

**Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund**  
No Objection Approval Pursuant to Section 4.1 of the Operational Manual

1 April 2025

**Ecosystem profile for the Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot**

**Recommended Action Item:**

The Donor Council is asked **to approve on a no-objection basis** the ecosystem profile for the Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot, and an increase in CEPF's spending authority by US\$10 million for the implementation of this profile.

The deadline for no-objection approval is **15 May 2025**.

**Background**

The ecosystem profile for the Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot was updated between March 2024 and March 2025. The process built on and updated an earlier ecosystem profile for the hotspot, prepared in 2015.

This is intended to be a full reinvestment, following prior investments during 2001-2006 (Phase I, US\$5.9 million), 2008-2012 (Consolidation, US\$1.9 million) and 2016-2022 (Phase II, US\$10 million). The most recent phase of investment made 76 grants to 64 organizations. The investment strategy set out in the updated ecosystem profile builds on the results achieved and lessons learned from these earlier investments.

The ecosystem profile was updated through a consultative process coordinated by the CEPF Secretariat and led by a team from BirdLife International, with support and guidance from an advisory committee, made up of representatives of Fondation Hans Wilsdorf, the Programme de Petites Initiatives of the Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial (FFEM PPI), the GEF, IUCN and the West African Civil Society Institute, plus an independent expert. The updating process drew on the final assessment of Phase II, the Long-term Vision for the hotspot, and an independent evaluation of lessons learned by the Regional Implementation Team (all prepared in 2022), as well as on four in-person workshops (held in Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Ghana and Liberia in July and August 2024), which were attended by 108 stakeholders.

The draft ecosystem profile was presented to the CEPF Working Group at its 79<sup>th</sup> meeting, on 18 March 2025. The ecosystem profile was subsequently revised, to address comments from the Working Group. A matrix showing how comments from the Working Group have

been addressed is attached, together with the final ecosystem profile and an extended technical summary.

The ecosystem profile sets out a five-year investment strategy, which will require an investment of US\$10 million in grant funding to implement in full. This investment will come from a secured contribution from Fondation Hans Wilsdorf, about which the Donor Council was notified at its 42nd meeting, on 15 February 2024 (CEPF/DC42/4), and anticipated future fundraising by the CEPF Secretariat.