



**CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM PARTNERSHIP FUND
IN THE GUINEAN FORESTS OF WEST AFRICA
CONSERVATION RESULTS:
2016 TO 2022**

CRITICAL | **ECOSYSTEM**
PARTNERSHIP FUND

GFWA
GUINEAN FORESTS
OF WEST AFRICA


BirdLife
INTERNATIONAL



INTRODUCTION

Founded in 2000, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan and the World Bank designed to safeguard some of Earth's biologically richest and most threatened regions, known as biodiversity hotspots.

Protecting the Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot

The Guinean Forests of West Africa (GFWA) Biodiversity Hotspot is one of eight biodiversity hotspots in Africa and Madagascar and covers 621,705 km² divided into two sub-regions:

- The 'Upper Guinean Forests' stretching from Guinea, through Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo and, marginally, into Benin.
- The 'Lower Guinean Forests' covering much of southern Nigeria, extends into Cameroon, and also includes São Tomé and Príncipe and

the offshore islands of Equatorial Guinea.

The Guinean Forests support impressive levels of biodiversity, having high levels of species richness and endemism. It also faces many ongoing threats to biodiversity that have resulted in the loss of more than 85% of the native vegetation cover.

Threats to biodiversity in the hotspot

- Rapid loss of forest cover for agricultural and infrastructural development activities
- Wildlife species loss due to excessive hunting for bush meat and wildlife trafficking
- Climate change
- Pollution
- Invasive and other problematic species
- Insecurity, disease and conflict
- Poverty and unsustainable biological resource use

CEPF's investment niche in the Guinean Forests is therefore to provide civil society organizations at grassroots, national and international levels with



Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity hotspot boundaries

the capacity and resources to establish and sustain multi-stakeholder partnerships that demonstrate models for sustainable growth, target the poorest populations and achieve priority conservation outcomes. CEPF's niche for investment in the hotspot was formulated through a participatory process that engaged civil society, donor and governmental stakeholders throughout the region. The results of this process and the strategy that CEPF has identified for supporting biodiversity conservation in the region are outlined in the [ecosystem profile](#).

Facts about CEPF's investment in the GFWA hotspot

CEPF has so far supported civil society organizations in the Guinean Forests of West Africa hotspot during three phases. The first two phases focused exclusively on the Upper Guinean Forests part of the hotspot, with \$6.2 million disbursed through 72 grants from 2001 to 2006 and then with \$2.1 million for another 5 grants, as a consolidation phase, from 2008 to 2012. The CEPF's Donor Council approved a third investment phase, this time for the entire hotspot, to extend from 2016 to 2022 with \$10.1 million which were disbursed through 79 grants to 65 organizations.

- Duration: July 2016 – June 2022 (6 years)
- Regional Implementation Team (RIT): BirdLife

International

- Budget \$10.1 million
- Eligible Countries: Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, São Tomé and Príncipe, Equatorial Guinea

Over the term of this 6-year investment the CEPF and the GFWA Regional Implementation Team have supported 79 projects across the hotspot, more than 65% of which were led by local civil society organisations. The engagement of the grantees during those years was exceptional and truly inspirational. Networks were formed and strengthened to continue to confront the challenges facing biodiversity, ecosystem services, and communities in the hotspot today.

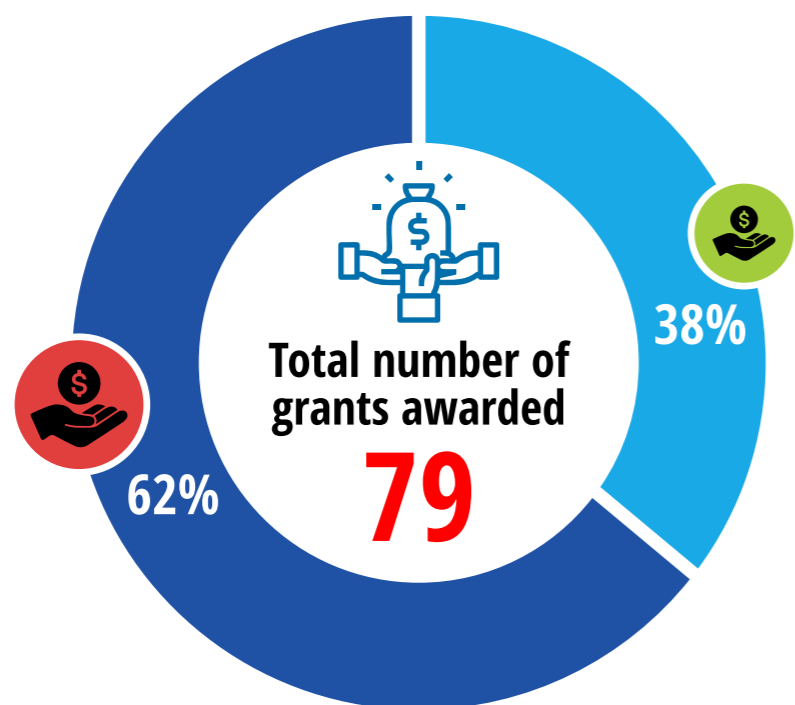
This leaflet aims to present the results of the final assessment of the CEPF's investment performance in the hotspot towards the goals set out in the ecosystem profile. It draws mainly on project reports generated by the civil society organizations implementing large or small grants across the 11 countries.



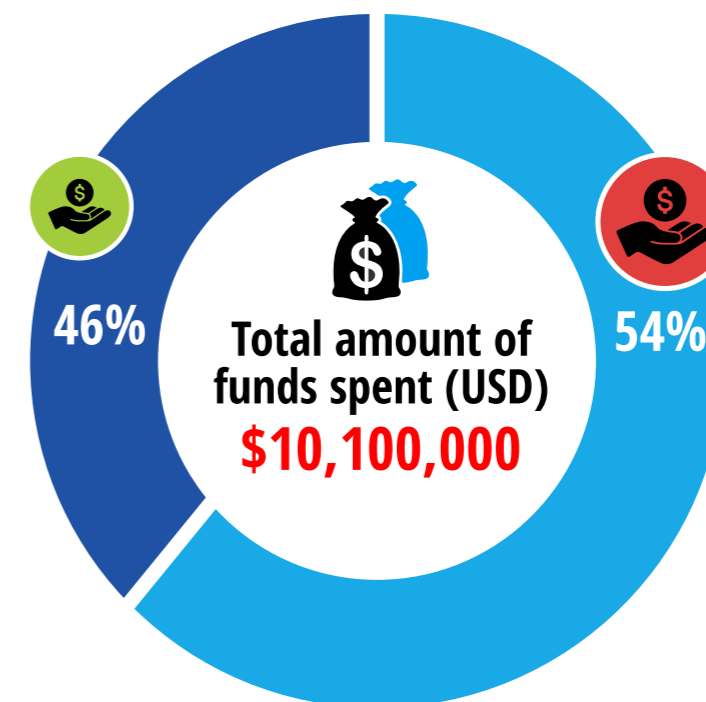
Location of small and large grant projects funded by CEPF in the hotspot



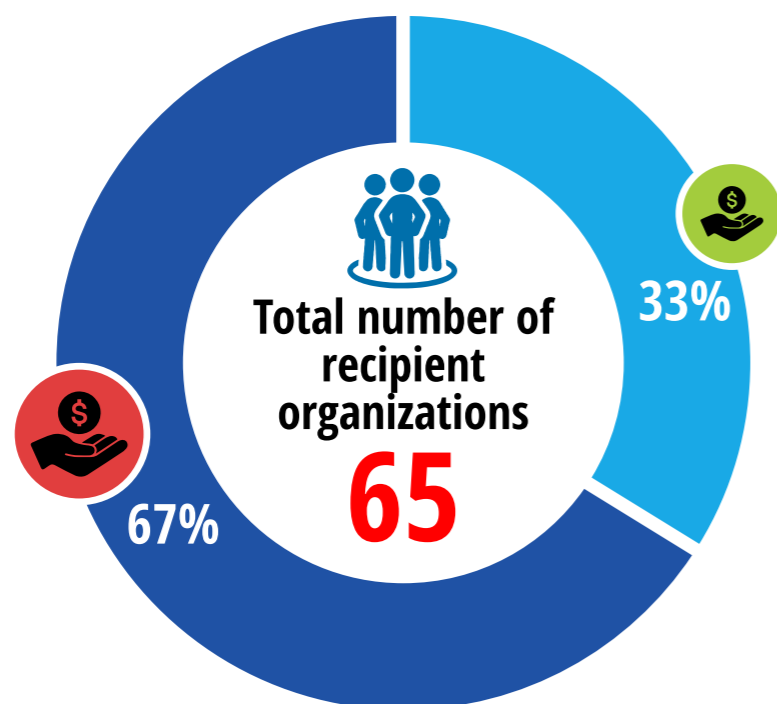
CEPF projects portfolio performance in the GFWA Hotspot July 2016 to June 2022



- % of large grants awarded (amount above \$50,000)
- % of small grants awarded (amount less than \$50,000)



- % of funds awarded to local CSOs
- % of funds awarded to International CSOs



- % of funded projects led by International civil society organisations (CSOs)
- % of funded projects led by local CSOs

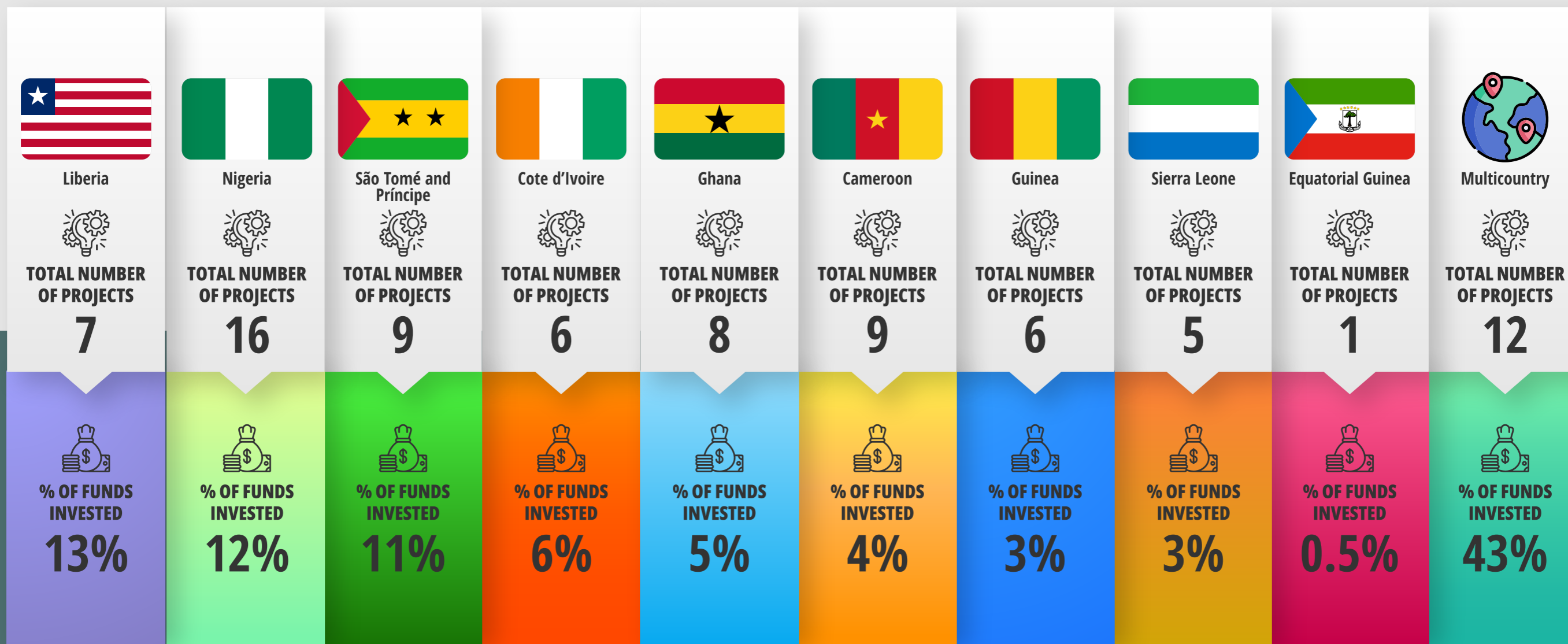


Livelihood alternative for local community through beekeeping in Liberia



Data collection in Sao Tome Obo National Park

TOTAL NUMBER OF PROJECTS AND PERCENTAGE OF FUNDS AWARDED PER COUNTRY



* Benin and Togo

Grants were not awarded in these two countries, mostly due to the reduced eligible area covering both Togo and Benin.

**Strategic
Direction 1**
Empowering Communities



**TOTAL NUMBER
OF GRANTS**

27

**% OF FUNDS
AWARDED**

24%



Training of women and youth in salt production using solar light in Touguissoury, Guinea. ©GE



Training of technicians in forest inventory and data analysis in São Tomé Obô Natural Park. ©RSET

**Strategic
Direction 2**
Mainstreaming Biodiversity



**TOTAL NUMBER
OF GRANTS**

14

**% OF FUNDS
AWARDED**

23%




Sensitization meeting with community members on the need for biodiversity conservation in the district of Tai and Zagne in Cote d'Ivoire. ©CEFCA



Training of farmers on agroforestry practices and biodiversity friendly practices in Tai district in Cote d'Ivoire. ©RA

Strategic Direction 3
Safeguarding Species & Key Biodiversity Areas



TOTAL NUMBER OF GRANTS
16

% OF FUNDS AWARDED
19%



Assessment and monitoring of the Príncipe Thrush, *Turdus xanthorhynchus* in Parque Natural Obô do Príncipe. ©FFI



Site monitoring of Marine turtles in Grand Béréby in Côte d'Ivoire. ©CEM

Strategic Direction 4
Capacity Building of Local Organizations



TOTAL NUMBER OF GRANTS
21

% OF FUNDS AWARDED
16%



Training of eco-guardians in nursery establishment and management in Iko Esai, Cross River State, Nigeria. ©DEVCON



Adult literacy study circles for Normon and Tonglay community members in Liberia. ©SCNL

Strategic Direction 5
Regional Implementation Team



TOTAL NUMBER OF GRANTS
1

% OF FUNDS AWARDED
18%



Participants at the CEPF GFWA final assessment workshop in Accra, Ghana © BIRDLIFE

PROJECT CONTRIBUTION TO CEPF PORTFOLIO INDICATORS IN THE GFWA HOTSPOT.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION
01

Number of local communities empowered to engage in the sustainable management of 40 priority sites and/or consolidate ecological connectivity at the landscape scale.

TARGET
60

CONTRIBUTION TO TARGET
144

Number of local land-use plans elaborated and implemented to facilitate good governance in the management of community and private reserves and concessions.



Number of local and indigenous communities trained to initiate and advocate for land tenure and forestry reforms in relation to management of community and private reserves and concessions.



Number of participatory management plans that support stakeholder collaboration in protected-area management prepared and implemented.



Number of local communities targeted by sustainable livelihood/job creation activities or benefit-sharing mechanisms with tangible wellbeing benefits.





STRATEGIC DIRECTION 02

Number of conservation corridors with public policies and/or private sector business practices incorporating provisions for biodiversity conservation.

TARGET 6

CONTRIBUTION TO TARGET 6

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 03



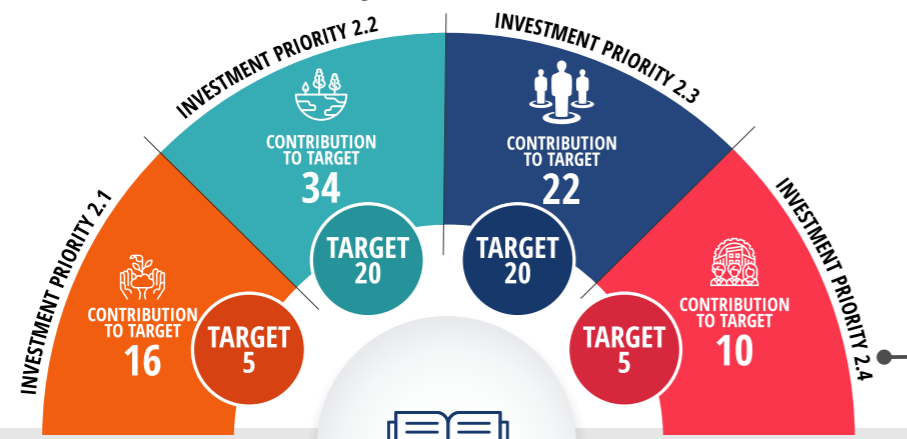
Number of globally threatened species targeted by CEPF grants with populations stable or increasing.

TARGET 30

CONTRIBUTION TO TARGET 22

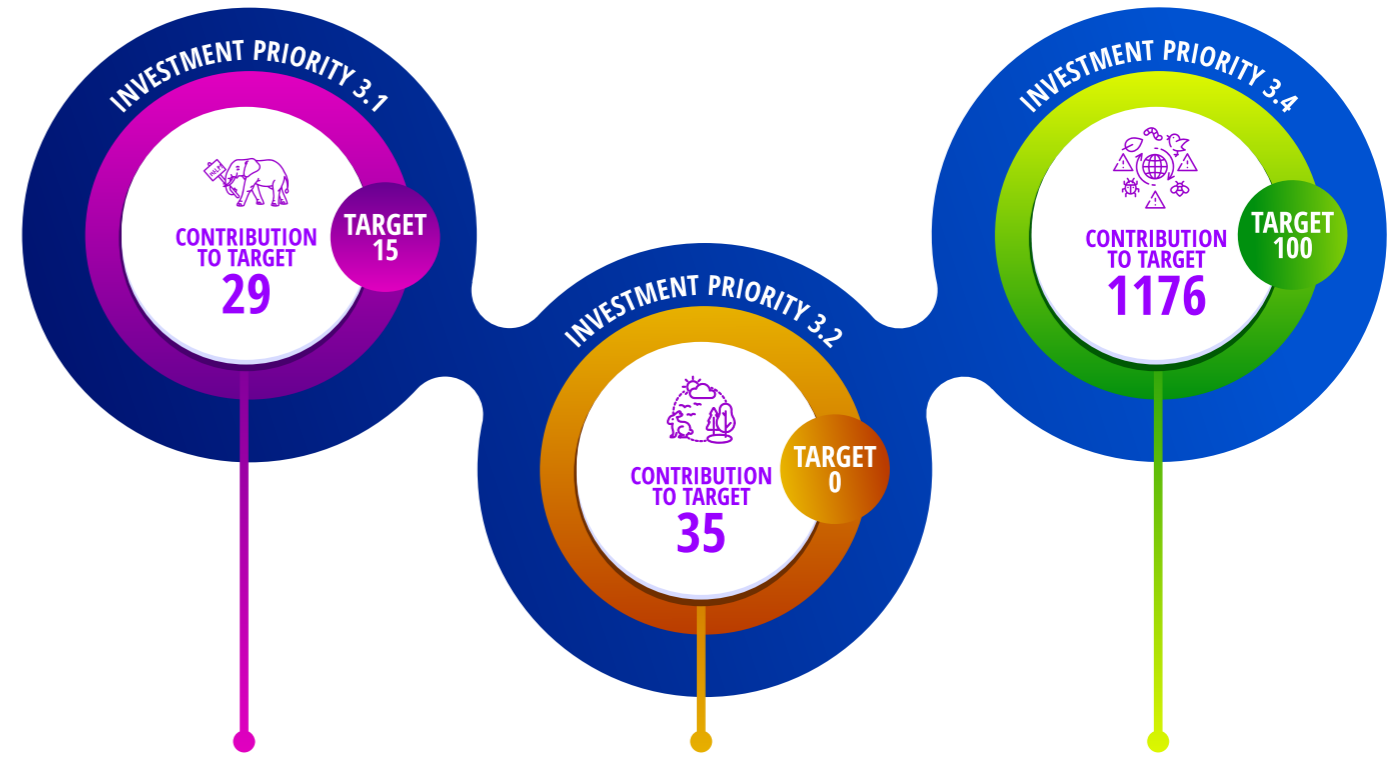
Number of key biodiversity areas with locally relevant information on natural ecosystems generated and used to influence political and economic decision-making in favor of their conservation.

Number of partnerships formed or strengthened among civil society, government, private sector and communities to promote best practices in mining, sustainable forestry and agriculture by private companies.



Number of conservation-related policies of national governments informed or influenced by research, analysis and outreach supported by CEPF grants.

Number of private companies with new management practices consistent with biodiversity conservation at operations in the conservation corridors.



Number of Critically Endangered and Endangered species with priority actions identified in conservation action plans being implemented.

Number of inventory of Key Biodiversity Areas in the hotspot updated to fill critical information gaps, particularly with regard to the Lower Guinean Forests subregion, and freshwater ecosystems.

Number of species from poorly assessed taxonomic groups with their global conservation status updated or assessed for the first time on the IUCN Red List.

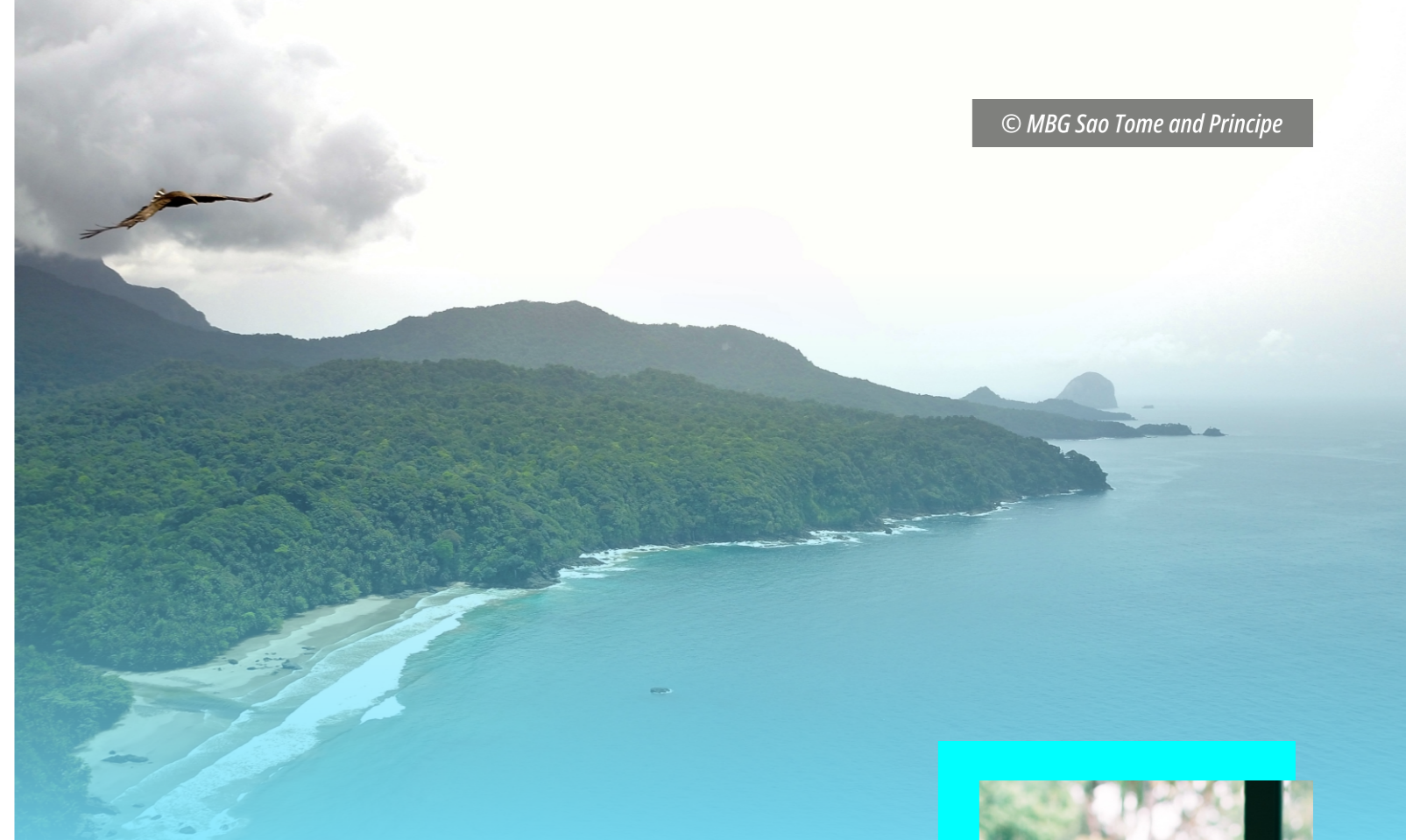
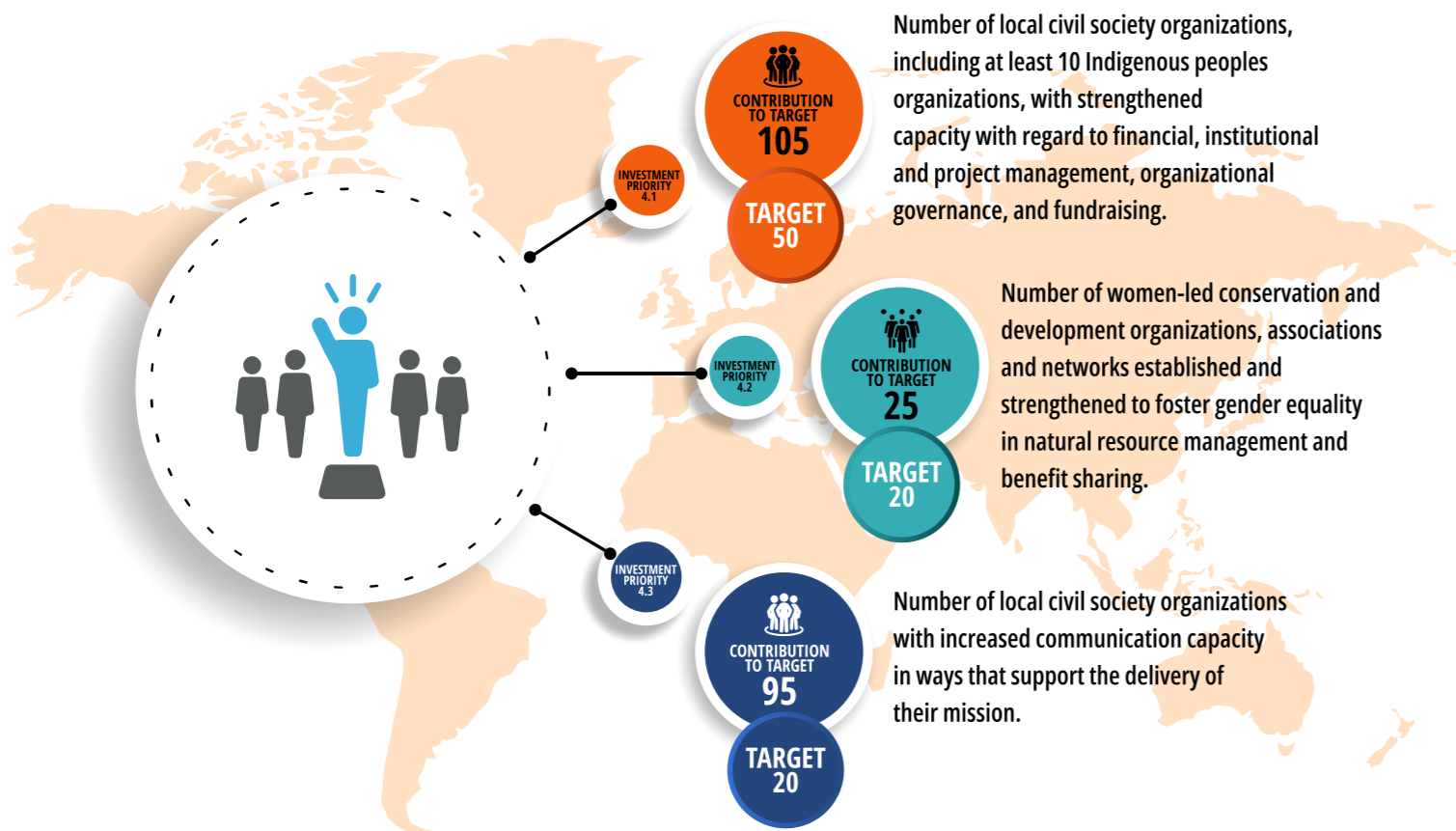
STRATEGIC DIRECTION
04



Number of civil society organizations, including at least 10 Indigenous peoples, women's and/or youth groups, with improvements in organizational capacity.

TARGET
50

CONTRIBUTION TO TARGET
77



CEPF investment in the Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot from 2016 to 2022 resulted in US\$10.1 million in grants, providing 65 civil society organizations with additional capacities and sustaining 22 multi-stakeholder partnerships which, among other achievements, led 15 private companies to adopt best practices for biodiversity conservation and benefited 170 communities and 29 threatened species. This demonstrates that civil society organizations at grassroots, national and international levels with improved capacity and resources can build lasting partnerships geared toward sustainable growth, improving the well-being of the poorest populations and achieving priority conservation outcomes.

