancy system in Namibia, and MPAs in the ETP. Because the scope of the PFPs in both Gabon and Namibia includes the entire system of protected and conserved areas (Gabon) and the entire conservancy system (Namibia) the range of environmental threats is necessarily broad. The PFP conservation plan (Gabon) and extension services plan (Namibia) will articulate the conservation goals of the overall program and the PFP operations manual will describe specific rules and procedures with respect to the programming of PFP funds.

1.2.1 Environmental Problems and Threats - Gabon

Gabon has demonstrated strong environmental leadership over the last two decades, and decisive action from past and current administrations has helped to keep in check some of the major threats to species and natural ecosystems, particularly given the evident pressures across the Congo Basin region.

Direct pressures/ threats include poaching, illegal logging, land use change (including deforestation/conversion from agriculture, infrastructure and mining), as described briefly below:

Poaching: In the regions bordering Cameroon and Congo, elephant poaching for ivory is still a priority issue. Poaching of other valuable species like marine turtles, crocodiles, pangolin, wild river hog, manatee, forest buffalo, or monkeys and apes to supply the commercial bushmeat market has yet to be fully controlled. Overall, pressure on endangered species and habitats varies by region, with some areas closer to urban centers, or in regions harder to access by law enforcement agents, experiencing greater pressure. Similarly, the level and type of threats over specific PAs is uneven, depending on existing infrastructure and the capacity of the national parks service (ANPN) agents to monitor and enforce laws and regulations.

Timber extraction and illegal logging: The last decade has seen a remarkable decrease of large scale unsustainable and illegal logging, mostly through the implementation of policy reform like the ban on the export of raw logs, the promotion of forestry certification, and a strong focus on strengthening law enforcement capability and marked improvement in governance and control of corruption throughout the sector. However, illegal logging activities still target high valuable timber species. In addition to sub-optimal harvesting practices, illegality in the forest sector is estimated to have been responsible for 10 to 15 million tons of CO₂ emissions.

Land use change: Although Gabon's deforestation rate is very low, forest degradation and pressure on the country's PAs due to land conversion is on the rise as a result of infrastructure expansion, agriculture, and mining. Industrial agriculture, mostly for palm oil, could significantly increase deforestation if it follows a similar pathway as other tropical forest countries around the world (fortunately, Gabon has committed to develop oil palm plantations only in degraded habitats). More worrisome is the recent surge of mining concessions (for manganese, nickel, iron, and gold), given their very destructive practices. Mercury-using gold mining (mostly done illegally at an artisanal scale) is of particular concern given the very negative impact on human, freshwater and wild species' health. Additionally, artisanal small-scale mining for gold and diamonds is significant in Gabon and has been expanding. (PROFOR, 2013). Communities come into direct conflict with wildlife – e.g., such as elephants trampling agriculture plots in rural areas– which significantly affects their livelihoods and negatively affects community support for conservation.

Finally, large infrastructure projects such as hydropower dams can have an irreversible impact on freshwater ecosystems by altering the natural dynamic of rivers (flow and sediment regime, connectivity for migratory species, etc.) and wetlands, and all species in affected areas. One hydropower dam built in 2013 with poor environmental oversight has already started to cause significant impact in neighboring populations and habitats. Depending on their location and design, proposed future projects could compromise the ecological condition of areas of high conservation value. In sum, large infrastructure development and mining upstream and surrounding PAs, poor harvesting practices in forestry concessions, and illegal logging, all contribute to the degradation of forest and freshwater habitat in Gabon.

Other threats to PAs in Gabon not directly addressed by the GEF Project include:

IUU (Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated) fishing and other Unsustainable Fishing Practices: This general term encompasses a wide variety of illegal fishing activities. IUU fishing is present in all fisheries and in many forms. It involves all aspects and stages of the catching and use of fish. The EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone) of Gabon authorizes different types of fishing which include trawling (fish and shrimp), deep-sea fishing (for tuna) and artisanal maritime fishing. There is little control and monitoring of these fishing activities, which does not allow for a scientific evaluation of the impact of this industry on marine resources and habitats. Inland fisheries are much less managed than marine fisheries, and many institutions and NGOs have already warned of the unsustainable practices in this area.

Hydrocarbon pollution. The oil industry is still very present in Gabon with numerous exploitation sites inland and at sea. Hydrocarbon pollution is frequent, both chronic pollution, as in the National Park of Mayumba, or punctual pollution, often of greater magnitude, as when a pipeline leaks. The impact of oil pollution on an ecosystem is closely linked to its nature, for example a beach takes one to two years to recover unlike a mangrove which can take 10 years to recover. Marine species that interact directly with the water surface or the beach are particularly vulnerable. Accidents are also reported in forests and lakes, sometimes restricting access to fishing and hunting for local communities. Despite the government's desire to move away from it, the industry continues to develop, particularly with offshore exploration. Offshore seismic searches are particularly impactful for marine wildlife because of the noise pollution they cause, which disorients marine mammals. In addition, oil exploration and exploitation are not prohibited in Gabon's PAs, so there are many marine parks with oil exploitation.

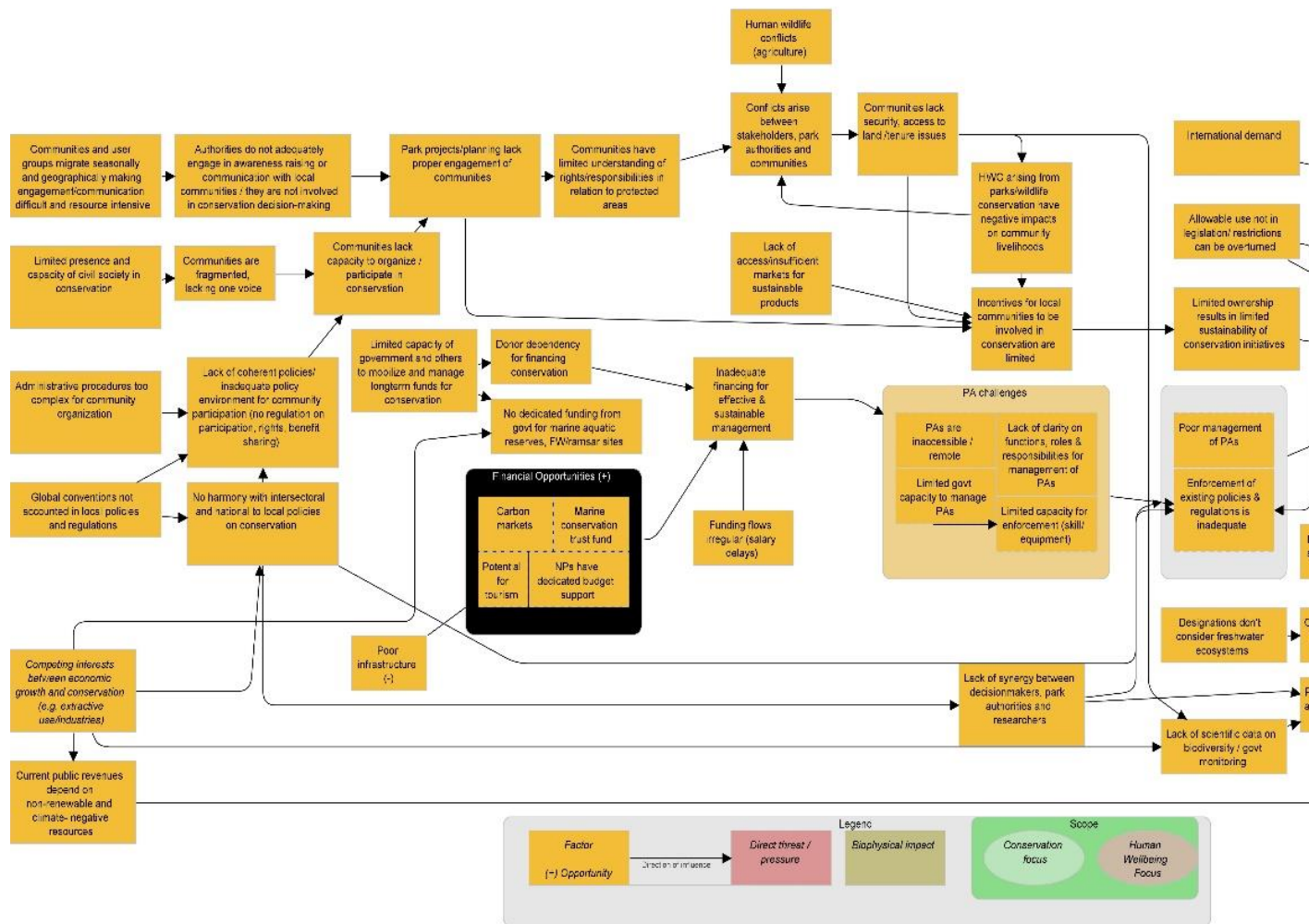


Figure 7: Gabon Situation Analysis

1.2.2 Environmental Problems and Threats - Namibia

Despite the scope of its impressive national PA and conservancy systems – Namibia is one of a few countries in the world that already protects more than 30% of its land and seascapes – and encouraging conservation outcomes with respect to key species, maintenance of these successes is challenged by funding limitations for ongoing needs, effective management of natural resources. Concerted and ongoing efforts are required to work with all partners, including Namibian NGOs, specialist organizations and government extension services to achieve lasting results. Ongoing investments and collaborations are needed.

Key pressures on conservation impact in communal conservancies identified through ongoing annual assessments and PFP-specific consultations are as follows:

Fencing that inhibits habitat connectivity: While the conservancies are mostly located along the borders of PAs and key areas of conservation interest, additional connectivity may need to be established in order to maintain large wildlife populations. Prevailing fences, both border and veterinary fences, as well as fences delineating properties (freehold and communal farms) hinder connectivity (and may limit maintenance of large wildlife populations), but in some cases, they allow for wildlife management in managed areas. Landscape approaches to conservation help connect the mosaic of conservation compatible lands uses, including in communal conservancies, but lack long-term investments for effective management.

Poaching: Poaching of Namibia’s iconic black rhinos and elephants (commercial, syndicate-driven poaching) in conservancies has largely been under control, although conditions were expected to worsen in light of the decrease in patrolling by conservancy game guards and an absence of tourist activities, which prior to the COVID-19 pandemic had provided strong incentives for protection.

Human-Wildlife Conflict: Prolonged dry cycles are natural in Namibia. Natural rainfall cycles result in grazing and biomass being available or declining. Wildlife numbers fluctuate similarly, with antelope moving over large areas with grazing and water availability. Population numbers of carnivores who may be more sedentary are affected and are likely to collapse during long cycles of drought when their prey base declines. Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) is often increased in times of drought, with livestock and wildlife competing for grazing, and carnivores having to kill livestock if no wildlife is available. The largest number of HWC incidents reported are attacks on livestock, averaging approximately 6,000 incidents per annum since 2015³⁰. Crop raiding and loss of life from elephant, crocodile, lion and hippo also occur quite frequently. Well-intended, but poorly planned placing of water holes or tanks for people and livestock can worsen the situation, leading to maladaptive practices where wildlife and livestock do not move out of drought-stricken areas “in time,” creating a situation where they stay in areas where no grazing/biomass will be available as fodder, resulting in overgrazing and potential conflict incidents. This can also lead to irreversible land degradation, which may contribute to a loss of productivity even in good rainfall years that might follow the drought. This is further exacerbated by increased pressure on grazing land due to high livestock numbers as well as the effects of climate change, which include droughts that are increasingly more intense and longer in duration.

Other threats affecting the conservancies, not directly addressed by this project include:

Unsustainable mining practices: Demand for Namibia’s mineral resources, including uranium, oil and gas, copper, gold, iron, amongst others, is increasing due to global demands for natural resources and the government of Namibia’s need to generate revenue. While many prospecting licenses currently “lay dormant”, in recent years many new mining areas have opened up, including in conservancies. The expansion of mining and prospecting, and associated infrastructure projects, has the potential to degrade ecosystems and contribute to habitat loss. With the location of deposits in PAs and conservancies, land set aside for conservation purposes is being “opened up” for extractive use.

Unsustainable water abstraction: Perennial water courses are critical for people and wildlife, especially elephants, and shared access is needed. In areas of high human concentration, especially in areas that have access to perennial water or along main access roads, settlements can be dense and structured in linear patterns, i.e. along roads, inhibiting wildlife movement and access to water, particularly in the north-eastern and north-central Namibia. Agricultural developments are naturally situated in areas with access to water, with large-scale agricultural schemes not only contributing to habitat conversion, but also unsustainable water abstraction and sometimes irreversible land degradation. Poor cross-sectorial planning and implementation of plans is a key concern, often leading to conflicting lands uses and poor optimization of sustainable options. While local conservancies are very strong institutions, they are not always included in higher level decision-making processes, and development and investment decisions do not always conform with conservancy aspirations and visions.

Overgrazing, livestock encroachment: The conservancy programme has strongly focused on wildlife management and creating associated benefits from tourism in the past decades. Associated natural resource

³⁰ <https://communityconservationnamibia.com/the-big-issues/human-wildlife-conflic>

uses are partially addressed by conservancy efforts. However, some conservancy areas face threats from unsustainable agricultural production including slash-and burn techniques, the encroachment of small-scale plots into communally managed wildlife areas, overgrazing, and illegal timber harvesting (particularly in the Northeast, bordering Angola), all of which contribute to the above-referenced environmental problems.

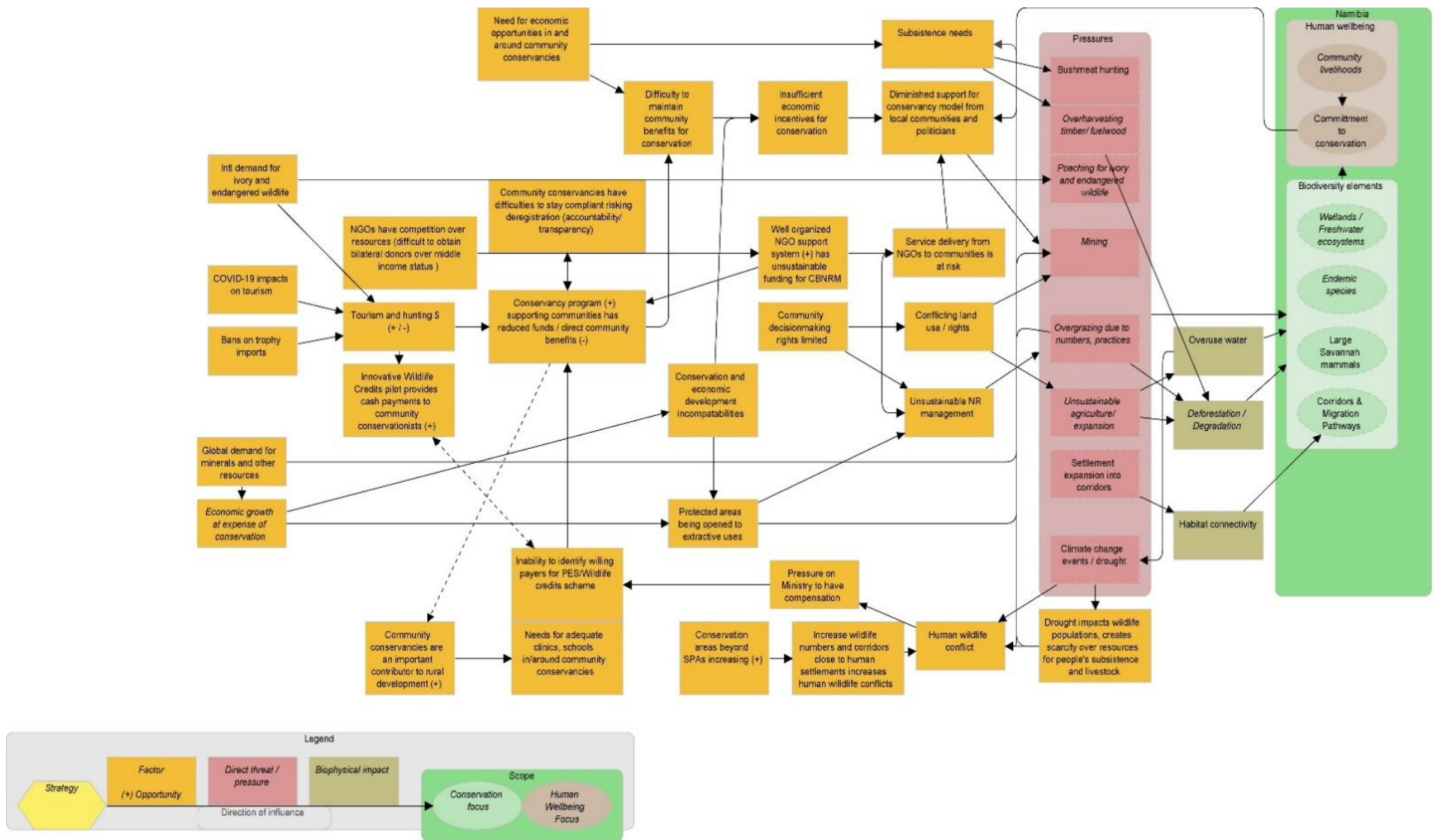


Figure 8: Namibia situation analysis – Community Conservation

1.2.3 Environmental Problems and Threats - ETP

“Despite their immense ecological value, marine ecosystems in the ETP Ocean are becoming degraded due to the steady increase of anthropogenic pressures that can in some cases cause significant changes and reorganizations of the structure and function of marine ecosystems (Rocha et al., 2015). Climate change (Castrejón and Charles, 2020), illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing (Castro et al., 2020), marine invasions (Carlton et al., 2019), pollution (Alava et al., 2014), increasing tourism, coastal development and population growth (Hastings et al., 2015; Ramirez, 2016) are among the well-documented problems posing a critical, growing threat to livelihoods, ecosystem sustainability and functioning of coastal zones” (Enright et. al. 2021).

Vessel strikes: While the ETP region hosts a number of globally significant MPAs, key species are currently vulnerable to ship collision and unsustainable fishing practices/bycatch as they move to and from marine PAs in the region.

Overfishing and bycatch: Overfishing is the principal cause of marine defaunation globally (Pacoureau et al., 2021) and a main reason for the decline of many migratory marine species in the ETP (Peñaherrera-Palma et al., 2018, p. 71, 112), including migratory species. This is due to intense fishing pressure from national vessels (WildAid, 2010, p. 2; The Economist, 2020; Hearn et al., 2021, p. 8), as well as increased fishing effort by foreign flagged fleets in the High Seas areas in this region. Foreign fishing vessels have been spotted loitering adjacent to or even entering MPAs, and it is expected that this situation will worsen in the future (Alava and Paladines, 2017; Collyns, 2020). In addition, the use of illegal gear and the capture of protected species is still a problem. Despite the efforts that governments have made to improve surveillance and control both in and outside the MPAs, there is a low rate of seizures and an even lower rate of sanctions for offenders. The lack of regional coordination on monitoring and enforcement further exacerbates these threats.

Marine contamination: A growing human population and activities related to tourism, fisheries and coastal development result in increased sedimentation, chemical and biological pollution, as well as the introduction of invasive alien species, which threaten the ETP’s MPAs (Boersma & Parrish 1999). Pollutants include pesticide and fertilizer runoff, some of which have been identified as endocrine-disrupting chemicals with underlying potential health effects in the endemic fauna, as well as persistent organic pollutants from the generation and treatment of solid wastes linked to human and economic activity in islands and the mainland. Other concerns include solid waste residues (mainly plastics from both marine and terrestrial sources), dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT), polychlorinated biphenols (PCBs) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAHs). Finally, the intentional or unintentional release of oil, diesel and gas from cargo ships, fishing and transportation vessels, contributes to chronic degradation in addition to its acute impacts on the marine environment (Lessmann 2004).

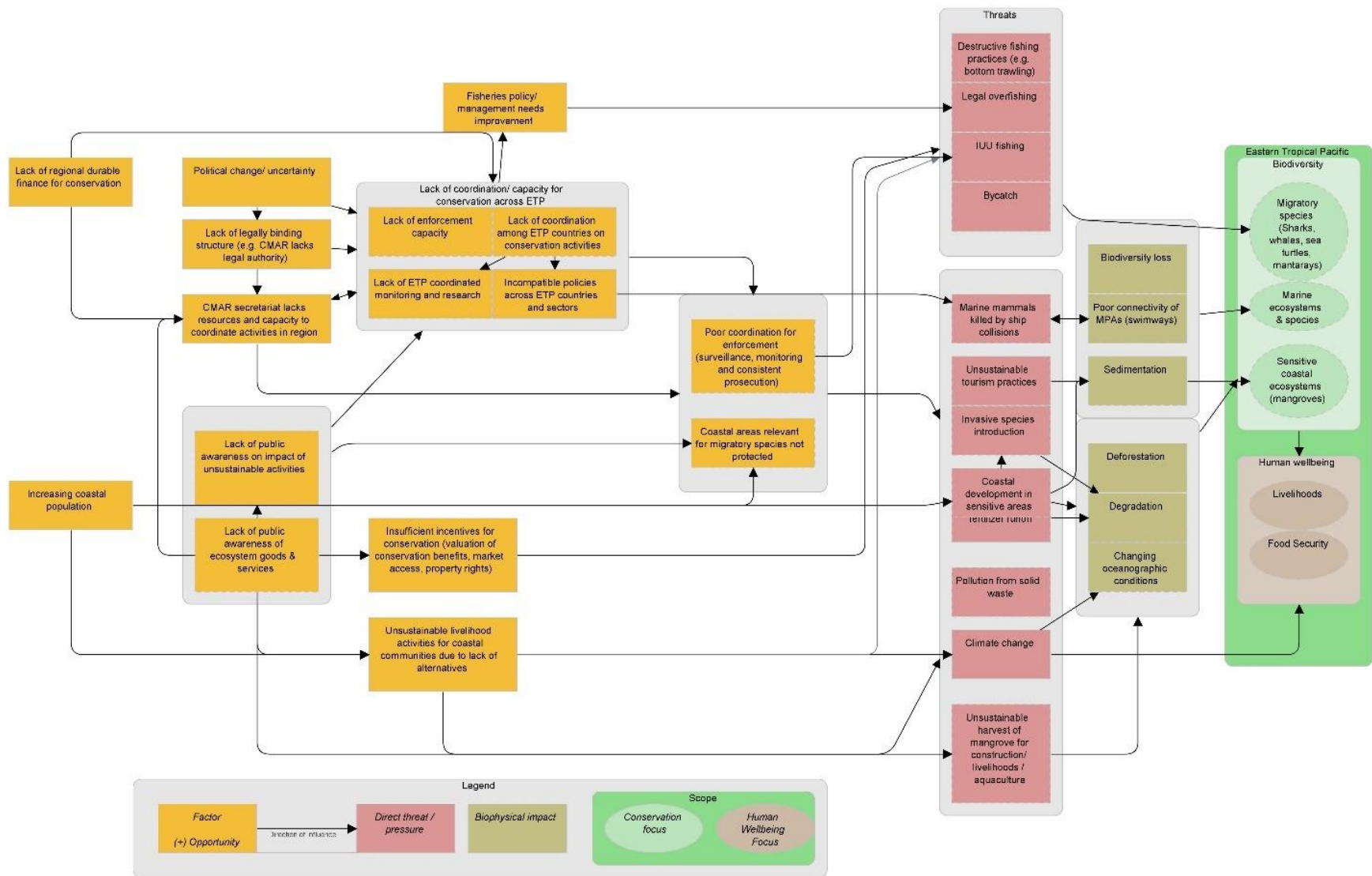


Figure 9: ETP Situation Analysis

1.2.4 Root causes of environmental problems and threats across priority geographies
Underlying causes exacerbate biodiversity loss by altering and influencing direct pressures on biodiversity and ecosystems. Root causes common across the three project areas are linked to economic, development and governance challenges, as well as climate change.

Economic and Developmental Challenges: Economic growth contributes to biodiversity loss via greater resource consumption and higher emissions, with economic development imperatives of poverty reduction, job creation and industrialisation often prioritised at the expense of biodiversity protection (Otero et al., 2020). In Gabon, the strategic development plan of Gabon (called “Emerging Gabon”), articulates the Government’s desire to further develop the economy through diversifying sources of income away from the oil and fossil fuel sector that has powered growth for the past 70 years. However, many of these sources also have the potential to have a tremendous (detrimental) impact on natural ecosystems if not done properly or left unchecked, while the continued reliance on the oil and gas-based economy also presents threats. The success of new economic models hinged on nature-based economies is critical, more so as a generation of young Gabonese persons are entering declining job markets. Current uses of natural resources, such as gold mines poor harvesting practices in forestry concessions, and illegal logging further contribute to the degradation of forest and freshwater areas. Furthermore, a lack of resources for enforcement and management in some parks opens the door to issues such as poaching of endangered wildlife (mainly driven by the international market for ivory and other wildlife products) and hunting for bushmeat, illegal logging and gold mining, or illegal and unregulated fishing.

In Namibia, the downturn in tourism and loss of associated revenues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has translated to insufficient resources to pay more than 1,000 people in critical conservation and operational roles in the conservancy system. The wages of an additional 1,400+ community employees working at joint venture tourism lodges and hunting concessions were also impacted because of reduced tourism numbers. Although the sector is slowly recovering, it is possible that some businesses will close permanently. Additionally, significant amounts of revenue to local households and rural economies are generated from the hunting industry, through the issuance of hunting permits, game meat and indirect job creation, and face an uncertain future, given the ongoing international battles and changing attitudes towards hunting based conservation models³¹. With limited opportunities to generate income in other ways, previously employed individuals and their families have been forced to rely more heavily on natural resources to sustain their livelihoods.

In the ETP, competing development priorities limit governmental investment in regional biodiversity conservation. This means there are inadequate resources for effective regional conservation, MPA management, control and surveillance, and coordination. In addition, coastal communities are reliant on fishing and natural products for their livelihoods and nature based marine tourism. They lack alternatives and the acute threats to these natural resources puts their livelihoods and regional economies at risk, and exacerbates ecological threats in an already strained system.

Governance Challenges: Limitations in national and regional level governance emerged as a root cause during stakeholder consultations across all priority geographies. In Gabon, weak application and enforcement of laws designed to protect forests result in significant negative impacts on waterways and

³¹ Conservancies generated total income and benefits of N\$91,745,778 for conservation and rural communities. Of this: (1) Conservation hunting generated N\$25,952,651 with 326,295kg of game meat worth N\$9,267,048 was distributed to conservancy residents; (2) Tourism generated N\$53,838,083; (3) Indigenous plants and other income generated N\$1,029,191 and N\$1,658,805 respectively; (4) N\$11,572,810 in cash benefits was distributed to conservancy residents and used to support community projects.

other sensitive ecological environments (Preferred by Nature, 2022). Furthermore, natural resource monitoring is challenged by inadequate government staffing and capacities. The land and resource tenure framework in Gabon, which concentrates decision making in the Government, does not provide an appropriate framework for inclusive conservation. In Namibia, local community members patrol and monitor and collect data, identify potential management risks, and combat poaching in community conservancies. However, funding for these activities is dependent on trophy hunting fees, and incidences of poaching are likely to increase as less funding is available to support patrols protecting conservancies. In the ETP, poor enforcement, mainly due to inadequate and uncoordinated surveillance, monitoring and consistent prosecution of illegal fishing activities results in large scale illegal fishing. Countries do not have an effective, cooperative response to illegal and unregulated fishing, due to inadequate enforcement capacity, weak governance, and a lack of political will (Seminario, Sandin & Parham, 2021). Conservation efforts in the region have been limited due to lack of coordination among governments, civil society and academia, weak management of MPAs limited control over the sources of marine pollution, lack of data or lack of access to data, limited public participation, lack of public awareness regarding the value of ecosystem services in the region as well as inadequate resources and funding (CMAR, 2019). The transboundary nature of this region makes governance more complex. While CMAR has created a forum for transboundary governance between the four countries, it is voluntary. There are no uniform procedures for regional monitoring and surveillance, making it difficult to accurately track populations of key species and illegal fisheries.

Climate change: Gabon is highly vulnerable to climate hazards, which are projected to affect productive economic sectors (agriculture, fisheries, water, energy, and mining) through seasonal flooding (particularly in two key economic areas of the country Ogoou-Ivindo and Moyen-Ogoou provinces), extreme winds and landslides as well as sea level rise, and increased coastal storms.³² Changes in environmental conditions, like increase in sea temperatures, ocean acidification, changes in oxygen level, rise in seas, etc. will adversely affect marine organisms and associated ecosystem services which in turn may negatively affect local populations.

Similarly, climate hazards such as extreme heat, drought, and wildfires; flooding and irregular or changing rainfall patterns, present serious risks to biodiversity and people in Namibia, and generally exacerbate the environmental threats described above. The population is at most at risk from floods, drought, and disease outbreaks. Namibia is prone to recurrent drought conditions and wildfires due to its hot and dry climate and erratic rains.³³ Community members who rely on livestock and crop production for their livelihoods are most severely impacted. One incident of drought between 2018-2019 devastated crops, killed 90,000 livestock, and left a third of Namibians facing food shortages. The second largest sectors in Namibia's economy is tourism which is also particularly vulnerable to climate risks.

In the ETP, climate change is exacerbating all other challenges facing the region. The Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ), which shifts latitudinally with climate patterns, makes the marine and coastal ecosystems of the MPAs in the ETP particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts. Warming surface waters, particularly during intense El Niño events, result in lower primary production and a general decline in biological activity (Liu et al., 2013). During the past decades, the frequency and severity of El Niño events have increased, and climatic models have shown that this tendency will continue to worsen within the ETP region under current rates of global warming (Liu et al., 2013; Cai et al., 2018). The region's unique coral reef ecosystems are particularly vulnerable to climate change and the increasing frequency of severe bleaching

³² See: [15858-WB_Gabon_Country_Profile-WEB_0.pdf \(worldbank.org\)](#)

³³ See: [15931-WB_Namibia_Country_Profile-WEB.pdf \(worldbank.org\)](#)

conditions (GCRMN, 2020), which would have a negative impact on fisheries. The lack of ecological connectivity (fragmentation highlighted above) within the region means that species needing to shift due to the impacts of climate change will be put further at risk.

1.3 Barriers addressed by the project

This project responds to four critical barriers to biodiversity protection and conservation through PAs and OECMs across the three regions: i) Insufficient and unreliable financing of PAs and conservancies; ii) Inadequacies in effective management and governance of PAs and conservancies; iii) Gaps in representation of critical habitats across PA & OECM systems; and iv) Insufficient incentives for conservation of species and habitats over the longer term.

Each of these barriers is discussed in further detail below:

1.3.1 Insufficient financing for conservation over the longer term.

A significant barrier to area-based conservation in many countries is underfunding of protected area systems and OECMs, with a recent report by the Paulson Institute showing that the funding gap for biodiversity is \$700 billion per year for the next decade (Deutz et al., 2020). Insufficient funding means that both the network and individual PAs have inadequate staff, equipment, and other management necessities. Most PAs depend on a mix of financial support from government, international agencies, donors, and NGOs. Few countries have managed to define and establish ways to provide long-term, sustainable financing for PAs. Furthermore, funding from philanthropic and donor organisations alone is not sufficient for long term sustainability, nor can it cover the full costs of PA management in the three regions. Hence, diversification in funding sources is essential for the long-term sustainability of conservation areas in all three regions. Recognizing governments alone cannot shoulder the full costs of PA management, the PFP approach can help identify clear priorities for terrestrial and marine protected area management and network the necessary partners to strategize on targeted and diversified funding opportunities (Murphey et al., 2021).

In Gabon, the PAs system lacks adequate funding, leaving gaps in proper enforcement and threat abatement. Only the national parks (13 terrestrial parks and the 9 marine parks) have dedicated budget support from the government, and this support is far from sufficient to pay for management, community relations, surveillance and monitoring, among other needs. In addition, government funding is not automatically processed each year, with the result that ranger salaries and/or other costs may go unpaid for months. There is a need to change this so that the funding flows regularly, on a monthly basis. Other Marine Aquatic Reserves, Ramsar sites (outside of National Parks) and other protection designations receive no dedicated funding from government. PAs management in Gabon is reliant on donor grant cycles and project-based funding, which inhibits planning and longer-term financial sustainability for the establishment and management of marine, terrestrial and freshwater conserved and PAs. There are currently no existing sustainable financial mechanisms for generating income for conservation in a durable manner. While there is good potential for tourism, this has largely been unrealized due to barriers such as poor road and travel infrastructure and difficult visa processes. While the National Parks Agency (ANPN), has some basic infrastructure and a workforce of rangers to deploy in most parks, they are not enough to provide proper coverage of all the parks, particularly in the most remote areas of Gabon. Funding to secure proper maintenance of equipment and infrastructure is unreliable. This lack of adequate funding causes hardships for the ANPN to “make ends meet,” does not allow for appropriate long-term planning, let alone much needed investments, putting extra stress on staff and/or leaving gaps in the ability to provide proper enforcement.

In Namibia, while the Government recognises the importance of community-based natural resource management as a rural development strategy, investment in the system is insufficient and limited to NGOs

working in the sector. NACSO is a consortium of Namibian civil society organizations that work together to support, promote, and strengthen community-based natural resource management (CBNRM). Full and associate members give direct support to conservancies in the form of training, advice, technical and logistical support, and advocate for sustainable development by developing links to the tourism industry. However, support to conservancies tends to be piecemeal, short term, donor funded, and project based. NACSO members focus most of their efforts on those conservancies that they can raise funding for. Lack of coordination and limited financial resources in the NGO sector inhibits optimal natural resource management and monitoring as well as institutional development and governance. The rising cost of conservation and downturn in tourism and associated revenues associated with the COVID-19 pandemic puts even greater strain on the limited financial resources available to the CBNRM / conservancies system. While local conservancies invest in conservation efforts within their conservancies, they do this with local income from sources such as trophy hunting, an income stream that is under threat, which poses additional risks to the conservancy programme.

In the ETP region, as a voluntary regional cooperation mechanism, the Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Conservation Corridor does not have consistent, reliable sources of funding in place, and thus seeks to identify and implement an appropriate sustainable funding mechanism to achieve more efficient management of critical marine resources and long-term durability of this ecologically and economically significant region. CMAR prioritized establishing a long-term conservation financial mechanism in its Action Plan, with the goal of at least 25 million USD raised by 2024 and 100 million USD by 2030 to ensure financial sustainability. However, the action plan does not define this financial mechanism. Under the current, voluntary CMAR framework, the allocation of financial resources from donors for the intended conservation purposes is often hindered by the need to pass them through public treasuries. (Enright et al., 2021). To date, most donor funding directed towards CMAR and its activities has been managed through partner organizations, which is not adequate or sustainable in the long-term. In addition, the CMAR Secretariat is not dedicated to CMAR full time and does not yet have a permanent physical infrastructure. The Secretariat currently rotates between each State every three years. The State that exercises the Presidency and the Secretariat (both roles rotate jointly) currently covers the associated expenses of operating the Secretariat with funds that are provided by that government's budget or via international cooperation. Coordination between four countries and multiple organizations is resource intensive, complicating the many legal and institutional challenges that attend managing shared biological resources (CMAR, 2019). Given these constraints, and a lack of needed capacities to adequately coordinate activities across the region, many of the efforts in the region have proven to be short-lived or lacking in permanence, and the overall rate of conservation progress has been slower than would be optimal, as demonstrated by the number of rare, threatened and endangered species in the region, with populations declining. The declaration by the four countries to establish the marine Transboundary Biosphere Reserve has led to heightened attention, including significant donor pledges, underscoring the importance of establishing structures that can take full advantage of opportunities to mobilize long term sustainable funding.

1.3.2 Inadequacies in effective management & governance of PAs and Conservancies

Effective management and good governance have been shown to maintain more effective protected area systems. The last global meta-analysis which included a regional analysis for Africa was conducted in 2010 (Leverington et al., 2010). The analysis found that the overall mean effectiveness score (averaged across all individual indicators) was 49%, which was below the world mean (53%) and lower than any other region. Some 22% of the assessments scored in the bottom third of the scale (clearly unacceptable), while only 17%

scored in the top third (sound management). This indicates that more work is needed to build the capacity of stakeholders to effectively coordinate and manage a diversity of actors in conservation, including local communities, indigenous peoples, private groups and the private sector in the governance of PAs. Available scores for conservancies in Namibia are in Annex 3b. In January 2023, the NACSO Natural Resource Working Group completed baseline METTs for the 86 registered Community Conservancies as part of the project preparation. Two additional biodiversity indicators were included and captured in the baseline reports.³⁴ Data was collected as part of the ongoing annual game counts and compliance assessments and was validated with the respective conservancies. Scores ranged from a low of 35 to a high of 65, with an average of 51.8 across the 86 conservancies.

The Government of Gabon strongly prefers to use the IMET tool to track effective management of PAs. Notwithstanding, METT scores reported in 2020 by UNDP ranged from 58-61 for certain national parks. Marine and freshwater PAs would likely have much lower scores. The baseline METT scores for the PA system will be completed prior to project start or as soon as possible thereafter. Gabon's marine parks, which are considered a high protection category, with clear biodiversity protection purposes and strong provisions relating to limitations on use represent less than 1% of the EEZ, while the remaining 11 MPAs are designated as "aquatic reserves," with no precision in the legislation regarding allowable uses. In these areas, management plans prescribe the protection and management activities to be enforced. Because these plans need to be revised every three years, any agreement on restrictive uses inside these aquatic reserves can be easily overturned.

In Namibia, conservancy governance has come under increasing scrutiny in recent years and support is needed to improve transparency, community involvement in decision making, and accountability within CBNRM. Although some progress has been made, challenges remain, including poor information flow between conservancy management committees and conservancy members; weak financial management; and inequitable sharing of benefits in conservancies. Figure 9 illustrates the extent of compliance across the system with key institutional performance indicators³⁵ prescribed in the CBNRM policy. In addition to these challenges, conservancies have identified limitations in the following areas: mapping, management planning, quota setting, hunting concessions management, harvesting systems planning, human wildlife conflict mitigation, fire management, antipoaching systems, game censuses and introductions, monitoring systems, and law enforcement support, among other things. Services in these areas are provided by "extension service providers" (NACSO members and technical staff of the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT)) but are applied unequally due to the reliance on short-term project funds that NGOs can fundraise for. Inadequate resources to NACSO, the conservancy support system, has impacted the ability of conservancies and partners to: strengthen management effectiveness and governance in conservancies; engage stakeholders; resolve conflicts; build capacity through learning exchanges and training, e.g., regarding conservancy governance; and hire enough skilled managers, among other things. While local conservancies are very strong institutions, they are not always included in higher level decision-making processes, and development and investment decisions do not always conform with conservancy aspirations and visions. In addition, poor cross-sectorial planning and implementation of plans is a key concern, often leading to conflicting lands uses and poor optimization of sustainable options.

³⁴ These two additional indicators are: (1) "Population diversity: Percentage of indigenous plains game species present;" and (2) "population health: Percentage of the indigenous plains game species at harvestable level." Some conservancies may only track one of these two indicators due to the nature of wildlife numbers in their areas.

³⁵ Indicators include whether a conservancy convened an annual general meeting; whether they have a benefit distribution plan; whether there is a game management plan; and whether conservancy management presented a financial report at the annual general meeting.

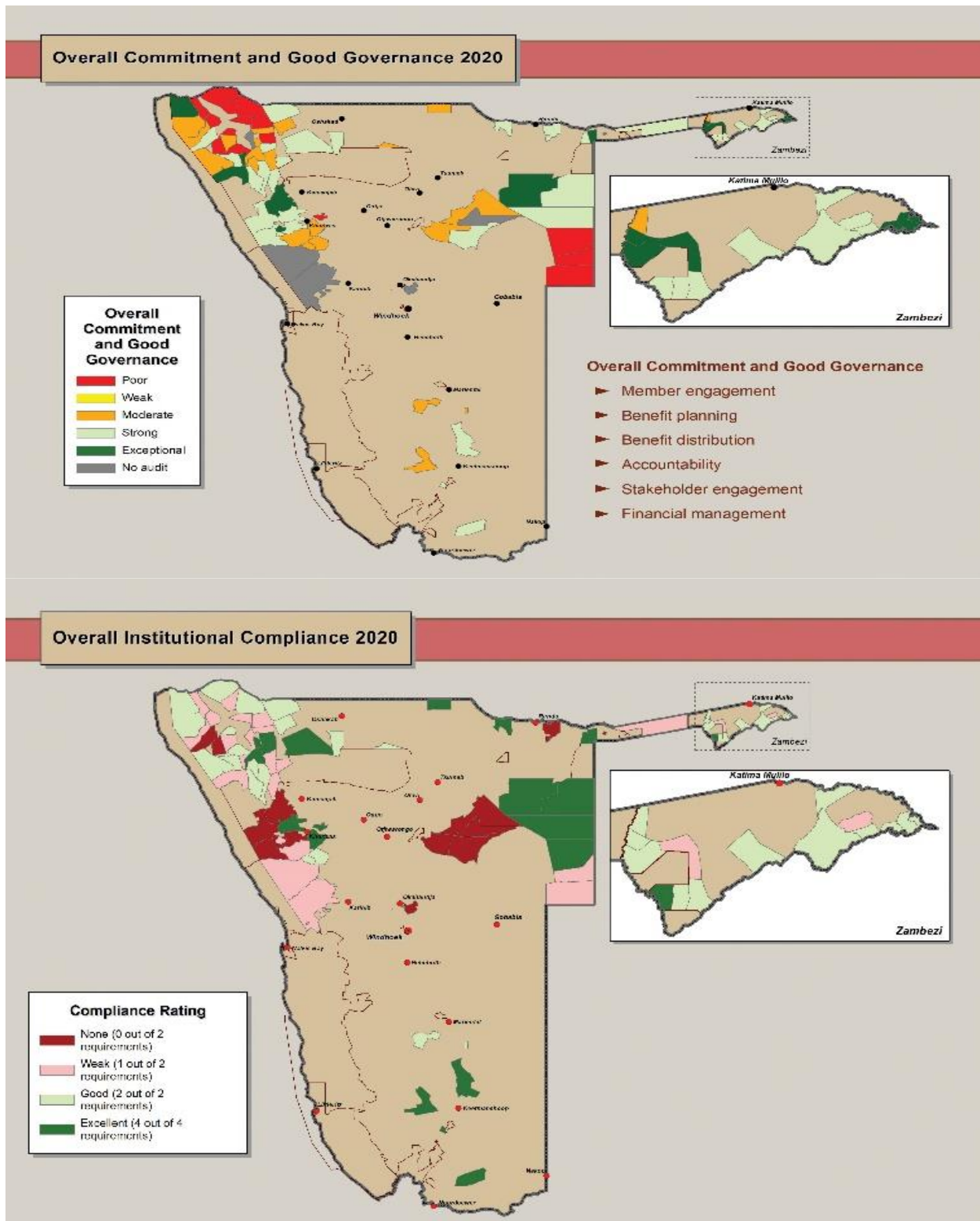


Figure 10: Levels of Compliance in Namibia – Institutional, overall commitment & good governance (2020)

In the ETP, weak governance has been cited as an overarching problem in the CMAR, with conservation efforts in the region struggling due to lack of a clear governance structure that supports coordination among governments, civil society, academia, the private sector, and other stakeholders in the region. Since the

announcement by the governments of the intent to establish a Transboundary Biosphere Reserve in 2021, followed by the announcement to establish a regional treaty and permanent secretariat for CMAR in 2023, there is significant support for conservation efforts in the ETP by donors, as well as increased pressure on CMAR to coordinate these activities. However, given the scale and complexity of CMAR, involving transboundary coordination across four jurisdictions, there have been significant challenges in formalizing the governance structure. Such an undertaking is without precedent in the region and execution is naturally complex due to the number of different actors involved (technical, political, and governmental/non-governmental), the limited resources available and the large scale of the oceanographic area to be covered (CMAR, 2005). While the variety of stakeholders makes this region complex, it also provides opportunities for significant technical and capacity support. If harnessed through a regional governance structure, the availability of these capacities would contribute to the realization of the regional vision. The participating countries recognize the need to explore and agree upon a coordination structure for regional conservation, the most suitable durable finance mechanism, the work plan, and an approximate budget. The absence of a legally binding structure that facilitates the coordination of conservation activity in the region inhibits adaptive management and swift decision-making. The lack of overall coordination in the ETP also contributes to overall weak monitoring of species in the region. Furthermore, there are no existing data sharing agreements or platforms to facilitate data sharing among CMAR countries, limiting the quality and quantity of data shared, and transboundary coordination on overall monitoring and resource management.

1.3.3 Gaps in representation of critical habitats across PA & OECM systems

Well-governed and effectively managed protected and conserved areas are proven policy tools for safeguarding both habitats and populations of species and for delivering important ecosystem services. Significant progress has been made in area-based conservation over the past twenty years. Globally, ~17% of the land and ~8% of the ocean is reported as PAs or OECMs (CBD 2022), although only 2.5% of the ocean is in highly/fully PAs (UNEP-WCMC, [2021](#)). Yet, despite this, around 4,900 or 33% of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) remained without protection in 2019.³⁶ Gaps in ecological representation and connectivity are a concern in the Gabon, Namibia and the ETP. In Namibia currently over 40% of the land area in Namibia is under conservation status, but there are still gaps in conserving some critical habitats. Namibia is currently undertaking a review of the PAs system to identify gaps and strategies on how to best address them. Marine ecosystems are underrepresented significantly, and Namibia is looking for ways forward through establishing a 30x30 Target 3 action plan, due in 2023.

In Gabon, although the country has formally designated about 50 PAs, not all designations carry the same backing in national legislation. In some cases (e.g., Ramsar sites) the designation is recognized internationally, but the country has yet to develop national policy and legislation to provide clarity with respect to allowed/unallowed uses to enable enforcement and their governance. Furthermore, the current network of PAs in Gabon was designed without regard to the representation of freshwater ecosystems, and the existing and available protection designations in Gabon do not capture the dynamic and interconnected nature of freshwater systems (flow and sediment regime, conditions for migratory movements, etc.). Lack of sufficient data and scientific information, and clear consideration of management requirements for this unique ecosystem type have inhibited a filling of the gap in representation. There are other gaps in protection of areas identified as important for biodiversity and carbon (e.g. peatlands, corridors, delta). Marine Protected Areas have low biodiversity protection status with high protection of > 1% of the EEZ. Very little knowledge is available on the marine stocks and ecosystems to be protected.

³⁶ Source: Area-based conservation in the twenty-first century | Nature

In Namibia, while the conservancies are mostly located along the borders of Pas and key areas of conservation interest, additional connectivity may need to be established to maintain large wildlife populations. Human wildlife co-existence (not conflict) is an aspiration, but hard to broker. Through a participatory approach, so-called “wildlife corridors” have been identified in Namibia’s densely populated, fertile north-east, the Zambezi region.³⁷ The conservancies in this area play a significant role in managing these wildlife corridors and contributing to connectivity in the KAZA TFCA, by opening up migration routes e.g. for elephants between Botswana, Zambia and Angola. Further corridors in the Khaudum-Nyae-Nyae-Ngamiland area are sought, potentially leading to connectivity between the Okavango River and Etosha National Park. Throughout many conservancies, areas of connectivity could be enhanced. Prevailing fences, either border and veterinary fences, but also fences delineating properties (freehold and communal farms) hinder connectivity, but in some cases, they allow for wildlife management in managed areas. Landscape approaches to conservation help connect the mosaic of conservation compatible lands uses, including in communal conservancies, but need long-term investments for effective management.

In the ETP approximately 210,000 km² in the CMAR lack protection and management and are not adequately connected, even though they serve as important aggregation areas for migratory species with expansive ranges that require secure connectivity between nursery and adult habitats (Pew PFP Feasibility Assessment). Furthermore, in many current swimways fishing is permitted and migratory species can experience high rates of bycatch therein. Protection of swimways is complicated by the fact that they often cross jurisdictions, and therefore require international cooperation to secure them.

Likewise, seamounts, which are vulnerable due to fishing impacts, are critical for maintaining fish stocks and securing migration routes for highly migratory species. Seamounts are regions of high primary productivity supporting local communities with high rates of endemism and attracting large numbers of highly migratory species such as the scalloped hammerhead, whale shark, olive ridley turtle and green turtle, as well as important commercial species such as tuna. Seamounts are classified as very vulnerable ecosystems, due to the impacts of industrial fishing methods, and require more effective management, monitoring and protection. However, because they are in remote areas beyond the jurisdiction of any individual country, they are difficult to protect outside of a regional cooperation framework.

1.3.4 Insufficient incentives for conservation over the longer term.

Stakeholder consultations and analysis during the project preparation phase show that there are insufficient incentives for conservation in the long term in Gabon, Namibia and the ETP, primarily due to economic and market failures such as ill-defined property rights, missing or incomplete markets for biological resources, and challenges in valuation and quantification of conservation benefits. As a result, government policies and development plans in these areas inadvertently distort the cost of use of intact ecosystem services, through the prioritisation of tourism, agriculture, urban development, mining, forestry and other natural resource-based sectors at the expense of long-term ecosystem and biodiversity protection. Furthermore, while the benefits of biodiversity and ecosystem protection in Gabon, Namibia and the ETP are accrued globally, the opportunity costs are often borne by local communities, who often lack alternative, sustainable means to sustain their livelihoods, therefore setting up long term conflict and competition between their subsistence needs and the global value of PAs.

Although Gabon remains committed to the “Green Gabon” pillar of its “Emerging Gabon” strategic development plan, biodiversity and habitat protection and the establishment and effective management of

³⁷ Zambezi Wildlife Corridor Strategy, launched by MEFT in Oct 2021.

PAs need to be an essential component of Gabon's national land use plan, currently in development. A more effective articulation of a cross-sectoral policy framework is also needed to build the durability of conservation interventions. Addressing some of these "foundational system" requirements will be considered and built into the closing conditions of a PFP. Furthermore, lack of proper plans (and associated resources) to address the livelihoods of communities living near and surrounding national parks constitutes another barrier to the durability of PAs. Small scale farming, hunting, and fishing are important subsistence activities in remote areas, particularly surrounding PAs, and when following best practices, they represent significant opportunities for low income, rural and marginalized communities to improve their livelihoods. However, there have not yet been enough focused and decided actions to promote these types of activities as part of the conservation agenda in Gabon – a significant gap that needs to be overcome to build socially and ecologically resilient landscapes, where local communities see a clear benefit from well managed PAs. Similarly, in many rural areas surrounding parks, when communities come into direct conflict with wildlife (as when elephants destroy agricultural plots which significantly affects their livelihoods and negatively affects community support for conservation), the park administration has little to no means and alternatives to provide to the affected communities. Enforcement of the legal restrictions within PAs must be complemented with the development of new models of sustainable resources use for communities living around them, and more broadly, with the creation of new "green and blue jobs" that can ultimately trigger broader support for conservation.

Although Namibia has an extensive network of PAs and community conservancies, the long-term sustainability of this system is in jeopardy, due in part to perceptions that biodiversity is a direct threat to their livelihoods rather than a potential source of livelihood support (because many rural communities in Namibia live alongside wildlife, which can damage crops and harm livestock). To offset this perception, communities need to derive benefits from wildlife and from conservation, for example, from tourism and associated income, including crafts, and from conservation hunting, among other things. These provide important sources of income in rural communities with few job opportunities. The most intense human-wildlife conflict occurs in some of the poorest parts of the country, and the current level of returns and benefits from wildlife do not cover the losses generated from human-wildlife conflict. However, if the benefits from wildlife are perceived to be sufficiently high, conservancy residents appear to be more tolerant of problem causing species. In the Nyae Nyae Conservancy, for example, elephants regularly damage infrastructure, compete with people for bush foods, and pose risks of bodily harm. Nevertheless, people say that they wish to live with elephants because they represent income and employment through tourism and trophy hunting. Conservancies work with MEFT and non-governmental organizations to help farmers that suffer losses to wildlife and implement mitigation methods – e.g., predator-proof kraals and elephant-proof water points.

While many do, not all conservancies generate cash income, either because they have not yet developed sufficient income generation capacity, or they have little potential to generate income from hunting or tourism. Similarly, while joint ventures between conservancies and private sector actors (in the tourism sector) present opportunities for conservancies to profit from the sustainable use of natural resources under their management, they also present pitfalls. There have been instances of conservancies signing "bad deals" with the private sector due to a relative lack of knowledge of contracting and negotiation. To address these limitations, many conservancies and communities need technical assistance support in the following areas: tourism planning, business planning and feasibility assessments, marketing, environmental assessments, tax assistance, contracts, insurance, product development, as well as training on: finance and administration, communications, negotiations, and infrastructure maintenance, among other things.

The communities in the ETP (particularly coastal communities) rely heavily on fisheries for their livelihoods and cultural activities (e.g., industrial fishing contributes \$21Bn to local economies in the region and 9M people rely on artisanal fishing.) Therefore, a decline in fish populations would have a direct impact on their livelihoods and food security. Fishing activity in the region has declined 4.7% over the past 20 years. Additionally, 60 ecosystem-critical species, including commercial shrimps, pacific thread herring and pacific anchovies, have declined by an average of 44% in recent years.³⁸ This data suggests the ecosystem is under pressure and could indicate early signs of fish stock collapse that could affect fishing yield in years to come, without protections in place.

Many coastal communities in the ETP are marginalized by poverty, dependent on fisheries and other ecosystem services, and vulnerable to climate impacts. While changes in fisheries management to support biodiversity conservation may negatively impact coastal community livelihoods in the short term, the longer-term impacts of marine conservation on community livelihoods are harder to predict, as much is dependent upon conservation outcomes and the availability and accessibility of target species and various other environmental and market conditions. Understanding the fisheries value chain and addressing this complexity holistically will be key in the planning process, as well as understanding the impact of any fisheries management changes on jobs at packing facilities, and food supply chains.

Similarly, heavy pressure on fisheries in the region from foreign vessels and its negative impacts also demands investigation of alternative livelihood options for local communities. This will require close consultation with the sector, which is not actively involved in the existing coordination and consultation mechanisms of the CMAR.

There are some positive examples of community development projects and resiliency models. For example, due to global interest in the ETP, some coastal communities have successfully diversified their income through wildlife-based tourism, which relies on conservation of natural resources, regional coordination and strong transboundary management and use guidelines.

1.4 National and Sectoral Context

The sections below provide an overview of the national and sectoral context of relevance to the Enduring Earth project.

Gabon

Gabon has a system of protected and conserved areas that currently comprises 26% of its marine area (established in 2017), including 1% in high protection designation; about 22% terrestrial/freshwater PAs, including 11% in high protection designation (as national parks designated in 2007); and an additional 10% under Ramsar designation, as detailed below. Gabon has nine Ramsar sites, of which three fully and three partially overlap with national parks.

Land – Existing (~25% in total):

- 11 % national parks (about 30,000 km²)

³⁸ Reconstructed data from seaaroundus.org, combining official reported data from (FAO) FishStat database and reconstructed estimates of unreported data (including major discards), considering three-year rolling average

- 10 % as Ramsar sites (about 25,800 km²) not overlapping with national parks (some Ramsar sites overlap with national parks and are counted in the figure above). “National park” is a stricter protection category.
- 2-3% small additional areas (e.g., presidential reserve, “domaine de chasse” [hunting domain]). These smaller categories are only paper designations or minimally managed and do not strongly focus on biodiversity protection.

Freshwater – Existing:

- ~11% running through or bordering national parks (2,300 km), not necessarily managed for biodiversity
- 14% (3,000 km) running through Ramsar sites

Marine – Existing:

- 26% designated MPAs. Only 1% of the designated areas are in high biodiversity protection status (marine parks) with some management capacity in place. The other 25% are in a low biodiversity protection designation with no management capacity.

The Ministry of Water and Forests, the Sea and the Environment (MinEF) is a key partner in the development of the PFP, is responsible for developing and implementing the Gabonese government’s policies on water, forests, the sea, the environment and wildlife and PAs.

The National Parks Agency (Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux, ANPN), formally established in 2009, is the executing agency, operating under the MinEF, with the mandate to oversee the national park system and protect the national park resources and wildlife. ANPN coordinates research activities, promotes tourism and has law enforcement powers. ANPN is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the National Parks and will be a key partner in the execution of the PFP.

Namibia

Since the first communal conservancy was established in 1998, Namibia’s conservancy system has grown to comprise 86 communal conservancies, covering about 20.2 percent of the country (166,179 km²) and encompassing approximately 227,802 community members (9% of Namibia’s population). Community-based natural resource management has empowered rural communities to manage their lands and wildlife sustainably. Namibia’s government has supported the conservancy programme since its inception, principally through the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT).

Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) The mission of the MEFT is to promote biodiversity conservation through the sustainable utilization of natural resources and tourism development for the maximum social and economic benefit of Namibian citizens.

This conservancy or Community-based natural resource management system has created incentives for communities to live with wildlife and to set aside vast tracts of wildlife habitat in rural communities across the country. As self-governing entities, conservancies – through management committees – decide how to use the income their activities generate (after conservation related costs have been covered). Financial benefits take the form of either cash pay-outs or community projects (e.g. grants for education, various other social programs). Conservancies must carefully plan to balance operating costs with potential benefits and their allocations in order to optimize their resources. In this sense the individual conservancies operate much like business entities.

The **Association of Community-based Natural Resources Management Support Organizations (NACSO)** is an association comprising eight Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and the University of Namibia that

provides services to rural communities seeking to manage and utilise their natural resources in a sustainable manner. NACSO coordinates closely with government agencies in support of community-based natural resource management in Namibia.

Conservancy Management Committees. Conservancy Management Committees are elected according to conservancy constitutions. Committees make decisions and provide guidance for permanent conservancy staff members, which include a manager, office administrators (for some conservancies) and community game guards. Staff members are responsible for day-to-day management and report to the committee, which in turn reports to the broader membership at community meetings. All conservancies must hold annual general meetings according to their constitutions. Many also hold district, village or block meetings to increase representation and to give a voice to members unused to speaking in large meetings. Annual financial statements are presented, discussed and approved at the AGM, and provided to the MEFT for purposes of monitoring and oversight. Annual Benefit Distribution Plans describe how the Conservancies will equitably distribute benefits. Plans should aim to disburse at least 50% of income as benefits. Finally, all conservancies manage their wildlife as per the Game Management and Utilisation Plan (GMUP) and submit a Wildlife Utilisation Report annually to the MEFT.

The Community Conservation Fund of Namibia (CCFN) was established in 2017 as a sustainable funding mechanism for CBNRM-targeted conservation. Its mission is to promote the sustainable development of communal conservancies, community forests and related natural resource management entities with similar legal mandates that contribute to: conservation, protection and improvement of the natural environment and biodiversity, including the sustainable use of natural resources; and relief of poverty and the improvement of livelihoods for the benefit of the members of communal conservancies. CCFN is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors representing the public and private sectors. Day-to-day operations are managed by a Chief Executive Officer.

Eastern Tropical Pacific

The ETP includes the marine areas contained in the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of Costa Rica, Panama, Ecuador, and Colombia (Figure 4). This region is home to four UNESCO marine World Heritage Sites:

- Cocos Island National Park (NP), Costa Rica
- Coiba NP, Panama
- Galápagos Islands, Ecuador
- Malpelo Fauna and Flora Sanctuary, Colombia

Two of the marine PAs are Ramsar Sites (Galapagos and Cocos; Ramsar, 2021) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has designated Galapagos and Malpelo as Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs) (Enright et al. 2021).³⁹

For nearly two decades, this globally significant marine area has been supported through a voluntary regional cooperation mechanism: the Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Conservation Corridor (CMAR), an intergovernmental initiative launched in 2004 between Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Panamá. Based

³⁹ Enright S.R., Meneses-Orellana R., Keith I. "The Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor (CMAR): The Emergence of a Voluntary Regional Cooperation Mechanism for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biodiversity Within a Fragmented Regional Ocean Governance Landscape". *Front. Mar. Sci.* 8:674825 (2021). doi: 10.3389/fmars.2021.674825

on the interests and priorities of its member states, CMAR promotes conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in the Eastern Tropical Pacific. This is achieved through regional governmental strategies, and supported by civil society, international cooperation and non-governmental agencies.

A Regional Ministerial Level (RMC) is made up of the Environment Ministers (with the support and advice of representatives of the foreign ministry) of each of the CMAR countries is the main decision-making body of CMAR. It issues guidelines and supports implementation politically in accordance with conservation priorities for CMAR, the policies of each participating State and the relevant international framework. The RMC meets once a year. The Presidency of this body rotates every three years.

A Regional Technical Committee (RTC), defines the actions needed to implement CMAR, advises the RMC, executes management actions, and coordinates among stakeholders in the region. Each state's environment ministry appoints a delegate (focal point) to the technical committee. The technical committee meets twice a year, and is supported by a Secretariat that rotates with the presidency. (Enright et al 2021)

PACIFICO – a foundation registered in Panama – is a coordination platform for four environmental funds operating in the Eastern Tropical Pacific that mobilizes financial resources to implement marine-coastal conservation actions. One representative from each of its four founding environmental funds sits on its Board of Directors. A trust fund ensures the effective and transparent management of the resources it mobilizes. PACIFICO is a key NGO partner of CMAR.

The Connect to Protect consortium is an informal group of philanthropies, government, and NGOs that pledged technical and financial assistance to the ETP totalling more than \$150M at the UNFCCC COP in Glasgow. The group meets regularly to discuss relevant regional activities.

The table below describes the mandates of governmental agencies across the ETP countries with responsibility for marine resources management across the four geographies of the ETP.

Table 4. Summary of environmental institutions and their competencies.

	Creation and Extension of MPAs	Administration of MPAs	Fisheries Management in MPAs	Fisheries Management in EEZ	Control and Surveillance in MPAs	Control and Surveillance in EEZ
Colombia	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MADS)	Natural National Parks (PNN)	PNN y AUNAP	National Authority of Aquaculture and Fisheries (AUNAP)	PNN National Army	National Army
Costa Rica	Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAIE)	National System of Conservation Areas (SINAC) & Cocos Marine Conservation Area (ACMIC)	MINAIE/SINAC	Costa Rican Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture (Incopesca)	SINAC SNG	National Coast Guard Service (SNG)
Ecuador	Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition	Direction of Galapagos National Park	Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition	Ministry of Production, Foreign Trade, Investments and Fishing	Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition National Army	National Army

Panama	Ministry of Environment	National System of Protected Areas (SINAP)	SINAP / ARAP	Authority of Aquatic Resources (ARAP)	SINAP Naval- Air Authority	Naval- Air Authority
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1.4.1 Global conventions of relevance

At the global level, the following are key to this project:

The **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**: Gabon, Namibia and the four countries within the ETP are parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD, known informally as the Biodiversity Convention). The Convention has three main goals: the conservation of biological diversity; the sustainable use of its components; and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources. This project will enhance management effectiveness of existing PAs (in both Gabon and Namibia) and expand the PA system (in Gabon) and contribute to an enabling environment for a mechanism in the ETP that will have similar goals.

Moreover, the project will help countries to achieve their commitments under the global targets for nature recently adopted under the Convention, comprising the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, which guide actions worldwide through 2030 to protect and preserve nature and essential services to people, prioritize the protection of ecologically-representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of PAs and other effective area-based conservation, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories and practices. Specifically, they include the targets of effective conservation and management of at least 30% of the world’s land, inland waters, coastal areas and oceans, and the restoration on at least 30% of degraded terrestrial, inland waters, and coastal and marine ecosystems and reduce to near zero the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance, including ecosystems of high ecological integrity. The project has particularly strong links to GBF Targets 3 and 19. **Target 3** calls for ... “at least 30 per cent of terrestrial, inland water, and of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of PAs and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.” **Target 19** calls on countries to “substantially and progressively increase the level of financial resources from all sources, in an effective, timely and easily accessible manner, including domestic, international, public and private resources.” The project also advances GBF **Goal D**, one of the five overarching goals to be achieved by 2050, which focuses on implementation – including finance, technical and scientific cooperation – needed to close the biodiversity finance gap of \$700 billion per year.

The **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and Protocols**. The ultimate objective of the UNFCCC is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system, in a time frame which allows ecosystems to adapt naturally and enables sustainable development. The project will contribute to the Convention’s mitigation and adaptation goals. Area-based conservation measures of the kind funded / enabled through the project will safeguard biodiversity and ecosystem services. This will yield socioeconomic benefits, and more

sustainable development, supporting local economies, while also reducing the risks of climate change and benefiting human health. These benefits will accrue at the local (e.g., income and employment), national (e.g., food and water security), and global levels (e.g., climate change adaptation and mitigation). All of the project's focal geographies are parties to the Convention.

Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES): CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) aims to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the survival of the species. Gabon, Namibia and the four countries within the ETP are parties to the Convention.

Convention on Migratory Species: The CMS provides a global platform for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory animals and their habitats. CMS brings together the States through which migratory animals pass, the Range States, and lays the legal foundation for internationally coordinated conservation measures throughout a migratory range. Gabon, as well as the ETP countries of Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Panama are party to the treaty. Colombia has not signed. In the ETP, the GEF-7 project would help to determine how to protect swimways of key migratory species in the ETP, in line with the convention.

UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS): UNCLOS outlines a comprehensive regime of law and order in the world's oceans and seas establishing rules governing all uses of the oceans and their resources. It embodies in one instrument traditional rules for the uses of the oceans and at the same time introduces more contemporary legal concepts and regimes. The Convention also provides the framework for further development of specific areas of the law of the sea. Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Panama are party to the treaty. Colombia has not signed. This may provide a basis on which to establish additional control and surveillance of IUU fishing in the ETP.

UN Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA): Sets out principles for the conservation and management of fish stocks and establishes that management must be based on the precautionary approach and the best available scientific information. Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Panama are party to the treaty. Colombia has not signed. The UNFSA may be helpful in justifying policy harmonization related to fisheries in the ETP.

International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling: The International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling is an international environmental agreement aimed at the "proper conservation of whale stocks and thus make possible the orderly development of the whaling industry". It governs the commercial, scientific, and aboriginal subsistence whaling practices of 88 member nations. All ETP countries are party to the treaty. Whales are some of the key migratory species that the project seeks to protect via swimway and MPA connectivity and enhanced coordination.

1.5 Baseline Scenario

As part of the wider PFP process, this GEF project sets out to consolidate the gains made through previous investments and leverage existing and planned initiatives to realize the overall conservation targets in each of the target geographic areas. This section provides a summary overview of the baseline initiatives relevant to three key project focal areas in the three geographic areas. These include:

1. Baseline for a multi-partner strategy for long-term sustainability of protected and conserved areas (Gabon) and terrestrial conservancies (Namibia);
2. Baseline for sustainable mechanisms for financing PAs; and
3. Baseline for PA/Conservancy management effectiveness and financial management

More detail on each of these is provided in Annex 4.

1.5.1 Baseline initiatives – Gabon

1. Baseline for a government-endorsed, multi-partner strategy for long-term sustainability of protected and conserved areas

- **PFP Preparatory Process:** Government and TNC, with partners, are working to initiate a preparatory process for developing Gabon’s PFP. Beginning with a viability assessment in 2021, Government, TNC and EE partners developed a vision that aligned the PFP model with Gabon’s goals for nature, climate, and people. Following the determination that PFP would be a suitable and practicable tool to create enduring protection of forests, freshwater, and oceans of Gabon, a subsequent feasibility assessment completed in 2022, resulted in a refined, coherent deal hypothesis with key stakeholder and rightsholder engagement. The assessment included a timeline, financial model (including an assessment of potential sources of funds including sustainable financing mechanisms). The assessment also identified future needs for stakeholder engagement as well as a risk management plan, the desired PFP outcomes, and PFP stakeholders. Current planning work funded and carried out by TNC (with project co-finance) includes activities to jointly design the PFP CTF’s institutional framework with the capacities to receive and execute the PFP; develop the PFP conservation plan, community engagement plan and financial model; prepare the PFP operating manual that describes institutional and governance arrangements; and associated activities. The planning stage will continue through 2023 to achieve the PFP plan and set up the right conditions for a single close agreement.

The current administration has indicated that it intends to implement a comprehensive conservation and sustainable development plan to protect 30% of ocean, 30% of land and 30% of freshwater ecosystems – making Gabon one of the first countries to make explicit reference to protection targets for freshwater systems. Responsibilities of the MinEF include (i) to develop and lead the implementation of forest policies, including to protect and restore forest ecosystems and to preserve biodiversity and to enhance forest resources and ecosystems; (ii) to develop and lead the implementation of the wildlife and PAs policy; to conduct an ongoing inventory and management of wildlife resources and PAs; to reconcile development imperatives with the preservation of wildlife and PAs; (iii) to develop cooperation and partnerships at the subregional and international levels; and (iv) to inform and raise public awareness about the exploitation of forest resources, wildlife, and PAs.

- **Durable Freshwater Protection Strategy (TNC)** - TNC is also building on the work deployed over the past nine years in freshwater conservation in Gabon to develop planning for durable freshwater protection outcomes, with a focus on connectivity, protection of freshwater species and their movement, and management of sediments and environmental flows. The work under this strategy will provide a solid foundation to the PFP conservation plan. TNC has also provided support to local stakeholders (government, NGOs, communities, private sector) in the development of sustainable fisheries management plans and planning for the hydropower sector to reduce impacts to freshwater systems – which will be key elements to consider in the creation of compatible economic activities surrounding PAs.

2. Baseline for sustainable mechanisms for financing PAs

A number of mechanisms were analyzed during the PFP feasibility phase by TNC that could be deployed to generate revenues to achieve the conservation outcomes of the PFP. At this time, most of the thinking about these mechanisms is conceptual. They will continue to be explored as PFP planning proceeds/intensifies.

Only the highest probability SFMs among a longer list of possibilities identified were assessed during the feasibility stage. These include:

- a. **Ocean Conservation Sustainable Financing Mechanism (SFM):** TNC and the Ministry of Finance in Gabon are collaborating on a SFM that will mobilize long-term sustainable financing towards 30% marine area protection (with 10% in a highly protected status), sustainable economic development, and climate change resilience. This SFM initiative will also produce a stakeholder-driven marine spatial plan (MSP) and help develop strong management capacities in marine PAs. This work will drive and inform the PFP's conservation objectives in Gabon's marine space.
- b. **Tourism optimization:** This new revenue stream would derive from fees charged to tourists based on the number of nights they stay in certain hotels, close to where they can observe charismatic species (gorillas, chimpanzees). It is dependent on a number of enabling investments/activities including primate habituation and the improvement of tourism infrastructure. Project co-financing will be used to explore and develop this opportunity.
- c. **Payments for ecosystems:** This mechanism could channel financial resources to local stakeholders for actions that enhance conservation efforts (e.g., financial incentive to improve water quality, and land use practice). There could be potential for these instruments to be scaled up and more systematically implemented in Gabon.
- d. **Extractive royalties:** This mechanism could yield agreements between resource-extractive industries and local stakeholders for conservation, with revenues originating from a mandatory conservation tax or royalty on select industries (e.g., oil & gas, mining, logging). A preliminary assessment found this mechanism was found to be relatively mature.

3. Baseline for PA management effectiveness and financial management

Since 2002 Gabon has progressively developed national policy and implementation capabilities for conservation of its biodiversity assets. The country has a network of terrestrial PAs consisting of 13 national parks, the Wonga-Wongué Presidential Reserve, nine Ramsar sites, hunting and wildlife reserves and arboretums, covering 22% of the country's land surface. Additionally, a network of aquatic PAs composed of marine parks and aquatic reserves, covering nearly 25% of Gabon's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) has been established by the Government of Gabon.

The last audited figure for government budget contributions to the PA system was USD 5.3 Million in 2020. The most recent allocation from the national budget reported by Government (2021) was \$9.4 Million/year, reflecting a significant increase in allocations to the Parks Agency over. The three primary agencies mandated with the protection of Gabon's biodiversity are MINEF, ANPN and DGFAP. Analysis of the budgets of these agencies shows: 30% of the budget covers the salaries of MINEF/ANPN/DGFAP agents; 15% of the budget covers the basic functioning of the structures. Investments granted from state budgets represent less than 10% of the budget. External sources of financing (donors) represent about 40% of the overall budget. The combined staff of the three structures is about 2500 agents, with a strong centralization in Libreville. State budgets made available to field teams are very low, and do not allow them to be fully operational (lack of vehicles, operating costs, minimum maintenance of premises and mission equipment). Most investments are made via non-state financing, showing the system's dependence on this type of external financing.

Only the national parks (13 terrestrial parks and the 9 marine parks) have dedicated budget support from the government, and this support is far from sufficient to pay for management, community relations, surveillance and monitoring, among other needs.

- **Biodiversity Conservation Trust Fund (CTF):** Linking with marine and freshwater protection SFM efforts, the government (MinEF, Presidency, and Sovereign Wealth Fund) and TNC are working together to develop a Conservation Trust Fund (CTF) to manage conservation revenues and associated investments. This will include returns from an endowment fund that will generate funds to support conservation in perpetuity. The CTF is being designed to capture funding from multiple sources, including those mobilized by the PFP. The CTF is being developed following best practices and standards for trust funds, including strong governance and transparency principles.

1.5.2 Baseline initiatives – Namibia

1. Baseline for a multi-partner strategy for long-term sustainability of protected and conserved areas (Gabon) and terrestrial conservancies (Namibia)

Namibia for Life (N4L): In Namibia, the design and establishment of the PFP is being carried out through the preparatory phase of the Namibia for Life (N4L) project, supported by the Enduring Earth partnership. Namibia for Life is a three-year project, which began in March 2022 and is aiming for closure by December 2024, provided all agreed “Closing Conditions” are met. WWF is coordinating this process, applying inclusive conservation principles. This involves: (1) developing the conservation plan underpinning the PFP, (2) identifying funding gaps, (3) developing a suitable financial model for the PFP, (4) in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, identifying the delivery mechanism of the PFP including fund management and administration, (5) undertaking relevant capacity assessments and due diligence processes, and (6) developing the Operating Manual for the N4L in line with PFP standard procedures.

2. Baseline for PA/Conservancy management effectiveness and financial management

Conservancy operations. Community conservancies generate a broad range of community and individual returns which also cover conservancy operational costs. The main sources of returns for communal conservancies derive from tourism, either directly or indirectly. Photographic tourism, conservation hunting, and craft industries are all reliant on international customers. These have grown steadily since conservancies were formed. The total cash income and in-kind benefits generated in conservancies grew from less than US\$50,000 in 1998 to over US\$ 8 million in 2019 (shrinking significantly in 2020 and 2021 due to global travel restrictions). In 2021, conservancies:

- Had **57** conservancy management plans in place
- Employed **748** game guards
- Facilitated **3,548 jobs**
- Generated total cash income and in-kind benefits to rural communities of ~US\$5M (Conservation hunting generated ~US\$1.4M; **tourism, US\$ 2.9M; and**
 - **\$617,000** in cash benefits was distributed to conservancy residents and used to support community projects.

Government support for conservancies. The government is committed to retaining its CBNRM staff and funding levels to provide support services to conservancies (for Wildlife & Protected Area Management; Protection & Management of key species and natural resources habitats; Infrastructure development, maintenance, and M&E; and Policy coordination and support services) in line with the national CBNRM policy launched in 2013. The MEFT runs a CBNRM support programme with staff at headquarters and in the field. The Ministry is supporting CCs in compliance work and coordinates the national programme. Various government funding sources are committed through this intervention. A national incentive scheme is

currently under development to promote a culture of good governance in conservancies. The government also continues to explore opportunities to secure external funding, from both bilateral (i.e., KfW, GIZ, etc.) and multilateral funding partners (GEF, GCF, etc.) to support the sector. In support of the Harambee Prosperity Plan II, the government is also now exploring how financial institutions can extend credit to parties looking to invest in communal areas and to accelerate concessions on wildlife and tourism in communal areas and in state PAs, with the goal of attracting investors to Communal Areas in Namibia.

CTF support for Community Conservancies. The CCFN Board has three financing windows in line with its operational scope: 1. Minimum Support Package (which assists conservancies to comply with minimum requirements prescribed in the conservancies legislation); 2. Human Wildlife Conflict; and 3. Payment for Ecosystem Services.

Several capacity building initiatives are ongoing, to support community-based conservancies in order to improve governance and capacity. These initiatives include:

- **The NACSO Institutional Development Working Group (IDWG):** the IDWG has conducted several training courses at conservancy and national level, as well as implementing mentorship and induction sessions for newly elected committees. Training has included financial management and gender mainstreaming. Although training targets Conservancy Management Committees with the hope that the results trickle down to conservancy members and improve governance, this has not always been the case. There is still often a disconnect between members and the CMC, disengaged community members and poor support for conservancy activities. Increased capacity within the IDWG and the MEFT is required to address this issue.

The MEFT, NACSO's IDWG and other partners including German Development (GIZ) have developed support tools. Three pilot projects on 'Membership Engagement' were implemented in northern Kunene, north-central regions and in Zambezi. Various tools including community radio programmes, village meetings, household surveys, and youth-centred activities are used to engage members. Dashboards – simple spreadsheets – have been developed to assist both conservancies and NGO support staff to understand and manage governance issues.

- **NACSO Natural Resources Working Group (NRWG):** The NACSO umbrella organization was founded in 1998 to help coordinate and amplify the CBNRM work of Namibia NGOs and experts. There are 12 main members to NACSO and additional entities are associated. Partners deliver critical extension services to Communal Conservancies to ensure compliance with the legal requirements and ensure continued legal status. The NACSO working group provides training and technical support in mapping, management planning, quota setting, hunting concessions, harvesting systems, human wildlife conflict mitigation, fire management, anti-poaching systems, game censuses and introductions, monitoring systems, and law enforcement support, among other things.
- **NACSO Business, Enterprises and Livelihoods Working Group (BEL WG):** The Business and Enterprise Working Group of NACSO is focusing on creating business approaches, sustainable financing innovations and financial incentives. The BEL WG provides training and technical support in tourism planning, product development and business planning, and contract negotiation and management of joint venture contracts with private sector investors, among other things.

WWF Namibia: WWF Namibia's strategy for rendering support to conservancies is in collaboration with, and through local, field-based NGO partners. This has greatly enhanced local ownership and sense of shared responsibility in raising the needed funding to render services to conservancies. WWF technical staff

participate in the CBNRM working groups, i.e., IDWG, NRWG and BEL WG, including as technical advisors to these working groups. Through both technical and financial support to the working groups, WWF is contributing to the development of planning frameworks, monitoring and management systems, training materials, standardized approaches to technical support provision to conservancies, coordinated knowledge management system at national level to coalesce experiences and results / impacts generated across the country, and documentation and communication of achievements, challenges, and future plans.

- These efforts are also supported by other key projects, including the KfW supported Integrated Wildlife Protection Project (IWPP) managed by WWF, and housed and implemented through the MEFT. This project aims to combat wildlife crime in the northern regions. Two other projects managed by the CCFN relate to mitigation of Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) and provision of COVID relief support through the Community Relief, Recovery and Resilience Facility (CRRRF). Another major support by the KfW is aimed at strengthening the effectiveness of State Protected Area management, managed through a PMU within the MEFT

1.5.3 Baseline initiatives - Eastern Tropical Pacific

The four governments of the ETP region have long recognized the ecological, economic, and social value of their shared marine resources. In 2004 they created CMAR, a voluntary regional cooperation mechanism to facilitate coordination and collaboration in this transboundary region.⁴⁰ Since then, the governments have worked together to strengthen protection and coordination. Based on the interests and priorities of its member states, CMAR promotes conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in the Eastern Tropical Pacific, coordinating governmental efforts in furtherance of its five year plans with those of civil society, international cooperation partners, and non-governmental agencies. However, enhanced coordination is needed to secure the long-term conservation of this marine region. In Glasgow at the UNFCCC COP 26 (in November 2021), the four governments declared an intention to create a marine Transboundary Biosphere Reserve, one of the world’s largest, to enhance conservation and connectivity throughout the 500,000 km² multiple use zone, and stabilize key species populations. This commitment was reiterated by all the governments in July 2022 at the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC), and a broad coalition of philanthropic, government, and non-government organizations (NGOs)—known as the Connect to Protect Eastern Tropical Pacific Coalition—pledged technical and financial assistance totalling more than \$150 million USD in private and public funds, to support the strengthening of the CMAR and the development of the TBR.

At the Our Oceans Conference in Panama in March 2023, the four countries once again highlighted their commitment to regional coordination, declaring their shared intent to develop a regional treaty concerning the conservation of marine resources in the region, and agreeing to establish a permanent CMAR Secretariat. They requested an analysis of regional conservation mechanisms to understand the TBR and other models, and have since reaffirmed their commitment to the TBR. This project will help assess the most suitable durable finance mechanism to support transboundary coordination and good governance.

The CMAR Secretariat initiated the process to establish a TBR by sending a letter of intent to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that administers conventions relevant to TBRs. Two consultants (one from UNESCO, one with CMAR) are supporting the TBR design process.

⁴⁰ The CMAR Secretariat coordinates all activities and rotates every three years between the four countries.

In assessing the possible scope of a durable conservation mechanism for the region, the project will leverage the conservation strategy developed by CMAR in 2019 (revised every five years), which prioritizes the following species and habitats for conservation (Figure 10).

After the considerations of the participants in the consultation process and the review of existing documentation, it is considered that there is a group of species and ecosystems that adequately represent the immense biodiversity in the CMAR region for the purposes of the formulation of this Action Plan. This list is presented below;

- PET ridges/seamounts
- Coral Reefs.
- Mangroves.
- Sandy and rocky coasts.
- Seabed.
- Seagrass meadows.
- Sea Turtles
- Marine Mammals.
- Pelagic fish.
- Demersal fish.
- Sharks
- Seabirds (Shorebirds and Oceanic)

Figure 11: CMAR conservation targets, 2019

The conservation priorities are aligned with PACIFICO's conservation targets (from its 2016 Conservation Plan) which prioritize the same species and habitats.

1. Baseline for a government-endorsed, multi-partner strategy for long-term sustainability of protected and conserved areas

Ongoing work in the region related to marine protected area management, reduction of illegal and unregulated fishing, regional ecological monitoring, control and surveillance, community development, and capacity building in the region includes: **PFP feasibility assessment:** A regional PFP Feasibility Assessment was completed in 2022 by The Pew Charitable Trusts, with support from Enduring Earth partners WWF, TNC and ZOMALAB, and included a legal analysis, scientific analysis, stakeholder analysis, and an in-person feasibility workshop with NGO, legal, scientific and government partners. The process involved consultation with stakeholders representing government, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and donors. The study assessed whether a PFP initiative would be feasible for achieving long-term conservation, social, and economic outcomes in the ETP. The concept was endorsed by the Enduring Earth Management team, which initiated a new phase of the co-development process, which is still preliminary, and will entail extensive stakeholder consultation and capacity building.

- **Assessment of capacity and enabling conditions:** Many organisations are supporting the development of enabling conditions for enhanced regional cooperation and governance in CMAR. Ongoing assessments are being completed by PACIFICO, a CMAR partner, concerning the CMAR's capacities and needs. KfW completed due diligence in advance of providing finance to PACIFICO.

1.5.4 Baseline for the Enduring Earth Initiative

The project will build upon the following ongoing initiatives being led by the Enduring Earth Partnership hub to develop and disseminate knowledge products that will promote domestic resource mobilization and the scaling out of the Enduring Earth/PFP approach.

- Enduring Earth has a learning and knowledge management strategy currently under development that will enhance the efficiency of its work. The strategy encompasses four workstreams: document management, learning, construction of a knowledge exchange network, and the creation and management of a global PFP network. Activities include webinars, workshops, field exchanges of experiences, peer learning and reviews, and other external resources and learning opportunities. These activities will be fully funded by Enduring Earth through resources provided by its partners, which include Pew, TNC, WWF, and ZOMALAB. By executing these activities, Enduring Earth aims to reduce the learning curve, standardize management across deals, and ultimately conserve ½ billion hectares of land, ocean, and freshwater in the long term.
- McKinsey & Company is providing support to Enduring Earth both on the individual project level and on the partnership level. For example, the McKinsey team is developing a guide for Enduring Earth to use across the portfolio on innovative and sustainable financing mechanisms, such as debt swaps, concessional loans, green bonds, and others. This will feed into building the necessary expertise to work towards the conservation of millions of hectares of land, ocean, and freshwater, and will allow for the development of rigorous and high-quality financial models. The team is also supporting individual projects with financial modeling (including cost and revenue projections), socio-economic analyses, and stakeholder presentations. The analytical report assessing financial mechanisms / structures for domestic resource mobilization being developed under Component 2 will build upon this work.
- To enhance the quality of its work and standardize management across PFPs, Enduring Earth plans to build a team of PFP experts. This team will be responsible for ensuring that the financial models, CTF structures, legal closing conditions, and sustainable finance mechanisms are implemented efficiently and effectively across its portfolio. The funding for this activity will come from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, and Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies. By hiring these experts, as shared capacity, to be deployed across deals, Enduring Earth aims to reduce the learning curve and ensure that its work is consistent across all PFPs. Knowledge products developed under the GEF7 Enduring Earth project will leverage and inform the development / deployment of these resources, particularly as relates to sustainable financing mechanisms and CTFs/governance structures. Enduring Earth has identified several common products across all PFPs that will guide Knowledge Management and support in building a standardized approach to PFP execution. Topics include building an integrated deal narrative or hypothesis, creating a conservation plan and financial model, development of sustainable financing mechanisms, case studies of deal structures and governance, how to develop successful negotiations (brokering & strategy), performing socio-economic impact analyses, creating closing & disbursement conditions, tackling community development, fundraising (public & private), legal support & agreements, environmental & social safeguards, project management, and communications.

1.6 Coordination with other relevant GEF & non-GEF Initiatives

Several initiatives of relevance for the project were identified at the global, regional, and national levels. This section provides a summary overview of the types of initiatives identified. The project will coordinate with

and build on these initiatives to i) benefit from lessons learned; and ii) effectively leverage relevant activities to maximize efficiency and impact.

1.6.1 Coordination with relevant initiatives – Gabon

Initiatives of relevance in Gabon include:

- The **Transforming Forest Landscape Governance in the Lower Ogooué – Lower Nyanga Landscape Corridor, Gabo (GEF ID: 10729)** project led by UNDP/GEF is a child project under the UNEP-led Congo Basin Sustainable Landscapes Impact Program (CBSL IP). It aims to conserve high conservation value and high carbon stock forests and forest-wetland complexes in two major watersheds in Gabon, the Lower Ogooué and Lower Nyanga. The Gabon PFP support to management effectiveness in PAs will seek to complement and collaborate with the UNDP project's efforts to improve management effectiveness in overlapping PAs.
- The PFP will complement the **Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI) and Reduced Impact Logging for Carbon (RIL-C)** (implemented by CAFI and TNC) project's technical focus on improved forestry practices and optimization of land use for food production and climate mitigation. In particular, it is projected that the Gabon PFP will support policy measures to improve standards for logging and fisheries practices that reduce negative impacts on climate, biodiversity, and ecosystems, while also supporting local communities' livelihoods through sustainable forestry and other nature-positive activities. The Gabon PFP can also synergize with the CAFI 3 program for Gabon Forest Ecosystem Research and Monitoring Program.
- The March 2023 **Gabon 'One Forest' Summit** was an event that launched the "Libreville Plan" which includes a €100m fund to reward Congo basin countries for protecting their forests and biodiversity. The Gabon PFP will endeavor to coordinate with this initiative to direct resources and expertise that go to Gabon.
- **Gabon Bleu Initiative** where marine spatial plan (MSP) work was done to inclusively map and plan Gabon's marine area. The resulting MSP needs some improvement, and the management plans for MPAs developed under that effort have expired.

1.6.2 Coordination with relevant initiatives - Namibia

In Namibia, a number of GEF and non-GEF initiatives are relevant to community conservation and consequently the PFP. These include:

- The **Integrated Approach to Proactive Management of Human-Wildlife Conflict and Wildlife Crime in Hotspot Landscapes in Namibia (GEF ID: 10244)**, a Child Project under the World Bank-led Global Wildlife Programme (GWP): the project aims to safeguard wildlife by incentivizing conservation through proactive management of human-wildlife conflict and wildlife crime, and delivery of wildlife-based benefits to rural communities in selected hotspot landscapes in North Central (incorporating the flagship Etosha National Park); North West (or Kunene); and North East (incorporating the Bwabwata-Mudumu National Park complex, and falling partially within the KAZA Transfrontier Conservation Area). The MEFT and GEF are partners in PFP development, and this work is directly relevant to PFP work.
- The **Namibia Integrated Landscape Approach for Enhancing Livelihoods and Environmental Governance to Eradicate Poverty (NILALEG)**, implemented by the MEFT, MAWLR, Ministry of Gender, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MGPEWS), and Ministry of Urban and Rural (MURD) Development is a UNDP GEF 6 project, that works in the forest, savannah and rangeland of Namibia's northern areas to pilot an integrated landscape management approach, reducing poverty through sustainable nature-based livelihoods, protecting and restoring forests as carbon sinks, and promoting Land Degradation Neutrality.

The project is well underway, and some limited interactions are in place through the NGOs under NACSO and conservancies part of the project.

- The **Integrated Landscape Management to Reverse Degradation and Support the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources (GEF ID: 10251)** project in the Mopane-Miombo belt of Northern Namibia, is a FAO/GEF 7 project that was approved in 2021 and is under implementation by the MEFT & MAWLR. The project invests into important land management plans, land use planning coordination gaps in north central Namibia, addressing sustainable and land water management priorities. The collaboration between MAWLR and MEFT is important, and the project can provide important policy context for the work in the conservancies related to sustainable NRM. Some conservancies fall within the geographic ambit of the GEF 7 project. Lessons on interventions will be exchanged and integrated into service provision at Conservancy level. Importantly, representatives from conservancies must be part of policy development around land reform, land degradation management – with wildlife probably the most sustainable land and NR use in the arid and highly variable climates of Namibia.
- The **Zambezi Integrated Conservation Planning project (ZICP)** supported by NACSO and WWF is addressing a number of the threats and root causes set out in the situation analysis in this project and will provide lessons for implementing an integrated conservation plan under a landscape approach.
- The **Skeleton Coast – Etosha Conservation Bridge Legacy** project supported by the MEFT, IRDNC and WWF is providing landscape management support to Namibia's north-west – both Pas and community conservancies – and, notably, the emerging Ombede Peoples Park. The project has made baseline investment into community conservation in north-western Namibia.

Other projects on protected area finance are currently underway, namely:

- The **Wildlife Credits System in Namibia** pilot project, which is exploring the possible integration of Wildlife Credits as a blended financing mechanism for community conservation under the PFP umbrella.
- The ongoing **SPA Sustainable Financing** project, implemented by the MEFT with support from KfW aims to secure long-term support to the SPA system through a sustainable SPA financing mechanism. These are synergistic initiatives that would enhance the conservation impacts of the PFP and the EE project will work in tight collaboration and coordination during project implementation activities.

The project will also coordinate closely with several ongoing projects which have made direct foundational investments linked to long term implementation of the PFP and which target the same stakeholders. These include:

- **Leading the Change (LTC)**, a project by NACSO partners, WWF and (SIDA) that supports investment into institutional development of NACSO institutions and partners and community conservancies; and
- The **EU Civil Society Governance and Institutional Support to CBNRM** project. The EU will support Namibia's well-established CBNRM programme, with a view to improving its ecosystem services delivery by targeting actions towards climate change resilience (SDG 13) and further contributing to the conservation of Namibia's unique biodiversity (SDG 15).

1.6.3 Coordination with relevant initiatives – ETP

A number of GEF and non-GEF initiatives are relevant to the ETP design of a durable finance / governance mechanism in the ETP. CMAR is coordinating these initiatives. The Pew Charitable Trusts is working collaboratively with CMAR and other partners to track and engage with them. These include:

- **Ongoing PFPs.** There are two ongoing PFP projects in the region: Herencia Colombia (HECO), supported by WWF, and Forever Costa Rica, supported by the Nature Conservancy. This project will draw on lessons

learned from HECO and Forever Costa Rica as well as WWF and TNC expertise in the development of PFPs in the region.

- **Blue Nature Alliance** (a partnership between Pew, Conservation International, and the GEF (“Blue Nature Alliance to expand and improve conservation of 1.25 billion hectares of ocean ecosystems,” GEF ID: 10375)), working at the national level in the ETP countries to support marine protected area creation and management effectiveness.
- **30x30 Assessment, Panama.** An assessment was completed in Panama to develop a plan to achieve 30 by 30. The marine elements of this assessment are informing the work undertaken under the project.
- **Connect to Protect Coalition**, which brings together philanthropies, government, and NGOs that pledged technical and financial assistance to the ETP totalling more than \$150M. The Coalition meets weekly and is committed to ensuring regional coordination.
- **“Beyond 30x30: Securing resilience in the Eastern Tropical Pacific through enhanced transboundary cooperation” (GEF ID: 11267).** Under this GEF-8 project, ETP Governments and Conservation International, will collaborate to enhance conservation and protection throughout the Eastern Tropical Pacific (ETP) region. This \$16 million grant from the GEF will focus on the long-term protection of more than 30 million hectares of ocean, prioritizing transboundary cooperation by: strengthening regional governance; coordinating and growing blue economy investments in the tourism and fishing industries; securing PAs; and enhancing regional connectivity to better conserve migratory species and support collaborative management across the region. The work undertaken in the GEF-7 Enduring Earth project will help to create the enabling conditions for implementation of activities under GEF 8.**PROBLUE.** Coordination and initial support to strengthen the Regional Management of the Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor. The World Bank initiative that is working with CMAR on regional conservation, management, finance and capacity.
- **RE: Wild** is supporting the ETP countries with regional control and surveillance strategy development.
- **Save the Blue 5:** A regional marine conservation program implemented by GIZ, CPPS, CI and Marviva.
- **Pacifico Regional Coordination** works in partnership with CMAR to support capacity and coordination in the region.
- **Defra ETP Regional Program.** This project will be launched in 2024 and will support regional coordination and conservation.
- **UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.** UNESCO is supporting an assessment of enabling conditions for a Transboundary Biosphere Reserve.
- **Pew Bertarelli Ocean Legacy Program** provides support for national marine protected area conservation and management and support for the TBR.
- **MigraMar** is completing assessments on regional swimways, migratory species and conservation needs.
- **Global Fishing Watch.** Working with partners in the region to design a sustainable fisheries strategy.

2 SECTION 2: PROJECT EXECUTION STRATEGY

2.1 Project Objective and Theory of Change

The Project Objective is: *“To catalyze sustainable, long-term investment in globally significant conservation areas in two target countries and enable scaling out of the Enduring Earth approach in additional countries, contributing to 30*30 goals”.*

The generic theory of change of this project (also see Figure 11), the details of which will be different in each country, is that:

IF a **PFP Plan** is developed, including:

- collective agreement amongst the interested and affected parties (governments, NGO partners, philanthropies, trust funds, and civil society partners) on the conservation vision, goals, targets and plans;
- Robust financial models developed based on the agreed Conservation plans, with cost estimates, existing funding sources, financial gaps, and targets;
- Funding sources, instruments, and sustainable financial mechanisms designed for permanent as well as transitional funding (including sinking funds); and
- Institutional arrangements are established, and capacities strengthened, ensuring good governance and oversight (including a capable independent fund administrator with a Board/Oversight Committee and effective and appropriate engagement and representation of donors, government, and non-government agencies); and

that **PFP Plan** is implemented, resulting in a **PFP**, such that:

- adequate one-time funding and commitments for transitional funding are secured; and
- government commits to specific conditions related to the conservation area network in order to receive the funding; with
- monitoring of government performance;

THEN the government/network of conservancies will be incentivized and funded to follow through on its commitments, resulting in the **PFP Outcomes**:

- Strengthened ecological representation in the conservation area network via new PAs and OECMs;
- Enhanced regional transboundary coordination; and
- Strengthened organizational capabilities of government and civil society; resulting in:
- Improved management effectiveness in conservation areas.

And **IF** these **PFP Outcomes** occur, **THEN** the **Ultimate Outcomes** will be:

- Reduced threats to biodiversity within the conservation area network, leading to:
- Enhanced national biodiversity, resulting in enhanced ecosystem services, resulting in enhanced human well-being.

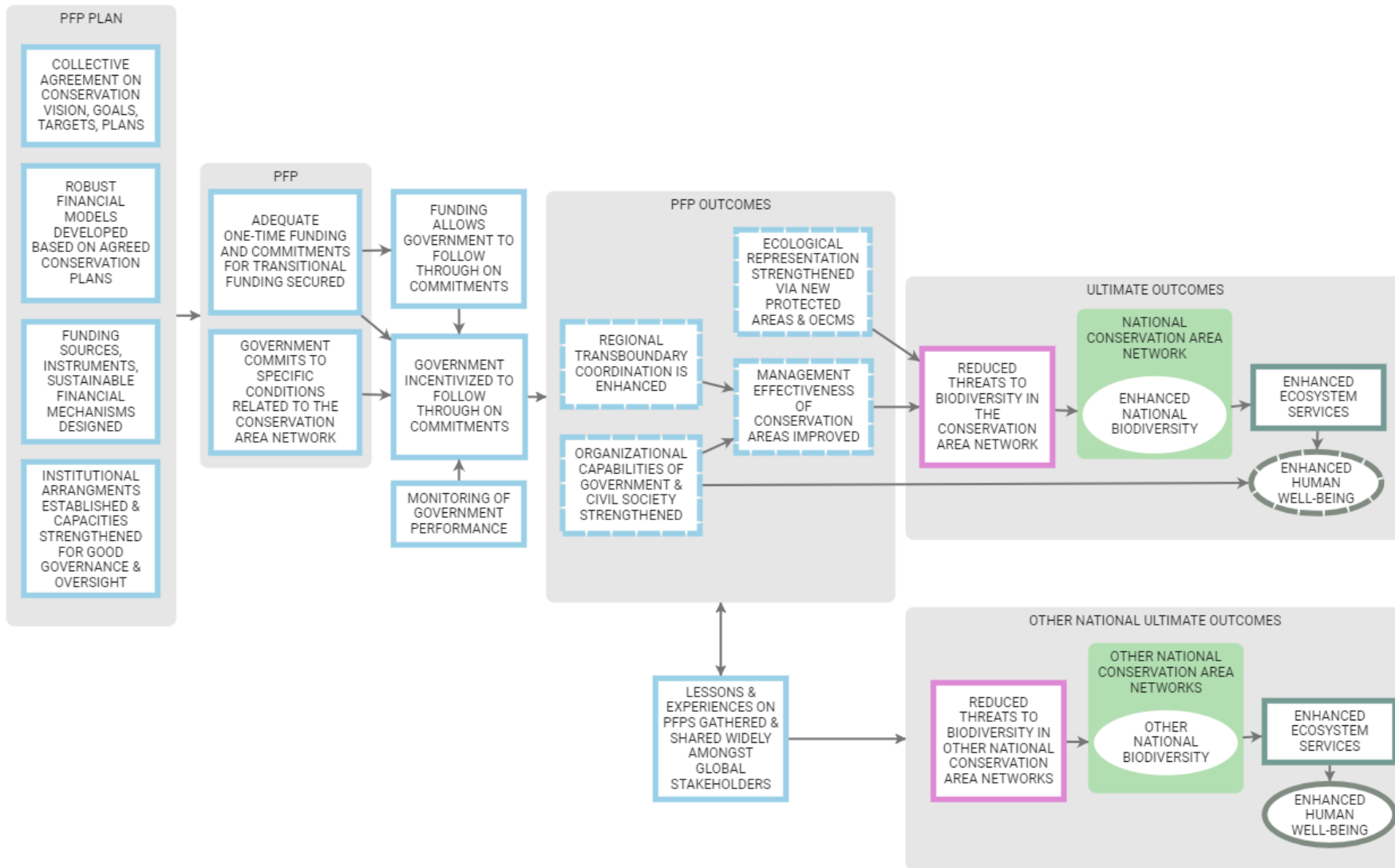


Figure 12: Simplified overview of the Enduring Earth Project's theory of change

GEF investment in each of the target geographies is integral to the achievement of the overall PFP theory of change. The sections below describe the incremental value of the GEF investment in the context of the broader PFP effort.

Gabon

The GEF project will support the delivery of a PFP that will establish both transition and endowment funds. The \$97M Transition Fund (to which the GEF project will contribute US\$3.7M) will cover the costs of establishing new PAs and effective management of the full network of these PAs during a 10-year transition phase. Payments from the transition fund will diminish over time as the Government institutionalizes in-country sustainable finance mechanisms that will help ensure permanence for conservation of 30% of its land, waters, and ocean. The endowment fund—with a target initial capitalization of \$27M (of which GEF will contribute \$5M)—will support capacity-building needs (of both government agencies and local communities) over the long term, maturing only after the end of the 10-year PFP transition phase, while the protected area system operational costs are expected to be covered with revenues generated through the operation of the sustainable finance mechanisms and over time increased government budgetary allocations to the PAs system.

A conservation trust fund (CTF), set to be established by late 2023 as a US-based corporation with a headquarters in Gabon, will manage both the transition (sinking) and endowment funds to give effect to the PFP conservation plan. The Gabon CTF will follow internationally recognized standards and good practices to ensure transparency and good governance of the CTF (including a diverse, independent board of directors, an internationally recognized asset manager, inter alia).

GEF funds will provide critical support across all phases of the PFP. Prior to the PFP single close, when the parties are negotiating the terms of the agreements with respect to the goals of the transaction (the conservation plan, financial plan and responsibilities, etc.), GEF funds will complement co-financed activities to produce studies that inform the PFP closing conditions (regarding the creation of government and community capacities to effectively manage PAs and participate in conservation planning, respectively). GEF funds and project co-finance will also support the design of sustainable finance mechanisms that will help the government of Gabon to meet its commitments for increased government funding for the PA system under the PFP. GEF and co-finance funds will capitalize a transition fund that will cover the gap for establishing new PAs and effective management of the full PA network during a 10-year transition phase. Finally, the GEF contribution of critical seed capital for the endowment fund will help to crowd-in support from other donors to ensure a sustainable flow of resources is available over the long term to support capacity building activities to complement PA investment from other sources (e.g. government budget allocations, sustainable finance mechanisms), and enhance the efficiency of resource use (through improved absorption capacity, better project planning and sequencing, etc.).

Namibia

In Namibia, GEF project funds will contribute almost exclusively to the capitalization of an endowment fund to support the long-term provision of critical extension services to 86 communal conservancies comprising the conservancy system. The critical GEF seed contribution will help to crowd-in support from other donors. The endowment funds will support extension services (elaborated in the extension services plan) in the following themes: (1) business and livelihoods; (2) institutional development and governance; (3) natural resource management; and (4) national support services.

Moreover, as in Gabon, the integration of GEF safeguards standards and procedures into fund operations – and dedicated technical support in the lifetime of the project to ensure trust fund staff understand these standards and procedures and how to implement them effectively -- will ensure that the trust fund continues to adhere to international good practice long after the project cycle.

ETP & Global

Under Component 2 of the project, GEF resources will finance technical assistance to build capacities to replicate and scale the PFP approach globally to advance 30x30 goals. This will include supporting the ETP region to explore regional durable governance and finance mechanisms and, building upon the findings and conclusions of a feasibility assessment, helping to establish enabling conditions for the creation of a durable regional governance and finance mechanisms. At the global level, GEF resources will finance technical assistance that will help build capacities to replicate and scale the PFP approach to advance 30x30 goals. Under Output 2.2, consultancies will evaluate institutional strengths and needs of CTFs in EE portfolio countries and their partner organizations against global practice standards for Conservation Trust Funds, deriving lessons relevant to the development of and implementation of future PFPs. This output will also help to identify and evaluate available financial mechanisms/present options to governments that could be channeled toward PFP conservation objectives (and thus promoting policy coherence) in the future. The report will include an evaluation of potential mechanisms and case studies, with a target audience of national governments. Finally, a series of webinars, case studies and workshops will be developed to present best practices on core competencies for PFP implementation and management of protected and conserved areas, and to facilitate south-south exchange of lessons and experiences among PFP countries. Work under Output 2.2. will be led by the Enduring Earth partnership hub.

2.2 Project Components and Expected Outcomes

Project Description – Summary

Project Objective: To catalyze sustainable, long-term investment in globally significant conservation areas in two target countries and enable scaling out of the Enduring Earth approach in additional countries, contributing to 30*30 goals			
Components & Outcomes	Outputs	GEF Contribution (G = Gabon; N = Namibia)	Co-Finance (G = Gabon; N = Namibia)
Component 1: Deploying Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) for priority conservation areas in Gabon and Namibia		\$18,498,020	\$76,845,370
1.1 Conservation goals, funding package and PFP conditions agreed by key stakeholders (including government, donors, NGO partners) in target countries, for improved financial sustainability and management of priority conservation areas	1.1.1 Closing conditions for PFP met in Gabon and Namibia -Conservation plan (Gabon), extension services plan (Namibia, co-financed) -Community engagement plan, financial model, governance structure, operations manual (co-financed, Gabon and Namibia)	\$380,410 (G)	\$1,200,000 (G) \$4,322,685 (N)
1.2 Enhanced capacity for domestic resource mobilization in Gabon to achieve PFP goals and commitments	1.2.1 Detailed feasibility assessments (political, legal, social, institutional, financial) of priority financial mechanisms, including revenue projections and existence of key enabling conditions (Gabon)	\$600,000(G) \$0 (N)	\$300,000 (G)
1.3 Improved protected area management effectiveness and creation of new conservation areas (Gabon) and improved management effectiveness of conservancies (Namibia) during the transition period	1.3.1 New PAs and OECMs established and designations upgraded (co-financed, Gabon) 1.3.2 Capacities and plans for improved management effectiveness developed (Gabon, Namibia)	\$3,416,225 (G) 401,385 (N)	\$18,000,000 (G) \$4,022,685 (N)
1.4 Endowment funds capitalized to invest in improved management effectiveness in priority conservation areas	1.4.1 Establishment and capitalization of endowment funds in each country for improved management of priority conservation areas	\$5,000,000 (G) \$8,700,000 (N)	\$22,00,000 (G) \$27,000,000 (N)
Component 2: Global Support to Scale Out PFP		\$1,599,464	\$17,401,041
2.1 Enabling conditions assessed and necessary	2.1.1 Viability/feasibility assessment of enabling conditions in the ETP	\$1,199,464	\$2,400,000

conditions developed for a durable financing mechanism in the Eastern Tropical Pacific	2.1.2 Development of necessary capacity and enabling conditions for mechanism readiness in the ETP		
2.2 Improved knowledge base for PFPs among key stakeholders (global)	2.2.1 Assessments of organizational structure and capacities of Conservation Trust Funds and their partner organizations to build lessons for future PFPs 2.2.2 Analytical report disseminated on financial mechanisms/structures for domestic resource mobilization to enable PFP resource flows 2.2.3 Knowledge exchange across the EE portfolio	\$400,000	\$15,001,041
Component 3: Monitoring & Evaluation and Knowledge Management		\$1,460,402	\$0
3.1 Effective project knowledge management and M&E contributes to efficient decision making and adaptive project management	3.1.1 Project lessons and KM products 3.1.2 Project M&E Plan informs adaptive project management	\$1,460,402	\$0
Project Management Costs		\$1,077,894	\$4,712,320
Total		\$22,635,780	\$98,958,731

2.2.1 Detailed description of the Project Components

COMPONENT 1: DEPLOYING PROJECT FINANCE FOR PERMANENCE (PFP) FOR PRIORITY CONSERVATION AREAS IN GABON AND NAMIBIA (GEF CONTRIBUTION: \$19.0M)

Component 1 of this GEF project contributes to **Deploying Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) for priority conservation areas in Gabon and Namibia.**

In Gabon, GEF resources under Component 1 will finance a range of activities integral to the successful execution and implementation of the PFP transaction and maintenance of conservation objectives over the long term across the “pre-close,” implementation/transition, and “steady state” phases. Prior to the PFP single close, when the parties are negotiating the terms of the agreements with respect to the goals of the transaction (the conservation plan, financial plan and responsibilities, etc.), GEF funds will complement co-financed activities to produce studies that inform the PFP closing conditions (regarding the creation of government and community capacities to effectively manage PAs and participate in conservation planning, respectively). GEF funds and project co-finance will also support the design of sustainable finance mechanisms that will help the government of Gabon to meet its commitments for increased government funding for the PA system under the PFP. GEF and co-finance funds will capitalize a transition fund that will cover the gap for establishing new PAs and effectively manage the full PA network during a 10-year transition phase. Finally, the GEF contribution of critical seed capital for the endowment fund will help to crowd-in support from other donors to ensure a sustainable flow of resources is available over the long term to

support capacity building activities to complement PA investment from other sources (e.g. government budget allocations, sustainable finance mechanisms), and enhance the efficiency of resource use (through improved absorption capacity, better project planning and sequencing, etc.).

In Namibia, GEF resources will be used almost exclusively to capitalize an “Extension Services” endowment fund, with some GEF support reserved for enhancing safeguards capacities in the CTF/Fund Manager that will manage the PFP funds. Co-financing will deliver the other core elements of the PFP (e.g. the extension services plan, financial model, operations manual, etc).

Finally, GEF financing for Component 1 activities relating to the capitalization of sinking/transition and endowment funds is tied to GEF-specific disbursement conditions described under output 1.4.1. These disbursement conditions will apply to transition/sinking and endowment funds alike. In the event that disbursement conditions cannot be met, WWF GEF Agency will consult with the GEF to evaluate options (described under Annex 6: Funding status and contingency Plan).

Outcome 1.1 Conservation goals, funding package and PFP conditions agreed by key stakeholders (including government, donors, NGO partners) in target countries, for improved financial sustainability and management of priority conservation areas.

Output 1.1.1 Closing conditions for PFP met in Gabon and Namibia

The key enabling conditions (see Section 1.1.1 above) for the **execution of** PFPs in both Gabon and Namibia will be delivered early in the GEF project period, and largely through direct co-financing. This includes, among other things, the articulation of conservation goals and finalization of the conservation plan (the extension services plan in Namibia); the PFP costing and funding package; the operations manual; as well as the agreement to PFP conditions by key stakeholders (including government, donors, NGO partners) and the single close.

The following activities in Gabon will be directly financed with GEF resources and may inform the conservation plan and other key PFP core elements prior to single close by identifying gaps and areas that the government may wish to improve, and therefore may link to their commitments in the PFP closing conditions. These activities will increase the capacities of key organizations – including government agencies – to fully engage in the design and execution of the PFP.

- Capacity strengthening plan to enable meaningful participation by local communities in conservation planning for 30% of Gabon's lands, freshwater and oceans.
- Detailed institutional capacity evaluations of MINEF, ANPN and DGFAP to determine readiness to effectively manage the funds made available, improve its financial, human resources, operational/logistical and management system, in order to obtain effective results in the field.

In Gabon, activities funded with co-finance include:

- Analysis to define management goals and carry out an analysis of costs, assess funding gaps and develop a detailed financial/cost model.
- Mobilizing counterpart funding to capitalize both the transition and endowment funds.
- Negotiation and signature of a Single Close Agreement between the Government of Gabon (represented by Ministry of Environment and Forests) and donors which will detail the financial and performance commitments of each party, the closing conditions and the milestones for resource disbursement.
- Capacity strengthening plan to address skills and management systems capacity gaps for national agencies to enable effective management of 30% of Gabon's lands, freshwater and oceans.

- The establishment of the Conservation Trust Fund (CF) by the Ministry of Finance in Collaboration with TNC. Governance structure, operating manual and operating standards developed for the CF based on international best practices for conservation funds.

Namibia

Activities funded through co-financing include:

- Assessments of minimum extension services required and review and update of implementation guidance.
- Detailed assessments of existing agencies to determine readiness to effectively manage PFP funds, and to identify measures necessary to improve financial, human resources, operational/logistical and management system to obtain effective results in the field.
- Integration of the following into the PFP Operations manual:
 - Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) developed during PPG for GEF Execution (provided in Annex 7b)
 - GEF safeguard procedures and standards: Environmental & Social Risk Management Framework (Annex 8b); Indigenous Peoples Plan; Community Health, Safety & Security Plan; Community Stakeholder Engagement & Grievance Mechanism

Outcome 1.2 Enhanced capacity for domestic resource mobilization in Gabon to achieve PFP goals and commitments

Mobilizing resources or generating additional funding for improved PAs management (post-close) is a condition of the Gabon PFP and is a critical element to long-term financial sustainability of the protected and conserved areas of Gabon. This will not be a condition of the Namibia PFP and outputs appearing under this outcome will not be produced for Namibia.⁴¹ Under this outcome, with co-finance from a grant from the Bezos Earth Fund, the GEF project will provide support in Gabon to the Ministry of Environment, and other government and non-government partners to develop new options to bring income for management and/or improve existing revenue-generating mechanisms to support management costs (building on analyses undertaken in the PFP planning phase). Activities under this outcome will help ensure that the Government of Gabon can identify viable financing mechanisms which will contribute to reducing the funding gap to meet the needs of effective management in the long term of the marine, terrestrial, and freshwater protected and conserved areas.

This outcome will be realized through a single output, described below.

Output 1.2.1 Detailed feasibility assessments (political, legal, social, institutional, financial) of priority financial mechanisms, including revenue projections and existence of key enabling conditions (Gabon)

Under this output, project resources will be deployed to facilitate the design and implementation of Payment for Ecosystem Services mechanisms in Gabon. This work will be led by the Conservation Trust Fund in Gabon. This will include: Providing specialized consultants to enable the Government of Gabon to assess extractive

⁴¹ In Namibia, funding for conservation that is generated by new or expanded market-based or government-managed sustainable financing mechanisms will likely be allocated directly to conservancies as benefits (as tourism revenue generated in conservancies currently is, acting as an incentive for conservancy members to support conservation), or be allocated to cover the government's costs of managing State Protected Areas i.e. parks, reserves and hot springs (which also need increased sustainable financing). Therefore, a donor-funded endowment is envisioned as the sole sustainable financing mechanism that would cover the cost of extension services (which are essential to achieve biodiversity and community outcomes in Namibia), and an analysis of additional potential sustainable financing mechanisms to cover the cost of extension services is not recommended.

use and cost of securing sustainable natural resource supply, including analysis of existing permits and licenses for natural resource extraction; creating a national prototype for measurement of ecosystem service and extractive use and rates of payment; assessing ecosystem service usage and value at-risk for payors; and developing a payment for ecosystem services value proposition for payors in Gabon.

Through co-financing, targeted, in-depth feasibility studies of sustainable financing mechanisms will be completed to clarify their financial, social, and political viability. Legal advisory services will assess and recommend any necessary modifications to applicable regulatory frameworks to implement the mechanisms. Based on the results of the feasibility analyses, shortlisted mechanisms will be ranked according to their overall feasibility, political support, and financial potential, and will be moved forward with technical assistance for the preparation of an action plan detailing all the activities needed for their implementation. Priority sustainable finance mechanisms under examination include a marine-focused revolving funding mechanism, a mechanism linked to fees charged to tourists linked to the viewing of gorillas and other charismatic species, and a mechanism based on payments for natural resource extraction. These are described at greater length in the baseline section, above.

Co-financing will support the development and implementation of an action plan and guidelines for development of these financial mechanisms, including resources to structure and launch of two or more sustainable finance mechanisms (SFM) developed for Gabon PFP (including communication and advocacy materials) aimed at securing support and commitments to sustainable financial mechanism implementation.

Towards securing government budget and to increase government contributions for the protected and conserved areas, and to garner support for the finance mechanisms, a targeted advocacy strategy and communications materials will be developed and implemented (with project co-financing). The strategy will address key decision makers and stakeholders in Gabon, including, but not limited to, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and Ministry of Finance.

Outcome 1.3 Improved protected area management effectiveness and creation of new conservation areas (Gabon) and improved management effectiveness of conservancies (Namibia) during the transition period

Following the certification of disbursement conditions and the transfer of seed capital to the transition/sinking fund in Gabon and the sinking extension services fund in Namibia, the funds will commence operations. In Gabon, project funds will capitalize both transition (sinking) and endowment funds to support the implementation of the Gabon 30:30:30 Integrated Conservation Plan. The estimated transition fund capitalization is \$124 Million, based on current costing analyses. This figure may be further refined based on developments with the Integrated Conservation Plan, and associated financial models. In Namibia, a \$10M sinking fund (seeded with project co-financing) will support the provision of extension services during the project while the endowment capital matures. The transition funds will drive the delivery of project impacts during the project cycle. This outcome has two outputs.

Output 1.3.1 New PAs and OECMs established, and designations upgraded (Gabon)

Project co-financing will support the following activities to expand the PAs system.

- PFP Stakeholder and local community mapping (building on the GEF stakeholder engagement map developed during PPG) and consultations.
- A spatial science assessment of priority areas for new protection or further research including ecosystem representation, connectivity, species of concern, ecological services co-benefits and land-use.

- Ecological and socio-economic surveys, FPIC consultations and priority landscape mapping for new PAs.
- Legal process, gazettelement, etc.

Output 1.3.2 Capacities and plans for improved management effectiveness developed (Gabon, Namibia)

Gabon

The project will directly contribute to strengthening capacities for ensuring meaningful participation of government and local communities in conservation planning. These activities will align with the Conservation Plan and be led by the CTF in Gabon and funded through the Transition Fund. The GEF-funded activities will likely include (this list will be confirmed once the Conservation Plan is finalized):

- Targeted training packages to develop skills and competencies required by central government personnel for effective management of Gabon's PAs.
- Creation and/or operationalization of a Local Management Advisory Committee (LMAC) for each national park as a participatory management platform for national parks including related FPIC processes.
- Preparation and approval of Land Use Contracts which secure and regulate the customary use rights of local communities to natural resources in PAs.
- Assessment of current conservation management status in 28 existing terrestrial PAs with no or expired management plans and development of site-specific conservation management plans to achieve effective management these PAs. This assessment will complement a series of other studies and services carried out with co-finance.

Activities Funded Through Co-Financing include:

- Capacity screenings of MINEF, ANPN and DGFAP and identification of priority needs.
- Developing a capacity strengthening plan to address skills and management systems capacity gaps for national agencies to enable effective management of 30% of Gabon's lands, freshwater and oceans.
- Targeted training packages to develop skills and competencies required by central government personnel for effective management of Gabon's PAs.
- Assessment of legal framework for a Conservation Fund and related enabling conditions and risks.
- Strengthening legal and regulatory provisions with defined regulations regarding allowable uses in PAs.
- Demarcation of PA boundaries of PAs.
- Development of comprehensive PA management plans with defined objectives and operation annual plans/workplans and PA budgets. Implementation of annual plans, including adequate human resources, infrastructure, equipment and facilities and maintenance thereof.
- Support to surveillance and law enforcement patrols.
- Research and long-term ecological monitoring.
- Specific training for PA staff, such as monitoring of species, local community engagement and consultation, use of technology, etc.

Namibia

In Namibia, project funds will ensure appropriate safeguards capacities are in place for the CTF to manage the sinking fund for extension services in accordance with GEF standards and procedures.

Co-financed Activities Include:

- Provision of ongoing capacity support to local community conservancies through the existing CBNRM programme.
- An interim, \$10M sinking fund (funded through co-finance) will fund the provision of critical extension services for improved effective management of the conservancies.
- The development and implementation of a capacity support plan for the appointed fund manager. The plan will provide for safeguards trainings and capacities to ensure compliance with GEF safeguards standards and procedures.

Outcome 1.4: Endowment funds capitalized to invest in improved management effectiveness in priority conservation areas

The project will provide seed capital for endowment funds in both Gabon and Namibia through one Output. The funds will flow from the GEF Agency to each of these funds after disbursement conditions are met (as described below). The endowment funds will be utilized to help realize the goals and targets specified in the Conservation Plans (Extension Services Plan in Namibia). In Gabon, the endowment funds will be directed specifically toward capacity building activities. Disbursements from the endowment funds will only flow *after* the close of this GEF-7 project in Gabon (i.e., after the 10-year transition phase is complete) and after a five-year interim period in Namibia in which extension services will be funded through a sinking fund.

Output 1.4.1 Establishment and capitalization of endowment funds in each country for improved management of priority conservation areas

Gabon

In Gabon, the endowment fund has a target initial capitalization of \$27M (of which GEF will contribute \$5M) and will be dedicated to supporting on-going capacity building after the transition period. The trust fund's operating manual will contain a program strategy for the endowment which will describe how it will function, including eligible expenditures, eligible grantees, disbursement procedures, rules and procedures regarding safeguards, *inter alia*. The GEF contribution to the seed capital for the endowment fund will not be transferred to the trust fund until the WWF GEF Agency has reviewed and provided no objection on a clear programming strategy.

The endowment will fund activities such as:

- Management effectiveness tools training for PA agencies and staff (such as METT) and implementation of the tools in PA on a regular basis.
- Specific training for PA staff, such as monitoring of species, local community engagement and consultation, use of technology, etc.
- Project management training for PA agencies and staff, local NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs).
- Project design and proposal writing for local NGOs and CBOs, including intervention logic, identification of sound indicators, costing and financial planning, baseline setting, risk analysis, etc.
- Project implementation practices for local NGOs and CBOs, including financial management and reporting, monitoring and evaluation of execution and biodiversity indicators, environmental and social compliance, communication.

- Organizational development (including formalization) of local NGOs and CBOs, their institutional structuring, governance and operation procedures.
- Financial management and sustainability for local NGOs and CBOs.
- Participatory monitoring for community groups, local NGOs and CBOs, including citizen science.
- Women, youth and other vulnerable groups education and empowerment.

Disbursements would begin after the transition period, and the \$27M endowment is projected to generate approximately \$3M / annum after the ten-year PFP transition period.

Namibia

The extension services plan will describe the range of activities eligible for funding from the endowment, the processes for accessing or disbursing funding, etc. The GEF contribution to the seed capital for the endowment fund will only be transferred to the trust fund if the WWF GEF Agency has reviewed and provided no objection on the extension services plan. Covered extension services will fall into one of four workstreams: (1) business and livelihoods; (2) institutional development and governance; (3) natural resource management; and (4) national support services.

Business and livelihoods support (focusing on capacity building, not seed capital for businesses) will help emerging entrepreneurs to learn basic business concepts (markets, competition, supply and demand, business productivity, pricing), how to assess business opportunities, and business and financial planning. This support will, among other things, help conservancies secure benefits from joint ventures with the private sector.

Institutional Development and Governance. Financial support will contribute to compliant, transparent, and effective conservancy governance and management and may encompass: legal and policy support, conservancy establishment, stakeholder engagement, conflict resolution, learning exchanges, training on: constitution implementation and amendments, Annual General Meetings, financial management and reporting, advocacy, support for training of managers, etc.

Natural Resource Management, to include: Mapping, management plans, quota setting, hunting concessions, harvesting systems, human wildlife conflict mitigation, fire management, anti-poaching systems, game censuses and introductions, monitoring systems, law enforcement support, etc.

National Support Services. National support services will provide an enabling framework at a national level to ensure that the different thematic technical services will be effective in achieving their intended purpose in an efficient manner. These services may include (1) Support in reviewing and developing policies and legislation as needed to fit the current and evolving operational context (2) Support in aligning Namibia's development plans with the needs of community conservancies (3) Facilitating the development and implementation of a CBNRM advocacy strategy to enhance community voices so that their rights are fully devolved, and they take ownership. 4) Coordinating / facilitating synergies in the development and implementation of environmental and social safeguards by different service providers at all levels; 5) Facilitating the development and implementation of a national CBNRM Communications Strategy, including preparation and publication of the annual State of Community Conservation Report; 6) Supporting continued operationalization of a national CBNRM coordination and representational service to maintain synergy and collaboration across thematic and geographic focal areas, and effective representation of Namibian CBNRM experiences in relevant external fora i.e. Sustain the core/foundational structure of NACSO secretariat as a

critical national level service (core staff structure plus M&E). The key stakeholders in this service include conservancies, MEFT, NACSO, relevant line ministries, CBOs, civil society, experts/consultants, the Legal Assistance Centre, and tertiary institutions.

Disbursement Conditions

In contrast with the PFP closing conditions, which are one-time conditions that must be met before closing the design phase and launching the implementation phase, disbursement conditions are milestones that must be met during PFP implementation for donor funding to be disbursed in one or multiple tranches. They are an important way in which the government, donors and other key stakeholders ensure that the initiative stays true to its design over time during implementation.⁴²

GEF funds will be disbursed in support of the PFPs in Gabon and Namibia in multiple tranches. One tranche will transfer the GEF contribution to the transition fund to the CTF in Gabon. A further two tranches for each of the endowment funds will follow. Funds will not be disbursed until all conditions with respect to each of the tranches have been met for both a) the transition and endowment funds in Gabon; and b) the endowment funds in Namibia. The call for the disbursement of funds should come from TNC as lead Executing Agency for the global project. The WWF GEF Agency will then assess and determine when compliance with disbursement conditions has been achieved and thereafter disburse the requested funds.

Note that in the event that either the Namibia or Gabon PFP deal closings are postponed, or that insufficient funds have been raised, or that the disbursement conditions cannot be met, the WWF GEF Agency will consult with the GEF Secretariat to evaluate contingency plans. Contingencies are detailed for each geography in Annex 6.

Also note that GEF safeguards rule and standards should apply to the operation of both transition/sinking and endowment funds in both Gabon and Namibia.

GEF Disbursement Conditions will include, at a minimum, the following:

Gabon Transition Fund Tranche (Note that application for transfer of transition funds and the first tranche of endowment funds may occur at the same time)

- Single close is complete.
- The fund administrator/CTF is assessed to have strong governance arrangements, as reflected in legal instruments, including: bylaws, articles of incorporation (or their equivalent), and operations manuals, as well as donor financing agreements, conflicts of interest policies, and investment policies. Governance arrangements are assumed to be strong if they comply with the Conservation Finance Alliance's Practice Standards for Conservation Trust Funds. Critical, non-negotiable characteristics include: independence from government (i.e. a Board of Directors with a non-governmental majority) and a quorum provision that ensures that the non-governmental character of fund operations is preserved in decision-making. Directors should be selected on the basis of their qualifications to perform the role.
- WWF GEF and GEF Secretariat safeguards standards and policies are reflected in the governing instruments of the fund administrator / CTF (this should include mentions to all applicable safeguards activities, such as ESS screenings at the project level; embedding of ESS management and

⁴² Source: [Securing Sustainable Financing for Conservation Areas](#)

oversight procedures within the trust manager for each country; development of management plans as needed; and stakeholder engagement, among others). These standards and procedures should be observed for as long as the fund remains in operation, even after this GEF project has ended. These safeguards should apply to PFP transition/sinking and endowment funds alike.

- An internationally recognized asset manager should be in place, contracted per an approved competitive tender process.
- The CTF/fund administrators must clear a due diligence review administered by the WWF GEF Agency.
- A staffing plan for the fund administrator/CTF is in place, and has received WWF GEF Agency no objection. The staffing plan should provide for a permanent safeguards position within the national Namibia and Gabon CTFs to ensure compliance to WWF GEF Agency and GEF Secretariat standards and procedures concerning safeguards. This capacity should remain in place on a permanent basis, even after the close of the GEF project, to ensure adherence to international good practices.
- Operations manuals describing how funds will be used are in place, and have received WWF GEF Agency no objection. The operations manual should include descriptions of eligible expenditures, eligible grantees, disbursement procedures, inter alia.
- METT baselines have been completed for all eligible beneficiary sites.⁴³

Endowment Funds, First Tranche (one half of the GEF funds earmarked for the endowment fund in each of Gabon and Namibia)

- Same as above.

Second Tranche (balance of GEF funds earmarked for the transition / endowment funds)

- Contributions to the endowments and transition funds from other donors (in line with the commitments at single close and in the financial models) have been disbursed to the CTFs / fund administrators in both geographies.

COMPONENT 2: GLOBAL SUPPORT TO SCALE OUT PFP (GEF CONTRIBUTION: \$1,599,463.80)

The focus of Component 2 is **Global Support to scale out PFP**. Under this Component, the project will invest in technical assistance to build capacities to replicate and scale the PFP approach globally to advance 30x30 goals. This will include supporting the ETP region to explore regional durable governance and finance mechanisms and establish its enabling conditions. Globally, the project will strengthen capacities within national institutions, including Conservation Trust Funds (CTFs) and others; analyze innovative mechanisms to mobilize capital to increase the level of funding available to achieve conservation goal(s); and facilitate south-south sharing of lessons across the Enduring Earth portfolio.

Outcome 2.1 Enabling conditions assessed and necessary conditions developed for a durable finance mechanism in the Eastern Tropical Pacific (ETP) [GEF Contribution: \$1,199,464]

⁴³ TNC has indicated that it will undertake to complete METT baselines for all protected and conservation areas that may benefit from the PFP in Gabon by December 2023. In Namibia, baselines for 86 community conservancies were established during project preparation. These appear in Annex 3a.

Under this outcome, the project will build upon baseline initiatives to finalize assessing the necessary conditions for establishing durable finance mechanisms in the ETP, engaging governments in the identification of mechanisms and the process of co-design. An indicative outline of the planning process appears in Figure 12.

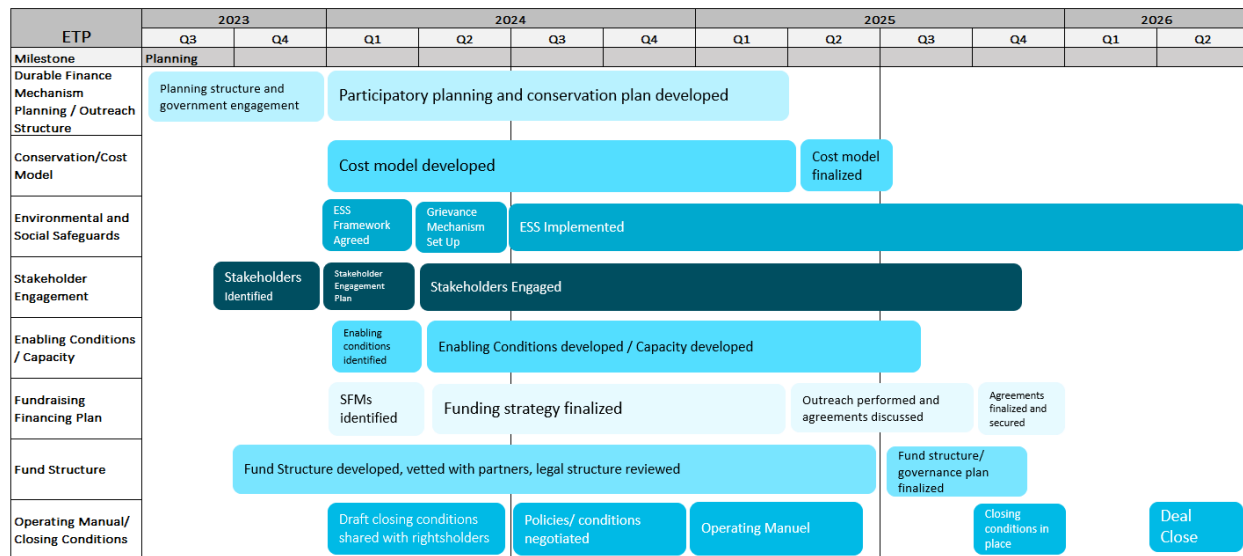


Figure 13: Indicative outline of the planning process

Output 2.1.1: Viability/feasibility assessment and workplan for the enabling conditions of the financial mechanism in the ETP

Under Output 2.1.1, a series of consultations, workshops, and consultancies will be undertaken to co-develop (with the ETP governments and other key stakeholders) an in-depth feasibility assessment of a durable finance and governance mechanism for the ETP region. Work under this output will yield a workplan for Output 2.1.2.

Activities include:

- Completion of a feasibility assessment addressing overall vision and scope of a durable financing mechanism, including community development needs and users, and regional capacity needs. The feasibility assessment and planning process will include consultation on possible governance structures, regional conservation and finance mechanisms, and organizational capacity building

Output 2.1.2 Development of necessary capacity and enabling conditions for mechanism readiness in the ETP)

This output will help deliver enabling conditions for a financial mechanism, as defined by Output 2.1.1, in the ETP .

Activities include:

- Support and Build Capacity for Environmental and Social Safeguards, including: a) ESS Technical Support and Expertise; and b) Monitoring Grievance Mechanism
- Develop the Operating Manual for a conservation trust fund concerning the use of resources to be mobilized.
- Carry out stakeholder consultations and validate the Regional Conservation Plan.

- Facilitate Government engagement and discussions and support policy harmonization where required.
- Support capacity development of CMAR to ensure readiness for the development of enhanced governance, operations and regional finance in the ETP.

Co-financed Activities

Co-financed activities will include: developing, through a participatory approach, a conservation plan; a cost model; and a funding strategy, including an analysis of possible SFMs that will support the achievement of conservation goals.

Outcome 2.2 Improved knowledge base for PFPs among key stakeholders (global)

This Outcome will produce important knowledge products and facilitate exchange of lessons towards developing the capacity of key stakeholders to engage across the PFP process, including country governments, conservation trust funds, other in-country stakeholders, donors and NGOs.

Output 2.2.1 Assessments of organizational structure and capacity of Conservation Trust Funds and their partner organizations to build lessons for future PFPs

CTFs are integral partners to successful PFP transactions that serve as fiduciaries for financial resources supporting the PFP agreements, including transition funds, revolving funds and endowment funds. Consultancies under this output will evaluate institutional strengths and needs of CTFs in EE portfolio countries and their partner organizations against global practice standards. The Practice Standards⁴⁴ are a globally recognized set of evidence-based norms, covering core areas considered essential to the development of CTF's as effective institutions: governance (composition, functions and responsibilities of a CTF governing body or bodies and the content and role of governing documents); operations (strategic planning, grant-making; interactions with government, and partnerships with other organizations); Administration (organizational roles and responsibilities, operations manuals, use of financial resources and auditing); Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation (conservation impact monitoring; technical and financial reporting to donors; and dissemination of results); Asset Management (investment strategies, fiduciary responsibilities); and Resource Mobilization. Project resources will support assessments of CTFs across the EE portfolio to develop lessons for future PFPs.

Activities will include:

- Assessing the organizational structure and capacities of Conservation Trust Funds and their partner organizations to build lessons for future PFPs.
- Designing and disseminating the final CTF assessment product through print and digital media.
- Convening capacity building workshops benefitting up to 60 people for at least 15 deal teams from 15 nations to strengthen skills and knowledge in CTF and partner organizational structures and capacities to build lessons for future PFPs.

These activities will be partly funded with project co-financing.

⁴⁴ See <https://www.conservationfinancealliance.org/practice-standards-for-ctfs>

Output 2.2.2 Analytical report disseminated on financial mechanisms/structures for domestic resource mobilization to enable PFP resource flows

This output will fund consultancies to identify and evaluate available financial mechanisms/structure options to governments that could be channeled toward conservation objectives (promoting policy coherence). The report will include evaluation of potential mechanisms and case studies, with a target audience of national governments.

Activities include:

- Developing a report on financial mechanisms/structures for domestic resource mobilization to support PFPs
- Designing and disseminating the final report on financial mechanisms/structures, including tools and frameworks for adoption of lessons learned through print and digital media
- Convening capacity building workshops benefitting up to 60 people for at least 15 deal teams from 15 nations to strengthen skills and knowledge on financial mechanisms/structures for domestic resource mobilization

These activities will be partly funded with project co-financing.

Output 2.2.3 Knowledge exchange across the EE portfolio

Under Output 2.2.3, a series of analyses, webinars, case studies and workshops will be developed to present best practices on core competencies for PFP implementation and management of protected and conserved areas, and to facilitate south-south exchange of lessons and experiences among PFP countries.

Activities:

- Convene two meetings of the Global PFP Network to effectively engage and strengthen the collaboration between PFPs in the Enduring Earth portfolio and PFPs created before 2022. The meetings will benefit up to 63 people from 21 different nations and promote peer-to-peer learning, knowledge-sharing, and joint problem-solving.
- Facilitate three exchanges of experiences between PFPs directly benefitting at least 30 people from 6 different nations.
- Systematize at least two of the exchanges are systematized, including the identification of lessons learned and production of case studies for replication.

These activities will be partly funded with project co-financing.

COMPONENT 3: MONITORING & EVALUATION AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT (GEF CONTRIBUTION: \$957,500)

The project will ensure effective monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management activities and training on key topic areas and will strengthen national and regional/global coordination among EE coalition members and stakeholders.

Outcome 3.1 Effective project knowledge management and M&E contributes to efficient decision making and adaptive project management

Under Outcome 3.1, activities will facilitate sharing of project level knowledge and lessons, and a monitoring and evaluation system will be designed and implemented during the project implementation.

Output 3.1.1 Project lessons and KM products

Under this output, networks will be established to facilitate knowledge sharing and information dissemination among project partners, especially PAs and conservancy/protected area managers in Gabon and Namibia, and project briefs and lessons will be disseminated.

Knowledge management is key for Enduring Earth's theory of acceleration, ensuring that information about overarching themes of relevance to the PFPs —such as community economic development, sustainable finance, best practices for conservation trust funds, and potential economic solutions such as those relating to ecotourism and sustainable fisheries—are shared across geographies. EE's multi-institutional structure allows for the broad sharing of knowledge and resources across member organizations and through their respective networks. The Enduring Earth partnership hub has implemented several Knowledge Management activities to date, including webinars to share best practices and key learnings with a wide audience, and Communities of Practice to encourage more targeted knowledge-sharing among current PFP practitioners. These activities will continue to inform current and future Enduring Earth PFPs.

Strategic communications activities will be covered through Enduring Earth partner funding and managed by the EE Hub under project Component 2.2 "Improved knowledge base for PFPs among key stakeholders (global)". Through Component 2.2, the project will produce assessments of trust funds to build lessons for future PFPs, as well as analyses of sustainable finance mechanisms, including those that may enhance domestic resource mobilization efforts and relieve or resolve perverse subsidies/promote policy coherence. These products may be used to facilitate future PFP initiatives, and will be shared broadly, particularly, as noted in sub-Component 2.2.3 across the EE portfolio of countries.

Output 3.1.2 Project M&E Plan informs adaptive project management

Project level monitoring and evaluation will be funded under this output to track the project's progress and impact. The project results, corresponding indicators, and targets (including GEF core indicators) in the Project Results Framework will be monitored annually and evaluated periodically during project implementation. M&E processes and activities are described in detail under Section 2.7.

Knowledge Management and Communications Strategy

1. Utilizing available knowledge to apply best practices and lessons learned is important during both project design and implementation to achieving greater, more efficient, and sustainable conservation results. Sharing this information is then useful to other projects and initiatives to increase effectiveness, efficiency, and impact among the conservation community. Knowledge exchange is tracked and budgeted in Component 3 of the Results Framework.

2. Prior to finalizing the project design, existing lessons and best practices were gathered primarily from the PFP Guide "Securing Sustainable Financing for Conservation Areas: A Guide to Project Finance for

Permanence,” (Amazon Sustainable Landscapes Programme, WWF. November 2021) and incorporated into the project design. Please reference Section 3.8 to review the lessons and understand how they were utilized.

3. During project implementation and before the end of each project year, knowledge produced by or available to the Project will be consolidated from project stakeholders and exchanged with other relevant projects, programs, and initiatives (including the Enduring Earth partnership and its communities of practice) by the project management unit (PMU). This collected knowledge will be analyzed alongside project monitoring and evaluation data at the annual Adaptive Management meeting. It is at this meeting that the theory of change will be reviewed, and modifications to the annual work plan and budget will be drafted. Making adjustments based on what works and what does not work should improve project results.

4. Lessons learned and best practices from the Project will be captured from field staff and reports, and from stakeholders at the annual Adaptive Management meeting. External evaluations will also provide lessons and recommendations. These available lessons and best practices will then be documented in the semi-annual project progress reports (PPR) (with best practices annexed to the report).

5. The PMU Project Manager will ensure that relevant stakeholders, such as OFPs, the PSC, and project partners, among other relevant actors are informed of, and, where applicable, invited to the Adaptive Management meeting, formal evaluations, and any documentation on lessons and best practices. These partners will receive all related documents, such as Evaluation Reports and knowledge outputs developed by the project (e.g., white papers, consultant reports on sustainable financing mechanisms, etc.) to ensure the sharing of important knowledge products.

6. A strategic communications plan has been budgeted for this Project and will include the following knowledge and communication products:

Reports:

Report on financial mechanisms/structures for domestic resource mobilisation to support PFPs.

The Project will meet the reporting requirements of the WWF GEF Agency, producing the following reports: Inception Report, Quarterly Field Report, Quarterly Financial Reports, WWF Project Progress Report (PPR) with RF and workplan tracking, GEF METT Tracking Tool (note in Gabon, there is a preference for IMET), Mid-term Project Evaluation Report, and Terminal Project Evaluation Report

M&E and knowledge management

Two meetings of the Global PFP Network will be held to effectively engage and strengthen the collaboration between PFPs in the Enduring Earth portfolio and PFPs created before 2022. The meetings benefit up to 63 people from 21 different nations and promote peer-to-peer learning, knowledge-sharing, and joint problem-solving.

Three exchanges of experiences between PFPs developed directly benefitting at least 30 people from 6 different nations.

7. All knowledge and communication products produced by the Project will be shared on a project-specific website. This will allow a wider audience to gain knowledge from the Project. In addition, all knowledge and communication products produced by the Project will be shared by the PMU Monitoring

and Evaluation Officer with stakeholders directly through e-mail. If Enduring Earth Partners participating in the project agree, documents related to lessons learned may be posted publicly on a website preferred by the GEF.

8. The Project has budgeted to convene at least three exchanges (as per the bullets above), at least two of these exchanges will be systematized by a consultant, including the identification of lessons learned and production of case studies for replication.

2.3 Institutional Arrangements

Institutional arrangements are designed to allow for efficient and effective delivery of the project at multiple levels, while aligning with the PFP governance arrangements, to allow for continuity in management and coordination. An illustrated overview of the institutional arrangements is provided in Figure 13 and described in further detail in the subsequent sub-sections.

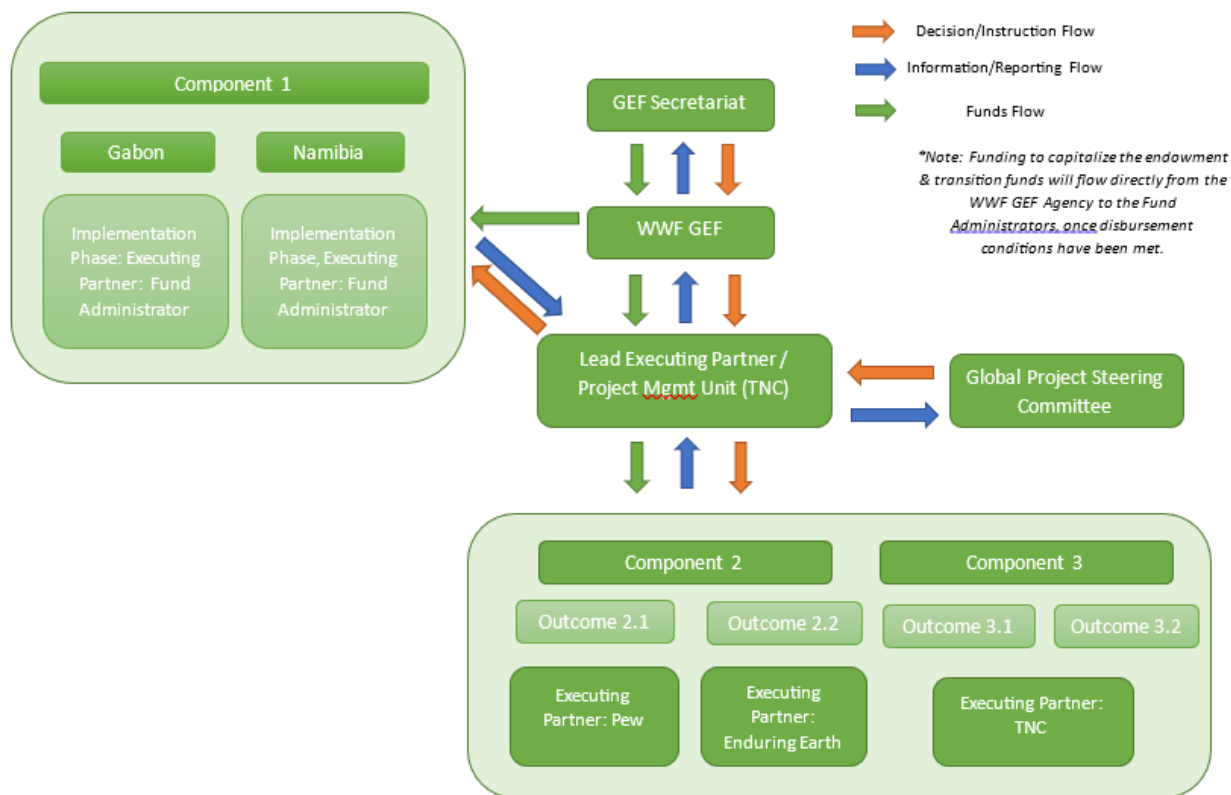


Figure 14: Institutional Arrangements

2.3.1 WWF GEF Agency

WWF-US is the GEF Project Agency and will: (i) provide consistent and regular project oversight to ensure the achievement of the Project Objective and Results as elaborated in the Results Framework, and provide other assistance upon request of the Executing Agency; (ii) liaise between the project and the GEF Secretariat and provide project reporting to the GEF Sec; (iii) ensure that both GEF and WWF policy requirements and standards are applied and met (i.e. reporting obligations, technical, fiduciary, environmental and social

safeguards, monitoring and evaluation-M&E); (iv) approve work-plans and budget revisions, certify fund availability and transfer funds and ensure proper use of GEF funds; (v) organize the final evaluation and review project audits; (vi) certify project operational and financial completion; and (vii) arbitrate and ensure resolution of any conflicts during implementation that cannot be resolved in first instance by the EA.

In addition, the WWF GEF Agency will disburse the GEF contribution to capitalization of the endowment funds to the Namibia and Gabon CTF's upon compliance with disbursement conditions.

2.3.2 Lead Executing Agency – The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is the Lead Executing Agency. TNC is a member of the Enduring Earth partnership and has a successful record of leveraging private investment and innovative financing for conservation, as well as global reach and experience in the themes of spatial planning and Indigenous people-led conservation.

2.3.2.1 Project Management Unit

A Project Management Unit will be located within TNC and be responsible for the following functions and roles:

Project Manager Role (100% time): Responsible for the day-to-day coordination and oversight of the project, ensuring that the project realizes its overall goals and objectives in accordance with the approved project document, work plans and budgets. This includes supervision of Project Management Unit (PMU) staff, coordination of agreements, supervision and monitoring of project executing partners, and day-to-day management of project activities as well as maintaining collaborative relationships with project partners. The Project Manager will liaise with the WWF GEF Agency on behalf of the Project Management Unit.

Grants Specialist (75% time): Under the direction of the Project Manager, the Grants Specialist will be responsible for the management of all financial and operational aspects of the Project including project budgeting, contracting, financial tracking and reporting, and administrative functions. The Grants Specialist provides financial and administrative assistance to, and oversight of, program staff and grantees to ensure that budgets and agreements are handled in accordance with WWF policies, procedures, systems, and donor requirements. The Grants Specialist will have oversight of budgets across all partners in collaboration with the Project Manager. In addition, TNC is co-financing 0.55 FTE of a Grants Specialist to assist the Grants Specialist in due diligence, subgrant cash flow management, and tracking and reporting co-finance.

Monitoring and Evaluation Officer Role (100% time): Under the direction of the Project Manager, the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer will be responsible for M&E activities including tracking and reporting project implementation against project work plans, reporting progress towards outcome indicator targets. The M&E Officer will coordinate M&E processes across project partners, ensure a shared understanding of M&E requirements, ensure timely collection of information, prepare and submit progress reports, and ensure that M&E supports learning and adaptive management. In addition, the M&E officer will oversee the work of safeguards/gender staff working in the CTFs/Fund Administrators in Gabon and Namibia respectively. This will ensure proper implementation, M&E, and reporting on safeguards and gender progress. The M&E Officer will maintain the overall M&E system of the project and will assist the Project Manager in preparing the 6-month and 12-month technical progress reports, and contributing technical updates on progress and challenges in the quarterly financial reports, to WWF GEF. Through the collection and analysis of timely data inputs from project partners (gender disaggregated as required in the results framework), the M&E Officer is responsible for reflecting on and adapting the project theory of change. Relatedly, this individual will also ensure that activities result in the achievement of intended outputs and

outcomes in a cost effective and timely manner, as well as contributing to project team discussions of potential opportunities for adaptive management. The M&E officer is also responsible for ensuring that the implementation of the safeguard requirements, stakeholder engagement plans, and gender action plan is reported on and any challenges that may arise during implementation are brought to the attention of the PMU and Global Steering Committee.

2.3.3 The Global Project Steering Committee

The Global Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be the highest decision-making authority for the project, responsible for advising on the strategic direction of the project, and approving annual work plans and budgets.. The PSC will be responsible for strategic guidance and approving any major changes that may be needed in the strategic plans or execution of the project, informed by the project monitoring and evaluation outcomes, and ensuring alignment with the ProDoc and national priorities and policies.

The PSC will meet at least twice a year (with at least one face to face meeting during the life of the project). Members of the PSC are likely to include representation from the Governments of Gabon and Namibia, TNC, WWF, PEW, and others determined critical to helping guide the project to success. As the Secretary of the PSC, the Project Manager prepares meeting minutes and maintains PSC records. The Project Manager will also take responsibility for communicating outcomes and decision made by the Global Steering Committee to the Component level Partners. PSC Chair and Vice-chair positions will be filled by PSC members on an annual rotative basis. During the first year, the PSC will be chaired by TNC.

2.3.4 Executing Partners

The project will be implemented through Executing Partners. For Component 1, in Gabon, management and coordination of the Project will take place through a Sub-PMU (TNC) until single close is realized. The Sub-PMU's responsibilities will transfer in full to the Fund Administrator following single close and will be maintained throughout the course of the project and the implementation of the PFP. For Component 2, implementation of Outcome 2.1 will be under the responsibility of The Pew Charitable Trusts, while Outcome 2.2 will be managed by the Enduring Earth Hub. Outcome 3 will fall under the responsibility of the Executing Agency, TNC. Further detail on management and coordination at Component level is provided below.

2.3.4.1 Institutional Arrangements - Component 1

Institutional Arrangements – Gabon

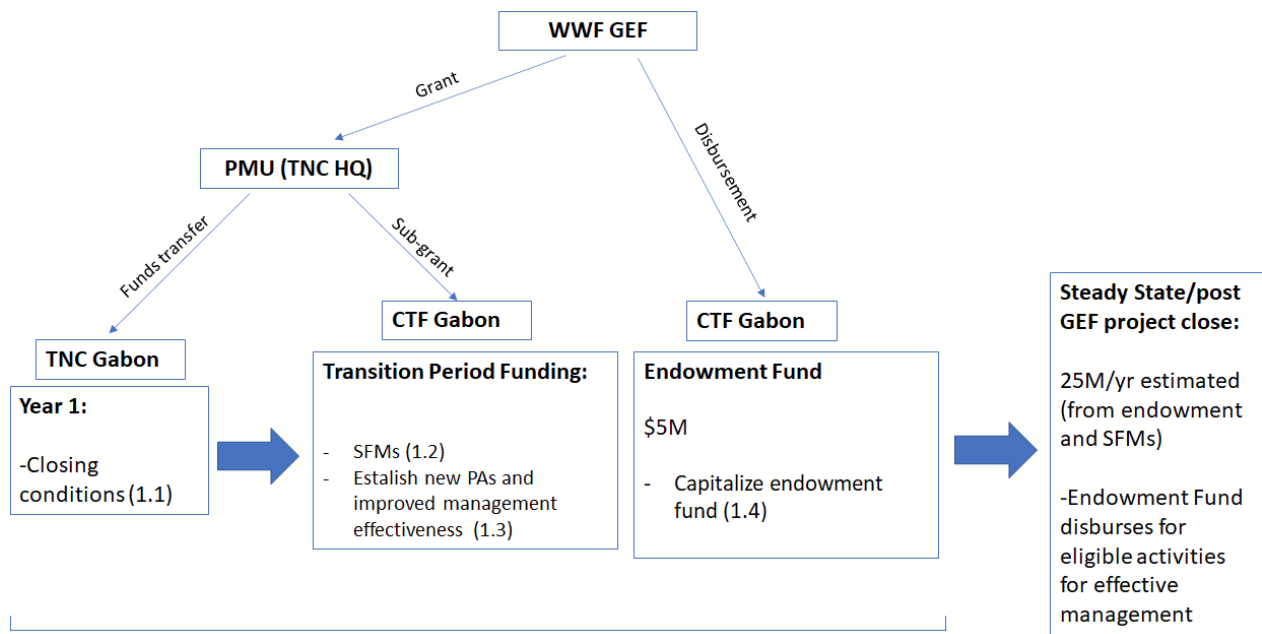


Figure 15: Institutional Arrangements, Gabon

GEF Project Start – Pre-Single Close

From GEF project start up until PFP Single Close, activities will focus on delivering the closing conditions and building capacity of the Conservation Trust Fund (CTF) in Gabon, which should be set up by late 2024. During this period, this work (outcome 1.1) will be carried out by TNC in collaboration with the Government of Gabon, and with strategic guidance from the EE Management Team (through the Enduring Earth stage-gating process). The PMU will transfer GEF project budget to TNC Gabon to support the activities pre-close, as described in the strategy section. This support will be provided through existing TNC staff.

At the national level, the Gabon PFP Steering Committee will be established as responsible for steering and providing strategic guidance to the PFP planning processes, ensuring adherence to PFP requirements and best practice as well as ensuring that GEF funding is utilized in accordance with approved workplans and budgets and WWF GEF Agency policies and procedures. This independent committee will also be responsible for championing the PFP planning process (which includes the GEF project), and supporting the Sub-PMU team to address challenges and barriers as they arise. The committee will comprise of TNC Global, Africa region, and Gabon leadership, as well as senior leadership from EE partners (WWF-US, Zomalab) and will convene at least every 3-months up until single close. Once a single close is reached, these responsibilities will be transferred to the CTF's PFP Committee, under the CTF's Board of Directors (i.e. governance of the PFP that ensures program effectiveness). See Figure 11 below for an overview of the CTF's indicative governance structure.

PFP Implementation (Transition Period) Phase

The Gabon Conservation Trust Fund is set to be established in late 2024 as a US-based corporation with a headquarters in Gabon and will assume the role of Fund Administrator for the PFP, including the transition period funding, following single close. At that time the delivery of transition period activities of the GEF project (outcomes 1.2 and 1.3) will be under the responsibility of the CTF. TNC will sub-grant the associated funding to the CTF.

Disbursement conditions will be set by WWF GEF for direct disbursement of the \$5M GEF funding to the CTF for the endowment fund (see description of outcome 1.4 for a list of the conditions), in two tranches. The first tranche conditions should be met by single close, including: baseline METT scores, eligible expenditures defined, safeguards plans in place, agreed governance structure, selection of asset manager, and operation manual. The second tranche condition is that the other donors have paid into the endowment fund. TNC and Government will endeavor to reach the disbursement conditions early in the GEF project period, ideally in Year 1.

The CTF will manage transition (sinking) and endowment funds to give effect to the conservation plan/deliver project results. The Gabon CTF will follow internationally recognized standards and good practices to ensure transparency and good governance of the CTF (incl. a diverse, independent board of directors, an internationally recognized asset manager, inter alia). Careful staffing arrangements and capacity support from TNC and project oversight from the WWF GEF Agency will ensure that the new fund is able to manage GEF funding, including adhering to policies and procedures with respect to safeguards. The following staff are anticipated as part of the Gabon CTF: CEO, Program Manager, Financial Manager, Safeguards Officer, M&E Officer, Communication Officer, Administrative Assistant, and a Driver. GEF funding will in part support the financial manager/officer, an M&E officer, and a Safeguards officer in the CTF, who will ensure management and reporting against the GEF funding in the transition fund and the endowment fund. The safeguards specialist that will be hired within each CTF will have gender expertise to ensure proper implementation, M&E, and reporting on gender progress. Gender expertise should be an integral part of the terms of reference for the positions. PFP operating manuals will define operating rules and processes, and specify responsibilities. A draft is under development and should be completed in late 2023.

Oversight of the Conservation Trust Fund will fall under the CTF Board of Directors (BoD). The BoD will be composed of government (non-majority) and non-government (majority) representatives of Gabon and non-Gabon nationality. The Board will have the authority to convene technical committees and subcommittees to provide targeted subject matter and management expertise. Responsibilities of the Board will include oversight of the management of the PFP for Gabon, including financial management, monitoring and implementation activities, during the 10-year PFP implementation phase. The CTF BoD will oversee the organization's functioning and growth, in keeping with its fiduciary responsibilities. The CTF BoD will convene on a regular basis, with frequency determined in consultation with GoG and considering experiences of other CTF BoDs and good practice. The CTF BoD will communicate its activities and decisions horizontally and vertically in a manner that will be determined in consultation with GoG and considering experiences of other PFP CTF BoDs. An Executive Committee will be established, led by an Executive Director or similar position. Technical Committees will be focused on different program accounts (including, for example, an ocean conservation sustainable financial mechanism committee for the marine program, and PFP technical committee for terrestrial and freshwater program). The Technical Committees will guide strategy and operational procedures specific to each program account. Additional subcommittees of subject matter experts may advise and support other management and thematic areas of the CTF's responsibilities. Additional committees to be established include Finance & Investment, Governance and Nominating Committees. An illustration of the indicative structure of the Gabon CTF appears in Figure 11.

Further details regarding the composition, governance, convening cycle and communications approach are being refined and will be approved by the GoG.

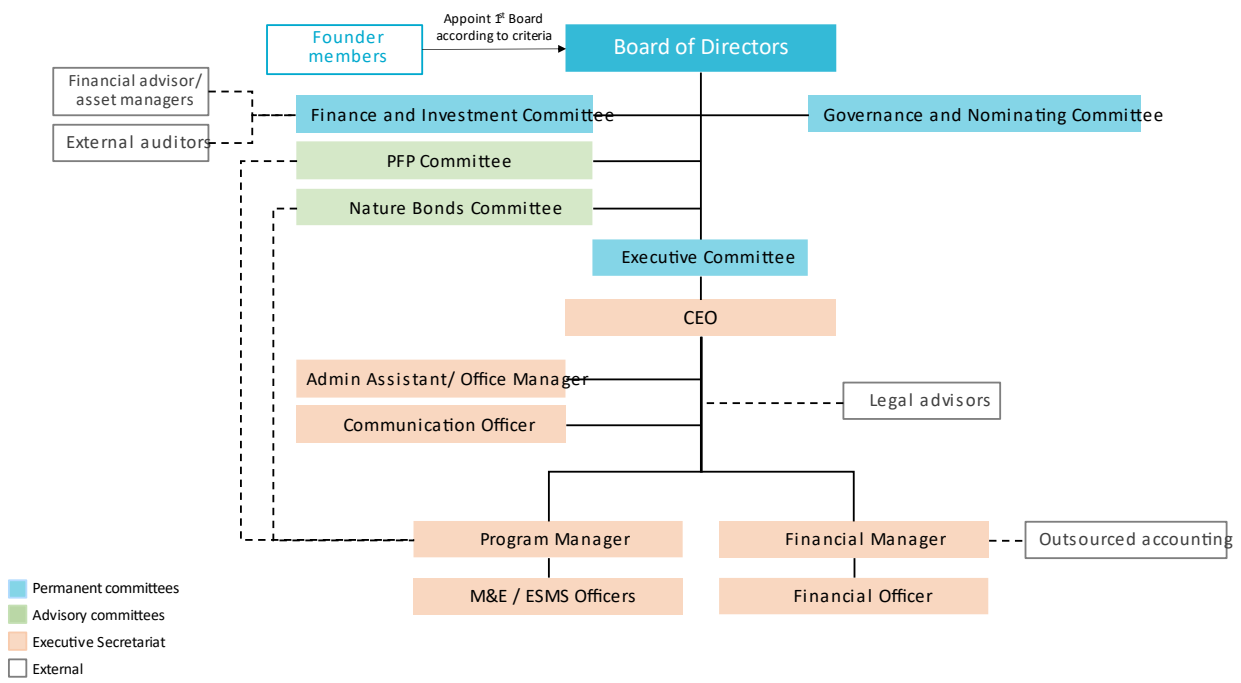


Figure 16: Indicative Structure of CTF, Gabon

Institutional Arrangements – Namibia

GEF Project Start – Pre-Single Close

Prior to single close, and through co-financing, WWF, NASCO and MEFT will coordinate to complete the due diligence process of the Conservation Trust Fund (CTF) and to reach the conditions required for single close – including donor commitments, a conservation plan, a financial model, agreed governance structure for the PFP, and an Operational Manual.

PFP funds will be managed by a Fund Administrator in accordance with internationally recognized good practices as set out in the GEF-supported practice standards for conservation trust funds to ensure transparency and good governance (incl. a diverse, independent board of directors / oversight committee, an internationally recognized asset manager, sound investment policy, *inter alia*). Careful staffing arrangements, capacity support, and project oversight from the WWF GEF Agency will ensure that the new fund is able to manage GEF funding, including adhering to policies and procedures with respect to safeguards. GEF funding will in part support a financial manager/officer, an M&E officer, and a Safeguards officer in the CTF, who will ensure management and reporting against the GEF funding in the transition fund and the endowment fund. PFP operating manuals will define operating rules and processes, and specify responsibilities.

A due diligence assessment of an existing CTF in Namibia is in process at the time of first submission (June 2023).

PFP Implementation (Transition Period) Phase

After single close, the Fund Administrator in Namibia will manage the \$300,000 GEF funding earmarked under Output 1.3.2 Capacities and plans for improved management effectiveness. This funding will support staff positions (co-financed by other donor funding in the transition fund) for (a) M&E and (b) environmental and social safeguards, and training/travel for those staff as needed. These positions will operate during the GEF project period (and transition period) to provide (a) project technical reporting and M&E data on the co-financed transition period activities for improved management effectiveness in the Conservancies, to the central PMU (i.e. TNC) for their technical project progress monitoring and reporting; and (b) build safeguards capacities during the transition period and oversee and report on safeguards implementation to the central PMU.

Disbursement conditions will be set by WWF GEF for direct disbursement of the ~US\$9M GEF funding to the CTF for the endowment fund (see description of outcome 1.4 for a list of disbursement conditions), in two tranches. The first tranche conditions should be met by single close or as soon as possible thereafter, including: baseline METT scores, eligible expenditures defined, safeguards plans in place, agreed governance structure, selection of asset manager, and operation manual. The second tranche condition is that the other donors have paid into the endowment fund. The teams supporting the PFP will endeavor to reach the disbursement conditions early in the GEF project period, ideally in Year 1.

2.3.4.2 Institutional Arrangements – Component 2

Component 2.1

Under Component 2.1, the ETP project will be led by The Pew Charitable Trusts, with an Advisory Committee that includes staff from WWF, TNC, Pew, ZOMALAB, and other key partners. Workplans will be developed by Pew, with overall management of the project by a Pew-hired manager. The project team is likely to comprise six members. The ETP Project Manager will report to Pew's Senior Manager, Enduring Earth. The Project Manager will be responsible for delivery of the workplan and reporting against relevant targets set in the results framework. The project manager will also be responsible for ensuring that gender is being taken into

account in project execution, M&E and reporting, as per the Gender Action Plan. The planning process will proceed in close coordination with the governments and CMAR, who will play a key role throughout. CMAR already convenes technical committee meetings quarterly. The planning process will be nested under these regular CMAR meetings, and engage the CMAR technical committee, which includes representatives from the four countries.

Component 2.2

Component 2.2. will be implemented by the Enduring Earth Hub with oversight by the Enduring Earth Management Team. Overall decision-making falls under the responsibility of the Enduring Earth Managing Director. Day to day management and implementation will be the responsibility of the Knowledge Manager, who will oversee reporting and communication.

2.3.4.3 Institutional Arrangements – Component 3

Component 3 falls under the responsibility of the Executing Agency, TNC. The PMU will be responsible for documenting lessons learned from the project, as well as any knowledge management products in coordination with the Enduring Earth Knowledge Manager. The PMU Project Manager and Monitoring and Evaluation Officer will work to document lessons and ensure dissemination through the EE community, with a particular focus on ensuring knowledge sharing is occurring among protected area managers in Gabon and conservancy managers in Namibia. A key mechanism for facilitating knowledge sharing will be the networks established through and by each respective Conservation Trust Fund. The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan – as described in Section 2.8 - will inform adaptive project management efforts, which will be implemented at the country level and by the PMU housed within TNC.

2.4 Stakeholder Engagement

2.4.1 Stakeholder Engagement

The project will comply with WWF and GEF Standards on Stakeholder Engagement and with the project-specific Stakeholder Engagement Plans (SEP). The Stakeholder Engagement Plans were designed through a consultative process in line with GEF and WWF guidelines and requirements and provide details on how each country will comply with stakeholder engagement standards throughout the duration of the project and the PFP. They lay out standards, guidelines and concrete activities for the project to ensure transparency, inclusion, accountability, integrity, and effective participation of all affected parties by the project.

The SEP is designed to ensure country ownership and effective design and implementation, by outlining actions that the project will take to ensure that the views and perspectives of and to effectively engage with a variety of stakeholders ranging from local communities, grassroots organizations NGOs, research and academic institutions, private sector and the different levels of government (local and national) related to the themes of this project, as described in the project strategy section. Details on implementation activities for each country can be found in Annex 7a (Gabon), 7b (Namibia) and 7c (ETP).

2.4.2 Stakeholder engagement during project development

Stakeholders involved in the PFP have been identified and meetings and workshops have been held to solicit their feedback and input on the transactions. These are summarized in this section, with detailed information on stakeholder engagement in each country provided as Annex 7a (Gabon), 7b (Namibia) and 7c (ETP).

PIF Stage Stakeholder Consultation

Stakeholder consultations at this stage included stakeholder mapping exercises to identify interested actors, and systematically assess and compare their interests, roles and powers, as well as develop appropriate outreach and engagement strategies.

Many stakeholders in the EE project were identified during the pre-feasibility study phases for the individual PFPs, which were undertaken to assess if countries would be ready for the PFP intervention. The prefeasibility study was undertaken by the PFP preparation team in Namibia comprised of representatives of WWF US and WWF Namibia. In Gabon the prefeasibility study was undertaken by TNC.

PPG Stage Stakeholder Consultations:

The GEF Council approved the PIF for the Enduring Earth PFP on June 21, 2022. The design phase began in July 2022 and ended in June 2023. Stakeholder consultations undertaken during the PPG stage are listed by county/ region below. Further details can be found in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan Annexes.

Gabon: a national inception workshop was held on October 25 -27 October 2022 in Libreville, Gabon, which brought together key stakeholders to introduce the project and ensure a shared understanding of the project's theory of change and design process, as well as initiate codesign of the project, building on the approved PIF. A stakeholder mapping exercise was also undertaken during this workshop, validating the exercise completed during the PIF stage and identifying key stakeholders and their interests and roles in relation to different stages of the project. Information gathered at this stage informed the development of an appropriate outreach and engagement strategy for the program. In June 2023, a validation workshop was held with the GoG and invited stakeholders to review and validate the project document and associated information about the project.

Field visits and community consultations with communities living near and inside four National Parks (Mayumba, Loango, Minkebe and Monts de Cristal) also took place in April 2023 in Gabon in order to inform the stakeholder engagement plan.

Namibia:

National level stakeholders' meetings to develop the Critical Extension Services Plan started with a kick-off meeting of all stakeholders, followed by several planning sessions with a core team of 10 people representing NGOs and MEFT to prepare for a national workshop. This core team agreed to propose adoption of the existing National CBNRM Vision as the Vision for the PFP; drafted a PFP goal and a goal for the Extension Services Plan; agreed to propose the draft components of the PFP; drafted an area-based disbursement condition; drafted a purpose and agenda for the national workshop; and provided guidance on logistics. The National Extension Services Plan Workshop involved over 70 participants from conservancies, government, NGOs, (the latter two including a mix of national and regional / field level staff). The participants agreed on a vision statement and goal for the Extension Services Plan; area-based disbursement condition and draft detailed written descriptions of each activity / extension service and how it supports the Extension Services Plan goal.

The outcomes of the national workshop were further shared for continued discussion at various national and regional level meetings, including NACSO WGs Coordination and Annual Planning Week that was attended by 40 representatives from MEFT, NACSO partners, and Projects, to provide progress updates/feedback on 2022 activities by the regional field-based staff and working groups; and develop a common work plan for

supporting conservancy Governance, NRM, and Enterprises. During the work session on GEF ESMF, IPP and Gender Plan, the participants provided inputs into the ESMF, IPPF and Gender Action Plan. An update on the GEF-7 prodoc development, ESMF and IPPF was also shared during the the NACSO Heads of Organization meeting and AGM. It was agreed that in preparation for the project validation meeting, the full prodoc with annexes will be shared with the stakeholders for their review.

Field-level stakeholder consultations continued with the attendance of: the Zambezi Regional Biannual Meeting (twice) that was attended by over 100 participants from 16 registered and 4 emerging conservancies; and Traditional Authorities in Zambezi; 2 visiting conservancies from Kavango East; support agencies, including MEFT, IRDNC, NNF, WWF, UNAM, Kwando Carnivore Project, NCE; and visitors from neighboring countries; Kunene Biannual Meeting that was attended by over 50 participants from conservancies, Traditional Authorities, and technical support staff from NGOs and government. During attendance and briefing at the Ombonde People's Landscape Board meeting, and in response to the point about conservancies needing to make a permanent commitment towards conservation, i.e. area under conservancy management, it was highlighted that it's important to engage Ministry of Mines and Energy to better understand potential impact of Exclusive Prospecting Licences (EPLs) on conservancies and alleviate / mitigate potential negative impacts as identified. Also, a question was raised on how conservancy commitment to the initiative will be "documented", in a similar manner that funding partner commitment will be documented? Who / how will conservancies become "signatory" to the Deal? It was agreed that this question still needed to be explored for a clear answer. Online updates were also shared with the Kavango East and West Regional Conservancies during their Green Economy Vision workshop; and the North Central Regional Conservancies during their Community Conservation Landscape Peer Review Learning and Sharing Workshop.

ETP:

In the ETP, The Pew Charitable Trust and Enduring Earth completed a stakeholder mapping exercise at a regional meeting in April 2022 in Panama, where the prospects for a regional governance and finance mechanisms were discussed. More than 60 people attended, including donors, NGOs, CBOs, private sector, and government representatives. Between April and August 2022, Pew engaged NGO, government, private and donor partners in furtherance of this stakeholder mapping exercise to identify the conditions needed to for a regional PFP. This was followed by a four-day feasibility assessment workshop held in August 2022 in San Jose, Costa Rica, where the ETP feasibility assessment was reviewed and discussed by key NGO, government and philanthropic stakeholders to collect feedback and incorporate it into the assessment.

In October 2022, Enduring Earth presented the Feasibility Assessment and the GEF-7 opportunity to the CMAR Technical Committee in San Jose, Costa Rica, and that same week to the CMAR Ministerial Committee. The goal of this presentation was to engage the CMAR committees on the potential of an ETP durable finance mechanism and receive input prior to the feasibility assessment. A key takeaway from this presentation was an ongoing dialogue/relationship between Enduring Earth and CMAR.

In March 2023, a meeting was held with ETP government representatives, Enduring Earth and the Connect to Protect Coalition at the Our Oceans Conference in Panama. During the conference, Environment Ministry representatives from each of the countries announced their intentions to develop a legally binding treaty for conservation in the ETP. The announcement is indicative of the countries' continued support for regional marine conservation in the ETP, and the treaty will complement and bolster regional durable finance mechanisms. The GEF-7 project was discussed and endorsed at this meeting.

Throughout this process, stakeholders were consulted to identify conditions necessary to put in place a mechanism that can facilitate partnerships between key stakeholders, such as governments, local communities, funders, and NGOs, to secure long-term management and financing in the form of a deal with a single closing agreement.

Following the March 2023, Our Oceans Conference in Panama, Pew had one-on-one meetings with representatives of each of the ETP country governments to discuss the GEF-7 opportunity, review the scope of work articulated in the project (i.e. to initiate a codesign of a durable finance mechanism for marine conservation in the ETP) and ensure a shared understanding of the project's theory of change and design. Pew held calls with government representatives from Colombia, Costa Rica, and twice with Ecuador. Panama's representatives indicated that they were comfortable moving forward with the planning process without an additional call. An additional consultation was held with representatives of the government of Colombia. These consultations have informed the project design, notably how the durable finance mechanism would complement the TBR and treaty, concerns about governance structures, and the need for durable finance in the region. Governments were clear about the need to respect national jurisdictions while enhancing coordination.

A validation meeting took place on 7 July 2023 with Pew, the CMAR Secretariat, WWF, and the ETP Technical Committee. The session was virtual and a presentation was provided on the GEF – 7 proposal, workplan, budget, deliverables.

2.4.3 Stakeholder engagement during project execution

The strategy for stakeholder engagement during execution is detailed in the project's Stakeholder Engagement Plan in Annex 7. The purpose of this Stakeholder Engagement Plan is to ensure appropriate and consistent involvement of project stakeholders in every stage of the project implementation, supporting effective communication and working relationships. This plan may be reviewed at the onset of implementation and will periodically take into consideration the lessons and experiences emerging from the project as well as to enable the project to respond to changes in the external context in each country/ region.

In Gabon, the CTF, once established, will ensure that the views and inputs of stakeholders are taken into consideration throughout project implementation. The consultation processes will be continued throughout the project as required by the nature of the collaborative platform ensuring steady growing interest of beneficiaries and donors and maintaining inclusive and diverse representation, including among women and men in target communities. The PMU will ensure that the information disclosed, the format, language and the methods used to communicate the information will be tailored to each stakeholder group (see appendix for further details). Women and men in local communities and indigenous groups are intended to receive information about the project via appropriate channels chosen to reflect preferences (for example gender differences in access to technology and language), such as the internet, public notices, SMS, social media, as well as traditional mechanisms for consultations.

In Namibia, the CBNRM program is well established and regular consultations and stakeholder engagements routinely take place. Governance structures are operational that ensure local Community Conservancies engage with their members and local communities: regular meetings (including bi-annual meetings) are held, where representatives are democratically elected. Service providers operating under NACSO take part in these, and regular audits are being conducted by MEFT and other support partners on compliance. Rigorous ESSF and IPPF are being developed for the entire PFP program, led by WWF and local partners, linked to the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

In the ETP, this project will be driven and led by the four governments through CMAR. Pew will engage with CMAR, government representatives and partner NGOs. Existing networks of stakeholders representing NGOs, including scientists and social scientists, will be leveraged during execution, building off of the work completed during preparation by The Pew Charitable Trusts. Additional consultation support will be provided by Enduring Earth partners. There are on-going stakeholder engagement processes in the ETP region and the project will work to ensure that it is not replicating but complementing this engagement, while ensuring compliance with GEF standards. Progress against the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) will be monitored and reported on throughout implementation.

Project design emphasizes the importance of involving local communities that have an impact on or are impacted by protected area management in activities supporting the necessary conditions for effectively and efficiently operationalizing the PFPs in Gabon and Namibia, as well as supporting the ETP region to establish conditions for the build out of a PFP deal there. In all of the project's target geographies, stakeholders will be consulted during the development of the core elements of the PFP transaction (including the conservation plan, community engagement plan and financial model).

Under Component 1, stakeholders will be consulted in the development of the Conservation plan, community engagement plan and financial model in Gabon and Namibia. The development of these plans is already underway, and, in Gabon, co-financing will support a PFP stakeholder and local community mapping that will build on the existing GEF stakeholder mapping completed during the PPG. This will ensure the meaningful participation of local communities in conservation planning. In Namibia, the project will build on the safeguard and stakeholder engagement standards and guidelines developed during this project's preparatory phase in order to integrate them into the PFP operations manual in Namibia.

Under Component 2, the project will support a collaborative design with the four countries of a durable regional financial model in the ETP. The GEF project will support participatory planning, community engagement and consultation, as well as organizational capacity building in order to support the development of necessary capacity for a regional durable finance mechanism in the ETP. This will include a series of consultations, workshops, co-design and consultancies.

2.5 Gender

The project will comply with WWF and GEF standards and policies on Gender Equality, which require that project activities take into account the different roles, needs, and perspectives of women and men, and that they contribute to gender equality and the empowerment of women. The policy also requires that a gender perspective is incorporated in the design and implementation of conservation projects, as well as monitoring and evaluation of gender impact of conservation activities. This ensures a more systematic inclusion of gender aspects in projects and creates positive synergies between improved environmental impact and greater gender equality.

2.5.1 Gender assessment

A high-level gender desk review was undertaken during the PPG stage to inform and guide the development of the project. The countries' gender profiles are based on a desk review of relevant literature, including reports and research conducted at the national level, as well as interviews/conversations with gender experts at the national and regional levels. This included an assessment for each country of the mandates and frameworks on gender, the national context in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment, and gender considerations in the use, conservation, and management of natural resources and PAs.

There are significant and important differences between the roles, rights realized, and opportunities available for women and men in the countries where the project is proposing to work. These include, among others: differences concerning land and resource rights, access to goods, services and financial resources, gender-based violence and spaces to participate in and influence decision-making processes. Additionally, men and women use natural resources differently, and as a result, are affected by changes to these resources. Lastly, while women face unique barriers, they are also increasingly recognized as agents of change who make valuable contributions to the environment, including a unique understanding of the natural resources around them. Overall, the gender analysis showed that inequality between men and women in the countries is engrained in socio-cultural norms, with implications for project related activities / conservation at large.

Gender can often strongly predict how an individual can meaningfully engage in resource-management programmes and decision making, and how those programs might impact the individual positively or negatively. Existing gendered power imbalances in natural resource ownership specifically affect women's capacity to influence change and expand their roles in managing and safeguarding natural resources and PAs. Further, women and men may have divergent understandings of the use and management of natural resources or traditional knowledge about biodiversity and ecosystems. It is thus crucial to find synergies between efforts to protect natural resources and address gender inequality as reflected in the agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, which recognizes gender equality and women's empowerment as a sustainable development goal in its own right, as well as a catalyst for reaching all other goals.

2.5.2 Gender action plan for project execution (summary)

A gender-responsive Gender Action Plan has been developed to guide the work to be completed in each of the project's focal geographies. The action plan adheres to the GEF's 2018 Policy on Gender Equality as well as the WWF policies and guidelines on gender. In both Namibia and Gabon, GEF funding will in part support a Safeguards officer in the CTF. The safeguards specialist that will be hired within each CTF will have gender expertise to ensure proper implementation, M&E support and reporting on gender progress. **The M&E plan for the project includes monitoring and reporting on the GAP. GAP-specific indicators will be incorporated in output and activity level indicators and targets in the AWPB as set at the end of each project year for the following year.**

Furthermore, part of the global PMU staff responsibility will be to provide capacity and report on implementation of the GAPs across the entire project. Prior to PFP single close, co-financing will cover the costs of GAP implementation in Gabon and Namibia under project Component 1. The project includes budget for CTF staff time to implement the GAPs and do direct monitoring and reporting in Namibia and Gabon on indicators included in the GAP (and in the AWPB) post-PFP closing. Furthermore, the gender inclusive approach outlined in the GAPs for Gabon and Namibia will be integrated into the PFP development and operations and will apply to GEF and all other sources of funding managed by the CTF/Fund Manager under the PFP. Under Component 2, the sub-grant to Pew will cover the costs of implementation and monitoring of the GAP.

The Gender Action plan identifies and describes gender differences, gender differentiated impacts and risks, and opportunities to address gender gaps and promote the empowerment of men, women and youth. It also contains corresponding gender-responsive measures to address these differences, identified impacts, risks and opportunities. The detailed plan in Annex 9 includes gender-specific actions for outputs delivered by the project for each year of project implementation. It is a useful tool for project implementation and monitoring as it provides gender specific indicators and targets for each year and identifies responsible parties for each target. Overall, the gender action plan is based on the following principles:

- Incorporate a gender perspective into program and project development processes the application of gender awareness and analysis in the project cycle, including design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Where appropriate, develop gender analysis and sex-disaggregated social and economic indicators and targets
- To the extent possible, assess potential impact of program and projects on gender equity, and ensure that potential negative impacts on women and men are addressed, if appropriate also identify and use opportunities to reduce gender inequities
- Apply a culturally sensitive approach, especially when working with local communities, and that respects and takes account of different roles, responsibilities, entitlements and knowledge among men and women involved and/or affected by the program/project
- Examine how policies, processes and institutions at and beyond community level (i.e., national, regional and global) affect gender equity, and men and women’s access to and control over resources, as well as power of decision-making in our programs/projects and identify options and, where appropriate, promote gender equity within these
- Encourage continuing effort to expand WWF’s knowledge and commitment to social and gender equity, through staff training, documentation and sharing of lessons.

The Gender Action Plan contains targets to ensure that project activities are inclusive, providing equitable access and is responsive to the needs identified in the gender assessment. This includes activities to efficiently operationalize the PFPs in Gabon and Namibia, as well as supporting the ETP region to establish conditions for a regional durable finance mechanism. Under Component 1, this includes targets to ensure that gender mainstreaming and gender responsive modalities are included in the operating manual as appropriate; and that funding mechanisms developed include a gender review and action plan.

Additionally, community engagement plans and conservation plans under component one will be gender inclusive. In Gabon, the gender action plan contains targets to ensure that community engagement plans and conservation plans are gender inclusive, with at least 30% of participants in training and capacity building activities are women, at least 30 of the members of decision-making bodies are women and that at least 10 women are trained in entrepreneurship and supported for start-up by site as part of component one.

In Namibia, detailed local level interviews and consultations will be carried out by a team of consultants from the University of Namibia (UNAM) between January and November 2023, conducting in depth work on ESSF, IPPF and Gender for the overall PFP/N4L and WWF Namibia. The site-specific findings will be considered in the implementation modalities of the PFP. A review of the conservation and community engagement plans with a view to identifying gender mainstreaming opportunities will also be undertaken, in order to set gender targets for service organizations and conservancies in hiring female staff; consider a State of the Communal Conservancies Report (SOCCR) focusing on gender and; include possible costs for gender training.

Under component two, the Gender Action Plan includes targets to ensure that all community development and livelihood development activities are inclusive and gender responsive; that any governance structures developed are gender inclusive; and that, in the ETP, recommendations from the feasibility assessment and planning documents promote inclusivity and adequately address gender specific action. Gender specific indicators and targets will be defined during project implementation.

2.6 Safeguards

In compliance with WWF Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework (ESSF), as detailed in WWF's Environmental and Social Safeguard Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP), the Enduring Earth: Accelerating Sustainable Finance Solutions to Achieve Durable Conservation project was screened according to WWF's Standard on Environmental Social Risk Management. The project as a whole has been classified as a Category "B" project, given that: (a) it is, essentially, a conservation initiative expected to generate significant positive and durable social, economic and environmental benefits; and (b) any adverse environmental and social impacts are site-specific and can be mitigated. Although this categorization applies for the project overall, it should be noted that the targeted ETP geography has been classified as a Category "C" project, as it is primarily concerned with conducting a feasibility study for the PFP model.

The following section presents the different standards triggered in each of the geographies included in this project.

Gabon:

- **Natural Habitats:** This Standard has been triggered because the Gabon PFP will fund activities with on-the-ground impact. One of these refers to the construction or improvement of small-scale infrastructure to accommodate park staff, create more effectiveness (i.e., landing strips for monitoring overflights) and overall increase management capacity for the PA. As the specific activities and its locations become better defined, further environmental impact assessments will be carried out before development of infrastructure begins.
- **Involuntary Resettlement and Restriction of Access:** This standard has been triggered because the PFP will support the establishment of higher protection designation of conserved and PAs, and more clarity about management and resources use for other protection categories such as Ramsar sites. Furthermore, it may also support the drafting of stronger management plans for MPAs and inland fisheries, and may also support stronger patrol efforts at National Parks to reduce the impacts of illegal activities (poaching, gold mining, timber extraction, etc). As the specific activities and locations of the project's activities are not yet defined, a Process Framework will be prepared as part of the ESMF to conform to WWF's Environment and Social Safeguards Framework to ensure community rights are respected.
- **Indigenous Peoples:** This standard has been triggered because it is likely that the project sites identified by the Project will entail IPs. Specifically, Gabon is home to a number of self-identifying, highly heterogeneous Indigenous Peoples—including Baka, Akowa, Bekui, Bebinga, Babongo, and Baringa—as well as to a significant forest-dependent Indigenous population, including up to 30,000 Baka and Babongo people. The specific activities and locations of the project's activities are not yet defined and more information on IPs, their physical presence in this geography and their use of natural resources is needed, which is why an Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework will be prepared as part of the ESMF to conform to WWF's Environment and Social Safeguards Framework.
- **Community Health and Security:** Human-wildlife conflicts are a major threat to wildlife populations and the livelihoods of smallholder farmers given the prevalence of crop-raiding by different animal species (elephants and monkeys, among others), which can drastically reduce income and food security of rural communities, producing negative perceptions towards wildlife and perpetuating poverty. These have become increasingly common in Gabon as its human population continues to grow, which is why this standard has been triggered. Additionally, the previously mentioned

possibility of working with rangers on patrolling of PAs presents a potential risk. Therefore, the ESMF identifies and lists measures for mitigating human wildlife conflict (such as support for innovative electric barriers or monetary compensation) as well as measures to avoid and mitigate risks associated with support of conservation law enforcement.

- **Physical and Cultural Resources:** The establishment of PAs might have an impact on physical cultural resources and this standard has been triggered because the forest is important for many Indigenous peoples in Gabon for cultural practices and resources. In fact, Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLC) use the forest includes hunting, fishing, and farming; the forest here also contains ancestral villages and ritual sites of invaluable cultural wealth. Moreover, IPLC also have detailed ecological knowledge, traditional conservation practices and a strong spiritual and physical link to the rainforest. As the project's specific activities and locations become better defined, further screening will be conducted to ensure there are no negative impacts on physical and cultural resources at the time of implementation.

Namibia:

- **Natural Habitats:** At this point, there are no planned activities that would negatively impact natural habitats. However, this standard has been triggered as a precaution because some of the extension services to be supported through the Endowment Fund might entail on-the-ground activities, including implementation of climate-adaptive strategies such as solar panels, development of vegetable gardens and gazettement work, among others. Consequently, further environmental impact assessments will be needed as the specific activities and locations become better defined to determine which safeguard measures, if any, need to be in place to ensure no lasting damage to natural habitats or the people that rely on them occur.
- **Indigenous Peoples:** This standard has been triggered due to the presence of San and Himba peoples in the Namibian landscape. These groups are considered as Indigenous Peoples under WWF's Indigenous People's Policy and safeguards standard and are present in some of the Conservancies being supported by WWF Namibia. Due to their presence, WWF requires additional consideration and support for their rights consistent with both WWF's policies and the recognition afforded to them by the Government of Namibia. An Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework has been included in the ESMF for the Namibia portion of this project.
- **Community Health, Safety and Security:** This standard is triggered due to the potential for Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) that exists where communities are living in proximity to wildlife, including in the CBNRM approach which empowers communities to manage and benefit from wildlife.
- **Pest Management:** WWF-funded projects are not allowed to procure or use formulated products that are in World Health Organization (WHO) Classes IA and IB, or formulations of products in Class II, unless there are restrictions that are likely to deny use or access by lay personnel and others without training or proper equipment. The project will follow the recommendations and minimum standards as described in the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides and its associated technical guidelines, and procure only pesticides, along with suitable protective and application equipment, that will permit pest management actions to be carried out with well-defined and minimal risk to health, environment, and livelihoods.

While the project will not procure any pesticides, it might promote the use of registered biopesticides as part of the extension service that seeks to support conservation agriculture. Because this entails the introduction of smart farming methods and trainings on practices that allow for less

pesticide use, this standard has been triggered out of an abundance of caution. A Pest Management Plan has been included in the ESMF for the Namibia portion of this project.

ETP:

- **Indigenous Peoples:** The four countries that make up the ETP—Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Panama—have a significant percentage of indigenous populations (3.4%, 2.4%, 6.3% and 12% of the total populations, respectively). This standard has been triggered as a precaution because, at this stage, it is still unclear whether any of these populations will be affected as the project sites are yet to be defined. If determined necessary, steps will be taken in accordance with WWF ESS guidelines to mitigate these impacts, including the development of an Indigenous Peoples’ Framework and obtaining FPIC.
- **Restriction of Access & Resettlement:** Some of the envisioned changes to fishing practices/policy may impact coastal communities, including their access to fisheries. However, the inclusion of this type of policy change will be determined based on the final scope of the project and on the state governments’ agreement to changes. As such, this standard has now been triggered as a precaution and any negative impacts will be assessed during the planning stage. If determined necessary, steps will be taken in accordance with WWF ESS guidelines to mitigate these impacts, including the development of a Process Framework.

Since the exact scope of the activities supported by this project as well as the locations where those will be undertaken are being defined at the time of writing, an Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF) has been developed both for the Gabon and Namibia geographies. In the first case, the ESMF includes a Process Framework (PF) and an Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF), while the latter ESMF includes an IPPF. These documents were prepared to conform to WWF’s Environment and Social Safeguards Framework and outline the principles, procedures, and mitigation measures for addressing environmental and social impacts associated with the project in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Gabon and Namibia, respectively, as well as with the WWF SIPP.

While an ESMF has not been developed for ETP, a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been prepared for this part of the project, which is classed as Category C.

The project will have a direct and tangible effect on a large number of communities and individuals residing within or in the vicinity of project sites, both in Gabon and Namibia. There is thus a need for an efficient, effective, culturally responsive and accessible Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) that collects and responds to stakeholders’ inquiries, suggestions, concerns, and complaints. The GRM shall constitute an integral part of the Project and assist both the Gabon and Namibia executing partners (the CTFs/fund administrators) in identifying and addressing the needs of local communities. Both of these GRMs will be constituted as a permanent and accessible institutional arrangement for addressing any grievances arising from the implementation of project activities. The Gabon and Namibia, project-level GRMs will be administered by the executing partners in Gabon (the CTF) and Namibia (CTF/fund administrator), respectively. Guidelines for the establishment and operation of each of these GRMs are presented in the ESMFs.

Roles and Responsibilities

Gabon

Responsibilities for the implementation and oversight of environmental and social safeguards measures related to the project are outlined in the ESMF. The overall responsibility for ensuring that safeguards are

implemented lies with the CTF, with oversight by the CTF Board, the global PMU (TNC), and the WWF GEF Agency. As stated above, the Project in Gabon will recruit at least one environmental and social safeguards specialist to support the CTF for the duration of project implementation as well as for the period of the endowment fund disbursements.

TNC staff will oversee the work of the CTF in this regard.

Namibia

Similarly, responsibilities for the implementation and oversight of environmental and social safeguards measures related to the project are outlined in the ESMF. The overall responsibility for ensuring that safeguards are implemented lies with the PFP Fund Administrator / CTF here, with oversight by the governing body of the fund administrator, the global PMU (TNC), and the WWF GEF Agency. As stated above, the Project in Namibia will also recruit at least one environmental and social safeguards specialist to support the Fund Administrator/CTF for the duration of project implementation as well as for the period of the endowment fund disbursements.

ETP

Stakeholder engagement will be led by The Pew Charitable Trusts, as the lead for the planning process. Pew will develop a deal team that is comprised of Pew staff and led by a Project Manager. An Advisory Committee will be developed that includes Pew, WWF, ZOMA Lab and TNC representatives. A broader planning team will include Enduring Earth partner representatives, CMAR technical representatives and technical partners, as requested and needed by CMAR. There are on-going stakeholder engagement processes in the ETP region and the Pew team will work to ensure that it is not replicating engagement and rather complementing, while ensuring compliance with standards.

Financial arrangements

In order to appropriately implement the above-mentioned measures, project budget has been allocated for the following:

- One safeguards staff position *in each* of the Gabon and Namibia CTFs/Fund Administrators;
- Part of the time of an M&E specialist within the global PMU to oversee their work and act as coordinator

It should be noted that the ESMF and Process Framework for Gabon specifies that the project budget would cover potential compensation to project affected people related to the implementation of the Process Framework (i.e., resulting from the GRM). A Process Framework has not been developed for Namibia and, although it is not anticipated that one will be needed in the future, budget adjustments may be necessary in order to ensure compliance with the ESMF.

At this stage, no amount has been earmarked for such events, but budget adjustments will be made to accommodate for these and any other potential expenses as necessary, such as a consultant for cultural heritage management or any other expert whose knowledge might be needed.

2.7 Monitoring & Evaluation

The Project will be monitored through the Results Framework (see Annex 5), which includes targets and indicators for strategic outputs as well as intended outcomes and provides the baseline for most indicators. For indicators in which baselines were not available, these will be carried out within the first six months of

project start up or as soon as possible thereafter. The results framework provides a method and source for measuring indicators, which are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) and disaggregated by sex where applicable. Component 3 of the Results Framework is dedicated to M&E, knowledge sharing and coordination. Relevant Core indicators have been included to provide a portfolio-level understanding of progress towards the GEF Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs).

Responsibilities for M&E are shared between the Global PMU and the executing partners for each component (in the case of Component 1, responsibility will lie with the CTFs/PFP Fund Administrators). All Component level indicators fall under the responsibility of the Component Partners with the Global PMU responsible for quality control and consolidation of data and information across the six countries and global level interventions.

In Gabon and Namibia, the CTFs will be responsible for engaging key stakeholders, including the Independent Committee members in reflection, sense making and identifying recommendations to adapt strategies and approaches, informed by M&E data and information collected during annual reflection meetings. Outcomes of these meetings are shared with the Global PMU and the Global Steering Committee for endorsement.

Table 5 contains a summary of project reports that must be completed during execution.

Table 5. Project Reports

M&E/ Reporting Document	How the document will be used	Timeframe	Responsible
Inception Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarize decisions made during inception workshop, including changes to project design, budget, Results Framework, etc. 	Within three months of inception workshop	PMU Project Manager and M&E Officer
Quarterly Field Report [optional]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform PMU PM on progress, challenges and needs of activities in field. 	Every three months	Field team
Quarterly Financial Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess financial progress and management. 	Every three months	PMU GFO officer
WWF Project Progress Report (PPR) with RF and workplan tracking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform management decisions and drafting of annual workplan and budget; Share lessons internally and externally; Report to the PSC and GEF Agency on the project progress. 	Every six months	PMU Project Manager and M&E Officer
GEF METT Tracking Tool [only relevant for Component 1]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform GEF SEC on progress towards outcomes/impact relating to protected areas; Assessment of the project contribution to Global Environmental Benefits (GEB) targets. 	CEO endorsement, Mid-term and Final	PMU Project Manager and M&E Officer
Mid-term Project Evaluation Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External formative evaluation of the project; 	Midterm (end of YR2)	External expert or organization

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations for adaptive management for the second half of the project period; Inform PSC, GEF and other stakeholders of project performance to date. 		(contracted by WWF US)
Terminal Project Evaluation Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External summative evaluation of the overall project; Recommendations for GEF and those designing related projects. 	Before project completion	External expert or organization (contracted by WWF US)

Independent formal evaluations have been budgeted by the project and will adhere to WWF and GEF guidelines and policies. The Midterm Evaluation will be conducted within six months of the midpoint of the project (i.e Yr2/Yr2.5 following CEO endorsement) and the Terminal Evaluation will be completed before the official close of the project. The evaluations provide an opportunity for adaptive management as well as sharing of lessons and best practices for this and future projects. The GEF Agency, Lead Executing Agency, Independent Committees and the Global Steering Committee will be briefed and debriefed before and after the evaluation(s) and will have an opportunity to comment on the draft and final report.

In Gabon and Namibia, an annual reflection workshop will take place involving key stakeholder representatives to review project progress and challenges to date, considering results framework tracking, work plan tracking and stakeholder feedback to review project strategies, risks and the theory of change (ToC). The results of this workshop will inform project decision making (i.e., refining the ToC, informing PPRs and AWP&Bs). The outcomes of these national level workshops will feed into the global annual reflection workshops (which will take place virtually), bringing together all partners across the 3 Components of the project as well as members of the Independent and Steering Committees. Global annual workshops will provide the opportunity for partners to share progress and lessons with one another, create synergies where appropriate and review strategies, risks and assumptions in order to support adaptive management.

Table 6. Monitoring and Evaluation Budget:

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	TOTAL COMPONENT 3: OUTCOME 3.1 : Effective project knowledge management and M&E contributes to efficient decision making and adaptive project management
Grants/Sub-grants	Sub-grant to Namibia Fund Administrator	172,000
Grants/Sub-grants	Sub-grant to Gabon CTF for Transition phase	224,000
Total Sub-grants		396,000
International Consultants	Mid-Term and Final Evaluations (WWF GEF Agency)	120,000
Total International Consultants		120,000
Salary and benefits / Staff costs	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer at 100% LOE (partial time to KM)	533,402
Total Staff Costs		533,402

Trainings, Workshops, Meetings	Hold annual project reflection workshops with stakeholders to reflect on project strategies, risks and assumptions, and adjustments to achieve expected results and lessons learnt to inform the PPRs (See above KM section for further details and funding to workshops)	360,000
Total Trainings, Workshops, Meetings		360,000
Travel	Travel for M&E Officer	-
Travel	In-person Global PSC meeting	51,000
Total Travel		51,000
Grand Total		1,460,402

2.8 Budget

ENDURING EARTH BUDGET SUMMARY by Outcome and Output	
CATEGORY	PROJECT TOTAL
Component 1: Deploying Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) for priority conservation areas in Gabon and Namibia	\$ 18,498,020.00
TOTAL OUTCOME 1.1 : Conservation goals, funding package and project conditions agreed by key stakeholders (including government, donors, NGO partners) in target countries, for improved financial sustainability and management of priority conservation areas	\$ 380,410.00
TOTAL OUTCOME 1.2 : Enhanced capacity for domestic resource mobilisation in Gabon to achieve PFP goals and commitments	\$ 600,000.00
TOTAL OUTCOME 1.3 : Improved protected area management effectiveness and creation of new conservation areas (Gabon) and improved management effectiveness of conservancies (Namibia) during the transition period	\$ 3,817,610.00
TOTAL OUTCOME 1.4 : Endowment funds capitalized to invest in improved management effectiveness in priority conservation areas	\$ 13,700,000.00
Component 2: Global support to scale out PFP	\$ 1,599,464.00
TOTAL OUTCOME 2.1 : Enabling conditions assessed and necessary conditions developed for a durable financing mechanism in the Eastern Tropical Pacific	\$ 1,199,464.00
TOTAL OUTCOME 2.2 : Improved knowledge base for PFPs among key stakeholders	\$ 400,000.00

Component 3 : Monitoring & Evaluation and Knowledge Management	\$ 1,460,402.00
TOTAL OUTCOME 3.1 : Effective project knowledge management and M&E contributes to efficient decision making and adaptive project management	\$ 1,460,402.00
PMC	\$ 1,077,894.00
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	\$ 22,635,780.00

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount (\$)
Civil Society Organization	TNC	Grant	Investment Mobilized	42,000,000
GEF Agency	WWF US	Grant	Investment Mobilized	31,431,027
GEF Agency	WWF US	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	2,716,293
Government	Government of Gabon	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	TBD
Government	Government of Namibia: Ministry of Environment, Tourism, Forestry	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	2,352,000
Civil Society Organization	The Pew Charitable Trusts	Grant	Investment Mobilized	1,555,700
Civil Society Organization	The Pew Charitable Trusts	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	909,300
Civil Society Organization	WWF Namibia	Grant	Investment Mobilized	2,993,370
Civil Society Organization	Enduring Earth Coalition Hub	Grant	Investment Mobilized	10,252,694
Civil Society Organization	Enduring Earth Coalition Hub	In-kind	Recurrent Expenditures	4,748,347
Total Co-financing				98,958,731

3 SECTION 3: GEF ALIGNMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

3.1 Incremental Cost Reasoning

Building off a baseline of global and national-level interventions aimed at promoting the conservation of marine and terrestrial biodiversity through improved management effectiveness and sustainable

financing of PAs and PAs systems, the Enduring Earth (EE) GEF project's incremental value will be to catalyze sustainable, long-term investment in globally significant conservation areas in two target countries (Gabon and Namibia) and enable scaling out of the Enduring Earth approach in additional countries (including the ETP countries), contributing to 30x30 goals.

Table 9 below summarizes the situation at the baseline ("business as usual" scenario), the alternative scenario that the project will provide, and the additional global environmental benefits to be achieved through project interventions.

Table 7. Summary of Incremental Value and Global Environmental Benefits

Baseline (“business as usual”) Scenario	Alternative Scenario (with GEF project)	Global Environmental Benefits
Component 1: Deploying Project Finance for Permanence for Priority Conservation Areas in Gabon and Namibia		
<p>Under the current baseline scenario, the available financial resources (i.e., budgetary allocations, self-generated resources, will not be sufficient to enable the effective management of PA systems in Gabon and Namibia and ensure the effective protection of biodiversity of global importance in the face of the threats described under the Project Justification section.</p> <p>In Gabon, the insufficient finance, the weak institutional and technical capacities and the incomplete policy and legislation frameworks will continue to result in a lack of PA coverage, enforcement, and effective management of protected areas that host globally significant biodiversity.</p>	<p>In the alternative scenario, the EE GEF project will roll out a multi-partner strategy for long term financial sustainability of the marine, freshwater and terrestrial protected and conserved areas of Gabon, and the terrestrial conservancies of Namibia. The project will support all the steps of this multi-partnership strategy, from the design of the operation (design of conservation plan, financial model, institutional arrangements, and facilitation of single close with donors), the capitalization of the transition / endowment / sinking fund(s), and the work to secure opportunities for domestic resource mobilization. By these means, the project will ensure the financial gap of the protected areas systems is closed and will secure the long-term financial needs for the effective conservation of the globally significant biodiversity of Gabon and Namibia.</p> <p>In Gabon, the Project will provide deal capital to a PFP transition fund. The project will also work to secure domestic resources mobilization towards meeting the long term needs of the protected area system. The project will provide technical and financial support to the government, including legal advice and strategic guidelines, to catalyze the design of the PFP, and</p>	<p>GEF Funding will catalyze improvement of management effectiveness in a significant area of the Gabon and Namibia national protected areas / CBNRM systems.</p> <p>The beneficiary protected areas include important biodiversity, numerous endemic and threatened species, forests, and freshwater ecosystems, and ecosystems services of national, regional and global significance such as carbon sequestration and climate regulation.</p> <p>In Gabon, the project will improve the management of at least 11,480,383 ha of terrestrial, freshwater and marine protected areas of global significance, and expand the PA system by 2,538,117 hectares (marine and terrestrial). The project will thus yield a range of social, cultural, environmental and financial benefits.</p> <p>In Namibia, the project will ensure the permanent protection for up to 3,323,580 hectares of land and so yield a range of social, cultural, environmental and financial benefits, as well as contribute to the achievement of national development goals.</p> <p>By increasing effective management of the PA and</p>

Baseline ("business as usual") Scenario	Alternative Scenario (with GEF project)	Global Environmental Benefits
<p>In Namibia, the available financing for effective management of conservation areas, and the conservancies technical, governance and coordination challenges as well as current weak incentives for community conservation will not be sufficient to effectively protect the biodiversity of global importance in the face of the threats described.</p>	<p>generate the necessary conditions for its effective and efficient implementation.</p> <p>In Namibia, the Project will capitalize an Endowment Fund to support communal conservancy operations and governance through the provision of extension services to conservancies in topics such as Natural Resource Management and Monitoring; Institutional Development and Governance; and Business, enterprise, and livelihoods, for conservancies to overcome identified barriers and ensure effective protection of targeted areas.</p>	<p>conservancy systems in Gabon and Namibia, and preventing conversion of these areas to agriculture or other land use changes, and maintaining them in protection regimes, the project will also ensure the carbon storage potential in these areas is preserved.</p> <p>Finally, by expanding and/or improving the management effectiveness of protected and conserved areas in both Namibia and Gabon, the project will contribute to creating job opportunities and enhancing incomes both directly and indirectly for the communities that live in and around protected and conserved areas, and so contribute to a "green recovery" from the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>

Component 2: Global Support to Scale Out PFP

<p>Under the current baseline scenario, at the global level, many countries will continue to face challenges to meet 30x30 goals. Some of the most important barriers the governments in developing countries face are limited capacities to ensure long term finance for the effective management of their PA systems. Currently, at the global level, there are insufficient support systems to ensure developing countries, and especially those that host the most important levels of globally significant biodiversity, overcome the</p>	<p>In the alternative scenario, the EE GEF project will invest in technical assistance to build capacities to replicate and scale the PFP approach globally in order to advance 30x30 goals. This will include supporting the build out of a pipeline of deals ready for follow on funding, such as the ETP durable finance mechanism; strengthening capacities within national institutions, including Conservation Trust Funds (CTFs) and others; and analyzing innovative mechanisms to mobilize capital to increase the level of funding available to</p>	<p>The project will help to create enabling conditions for a durable financing and governance mechanism in the ETP. Subsequent projects and initiatives (e.g. the GEF-8 project - "Beyond 30x30: Securing resilience in the Eastern Tropical Pacific through enhanced transboundary cooperation" (GEF ID: 11267), and the Enduring Earth initiative in ETP, will contribute to the achievement of GEBs.</p>
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Baseline (“business as usual”) Scenario	Alternative Scenario (with GEF project)	Global Environmental Benefits
referred barriers.	achieve conservation goal(s). The Project will also develop a knowledge base and facilitate exchange of lessons towards developing the capacity of key stakeholders to engage across the PFP process, including country governments, conservation trust funds, other in-country stakeholders, donors and NGOs.	

3.2 Global Environmental Benefits

The project will contribute to the conservation and sustainable development of globally significant biomes and will help Gabon and Namibia to reach their goals under GBF Target 3. Additionally, the project will help scale out the PFP approach for sustainable financing for area-based conservation – including scoping additional PFPs and creating a connected community of practitioners to share lessons and improve approaches to PFP in countries in the Enduring Earth portfolio.

In the case of Gabon, the second most forested country in the world, the project will help to ensure the sustainability of the national PAs system, and thereby maintain the integrity of globally significant forested areas and the ecosystem services they provide. In Namibia, the project will help to protect crucial habitat for the critically endangered South-Western Black Rhino (*Diceros bicornis bicornis*) and other species including: elephants, wild dogs, hyenas, pangolin, and vultures.

The project will help to safeguard socio-economic benefits provided by nature to local communities as well as to national economies. In Gabon, the PFP will seek to invest in community-based activities surrounding the PAs and catalyze private sector investments that can help create needed green and blue jobs. In Namibia, the project's support to conservancies may include technical assistance to enhance community capacities to develop joint ventures with the private sector, building upon a wildlife economy which (pre-COVID) contributed US\$65M per annum to the national economy.

Error! Reference source not found.8 describes the project’s Global Environmental Benefits.

Table 8. Global Environmental Benefits.

Core Indicator 1: Terrestrial PAs created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use
Indicator 1.1: Terrestrial protected areas newly created
-In Gabon, the project will result in the creation of 6,115,713 HA of new protected areas.
Indicator 1.2: Terrestrial protected areas under improved management effectiveness
– In Gabon, the project will bring 6,115,713 HA of forests, wetlands and freshwater Protected Areas under improved management effectiveness.
– In Namibia, the project will bring 6,400,000 HA of Protected Areas / conservancies under improved management effectiveness.
Core Indicator 2: Marine protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and

sustainable use
Indicator 2.1 Marine protected areas newly created.
-In Gabon, the project will result in the creation of 676,680 HA of new MPAs
Indicator 2.2. Marine protected areas under improved management effectiveness
-In Gabon, the GEF project will bring 5,364,630 HA of marine protected areas under improved effective management.
Core Indicator 6: Greenhouse gas emissions mitigated (metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent)
Indicator 6.1. Carbon sequestered or emissions avoided in the sector of Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use
Gabon -The project will contribute to GHG emissions avoided through improved management of Protected Areas. The amount of emissions avoided in Gabon are conservatively estimated as 3.3 million tCO ₂ e.
Namibia Direct emissions mitigated during the six years of GEF project implementation are estimated to be 10.8M tCO ₂ e. The indirect emissions mitigated for the project lifespan of 30 years is estimated to be 97,129,664 tCO ₂ e.
Core Indicator 11: Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment
Female: 149,351 Male: 149,351 Total: 298,702 -In Gabon, the project will directly benefit 60,000 persons who will experience increased meaningful participation in decision-making about lands, waters and natural resources. -In Namibia, it is estimated that the project will benefit at least 238,701 persons, living in conservancy and community forest areas by enhancing livelihoods and lessening the impacts of human-wildlife conflict. 227,802 are the estimated number of residents in conservancies. Beneficiaries by year 6 of the project are likely to exceed 250,000 persons, accounting for expansion of the conservancy system during the project implementation period.

3.3 Alignment with GEF Focal Area and/or Impact Program Strategies

The project will contribute to the following Biodiversity focal area objective:

2-7: “Address direct drivers to protect habitats and species and improve financial sustainability, effective management, and ecosystem coverage of the [...] protected area estate” through the following:

- Contributing to the effective protection of ecologically viable and climate-resilient representative samples of ecosystems in Gabon and Namibia and adequate coverage of threatened species at a sufficient scale to ensure their long term persistence;
- Enabling sufficient and predictable financial resources, including external funding, to support protected area management costs; and
- Ensuring sustained individual and institutional capacity to manage PAs such that they achieve their conservation objectives.

In addition, the project will promote the participation and capacity building of local communities, especially women, in the design, implementation, and management of protected area projects as well as co-management models. In the case of Namibia, the establishment of an endowment for extension services for community conservancies will ensure that these institutions have the support they need to implement natural resource management projects and effective governance arrangements in

perpetuity. Similarly, the capitalization and operationalization of an endowment fund in Gabon will enhance the capacity of stakeholders to absorb the resources mobilized by the PFP over the long term.

Finally, the project will investigate PAs financing strategies both at the national level in Gabon (under component 1) and globally (under Component 2). In Gabon, the project will evaluate financial mechanisms that could support the delivery of the PFP, especially those elements relating to domestic resource mobilization. The global review will compile case studies and evaluate good practices with respect to PAs finance strategies and mechanisms applicable to PFPs. These would include those emphasizing national policy reform (with a view to promoting policy coherence).

The project will also contribute to CCM-2-7 “*Demonstrate mitigation options with systemic impacts for sustainable forest management impact program.*”

The project will expand and improve the effectiveness of the national system of PAs in Gabon and of community conservancies in Namibia. By preventing conversion of these areas to agriculture or other land use changes, and maintaining them in protection regimes, the project will ensure the carbon emissions reduction potential in these areas.

3.4 Socioeconomic Benefits

The project will help to safeguard socio-economic benefits provided by nature to local communities as well as to national economies.

Area-based conservation measures of the kind funded / enabled through the project will safeguard biodiversity and ecosystem services. This will yield socioeconomic benefits, and more sustainable development, supporting local economies, while also reducing the risks of climate change and benefiting human health. These benefits will accrue at the local (e.g., income and employment), national (e.g., food and water security), and global levels (e.g., climate change adaptation and mitigation).

In Gabon, the PFP will seek to invest in community-based activities surrounding the PAs and catalyze private sector investments that can help create needed green and blue jobs. In Namibia, the project's support to conservancies may include technical assistance to enhance community capacities to develop joint ventures with the private sector, building upon a wildlife economy which (pre-COVID) contributed US\$65M per annum to the national economy.

3.5 Risks and proposed mitigation measures

Potential risks to the project and mitigation measures are described in the tables below.

Table 9. Risks & Mitigation Measures - Gabon

Risk	Risk Level (Likelihood)	Severity Of Impact	Mitigation
Civil society capacity to engage in project. Gabonese civil society and rural populations do not have a robust history of financial,	Medium	Medium	The stakeholder engagement plan, community engagement plan, and gender plan, along with project start-up activities, will establish the baseline of civil society and community capacity for engagement and leadership in the PFP-

Risk	Risk Level (Likelihood)	Severity Of Impact	Mitigation
<p>technical, and management capacity to engage in conservation and livelihoods initiatives. Low population levels in areas where the project would touch down make it more difficult to coordinate and convene with civil society and community stakeholders. Women, IPs and other marginalized groups may face further challenges to participate and contribute to decisions for engagement in the project in ways that support their desired outcomes.</p>			<p>supported activities. The project's Outcome 1.1 activities will strengthen the capabilities (skills and knowledge, equipment, technologies, etc.) of civil society to better enable them to fulfill their role as stakeholders and participate in PFP activities on terms that help them achieve their self-determined outcomes. Furthermore, TNC's Human Rights Guide and Voice, Choice and Action framework will foster a rights-based approach to community and civil society decision-making and participation in PFP activities. While Gabon's social and civil society context is unique, learnings from experiences in Namibia's PFP can be exchanged with Gabon civil society groups under Component 2.</p>
<p><i>Institutional Capacity.</i> Existing government institutional capacity to further design and implement PFP activities and conservation plans is mixed. Capacity to take up the PFP activities is uneven across government actors.</p>	Medium	Medium	<p>An integral component of the project design is establishing a strong training and capacity building implementation plan for each program. Under Outcome 1.1, project co-financing supports government costs for workshops, meetings, consultancies and legal assistance for (i) developing the conservation plan and financial model, (ii) preparation of an Operating Manual to guide implementation of the PFP; and (iii) defining a Single Close Agreement between the partners.</p> <p>TNC will work with the CTF/PFP Fund Administrator to bring together expert conservation and management partners to support the government in planning and implementation of the PFP's conservation scope of work.</p> <p>Also under Outcome 1.1, to support the development of the conservation plan and financial model, the project will fund strategic capacity building of the Gabon Agence Nationale des Parc Nationaux (ANPN) managers and other government stakeholders to participate in the preparation of the long-term conservation strategy and the CTF.</p>
<p><i>Institutional Governance.</i> With the new PFP CTF mechanism starting at the initiation of this project, the government and CTF will have to</p>	Medium	Medium	<p>As described in Outcome 1.1 and annexes, EE works with government and other stakeholders to design and set up the PFP CTF governance structures, including: defining the roles and responsibilities of different actors (e.g., determining the</p>

Risk	Risk Level (Likelihood)	Severity Of Impact	Mitigation
navigate and uphold the new governance policies and structures they have created and endorsed, and may have limited capacity for this.			composition of the Board of Directors, refining role of government agencies, staff, donors, location and registration of CTF, etc.) in its implementation and management; establishing the endowment, sinking and/or transition fund; and developing necessary financial information and planning systems.
Institutional financial and project management capacity. There is a risk that the PFP CTF will be inexperienced in managing the tasks and implementation protocols that meet international standards required / GEF Standards.	Medium	Medium	Under Outcome 1.1, with co-financing the project partners will ensure that expertise (through TNC PFP staff and an external Senior CTF Senior Technical Advisor) supports initial development of the CTF structure, including drafting operational manual and practice standards in advance of financial transactions. The advisor will remain with the CTF for at least 1-2 years to advise the CTF Board and staff, based on experience with other PFPs and similar international financial programs that require rigorous safeguards to people, nature, and anti-corruption. Also, contingency language and rigorous conditions will apply to the disbursement of GEF funds. In the event that these disbursement conditions are not met, discussions may be initiated about alternate uses of the GEF resources.
Government support for the Project. There is low risk that Government Ministers and Agencies do not remain actively engaged and do not support the development and implementation of the project.	Low	High	<p>Existing government actions indicate full support for the PFP, and the government's economic development strategies align to the PFP commitment. Relevant government ministries and entities are being engaged and consulted on the PFP development.</p> <p>EE will work with Gabon government to explore and advance policies that allow for PFP to deliver on commitments.</p> <p>The nature of the PFP single close means that a range of closing conditions must be satisfied (e.g., governments commit to specific actions prior to signing the agreement) and disbursement conditions (e.g., funding will cease to flow if conditions agreed by key stakeholders at the time of signing are not met). The conditions and benefits of the PFP and CTF are being designed to motivate government administrations to remain engaged in the PFP regardless of political change. All CTFs following the EE PFP model will follow international best practices and assure that Board membership is independent. See annexes for information</p>

Risk	Risk Level (Likelihood)	Severity Of Impact	Mitigation
			about the contingency plan if the unlikely situation arises that government reduces support to the PFP and conditions of the single close.
<p>Government budget allocation.</p> <p>There is risk that government’s conservation allocation may be lower than expected due to external factors (e.g., change in export commodity values reduces available public resources for treasury allocation) to contribute to the PFP.</p>	Low	Low	The project aims to develop and implement additional sustainable financing mechanisms to both incentivize government commitment and mitigate any short-term gaps in government allocations. There is already a portfolio of SFMs assessed for feasibility available to the CTF for this purpose.
<p>One or more SFMs do not materialize/fail to generate projected revenues, and/or endowment may have lower return rate than expected, reducing funds available to PFP</p>	Medium	Medium	The CTF portfolio as developed under EE excludes SFMs with the highest level of uncertainty, favoring only those with highest potential to deliver. The SFM portfolio is also diversified to spread commercial risk, and Government of Gabon’s policy and actions indicate their support for nature-positive SFMs. The endowment revenues form a small percentage of the overall CTF portfolio and would not expose the PFP to significant risk.
<p>Government Elections Upcoming elections in Gabon (2023) bring the risk of losing high level government support for the Enduring Earth Partnership and furtherance of 30x30 and other development goals. Should the Gabon government priorities change, this may affect its role and commitment to the PFP collaboration.</p>	Low	Medium	<p>Continuing to broaden support from the government through different ministries and agencies will be an important means of ensuring that the benefits of this project are appreciated and integrated into priorities across sectors and stakeholders, to ultimately reduce the risk of impact from a potential political shift.</p> <p>During the PFP planning phase, a robust risk mitigation plan will be drawn and implemented to address this point, considering different potential outcomes of the elections. One key element of the stakeholder engagement process to roll out in the early phase of the PFP is to engage well respected Gabonese citizens that can serve as champions and provide a politically balanced grounding to this project.</p> <p>Finally, strategic outreach materials designed to highlight the benefits the PFP can bring to Gabonese society and community members will be developed – to show the value</p>

Risk	Risk Level (Likelihood)	Severity Of Impact	Mitigation
			of this project from an apolitical, “win-win” perspective.

Table 10. Risks and proposed mitigation measures – Namibia

Risk	Risk Level (Likelihood)	Severity Of Impact	Mitigation
Communities withdraw support for conservancies	Low	High	Ensure HWC is addressed through the extension support provided by the PFP. This can happen by providing grants for technical support partners to render training and on-site support to conservancies to implement HWC mitigation strategies, especially as provided for under the National Policy on HWC Management and accompanying Measures and Guidelines for Implementation of the policy. Compliance by conservancies includes i) implementing measures to avoid / reduce the impact of HWC; ii) documenting all incidences of conflict for monitoring purposes and administration of off-set claims where relevant; and iii) implementing the HWC Self Reliance Scheme as provided for in the Policy and Implementation Guidelines. A core part of the Self Reliance Scheme is the payment of off-set fees to partially cover the costs of damages caused by wildlife, in accordance with clear claim, verification and payment procedures. The Self Reliance Scheme is mostly financed by the Game Products Trust Fund (capitalized from the sale of game and game products) and conservancies’ own funds (generated through trophy hunting and tourism). Committee members will be held accountable by the conservancy members (who elected them into power) during the Annual General Meeting, where the committee will report on all activities implemented during the previous year (including HWC mitigation) and present plans for the following year for endorsement by the conservancy members.
Poor service delivery of critical services to conservancies	Low	Medium	The GEF project/PFP staff at the national level / Fund Managing Entity should ensure the procurement of services are structured to ensure correct selection of skills and include accountability mechanisms, through clear funding / grants disbursement criteria and guidelines.
Covid continues and impacts program design and/or implementation	Medium	Medium	Funding can be contributed to the Conservation Relief, Recovery and Resilient Facility (CRRRF) where multiple funding partners collaborate to provide financial relief to CBNRM institutions, including communal conservancies affected by the pandemic. The facility will ensure continuation of key conservancy interventions, including anti-poaching activities, mitigation of human-wildlife conflict, and

Risk	Risk Level (Likelihood)	Severity Of Impact	Mitigation
			<p>management of natural resources. All 86 conservancies should benefit from this facility to cover their core / operating costs, such as those related to deployment of community game guards and staff salaries to retain the main functions of conservancies and not lay off any conservancy employees. Support should be provided by the field based CSOs together with MEFT to ensure full accountability and reporting to the coordination task team on the use of these funds by the conservancies.</p> <p>Technical service providers should facilitate positive engagement between conservancies and their private sector partners, to find amicable solutions to payment expectations (where Joint Venture contracts require the private sector partners to make certain payments to conservancies), including “relaxing payment schedules and conditions” to allow for the tourism sector to recover. The technical service providers evolve and amend modes of operation, including conducting their meetings, workshops and training sessions online; and support conservancy meetings in line with Covid related restrictions and requirements.</p>
Government weakens the conservancies’ rights / responsibilities due to conservancies not performing	Low	High	<p>Ensure that the Conservancies receive adequate extension services from the technical service providers in the three areas of NRM, Institutional Governance and Business and Enterprises. This will enable conservancies to be compliant to the MEFT’s Guidelines for the Management of Conservancies and Standard Operating Procedures (2013). According to these, Conservancies are required to continually comply with the following: i) <u>holding Annual General Meeting (AGM) as per their own constitution</u> (this may stipulate quorum requirements, representativeness, etc.); ii) <u>new Management Committee election conducted in accordance with their constitution</u> (again, the constitution may stipulate composition of the Management Committee); iii) <u>submitting to the AGM annual financial statements (satisfactory to the community members present)</u>, showing expenditures kept within the community-approved budget; iv) managing wildlife as per the government-approved Game Management and Utilization Plan, and submitting the utilization report to the MEFT; v) and <u>distributing benefits according to their community-owned equitable Benefits Distribution Plan and procedures.</u></p>
CCFN does not have the support of key local partners	Low	High	<p>Ensure that NACSO, Conservancies and MEFT are closely engaged with CCFN through engagement with the Board and the CEO</p>

Risk	Risk Level (Likelihood)	Severity Of Impact	Mitigation
Disagreement/disunity amongst the PFP partners about the objectives and priorities of the PFP	Low	Medium	Ensure complete transparency and agreements by all key stakeholders (ie. Conservancies, MEFT and NACSO members) as the project development team works with all key stakeholders in developing and agreeing to the closing agreement.
Perception that efforts to support CBNRM in Namibia are focused on the sustainability of NGOs as opposed to the sustainability of conservancies	Medium	Medium	Continuing and expanding on current efforts to provide direct payments to conservancies i.e., conservation performance and social economic grants, to be provided through co-financing, and exploring the ability to incorporate those elements into the PFP
Government funding for conservancies decreases over time	Medium	Medium	Enhance technical capacities of conservancies to ensure they continue to comply with the legal provisions, even if monitoring and enforcement by government is weakened due to inadequate capacity for service provision within government. This will be ensured through the provision of extension services to conservancies (to be covered by capitalized fund).
High inflation erodes the value of the fund to deliver	Medium	Medium	Review the investment strategy of CCFN closely to ensure this is addressed/accounted for and that investment advisory services adheres to internationally recognized good practice and are provided by highly qualified, internationally-recognized professionals.
Fraud/mismanagement of endowment fund(s)	Low	High	Review, and if necessary, increase any financial systems that would prevent fraud. The project will ensure that strong governance arrangements for PFP funds are in place and captured in the appropriate governing instruments (e.g. financing agreements, operations manuals). This may include WWF appointing a representative on the Board/governing body of the PFP Funds Administrator.
Not respecting communities' rights to generate benefits for conservation and livelihoods from hunting	Medium	Medium	Engage donors that have a vision for community-based approaches, to ensure that external funding will not come with conditions that will disempower the ability of conservancies to manage and benefit from their wildlife. Complete ESSF assessments; develop and implement mitigation plans, including Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF), and stakeholder engagement plan. The IPPF will clarify under what circumstances a more focused Indigenous Peoples Plan and/or FPIC would be necessary. Consider also the future opportunities to incorporate payment for ecosystem services/wildlife credit framework could help to mitigate the

Risk	Risk Level (Likelihood)	Severity Of Impact	Mitigation
			risk.
PFP Funds not sufficient to deliver on PFP objectives	Low	High	Plan to provide extension services to 100 conservancies (86 current + 14 planned). It is not and has never been the plan / intention of this or any project in the past to establish new conservancies. Conservancy formation is entirely community driven, with support services rendered on request by the communities concerned. Thus, although this project does not have an output or strategy to establish new conservancies, it will plan to have adequate capacity to render support to communities when requested.

Table 11. Risk and mitigation measures - ETP

Risk	Risk Level (Likelihood)	Severity of Impact	Mitigation
Not capitalizing on high level government and donor support; undue delays and/or inaction	Med	High	Swiftly advance -- with key stakeholders – the planning phase / co-design phase. Countries reaffirmed their commitment to ETP governance and exploration of regional durable mechanisms in March 2023 at the Our Oceans Conference. The co-design process envisaged by the project will help to underscore the socio-economic benefits of a durable financing mechanism at the local, national and regional levels which can be leveraged for advocacy purposes and maintain high levels of support.
CMAR lacks the capacity needed to support the project planning and long-term implementation	Low	Med	The project (under Output 2.1.2) provides for strengthening capacities within CMAR. This will complement the support that other partners are investing in CMAR capacity. Moreover, the ETP governments committed to establishing permanent CMAR secretariat in March 2023, which will likely entail investments in institutional develop and capacity that will benefit the project.
Resistance from certain stakeholders	Med	Med	The project stakeholder strategy identifies key stakeholders and how best to engage them. The fisheries sector will be an especially important target during project execution. Development of a fisheries strategy that engages the industry early in the process will be critical. The strategy should address possible alternative livelihoods

			and value chain enhancements.
Not all four countries agree on the regional model and structure	Med	High	The project will help to identify champions within the governments and build the economic case for why a regional durable finance mechanisms will enhance national / regional brand, economies, and social development. There is unprecedented support for regional conservation in the ETP by the four governments, and the project will help to consolidate this support by involving the ETP governments in co-design.
Geo-political risk	Med	Med	Various other countries/national companies have economic or industrial interests in the region, and could put up subtle or explicit resistance to some of the proposed regional activities. The SEP for the execution phase identifies external interests in the region and defines how to engage them.
Risk of complications related to a multi-country project	Low	Med	Project investments will support the articulation of a clear strategy with clear definition of roles, and a co-design approach that effectively engages government. CMAR and regional coordination already exist, making this more feasible. EE has experience in multi-jurisdictional projects in Canada and will be engaged in defining the strategic direction of the approach.

Table 1212. Climate Risk Analysis

Country	Climate Risk	Climate Risk Impacts	How the Project Addresses This
Namibia	On an Index that ranks a country's vulnerability and readiness to adapt to climate change, Namibia is ranked 107 th out of 182 countries. ⁴⁵ In Namibia, Wildfires occur in the Caprivi, Kavango, Otjozondjupa, Omaheke Khomas, Oshana, Omusati and Kunene	It is estimated that 3.5 to 7 million hectares of forest and grasslands burn every year in Namibia. ⁴⁷ Wildfires have impacts on biodiversity, forest degradation and pasture lands reducing the amount of fodder and crops available to communities.	This project aims to promote sustainable management of established globally significant conservation areas as well as aid in creating new conservation areas that will be set aside for wildlife use as natural habitat. The project will incorporate a more holistic and integrated approach to building resilience and adaptive capacity to counter climate induced threats such as

⁴⁵ UNISDR (2018). Disaster Risk Profile – Namibia. URL: <https://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/63278>

⁴⁷ Id.

Country	Climate Risk	Climate Risk Impacts	How the Project Addresses This
	regions. ⁴⁶		drought, flooding, uncontrolled wildfires, and an increase in invasive species.
Gabon and Namibia	<p>On the same index ranking a country's vulnerability to climate change and readiness to adapt as above, Gabon is ranked 117th in the world.⁴⁸ Both Namibia and Gabon have seen an increase in annual temperatures.</p> <p>Extreme Heat and Invasive Species.</p> <p>Namibia's rangelands and grasslands are constantly under threat from invasive plants and extreme heat.</p>	<p>As a result of changing precipitation patterns and increased heat, trees in Gabonese forests are producing less fruit which affects the population of elephants. There have been more incidences of human conflict with elephants as elephants leave their traditional habitats in search of food.⁴⁹</p> <p>Over the past century, the rangelands in Namibia have become degraded in response to a variety of species grazing, soil erosion and reduced water infiltration into the water table. Invasive species causing "bush encroachment" have resulted in a much lower carrying capacity of grazing animals, negatively affecting wildlife and livestock populations.</p>	

⁴⁶ Climate Risk Profile: Namibia (2021): The World Bank Group

⁴⁸ UNISDR (2019). Disaster Risk Profile – Gabon. URL:

https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Report_Gabon_Final-compressed.pdf CLIMATE RISK COUNTRY PROFILE: GABON

⁴⁹ Bush, E. R., Whytock, R. C., Bahaa-el-din, L., Bourgeois, S., Bunnefeld, N., Cardoso, A. W., ... Abernethy, K. (2020). Long-term collapse in fruit availability threatens central African forest megafauna. *Science*, eabc7791. doi:10.1126/science.abc7791

Country	Climate Risk	Climate Risk Impacts	How the Project Addresses This
Gabon and Namibia	<p>Severe drought in both Gabon and Namibia is a threat to people and biodiversity. In Gabon, droughts affect approximately 21,000 people annually and in Namibia approximately 780,000 of the population of 2 million are affected.⁵⁰</p>	<p>Drying and disappearance of surface water or freshwater, increased instances of hunger, famine, and poor nutrition, decline in livestock health, and decline or loss of crop yields are all associated with severe droughts in the project area (in both Namibia and Gabon). In both Gabon and Namibia, the government has stepped in during severe droughts and assisted with regulating freshwater resources.</p> <p>Previous droughts have cost Namibia up to 175 M USD per year. One incident of drought between 2018-2019 The drought devastated crops, killed 90,000 livestock, and left a third of Namibians facing food shortages.⁵¹ In Gabon, it is estimated that costs associated with droughts per year reach up to 185M USD.⁵² Gabon relies heavily on rainfed agriculture, limiting food security when droughts occur.</p>	
Gabon and Namibia	<p>Increased instances of disease/declining health have been linked to flooding events in Namibia.⁵³ Flooding has also become more frequent in recent years in Gabon and is estimated to impact 70,000 people annually. These events are expected to continue in response to sea level rise and flooding.⁵⁴</p>	<p>An Increase in Diseases related to flooding and water-borne illnesses in Namibia has been observed, with the most prevalent diseases being malaria, dysentery, and cholera. During a flood in 2008 there was a cholera outbreak that caused 19 deaths.⁵⁵</p> <p>In Gabon, flooding usually occurs along the rivers located near the international border during high tides causing the rivers to become brackish and contaminating drinking water. In Gabon, floods are most common in two areas- in Ogooué-Ivindo and Moyen-Ogooué provinces. Flooding affects 21% of the total population in the country, having serious detrimental impacts on the agricultural, water, oil, energy and mining sectors.⁵⁶</p>	

⁵⁰ Kapuka, A. and Hlasny, T (2020). Social Vulnerability to Natural Hazards in Namibia: A District-Based Analysis. Sustainability 12(12). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12124910>

⁵¹ *Id.*

⁵² Climate Risk Profile: Gabon (2021): The World Bank Group

⁵³ Kapuka, A. and Hlasny, T (2020)

⁵⁴ Climate Risk Profile: Gabon (2021): The World Bank Group

⁵⁵ Climate Risk Profile: Namibia (2021): The World Bank Group

⁵⁶ The World Bank Group (2021)

Country	Climate Risk	Climate Risk Impacts	How the Project Addresses This
Eastern Tropical Pacific	Lack of data and information on the impact of climate change to the region creates more vulnerability in the region.	Potential impact on food security, local economies and marine biodiversity	Develop a coordinated climate change assessment model and baseline to track the impacts of climate change; utilize climate modeling in the design of swimways and marine protected area design and management; and enhance predictability of climate impacts
Eastern Tropical Pacific	Mangroves in the ETP are threatened by rising sea levels, in addition to agriculture, aquaculture, and coastal development.	<p>There are ~4,485 km² of mangroves supporting climate resilience to ~7.2M people along the ETP coastline^[1]. ETP mangroves are estimated to hold 735 Mt CO₂.^[2] These mangroves are essential to the local economy for harvesting of subsistence marine products. Additionally, mangroves provide protection against climate risks such as flooding, are critical for long term storm resilience, and act as nursery areas for multiple marine species, including rare, threatened and endangered species.</p> <p>^[1] NASA's Earth Observing System Data and Information System (EOSDIS) Gridded Population of the World (GPW), v4 ^[2] As stated on globalmangroveswatch.org (last checked March 2022)</p>	A holistic conservation plan may include considerations for both protection and restoration of mangroves within the ETP, while an accompanying financing and livelihood plan could leverage improved coastal resilience by developing alternative and enhanced livelihoods.
Eastern Tropical Pacific	In a simulation of climate change effects (under Representative Concentration Pathway (RCP) 8.5 and RCP 2.6 scenarios) on fish and invertebrate species in the ETP, species habitat suitability decreased by up to 14% in some fisheries along Central America. The largest declines in the average species habitat suitability	Communities in the ETP rely on coastal fisheries for sustenance, culture, and livelihood, and could be negatively impacted if fisheries are diminished or changed due to climate change.	The PFP would seek to support a healthy fish population and community adaption via alternative livelihood development. The ETP countries via the PFP would encourage and/or mandate sustainable fishing practices to ensure that fisheries are not depleted due to IUU or other unsustainable fishing methods.

Country	Climate Risk	Climate Risk Impacts	How the Project Addresses This
	<p>index were projected for small pelagic fisheries (up to -46%), while the highest local species turnover was projected for coastal small-scale fisheries (up to 80%). ^[1] https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/ddi.13181</p>		

Table 13. COVID 19 Risks

Risk category	Potential Risk	Mitigations and Plans
Availability of technical expertise and capacity and changes in timelines	Continued or renewed efforts in COVID-19 containment are likely over the course of project development and possibly into implementation and may cause delays.	The project development work plan and team will be built with this in mind, for example, selecting local staff and consultants to conduct stakeholder engagement to minimize the risks associated with international or outside consultants physically interacting with isolated, and rural communities. When necessary/appropriate, the project will rely on remote technology to connect to in-country consultants and partners to design and consult on the project.
Financial Resources	Changes in baseline – there is a low risk that any of the co-financing or baseline will be decreased or delayed due to the Pandemic.	The additional need for resources to address the effects of the pandemic will not likely affect the co-financing available for this project. However, in Namibia, funding could be contributed to the Conservation Relief, Recovery and Resilient Facility (CRRRF) where multiple funding partners collaborate to provide financial relief to CBNRM institutions, including communal conservancies affected by the pandemic. The facility will ensure continuation of key conservancy interventions, including anti-poaching activities, mitigation of human-wildlife conflict, and management of natural resources. All 86 conservancies should benefit from this facility to cover their core / operating costs, such as those related to deployment of community game guards and staff salaries to retain the main functions of conservancies and not lay off any conservancy employees. Support should be provided by

Risk category	Potential Risk	Mitigations and Plans
		<p>the field based CSOs together with MEFT to ensure full accountability and reporting to the coordination task team on the use of these funds by the conservancies. Technical service providers should facilitate positive engagement between conservancies and their private sector partners, to find amicable solutions to payment expectations (where Joint Venture contracts require the private sector partners to make certain payments to conservancies), including “relaxing payment schedules and conditions” to allow for the tourism sector to recover. The technical service providers evolve and amend modes of operation, including conducting their meetings, workshops and training sessions online; and support conservancy meetings in line with Covid related restrictions and requirements</p>
<p>Stakeholder engagement process</p>	<p>With the risks COVID-19 poses, it may be difficult to do community-level consultations on the project in the development phase.</p>	<p>Local level consultation will only be undertaken if it complies to national to local government guidelines and WWF national office guidelines. For example, it is possible that a small number of staff engage stakeholders on a broader set of topics such as design, gender, social and environmental issues, in order to limit exposure. Staff conducting consultations can utilize PPE for themselves and for people they talk to in person. Additionally, COVID protocol will be developed and followed, such as testing, and supply of sanitizer and masks. In any case where either party is not comfortable to engage in discussions, it will not proceed. As much as possible/appropriate to circumstances and conditions in the target geographies, remote connections will be sought, for example via local government offices visiting communities.</p> <p>In all cases, continued attention will be given to ensuring the voices of IP, women, youth, and any underrepresented community members.</p> <p>Development of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan for implementation will also address such restrictions and mitigations.</p>

Risk category	Potential Risk	Mitigations and Plans
Future risk of similar crises	It is not anticipated that this project will have adverse impacts that might contribute to future pandemics, for example, there will be no focus on increasing the human-wildlife interface or any actions that cause degradation.	This will be closely reviewed in the ESSF screening and in safeguards analysis and documentation. There are some project activities that may reduce current forest degradation.

Table 1144. COVID Opportunity Analysis

Opportunity Category	Potential and plans
Can the project do more to protect and restore natural systems and their ecological functionality?	<p>The project will safeguard ecological functionality in PAs and communal conservancies in Gabon and Namibia, respectively.</p> <p>The project will bring sustainable finance at a point in time where green recovery is important in Gabon and Namibia.</p>
Can the project include a focus on production landscapes and land use practices within them to decrease the risk of human/nature conflicts?	The project will have direct impacts in rural communities, many of which rely on natural resources for their livelihoods and/or live in close proximity to wildlife. In Namibia for example, the project will directly contribute to the mitigation of human/nature, specifically human-wildlife, conflicts by providing extension services/capacity building to communal conservancies for this purpose.
Can the project promote circular solutions to reduce unsustainable resource extraction and environmental degradation?	n/a
Can the project innovate in climate change mitigation and engaging with the private sector?	The private sector is a key player and stakeholder in community economic development. Their activities may align with and support conservation outcomes and goals of the PFP, and, in certain cases, may directly fall within the scope of the PFP (e.g., sustainable forestry, ecotourism, etc.). The private sector may also be engaged at a partnership-level in areas such as: carbon finance, biodiversity offsets, and other private capital market financing solutions, particularly in Gabon where government has demonstrated an appetite for financing that maximizes on a nature-based economy as part of a post-pandemic recovery. In Namibia, through the provision of extension services to individual conservancies, the project will develop/enhance the capacities in country to engage with the private sector, e.g. through the development of joint ventures with the tourism sector.

3.6 Consistency with National Priorities or Plans

The sections below provide an overview of how the project aligns with national priorities and plans.

3.6.1 Consistency with National Priorities - Gabon

CBD National Report 6th National Report (2019): Gabon adopted 24 national objectives relating to the Strategic Plan for Biological Diversity 2011-2020. By capitalizing an endowment fund to support 30x30x30 goals and improved management of the marine and terrestrial protected area estate in Gabon, the project will contribute directly or indirectly to the achievement of the following objectives:

- Objective 5 (calling for management of ecosystems impacting pelagic fish stocks);
- Objective 9 (calling for conservation, through a national PAs system of 17% of terrestrial and inland water areas, and 10% of marine and coastal areas, including areas that are particularly important for biodiversity and ecosystem services);
- Objective 10 (calling for the improvement and maintenance of biological diversity, esp. that of threatened species);
- Objective 14 (calling for the development and maintenance of a national network of wetlands);
- Objective 17 (calling for improved resilience of ecosystems and the contribution of biological diversity to carbon stocks in order to mitigate climate change and adapt to it);
- Objective 22 (relating to strengthening human, legal, institutional and financial capacities to manage biological diversity in a sustainable manner); and
- Objective 23 (strengthening international cooperation and concluding strategic alliances).

NBSAP (1999, 2004): The NBSAP available on the CBD website dated 1999, possibly updated or ratified in 2004 expresses Gabon’s vision to “by 2025, ... ensure the conservation of biodiversity and guarantee satisfactory sharing of the socio-economic and ecological benefits from biological resources by raising awareness of the importance of its biological resources and by developing human and institutional capacities. It also calls for “Safeguarding Biodiversity by protecting genes, species, habitats and ecosystems.” The project will contribute to the achievement of this vision by supporting the expansion and improved management of the marine and terrestrial PAs estates in Gabon.

UNFCCC National Communication/NDC (2016): In its NDC (2016), Gabon committed to reduce its GHG emissions by at least 50 percent from baseline scenario emissions in 2025. The commitment is to be achieved excluding carbon stocks from forests from the target. The NDC notes that land use change accounts for 60% of direct emissions in Gabon and would be a focus of its strategy to reduce emissions. This project will facilitate investment in the maintenance / enhancement / and expansion of conservation areas (with varying degrees of land use restrictions) helping to assure that high value forest and other ecosystems, including wetlands and mangroves, remain intact.

Plan Gabon Vert: Environment is one of three central pillars of the Gabon Emergent national development strategy. “Green Gabon” aims to increase wealth and opportunities through the sustainable development of seven nature-associated value chains: the wood sector, Forest Products Non-Timber (NTFP), the bushmeat sector, fishing, aquaculture, agriculture and livestock. By capitalizing an endowment fund to support the management of the marine and terrestrial protected area estate in Gabon, the project will help to ensure

that natural capital remains intact and generating services that contribute to/enable these development goals.

3.6.2 Consistency with National Priorities - Namibia

Article 95 of the Constitution: The policy framework for CBNRM stems from Namibia's constitution, setting out Namibia's commitment to conservation. Article 95 stipulates that the State is required to ensure "the maintenance of ecosystems, essential ecological processes and biological diversity and the utilisation of living natural resources on a sustainable basis for the benefit of all Namibians, both present and future". The Government of the Republic of Namibia's Policy on CBNRM is therefore to have a CBNRM programme that recognises the rights and development needs of local communities, recognises the need to promote biodiversity conservation and empowers present and future generations to manage and benefit from wildlife, forestry, fisheries, and other natural resources, in an integrated manner, that is also fully and recognized as a rural development option. These rights include rights to access, use, control, and benefit.

NBSAP 2 (2013-2022): By capitalizing an endowment fund that will provide financial support to enhance the effectiveness of community-based natural resource management and the expansion of the conservancy system in Namibia by making investments in (among other things): quota setting, hunting concessions, harvesting systems, human wildlife conflict mitigation, fire management, anti-poaching systems, game censuses and introductions, monitoring systems, law enforcement support, inter alia, the project will contribute directly to the achievement of a number of strategic goals set out in Namibia's NBSAP. Specifically, the project will contribute to strategic Goal C, which outlines Namibia's commitment to improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity. The endowment established by the project will provide direct support to several strategic initiatives under Goal C, namely:

- Strategic Initiative 3.1.1 which aims to "ensure that all protected areas are managed using participatory and science-based site planning processes that incorporate clear biodiversity objectives, targets, management strategies and monitoring programmes"
- Strategic Initiative 3.1.2, which is focused on developing capacities and infrastructure within PAs to attract tourism and tourism investment.
- Strategic Initiative 3.1.3: which aims to Consolidate integrated park management to enable it to generate economic benefits, tackle human wildlife conflicts and contribute to biodiversity protection integrated into the wider landscape. · Strategic Goal E: Enhance implementation of NBSAP2 through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building, incl., mobilization of financial resources from all sources

The National Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (2013- 2020) and Intended Nationally Determined Contributions document (2015) and updated NDC (2021): The National Climate Change Strategy and Action plan set ambitious targets for climate change adaptation and mitigation, such as: Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 89% by 2030; [...] Reforesting 20,000 hectares annually from 2018; Restoring 15 million hectares of grassland by 2030; Practicing conservation agriculture on 80,000 hectares by 2030; Implementing agro-forestry systems on 5,000 hectares of land commencing in 2018. Namibia's Updated NDC speaks specifically to the use of conservancies, community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) as a key adaptation approach. These strategies set out Namibia's commitment to addressing climate change and linking them to CBNRM. By fully-fund the provision of critical extension services in perpetuity to strengthen community-based natural resource management in Namibia and deliver community-driven protection and conservation impact in 86 communal conservancies covering an estimated 20M hectares of land, the project will contribute to Namibia's updated NDCs via CBNRM.

Fifth National Development Plan (NDP5) (2017-2022): Environment is one of four pillars of Namibia's national development plan. In line with the plan, the project will help to improve infrastructure, enforcement, combat poaching and illegal trade by enabling more resources to flow to CBNRM. This policy sets out Namibia's commitment to CBNRM and anti-poaching, a fundamental aspect of conservation. A new NDP setting out the country's priorities for the next five-year period is forthcoming.

Harambee Prosperity Plan (2021-2025): This is the Action Plan of the Namibian Government Towards Economic Recovery and Inclusive Growth. The Economic Progression Pillar (one of five pillars of the plan) calls for Optimizing Stewardship of Natural Resources and enhancing productivity in key sectors by, inter alia, reviewing policy and legislation to unlock the economic potential of communal land. The Prosperity Plan sets out Namibia's commitment to unlocking economic potential of communal lands, and the PFP can demonstrably make significant contributions to successful implementation of the Harambee Prosperity Plan.

Human Wildlife Conflict Policy (2009, rev. 2018): This policy recognizes that living with wildlife carries a cost and that there is an urgent need to find practical approaches and solutions to reduce the impacts of human-wildlife conflict, particularly in areas with the most vulnerable communities in Namibia. The endowment fund may provide resources designed to directly address such problems in community conservancies.

National Policy on Community Based Natural Resource Management (2013): This is the key policy document governing the national CBNRM and Community Conservation commitment and legal framework. Some elements may need strengthening i.e., in terms of potential land use right conflicts with regards to mining a.o. By mobilizing financial resources for extension services to support CBNRM and the conservancy system, the project will directly support the CBNRM policy which promotes the sustainable use of natural resources on state-land outside PAs. May pose a risk and may precede Community Conservancies rights. May need to be addressed as part of PFP.

Communal Land Reform Act, 2002 (Number 5 of 2002): This law has important implications for the Government's CBNRM Programme. The Act provides for the establishment of Communal Land Boards, places communal land under the administration of the CLBs and their Traditional Authorities and defines the rights and duties of the Land Boards, their composition, and functions. It may pose a risk and may precede Community Conservancies rights. May need to be addressed as part of PFP.

Water Act, 2004 (Number 24 of 2004): This Act provides for the establishment of Water Point User Associations comprising all rural community members or households using a particular water point on a permanent basis. The PFP facility will address natural resource use and management in the broader sense and will potentially contribute to sustainable management of water point committees and water resources. The project will ensure alignment with the provisions of the Act.

National Policy on Tourism for Namibia: Aims to provide a framework for the mobilisation of tourism resources to realize long term national goals defined in Vision 2030 and the more specific targets of the National Development Plans, namely, sustained economic growth, employment creation, reduced inequalities in income, gender as well as between the various regions, reduced poverty, and the promotion of economic empowerment. Community tourism is enabled through this policy and linked to CBNRM and community conservation, providing the foundation of economic benefits and incentives supporting community-based conservation, and the the project will ensure actions are in alignment with the policy.

Nature Conservation Amendment Act, 1996 (Act 5 of 1996): Provides the mechanisms for implementing the Conservancy Programme. It sets the formation of a conservancy as the condition upon which ownership over

wild game and use rights over other game species will be given to communal area residents The Act is the foundational for all policies related to conservation work in Namibia, and is currently under revision.

Forest Act, 2001 (Number 12 of 2001): the Act stipulates that community groups have the rights to proclaim Community Forests on their communal lands. It sets out the legal framework for State Forest Reserves and Community Forests, partially linked to PFP. The project will ensure alignment with the provisions of the Act.

3.6.3 Consistency with National Priorities - Eastern Tropical Pacific

Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles: The Convention promotes the protection, conservation, and recovery of the populations of sea turtles and those habitats on which they depend, based on the best available data and taking into consideration the environmental, socioeconomic and cultural characteristics of the Parties (Article II, Text of the Convention). These actions should cover both nesting beaches and the Parties' territorial waters. Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama are party to the treaty. Colombia has not signed. Sea turtles are some of the key species that thrive in the ETP and would benefit from protection of swimways.

Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor (CMAR):

EEZs of Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, and Costa Rica and high seas pocket between the Galapagos Islands and Ecuador. Mandate of conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in the ETP. Created with the San Jose Declaration in 2004. The CMAR Action Plan (p. 9) outlines a vision for CMAR, which is the achievement of effective governance and participation at a regional scale for the conservation and sustainable use of ETP biodiversity, with the MPAs as core areas of conservation. In close alignment with its vision is CMAR's stated objective, which is to achieve conservation and promote sustainable use of biological diversity in the ETP region, based on the interests and priorities of its member States, via the establishment of regional governmental strategies supported by civil society, NGOs, and international cooperation. The guiding principles of CMAR are equity, sovereignty, precaution, transparency, and adaptive management. CMAR will be essential in the implementation of any regional conservation mechanisms, and this project will seek to give CMAR legal authority to facilitate coordination. One key activity during the planning stage is to increase the capacity of CMAR and create durability. Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS), Regional Fisheries Body (RFB)

Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS), Regional Fisheries Body (RFB): EEZs of Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia. Mandate of conservation and sustainable use of all living resources within area of competence. ETP parties: Ecuador and Colombia. Created with the Santiago Declaration, 1952. Action Plan for the Southeast Pacific, which includes actions on IUU fishing such as regional coordination, capacity building, analysis of national legislations, workshops on sanctions with judges and customs officials. May offer a basis on which to establish regional coordination in the ETP against IUU fishing. Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC),

Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMO): The area of the Pacific Ocean bounded by the coastline of North, Central, and South America and by the lines described in Article III of the Antigua Convention. Includes EEZs of Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, and Costa Rica. Mandate: conservation and sustainable use of tuna and tuna-like species. Signed by all ETP countries. Signed at the Antigua Convention in 2003. In particular, may be helpful in establishing a "closed" area in the critical high seas portion of the ETP (swimway between the Galapagos Islands and Ecuador).

South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPRFMO): Waters of the Pacific Ocean beyond areas of national jurisdiction as delimited in Article 5 of the Convention. Includes high seas pocket between Galapagos and Ecuador. Mandate: Conservation and sustainable use of all fish (except sedentary species, highly migratory species, anadromous and catadromous species, marine mammals, marine reptiles, seabirds) in the high seas of the South Pacific and the safeguarding of the ecosystems in which they occur. Includes only Ecuador. Signed at the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean, 2012. In particular, may be helpful in establishing a “closed” area in the critical high seas portion of the ETP (swimway between the Galapagos Islands and Ecuador).

Large Marine Ecosystem Pacific Central American Coastal (LME PCAC): Bordering Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, and Ecuador. Integrated, ecosystem-based management of the Pacific Central American Coastal Large Marine Ecosystem. ETP parties: Ecuador, Panama, Costa Rica.

Central America Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization (OSPESCA): Regulation OSP-03-10 Creation and Gradual Implementation of a Regional System for Monitoring and Satellite Control of Fishing Vessels of the States of the Central American Isthmus and Regulation OSP-08-14 to encourage the adoption of harmonics provisions aimed to prevent, discourage, and eliminate IUU fishing. May offer a framework for changes to IUU fishing management and policy in the ETP.

3.7 Innovativeness, Sustainability & Potential for Scaling up

Enduring Earth is a groundbreaking collaboration to accelerate conservation worldwide at a bold scale. The 600 million hectares of ocean, land, and freshwater that Enduring Earth is partnering with governments, Indigenous peoples, local communities, and others to permanently protect is an area twice the size of India.

By protecting lands and waters at this scale, we can save iconic species, safeguard vital ecosystems, and stabilize the climate, putting our planet on a path to a healthier future. To achieve these goals, Enduring Earth partners work closely with Indigenous peoples and local communities who have rightfully stewarded these lands for generations and whose livelihoods depend on these places.

The Project Finance for Permanence model employed by Enduring Earth fully funds large-scale conservation projects upfront and secures major commitments to conservation, the rights of people, and sustainable economic growth. This approach unites governments, private and public funders, Indigenous peoples, local communities, and others to ensure projects are collaboratively designed, locally led, sustainably financed, well-managed, and supported by communities and governments alike. In this way, protected places stay protected in the face of ongoing change.

Enduring Earth aims to complete PFP initiatives in 20 countries by 2030, developing a pipeline of potential opportunities where biodiversity and climate benefits are high, stakeholder support is strong, and the political moment is right. Managing a shared project portfolio means Enduring Earth is able to form a nimble team to rapidly develop and implement projects, moving quickly as opportunities arise and delivering impact greater than the sum of our individual efforts.

3.7.1 Innovation

The project will use the innovative Project Finance for Permanence mechanism in Gabon and Namibia, through which public and private funds will be pledged toward the goal of helping expand protections and improving the management status of a network of protected and conserved areas, based on an agreed conservation plan, in both target countries. Interventions will not focus on a specific site but rather on

mechanisms and enabling conditions to build long term financial sustainability across entire systems (the PAs system in Gabon, conservancy system in Namibia). In Gabon, the project will help materialize Gabon's pledge to include explicit protection to its freshwater systems to reach 30% protection across the three realms: terrestrial, marine, and freshwater, potentially being a global first. It seeks to do so while providing clear biodiversity, climate, and livelihood benefits. In Namibia, this project represents the first time a PFP approach will be applied in the developing world to channel support directly to community conservancies, promoting the mainstreaming of conservation as a rural development strategy and likewise producing biodiversity, climate, and livelihood benefits. The Enduring Earth Coalition itself is an innovative collaboration between three of the world's foremost conservation organizations and other public and private donors. The Coalition capitalizes on the individual institutional strengths and comparative advantages of these global conservation organizations to facilitate resource mobilization as well as deal execution, PFP implementation, and scaling up.

3.7.2 Sustainability

The project is expressly designed to counter the challenge faced in all target countries of over-reliance on short- or medium-term projects financed primarily by international public or private donors, which threatens the sustainability of results of investments in their respective protected and conserved areas systems. A PFP, by definition, ensures that all policy changes and funding necessary to meet the specific conservation goals of a program over a defined long-term timeframe are secured, with the ultimate aim of achieving the ecological, social, political, organizational, and financial sustainability of that program.

This project will contribute to the long-term sustainability of the PAs and conservancy systems in Gabon and Namibia, respectively, by supporting the development of a PFP (including conservation plan and financial model, appropriate institutional arrangements, *inter alia*) which will be ecologically, socially, financially and institutionally sustainable. The project will also contribute to the development of enabling conditions for a regional durable governance and financing mechanism in the Eastern Tropical Pacific, which will ensure durability of ongoing investments in the region through regional coordination and sustainable finance.

Ecological sustainability. The conservation plans for all countries will ensure the long-term health of the target ecosystems. Geographic areas will be sufficiently large and well protected to maintain biodiversity.

Social sustainability. In all countries, project investments will contribute to the social sustainability of the PFP by helping to realize a variety of social benefits that create strong incentives for conservation, stimulate community support. In Gabon, clear plans for community support and development, associated to the conservation plan, and identification of strategic investments for social enterprises (such as tourism and forest-products based industries) with collaboration of the private sectors should create a stronger and broader social support to the conservation agenda. In Namibia, extension services financed by the endowment may enhance community capacities to generate nature-positive livelihood opportunities by providing technical assistance in the following areas: tourism planning, business planning and feasibility assessments, marketing, contracts, insurance, product development, among other things. Similarly, technical support enabled by the endowment to individual conservancies may provide a host of other benefits that contribute to social sustainability, e.g. human wildlife conflict mitigation. In the ETP, the project will help to define how a durable finance mechanism for the region may benefit local communities via community development opportunities and enhanced resiliency. Finally, to promote broad support for regional

governance and financing mechanisms, an inclusive process for developing the conservation plan will be followed, which engages a wide variety of stakeholders, including community groups.

Institutional sustainability. In each country/ region, the PFP design will ensure that there are institutions with the capacity to successfully design, execute, and monitor activities that contribute to the PFP's conservation goal. Part of government's ongoing commitment in Gabon under the terms of the PFP will be to ensure that appropriate capacities for project design, execution and monitoring are in place to ensure conservation targets are being met. In Namibia, extension services to the communal conservancies will help to ensure that conservation goals set in the conservation plan are being met. In both cases, the project will capacitate conservation trust funds to manage a sustainable flow of conservation funding over the long term, in line with internationally recognized good practices. In the ETP, the project aims to increase the organizational capacity of CMAR and to bolster CMAR's effectiveness by enhancing its legal structure.

Financial sustainability. The ambition for the Gabon PFP is to capitalize a \$124M transition fund (this is the current estimate; the final amount target capitalization will be confirmed once the conservation plan and funding model are finalized) that will incentivize the creation of new sustainable financing mechanisms that enable the government to increase the level of investment in PAs over time. Payments from the transition fund will diminish over time as the Government meets key disbursement milestones and institutionalizes in-country sustainable finance mechanisms that will ensure permanence for conservation of 30% of its lands, waters, and oceans. A new conservation trust fund being created in Gabon will ensure appropriate controls over financial resources. In Namibia, the capitalization of an endowment fund will ensure that financial resources are available in perpetuity to support extension services to the 86 community conservancies currently comprising the system and any new conservancies that may come on stream. Strong funds management and control processes within an independent trust fund will derive from adherence to internationally recognized good practice. In the ETP, the project will explore the use of a durable financing mechanism to support regional coordination and collaboration. A regional environmental fund (a CTF) will ensure good governance of financial resources mobilized. Domestic revenue sources and other mechanisms (e.g., debt conversion, payment for ecosystem services, and sustainable marine conservation finance mechanism), will be assessed during the planning phase to inform financial models and promote financial sustainability of the ETP durable mechanism.

3.7.3 Scaling-up

The project will invest in technical assistance for the express purpose of building capacities to replicate and scale the Enduring Earth PFP approach globally. Project investments under component 2 will support scaling out of the Enduring Earth/PFP approach in other geographies by: contributing to the development of a pipeline of deals ready for follow on funding; strengthening capacities within national institutions, including Conservation Trust Funds (CTFs) and others; and analyzing innovative mechanisms to mobilize capital to increase the level of funding available to achieve conservation goal(s) to help countries to overcome the difficult challenge of mobilizing resources domestically. This will include deeper dive analyses of the capacities of CTFs and other national actors, as well as investigations of revenue generation mechanisms in prospective countries. This subcomponent also includes support for activities necessary to build the readiness of a selected country or a multi-country region for a potential PFP.

Finally, the project has a strong approach on knowledge management to ensure sharing of experience and good practices to facilitate replication and scaling. The project will finance a series of analyses, webinars, case studies and workshops to present best practices on core competencies for PFP implementation and management of protected and conserved areas, and to facilitate south-south exchange of lessons and experiences among PFP countries.

3.8 Lessons learned during project preparation and from other relevant projects

PAs and “other effective area-based conservation measures” (OECMs) – what may be referred to generally as conservation areas – need to be adequately funded to meet their conservation, sustainable development, and management objectives so they can guarantee long lasting local, national, and global benefits. Over the past 30 years, many tools and mechanisms have been designed and tested with a view to securing sustainable financing for conservation areas. Despite making considerable advances, securing the stable and adequate financial flows needed to ensure the effective and efficient management of conservation area systems over the long term remains a challenge. Conservation area systems in many countries continue to operate with minimal national funding and rely mostly on short- or medium-term projects financed primarily by international public or private donors. Consequently, the sustainability of the achieved results and impacts are vulnerable to project funding cycles.

Project finance for permanence brings concentrated organizational and financial resources to bear on large-scale, long-term conservation programs. By designing projects for permanent protection, creating strong organizations and inter-organizational agreements, and using tested financial processes such as rigorous financial plans and a single closing, PFP builds a strong foundation for the permanence of ecologically important places. PFP efforts are large endeavors, usually demanding many years of intensive work. Site selection is important, and it should take account of the factors associated with project success, such as strong government capacity, political commitment, high-capacity stakeholders, and strong potential for additional internal and external funding. New PFP efforts could push its evolution. Specifically, PFP may benefit from 1) increased diversity of funding sources, 2) more attention to political and social sustainability, 3) fewer compromises in setting conservation objectives, and 4) clearer expectations for each major stakeholder.

A number of important lessons have been learned from existing PFP experiences⁵⁷, including the following:

Buy in from government, donors and the private sector is crucial to the success of a PFP: PFP efforts are large endeavors, usually demanding many years of intensive work. Furthermore, government plays a central role in sustainable conservation, and high-level political sponsorship is needed throughout the program’s life, especially at the national level. Substantial political will is therefore necessary to bring a PFP project to completion. It can be generated by identifying political champions, identifying an anchor donor, and ensuring that at least 30% of funding commitments have been lined up before the beginning of the process. At minimum, the PFP partnership should include the host government, a high-capacity conservation NGO, and an anchor funder for external private funding.

Fundraising should be supported by strong branding and communication: Fundraising for a PFP initiative requires a large and sustained effort over many years. The authority and other lead fundraising partners visit and undertake rounds to raise awareness about their PFP initiative and then carry out negotiations with various potential donors. Each PFP must also have a robust communications strategy tailored to fundraising efforts. This should include giving the PFP a name that captures the spirit and vision of the initiative, and that coalition members strongly identify with. An organization with strong marketing capabilities should oversee communications. The communication strategy should highlight the wealth of biodiversity of the country and the contribution of conservation areas to maintaining ecosystem services and social benefits, underscore the initiative’s contribution to fulfilling the country’s international commitments to sustainable development and environmental stewardship, the paradigm shifts of the PFP and added value as well as highlight innovative

⁵⁷ The lessons described here are drawn from the PFP Guide: Securing Sustainable Financing for Conservation Areas: A Guide to Project Finance for Permanence. Amazon Sustainable Landscapes Programme, WWF. November 2021.

features of the initiative such as the conservation goals or financial model. Promotional materials should also explicitly recognize roles so potential donors will quickly identify the initiative as a priority of those responsible for conservation area management. It is often useful to identify a person who can play the role of a fundraising champion. This person can help lead fundraisers to identify and solicit funds. This person can also play an influencer role with the lead authority and other donor participants and can have either a public role or one that is behind the scenes.

Likewise, the closing ceremony has been a public event accompanied by a strong media presence. The closing ceremony is an opportunity for coalition partners to show their leadership in the conservation agenda on an international stage. The closing can occur or be announced at a major international event to garner more attention, but the most important priority is ensuring participation of the highest-level political representative possible from the PFP country.

Define charismatic and measurable program goals that include permanence in the conservation plan: At the beginning of PFP design, all partners should develop and agree on a compelling and unified vision that aligns partners' interests and reflects the country's high-level conservation priorities that the PFP will help achieve. These priorities could relate to a country's commitments to international conventions or its nationally determined contributions, among others. Political considerations may shift during the design phase due to changes in administrations, policies, institutions, or staff, but aligning PFP goals with national conservation priorities, commitments to international agreements, and the PFP vision should help ensure continued support for the program. When approaching the government, a window of opportunity should be identified to pitch the idea to the government leader where the conservation area is located. Ideally, the pitch should be made early in the leader's term, to optimize the amount of time that there is high level support for the PFP. Ideally, the leader embraces the PFP as a potential political victory or legacy for the current government. That will increase the likelihood of having political support for the PFP from start to finish. Expectations about the amount of time and work needed to be done to close the deal should be communicated early on, to make sure that there is enough support to keep the initiative moving, particularly at the mid-government level. PFPs should also involve key technical personnel of the authority who will likely remain in their positions despite political changes. This will help embed the PFP initiative within the responsible implementing institutions.

Likewise, PFP depends on partnerships with and among highly capable non-governmental actors. These partners should have a strong interest in seeing the PFP succeed, given that multistakeholder involvement is crucial to PFP. They should also have general technical and in-country expertise, as well as relationships with local and international partners, and large-scale fundraising ability. Donors require that the following conditions be in place before committing to the PFP: an accountable government that is open to innovative ideas; some existing staffing for PAs (knowing that the staffing will likely need to be improved); and a mechanism to measure success of the PFP. Another draw is having a diverse group of partners from the social and economic development sectors, not just the environmental sector, and partners whose values are similar to those of the donors. For some donors, having prominent bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors on board is attractive. PFP deals are seen as an exit strategy for donors who have supported other conservation work in the region. Filling the funding gap ensures those donors that their previous investments and achievements will be sustained. Donor interests must be balanced with the country's conservation priorities reflected in the goals of the PFP, where the latter should take priority over the impulse to broaden the initiative's scope with the sole objective to maximize donor commitments. Regardless, conversations with donors (public and private) should emphasize the need for PFP funds to be as flexible as possible.

Some private companies that have long-term investment plans for the region said that supporting PFP deals is a way to address their goals for protecting the region's environment, not just in the short-term but also long after they have finished their work in the region. It also is seen by some companies to build better working relationships with government officials with whom they need to work.

A strong PFP team with clearly defined roles should be put in place early in the process: The core PFP team needs to have a deal broker, a project manager, a political champion and a lead fundraiser. The deal broker is the main contact with high level government officials and potential donors, and thus has some political clout, as well as project monitoring and management skills. A project manager is needed to coordinate the day-to-day aspects of the PFP. A political champion is a political leader that can give political clout to the PFP before and after the fund is created. The political champion should be willing and able to meet with potential donors, as well as capable of putting pressure on mid-level government staff to complete the PFP tasks. A lead fundraiser, who can secure at least 30% of funds before the start of the initiative. A strong fund leader is critical to the long-term success of the PFP initiative, especially post-closing. The leader should have good relationships with decision makers so that he/she can maintain government support for the fund over time. The leader also should be willing and able to raise funds, if fundraising has not been completed prior to closing or if funds are needed beyond what was raised to meet the initial PFP target.

The PFP process needs to be flexible, adaptable, and forward thinking: The design of a PFP and its components is an iterative process—they will be reviewed and adjusted frequently until final approval by the relevant authority and coalition members. The PFP process should be adaptable to delays, changes of courses and roadblocks, some of which are for political reasons, by assessing which issues that are slowing down or altering the process that need to be addressed before or after the closing.

Explore new and diversified sources of domestic funding: From the start of the process, time should be allocated to exploring new and diversified sources of domestic funding, to make the financial model underpinning the PFP deal more resilient. Given that international experience has shown that government funding is usually insufficient to meet all costs related to effective management, domestic sources of funding should be identified and secured, in order to make the financial model more resilient, mitigating for future risks. To enable the authority to keep their commitments to progressive increases in financing, PFP arrangements may include establishment of mechanisms to raise new recurring funding (e.g., from carbon taxes, compensation payments, or other mechanisms), and actions that will optimize use of available resources. Identifying and securing diversified sources of domestic funding should be done before closing, since there is less incentive to make policy changes needed after closing. Because PFP focuses on achieving long-term goals, the project team should design the financial model based on outcomes, but ensure that it will adhere easily to government line-item budgeting.

Fundraise for the full cost of the conservation program: To close, the project team needs commitments to cover the financial plan's estimates for program costs in perpetuity. PFP is an "all or nothing" approach: no commitments are called unless the project has obtained commitments for the full cost. Hence, a transition fund is appropriate if all resources in it are used over a pre-established period of time. However, a hybrid fund, which is a mix of transition and endowment, is the best option when it is not possible to raise enough funds to cover the full gap with an endowment. Transition funds also increase the likelihood that the government will remain engaged in funding PAs over the course of the implementation of the PFP.

A transition fund is a pool of one-time funding (usually donations) held by a fund administrator that will be completely spent down over a defined long-term period (typically 10–25 years) as in-country sources of sustainable financing steadily increase to eventually cover all long-term recurring costs of a program. PFPs

often employ transition funds to temporarily help developing countries cover costs of conservation area systems until those countries can fully cover those costs themselves. A transition fund is a specific type of sinking fund.

Ensure that the public-private partnership is secure by developing distinct closing conditions and disbursement milestones: The former should frame a deal in which all parties both contribute to and receive something from the project, so that each is better off accepting the deal than rejecting it. Closing conditions are mutually agreed upon minimum requirements that the PFP must meet before implementation can begin. Closing conditions are extremely important because they give coalition members clear milestones to work towards when designing the PFP. Closing conditions and other relevant provisions that will guide the development of the single closing agreement should be summarized in a term sheet that will be signed during the design phase by coalition members. It is recommended that the parties agree upon the fundamental aspects of the single closing in plain language—for example, in a “term sheet”—before beginning the drafting of the legal agreement to focus the parties’ initial energy and attention on the issues rather than the art of legal drafting.

Disbursement conditions are milestones that must be met during PFP implementation for donor funding to be disbursed in one or multiple tranches. They are an important way in which the donors and other key stakeholders ensure that the initiative stays true to its design over time during implementation. They are defined in the design phase by the coalition members, including donors, and always require the achievement of specific conservation results. They may include funding requirements from partners as well as other conditions. In most projects, including ARPA, the government is the major source of financing for supported PAs (as well as authority for the program). It is thus crucial that the PFP structure can use the financial partnership between the government and the independent entity to ensure performance by all parties of previously-agreed-upon actions.

The financial model should adequately factor in the localized threats to PAs: Adequate funding should be generated through the PFP to cover expenses geared toward minimizing or eliminating localized threats, and expenses that the PFP will cover should be clearly communicated. If possible, costs should be estimated for each protected area’s specific needs, with the scope, activities and outputs associated with the PFP clearly defined. In order to minimize the risk of under or overestimating funding, cost estimates should be updated every two to three years. If possible, contingency funds should be put in place to respond to needs that may fall outside the agreed financial plan. An adequate monitoring system for the PAs should also be put in place, in order to ensure that PFP funds are distributed strategically. Because PFP focuses on achieving long-term goals, the project team should design the financial model based on outcomes, but ensure that it will adhere easily to government line-item budgeting. It is important to ensure the financial model is flexible enough to be adapted to changing contexts, such as shifting conservation threat levels and locations, or adoption of new technologies during implementation.

Transition fund management should be left to a credible organization with a clear mission statement and conservation goals: If a transition fund is created, it needs to be managed by a suitable organization. A suitable organization is one that is independent enough from the government to be able to leverage the government’s commitments, while also agile, efficient and credible enough to manage the funds. The organization must also have a clear mission statement and conservation goals, and the governance and operational procedures of the fund need to be clearly defined in a detailed operating manual prior. Where possible, the PFP team should recruit an existing organization rather than create a new one, to avoid the need to build organizational structure and credibility from scratch, reducing the project costs and time

significantly. If a new organization needs to be created to disburse funds, specific expenses associated with the set up should be incorporated into the PFP design costs.

Creating a new organization to manage PFP donations has high transaction costs and significantly extends time and funds required for the design phase. This is particularly due to the amount of work required to negotiate the conservation trust fund's design, create it, and build staff capacity. Specific expenses associated with setting up a new conservation trust fund need to be incorporated into the PFP design costs.

The assessment of existing fund administrators should not overlook the history and institutional arrangements related to financing conservation areas in the country. This is because the assessment provides an opportunity to improve the institutional capacity of a CTF and, consequently, the capacity of the conservation area system to manage and absorb large amounts of resources.

4 SECTION 4: TECHNICAL APPENDICES:

Annex 1 - Advanced Draft: Namibia Critical Extension Services

Annex 2- WWF Climate Risk Screen for Gabon, Namibia, ETP

Annex 3a - METT scores Namibia

Annex 3b - List of Target Protected Areas & Gabon

Annex 4a - Baseline initiatives (Gabon)

Annex 4b - Baseline initiatives (Namibia)

Annex 4c - Baseline initiatives (ETP)

Annex 5- Results Framework

Annex 6 - PFP Funding status and contingency plan (Gabon & Namibia)

Annex 7a - Stakeholder Engagement Plan (Gabon)

Annex 7b - Stakeholder Engagement Plan (Namibia)

Annex 7c - Stakeholder Engagement Plan (ETP)

Annex 8a - Safeguards (Gabon)

Annex 8b - Safeguards (Namibia)

Annex 8c - Safeguards (ETP)

Annex 9a – Gender Analysis & Action Plan (Gabon)

Annex 9b - Gender Analysis & Action Plan (Namibia)

Annex 9c - Gender Analysis & Action Plan (ETP)