

**Process Framework for Involuntary Restrictions**

**March, 2021**

**CEPF Grant 110588**

**Conservation Society of Sierra Leone**

**Conserving the Yawri Bay Ecosystem in Sierra Leone's Coastal Corridor**

**Sierra Leone**

## **Grant Summary**

1. Grantee organization. Conservation Society of Sierra Leone
2. Grant title. Conserving the Yawri Bay Ecosystem in Sierra Leone's Coastal Corridor.
2. Grant number 110588
3. Grant amount (US dollars). **\$169,906.00**
4. Proposed dates of grant. 1 March 2020 to 30 Jun 2022
5. Countries or territories where project will be undertaken. Sierra Leone (only)
6. Date of preparation of this document. 2 Dec 2021

**The Process Framework will describe the project and how restrictions of access to natural resources and measures to assist affected communities. Affected communities should have the opportunity to participate in the drafting of the Process Framework. Typically, the Applicant will prepare a draft Framework that will then be shared and discussed with local communities and other relevant stakeholders. Based on the consultations, a final Framework will be prepared. CEPF may provide guidance on development of the Framework and will review and approve the final Framework prior to approving the final project proposal application. The Process Framework should include the following elements:**

### **A. Project background**

Yawri Bay is one of nine KBAs in Sierra Leone recognised in the Guinea Forest Ecosystem Profile and part of the Northern Upper Guinea Ecoregion which is classified as continentally outstanding. It is one of the only four areas in Sierra Leone identified in the Profile (Table 12.2) as a “Priority Site” for CEPF investment. The Bay was designated as an Important Bird Area in 1992 and the Government of Sierra Leone has identified Yawri Bay as one of 15 proposed Protected Areas.

Yawri Bay is one of the most important stop-over and wintering grounds for birds in West Africa. Forty-six species of palearctic migrant birds are known to occur in the bay. Four of these species – Avocet, Lesser-crested Tern, Water Dikkop and the near-threatened Damara Tern - were first recorded for Sierra Leone at this site. During migration, more than 20,000 water birds use Yawri Bay. In the northern winter, the Bay is used by nine species with wintering numbers exceeding 1% of their total populations. No surveys of mammals have been recently carried out but there is evidence of the presence of the threatened African Manatee, and three species of game mammals inhabit the coastal forest including the Maxwell Duiker (Near – threatened). Also, three species of turtles occur: Green, Loggerhead and the Vulnerable Olive Ridley. Yawri Bay supports a major local fishing industry, especially at Tombo and Shenge, which supplies most of the fish consumed in Freetown. There is also a viable local salt industry in the area. These activities provide employment opportunities for local inhabitants but also pose major threats to the Bay.

Yawri Bay accounts for about 14% of the total mangrove swamp in Sierra Leone. Mangroves not only provide biomass, forest products and sustain fisheries as well as contributing to the protection of coastlines, they also help mitigate the effect of climate change and extreme

weather events such as flooding. The mangroves in this area are under threat particularly for timber and charcoal, and for oil and gas exploration. During 1980-2006, Sierra Leone lost 37% of its mangrove cover (Feka et al 2014). The trend has unfortunately continued. For example, in the southern half of our project area, mangrove cover declined 19% during 2000-2014 (Paul Britten, unpub. data).

Despite Yawri Bay being one of only four areas in Sierra Leone identified in the CEPF Profile (Table 12.2) as a “Priority Site” for CEPF investment; it currently has no legal protection. No government land use policy exists for the area. Legislation designed to prevent over-fishing exists but is poorly enforced. Similarly, wood cutting is supposed to be controlled by traditional laws, but this has not been effective.

As a result of the poor regulatory framework, the Bay is under threat from over-fishing and over-harvesting of mangroves. Furthermore, modern principles and practices of wildlife and habitat management, which would conserve the Bay and maximize benefits derived from it by residents, are not being followed. Finally, local businesses like the fishing and salt industries at Tombo and Shenge, that use resources from the Bay at present, receive little if any support to integrate biodiversity conservation and sustainability into their day to day operations and thus will eventually struggle to remain viable. If no efforts are made to solve these problems, the Yawri Bay mangrove ecosystem, its biodiversity and its potential to support local livelihoods in diverse ways (such as through the revitalization of the tourism sector), will be lost.

In summary, the problem we will address is that the Yawri Bay ecosystem in Sierra Leone has been degraded and is susceptible to further decline. The major threats are destruction of mangroves, unsustainable harvest of fish and crustaceans, loss of coastal shorelines, and disturbance of animals by people. These threats are driven by gaps in our knowledge of the Bay, insufficient legal protection, non-compliance with existing environmental laws, and the fact that at present local residents do not benefit from protecting the Bay.

## **B. Participatory implementation**

The project will try to ensure recognition for the Yawri Bay through several actions. We will:

- i) Work with youth and birds experts of and CSSL Biodiversity Officer to conduct two 10 days Waterbird Census in the Bay;
- ii) Undertake biodiversity and socio-economic surveys to collect additional data through expert surveys by consultants and CSSL staff in consultation with stakeholders;
- iii) Engage stakeholders along with the consultant to analyse collated data and to conduct an assessment of the site using Ramsar criteria;
- iv) Institute the formation of a Yawri Bay Ramsar Site Working Group to review assessment and also work with NPAA (also part of group) to propose Yawri Bay as a Ramsar site to the Sierra Leone Government (through NPAA) and facilitate the submission of the nomination material to Ramsar;
- v) Assuming successful nomination, CSSL and Site Working Group publicise Ramsar site nomination on the World Database of KBAs including CSSL Website and Facebook page;

- vi) Hold meetings with stake holders to provide briefings on the updated status of Yawri Bay; and
- vii) Through consultations, develop and publish online, a Guide to the Yawri Bay Marine Ecosystem, and disseminate 500 hard-copies of the guide locally and also through presentations and discussions including on national media and educational institutions (universities, etc).

The project will also try to protect the Bay by:

- i. Examining the National Protected Area Authorization and Conservation Trust Act and the Environmental Protection Act and produce a report with recommendations on the adequacy of current laws and share the reports with relevant authorities *eg.* the Parliamentary Oversight Committee on the Environment;
- ii. Based on the Management Plan which we will develop as a strategy, working with the NPAA to determine logistical support required to improve integrated conservation management at Yawri Bay together with the community stakeholders, NPAA and the site working group, holding community consultations in each of 5 villages with 50 participants per meeting;
- iii. Working with District Council Chair, along with the village authorities produce, review and draft by-laws with the communities and conduct a validation workshop with the communities to be agreed upon and adopted by the communities;
- iv. The Project Team and Yawri Bay Working Group will then consult with stakeholders to agree a process to integrate revised community by-laws into MOUs and frameworks for Conservation Agreements.

As a strategy and through a consultant supported by the CSSL project team, communities, local authorities, NPAA and other stakeholders will:

- i. collect local knowledge on site management planning and briefs local communities and use this to design and implementation of MOUs and Conservation Agreements that underpin the implementation of the Management Plan;
- ii. Review and verify the boundaries of the Yawri Bay site with GPS tracking using this to produces a detailed description of Yawri Bay that informs development of the Management Plan;
- iii. Engage 5 focal communities and involve all stakeholders, local communities, government agencies, local industries to discuss community issues/priorities for preparing first draft of the management Plan;
- iv. Seek review and validation of the Management Plan after which CSSL works with a Financial Expert to develop a Financial Plan for the implementation of the Management Plan;
- v. Confer with NPAA, EPA and relevant stakeholders on support to facilitate the development of a multi-stakeholder partnership between local communities, private sector and government to allow for effective implementation of the Management Plan.

At this point, we will then work with a consultant to:

- i. Review potential sustainable sources of funding for the conservation of Yawri Bay through *eg.* REDD+ program / Conservation Trust and produce sustainable funding plan;

- ii. study ways to support local businesses (e.g., salt, fish packing) and prepares and submit to stakeholders a summary of findings and reviews ways to support local communities through non-destructive, climate-smart nature-based activities.

In order to ensure compliance with the management plan and the MoUs and Conservation agreements, we will:

- i. Recruit, train and supervise 4 conservation officers, recruit, train and supervise local community “monitors” or eco-guards to work alongside conservation officers. They will survey and monitor Yawri Bay with a frequency consistent with the Management Plan;
- ii. support 5 communities to develop and implement by-laws in alignment with MOUs and Conservation Agreements;
- iii. Hold consultations with all parties to design the voluntary MOUs that will eventually lead to Conservation Agreements;
- iv. Improve the sustainability of the practices of 5 communities and support 10 school nature clubs to conduct awareness /pride campaign on Yawri Bay; and
- v. Establish and provide initial support to a multi-stakeholder Yawri Bay Working Group for regular quarterly meetings to review and monitor progress with development.

Additionally, this document will be shared with communities in the project area at the start of the project (or prior to it if required by CEPF), and representatives (e.g., Village Chiefs) will be asked to sign a statement indicating that they have read and accepted the document. The signed statements will be returned to CEPF before the commencement of other project activities.

To ensure active participation for instance, the following meetings and workshops are scheduled:

- Site assessment meetings with key stakeholders by April to May 2021
- hold two community consultations in each of 5 villages with 50 participants per meeting on development of marine ecosystem conservation by-laws which will be validated by the stakeholders by January – February 2022
- Monthly working group meetings for decision making on the management of the bay meetings will be conducted including Government Departments/Agencies, Local Councils, NGOs, CBO/Unions, Traditional Authorities, Harbour Masters, Fishing & Salt Industries, Trading Associations & Local Conservation Groups
- Yawri Bay Management Plan development and validation workshop with over 100 key stakeholders, including Government Departments/Agencies, Local Councils, NGOs, CBO/Unions, Traditional Authorities, Harbour Masters, Fishing & Salt Industries, Trading Associations & Local Conservation Groups by mid-December, 2021
- consultations with 7 companies directly working and benefiting from the bay by mid-January 2022
- Discussions and consultations meetings with 5 focal local communities expected to be involved in the design and implementation of MOUs by September – November 2021

- Consultant further engages 5 focal communities and involves all stakeholders, local communities, government agencies, local industries to discuss community issues/priorities for Yawri Bay including. use of wetlands and management plan by October to November 2021
- Confer with NPAA, EPA and relevant stakeholders on support to facilitate the development of a multi-stakeholder partnership between local communities, private sector and government to allow for effective implementation of the Management Plan by October 2021 – January 2022

### C. Criteria for eligibility of affected persons

We will identify all villages within the project area and other villages whose members use the Bay. As a custom it is found that the Yawri Bay encompasses 15 villages. However, there are 37 villages that can be considered living in and around the Bay with people directly deriving their livelihood from the bay and so considered affected. Status will be clearly ascertained during implementation. The project will mainly focus on areas where fishing and salt producing companies/industries exist for closer collaboration on the management and protection/conservation of the Bay.

We will identify affected person (if any) who will be eligible for a compensation measure (but the actual persons can be identified during project implementation). We will follow processes and criteria. We will assess the impacts and losses that may be caused by access restrictions put in place by the project. This assessment will include:

- **material impacts** caused by restricting **access to and/or use of natural resources, by restricting physical access** to areas of occupation or use or by imposed changes in use and management regimes of natural resources;
- **non-material impacts** related to **social, recreational, spiritual, cultural, knowledge and educational values** of the land and resources to be restricted;
- impacts related to reduced **access to social services such as education or health services** by prohibiting or limiting physical access to places where those services occur.

In order to structure the analysis well and to ensure that no significant resources or groups are left out, an inventory will be developed describing:

- i. the main **types of natural resources**, their **current use** and **importance for the livelihoods of the people/groups** identified above,
- ii. their **current use rights** and
- iii. the planned restrictions and changes in use and management regimes.

We will look at resources such as Timber; construction material; fuel wood; medicinal plants and bush meat /wild game. For all of these, we will consider their importance for livelihoods;

currents sites of gathering/ harvesting them; and user rights (formal and customary to for triggering a restriction by the project. In terms of site, we will look at whether they are located in a conservation zone; a buffer zone or in a community use zone.

Eligibility to or entitlement to mitigation measures including those for compensation, will be assessed based on: legal rights, including customary rights, and the identified impact of restrictions.

We will be transparent and fair to avoid any potential perception of discrimination or unjust preferential treatment. Compensations on collective bases will clearly demonstrate how the benefit will be distributed to all eligible members. CSSL is developing proposals to try and cover this aspect of the project since it is not covered already in this implementation.

#### **D. Measures to assist the affected persons**

As explained in detail in the full application and the supplementary material, an essential part of this project – made explicit in our theory of change – is that long-term protection of the Bay (including its people) requires continuing support. We have identified several sources of support, including a second grant which will allow us to more fully develop these approaches, and we have stressed that payment (e.g., PES, payment for environmental services) must be tied to protection of the Bay. Without this link, the Bay could continue to deteriorate and benefit to the people will ultimately be lost (e.g., when the mangroves and fish stocks disappear completely). Thus, tying payments to achieving targets in the management plan will help protect the people as well as the environment.

- a) If the bay achieves a Ramsar status, it should be protected, meaning that there will be a potential restriction for access to some of the resources of the bay e.g. cutting of wood/mangroves for domestic/drying of fish etc, use of certain fishing nets to prevent harvesting of fingerlings, or collection of salt marches in the bay where they may require permits to cut wood for instance, Here we will propose best fishing measures/ salt production practices and in this case, premium prices will be paid by companies part of the agreement between the companies and the fishermen. During the implementation of project, we will discuss with affected communities as how they could be supported to sway their actions to a more ecosystem friendly activities for their long term survival.

#### **E. Conflict resolution and complaint mechanism.**

All projects that trigger a safeguard must provide local communities and other relevant stakeholders with a means to raise a grievance with the grantee, in the commonly accepted local language of Krio/creole, to the relevant Regional Implementation Team, the CEPF Secretariat or the World Bank.

The phone numbers will most useful since it is now a commom means of communication at all levels of communities. emails will be more useful for some elites who have the s and ability to use them

This grievance mechanism must include, at a minimum, the following elements.

- Email and telephone contact information for the grantee organization *will be publicly displayed on bill boards.*
- Email and telephone contact information for the CEPF Regional Implementation Team *will be publicly displayed on bill boards.*
- Email and telephone contact information for the local World Bank office., *will be publicly displayed on bill boards.*
- The email of the CEPF Executive Director: [cepfexecutive@conservation.org](mailto:cepfexecutive@conservation.org), *will be publicly displayed on bill boards.*
- A statement describing how you will inform stakeholders of the objectives of the project and the existence of the grievance mechanism (e.g., posters, signboards, public notices, public announcements, use of local languages).
- You should include the following text, exactly, in any grievance mechanism: “We will share all grievances – and a proposed response – with the Regional Implementation Team and the CEPF Grant Director within 15 days. If the claimant is not satisfied following the response, they may submit the grievance directly to the CEPF Executive Director at [cepfexecutive@conservation.org](mailto:cepfexecutive@conservation.org) or by surface mail. If the claimant is not satisfied with the response from the CEPF Executive Director, they may submit the grievance to the World Bank at the local World Bank office.”

Following the guidance above, describe the grievance mechanism that you will use.

*(see next page)*

## **F. Implementation Arrangements**

At the beginning of the project, we will visit all of the villages in the project area and explain the project and the grievance procedures to the residents in their the most common language of Krio/Creole which is understood and accepted everywhere in the country.

*We will share phone numbers and email contact of the following as well:*

- *the grantee organization contacts*
- *the Regional Implementation Team and the CEPF Grant Director*
- *the grievance directly to the CEPF Executive Director at [cepfexecutive@conservation.org](mailto:cepfexecutive@conservation.org)*
- *the local World Bank office*

*The phone numbers will be most useful since it is now a common means of communication at all levels of communities. emails will be more useful for some elites who have the ability and access to use them*

We will stress the following commitment:



- *We will share all grievances – and a proposed response – with the Regional Implementation Team and the CEPF Grant Director within 15 days.*
- *If the claimant is not satisfied following the response, they may submit the grievance directly to the CEPF Executive Director at [cepfexecutive@conservation.org](mailto:cepfexecutive@conservation.org) or by surface mail.*
- *If the claimant is not satisfied with the response from the CEPF Executive Director, they may submit the grievance to the World Bank at the local World Bank office.*

## Grievance mechanism for the project

### Conserving the Yawri Bay Ecosystem in Sierra Leone's Coastal Corridor

CSSL, March, 2021

A copy of this grievance mechanism will be given to each Village chief and to other community leaders.

Email and telephone contact information for the grantee organization.

Sheku Kamara, Executive Director – [sheku.kamara@cssl@1986.org](mailto:sheku.kamara@cssl@1986.org) , (+232) 78452553;  
Edward Sesay, Programme Manager- [edward.sesay@cssl1986.org](mailto:edward.sesay@cssl1986.org), (+232) 78 452 553

Email and telephone contact information for the CEPF Regional Implementation Team.

Mariana Cavalho, [Mariana.Carvalho@birdlife.org](mailto:Mariana.Carvalho@birdlife.org), (phone to be added)

Email and telephone contact information for the local World Bank office

(to be added)

The email of the CEPF Executive Director: [cepfexecutive@conservation.org](mailto:cepfexecutive@conservation.org)

As a mechanism, we will ensure that local systems and procedures are considered, involving the local chiefs and authorities in the project communities for their local regulations and practices for conflict and grievance resolutions. In case where affected people are aggrieved for being unfairly or inadequately treated, they have options to recourse local systems or use any of the channels indicated above to project authorities.

We will also establish a desk at the CSSL office and indicate individuals at community level, of course, ensuring to that women and vulnerable people are comfortable with whoever is designated for such so that they may not be intimidated to register where aggrieved individuals could go to register grievances.

At the beginning of the project, we will visit all of the villages in the project area and explain the project and the grievance procedures to the residents in their own language. We will stress the following commitment:

*We will share all grievances – and a proposed response – with the Regional Implementation Team and the CEPF Grant Director within 15 days. If the claimant is not satisfied following the response, they may submit the grievance directly to the CEPF Executive Director at [cepfexecutive@conservation.org](mailto:cepfexecutive@conservation.org) or by surface mail. If the claimant is not satisfied with the response from the CEPF Executive Director, they may submit the grievance to the World Bank at the local World Bank office.*